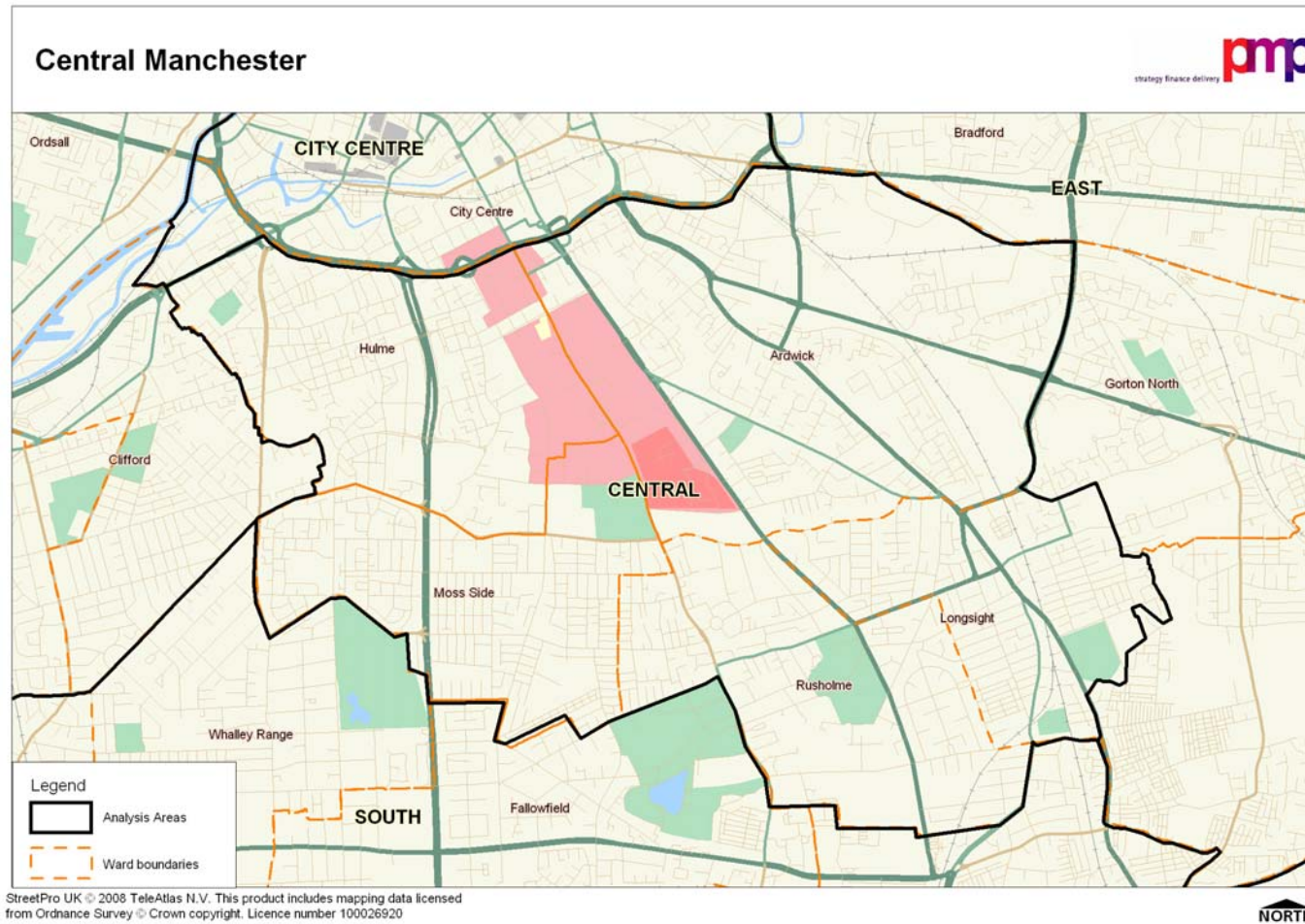


15. Central Manchester

Introduction

- 15.1 The Central Manchester area is made up of the wards of Ardwick, Hulme, Longsight, Moss Side and Rusholme. The area is characterised by dense terraced housing with limited green space. The majority of houses have small rear yards and no garden space. Public green space is therefore of particular importance in this area.
- 15.2 Between 1991 and 2001 the population of Central Manchester has increased by approximately 3%. This increase has continued and this has mainly been down to an increase in the Asian community in the area. The area is ethnically diverse and there are a number of areas of community concentrations, specifically in Gorton (a predominantly white community), Moss Side (a large African and Caribbean community) and Longsight (a large Asian community).
- 15.3 Levels of deprivation in the area are particularly high, with over half of Central Manchester classified within the worst 5% of LSOA's and 30% of neighbourhoods classified in the worst 1%. These high levels of deprivation are particularly evident in Moss Side. In addition to high levels of deprivation there are also high levels of unemployment, crime and poor health in the area.
- 15.4 The population in the Central area is made up of a large BME community and has a high number of students due to the close proximity of the Manchester University. The population growth and influx of students in this area has created a high demand for housing. There are a number of neighbourhoods that are ranked the most deprived wards in the UK and future priorities are to regenerate a number of areas in light of the lack of opportunity for new development.
- 15.5 The Central Manchester Regeneration Area contains the Oxford Road Corridor. This corridor is the focus of a significant regeneration programme driven by the Manchester City South Partnership. The area covers 600 acres immediately south of Manchester City Centre. The strategic framework for this area addresses a range of issues including transport, environment, culture, retail, employment and linkage to the surrounding communities. As a result, open space is central to the proposals in the area and there will be a concerted effort to improve the quantity and quality of green spaces, making the area a more pleasant place to live and work. As well as new open spaces, the area will be "greened" through the planting of additional trees, something that reflects creation of green biodiverse linkages to other open space sites, provides shade areas, helps in the reduction of air pollution, softens urban environment.
- 15.6 In recognition of the importance of public open space in Central Manchester, a green space strategy is currently being produced. This builds on the findings of this PPG17 assessment and will look at solutions to address the key issues identified. The strategy will be important material consideration for future planning applications within the central area.

Map 15.1 – Central Manchester



- 15.7 The Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) focuses on the following key themes:
- a dynamic economy
 - opportunities for all
 - flourishing communities
 - a renewed urban environment.
- 15.8 The strategy identifies a number of opportunities and objectives in relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities in the area. These are as follows:
- improving the living conditions and environments of Central Manchester
 - transforming the health of Central Manchester's residents
 - reviewing and improving the areas natural assets
 - improving environmental quality – maintaining and improving major parks and open spaces
 - creating green links to improve accessibility to parks and open spaces
 - increasing participation in regular physical activity, including the provision of an all weather facility
 - making full use of green and open spaces
 - using parks as a driver for development adjacent to them.

Open space, sport and recreation provision across Central Manchester

- 15.9 Though Central Manchester has some high quality parks and open spaces greater emphasis on green and open spaces is needed to strengthen neighbourhoods. Open space, sport and recreation facilities found in Central Manchester include:
- 19 Local Parks. Of these parks, Ardwick Green and Crowcroft Park have achieved Green Flag status in recognition of the high quality of these sites
 - eight natural open spaces, with the size of sites ranging from 0.14 hectares to 2.51 hectares
 - 60 amenity green spaces. The average size of an amenity green space in the area is 0.53 hectares with the largest site being Princess Road (2.79 hectares)

- 16 children's play areas, including two adventure playgrounds. In addition to this, 25 facilities for young people are also located in Central Manchester. Facilities found in the area include MUGAs, skate parks and a five a side football pitch
- a wide range of outdoor sports facilities. This includes:
 - 17 educational sites
 - one athletics track
 - two bowling green sites
 - six synthetic turf pitches of which four are full size
 - 23 grass pitches
 - two tennis court sites.
- four allotment sites, with the largest site being Brighton Grove (79 plots). Waiting lists are found at all four sites and the number of people on the waiting list at Aquarius Estate (6) is greater than the supply (4 plots).

