

# 5. Natural and Semi Natural Open Space

05

## Introduction and definition

- 5.1 This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (for example downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and biodiversity. Examples of such sites in Derby include Nutwood, West Park Meadows and Windmill Hill Plantation.
- 5.2 The urban countryside is a key feature of Derby. Although the majority of land in Derby is developed, approximately one third remains undeveloped land – the urban countryside, which includes the parts of the city designated as Green Wedges. Derby City Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the urban countryside and there are a number of important natural open spaces in the City, such as Chaddesden Wood and West Park Meadows. Chaddesden Wood is the only ancient woodland in the City and is a designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR). West Park Meadows is also a LNR and contains a variety of natural open space including grassland, scrub and woodland. These two sites and many others contribute significantly to the character of Derby.
- 5.3 As well as stand alone sites, natural and semi natural open space is frequently found within other types of open space, such as parks, and in some instances there may be some sites classified as amenity green space or parks that have a secondary function as natural and semi natural open space, reinforcing the overlap between the different types of open space. Sinfin Moor is a particular example of a site that functions as a park, but that also has a secondary function as a natural open space.
- 5.4 The Wildlife Trust highlights the importance of natural and semi natural open space in terms of adapting to climate change. The use of this type of open space for flood defence and shading and absorption of CO<sup>2</sup> is emphasised. The provision of natural and semi natural open space may therefore be a key component of the strategy to reduce flood risk and adapt to climate change in Derby.
- 5.5 Although natural and semi natural open space plays a key role in wildlife conservation, biodiversity and climate change, the recreational opportunities provided by these spaces are also important and it is essential that an appropriate balance between recreational use, biodiversity and conservation is achieved. Derby City Council is committed to enhancing the recreational opportunities offered by natural open space whilst protecting the environmental value of these sites.
- 5.6 This section outlines the context and key consultation findings relating to natural and semi natural open space across Derby, and the recommended local standards. These local standards are then applied in order to understand local issues and priorities.

## Context

- 5.7 A commitment to the enhancement of natural and semi natural open space in Derby is outlined in the *City of Derby Local Plan Review 2006*, the *Nature Conservation Strategy* and *Derby's Sustainable Community Strategy*. These documents emphasise the importance of enhancing the quality of the natural environment in Derby and this is a specific priority in *Derby's Community Strategy*.

- 5.8 The importance of protecting natural and semi natural open space from development is emphasised in the *City of Derby Local Plan Review 2006* and the Council's *Nature Conservation Strategy*. A number of policies in the *City of Derby Local Plan* state that development which affects or harms the wildlife, habit, biodiversity or character of natural open space will not be permitted. The *Nature Conservation Strategy* emphasises the need to protect natural open space and outlines the importance of retaining a healthy biodiverse network in the City and increasing the quantity of wildlife features in Derby.
- 5.9 Responses to the household survey indicate that natural and semi natural open space is the third most frequently used type of open space in Derby, highlighting the popularity of this type of open space from a recreational perspective. The importance of natural and semi natural open space in Derby was further highlighted throughout consultation with the need to protect this type of open space from development regularly emphasised.

### **Current Position**

- 5.10 Although Derby is a compact City, there is a significant and varied amount of natural and semi natural open space in the City. The total amount of provision equates to over 248 hectares.
- 5.11 In addition to the recreational function that natural and semi natural open spaces offer for residents there are numerous sites of particular importance for their nature conservation and wildlife value. These include:
- 10 Local Nature Reserves; and
  - over 50 other sites of wildlife interest, many of which are open to the public and are part of larger natural open spaces or parks.
- 5.12 The Green Wedges within Derby are also an important resource for the City. These spaces help maintain the identity of settlements and provide recreation opportunities and links to the countryside. They are also particularly important in terms of wider green infrastructure networks and the protection and conservation of biodiversity. The function of these areas will be discussed in more detail later in the report.
- 5.13 Table 5.1 summarises the distribution of natural and semi natural open space across Derby. Allestree NSN (50.42 hectares), located in the North West area, has been excluded from the quantity calculations as it is over 40 hectares and as such, skews the figures. Only sites which are classified as having a primary purpose of natural and semi natural open space (as defined in Section 2) are included within this table. Many other sites also contain natural open spaces within their overall boundaries.

**Table 5.1 – Provision of natural and semi natural open space across Derby**

Area	Current provision (hectares)	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	Current population	Provision per 1000 population
Central	2.60	4	0.08	1.85	39,573	0.07
North East	62.81	24	0.10	9.84	52,201	1.20
North West	43.14	16	0.11	10.27	38,277	1.13
South East	48.34	15	0.08	12.65	53,280	0.91
South West	33.60	17	0.17	9.57	38,301	0.88
<b>Overall</b>	<b>190.49</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>12.65</b>	<b>221,632</b>	<b>0.86</b>

5.14 The key issues emerging from Table 5.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of natural and semi natural open space include:

- the current provision of natural and semi natural open space in Derby equates to 0.90 hectares per 1000 population;
- although the quantity of provision is relatively consistent across most of the different areas of city, the provision of natural and semi natural open space is limited in the Central Area (2.60 hectares). This is not surprising given the dense urban concentration of this area. The South East and South West are the only other areas to have less than 1 hectare per 1000 natural open space, suggesting that there is a lack of this type of open space in the south of Derby;
- a split in opinion regarding the provision of natural and semi natural open space is evident from responses, with 49% of residents indicating that provision is insufficient and 42% stating that provision is sufficient. Only 4% of residents feel that there is more than enough natural and semi natural open space in Derby. This is perhaps reflective of the characteristics of the City environment;
- not surprisingly, given the urban nature of the area, the highest level of dissatisfaction is found the Central area. There are only four natural and semi natural open space sites located in this area;
- other surveys demonstrate an overall difference in opinion regarding the quantity of natural and semi natural open space. This was particularly evident from responses to the elected members' survey. The provision of natural open space within the Chaddesden and Oakwood wards was perceived to be about right and in Blagreaves and Mickleover wards, provision was considered to be almost sufficient. However, within the Mackworth and Derwent wards respondents stated

that there is not enough natural open space. This suggests that there are some localised deficiencies in Derby;

- respondents to the officers' survey portrayed a slightly higher level of dissatisfaction. Almost half of respondents (47%) indicated that there are not enough natural open spaces and a further 12% suggested that there are nearly enough spaces. In contrast, 29% of officers stated that the provision of natural open space is about right;
- the importance of protecting natural and semi natural open space from development was emphasised by respondents to the household survey. Many residents stated that sites have recently been lost to development and this was given as one of the main reasons why residents perceived provision to be insufficient;
- at the stakeholder workshop, the quantity of natural open space was identified as being close to Natural England's recommended accessibility standards, which is relatively unusual for a city; and
- difficulty in accessing sites was identified as one of the main reasons given by those respondents to the household survey who stated that provision is insufficient. This indicates that increased access to existing provision rather than increased provision is a priority.
- Additional consultation with the 'People with Learning Disabilities' and 'Older Family Carers' Groups highlighted the need to provide access to these sites for people with mobility impairments and learning difficulties.

5.15 Full consultation findings are set out in Appendix E.

### **Setting quantity standards**

5.16 The recommended local quantity standard for natural and semi natural open space has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix E.

5.17 The recommended local standard for natural and semi natural open space has been set slightly above the existing level of provision. This reflects the difference in opinion regarding the current provision identified during consultation and the need to seek to address deficiencies in areas which contain less natural open space.

5.18 Natural and semi natural open spaces over 40 hectares have been excluded from the quantity standard as the inclusion of these sites would skew figures and create an unrealistic standard. Inclusion of these sites would mean that the amount of open space required from new developments would be unrealistic, particularly within the dense urban areas of the City.

**Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification and worksheet)**

Current Provision	Recommended Standard
0.86 hectares per 1000 people	0.87 hectares per 1000 people

**Justification**

A level of dissatisfaction regarding the provision of natural and semi natural open space was identified during consultation. Nearly half of respondents to the household survey (49%) stated that the provision of natural and semi natural open space is insufficient and only 4% of residents indicated that there is more than enough natural and semi natural open space in Derby.

Other consultation findings also indicate a level of dissatisfaction regarding the provision of natural and semi natural open space. Almost half of respondents to the officers' survey (47%) indicated that there are not enough natural open spaces and provision within the wards of Mackworth and Derwent was perceived to be insufficient by elected members.

Based on the above the local standard has been set slightly above the existing level of provision. Setting a standard at this level will allow for existing deficiencies to be identified, and will also enable a focus on qualitative improvements.

**Quality**

***Current position***

- 5.19 The quality of natural and semi natural open space was assessed through site visits undertaken by pmpgenesis.
- 5.20 The quality of natural and semi natural open space, based on the site visits, is summarised in Table 5.2 overleaf.

**Table 5.2 - Quality of natural and semi natural open space in Derby**

Area	Range of quality scores	Average Quality Score	Highest quality Site (ID)	Lowest Quality Site (ID)
Central	-	-		-
North East	40% to 75%	64%	Hampshire Road (192)	Stoney Lane (112)
North West	56% to 80%	69%	Nether Park Drive (80)	Darley Fields (2030)
South East	55% to 80%	67%	Prestwick Way (686)	Whitehaven Grove (710)
South West	40% to 80%	59%	Richmond Close (505)	Faxton Close (464)
<b>Overall</b>	<b>40% to 80%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>Richmond Close (505)</b>	<b>Faxton Close (464)</b>

5.21 The key issues emerging from Table 5.2 and consultations relating to the quality of natural and semi natural open space are as follows:

- positive perceptions regarding the quality of natural and semi natural open space were portrayed by respondents to the household survey. The majority of respondents consider the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces to be either good (42%) or average (40%). Only a minority of respondents (8%) perceive the quality of this typology to be poor;
- the positive perceptions regarding the quality of natural and semi natural open space were also reflected during other consultations. Over half of respondents (53%) considered the quality of natural open space to be good or average and findings from the elected members survey found that only within the Derwent ward was the quality of natural open space perceived to be below average (rated as poor);
- site assessments support the findings of the consultation with the quality of natural open space rated as above average (average quality score 65%). However, based on the average quality scores achieved during site visits, this type of open space is rated the second lowest quality of all typologies in Derby. This may reflect the more natural environment of these sites and the lower focus on the provision of associated infrastructure;
- the quality of natural and semi natural open space is noticeably higher in the North West and South East (average quality score 69% and 67% respectively). It is within the North West where the greatest level of satisfaction is portrayed by respondents to the household survey;

- litter, misuse of site and dog fouling were identified as minor problems experienced by frequent users of natural open space. In contrast to the perceptions of current users, site assessments did not identify these as problems, with little evidence of litter and dog fouling found on sites;
- a clean and litter free site, footpaths and flowers, trees and shrubs were identified by residents as essential features of natural and semi natural open space. This indicates that a well maintained site that provides a range of vegetation is important at natural open space sites in Derby;
- site assessments identified that ancillary accommodation is the main factor requiring improvement at natural open space sites in the City. Many sites were highlighted as lacking in basic infrastructure such as footpaths and bins; and
- the need for improvement management of natural and semi natural open space from a conservation and biodiversity perspective was identified by The Wildlife Trust at the stakeholder workshop. Balancing the recreational and environmental value will therefore be important.

