

Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study 2016 – 2030



Open Space Area Profile: Ellesmere Port

Part 2 of 2
(Final Version March 2017)



Report produced on behalf of Cheshire West and Chester Council by Ethos Environmental Planning

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Open Space Area Profile: Ellesmere Port

1.0 Introduction

The Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Open Space Study is presented in two parts. The main report (part 1 of 2) comprises an overview of the whole study and includes details on local needs, methodology, open space typologies and analysis of provision which combine to make recommendations for future provision and policies for open space in the district. This report is **part 2 of 2**, and comprises five open space area profiles which provide more localised information.

The area profiles have been developed for five areas as shown in figures 1 and 2. These are based on the areas identified in the Local Plan (Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich, Winsford and Rural areas) which broadly reflect how regeneration is delivered in the borough (further details are provided in part 1 of the study).

Figure 1 Ward analysis areas (Ellesmere Port, Chester and Rural Areas)

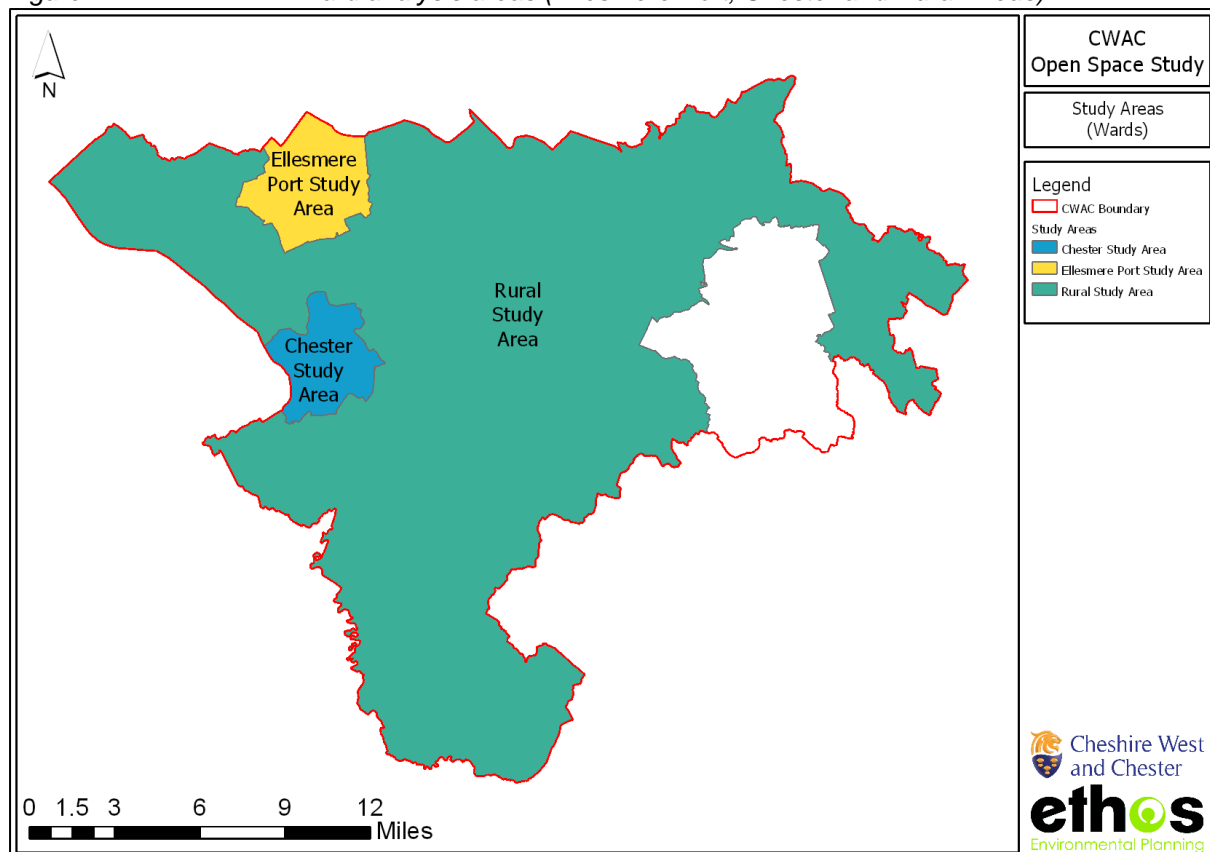
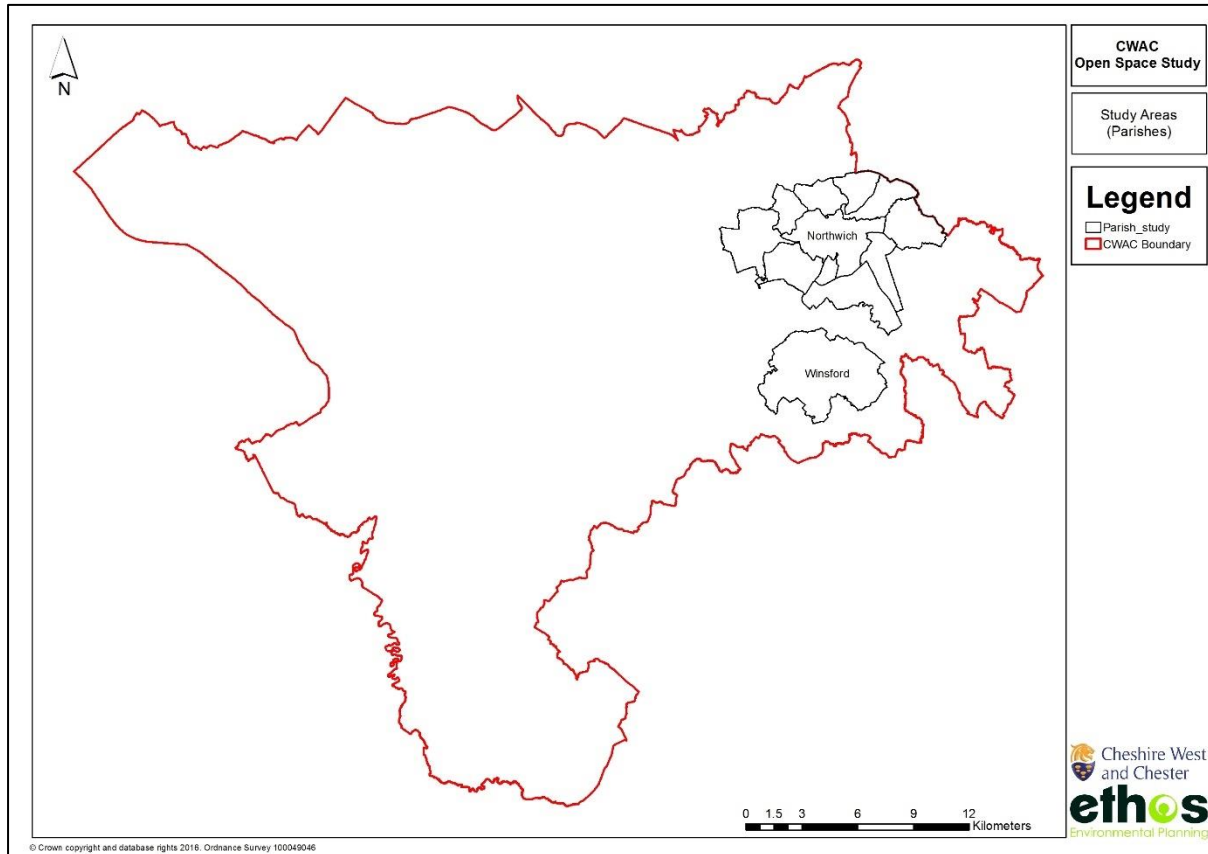


Figure 2 *Parish analysis Areas (Winsford and Northwich)*



The area profiles should be read in conjunction with the main report (part 1). Each profile includes the following information:

- A description of the area;
- Maps showing the provision of open space;
- Quantitative analysis of current provision of open space’
- Analysis of access to open space;
- Summary of quality issues and opportunities;
- Analysis of future need for open space;
- Priorities for the area.

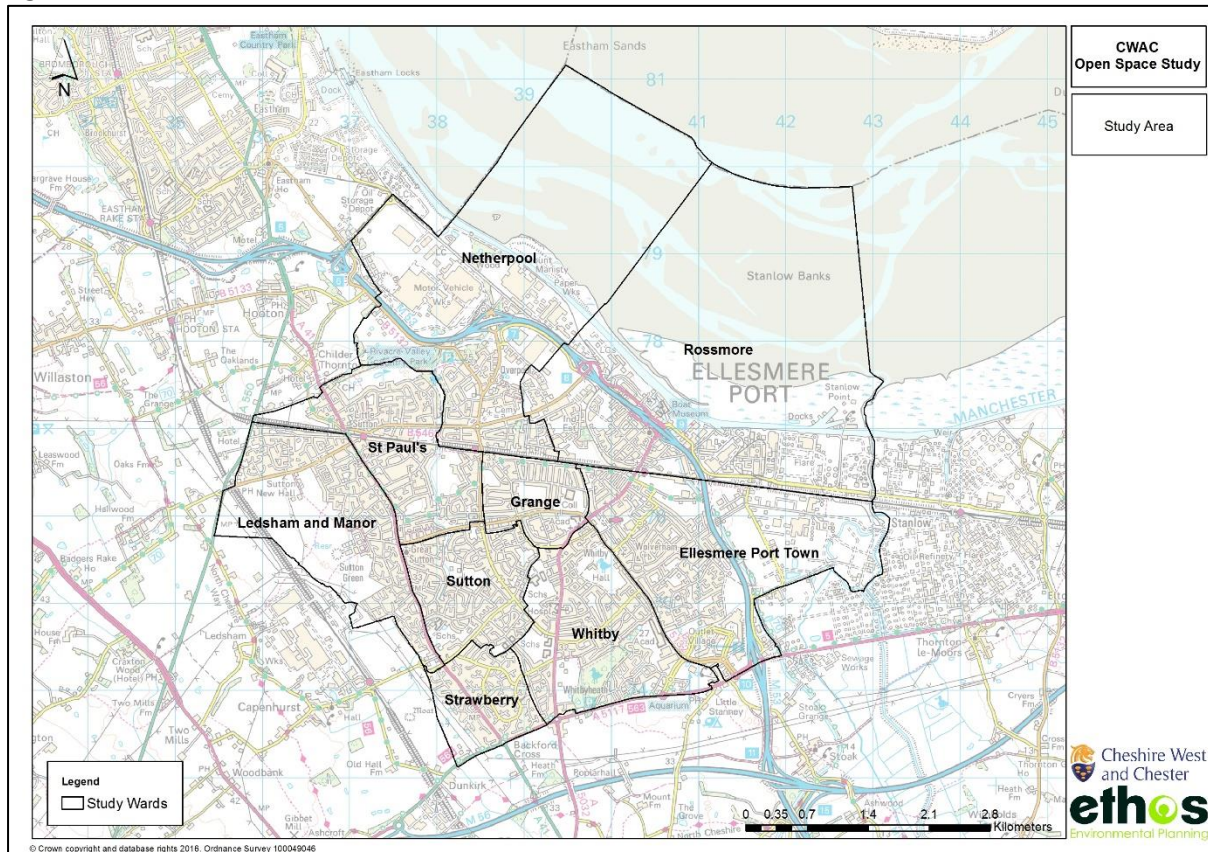
The area profiles are intended to be a starting point to inform other strategies and plans, including neighbourhood plans, planning policies, development control policies, parks and open spaces service and action plans.

All of the maps provided within this section of the report are intended to be used for indicative purposes only. Larger scale maps have been provided as a separate database to the council.