15.10 Table 15.1 summarises the quantity of open space falling into each of the typologies assessed as part of this study. Outdoor sports facilities are evaluated separately in table 15.2.

Table 15.1 – Open space across Central Manchester

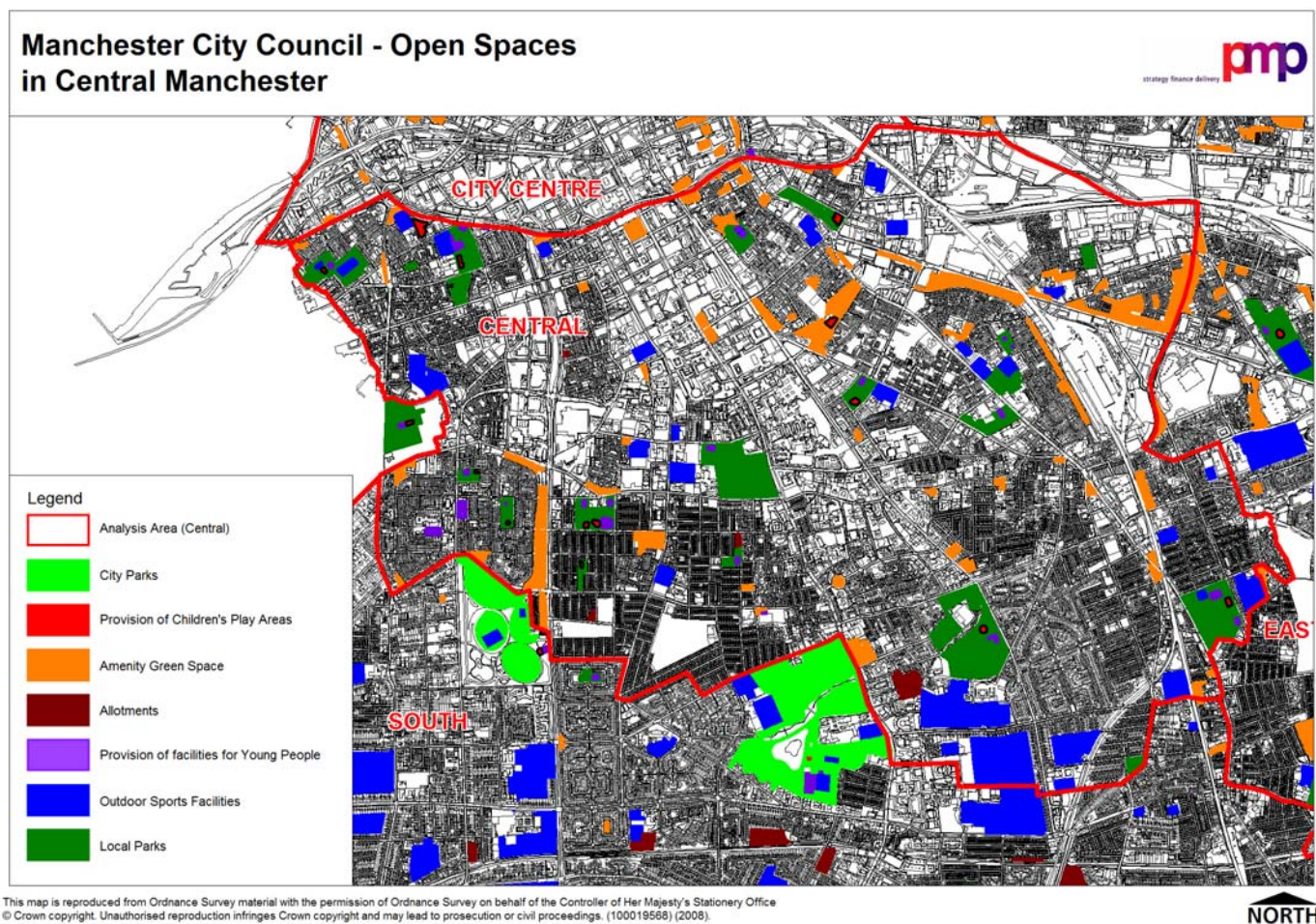
Open space type	Number of sites	Hectares (total)	Hectares per 1000 population
City parks	0	0	0
Local parks	19	45.07	0.60
Natural and semi natural open space	8	7.19	0.01
Amenity green space	60	31.58	0.42
Children's play areas	16	1.71	0.02
Provision for young people	25	2.28	0.03
Allotments	4	1.92	0.03

Table 15.2 – Outdoor Sports Facilities

Outdoor sports facility type	Number of sites	Hectares (total)	Hectares per 1000 population
Grass pitches	23	36.35	0.49
Synthetic turf pitches	6 (4 full size)	3.23	0.04
Bowling greens	2 (2 greens)	0.38	0.01
Tennis courts	2 (3 courts)	0.29	0.004

15.11 The adequacy of these facilities will be considered later in this section.

Map 15.2 – Open space, sport and recreation facilities in Central Manchester



The adequacy of provision in Central Manchester

- 15.12 As discussed in Section 4, standards have been set for all types of open space. The application of the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local needs.
- 15.13 Table 15.3 evaluates the adequacy of the quantity of open space in Central Manchester by measuring the existing provision against the local standards. It also highlights the amount of population growth that could be accommodated before existing provision would fall below the minimum standards.

Table 15.3 – Application of the Manchester City Council Quantity Standards in Central Manchester

Type of open space	Current provision (hectares)	Shortfall / surplus against local standard 2008 (hectares)	Amount of population growth that can be accommodated
City parks	0	-14.95	Below minimum standard
Local parks	45.07	8.44	17,219
Natural and semi natural	7.19	-13.41	Below minimum standard
Amenity green spaces	31.58	1.68	4,189
Children's play areas	1.71	-0.27	Below minimum standard
Provision for young people	2.28	-0.26	Below minimum standard
Outdoor sports facilities	4.48	-31	Below minimum standard
Allotments	1.92	No standard set	No standard set
Civic spaces	0	No standard set	No standard set
Cemeteries and churchyards	0	No standard set	No standard set