### Setting quality standards

- 5.22 The recommended local quality standard for natural and semi natural open space is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation for the local standards are provided within Appendix E.
- 5.23 The quality standards summarise the features that residents consider to be important determinants of the quality of provision. The target quality score for natural and semi natural open space is set at 75%.

### Quality Standard (see Appendix E)

#### Recommended Quality Standard

Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the vision for natural and semi natural space should incorporate:

Essential	Desirable
Clean & litter free – appropriately maintained	Nature features
Footpaths	Water features
Flowers, trees & shrubs	Well kept grass

### Accessibility

- 5.24 As previously highlighted, access to natural and semi natural open space was identified as a key determinant of usage. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived from the findings of the local consultations.
- 5.25 Over two thirds of current users walk to access a natural open space (68%). 29% of current users drive to access a site. There is no pattern as to how far current users travel to reach a natural open space, with just over 50% of users travelling less than 15 minutes and just under 50% travelling 15

to 30 minutes. This indicates that while some residents use sites in close proximity to their home others are willing to travel much further to use this type of open space.

- 5.26 Consistent with the findings for current users, the significant majority of respondents to the household survey expect to walk to a natural open space (63%). In general, findings within the five geographical areas support the overall results, with over 52% of residents in each area indicating that they would prefer to walk to access this type of open space. This suggests that residents expect to find natural open space within close proximity to their home.
- 5.27 The most common expected travel time is 10 minutes and the average expected travel time is slightly higher at 14 minutes. Travel times indicated by respondents range from 2 to 60 minutes. These findings suggest that although many residents expect natural open space to be provided in close proximity to their home, some are prepared to travel further to access a site. The distance travelled is likely to depend on the size and function of the site.
- 5.28 Site assessments reveal that access to natural and semi natural open space is generally regarded as average or poor. Many sites were difficult to access, particularly due to small entrances. Transport was identified as the main area for improvement. Specifically, many sites were identified as only being accessible on foot. This reflects the findings of consultations, which suggest that an improvement to access to sites is a key priority.

### Setting accessibility standards

- 5.29 The recommended local accessibility standard for natural and semi natural open space is summarised overleaf. Full justification for these local standards is provided within Appendix E.

#### Accessibility Standard (see Appendix E)

##### Recommended Accessibility Standard

10 minute walk time (480 metres)

##### Justification

Over two thirds of current users (68%) walk to access a natural or semi natural open space. Consistent with the patterns portrayed by current users 63% of household survey respondents would prefer to walk to this type of open space.

The average expected travel time is 14 minutes and the most common response is slightly lower at 10 minutes. The modal response is mirrored in all geographical areas in the City.

The recommended local accessibility standard has therefore been set at a 10 minute walk time (480 metres).

### Applying provision standards

- 5.30 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards provides an understanding of the existing distribution of natural and semi natural open space. Table 5.3 summarises the application of the quantity standard for natural and semi natural open space by geographical area.

- 5.31 Surpluses and deficiencies are calculated by applying the recommended standard to the existing and projected populations. Calculations on future provision against the local standard assume that no further natural and semi natural spaces will be provided. The quantity standards should be used to guide the amount of provision required, however an accessibility led approach should be taken in order to determine where new natural open space should be provided.
- 5.32 Given the uncertainties that still exist around the levels and location of new housing developments, it has been assumed for the purposes of projecting open space need that population will grow uniformly across the city. The figures used consider only the impact of population growth within the city boundaries.
- 5.33 It is however acknowledged that plans to provide new housing on the edge of the city boundary within the South Derbyshire and Amber Valley Districts will also impact on demand for open space, as it is likely that these residents will travel into the city to use open spaces and sports facilities. The lack of clarity on the likely scale and location of development means that this impact cannot be quantified at the current time, but should be taken into account as part of the planning process for any new development.

**Table 5.3 – Application of the quantity standard**

Area	Current shortfall / Surplus when measured against local standard (hectares)	Future shortfall / Surplus when measured against local standard (hectares)
Central	-31.83	-39.88
North East	17.40	6.77
North West	9.84	2.11
South East	1.99	-8.86
South West	0.28	-7.51
<b>Overall</b>	<b>-2.33</b>	<b>-47.37</b>

5.34 Table 5.3 indicates the following:

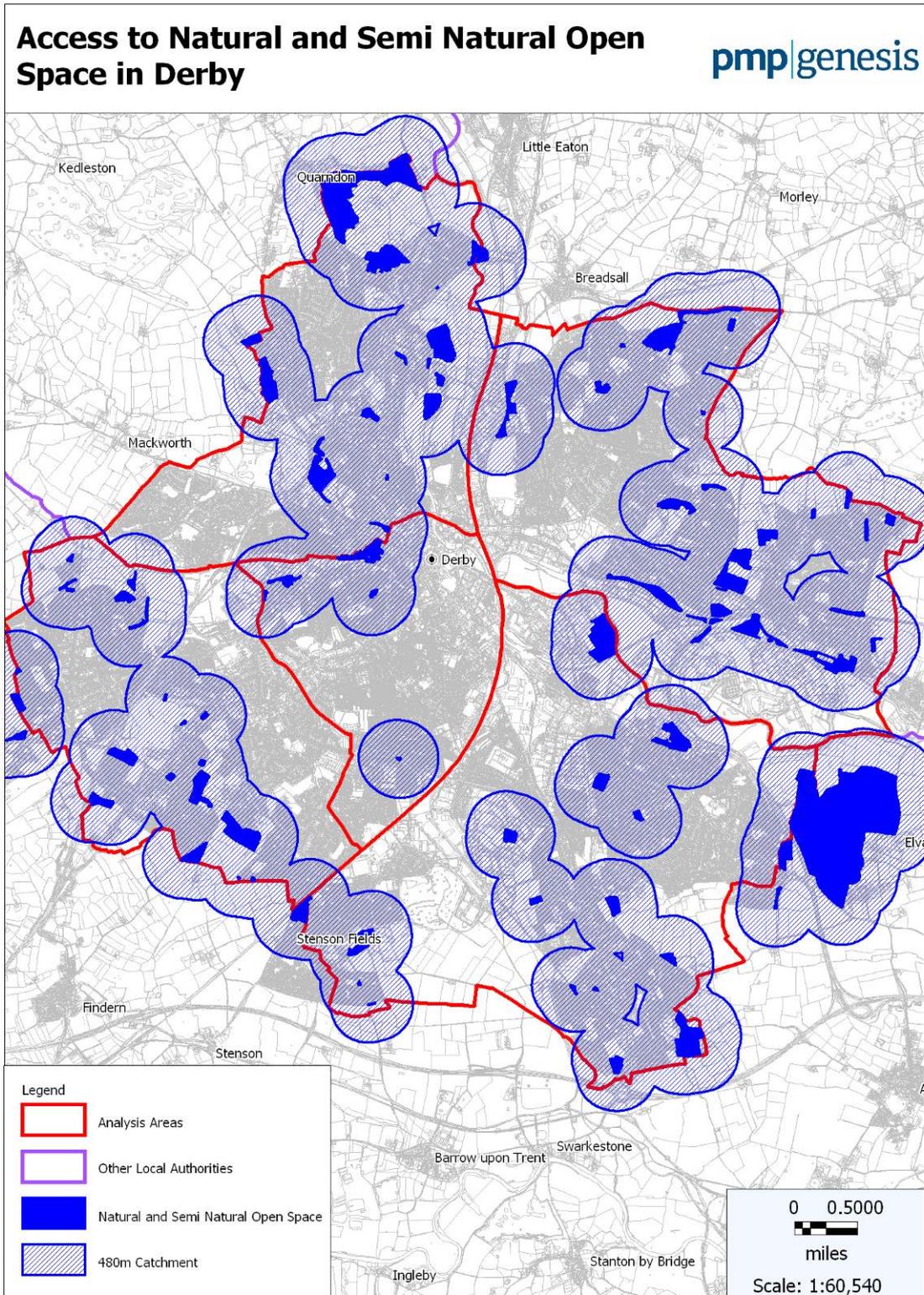
- the current quantity of natural and semi natural open space falls below the recommended minimum standard. Future population increases indicate that there will be a large shortfall of nearly 50 hectares by 2026;
- although there will be a large shortfall of natural and semi natural open space by 2026 nearly this entire shortfall is located in the Central area (39.88 hectares). It is within this area of the City where the greatest shortfalls are currently located;

- only within the North East and North West areas is the provision of natural open space above the recommended minimum standard. This indicates that residents in the north of Derby have greater provision of natural open space than those located in the south of the City; and
- future shortfalls suggest that increased provision may be required in order to accommodate future population increases.

### **Accessibility**

- 5.35 The application of the accessibility standard for natural and semi natural open space is outlined in Map 5.1 overleaf.