1.1 Geographical Area

The Ellesmere Port Area Profile comprises the wards of Ellesmere Port Town, Netherpool, Rossmore, Grange, St Paul's, Sutton, Whitby, Strawberry and Ledsham and Manor, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Ellesmere Port Area



1.2 Population

Table 1 Parish population statistics (Census, 2011)

| Name | Population |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Ellesmere Port Town | 9,103 |
| Whitby | 8,102 |
| Ledsham and Manor | 7,796 |
| Rossmore | 3,808 |
| Netherpool | 3,287 |
| Grange | 4,649 |
| St Paul's | 9,256 |
| Strawberry | 5,086 |
| Sutton | 9,176 |
| Total | 60,263 |

1.3 Ellesmere Port – Overview of the area

The CWAC Local Plan provides a summary of Ellesmere Port:

“Ellesmere Port is the second largest settlement with over 60,000 residents and the most industrialised part of the borough and was a major centre for manufacturing. The town has suffered a sharp decline in employment and there has been a 50 percent reduction in manufacturing employment leaving a legacy of derelict brownfield sites and some contamination issues. The industrial legacy and the presence of the M53 motorway cutting through the town has led to image and perception problems.

However, the area provides a major employment land resource for the borough and has become increasingly successful in attracting new employment opportunities. Wages are higher than in the rest of the borough, albeit workers rather than residents are the beneficiaries reflecting the presence of high value manufacturing in automotives and chemicals. There are pockets of high deprivation particularly in northern parts of the town. The presence of the Manchester Ship Canal, ease of access to the national motorway network and availability of land provides considerable opportunities for improving the economy of the town and the borough as a whole.

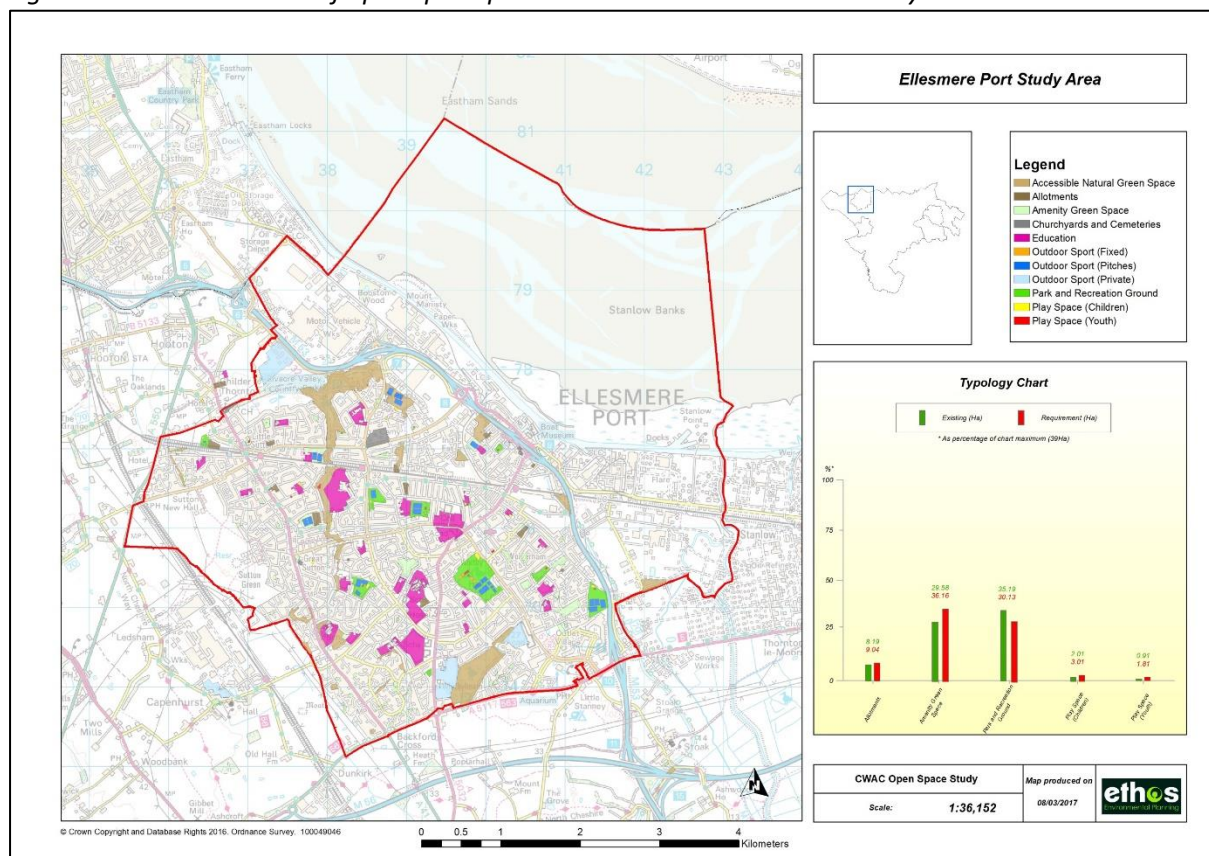
Ellesmere Port town centre serves as a local shopping centre and provides access to wider facilities and services.”

2.0 Existing provision of Open Space

This section provides maps showing existing open spaces that have been mapped and included within the study. A map is shown for the overall area, followed by individual maps for each of the wards. The maps are intended to be used for indicative purposes and large scale maps and a GIS database of sites have been provided as an electronic database to the council.

2.1 Overview of open space provision in the study area

Figure 4 Overview of open space provision in the Ellesmere Port Study Area



2.2 Provision by ward in the Study Area

The following maps show the provision of open space within each of the wards within the Ellesmere Port study area.

