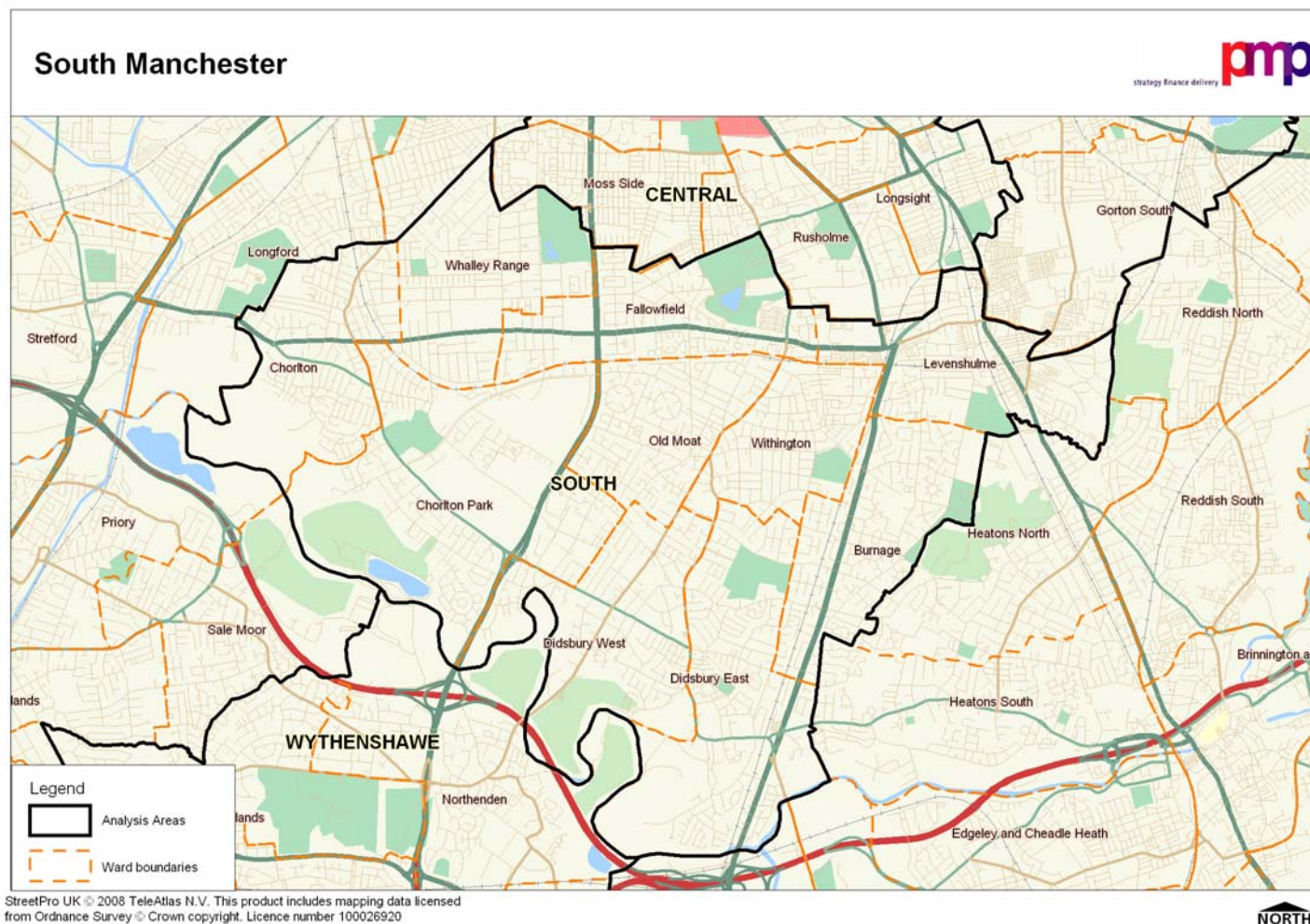


## **16. South Manchester**

### **Introduction**

- 16.1 The South Manchester area contains approximately a third of the City's overall population (132,181). The area contains ten wards (Burnage, Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, Old Moat, Whalley Range and Withington) and covers an area of over 2600 hectares. Map 16.1 overleaf the location of South Manchester in the context of other areas in the City.
- 16.2 South Manchester is more affluent than much of the City and is characterised by it's green appearance. The area contains many large private gardens as well as tree lined streets.
- 16.3 The Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) focuses on the following key themes:
- delivering popular neighbourhoods
  - achieving full potential in education, skills and employment
  - strengthening communities, individuals, families and neighbourhoods.
- 16.4 The SRF identifies that the attractive environment is a key characteristic of South Manchester. However, it is also noted that there are a number of low quality environment areas that need to be upgraded. Furthermore, the need to deal with development in a more sustainable way is emphasised.
- 16.5 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:
- to develop its current assets, such as the high quality parks in the area, as a way of driving forward the future of the area
  - to develop proposals that protect and improve the natural environment and to promote the importance of LNRs, the Mersey Valley, formal public parks and informal open spaces
  - to develop proposals and identify resources to retain and enhance open spaces and Local Nature Reserves throughout South Manchester.

Map 16.1 – South Manchester



### **Open space, sport and recreation provision across South Manchester**

- 16.6 South Manchester is a largely residential area with approximately a third of the City's population located in this area. However, despite this, almost two thirds of the area is green space and South Manchester is within easy access of the Mersey Valley, a number of parks and 11 conservation areas.
- 16.7 The SRF identifies that the level of use of open space is high, but that the quality of open space in the area is varying. Specifically, parks are identified as having a lack of amenities and acquiring funding is highlighted as the key to providing high quality parks across the area. The need for green links to encourage cycling and walking is also specified within in the SRF.