Map 5.1 – Natural and semi natural open space in Derby

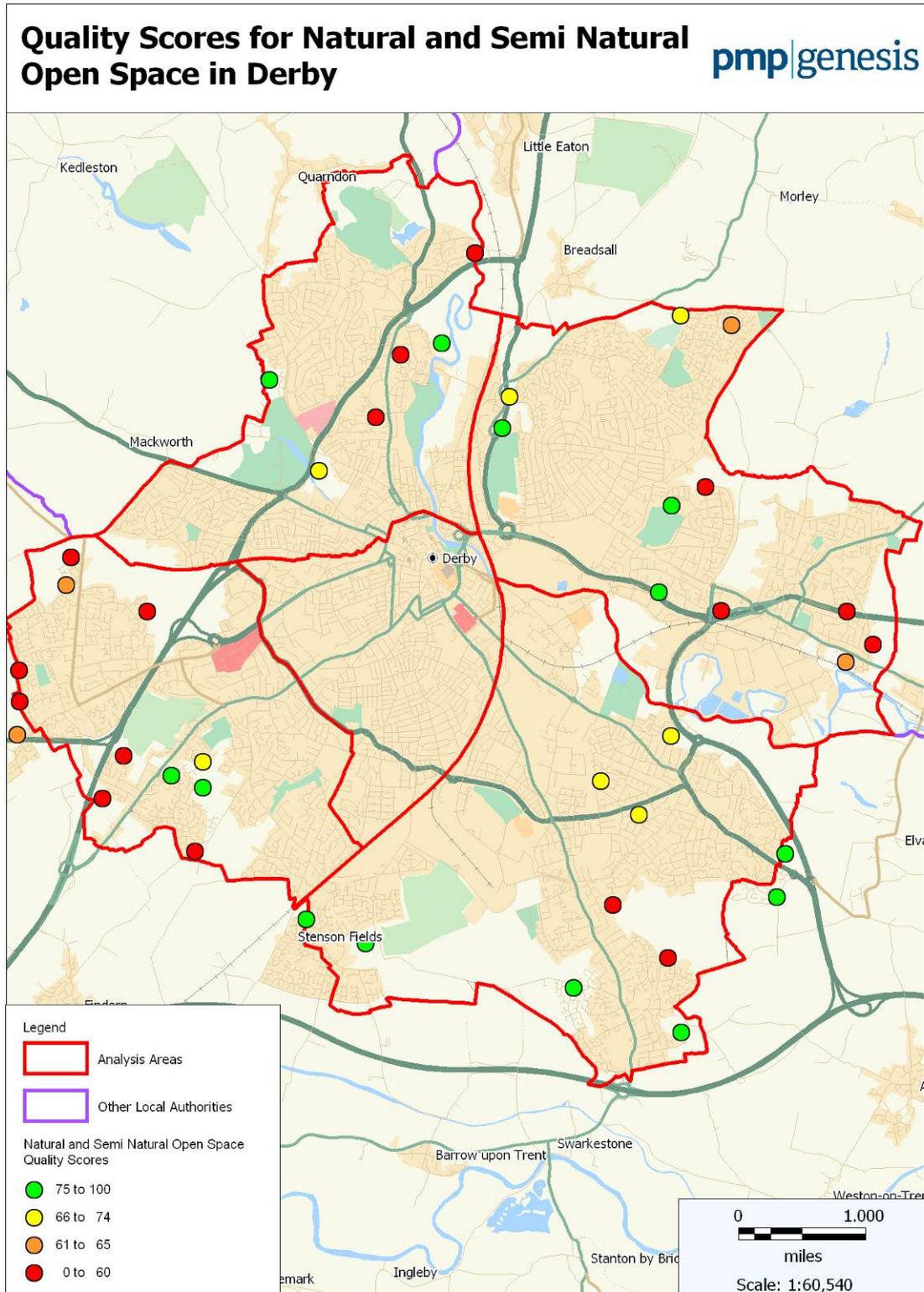


- 5.36 Map 5.1 shows that natural and semi natural open space is predominantly located in close proximity to the city boundary. These means that access to this type of open space is limited in the Central area and to the west of Chaddesden. This indicates that improving linkages to existing natural and semi natural open space is important. Although large areas of deficiency appear to be evident in the west of the South East area, these areas are non-residential land and are therefore of limited significance.

### **Quality**

- 5.37 The quality scores for natural and semi natural open space across the City, based on site assessments, have been divided into quartiles for ease of analysis. Map 5.2 illustrates the quality of natural and semi natural open space in Derby, identifying low quality and high quality sites.
- 5.38 Map 5.2 also indicates that clusters of poor quality facilities are distributed across the City, particularly in Spondon. This suggests that there opportunity for significant qualitative enhancements to a number of sites in the Derby.

Map 5.2 – Quality of Natural and Semi Natural Open Space in Derby



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## Priorities for Future Delivery

5.39 This section considers the city wide issues that need to be addressed. Consideration is then given to issues within specific parts of the city.

5.40 In line with the principles of PPG17, the priorities are set out under the headings of:

- Quality enhancements
- Protection of existing provision
- Increasing provision
- Redesignation
- Disposal of facilities
- Enhancing access routes

### *Quality Enhancements*

5.41 The *City of Derby Local Plan 2006*, *Nature Conservation Strategy* and *Community Strategy* identify the importance of enhancing the quality of natural and semi natural open space in Derby. Although positive perceptions regarding the quality of natural open space were portrayed during consultation current users of this type of open space did identify litter, dog fouling and misuse of site as problematic.

5.42 The recommended quality standard, based upon local consultation, identifies the importance of an appropriately maintained site, footpaths and flowers, trees and shrubs as essential features of a high quality natural or semi natural open space. Natural features are also viewed as important. Site assessments found that site infrastructure is the main factor requiring improvement at natural and semi natural open space in Derby.

5.43 In addition to maintaining natural and semi natural open space for recreational purposes it is also important to consider the management of this type of open space for wildlife and biodiversity. During the stakeholder workshop The Wildlife Trust indicated that more sympathetic management of sites for nature conservation is needed and this should be encouraged. Derby City Council is committed to increasing the recreational value of natural and semi natural open space whilst retaining the natural features and biodiversity/wildlife value of natural open space. The Council runs Local Nature Reserve management meetings and has management plans for a number of sites in the City including Chaddesden Wood and West Park Meadows.

<b>NSN 1</b>	<p><b>Seek to enhance and develop the quality of natural and semi natural open space in the City. Drive a structured programme of improvements with clearly defined outputs using the site assessments and quality vision as a basis.</b></p> <p><b>It is important to continue to incorporate sympathetic management techniques at natural and semi natural open space sites to enhance biodiversity and nature conservation.</b></p>
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- 5.44 The key quality issues relating to natural and semi natural open spaces within each of the geographical areas are outlined overleaf. It is important that any modifications to sites to improve the function for recreational purposes take into account the need for conservation management as highlighted above (NSN 1).

### ***North East Area***

- 5.45 John Berresford Close, Chaddesden Park Reserve and Hampshire Road (all 75%) achieved quality scores in line with the target score of 75%. These sites were identified as containing a good range of vegetation.
- 5.46 Although there are a number of high quality natural open spaces in the area, there are also some examples of poorer quality facilities. Four sites achieved quality scores of 60% or less, indicating the need for significant qualitative enhancement. These sites are identified in Table 5.4 below.

**Table 5.4 – Lowest scoring sites in the North East**

Site Name	Quality Score	Site Comments
Stoney Lane	40%	Maintenance at this site was particularly poor. Vegetation was overgrown and litter was located on the site.
Borrowash Sports Ground Natural Area	45%	This site was overgrown and suffered from a lack of maintenance. The need for increased site infrastructure was identified.
Borrowash Bypass	60%	This site is lacking in basic infrastructure. No visible paths were found and there is a lack of infrastructure, such as bins and benches.
Windmill Hill Plantation	60%	This site was generally rated as average. No specific issues were identified.

### ***North West Area***

- 5.47 Darley and Nutwood and Nether Park Drive (both 80%) achieved quality scores that exceed the target of 75%. Maintenance at both of these sites was rated as good and the footpaths at both sites were identified as high quality.
- 5.48 Wharfdale Close, The Copse and Beech Drive (all 60%) are the lowest quality sites in the North West area. Maintenance at these sites was identified as in need of improvement and a lack of ancillary accommodation was noted. These sites should be priorities for improvement in the North West area.

### ***South East Area***

- 5.49 Prestwick Way (80%), Pit Close Recreational Ground (Hell Brickworks) and Arleston Lane (both 75%) are the only sites within the South East area that achieved a quality score in line with the target of 75%. All factors at Prestwick Way were rated as good, the boundaries of the site are clearly defined and there are clear footpaths throughout the site. Pit Close Recreational Ground and Arleston Lane were identified as being well maintained with good footpaths provided.
- 5.50 Although there are some high quality sites in the South East area four sites achieved quality scores of 60% or below. These sites are outlined in Table 5.5 below.

**Table 5.5 – Lowest scoring sites in the South East**

Site Name	Quality Score	Site Comments
Whitehaven Grove	55%	This site was generally rated as average. However, the need for increased ancillary accommodation was highlighted.
The Sanctuary	56%	A lack of ancillary accommodation was noted at this site and there is a lot of noise from the adjacent main road and railway line.
Harlow Close Natural Area	60%	Litter was found on this site. Although footpaths were evident the need for more was noted.
Wilmore Road	60%	The need for footpaths through this site was identified.

### ***South West Area***

- 5.51 Richmond Close (80%) and Cascade Grove (75%) are the only sites in the South West area that achieved quality scores in line with the target score of 75%. These sites were identified as being well maintained and the amount of ancillary accommodation located on site at Richmond Close is good. Finmere Close (70%) is also a high quality site in the area.
- 5.52 Despite the presence of some high quality sites in the South West area eight sites achieved quality scores of 60% or below. The lowest scoring sites in the area are identified in Table 5.6 overleaf.

**Table 5.6 – Lowest scoring sites in the South West**

Site Name	Quality Score	Site Comments
Faxton Close	40%	A lack of maintenance was evident at this site. Vegetation was overgrown, boundaries were unclear and there was a lack of ancillary accommodation.
Pendleside Way	45%	No ancillary accommodation was found at this site. The cleanliness and maintenance of the site was rated as poor.
Greenside Court	47%	The need for significantly improved maintenance at this site was highlighted.
Moorway Lane/Balancing Pond	55%	This site was generally rated as average. However a lack of basic infrastructure, such as footpaths was evident.

### ***Protection of Existing Provision***

- 5.53 The importance of protecting natural and semi natural open space from development is set out in the *City of Derby Local Plan Review 2006* and the Council's *Nature Conservation Strategy*. These strategies state that development which affects or harms the wildlife, habit, biodiversity or character of natural open space will not be permitted.
- 5.54 The importance of protecting this type of open space was also emphasised throughout the consultation. A number of residents indicated that natural open space had recently been lost to residential development and this was given as one of the main reasons why provision was perceived to be insufficient.
- 5.55 Application of the quantity standards further reinforce the need to protect natural and semi natural open space from development with the current provision falling below the recommended minimum standard.
- 5.56 Natural and semi natural open spaces are valuable not just from a recreational perspective, but also in terms of conservation and biodiversity. The protection of these sites will also be a key component of the strategy to reduce climate change and promote urban cooling.
- 5.57 At the stakeholder workshop, it was indicated that access to natural open space (measured by Natural England Accessibility Criteria) is good, although it falls below the recommended levels of provision.
- 5.58 Application of The Woodland Trust Accessibility standard reinforces the need to protect existing natural and semi natural open space. Table 5.7 summarises the implications of the application of the Woodland Trust Access to Woodlands Standards. These standards show that figures for Derby are generally below the county average, particularly the percentage of people in Derby with access to accessible woodland. A significant amount of new provision is required to meet the Woodland Trust standards. It is important to note, however, that Derby is a compact urban city with a dense population and therefore there is limited provision in some areas of the City.