Figure 5 Provision of green space in Ellesmere Port Town

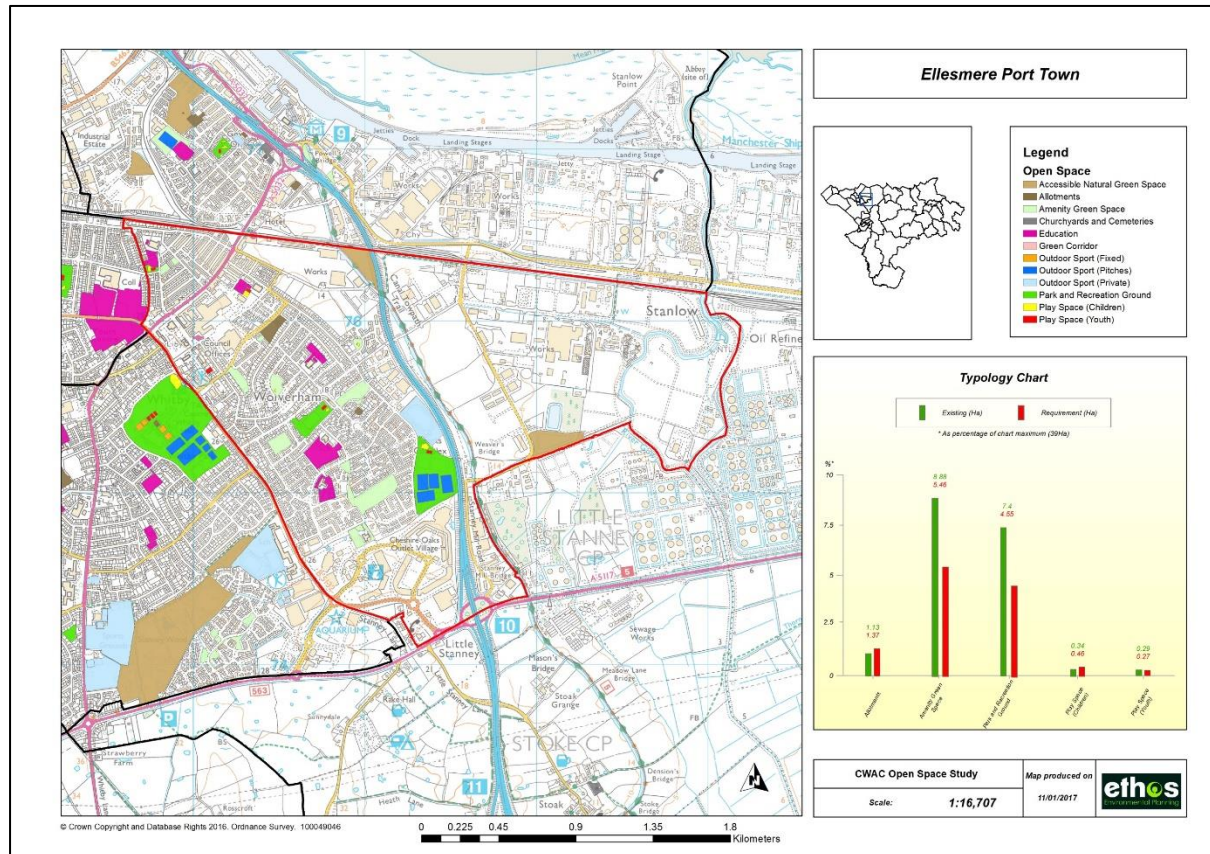


Figure 6 Provision of green space in Whitby

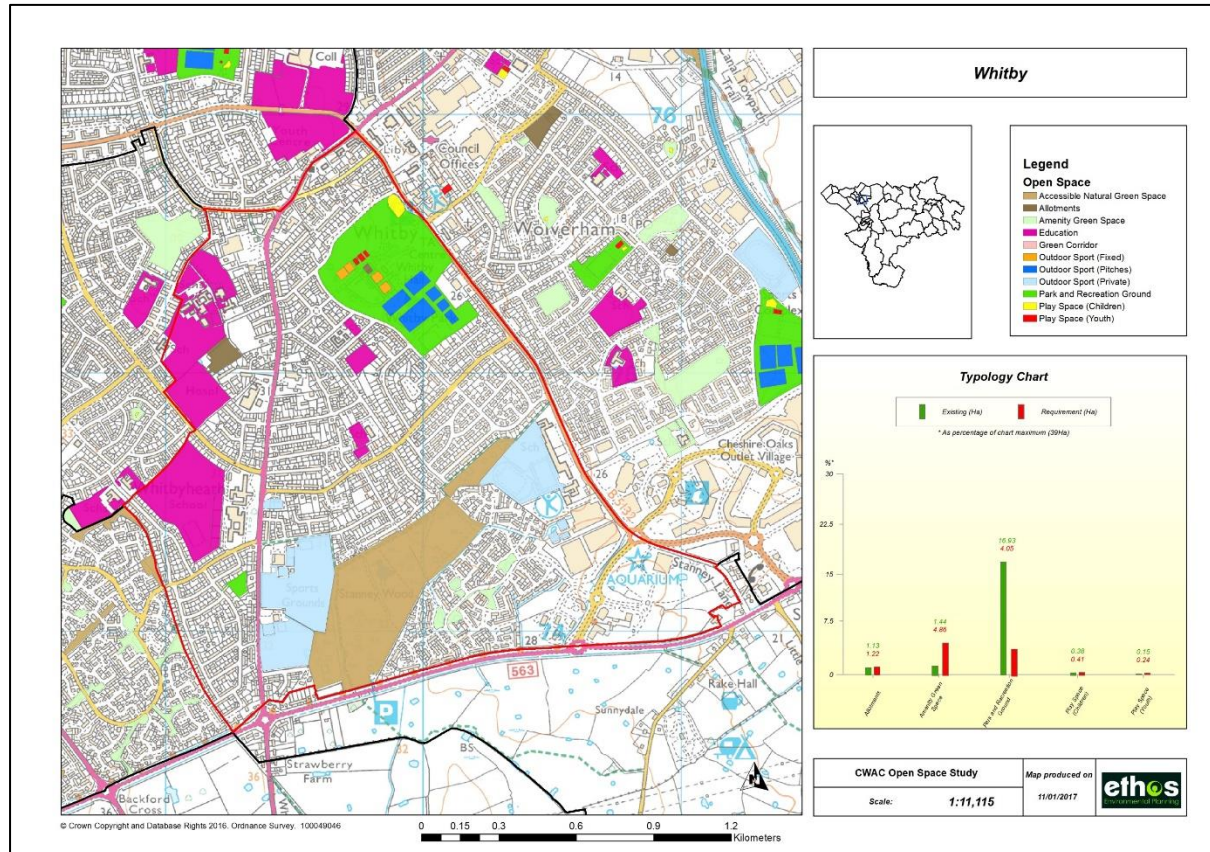


Figure 7 Provision of green space in Ledsham and Manor

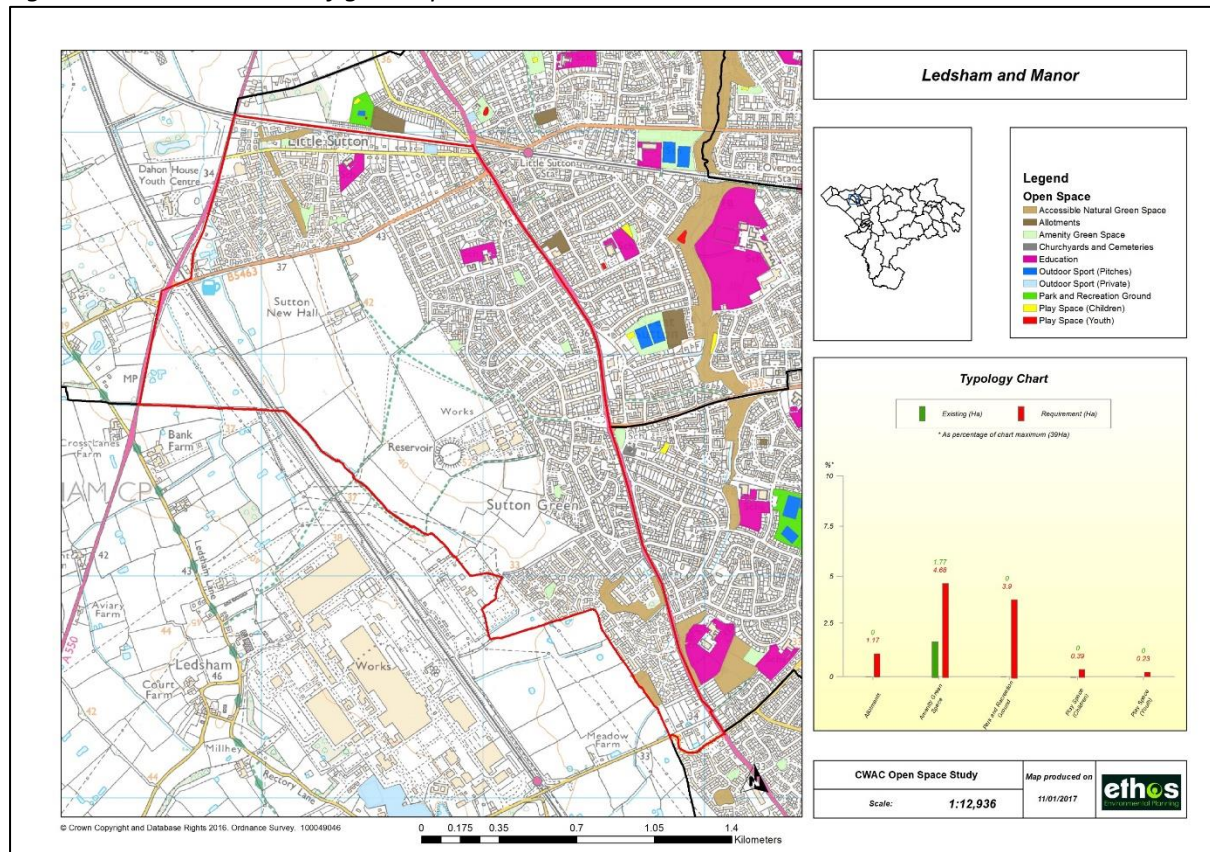


Figure 8 Provision of green space in Rossmore

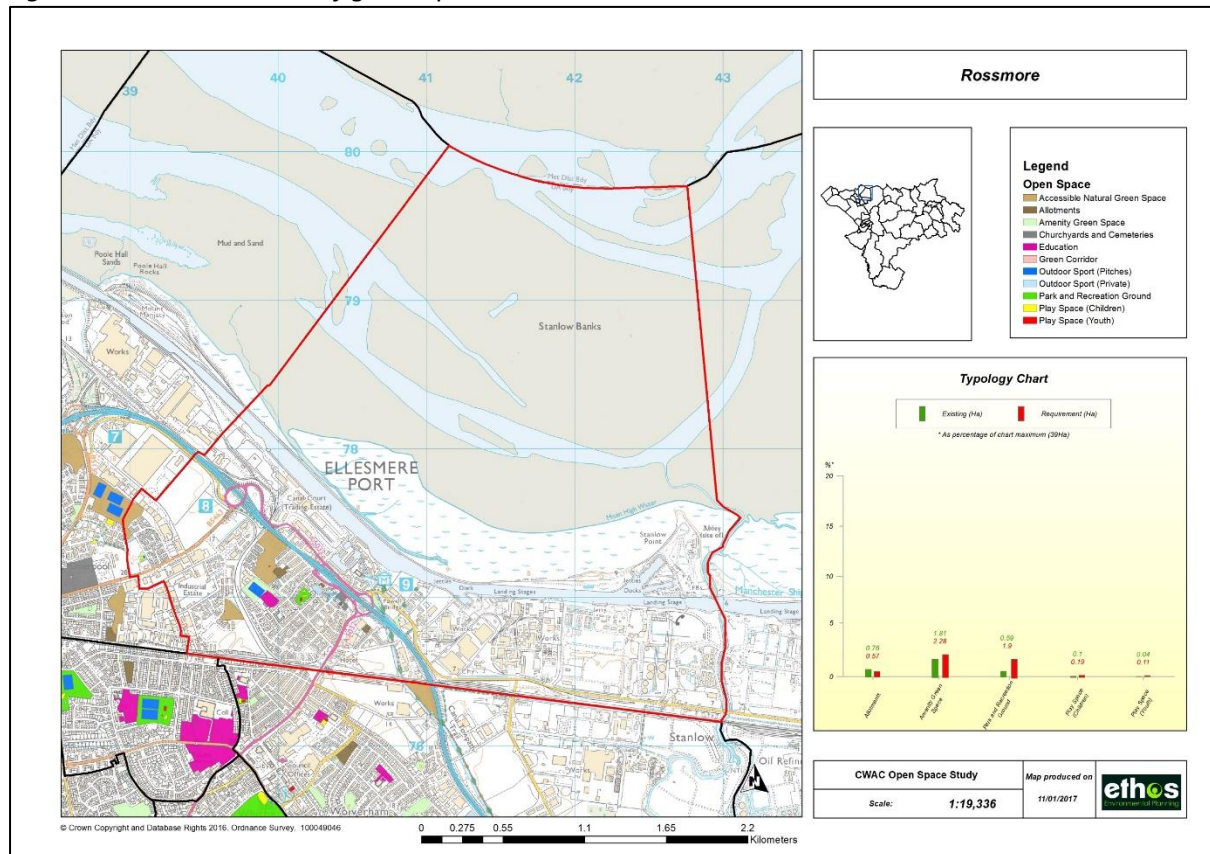


Figure 9 Provision of green space in Netherpool

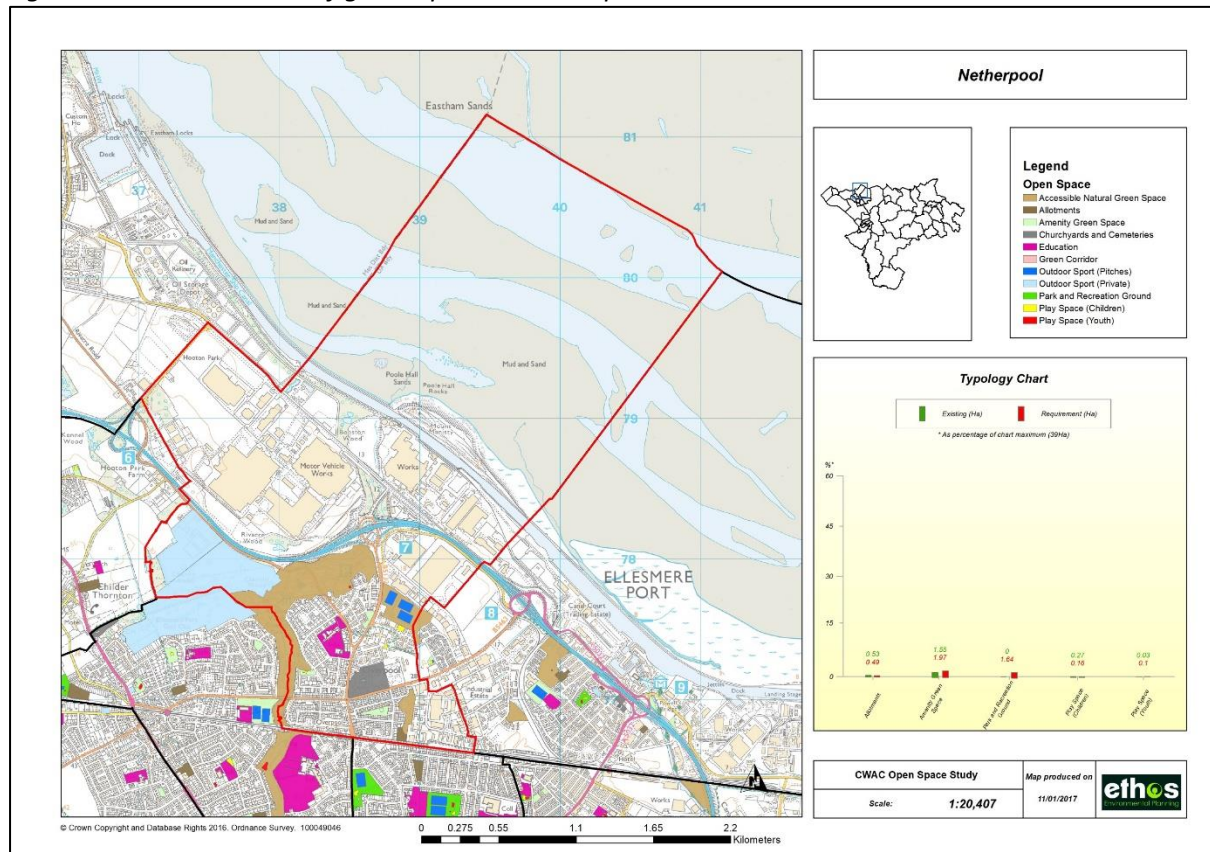


Figure 10 Provision of green space in Grange

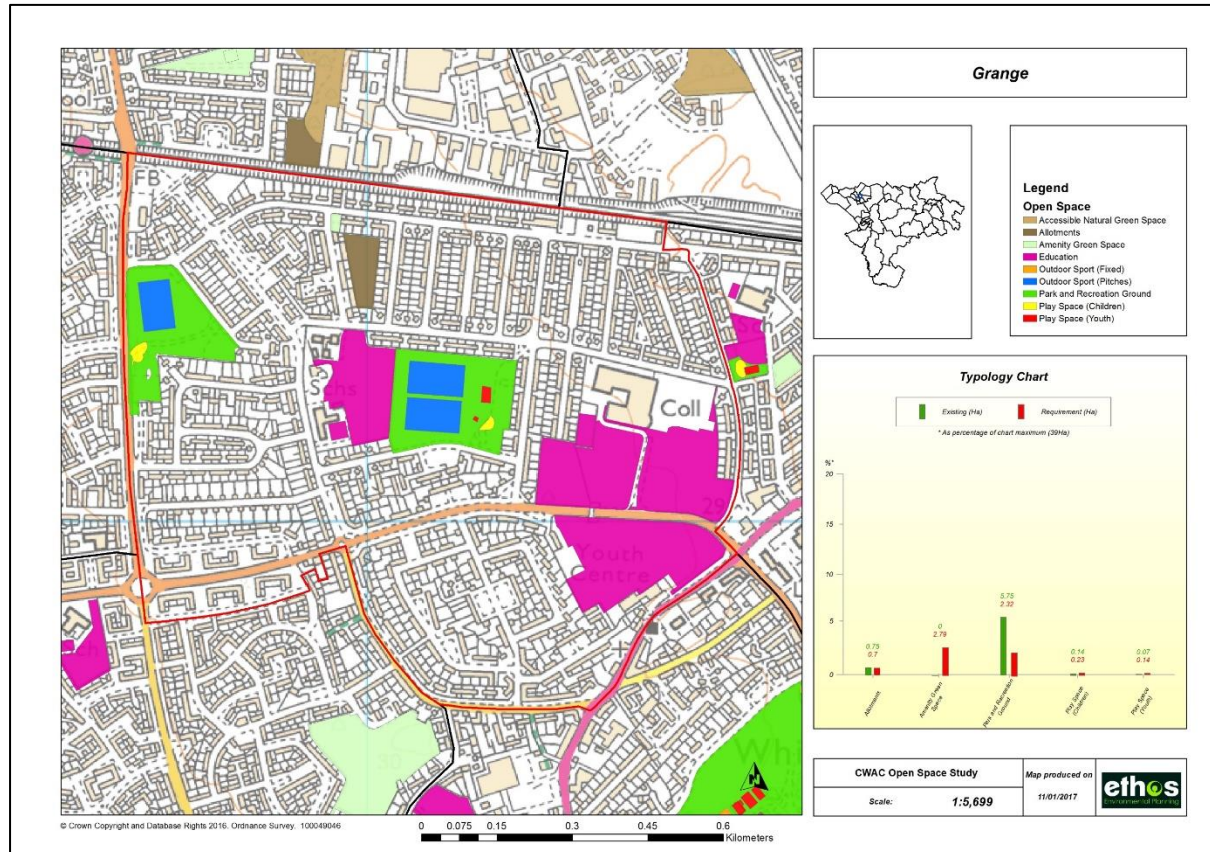