- 16.8 In addition to the abundance of green space and conservation areas, South Manchester contains:
- two City Parks: Alexandra Park and Platt Fields Park. Alexandra Park is a true community park which contains a wide range of facilities and the park holds a number of events throughout the year. Platt Fields Park is located just one mile from the City Centre and is one of Manchester's major event sites, with three dedicated show fields located on site. The park was awarded Green Flag status in 2008.
  - 14 Local Parks, with the average size of a park being 4.2 hectares. The largest local park in the area is Cringle Park (11.1 hectares). Seven of these sites (Chorlton Park, Fletcher Moss Gardens, Ladybarn Park, Old Moat Park, Didsbury Park, Parsonage Gardens and Cringle Park) have achieved Green Flag status. This highlights the provision of high quality parks in South Manchester
  - 22 natural open spaces, the largest of which is Mersey Chorlton Nature Reserve (56 hectares). This site provides a large number of informal recreational opportunities for residents in the area and is particularly important for nature conservation
  - 29 amenity green spaces, ranging in size from 0.06 hectares to 1.01 hectares. This highlights the small size of informal open space in South Manchester.
  - 15 children's play areas, with the majority of sites located within parks. There are also 16 facilities for young people in the area with the type of sites including MUGAs, skate parks and BMX tracks
  - a large number of outdoor sports facility sites containing a range of sporting facilities. This includes:
    - one athletics track
    - 17 bowling green sites
    - 18 tennis court sites
    - Nine synthetic turf pitches
    - 44 grass pitches.

- the greatest number of allotments in the City (15). There are waiting lists at the majority of these sites, with the greatest found at Scott Avenue Allotments (100 people).

16.9 Table 16.1 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 16.2.

**Table 16.1 – Open space across South Manchester**

Open space type	Number of sites	Hectares (total)	Hectares per 1000 population
City Parks	2	37.55	0.28
Local Parks	14	59.04	0.44
Natural and semi natural open space	22	197.27	1.46
Amenity green space	29	8.75	0.06
Children's play areas	15	1.67	0.01
Provision for young people	16	2.26	0.02
Allotments	15	20.12	0.15