Green = above the standard, Red = below the standard

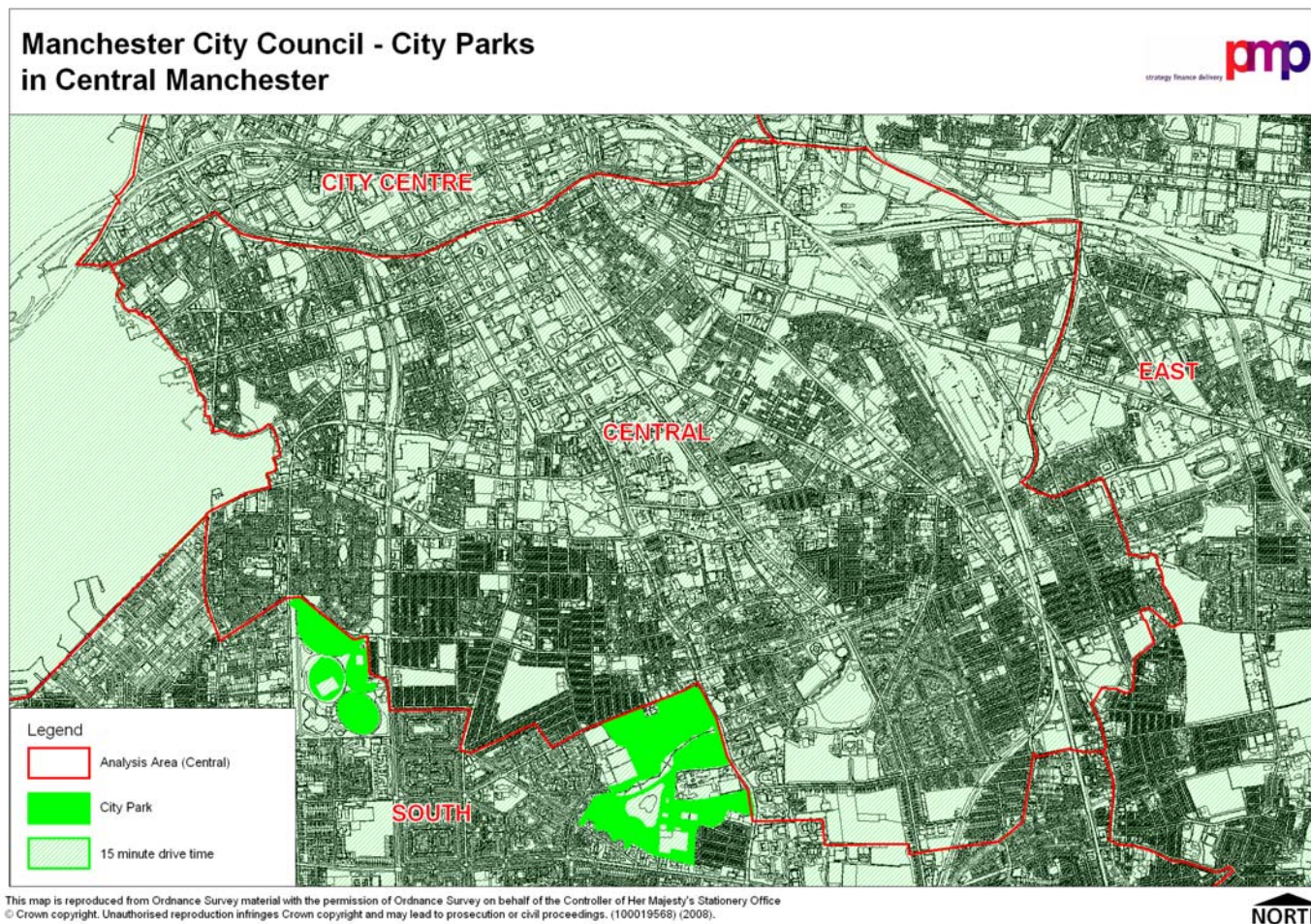
- 15.14 The quantity of open space in comparison to other areas of the City is varied. While provision of parks and amenity spaces is above the recommended minimum standards, there are significant deficiencies in natural and semi natural open space and outdoor sports facilities. If the population was to increase by 4,189 people, the quantity of amenity space would also fall below the minimum standard.

- 15.15 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. It is essential to apply the standards in isolation and then to apply them in the context of each other. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.
- 15.16 Maps 15.3 – 15.12 therefore evaluate the provision of each of the different types of open space across Central Manchester. Despite high quantitative deficiencies, it can be seen that the distribution of facilities across central Manchester is even. This means that while the open spaces may not have the capacity to meet the needs of existing residents; most residents have appropriate access to facilities. Facilities for children are the key gap in provision in this area of the City.
- 15.17 The quality of open spaces in the Central area is particularly good and in many instances the quality is the highest of all areas of the City. Table 15.4 summarises the average quality score achieved for each type of open space in Central Manchester. It can be seen that the quality of natural open spaces is lower than the other types of open space. In contrast, the quality of outdoor sports facilities is particularly high. Improvements made as part of the Manchester City South Partnership are likely to further enhance open spaces in the area.

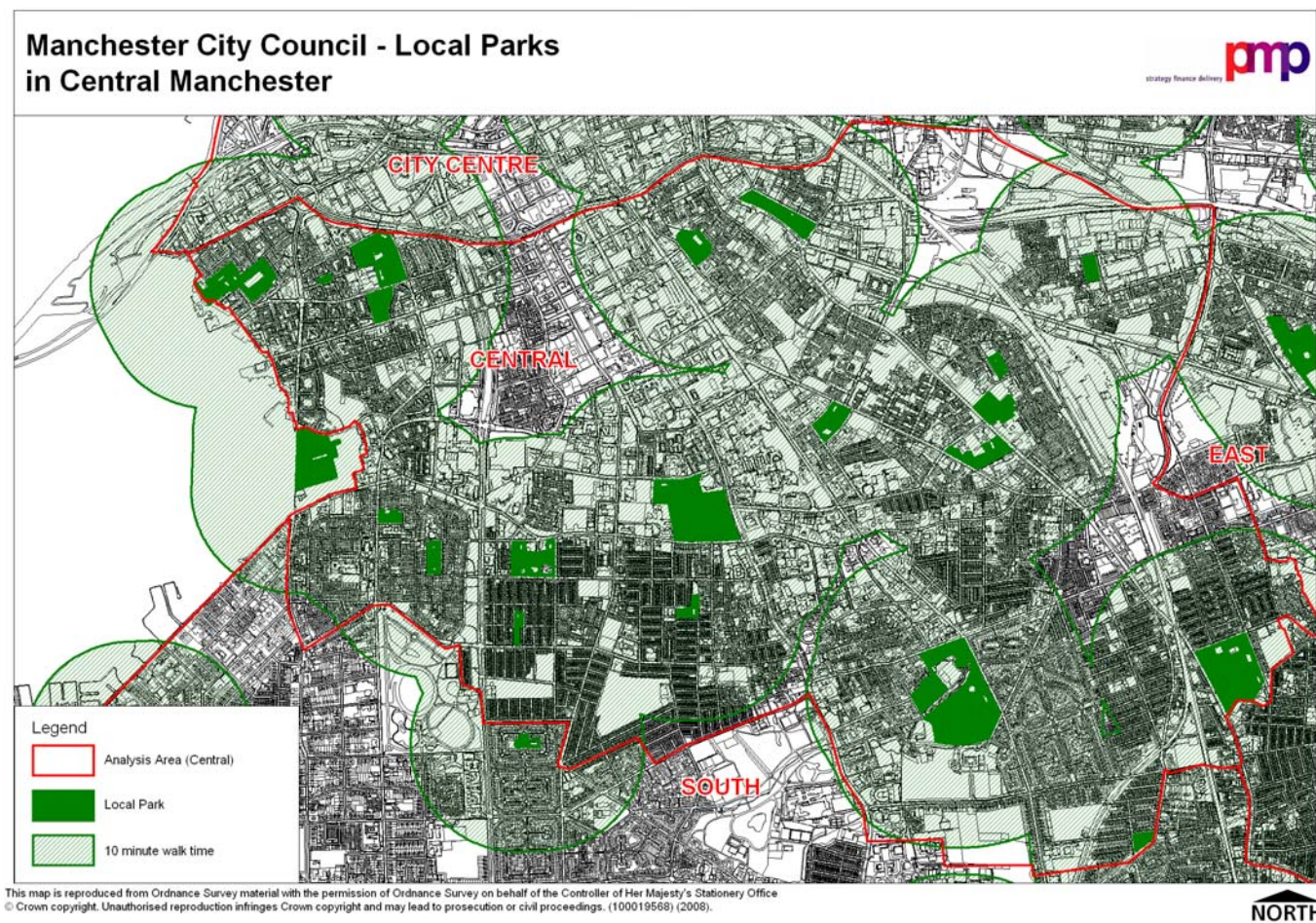
Table 15.4 – Quality of open spaces in Central Manchester

Area	Outdoor sports facilities	Natural open space	Amenity green space	Provision for children	Provision for young people
Central	85	53	73	74	63