Figure 11 Provision of green space in St Paul's

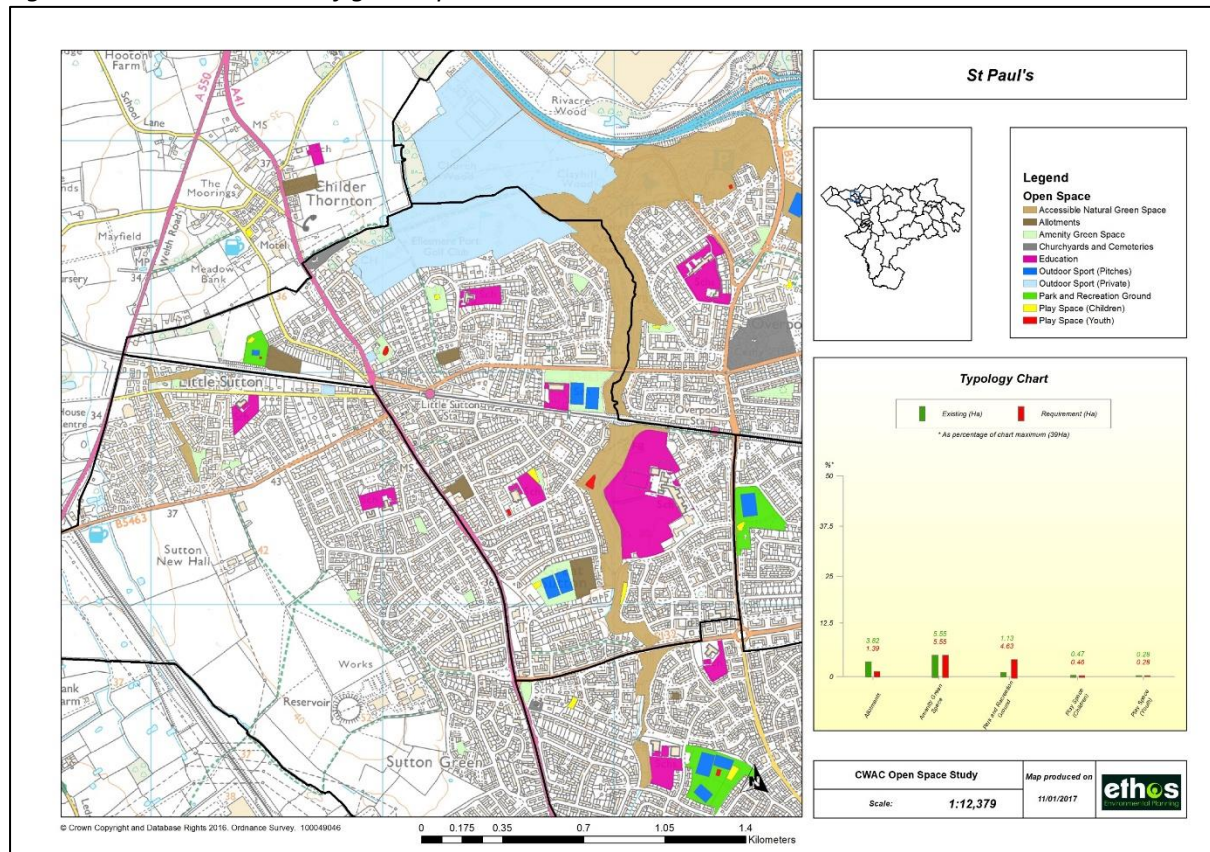


Figure 12 Provision of green space in Strawberry

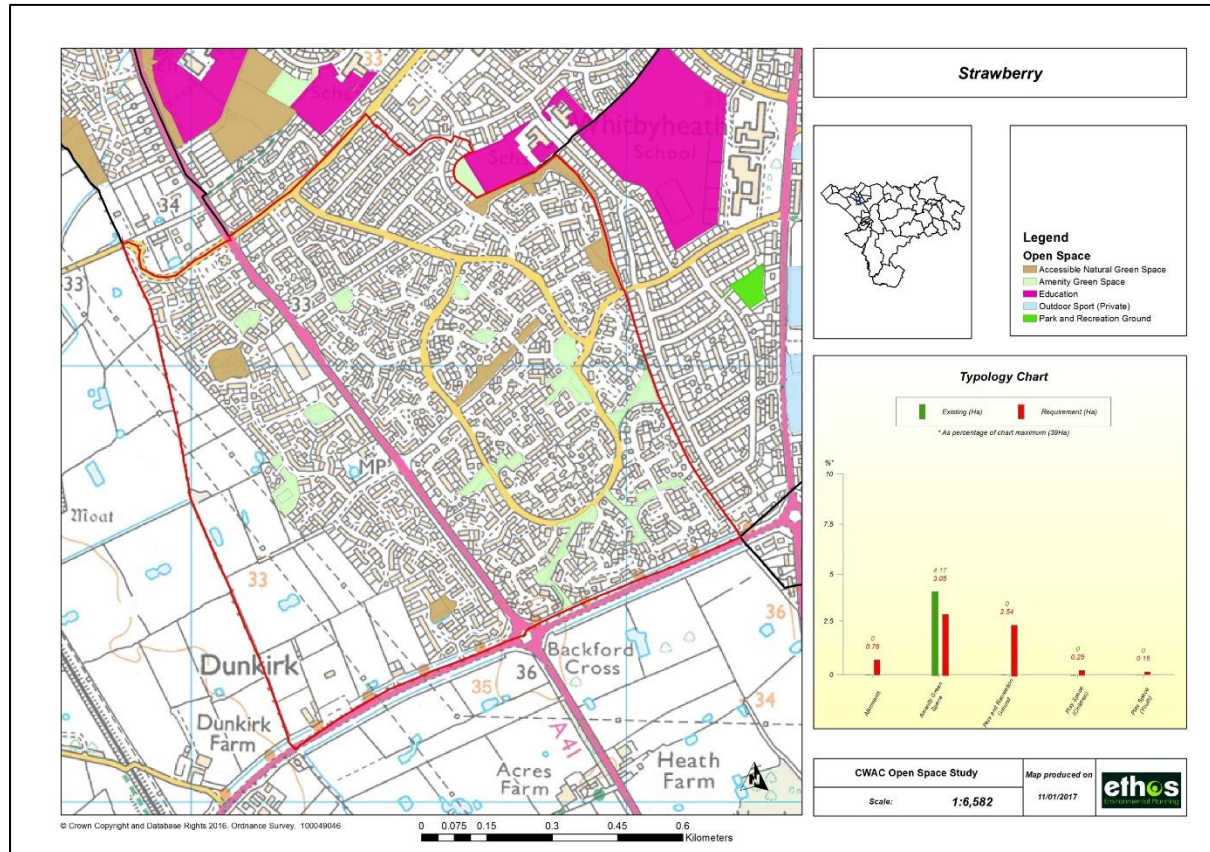
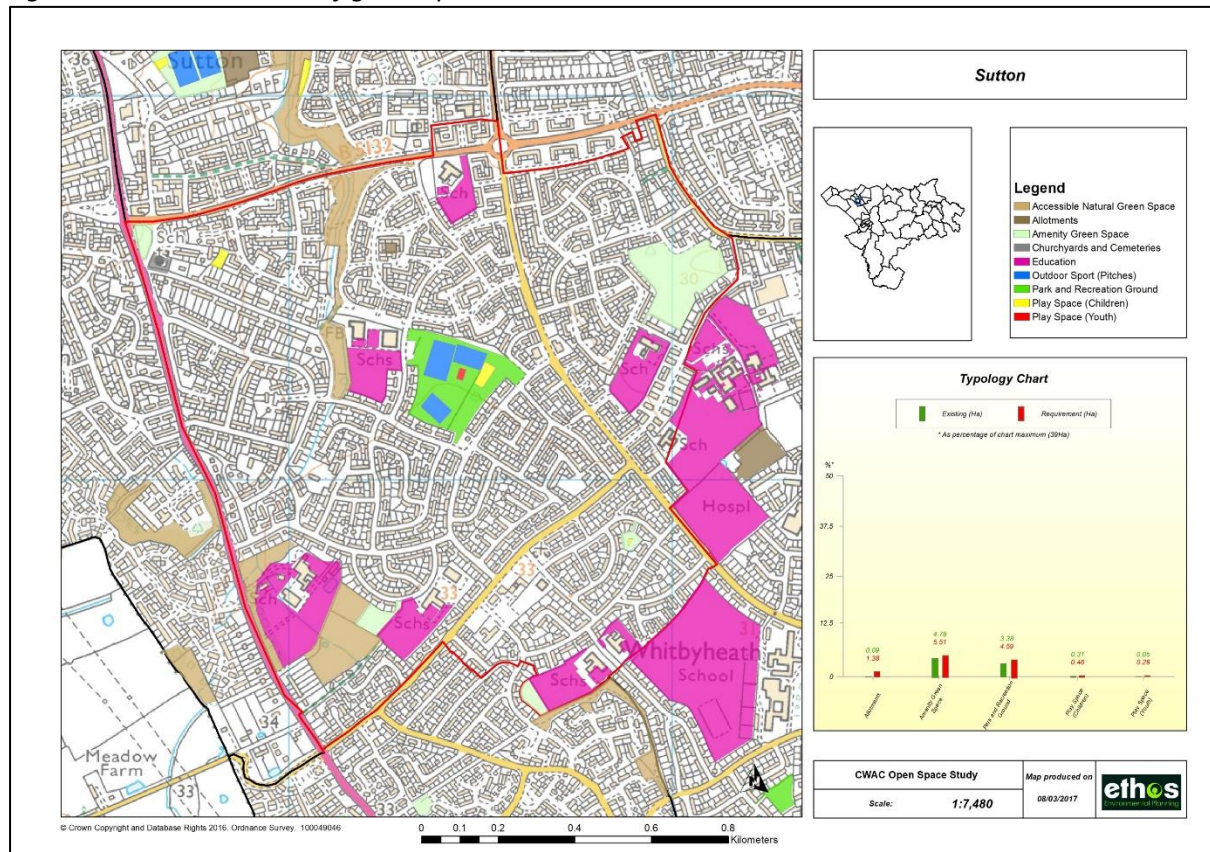


Figure 13 Provision of green space in Sutton



3.0 Analysis of existing quantity of Open Space

3.1 Introduction

This section provides an analysis of the existing quantity of open space within the study area. It uses the quantity standards for open space detailed in part 1 of the report, and summarised in table 2.