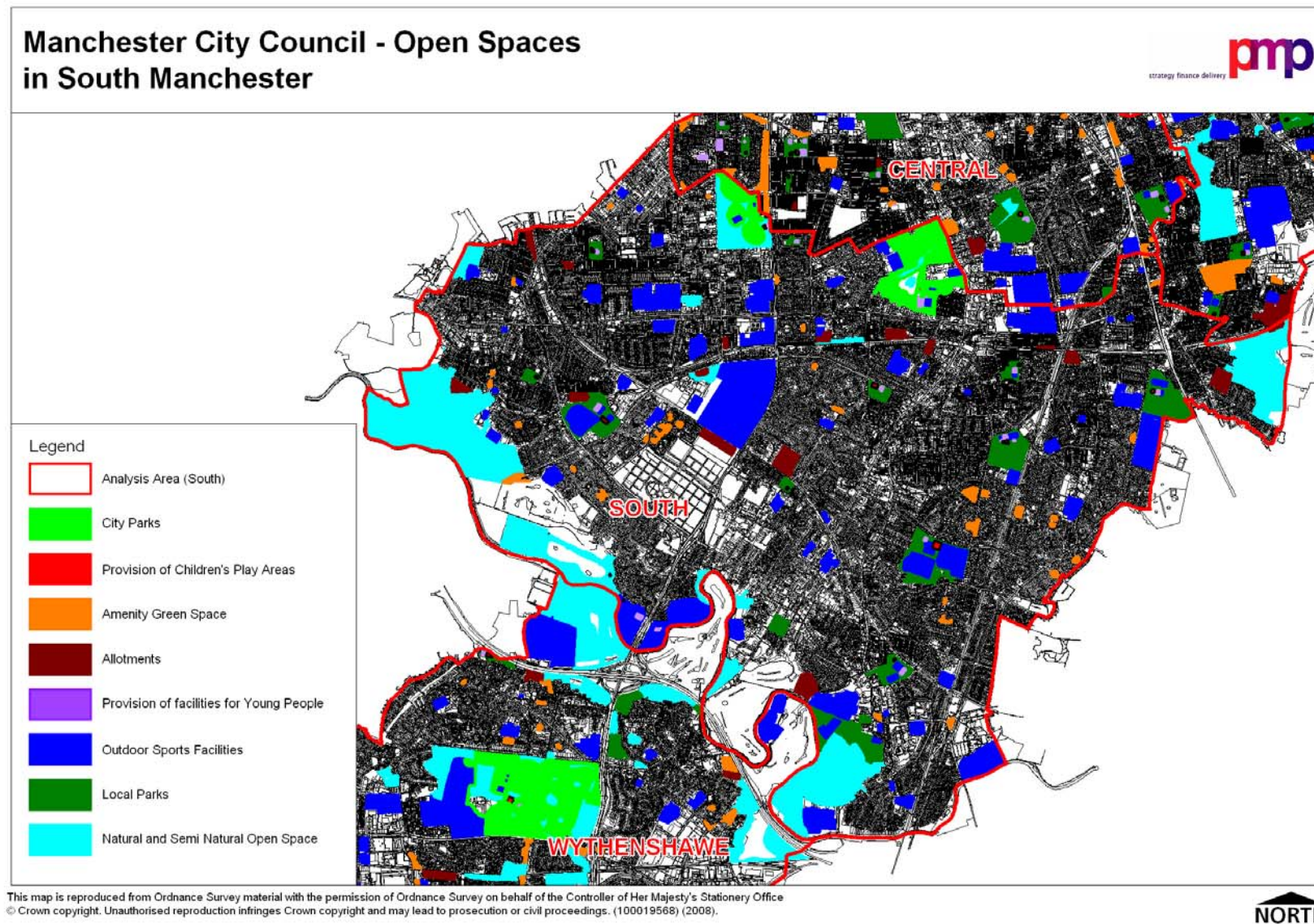
**Table 16.2 – Outdoor Sports Facilities**

Outdoor sports facility type	Number of sites	Hectares (total)	Hectares per 1000 population
Grass pitches	44	138.79	1.03
Synthetic turf pitches	11 (9 full size pitches)	7.14	0.05
Bowling greens	17 (20 greens)	3.75	0.03
Tennis courts	18 (70 courts)	4.60	0.034

16.10 Map 16.2 overleaf illustrates the distribution of open spaces across South Manchester.



Map 16.2 – Open space, sport and recreation facilities in South Manchester



**The adequacy of provision in South Manchester**

- 16.11 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.
- 16.12 Table 16.3 evaluates the adequacy of the quantity of open space in South 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 16.3 – Application of the Manchester City Council Quantity Standards in South 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	37.55	10.59	52,958
Local Parks	59.04	-7.01	Below minimum
Natural and semi natural	197.27	-58.83	Below minimum
Amenity green spaces	8.75	-45.17	Below minimum
Children's play areas	1.67	-1.90	Below minimum
Provision for young people	2.26	-2.32	Below minimum
Outdoor sports facilities	156.70	24.60	25,105
Allotments	20.12	No standard set	No standard set
Civic spaces	0	No standard set	No standard set
Cemeteries and churchyards	22.40	No standard set	No standard set

Green = above the standard, Red = below the standard

- 16.13 The application of local quantity standards therefore suggests that there are shortfalls in all types of open space with the exception of City Parks and outdoor sports facilities. Shortfalls in natural and semi natural open space and amenity spaces are particularly large. Shortfalls in facilities for children and young people are also the highest of all areas of the City.
- 16.14 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.
- 16.15 Maps 16.3 – 16.12 therefore evaluate the provision of each of the different types of open space across South Manchester.

