

Chapter 2 Undertaking the Study

Introduction

- 2.1 This study was undertaken with regard to PPG17 and its companion guide. The key emphasis of PPG17 is the importance of undertaking a local needs assessment, as opposed to following national trends and guidelines.
- 2.2 The companion guide indicates that the four guiding principles in undertaking a local assessment are:
- understanding that local needs will vary according to socio-demographic and cultural characteristics
 - recognising that the provision of good quality and effective open space relies not only on effective planning, but also on creative design, landscape management and maintenance
 - considering that delivering high quality and sustainable open spaces may depend much more on improving and enhancing existing open space rather than new provision
 - taking into account that the value of open space will be greater when local needs are met. It is essential to consider the wider benefits that sites generate for people, wildlife and the environment.
- 2.3 PPG17 recognises that individual approaches appropriate to each local authority will need to be adopted as each area has different structures and characteristics. The broad process set out in PPG17 has, therefore, been adopted, and where necessary adapted, to ensure that the needs and expectations of Leeds residents are adequately addressed taking into account local circumstances.

Types of open space

- 2.4 The overall definition of open space within the government planning guidance is:
- “all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity”.
- 2.5 PPG17 identifies ten typologies, including nine types of green space and one category of urban open space. It states that when preparing assessments of needs and audits of existing open space and recreation facilities, local authorities should use these typologies, or similar variations.
- 2.6 In order to best reflect the types of provision in Leeds, changes were made to the typologies detailed in PPG17, specifically:
- provision for children and young people was reclassified into provision for children (up to 12) and provision for young people (over 12) in order to reflect that the presence of a facility for children does not necessarily negate the need for a facility for teenagers

- in addition to considering the provision of outdoor sports facilities as one typology, consideration has been given to the provision of each facility as a separate entity.

2.7 Table 2.1 below sets out the types of open space included within this study with a brief explanation of the primary purpose of the type space.

Table 2.1 Typologies of open space, sport and recreation facilities

	Definition	Primary purpose
Green Spaces	Parks and gardens made up of city parks, neighbourhood parks or community parks and local recreation grounds	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces, including urban woodland	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness
	Green corridors, specifically including towpaths along the canal and rivers, disused rail lines	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration
	Amenity green space – likely to be open grass land without other built structures or facilities	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas
	Outdoor sports facilities	Facilities for formal outdoor sports participation, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics, golf
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas, courted games areas and teenage shelters
	Allotments, community gardens and urban farms	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so, to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity
Indoor	Indoor sport and recreation	Education facilities, swimming pools, sports halls, leisure centres, gyms, bowls and tennis centres, community centres and village halls used for sport or recreation

	Definition	Primary purpose
Civic spaces	Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians within Leeds City Centre	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events

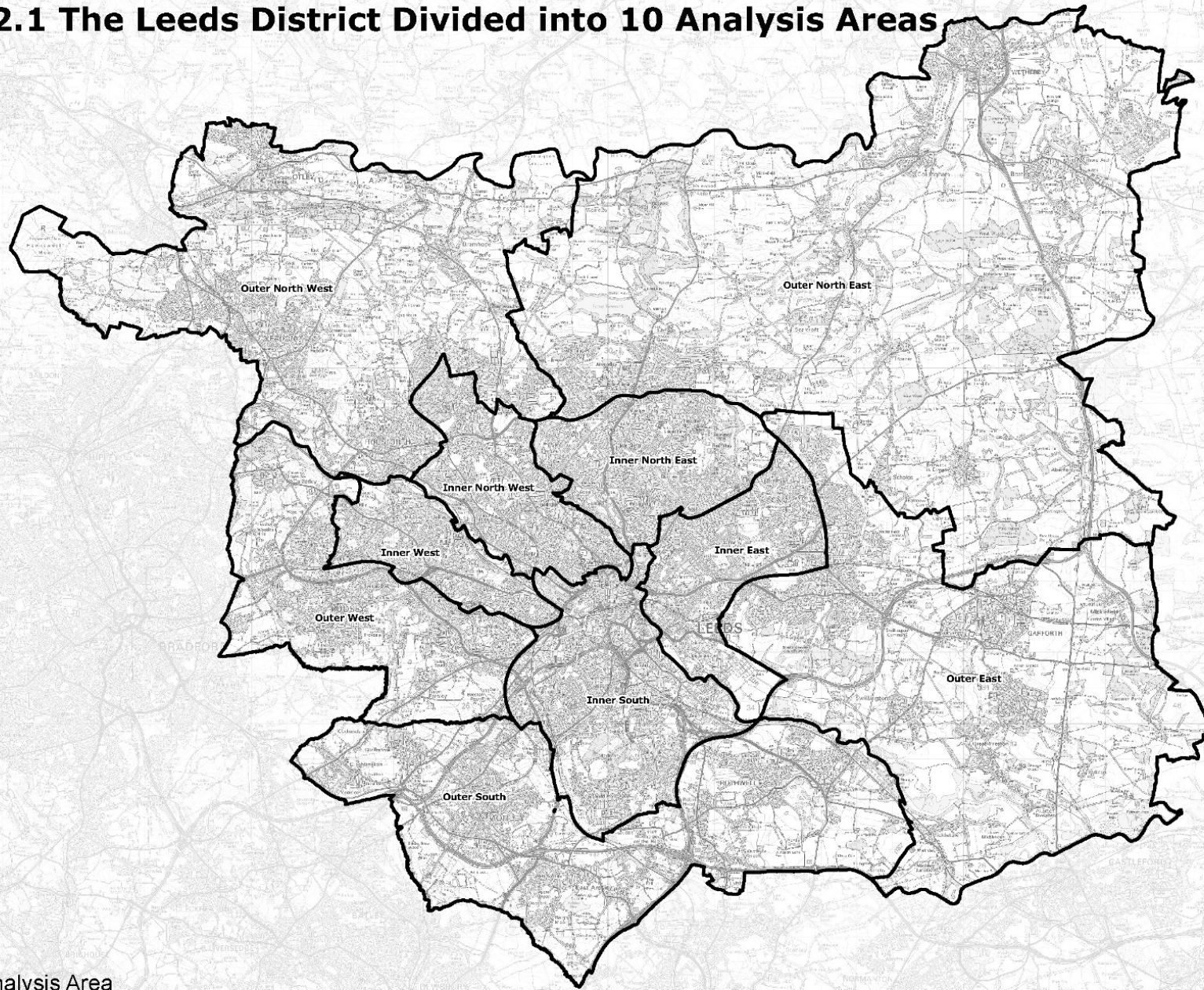
2.8 Although not a type of open space, PPG17 also highlights the importance of considering the provision of indoor sports facilities.