Table 2 Summary of open space standards (Quality standards not included here)

| Typology | Quantity standards (ha/1000 population) | Access standard |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Allotments | 0.15 | 720 metres or 15 minutes' walk time |
| Amenity Green Space | 0.60 for analysing existing provision of sites > 0.15 ha 1.0 for new provision (combined with natural green space) | 480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time |
| Parks and Recreation Grounds | 0.5 | 720 metres or 15 minutes' walk time |
| Play Space (Children) | 0.05 | 480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time |
| Play Space (Youth) | 0.03 | 600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time |
| Natural Green Space | 1.0 to include natural and amenity green space for new provision | ANGSt and Woodland Trust for analysing existing provision |
| Churchyards and Cemeteries | None, but sites mapped and quantity analysed | None |
| Education | None, but sites mapped and quantity analysed | None |
| Green Corridors | None, but sites mapped | None |
| Private open spaces (e.g. paid access sites) | None, but sites mapped | None |
| Playing Pitches | None, but sites mapped. Further details provided in playing pitch strategy | |

| Typology | Quantity standards (ha/1000 population) | Access standard |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Fixed Outdoor Sport Facilities | None, but sites mapped. Further details provided in facilities strategy | |
| 'Other' (Includes golf courses and fishing lakes) | None, but sites mapped | None |

Existing quantity figures are also provided for a number of typologies where there are no standards, as such these also do not show figures for required provision (a figure of 0.00 is provided) and supply is 'NA', these typologies are:

- Natural Green Space (as existing provision is assessed using the Natural England ANGSt Standards);
- Education;
- Churchyard and Cemetery.

The following section provides tables showing the current quantitative provision of open space within the study area.

3.2 Current quantity provision of open space

The following tables show the existing provision of open space within the study area. Figures are given for the overall study area, and for individual wards. In some areas, open spaces may cross ward boundaries and as such the quantity provision is included within both of those ward totals. Therefore, if individual wards are added together, this may not add up to the overall total figure for the study area. This factor needs to be taken into account when making decisions about local quantity provision.

Table 3 Existing supply of open space across the Ellesmere Port study area

| Typology | Existing Provision (Ha) | Existing Provision (Ha/1000) | Required Provision (Ha) | Required Provision (Ha/1000) | Supply (Ha) | Supply (Ha/1000) | Overall Supply |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Allotments | 8.19 | 0.14 | 9.04 | 0.15 | -0.85 | -0.01 | UNDER SUPPLY |
| Amenity Green Space | 29.64 | 0.49 | 36.16 | 0.6 | -6.52 | -0.11 | UNDER SUPPLY |
| Park and Recreation Ground | 35.19 | 0.58 | 30.13 | 0.5 | 5.06 | 0.08 | SUFFICIENT SUPPLY |
| Play Space (Children) | 2.01 | 0.03 | 3.01 | 0.05 | -1 | -0.02 | UNDER SUPPLY |
| Play Space (Youth) | 0.91 | 0.02 | 1.81 | 0.03 | -0.9 | -0.01 | UNDER SUPPLY |
| Natural Green Space | 98.67 | 1.64 | 0 | 0 | 98.67 | 1.64 | N/A |
| Education | 69.31 | 1.15 | 0 | 0 | 69.31 | 1.15 | N/A |
| Churchyards and Cemeteries | 6.38 | 0.11 | 0 | 0 | 6.38 | 0.11 | N/A |

Table 4 Supply of open space (hectares) for each Ward within the study area

| Wards | Allotments | Amenity Green Space | Park and Recreation Ground | Play Space (Children) | Play Space (Youth) |
|---------------------|------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Ellesmere Port Town | -0.24 | 3.42 | 2.85 | -0.12 | 0.02 |
| Grange | 0.05 | -2.79 | 3.43 | -0.09 | -0.07 |
| Ledsham and Manor | -1.17 | -2.91 | -3.9 | -0.39 | -0.23 |
| Netherpool | 0.04 | -0.42 | -1.64 | 0.11 | -0.07 |
| Rossmore | 0.19 | -0.47 | -1.31 | -0.09 | -0.07 |
| St Pauls | 2.43 | 0 | -3.5 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Strawberry | -0.76 | 1.12 | -2.54 | -0.25 | -0.15 |
| Sutton | -1.29 | -0.73 | -1.21 | -0.15 | -0.23 |
| Whitby | -0.09 | -3.42 | 12.88 | -0.03 | -0.09 |

As can be seen from the table 3 above, within the Ellesmere Port study area, there is an overall under supply of the majority of typologies of open space, with the exception of park and recreation grounds. The total shortfall for each typology is:

- Allotments 0.85 Ha
- Amenity Green Space 6.52 Ha
- Play Space (Children) 1.00 Ha
- Play Space (Youth) 0.90 Ha

Total shortfall**9.27 Ha**

Table 4 shows how this provision varies within individual wards in the study area, which indicates that provision does vary across wards and typologies, with some meeting the standards and others falling below.

4.0 Analysis of existing access to Open Space

4.1 Existing access to open space

This section provides maps showing access to different types of open space across the study area using the CWAC access standards (as summarised in table 5). More detailed maps showing access in each ward have been provided as an electronic appendix.

Table 5 CWAC access standards

| Typology | Access standard |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Allotments | 720 metres or 15 minutes' walk time |
| Amenity Green Space | 480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time |
| Parks and Recreation Grounds | 720 metres or 15 minutes' walk time |
| Play Space (Children) | 480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time |
| Play Space (Youth) | 600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time |
| Natural Green Space | ANGSt and Woodland Trust for analysing existing provision |

Figure 14 Access to Allotments across the Ellesmere Port Study Area (720 metre buffer)

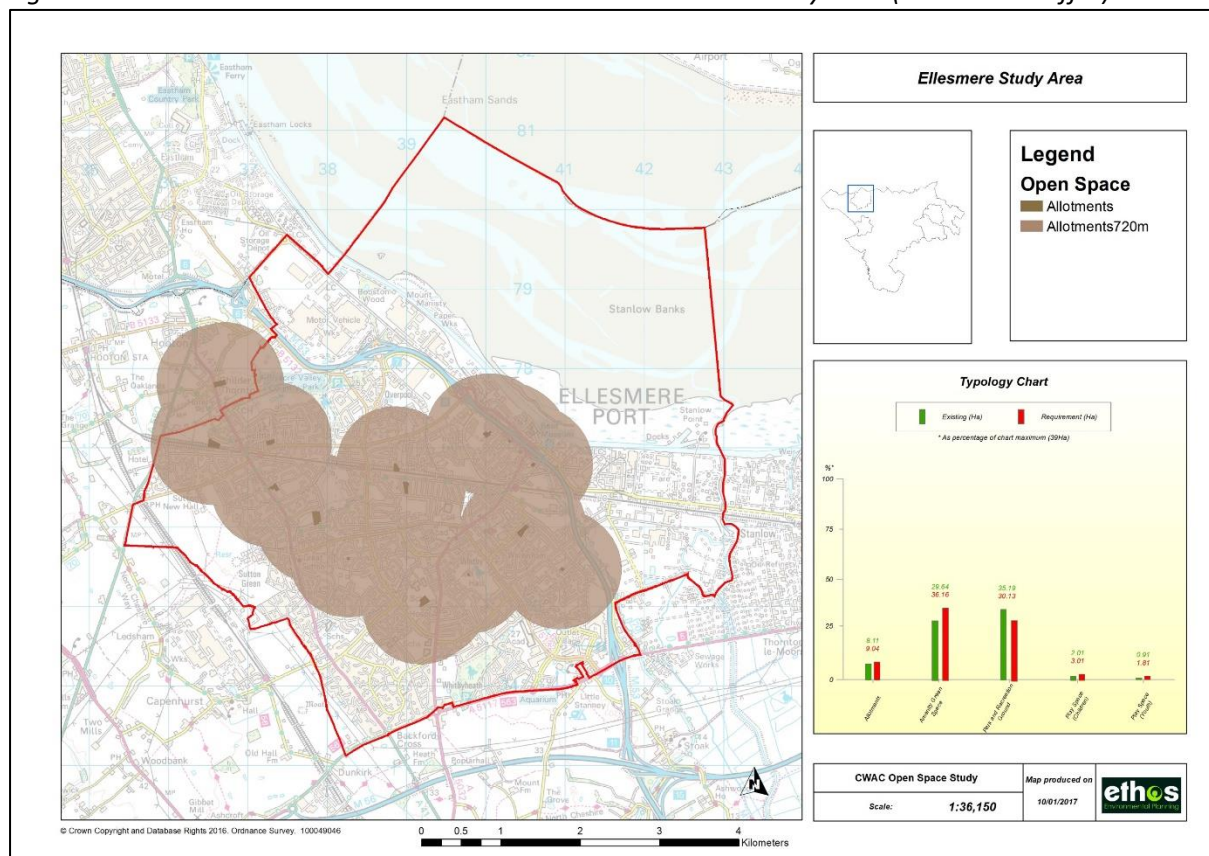


Figure 15 Access to Amenity Green Space across the Ellesmere Port Study Area (480 metre buffer)