16.16 The key deficiencies arising are:

- gaps in the provision of amenity spaces, although this is mostly offset by the even distribution of parks
- large areas where residents are unable to access natural and semi natural open spaces
- a lack of facilities for children in Whalley Range, Mosside and Chorlton Park
- shortfalls of provision for young people in Chorlton Park and West Didsbury.

16.17 The quality of open spaces in the South area is average. Table 16.4 summarises the average quality score achieved for each type of open space in South 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 is good and provision for young people is of better quality than in other areas of the City.

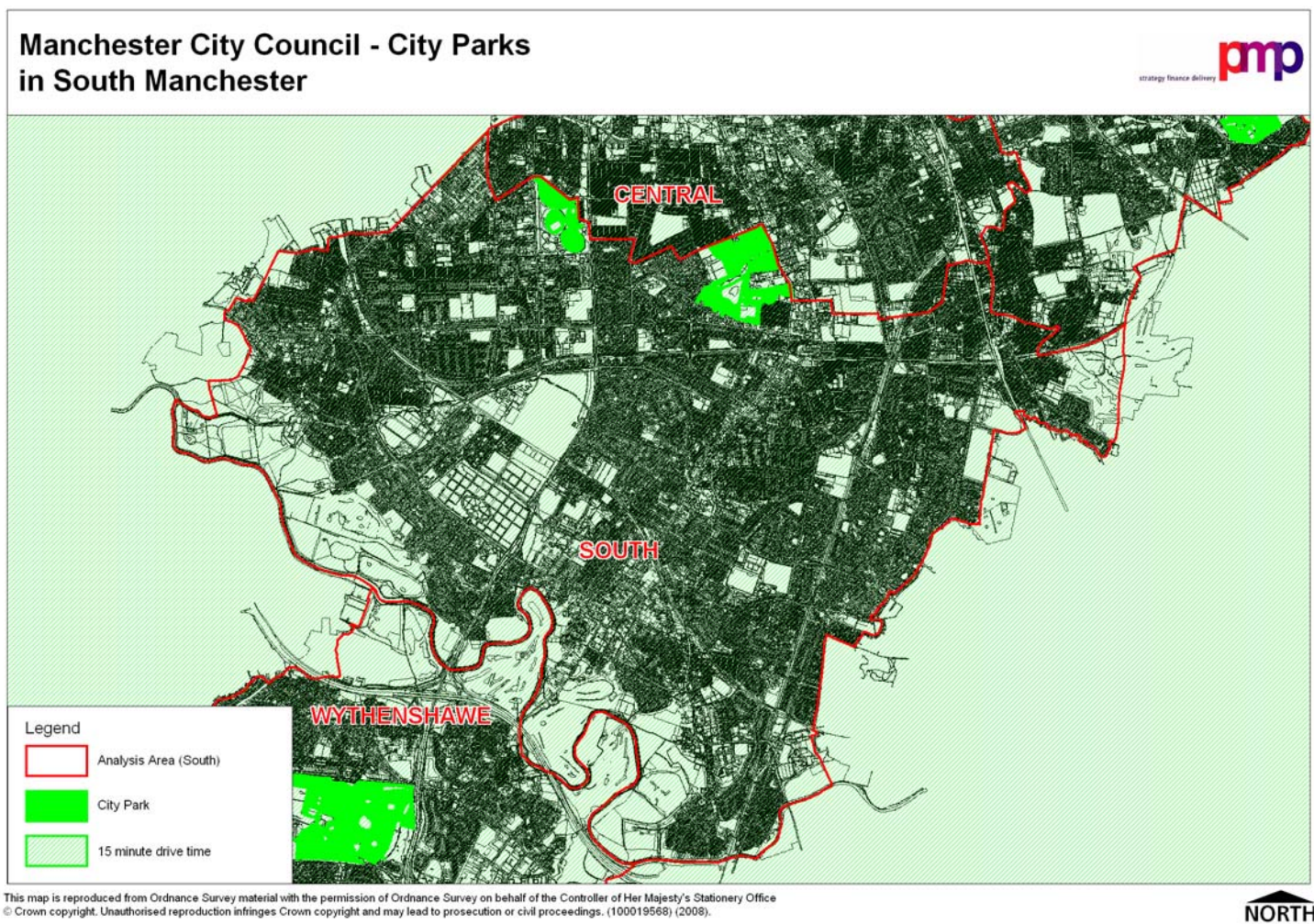
**Table 16.4 – Quality of open spaces in South Manchester**