2.9 This assessment evaluates the existing public and private provision of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor tennis, health and fitness gymnasiums and indoor bowls, and identifies key issues for the future delivery of these facility types.

Geographical Analysis Areas

2.10 The analysis of the open space, sport and recreation facilities has been undertaken on a city wide basis; grouped by ten inner and outer analysis areas. Plan 2.1 overleaf shows the boundaries of the ten analysis areas which form the basis of many of the data tables in this study. The population of the analysis areas is shown in table 2.2. These areas are referenced throughout the document and in all data tables where they are used, will appear in the order shown in table 2.2.

Plan 2.1 The Leeds District Divided into 10 Analysis Areas



Analysis Area

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Table 2.2 Population of Analysis Areas in Leeds (ONS 2008 mid year population estimate)

Analysis Area	Population	Wards included
East Inner	80,578	Killingbeck and Seacroft Gipton and Harehills Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
East Outer	85,392	Kippax and Methley Garforth and Swillington Temple Newsam Crossgates and Whinmoor
North East Inner	70,909	Moortown Roundhay Chapel Allerton
North East Outer	62,281	Harewood Wetherby Alwoodley
North West Inner	106,127	Weetwood Hyde Park and Woodhouse Headingley Kirkstall
North West Outer	87,305	Guiseley and Rawdon Otley and Yeadon Adel and Wharfedale Horsforth
South Inner	74,683	City and Hunslet Beeston and Holbeck Middleton Park
South Outer	90,587	Morley North Morley South Ardsley and Robin Hood Rothwell
West Inner	50,297	Bramley and Stanningley Armley
West Outer	71,097	Calverley and Farsley Pudsey Farnley and Wortley
Leeds	799,256	

2.11 Throughout the analysis, consideration is given to the implications of projected population growth over the period of the Leeds Core Strategy. In light of uncertainties relating to the long term projections in population growth, the implications of three different scenarios have been tested. These three scenarios are:

- Scenario A – Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) based on initial employment led population projection data which realigned population levels from 2001 to 2010 with locally derived data sources and projected growth based on employment projections. Distribution of future population across the city is aligned with housing units identified through

the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and application of selected planning policy constraints identified in the Core Strategy Preferred Approach. Average household size is derived from the SHMA assumptions.

- Scenario B – Strategic Housing Market Assessment based on ONS population estimates 2001 to 2010 and ONS projections to 2026. Distribution of future population aligned with housing units identified through the SHLAA with limited planning policy constraints applied to site selection.
- Scenario C – 22% increase in population of 169,700 between 2008 and 2026 using ONS population projections evenly distributed between the analysis areas.

2.12 Table 2.3 below illustrates the theoretical population change in each of the ten analysis areas. Scenarios A and B consider various factors influencing distribution of new development and show that some areas of the city will have larger population increases than others. Scenario C considers a proportional distribution of population growth where each analysis area increases its population by 22% up to 2026. In reality, scenario C is the least likely to transpire as it does not accommodate any development constraints.