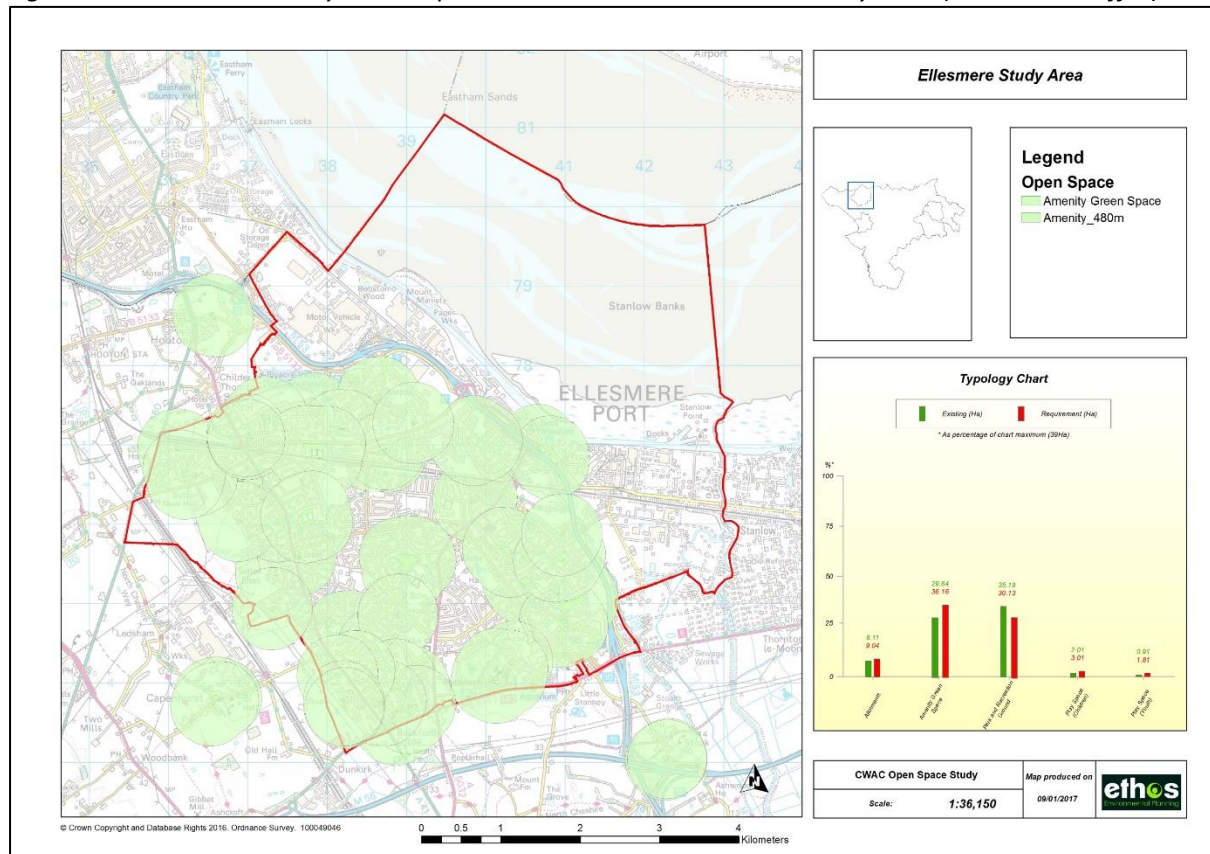


Figure 16 Access to Parks and Recreation Grounds across the Ellesmere Port Study Area (720m buffer)

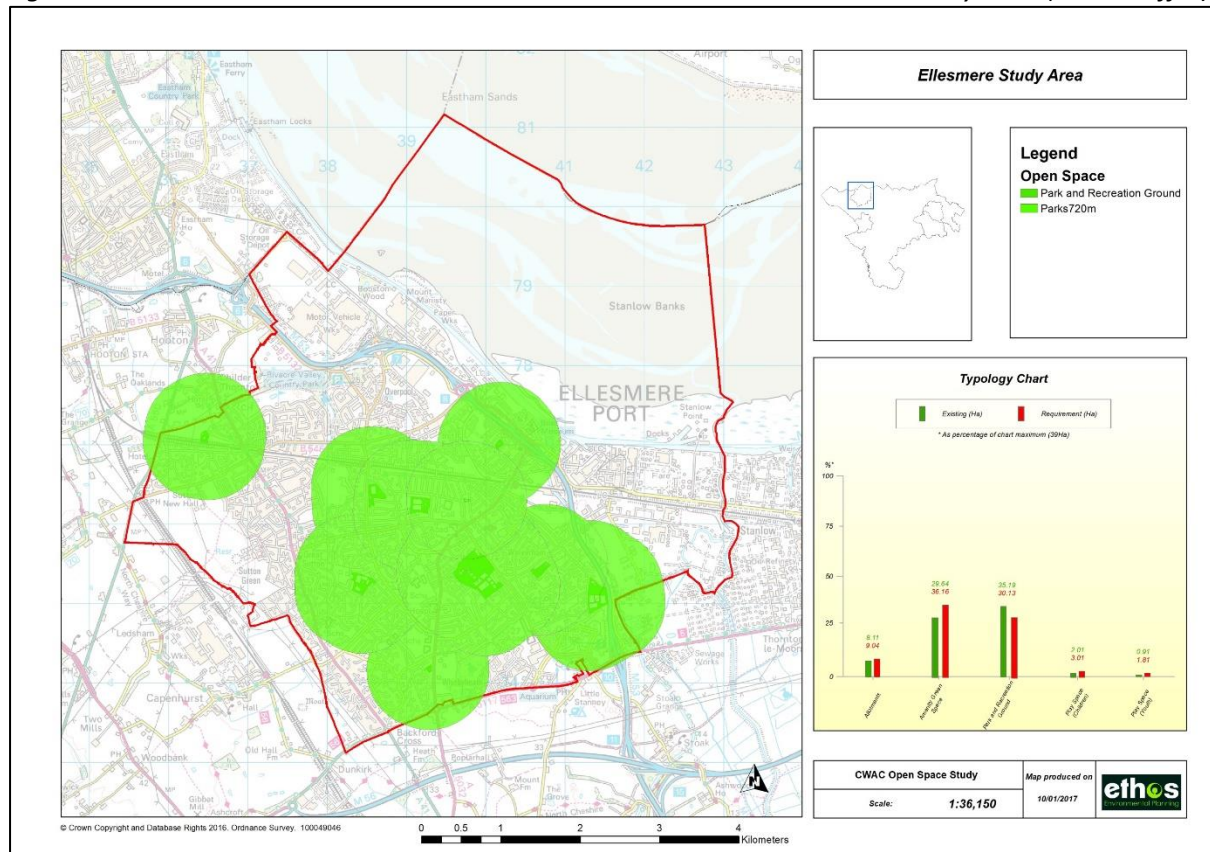


Figure 17 Access to Children’s Play Space across the Ellesmere Port Study Area (480 metre buffer)

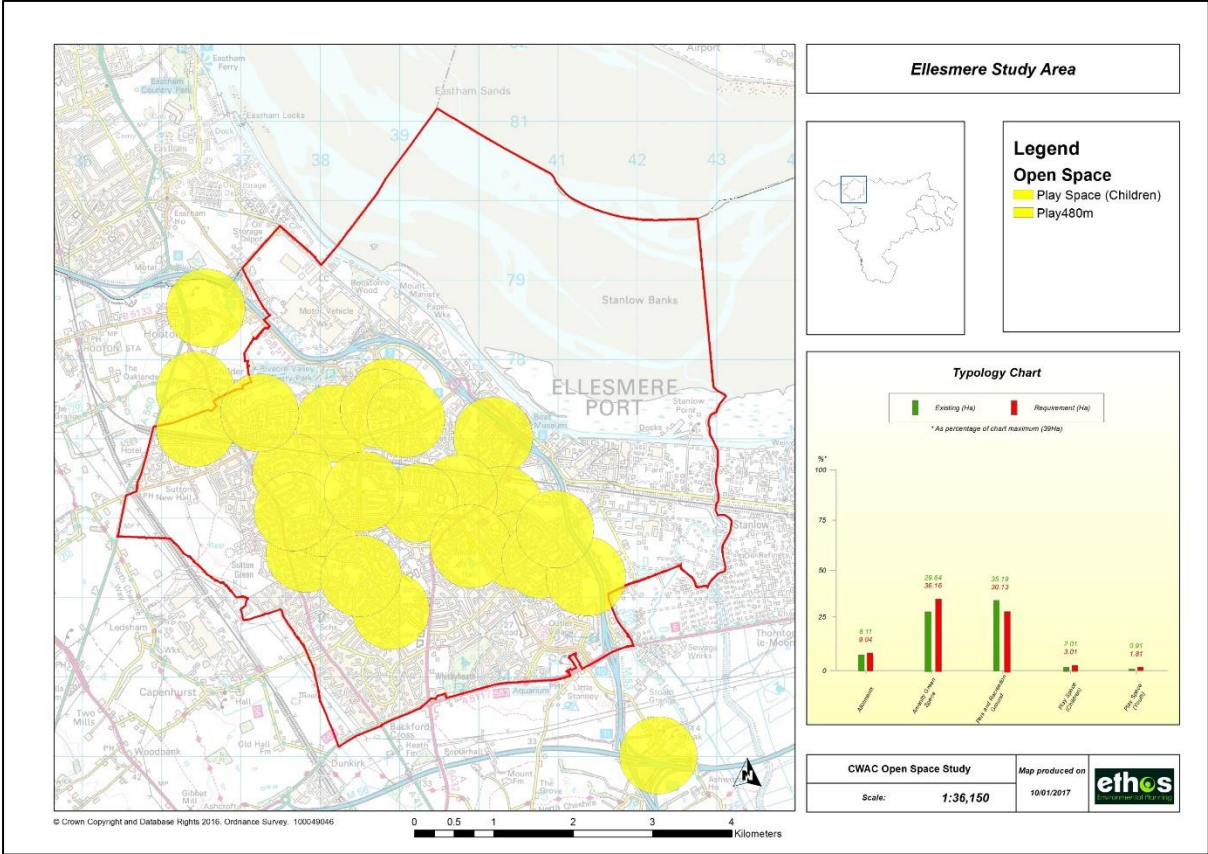


Figure 18 Access to Youth Play Space across the Ellesmere Port Study Area (600 metre buffer)