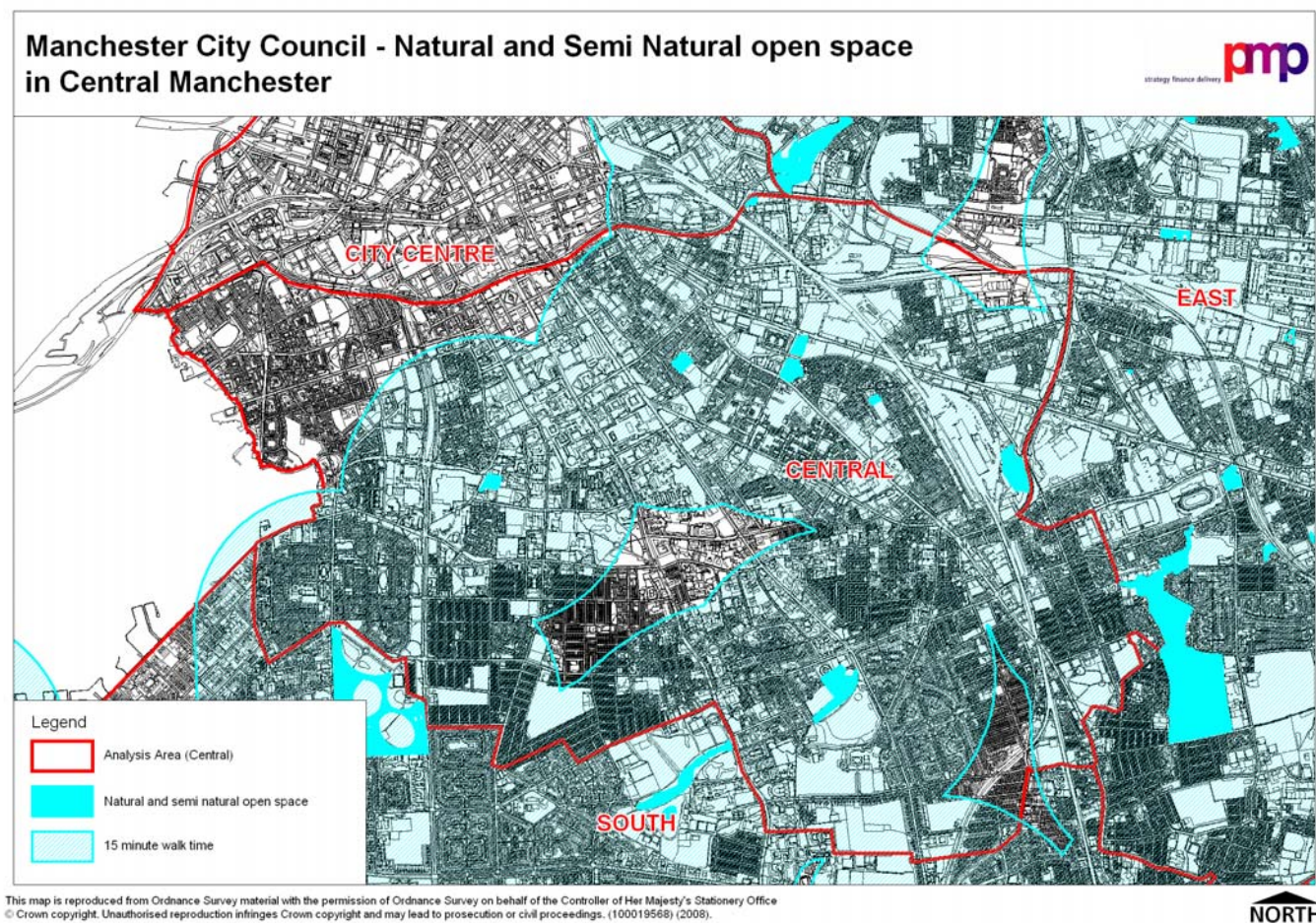
Map 15.3 – City Parks in Central Manchester



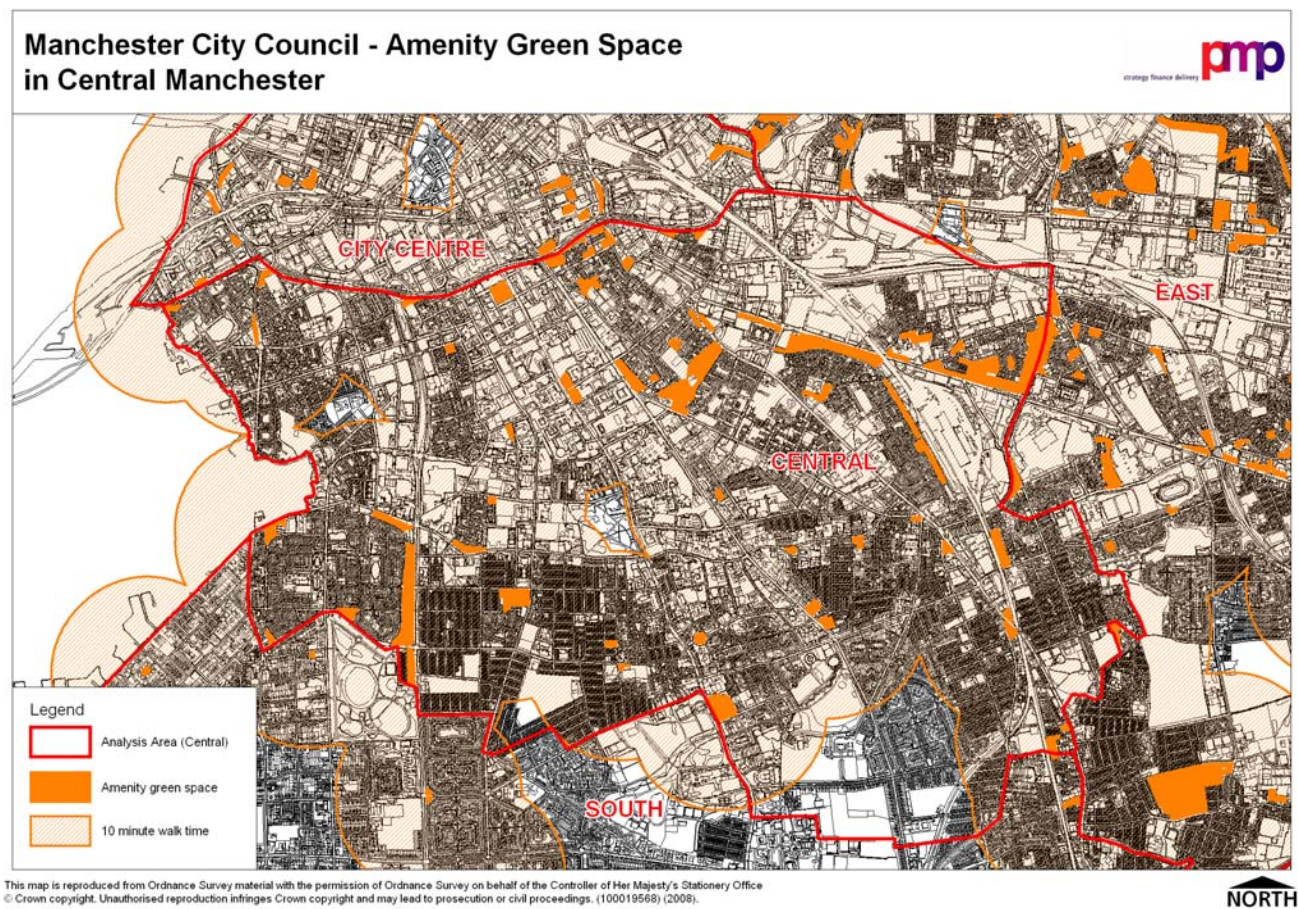
Map 15.4 – Local Parks in Central Manchester