**Table 5.7 – Application of the Woodland Trust Accessibility Standard**

Category	Indicator	Derby	Derbyshire
Accessible Woods	% population with access to 2 hectares+ wood within 500 metres	6.73	10.58
	% population with access to 20 hectares wood within 4 kilometres	32.33	55.48
Inaccessible Woods	% extra population with access to 2 hectares+ wood within 500 metres if existing woods opened	9.09	38.37
	% extra population with access to 20 hectares wood within 4 kilometres if existing woods opened	27.53	37.16
Woodland Creation	% population requiring new woodland creation for access to a 2 hectares+ wood within 500 metres	84.18	50.06
	% population requiring new woodland creation for access to a 20 hectares + wood within 4 kilometres	40.15	7.36
	Minimum area of new woodland required for 2 hectares + woods within 500 metres	134	1,207
	Minimum area of new woodland required for 20 hectares + woods within 4 kilometres	20	204

<b>NSN 2</b>	<b>In light of the importance of natural and semi natural open space and current quantitative shortfalls in the City all sites of recreational and/or wildlife value should be protected through policies in the Local Development Framework. Natural open space should only be lost to development if it can be proven that either, the open space is not required for recreational purposes and is not of value for either the habitats that it provides or the species that are present on the site, or that the loss of the site and compensatory improvement of a new site or provision of new site would be of greater benefit to the local community. As a minimum, protection should extend to sites with specifically designated sites, and to sites of 0.5 hectares or greater.</b>
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- 5.59 Green wedges within Derby provided an uninterrupted link to the countryside and contribute towards creating an attractive natural environment within Derby. Green wedges can provide a form of natural, informal open space, provide important wildlife corridors and can play a role in increasing access to open space and the countryside within the City.
- 5.60 The wedges between Spondon and Chaddesden, Allestree and Mackworth, Littleover and Mickleover and Alvaston and Chellaston are particularly important in terms of preventing coalescence of neighbouring communities. Many of the other wedges separate residential and business / industrial communities, while the Lower Derwent Valley wedge seeks to maintain and enhance the open river corridor.
- 5.61 While the majority of the green wedge does not fall directly into one of the typologies of PPG17, as well as maintaining settlement identify, these areas provide access to natural space. Option B of the *Core Strategy Options Paper* outlines plans to develop on Green Wedges near the city centre and other areas such as Osmaston and indicates that they could form part of large strategic allocations in South Derbyshire and Amber Valley.
- 5.62 The loss of such spaces will have a detrimental impact upon the potential to increase the amount of natural recreational space available to residents and may also sever important wildlife corridors. Furthermore, as highlighted, the increasing population will place higher pressure on natural open spaces, meaning that the allocation of at least part of the green wedges for recreation will be essential. The protection of the green wedges, for environmental, recreational and ecological perspectives is therefore essential.

<b>NSN 3</b>	<b>Protect the green wedges from development to ensure that their environmental, ecological and recreational functions are maintained.</b>
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### ***Increasing Provision***

- 5.63 A significant level of dissatisfaction with the current provision of natural and semi natural open space was portrayed by respondents to the household survey, with nearly half of respondents indicating that the provision of this type of open space is insufficient (49%).
- 5.64 Application of the quantity standard indicates that within Derby the current provision of natural and semi natural open space falls below the recommended minimum standard. Future population increases will further place pressure on existing provision resulting in an expected shortfall of nearly 50 hectares by 2026. This suggests that increased provision will be required in Derby. Improved access to some of the green wedges in the City and the incorporation of natural and semi natural

open space within larger open spaces, such as parks, may play a key role in the achievement of some of these targets.

- 5.65 In some parts of the city, the creation of new natural open space may be impossible, due to the character of the area and the dense urban environment that already exists. In these areas, it may be necessary to consider innovative solutions, including green roofs, green walls and street trees, which create a natural environment where space is limited, as well as the inclusion of natural and semi natural open space within existing open spaces.

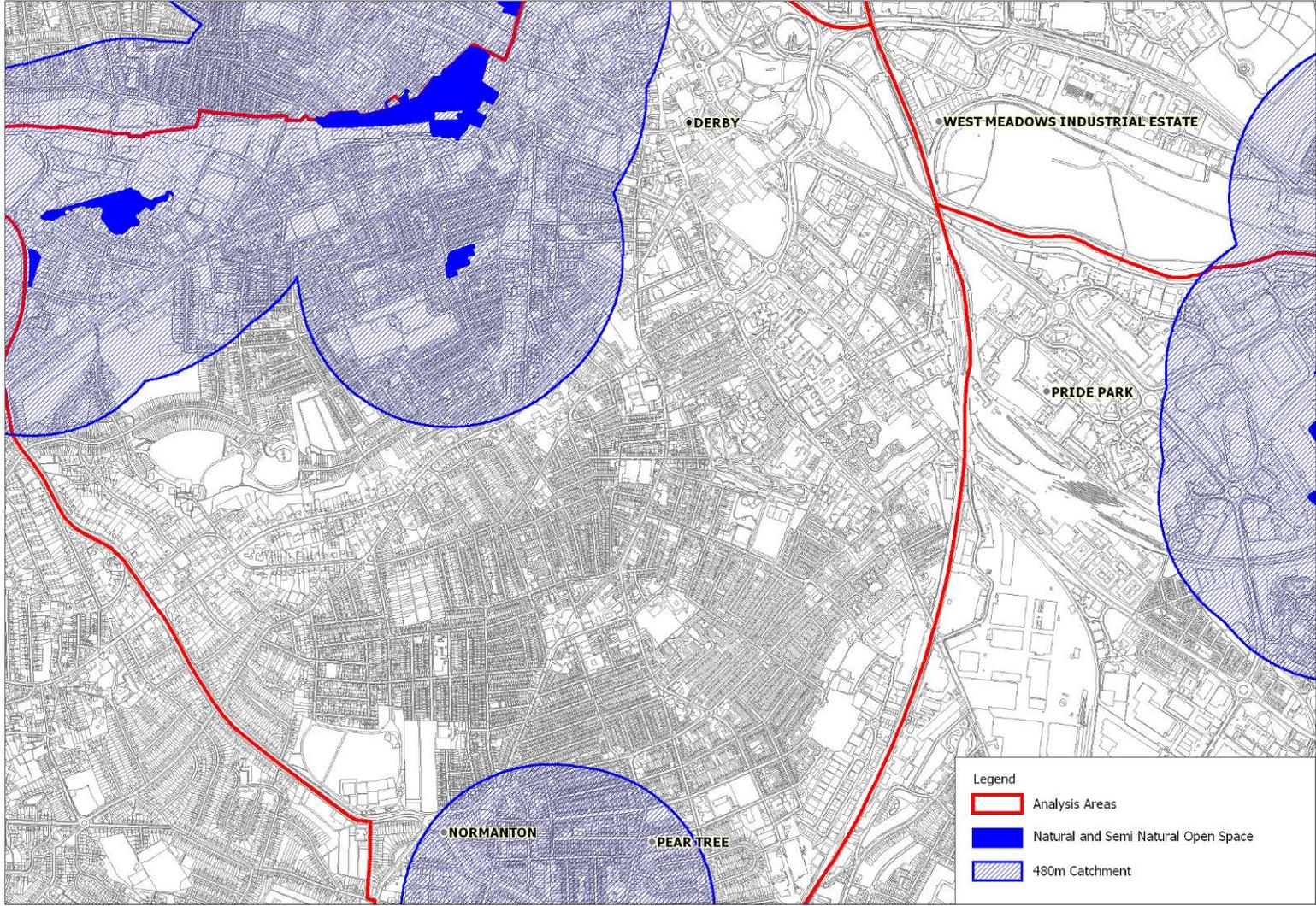
<b>NSN 4</b>	<p><b>Consider innovative solutions, such as green roofs, green walls and street trees, to create a natural environment within dense urban areas where opportunities for increased provision are limited.</b></p> <p><b>Seize opportunities incorporate natural and semi natural open space within other existing open spaces.</b></p>
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- 5.66 The following paragraphs evaluate the requirement for increased provision within the five geographical areas in the City.

***Central Area***

- 5.67 Natural and semi natural open space is predominantly located in close proximity to the City boundary and only 2.60 hectares of natural and semi natural open space is located within the Central area. Quantitative analysis therefore indicates that there is a significant shortfall of natural open space that is expected to equate to nearly 40 hectares by 2026. The lack of provision in the Central area was recognised throughout consultation with the greatest level of dissatisfaction of all five geographical areas portrayed in the Central area.
- 5.68 Reinforcing the findings of the application of the quantity standards, accessibility mapping indicates that the majority of residents are outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space (Figure 5.1 overleaf).

Figure 5.1 – Deficiencies in the Central area



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- 5.69 Although residents are outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space the majority of residents do have access to a park or amenity green space within a 480 metre catchment. This means that the majority of residents do have access to some form of informal open space.
- 5.70 The presence of parks in the Central area provides the opportunity for natural open space to be located within these sites. To alleviate existing accessibility deficiencies the Council should consider incorporating natural open space within parks in the Central area. The range of facilities provided at parks was identified as one of the reasons why these types of open spaces are regularly used. Therefore incorporating natural open space within parks will provide increased recreational opportunities for residents and may further increase their usage. Bass's Recreational Ground, Rykneld Recreational Ground, Arboretum Park and Normanton Park are well distributed across the Central area and should specifically be considered.