2.13 It is important to note that these three scenarios are for illustrative purposes only based on the latest emerging information. The city council is still considering its final position in regard to the distribution of housing growth.

Table 2.3 The Three Potential Population Growth Scenarios by Analysis Area

Analysis Area	Mid year 2008 ONS Estimate	Scenario A population (2026)	Scenario B population (2026)	Scenario C population (2026)
East Inner	80,578	93,648	102,120	98,127
East Outer	85,392	113,735	124,911	103,990
North East Inner	70,909	72,527	75,350	86,352
North East Outer	62,281	64,550	67,307	75,845
North West Inner	106,127	109,401	117,761	129,241
North West Outer	87,305	94,943	101,281	106,320
South Inner	74,683	94,354	118,662	90,948
South Outer	90,587	96,584	107,770	110,316
West Inner	50,297	51,946	55,177	61,251
West Outer	71,097	74,800	78,661	86,581
Leeds	799,256	866,488	949,000	948,977

PPG17 Five step process

2.14 PPG17 states that local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities. The study comprises of 5 main steps:

Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs

Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision

Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards

Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards

Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities

2.15 In reality, steps 1 and 2 were undertaken at the same time, rather than following on from one another.

Step 1: Identifying local needs

2.16 The guidance highlights that consultation with the local community is essential to identify local attitudes to existing provision and local expectations for additional or improved provision.

2.17 The assessment of needs should contribute to the production of local standards that reflect the type and amount of open space, sport and recreation facilities that local communities want.

2.18 It is important to obtain a statistical evidence base of local needs as well as carrying out a series of subjective consultations to test the key themes emerging from the statistical evidence base.

2.19 In April 2008, PMP, (a specialist leisure research company), was commissioned to undertake the necessary elements comprising the needs assessment. This involved a wide ranging consultation programme with the local community. There is a separate technical paper which contains more detail on the methodology and results from this exercise: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment - A Final Report by PMP (October 2008). The main elements of the Leeds needs assessment involved:

- A self-completion postal survey sent to a random sample of 7,000 households across the city;
- an on-street survey with 500 residents at a range of sites within five inner areas of Leeds;
- an on-line survey for completion by pupils attending schools in Leeds;
- a postal survey to circa 350 sports clubs and user groups;
- an on-line survey for completion by staff working at Leeds City Council;
- an on-line survey to council ward members;
- consultation with key stakeholders;
- discussion/focus groups with members of Leeds Youth Forum, parish council representatives and local residents;
- a desk review of existing policy documents and data of relevance to the study.

- 2.20 The surveys and consultation sessions were designed to gain feedback from the local community regarding the adequacy of open space, sport and recreation facility provision in Leeds. A range of questionnaires and interview guides were developed to collect the following information:
- Views on the adequacy of the existing quantity or amount of open space, sport and recreation provision;
 - views on the existing quality of open space, sport and recreation provision;
 - views on what features and aspects are considered to be important in an open space, sport and recreation facility in order to identify their aspirations for future provision;
 - details of expected travel times and modes of transport to open space, sport and recreation facilities;
 - usage information relating to open space, sport and recreation facilities;
 - feedback in relation to potential barriers to usage and participation;
 - whether any particular problems have been experienced when using open space, sport and recreation facilities;
 - views on the adequacy of provision within Leeds City Centre;
 - respondent profile details (eg gender, age, ethnicity and employment status).

Understanding the Statistics

- 2.21 With the exception of the on-street survey, where the respondent sample was stratified to reflect local demographics, all other surveys undertaken were self completion. As a result, individuals who choose to respond are 'self-selecting' and as such, are likely to include those with a specific interest in the 'subject matter' of the questionnaire. Whilst this is a positive, in terms of gaining feedback from individuals who have some knowledge and interest in open space, sports and recreation provision in Leeds, it can also mean that more responses are received from users than non-users (as such, opinions on some questions will differ between the on-street survey and the household survey respondents).

Stage 2: Auditing local provision

- 2.22 All information relating to open space (including outdoor sports or playing pitches) in Leeds is collated in a Geographic Information System (GIS). The study excluded:
- Grass road verges, unless they are large enough to be purposive and capable of performing an open space function (see below);
 - farmland (agricultural land), farm tracks;
 - Rights of Way (RoW), unless forming a green corridor;
 - private roads and private domestic gardens;
 - SLOAP – Space Left Over After Planning ie. space around blocks of flats, or grass between slip roads and motorway junctions, large roundabouts;
 - former residential clearance sites set aside for future redevelopment but grassed over as part of best practice asset management whilst plans are developed;

- spaces under 2,000 square metres (0.2 hectares) unless there is a sport or recreation facility at the site, such as single bowling green sites which are usually 1,400 square metres.