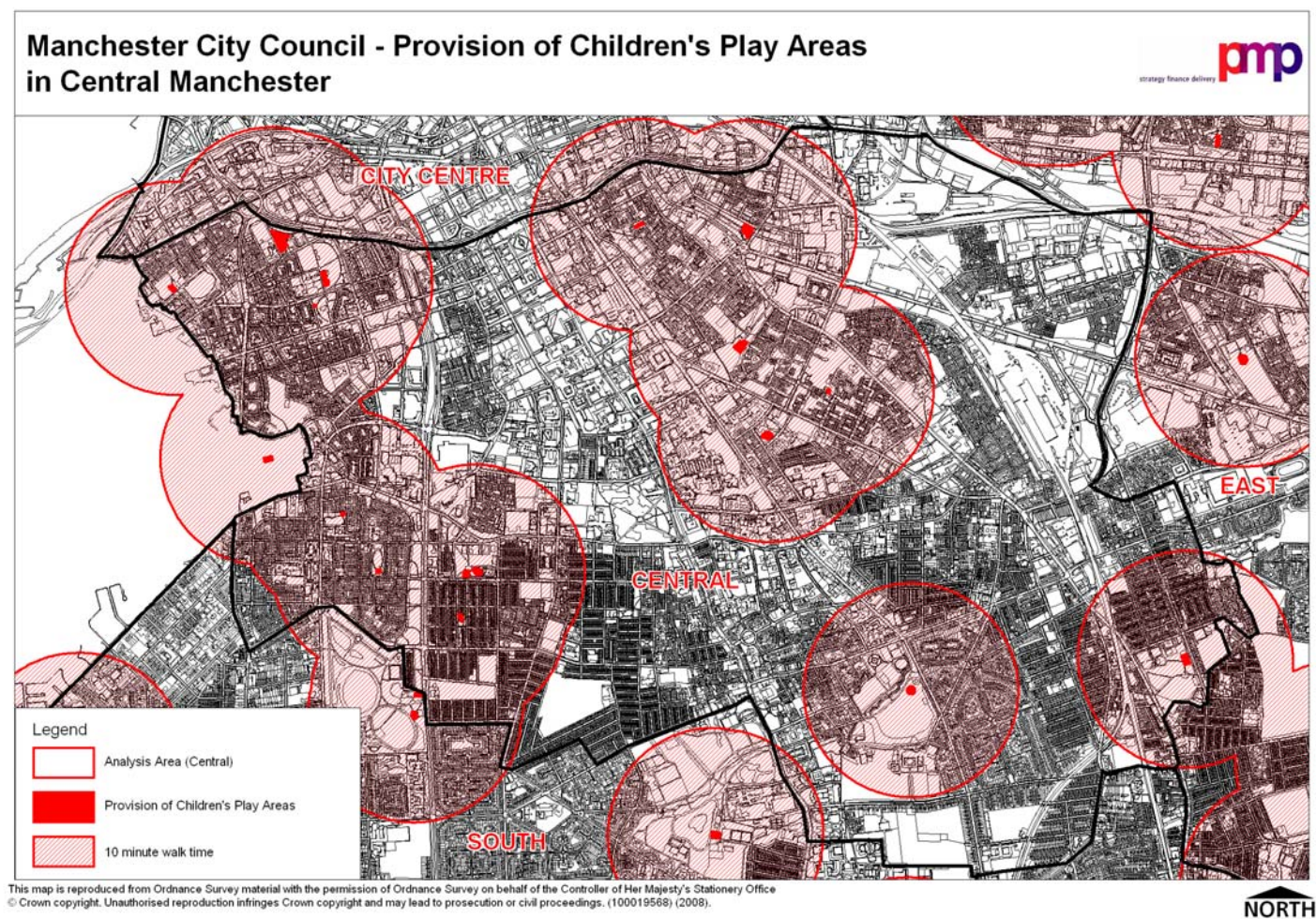
Map 15.5 – Natural and semi natural open space in Central Manchester



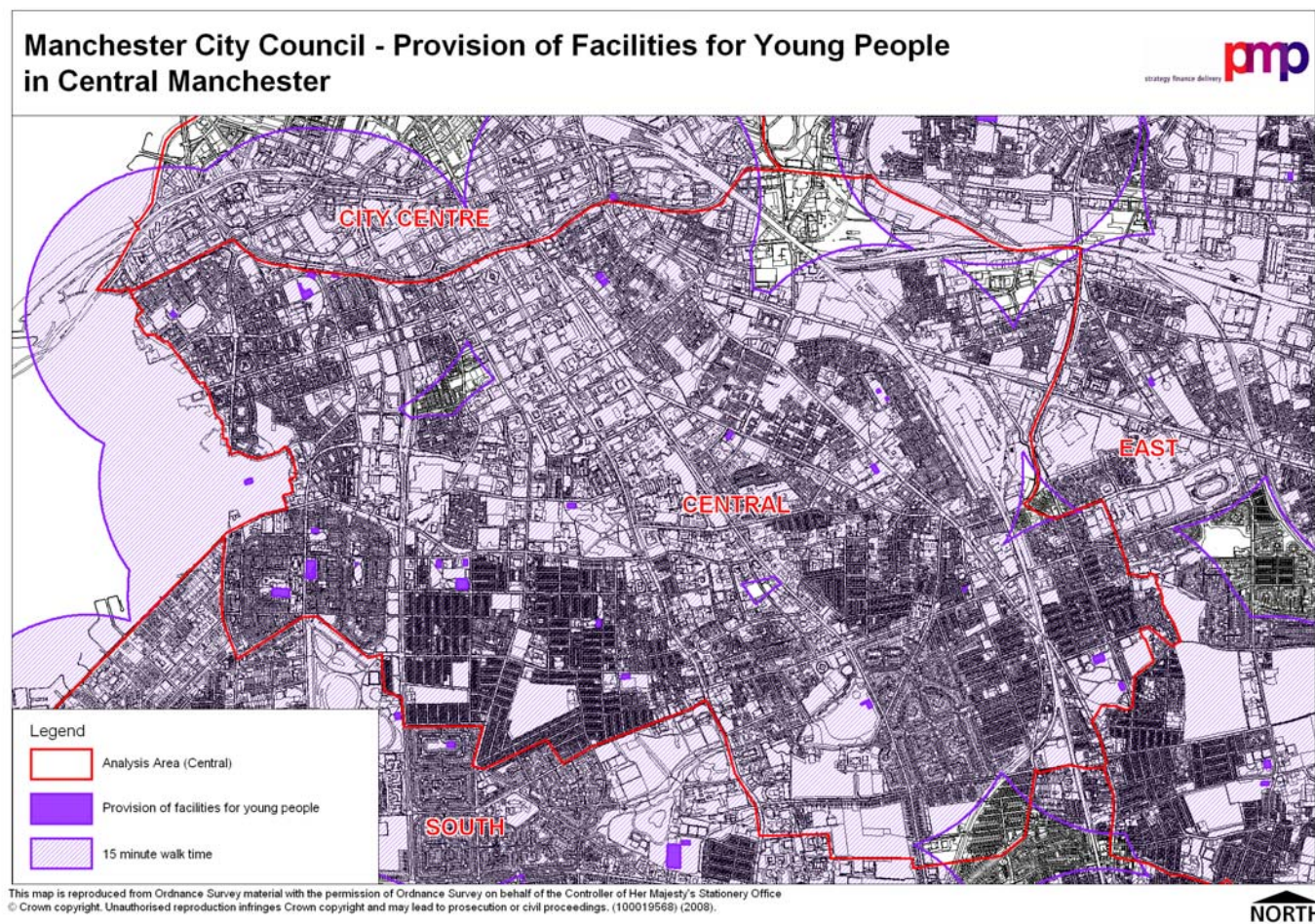
Map 15.6 – Amenity green space in Central Manchester