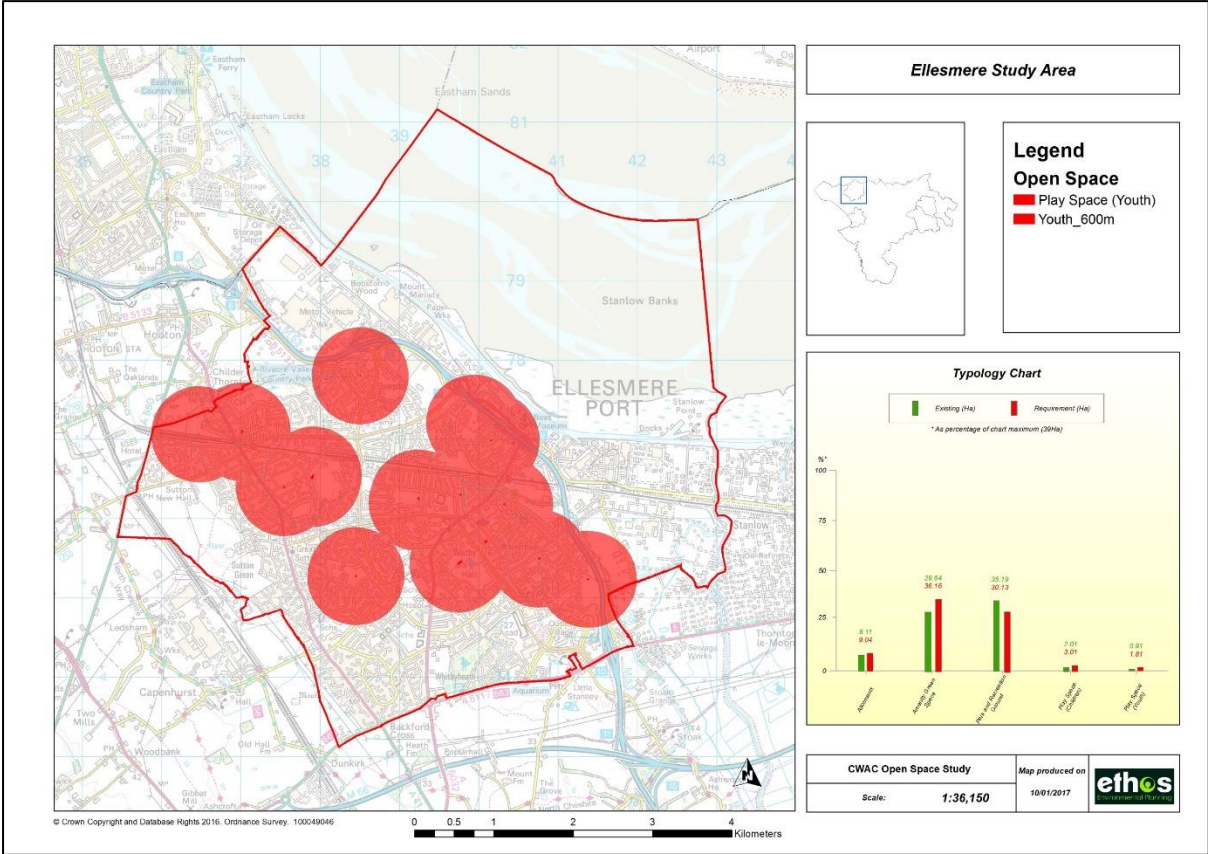


Figure 19 Access to Natural Green Space across the Ellesmere Port Study Area

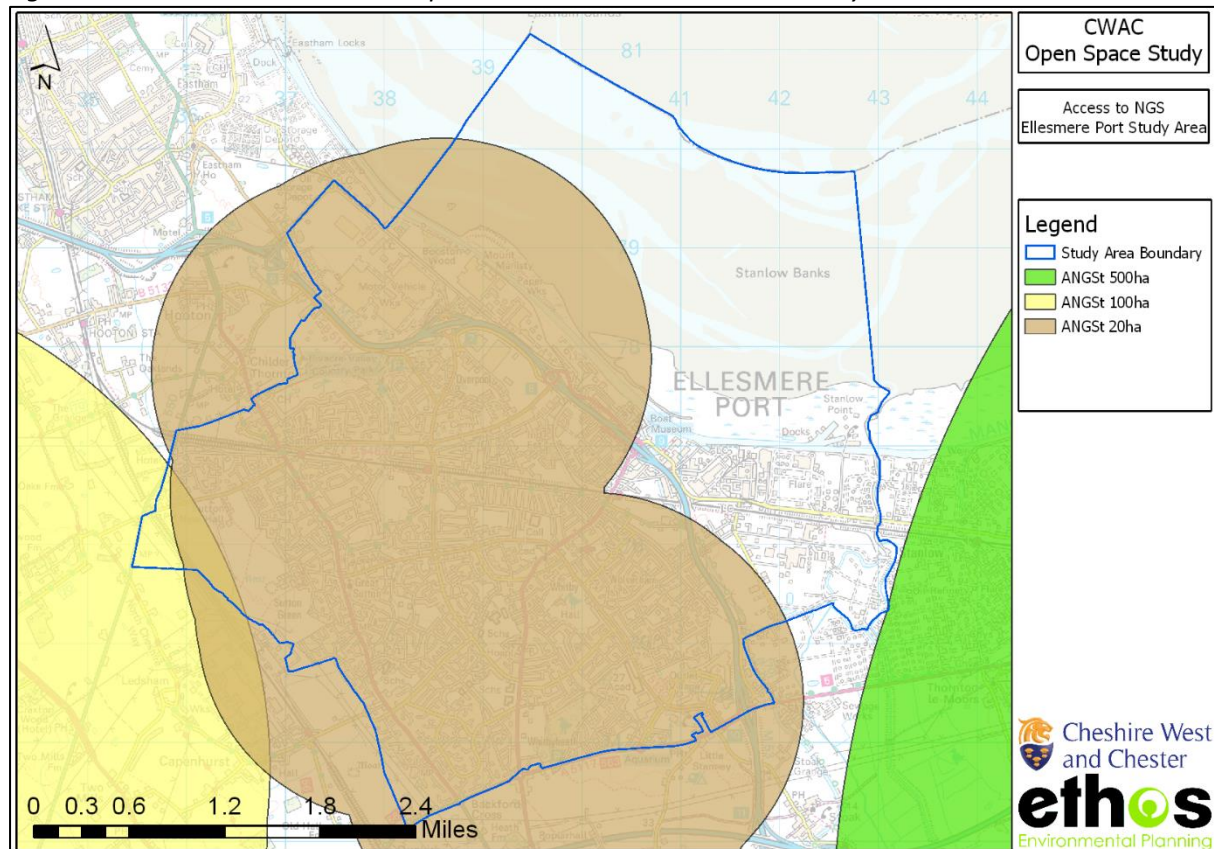
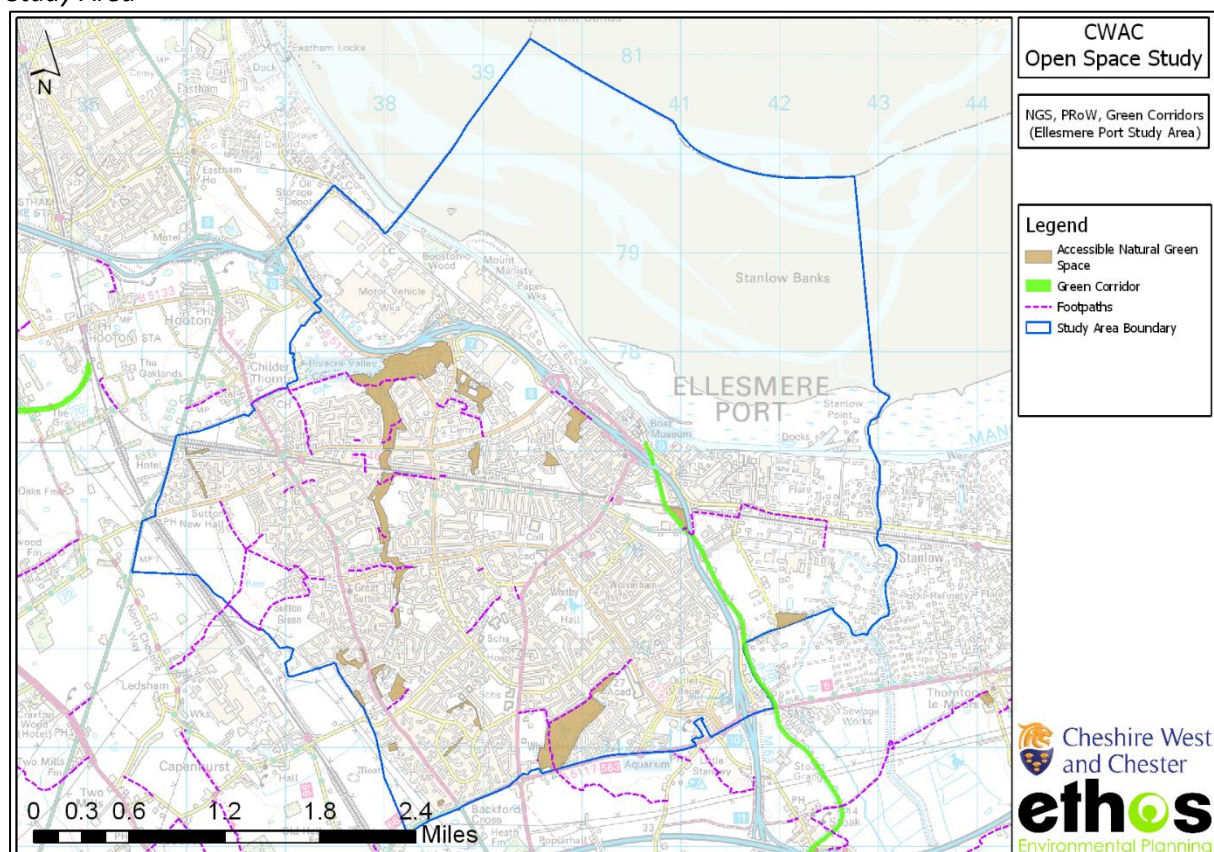


Figure 20 Public Rights of Way, green corridors and natural greenspace across the Ellesmere Port Study Area



4.2 Analysis of existing access

Table 6 below summarises the access maps provided (figures 14-20), highlighting any gaps or access issues.

Table 6 Summary of access to different types of open space in Ellesmere Port

| Typology | Current Access |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allotments | Good provision throughout most of Ellesmere port with the exception of Strawberry and South Whitby. |
| Amenity Green Space | Provision generally good with minor gaps in Grange, Sutton and Whitby. Other areas meet the standard, and in some wards, most notably St. Pauls and Strawberry there are several overlaps in provision. |
| Parks and Recreation Grounds | Access good across all areas with only a minor gap in access in the west of Strawberry Ward. |
| Play Space (Children) | Gaps in provision in Ledsham and Manor, Strawberry and Whitby. |
| Play Space (Youth) | No provision in Strawberry, limited provision in Whitby, and minor gaps in St. Pauls and Netherpool. |
| Natural Green Space | The area meets the ANGst standard for 20ha sites within 2km. However, there is no access to larger spaces of 100ha and 500ha. |
| Natural Greenspace, green corridors, and Rights of Way | Limited ROW in the urban area, with provision largely restricted to north western and south eastern fringes. Notable lack of access from Strawberry and Sutton wards into open land to the west. |

5.0 Quality Assessment

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the quality audit that was undertaken as part of the overall study. Following the initial mapping exercise, site visits were undertaken to assess the quality of sites. It was not possible to survey all sites due to access restrictions, namely certain private sports grounds and education sites. Other sites were also excluded due to limitations of resources, these included small amenity green spaces (<0.15 ha in size), and churchyards and cemeteries.

The audits were undertaken using a standardised methodology and consistent approach. However, audits of this nature can only ever be a snap-shot in time and their main purpose is to provide a consistent and objective assessment of a sites existing and potential quality rather than a full asset audit.

5.2 Audit methodology

Sites were visited and a photographic record made of key features, along with an assessment of the quality of the site. Quality was assessed using the following criteria which is based on the Green Flag Assessment¹:

- Access;
- Welcoming;
- Management and maintenance (hard and soft landscaping);
- Litter and dog fouling;
- Healthy, safe and secure;
- Community involvement;
- Biodiversity.

Existing quality score/rank

For each open space, an existing quality score rank from A – D has been given, where **sites that rank A are very good quality, and sites that rank D are very poor quality**. These rank scores have been calculated as follows:

- For each open space, a score for each of the above criteria is given between 1 and 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good.
- The scores are totalled for each site and the following thresholds are used for assigning a rank:
 - A is 38 to 45
 - B is 28 to 37
 - C is 18 to 27
 - D is 9 to 17

¹ <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/awards/green-flag-award/>

- These thresholds are based on the lowest and highest possible score that a site can obtain.

Potential quality score/rank

For each open space, a 'potential for improvement' quality score rank from A-D has also been given, where **sites that rank A have the most potential to be improved, and sites that rank D have the least potential to be improved**. These potential rank scores have been calculated as follows:

- For each open space or play space, a 'gap' score for each of the above criteria is given between 0 and 4, where a gap of 0 means there is no/very low potential for improvement and a gap of 4 means there is very high potential for improvement. For example, for the 'Welcoming' criteria, if a park and recreation ground has attractive, well maintained entrances with good signage it might score 4 (i.e. good) for existing quality and also 4 for potential quality (i.e. no gap score, and therefore no improvements needed). On the other hand, if there was no signage or old/worn signage and the entrance had a broken gate and litter, it might score 1 for existing quality and 4 for potential (i.e. with a gap score of 3), so those sites with the highest 'gap score' between the existing quality and potential quality have the highest potential for improvement.
- The 'gap' scores are totalled for each site and the following thresholds are used for assigning a rank:
 - A is 15-36
 - B is 10-14
 - C is 5-9
 - D is 0-4

This system highlights where sites could be improved. **Sites that have been given a rank of D for potential may still have potential to be improved, and local aspirations and information should be taken into account** in addition to the quality audit (which can only provide a snapshot in time).

The details of the quality audit are held within the quality database (appendix 2). Within these area profiles, a summary of the existing quality score ranks and those sites with the most potential for improvement (i.e. those sites with a potential quality rank of A, B, or C) is included within section 5.3.

5.3 Summary of priority open space sites

The 'gap' between the existing and potential quality scores has been used to identify and prioritise sites for improvement.

The following maps provide a summary of the existing quality rank (figure 21) and sites with potential for improvement (figure 22). These draw on the detailed quality audit database provided at appendix 2.

Details on the quality of play space (child and youth provision) can be found in the emerging CWAC Play Strategy; the quality of playing pitches is covered within the CWAC Playing Pitch Strategy; and the quality of fixed sports facilities within the CWAC Built Facilities Strategy.

