

Appendix B – Outline of Key Accessibility, Quality and Quantity Standards

These Standards will provide an appropriate level of open space infrastructure. As required for new developments in accordance with Policy E19 of the Northampton Local Plan adopted in 1997.

Policy E19

‘Planning Permission for residential, business or commercial development proposals will only be granted where any adverse effect or impact of the development is allowed for or mitigated and where the infrastructure, services and amenities made necessary by the development are in existence or will be provided by the developer or other agency’.

The Standards

The standards are designed to ensure that everyone in Northampton has access to a range of good quality spaces and associated facilities. The standards will be used to help plan new developments and prioritise future work for the council and partners in meeting this aim. It is intended that the standards will be incorporated into the Local Development Framework and provide developers and the council with clarity over the future provision of green space in planning decisions but due to the timescales to the Local Development Framework being adopted it is prudent to adopt the below standards in the interim.

Quality

Open space type	Quality Vision Percentage
Parks and Gardens	80%
Natural and semi-natural green space	75%
Amenity Green space	66%
Provision for Children	80%
Provision for young people	74%
Outdoor Sports Facilities	80%
Allotments	76%
Cemeteries and Churchyards	70%
Civic Space	70%

Accessibility

Open space type	Distance (metres)	Estimated Time (mins)
Parks and Gardens	480	10 mins walking
Natural and Semi-natural open space	720	15 mins walking
Amenity green space	240	5 mins walking
Play provision young children	240	5 mins walking
Play provision young people	480	10 mins walking

Outdoor Sports Facilities	720	15 mins walking
Allotments and Community Gardens	720	15 mins walking
Cemeteries and Churchyards	Not set	Not set

Quantity

Open space Type	Hectares per 1,000 population
Parks and Gardens	1.05
Natural and Semi-natural open space	1.57
Amenity green space	1.37
Play provision young children	0.04
Play provision young people	0.03
Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.62
Allotments and Community Gardens	0.42
Churchyards and cemeteries	0.013
Total	6.133

Improvement Policies for Standards

S1 – The standards will guide Development Control decision-making with regard to planning applications for open space sites including the securing of S106 contributions for future management and maintenance.

S2 - The standards will guide Development Control decision-making following a local area open space assessment and will determine

- i) How much open space provision should be made as part of new development.
- ii) Access links by foot, cycle and public transport needed (In association with Improvement Policy GI1)
- iii) Any contributions that should be made towards offsite open space
- iv) What typology of open space the planning contributions will be used for.
- v) Whether after a period of consultation open space or any assets within open space can be disposed or lost to development or whether they should be retained.

S3 - The standards will be applied as part of a holistic analysis of local resource in which quality, quantity and distance are considered together (as well as other relevant considerations such as other planning policy and particularly socially based values of the land).

Improvement Policies for Typologies

There are a number of Improvement Policies within the Strategy for each type of open space these also need to be taken account of by the Development Control Section these are outlined below:

P&G1 - Ensure that there is a good quality park with a range of facilities within reach of homes according to the set standards.

P&G2 - Restore, enhance and protect the historic and environmental context of Northampton's Parks and Gardens.

P&G3 – Where appropriate development should improve access links by foot, cycle and public transport and enhance entry points into our Parks and Gardens.

P&G4 - To maintain and manage a number of our Parks and Gardens to Green Flag standard.

P&G5 - Park area can only be lost to development where it is inappropriately sited and poor quality.

NSN1 - Protect and enhance the natural and semi-natural urban green spaces through the Planning system and by making appropriate designations of sites to protect them.

NSN2 - Where appropriate development should improve access links by foot, cycle and public transport between natural and semi-natural urban green spaces to enable all sections of the community to use and enjoy these areas.

NSN3 - Work with partners and local communities to manage these sites and raise awareness about them.

NSN4 – Manage all public spaces in our ownership, to protect and enhance their value for wildlife and habitats.

AGS1 – Prioritise investment and agree a rolling programme to improve grounds maintenance including the basics of grass cutting, litter and dog fouling.

AGS2 - Where there is excess amenity green space, which is inappropriately sited, consider using it for alternative purposes, such as changing its use to another type of open space or for development.

AGS3 - Generate a more appealing and useful urban environment through better design of amenity green space.

CYP1 - Provide a diverse range of children's play spaces from fixed equipment to natural play spaces, which are designed to be, exciting, risky and challenging using both the natural landscape and the introduction of natural play materials into the wider open space environment.

CYP2 - Increase the area of play space, providing larger, better quality play opportunities, well distributed across the town.

CYP3 - Ensure that the equipment in play spaces and facilities is inclusive, appropriate and stimulating for a range of age groups and abilities and wherever reasonable accessible to all.

CYP4 - Ensure that children and young people have a continuous involvement in the design and management of play spaces and young people's facilities.

OSF1 - Enhance parks and open spaces to increase informal sport opportunities.

OSF2 - To regularly review the Playing Pitch Strategy and comply with its Policies to ensure that there is adequate provision for Outdoor Sports in Northampton.

ALL1 - Work in partnership with local organisations to regularly review the distribution, protection and potential disposal issues.

ALL2 – Implement a prioritised programme of works to, improve security and the range and standard of facilities available on NBC owned allotment sites.

CC1 - The Council will produce a Cemeteries and Churchyards Strategy. The strategy will include an action plan providing an approach to meeting future needs.

CC2 - Protect the Borough's cemeteries from inappropriate development, safeguard the nature conservation value of cemeteries and churchyards and begin to develop more awareness of ecological management of cemeteries and churchyards.

CC3 - Work with partners and local communities to manage these areas, to maintain and enhance their value and ensure they are secure.

GI1 – New development will be required to improve linkages, open space corridors, riverside routes and cycle/walkways, bridleways through the town for recreation, biodiversity and safe commuting.

GI2 – Use opportunities to promote links such as dismantled railway lines and cross country nature trails that already exist.

CS1 - To raise the quality of civic spaces in Northampton by creating well designed, quality civic spaces that reflect and enhance the borough's built and landscape heritage.

CS2 - The design and planning of new neighbourhoods in Northampton should follow national and local guidance for example the current WNDC Design Code Manual.