<b>NSN 5</b>	<b>Consider incorporating natural or semi natural open space within existing parks in the Central area, including Bass's Recreational Ground, Rykneld Recreational Ground, Arboretum Park and Normanton Park.</b>
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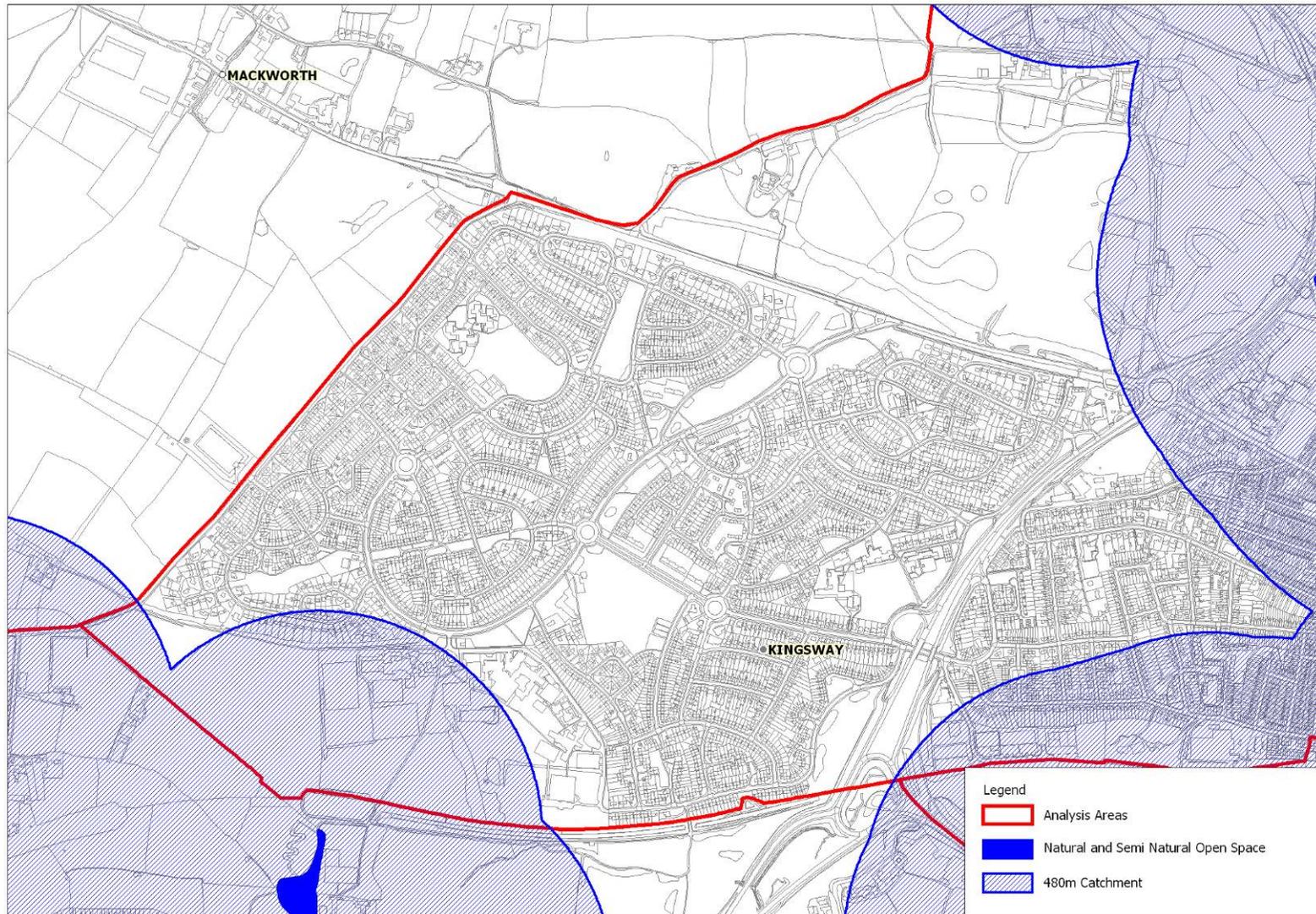
- 5.71 In addition to the above the Council should seek to increase access to existing natural or semi natural open space within the Central area. Maximising upon the opportunities provided by the River Derwent greenway will be important in increasing access to existing natural and semi natural open space.
- 5.72 As previously highlighted there is a large quantitative shortfall of natural and semi natural open space within the Central area and a high level of dissatisfaction with the current provision in the area was portrayed during consultation. Providing new natural open space is challenging, particularly within a dense urban area such as Derby city centre. However, in light of the large quantitative shortfalls and high level of dissatisfaction opportunities to increase the provision of natural and semi natural open space within the Central area should be seized. Aside from incorporating natural open space within existing open spaces, this is most likely to be achieved through Section 106 Agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

<b>NSN 6</b>	<b>Seize opportunities to increase the provision of natural and semi natural open space within the Central area. This may include incorporating natural open space into existing spaces as well as providing new space.</b>
	<b>Seek to improve access routes/green corridors from the central area to existing natural open spaces to improve access to such sites for local residents.</b>

### ***North East Area***

- 5.73 Application of the accessibility standard indicates that the majority of residents in the area have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the recommended 480 metre catchment. A key area of deficiency is however evident in the west of Chaddesden (Figure 5.2 overleaf).

Figure 5.2 – Deficiencies in the west of Chaddesden



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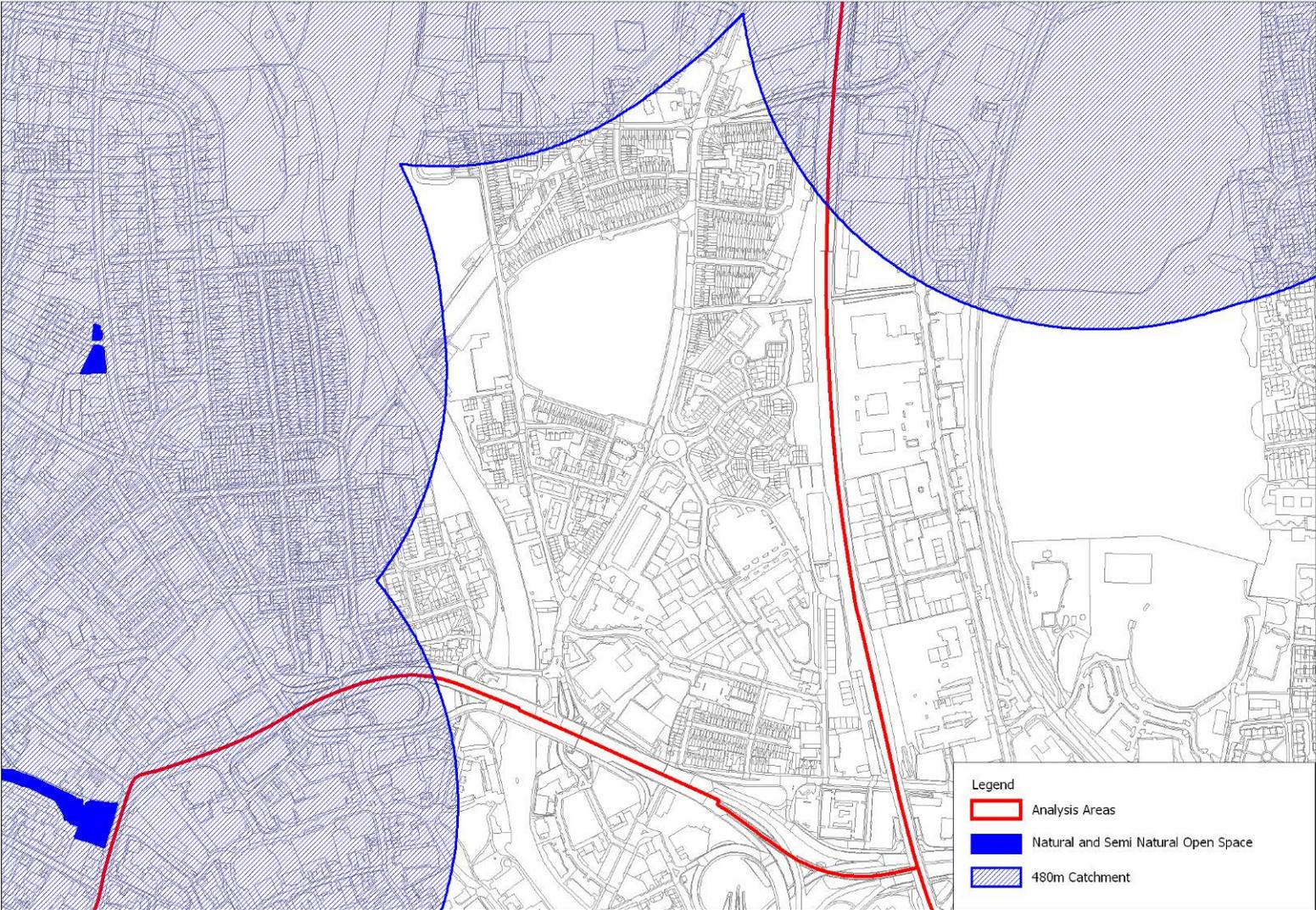
- 5.74 The greatest provision of natural and semi natural open space is located within the North East area (62.81 hectares) and application of the quantity standard indicates that current provision falls above the recommended minimum standard. The gaps in access to natural open space in this area mean that it is clear however that space is unevenly distributed.
- 5.75 In addition to being outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space, residents are also outside the catchment of a park and amenity green space. This means that there is a lack of informal open space in the west of Chaddesden.
- 5.76 Half of the respondents to the household survey within the North East area indicated that the provision of natural and semi natural open space is insufficient to meet demand, highlighting the need for increased provision. The split in opinion may also reflect the uneven distribution of spaces that is evident through the application of the quantity standard.
- 5.77 Although there is a need for increased natural open space in the west of Chaddesden this area is densely populated (highlighted by the lack of informal open space in the area) and therefore opportunities to increase provision are limited. In consideration of this, the Council should seek to increase access to Chaddesden Park. This site is located in close proximity to the area of deficiency and does contain natural open space in the form of woodland areas and a stream

<b>NSN 7</b>	<b>Increase access routes (for example, footpaths and public transport) to natural and semi natural open spaces within Chaddesden, particularly Chaddesden Park.</b>
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### ***North West Area***

- 5.78 Application of the quantity standard indicates that the current provision of natural and semi natural open space is above the recommended minimum standard. Supporting the findings of quantitative analysis, accessibility mapping reveals that the majority of residents have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the recommended 480 metre catchment. Areas of deficiency are however evident in Kingsway and south of Darley Abbey (Figures 5.3 and 5.4).