Figure 21 Existing quality rank of open space

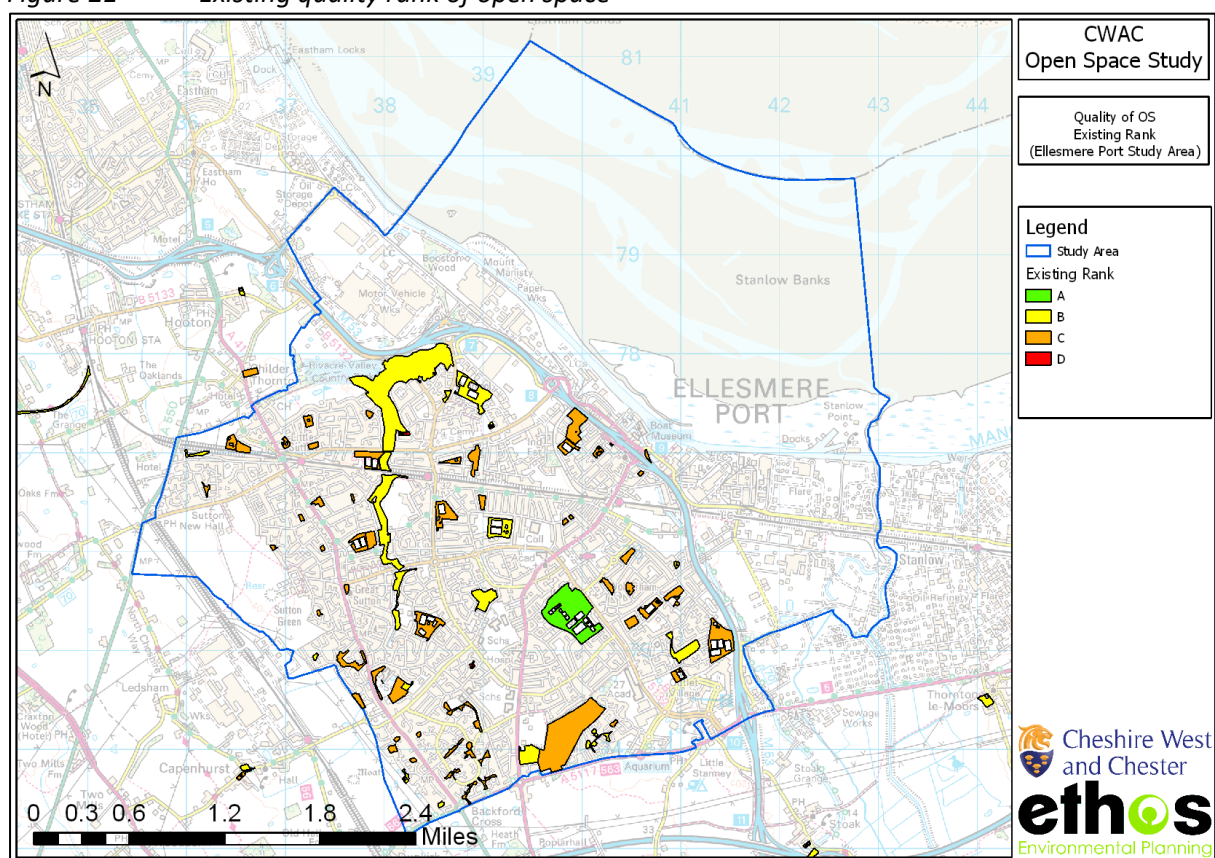
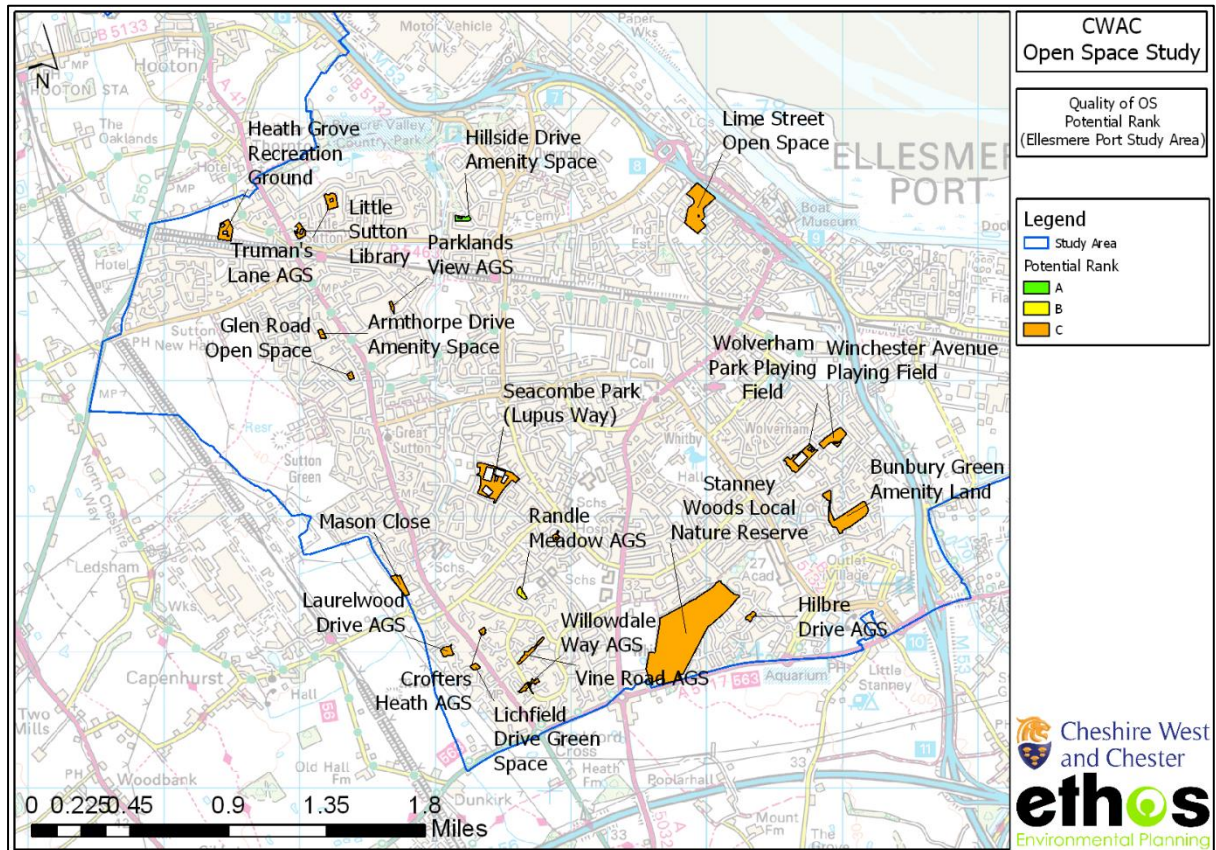


Figure 22 Sites with potential for improvement



6.0 Future need for Open Space

This section of the report considers the overall implications for open space provision from the predicted population growth for the whole of the study area.

6.1 Projected housing growth

The Local Plan makes provision for at least 4,800 new dwellings in Ellesmere Port. To meet this requirement, the following land is identified: Ledsham Road is identified on the Policies Map for up to 2,000 dwellings providing for a range and mix of housing types, including affordable housing in line with Policy 'SOC 1 Delivering affordable housing', together with essential community infrastructure including the provision of a new primary school.

For the purpose of this assessment, an increase in population of 11,040 people has been used (using the average household occupancy of 2.3 from the 2011 census).

6.2 Impact of housing growth on existing open space provision

Assuming a population increase of 11,040 people, the total population for the Ellesmere Port area within the local plan period would increase to 71,303 people. Using the CWAC standards for open space, the total amount of open space that would be required for an increase of 11,040 people is shown in table 7:

Table 7 Total amount of open space required for increased population growth of 11,040 people

| Typology | Standard for new provision | Requirement for 11,040 people (Hectares) |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Allotments | 0.15 | 1.66 |
| Amenity/Natural Green Space | 1.0 | 11.04 |
| Park and Recreation Ground | 0.5 | 5.52 |
| Play Space (Children) | 0.05 | 0.55 |
| Play Space (Youth) | 0.03 | 0.33 |
| Total | | 19.1 |

Noting that the area has an under supply across all typologies (with the exception of parks and recreation grounds), the existing shortfalls in provision would be exacerbated by the projected population increase if no new open space was to be provided. Therefore, the need for on-site provision of open space across all typologies (except parks and recreation grounds) through new development in Ellesmere Port is a key priority.

As the requirement for parks and recreation grounds from a population increase of 11,040 people only slightly exceeds the existing 'surplus', and there is good access (against the 720m standard) across the majority of the area, improvements to the quality of and access to existing parks and recreation grounds would be required over new provision, unless development falls within an area that would reduce gaps in access e.g. Strawberry Ward.

7.0 Summary of priorities for the area

This section brings together the analysis of the existing quality, access and quantity of open space and considers future requirements for open space from population growth, and considers the following priorities:

- Existing provision to be enhanced;
- Opportunities for re-location/re-designation of open space;
- Identification of areas for new provision;
- Facilities that may be surplus to requirement.

7.1 Existing provision to be enhanced

Section 5.3 provides a summary of the existing quality ranks drawn from the quality audit (appendix 2 of part 1). Figure 22 then highlights those sites which have 'potential for improvement' i.e. are ranked A, B or C. Those sites ranked D, generally have very little potential for improvement. The audit has identified a total of 22 sites which are ranked A-C, with sites ranked A the highest potential/priority for improvement.

7.2 Opportunities for re-location/re-designation of open space

Opportunities to relocate or re-designate open spaces draws on both the quantity and access analysis. In the case of Ellesmere Port, there is little opportunity in terms of quantity, as there is an existing shortfall across all typologies, except parks and recreation grounds. In terms of access, there is limited opportunity due to the quantitative issues, however, the following could be considered:

- Due to the proliferation of amenity green space in Strawberry Ward, where there are also overlaps in access, this typology may provide potential for alternative uses e.g. filling the existing gap in provision of allotments and/or play space in this area;
- As there is sufficient supply of parks and recreation grounds across the study area (largely due to the very large Whitby Park), and good access across the large majority of the study area (although it is noted there are shortfalls across individual wards). Parks and recreation grounds could be used to accommodate other types of provision where there is an identified shortfall in quantity and/or access e.g. allotments or play space.
- Natural green space could provide potential for meeting shortfalls in certain provision. For example, the provision of natural play facilities at Stanney Woods LNR could fill the gap in play provision in Whitby ward.

7.3 Identification of areas for new provision

The assessment has identified that there is already an existing quantitative shortfall in the provision of all types of open space (except parks and recreation grounds) in Ellesmere Port study area. The impact of future housing growth has also been shown to exacerbate this situation. Therefore, the need to provide open space on site in new development is a key

priority for the area. The exception would be for parks and recreation grounds, where improvements to the quality and access to existing sites is likely to be required over new provision, unless development occurs in areas where gaps in access could be reduced.

There are a number of areas that fall below the standard in terms of both quantity and access, most notably, the ward of Ledsham and Manor, Strawberry and Whitby have poor access to all typologies except amenity green space and natural green space (20ha sites within 2km). Ledsham and Manor and Sutton wards also fall below the quantity standards across all typologies (except natural green space 20ha sites within 2km).

7.4 Facilities that may be surplus to requirement

Due to the existing quantitative shortfall in the provision of open space across all types of open space (except parks and recreation grounds which would be in under supply following the projected housing growth for the area if no new provision were made, and could accommodate other types of open space e.g. play space and allotments to reduce the shortfalls in provision and access to these typologies), it is recommended that there are no open space facilities that are surplus to requirement.