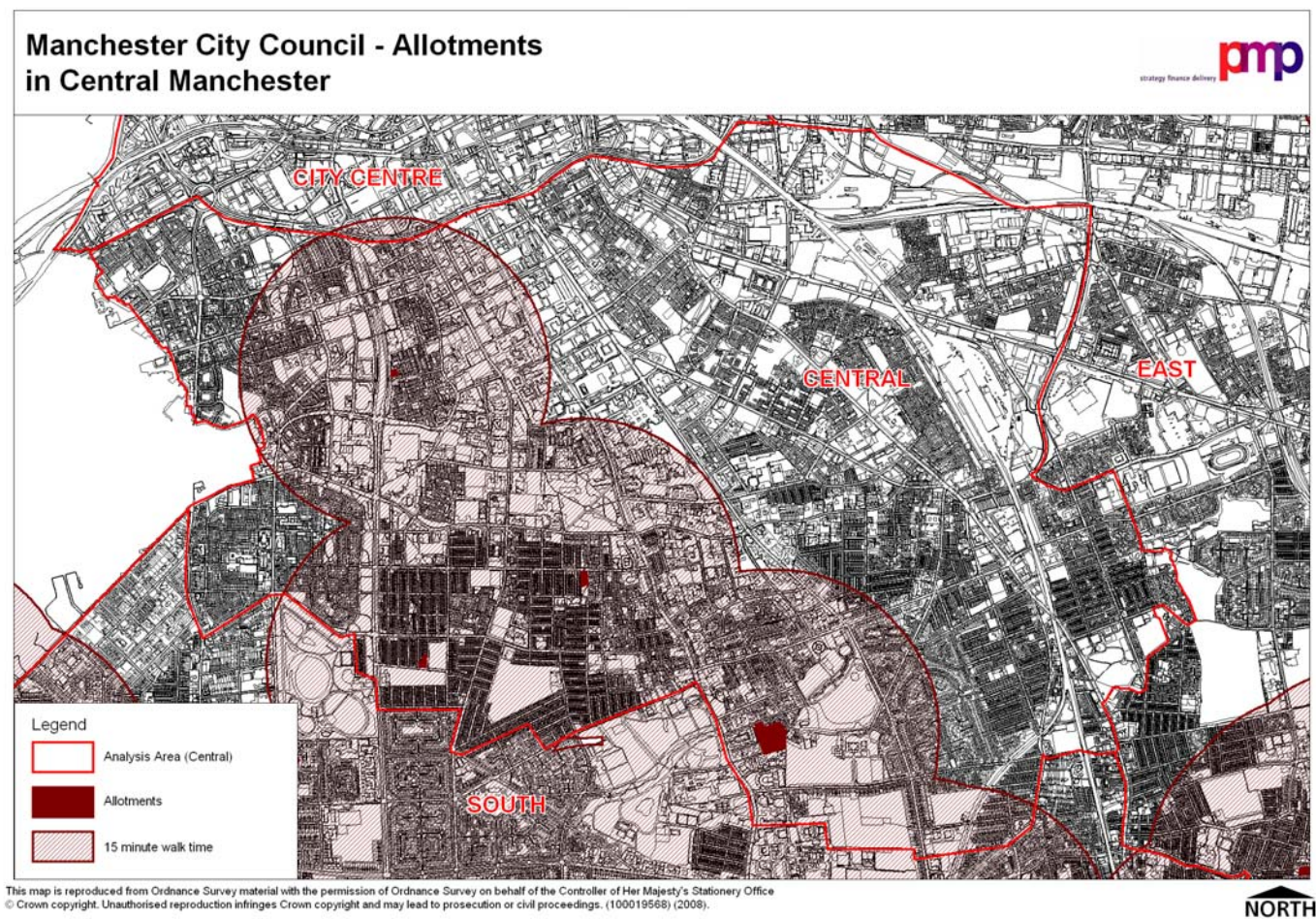
Map 15.7 – Children's play areas in Central Manchester



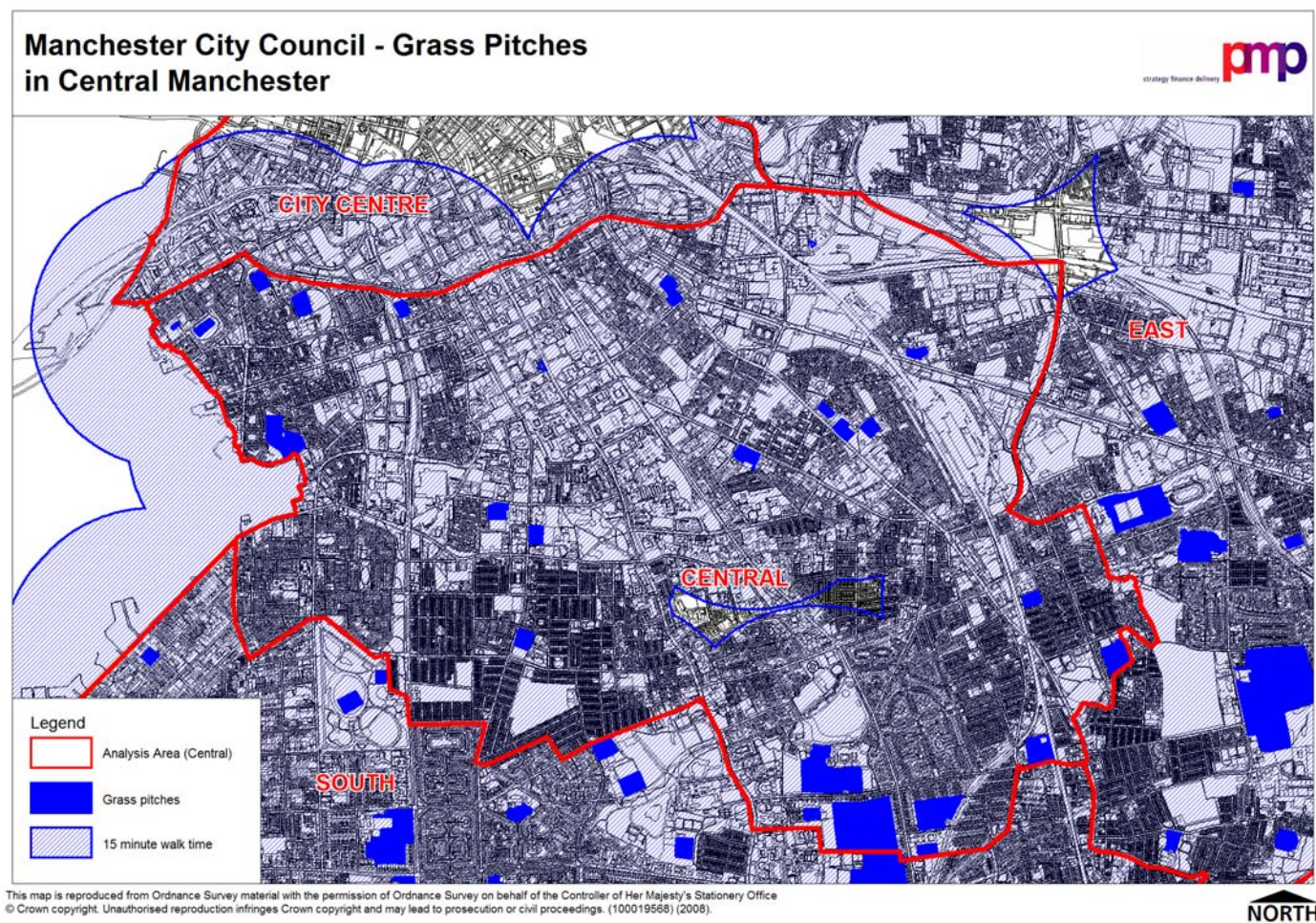
Map 15.8 – Provision for young people in Central Manchester