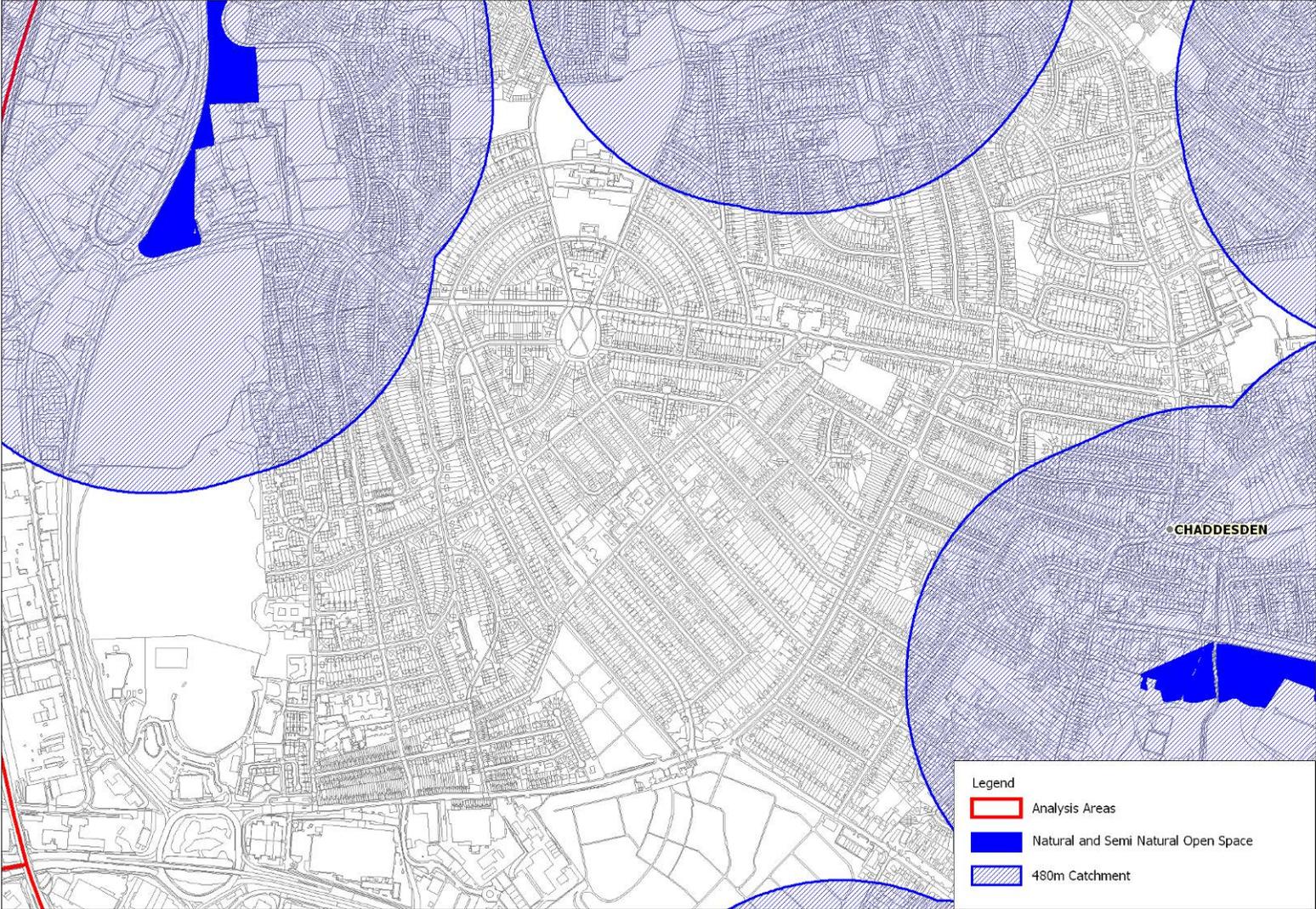
Figure 5.3 – Deficiencies in Kingsway



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Figure 5.4 – Deficiencies in the south of Darley Abbey



- 5.79 Although residents are outside the catchment of a natural and semi natural open space they do have access to a park or amenity green space. This means that residents have access to some form of informal open space.
- 5.80 Residents outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space in the south of Darley Abbey are located within the catchment of Darley Park. Although the primary purpose of the site is a park, this site contains natural open space, predominantly in the form of woodland, and furthermore Darley Park links to Nutwood which is a Local Nature Reserve. Therefore to alleviate deficiencies in the south of Darley Abbey focus should be placed on increasing access to Darley Park.
- 5.81 Mackworth Recreation Ground is located in the area of deficiency in Kingsway and Mackworth Park (located just outside of the North East area) is also accessible for residents in Kingsway. Mackworth Park in particular already contains some informal areas of woodland. To alleviate deficiencies of natural and semi natural open space in Kingsway consideration should be given to providing areas of natural open space within Mackworth Recreation Ground and potentially to increasing the amount of natural space within Mackworth Park.

<b>NSN 8</b>	<b>Consider incorporating natural open space within Mackworth Recreation Ground and Mackworth Park.</b>
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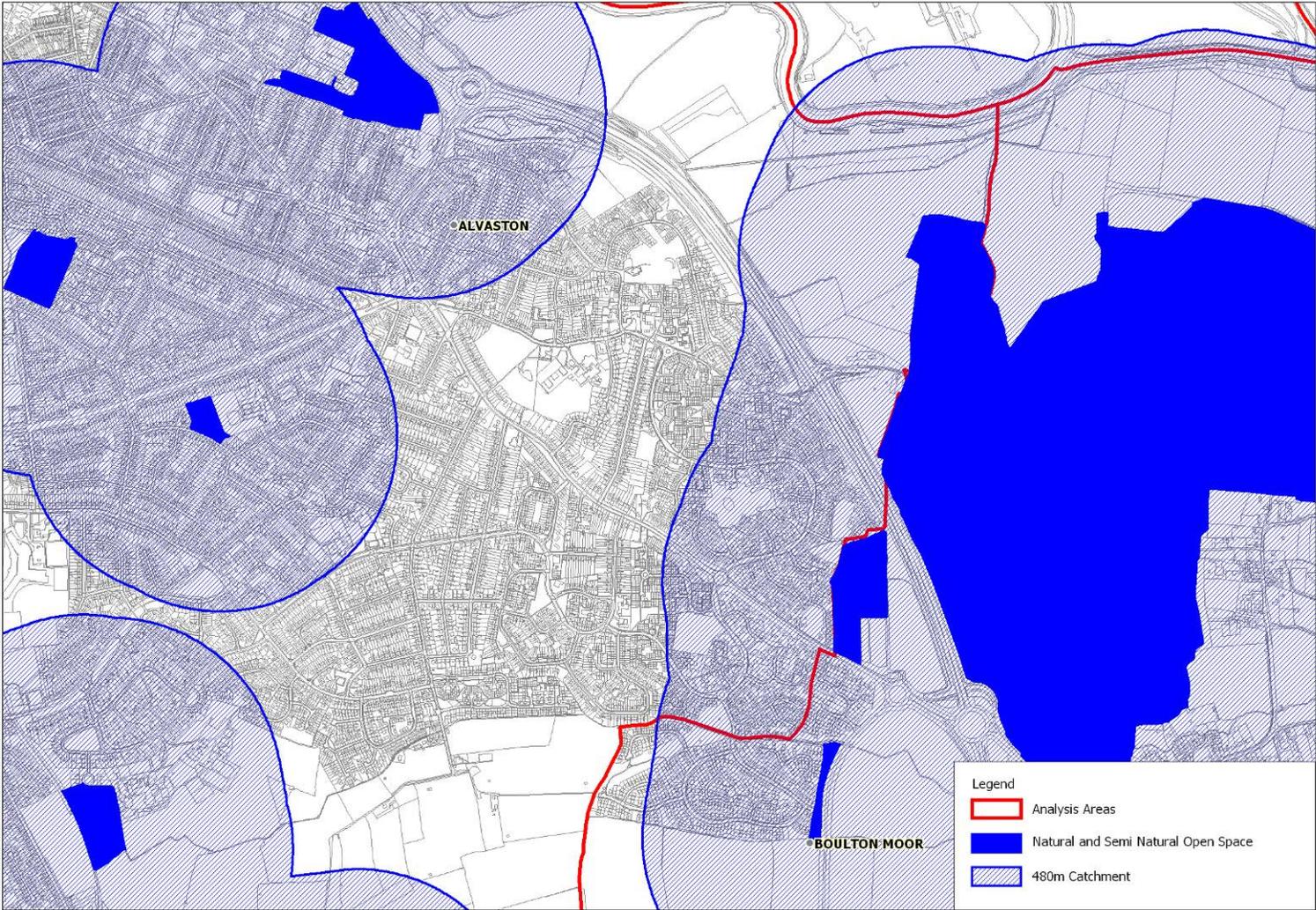
- 5.82 Although some deficiencies will remain in the north of Mackworth, residents in this area do have access to Markeaton Park within a 480 metre catchment. Markeaton Park does contain natural open space and therefore the Council should seek to improve the access routes to this site for residents in the north of Mackworth. The Ashbourne Road acts as a physical barrier to access and overcoming this should be a priority.

<b>NSN 9</b>	<b>Increase access routes (for example, footpaths and public transport) to Markeaton Park, particularly focusing on overcoming the physical barrier of Ashbourne Road.</b>
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### *South East*

- 5.83 Accessibility mapping illustrates that the majority of residents in the South East area have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the recommended 480 metre catchment. Despite this, areas of deficiency are evident in the west of Boulton Moor, north of Osmaston Park and north of Sinfyn (Figures 5.5 – 5.7).