2.23 Indoor sports and recreation facilities criteria were as follows:

- Halls and sports halls capable of accommodating at least a single badminton court;
- swimming pools at least 15 metres in length;
- dance studios at least 80 square metres;
- gyms and multi-purpose sports areas at least 100 square metres;
- facilities which are only available to school pupils during school hours were excluded.

2.24 The focus of the study is the provision of open space primarily within the built-up areas of Leeds. Sites in the Green Belt have also been included where they are laid out for sport and recreational use. The following open spaces and recreation facilities were identified and audited for the purposes of the study:

- Open space sites of 0.2 hectares and above in size, within the built-up area;
- sites laid out for sport and recreational use in the Green Belt of 0.2 hectares and above;
- sites with formal sport, recreation or equipped play provision.

2.25 As recommended in PPG17, each site has been identified and classed based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of space is counted only once. Some sites contain multiple open space uses, for example, the larger city parks can include playing fields, formal gardens, equipped children's play space, bowling greens, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, woodlands and natural grasslands.

2.26 This approach has resulted in a data set of 1,750 open space sites and 154 indoor sports sites.

2.27 The site audit included a quality assessment process of various site specific factors. Quality scores were assigned for each site.

2.28 A full list of sites and their scores can be found in Appendix A. The site assessment matrix and assessment sheet can also be found in Appendix B and C respectively.

Steps 3 and 4 - Setting and applying provision standards

2.29 PPG17 states that open space standards should be set locally and recommends that national standards should not be used to assess local circumstances.

2.30 PPG17 recommends that local authorities use information gained from the assessment of needs and opportunities (step 1) to set locally derived

standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities. These local standards should include:

- Quantitative elements (how much new provision may be needed);
- a qualitative component (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities).

2.31 The local standards for quality, quantity and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities should relate to the local consultation undertaken and, therefore reflect local needs. The study has proposed locally based standards using the findings of the community surveys, results of other relevant research and consultations. The survey results provide a statistical evidence base to inform decision making.

Quantity

2.32 The open space audit enables an understanding of the quantity of each type of open space in each area of the city. This level of detail enables the calculation of the provision of each type of open space per 1,000 population. This information is provided within typology specific chapters 4 to 12.

2.33 In order to ensure that any standards set are reflective of local community needs and opinions, key themes emerging from consultations in each analysis area relating to the quantity of each type are analysed. The key issues for each type of open space are assessed within chapters 4 to 12. Local standards are subsequently proposed taking into account the current level of provision compared to the perceived community need.

2.34 The overall aim of the quantity assessment is to:

- Provide an understanding of the adequacy of existing provision for each type of open space in the city;
- identify areas of the city with a deficiency of provision of each type of open space;
- provide a guide to developers as to the amount of open space expected in conjunction with new development.

2.35 This assessment measures the quantity of provision against the population of 799,256 (based on 2008 ONS mid year population estimates). Consideration is also given to the likely implications of future population growth up to 2026, considering the impact of each of the three potential growth scenarios.

2.36 It is important that the quantity of provision is not considered in isolation from access and quality, but that the interrelationship between the different standards is identified and evaluated.

Accessibility

2.37 Accessibility is a key criterion for open space sites. Without good accessibility, the provision of good quality or sufficient quantity of open space would be of limited value. The overall aim of accessibility standards should be to identify:

- How accessible sites are;
- how far people are willing to travel to reach open space;
- areas of the city that are deficient in provision (identified through the application of local standards).

2.38 Similar to quantity standards, accessibility standards should be derived from an understanding of the community views.

2.39 Distance thresholds (ie the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel to each type of provision using different modes of transport) are a very useful planning tool. PPG17 encourages any new open space sites or enhancement of existing sites to be accessible by environmentally friendly forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

2.40 Accessibility standards are proposed in the form of a distance in metres where walking is the most popular mode of travel, and a drive time (or public transport standard) where driving to the open space site is the most popular mode.

Quality

2.41 The quality and value of open space are fundamentally different and can sometimes be completely unrelated. Two examples of this are:

- A high quality open space is provided but is completely inaccessible. Its use is, therefore, restricted and its value to the public limited;
- a low quality open space may be used every day by the public or have some significant wider benefit such as biodiversity or educational use and, therefore, has a relatively high value to the public.

2.42 The site assessment matrix and assessment sheet can be found in Appendix B and C. The overall aim of a quality assessment should be to identify deficiencies in quality and key quality factors that need to be improved within:

- The geographical areas of the city;
- specific types of open space.

2.43 Scores achieved during site visits are translated into scores out of 10 or percentages and then benchmarked against each other. The application of the process for each typology can be found in typology specific chapters.

Step 5 Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities

2.44 Chapter 13 presents the basis for drafting planning policies, recommendations for additional research and consideration, strategic issues requiring action and implications for the future growth of the city in regard to open space, sport and recreation.