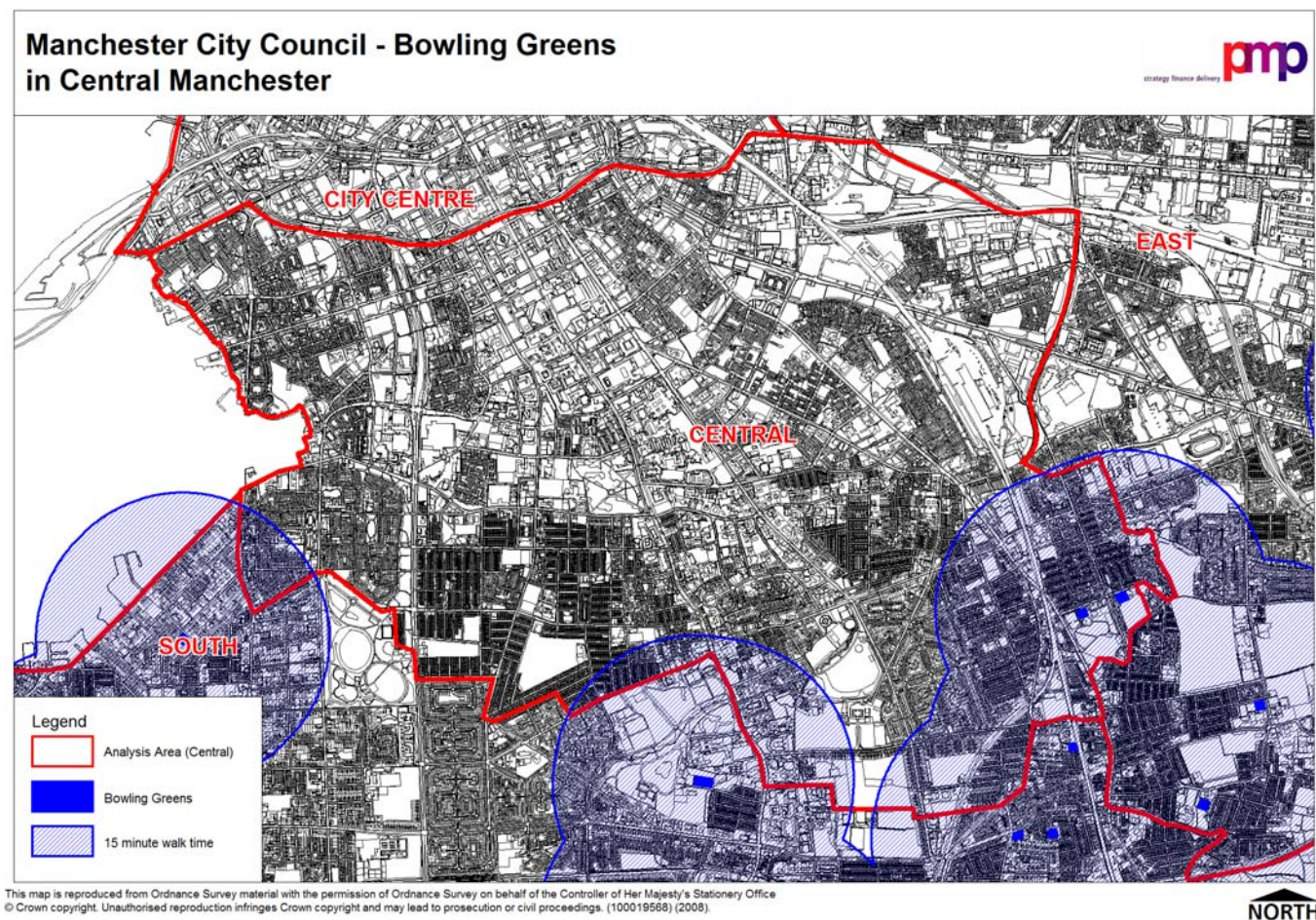
Map 15.9 – Provision of allotments in Central Manchester



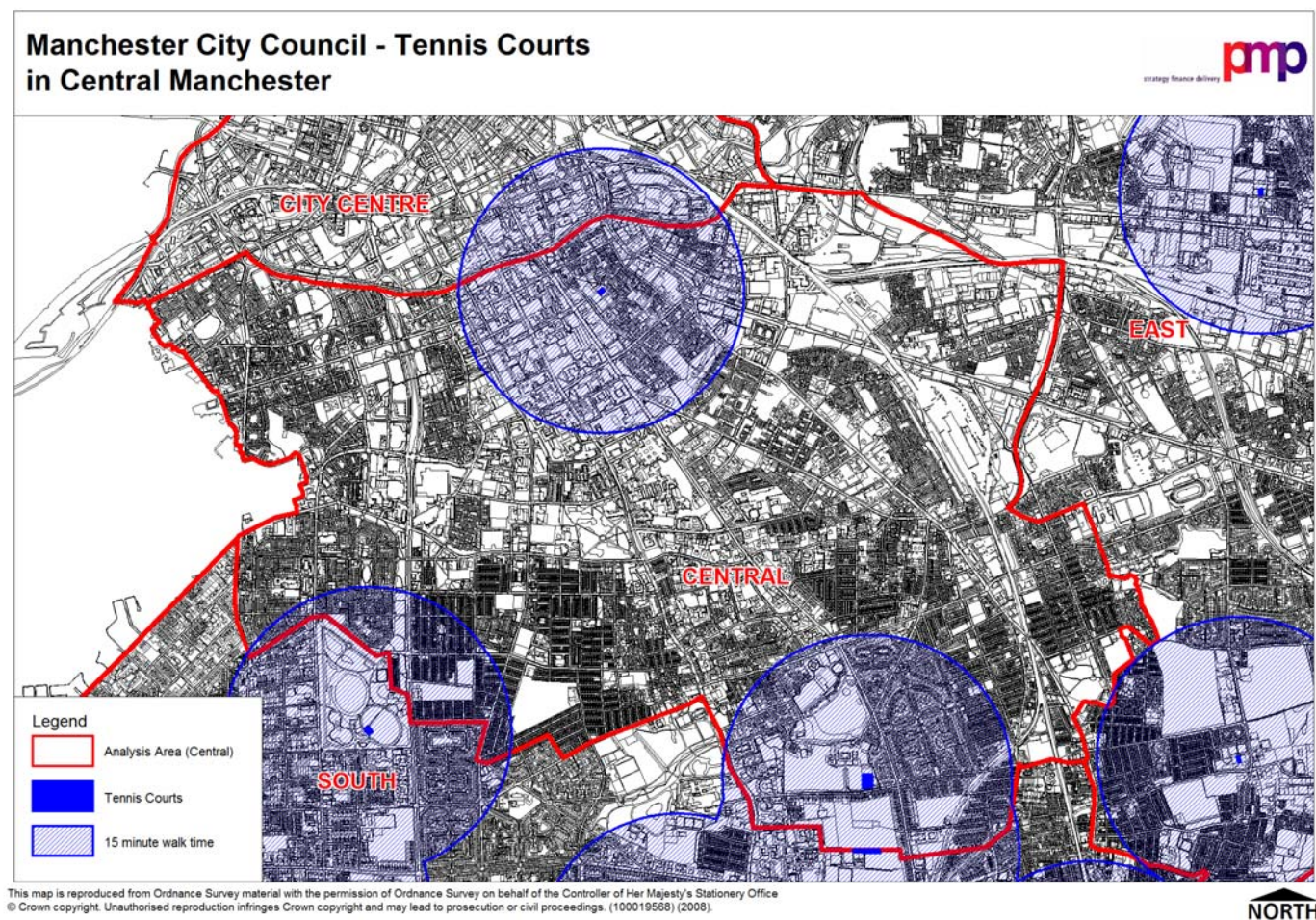
Map 15.10 – Provision of grass pitches in Central Manchester



Map 15.11 – Provision of bowling greens in Central Manchester



Map 15.12 – Provision of tennis courts in Central Manchester



Priorities in Central Manchester

- 15.18 Table 15.5 overleaf summarises the key issues arising in Central Manchester with regards open space, sport and recreation facilities and outlines the key recommendations for the future delivery of each type of open space.
- 15.19 Due to the dense urban nature of this area, innovative solutions may be needed to offset deficiencies including maximising the role of green corridors, developing green roofs and green walls and creating tree lined streets.