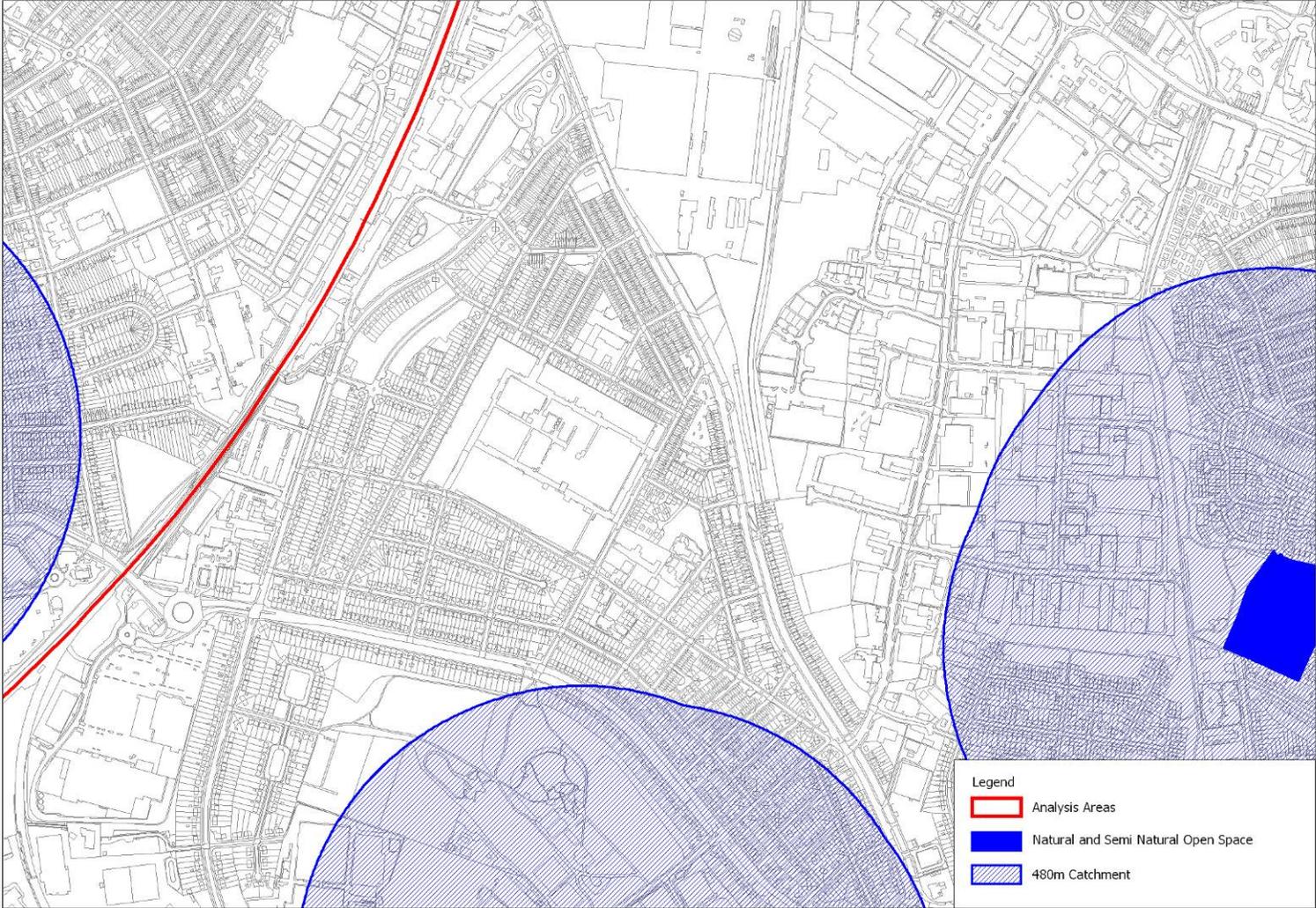
Figure 5.5 – Deficiencies in the west of Boulton Moor



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NORTH

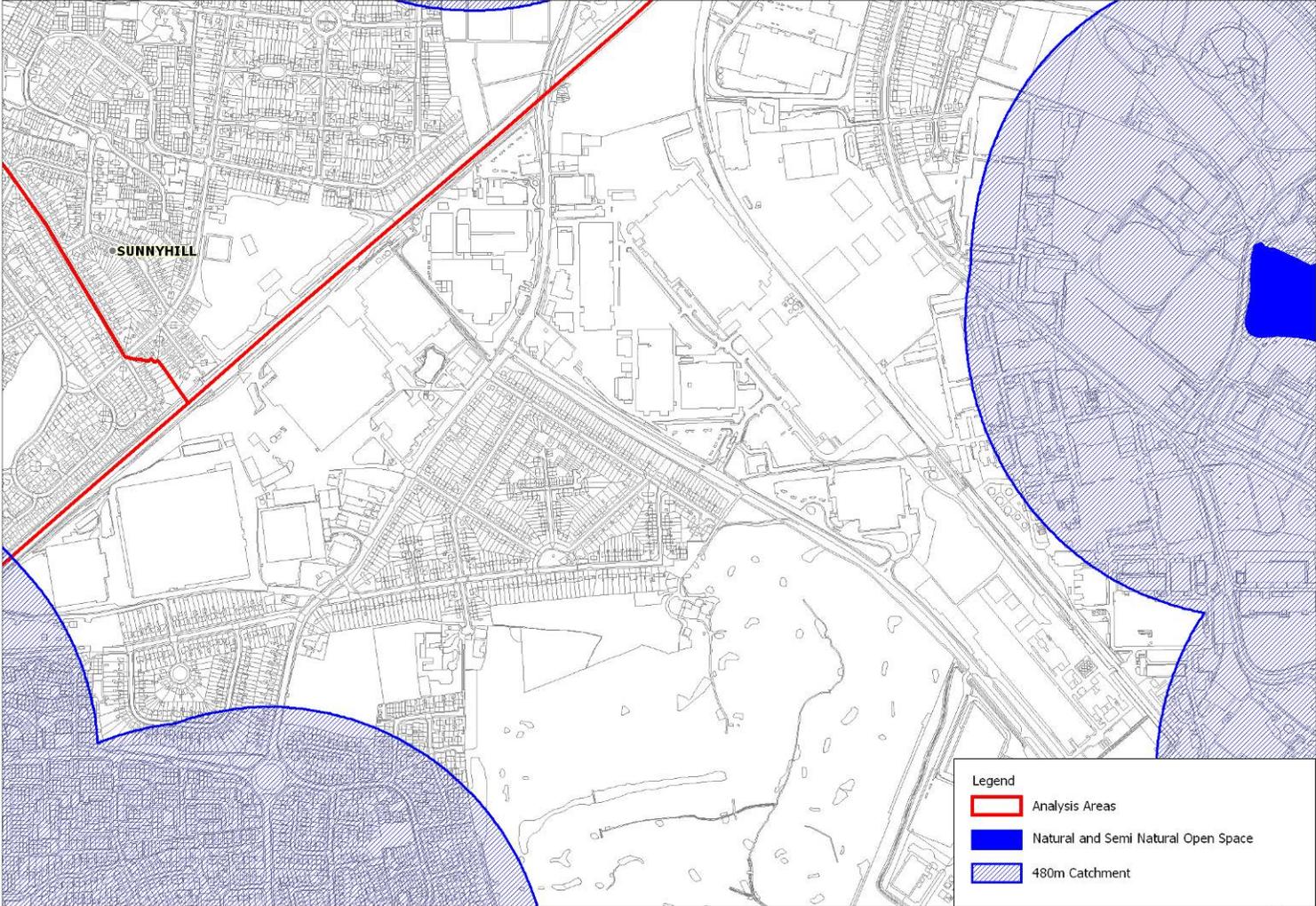
Figure 5.6 – Deficiencies north of Osmaston Park



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NORTH

Figure 5.7 – Deficiencies in the north of Sinfin



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NORTH

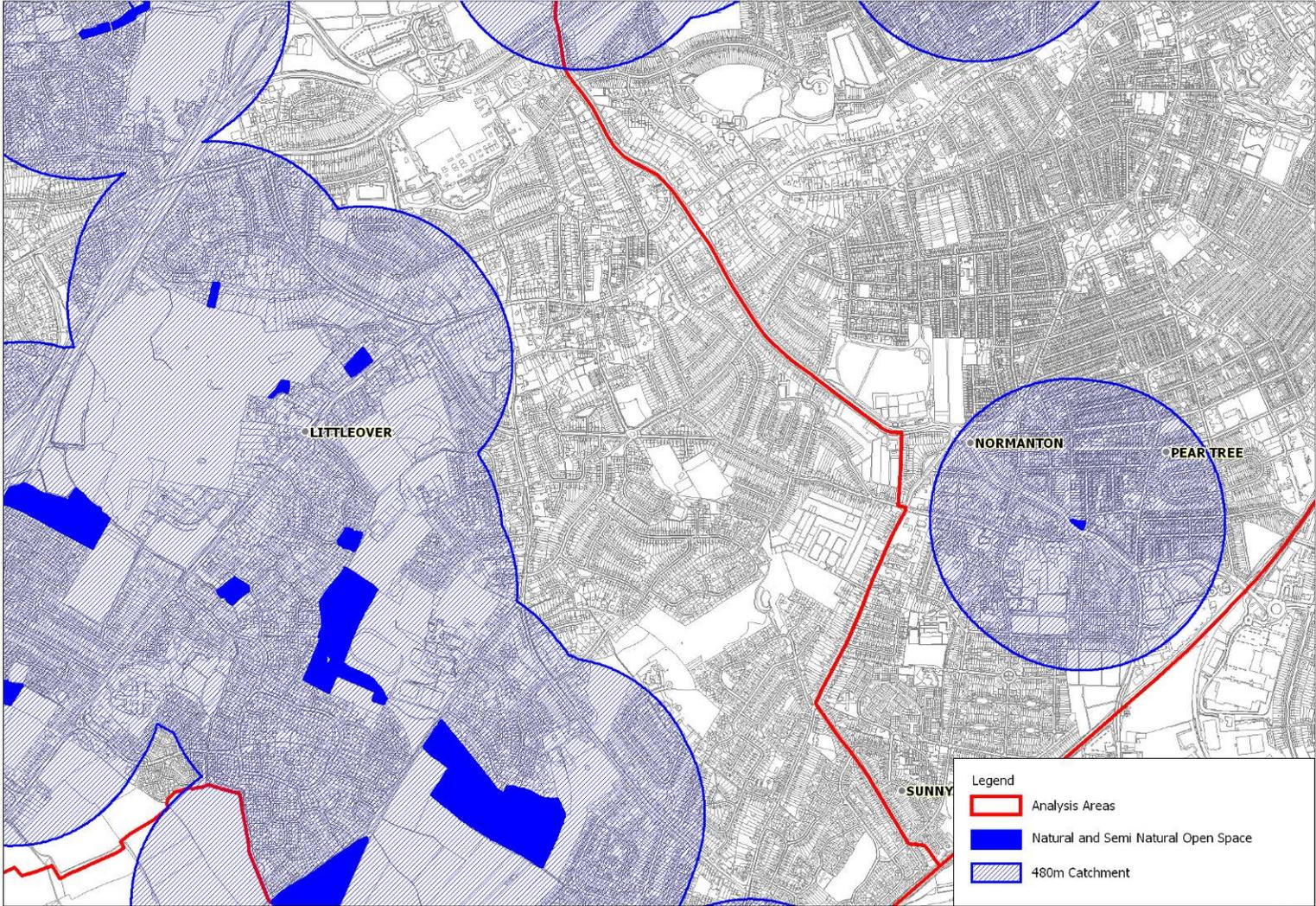
- 5.84 Quantitative analysis indicates that the provision of natural and semi natural open space is above the recommended minimum standard. However, based on future population increases there will be a projected shortfall of 8.86 hectares. This suggests that increased provision may be required in order to accommodate future population increases.
- 5.85 Residents in the identified areas of deficiency do have access to a park or amenity green space, which means that there is access to some form of informal open space. The location of parks in the area provides the opportunity for creating sites with a dual function by incorporating natural open space within them. Sites located in / in close proximity to the identified area of deficiency include Sinfin Recreation Ground, Osmaston Park, Field Lane Recreation Ground and Elvaston Lane Recreation Ground.