Table 15.5 – The future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities in Central Manchester

Open Space Type	Issues	Recommendations
Parks and Gardens	<p>Application of the accessibility standard indicates that nearly all residents have access to a local park. Quantitative analysis supports this high level of accessibility, with there being sufficient provision to meet current demand. The current quantity of parks would be sufficient to accommodate population growth of 17,219 residents.</p> <p>This even distribution of parks suggests that new provision is not a priority in this area.</p> <p>The quality of Local Parks in Central Manchester is good. The average quality score of a site is 76% and site scores range from 62% – 86%. In addition to this, Ardwick Green and Crowcroft Park have been awarded Green Flag status. However, Barracks Park (62%), Longsight Park North (67%) and Langport Avenue (68%) are three sites that scored below 70%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement. Improvements to the quality of provision are also a priority in the SRF.</p> <p>In light of deficiencies in other types of open space, it is essential that parks in the central area offer a wide range of opportunities for residents. This may include play provision, natural and semi natural open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the quality of the two existing green flag parks, specifically Ardwick Green and Crowcroft Park (Ongoing) • In order to offset deficiencies of other types of open space consider the provision of a wide range of different environments within the park, including natural areas, facilities for children and young people and sports facilities (Ongoing) • Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of existing parks (Short to medium term) • Promote the development of green linkages connecting residents in the central areas with parks and open spaces in the South, City Centre and East Manchester. This may include opening up access to river and canal corridors as well as making links between existing open spaces. Access routes within parks should also be considered. The creation of linkages will be particularly important if deficiencies in other types of open space are to be addressed (Short to medium term) • Evaluate the impact of population growth on the adequacy of parks in the area. Innovative solutions may be required in light of the nature of the area and the limited opportunities for large scale new provision (Longer term).
Natural and Semi Natural Open Space	<p>With the exception of the City Centre the Central area contains the lowest levels of natural and semi natural open space is. (7.19 hectares). As a consequence of low levels of provision, application of the quantity standard demonstrates a significant shortfall. (1344.867hectares).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of existing natural open spaces, taking into account the findings of the site assessments as well as the need to balance recreation with biodiversity and conservation (Short to medium term).

Open Space Type	Issues	Recommendations
	<p>Despite the greatest quantitative shortfall of natural and semi natural open space accessibility mapping reveals that nearly all residents have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the recommended accessibility catchment. Only a small number of residents in the west (Hulme area) do not have access to a natural or semi natural open space</p> <p>The quality of natural and semi natural open space is the lowest of all areas in the City, with the average quality score of a site being 58%. Only one site, Mill Green Street (85%), scored over 60% and three sites scored below 50%, indicating the need for significant qualitative improvements to a number of sites in the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate natural and semi natural open spaces with other types of open space for example ensure that parks contain an area of natural space (Short to medium term) • Promote the development of green linkages connecting residents with natural open spaces in nearby areas as well as creating wildlife corridors for migration and travel. This may include opening up access to river and canal corridors as well as making links between existing open spaces (Short to medium term). In areas where there are quantitative deficiencies and limited other solutions, the provision of trees to line streets may provide an interim solution.
Amenity Green Space	<p>Accessibility mapping indicates that nearly all residents have access to an amenity green space. Quantitative analysis supports this, with provision exceeding the minimum standard. The current quantity of amenity green space is sufficient to accommodate a small population growth of 4189.</p> <p>In addition to access to amenity green space, residents in this area of the City also have local access to Local Parks, meaning that many informal recreation opportunities are available.</p> <p>The quality of amenity green space in Central Manchester is good. Quality scores range from 60% to 100% and the average quality score of a site is 75%. Although the average quality score of a site is good, nine sites achieved quality scores below 70%. This indicates that quality improvements are required to a number of amenity green space sites in Central Manchester.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of existing amenity spaces (Short term) • Despite high levels of provision of amenity space, consider the need for new amenity spaces as part of development at a localized level, where deficiencies may occur (Ongoing) • Ensure that amenity spaces are integrated within the overall green space network and that they are connected with other larger spaces. (Longer term).

SECTION 15 – CENTRAL MANCHESTER

Open Space Type	Issues	Recommendations
Provision for Children	<p>Accessibility mapping illustrates that a large proportion of residents in the central area are outside of the appropriate catchment of facilities for children, in particular Ardwick and Longsight. Application of the quantity standard supports these deficiencies, with there being a current shortfall of 0.27 hectares (two facilities).</p> <p>The highest quality provision of play areas in all areas in the City is located in Central Manchester, with the average quality score of a site being 80%. No sites score below 70%, however only two sites achieved quality scores in 85% or above (the top quartile level). This indicates that while the general quality of site is good, there is room for improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address deficiencies in the area by providing new facilities in Ardwick and Longsight. These facilities should meet with quality guidelines (Short term) Drive a programme of qualitative improvements across existing facilities ensuring that facilities meet the needs of communities that they serve and provide a challenging play environment (Ongoing) Evaluate the need for facilities as part of new developments. New facilities will be required when developments are outside of the catchment for new facilities or provision is not sufficient to meet minimum standard. Even with the creation of new facilities to meet existing deficiencies, population growth will see provision fall below the minimum standard.
Provision for Young People	<p>Quantitative analysis reveals that there is a shortfall of facilities for young people equating to 0.26 hectares (two facilities). Despite this quantitative deficiency, accessibility mapping indicates that all residents have access to a facility for young people within the recommended 15 minute walk time. There appears to be several small facilities, particularly around the Hulme area and the quantitative shortfall suggests that facilities in the central area may perhaps be smaller than in other areas of the City.</p> <p>The average quality score of a facility for young people in Central Manchester is 72%. This indicates that on the whole, the quality of facilities is average. However, quality scores are wide ranging (47% - 100%) and seven sites achieved quality scores which fall within the bottom quartile. This highlights the need for qualitative enhancements in the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive a programme of qualitative improvements across existing facilities ensuring that facilities meet the needs of communities that they serve and provide a challenging play environment (Ongoing) Evaluate the need for facilities for young people as part of new developments. New facilities will be required when developments are outside of the catchment for new facilities or provision is not sufficient to meet minimum standard (Longer term).

SECTION 15 – CENTRAL MANCHESTER

Open Space Type	Issues	Recommendations
Outdoor Sports Facilities	<p>The overall quantity of provision in the Central area falls below the recommended minimum standards. In particular, deficiencies are highlighted in tennis and bowls when measured against the quantity standards. Despite this, application of the accessibility standard demonstrates that the distribution of bowling greens is reasonable, although there are some areas where residents are outside of the catchment for tennis courts, particularly in Longsight.</p> <p>The highest quality facilities are found in the central area although there remain some sites in need of improvement. The central area is also particularly important in terms of providing facilities to meet the needs of residents living in the City Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address gaps in current provision where demand is expressed considering particularly tennis courts (Medium Term)• Focus on qualitative improvements to existing facilities using the findings of the site visits as a guide (ongoing)• Maximise transport links from the City Centre to existing facilities (Medium – long term)• Monitor ongoing demand for new provision in light of potential increases in participation and / or population growth (Ongoing).

Summary

15.20 Analysis of the existing provision highlights that some of the key issues include:

- despite low levels of provision in comparison to other areas and when considering the quantity standards, the distribution of facilities in the Central area is even. Quantity standards demonstrate shortfalls of all types of open space with the exception of parks and amenity areas
- the quality of provision in the central area is amongst the highest in the City. The quality of outdoor sports facilities is particularly high
- the character of the central area means that the creation of new open spaces is more challenging and innovative solutions are therefore required. The future focus will therefore be a balance between new provision (particularly facilities for children), maintaining and improving the quality of provision where required and the creation of linkages. Access routes between and within open spaces will be particularly important in this area if opportunities are to be maximised.

15.21 The emerging Central Manchester Green Space Strategy will build upon these key issues identified in this open space assessment. The strategy will guide the future use of land in the area and ensure that the open space, sport and recreation needs of local residents are met.