<b>NSN 10</b>	<b>Consider incorporating natural open space within Sinfin Recreation Ground, Osmaston Park, Field Lane Recreation Ground and Elvaston Lane Recreation Ground.</b>
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***South West Area***

- 5.86 Application of the quantity standard indicates that the current provision of natural and semi natural open space is above the recommended minimum standard. However, based on future population projections there will be a shortfall of 7.51 hectares by 2026, suggesting that increased provision may be required.
- 5.87 Supporting the findings of the application of the quantity standard, accessibility mapping reveals that residents in the east of Littleover and centre of Mickleover are outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space (Figures 5.8 and 5.9).

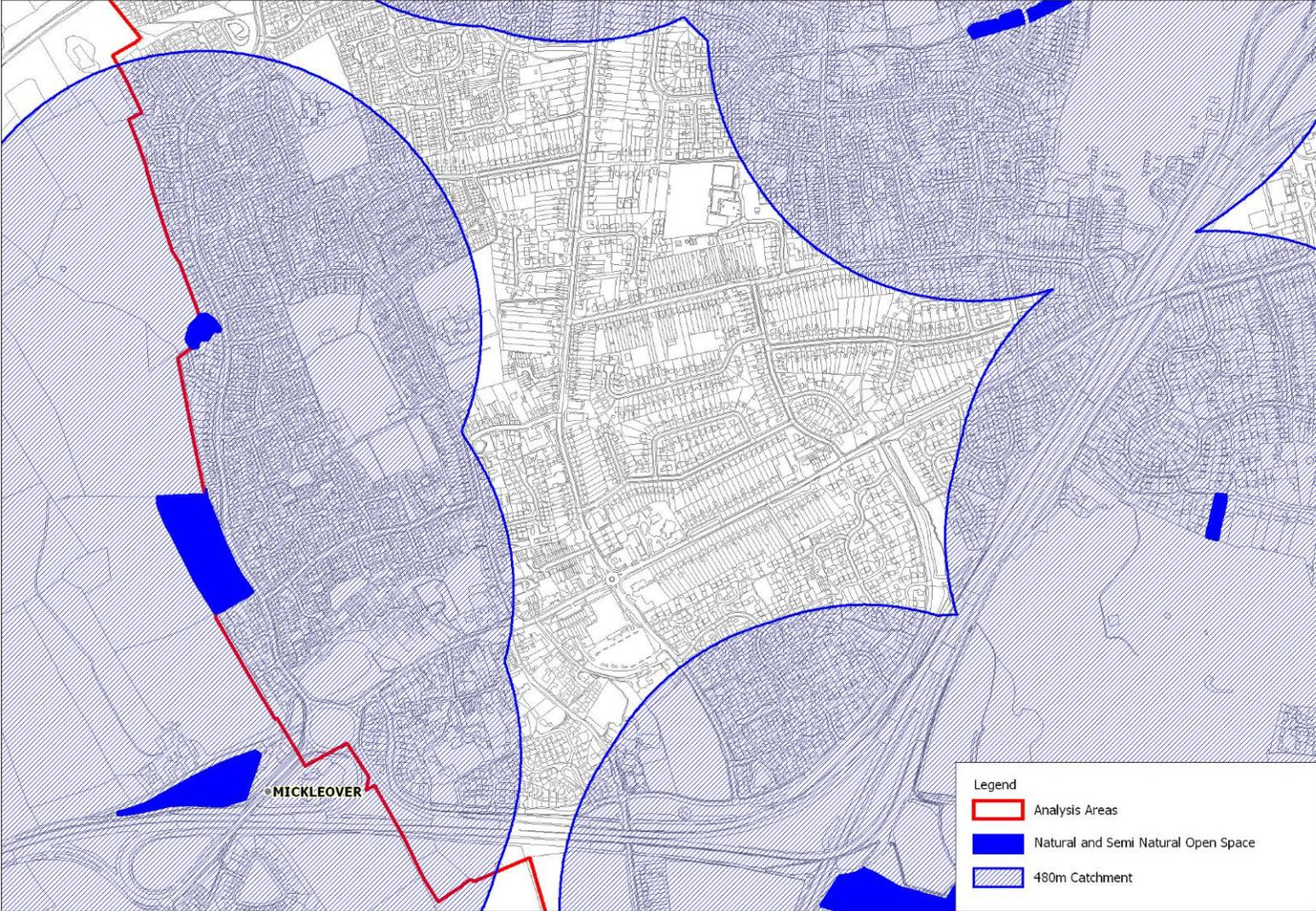
Figure 5.8 – Deficiencies in the east of Littleover



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Figure 5.9 – Deficiencies in the centre of Mickleover



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- 5.88 Nearly all residents outside the catchment of a natural or semi natural open space do have access to a park or amenity green space. This means that residents do have access to some form of informal open space.
- 5.89 The presence of parks in the areas deficient in natural open space provides the opportunity for natural open space to be incorporated within this type of open space. To reduce accessibility deficiencies consideration should be given to providing natural open space within Sunnydale Park, Clemson's Park and Vicarage Road Recreation Ground.

<b>NSN 11</b>	<b>Consider incorporating natural open space within Sunnydale Park, Clemson's Park and Vicarage Road Recreation Ground.</b>
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- 5.90 Although incorporating natural open space within parks will reduce deficiencies, residents in the north of Littleover (near the Royal Derby Hospital) will still be outside the catchment of a natural open space. This area of the City is a densely populated residential area and therefore opportunities to increase provision will be limited. Focus should therefore be placed on increasing access to existing natural and semi natural open space in the area where new provision is not possible.

***Redesignation***

- 5.91 Application of the quantity and accessibility standards have found that the current provision of natural and semi natural open space is below the recommended standards and accessibility deficiencies are evident in some areas of the City.
- 5.92 A number of natural and semi natural open spaces in Derby serve unique catchments and therefore provide a valuable local resource for both residents and wildlife. Based on this and the quantitative shortfalls and accessibility deficiencies, there are no recommendations for the redesignation of natural or semi natural open space sites.

***Disposal of Facilities***

- 5.93 There are no recommendations for the disposal of existing natural or semi natural open space.

***Increasing Access***

- 5.94 Application of the accessibility standard for natural and semi natural open space indicates that local access to natural or semi natural open space in some areas of the City, particularly the Central and South West areas, is limited.
- 5.95 As previously highlighted, providing new natural or semi natural open space is challenging particularly within a densely populated urban area such as Derby. Therefore, increasing access to existing natural and semi natural open space in the City is a priority.
- 5.96 Access to natural and semi natural open space was identified as a key issue during consultation and difficulty in accessing sites was given as one of the main reasons by those residents who stated that provision is insufficient. Application of the accessibility standard has revealed that increasing access to natural and semi natural open space is particularly important in the following locations:
- The Central area
  - West of Chaddesden

- South of Darley Abbey
- North of Littleover.

5.97 Improved access to the green wedges may contribute towards improved access for residents in some of these areas.

<b>NSN 12</b>	<p><b>Increase access to existing natural and semi natural open space in the City. Achieve a balance between enhancing the recreational opportunities provided by natural and semi natural open space and maintaining the biodiversity and nature conservation value of sites.</b></p> <p><b>Focus should be placed on developing the green infrastructure network, including such routes as the River Derwent greenway, through the provision of additional cycle routes and footpaths.</b></p>
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5.98 Overcoming physical barriers to access, such as main roads, will be a key challenge. However, as well as maximising access between and within settlements on foot, appropriate public transport links are also essential to maximise usage of larger strategic sites, such as Elvaston Castle Country Park (which is an Local Nature Reserve) and Allestree Park Natural Area.

<b>NSN 13</b>	<p><b>Seek to overcome physical barriers to access, such as main roads. Increase access to larger strategic sites, such as Elvaston Castle Country Park and Allestree Park.</b></p>
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## Summary

- 5.99 Natural and semi natural open space is one of the most frequently used types of open space in Derby and provides both recreational and environmental for residents in the City.
- 5.100 The need to protect natural and semi natural open space from development was a key theme throughout consultation and this is emphasised in a number of local strategies, including the *Nature Conservation Strategy*.
- 5.101 It is important that in addition to enhancing the recreational opportunities providing by natural open space this should be balanced with conserving and promoting biodiversity. Derby City Council is committed to this and already incorporates a number of sustainable management practices at multifunctional sites, such as parks, which contain natural open space.
- 5.102 Natural and semi natural open space is predominantly located in close proximity to the City boundary. This means that a large number of residents in the Central area are outside the catchment of a site. Areas of deficiency are also evident in Mackworth, Chaddesden, Mickleover and Littleover.
- 5.103 Increasing the provision of natural and semi natural open space is challenging, particularly within a dense urban area such as Derby. Incorporating natural open space within other types of open space, such as parks, will be key to reducing deficiencies in the City. In some parts of the city, more innovative solutions may be required, including green walls, green roofs and the provision of street trees.

- 5.104 The quality of natural and semi natural open space in the City is varied and there are a number of sites that require significant qualitative enhancement. Improving the basic infrastructure of sites, particularly the provision of footpaths, will be important.
- 5.105 In addition to increasing the provision and enhancing the quality of natural open space, increasing access to existing sites will be particularly important. The development of the green infrastructure network, such as the River Derwent greenway and the enhancement of both sustainable transport and public transport routes will be a priority.
- 5.106 It is therefore recommended that the key priorities for the future delivery of provision of natural and semi natural open space that should be addressed through the Local Development Framework and/or other delivery mechanisms are to:
- incorporate a policy protecting existing natural and semi natural open space within the Local Development Framework;
  - ensure that ongoing improvements to biodiversity and conservation management are encouraged, and that recreational use of sites is balanced with biodiversity and the maintenance of habitats;
  - identify opportunities for improving the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces, both in terms of the wildlife and habitat values of the site, but also for recreational purposes; and
  - seek to increase the provision of natural and semi natural open space, particularly in areas of deficiency, through the provision of natural and semi natural areas within other larger sites, such as parks.