Area	Outdoor sports facilities	Natural open space	Amenity green space	Provision for children	Provision for young people
South	73	64	69	77	76

16.18 The overall average score disguises a range in the quality of provision.

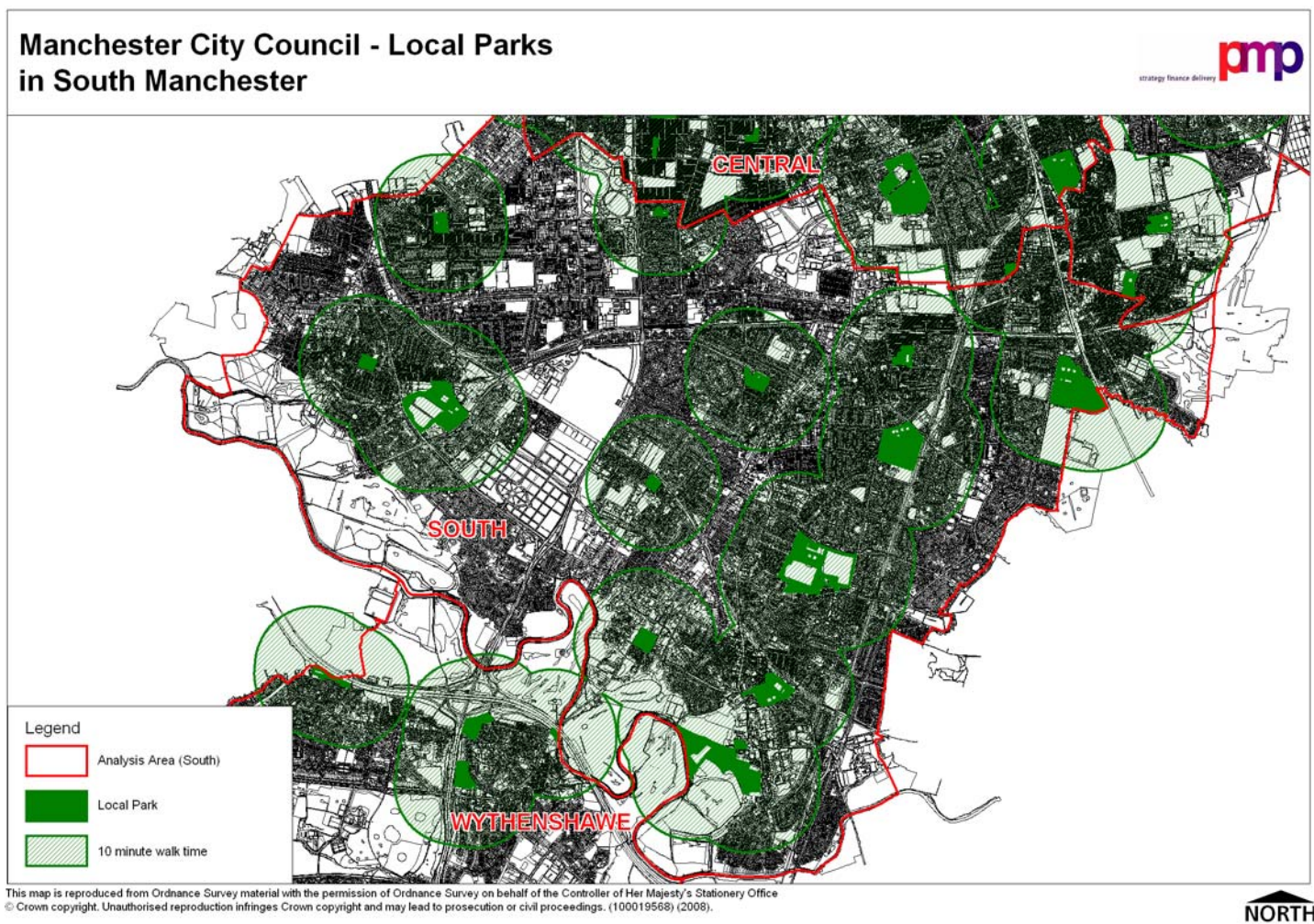


Map 16.3 – City Parks in South Manchester



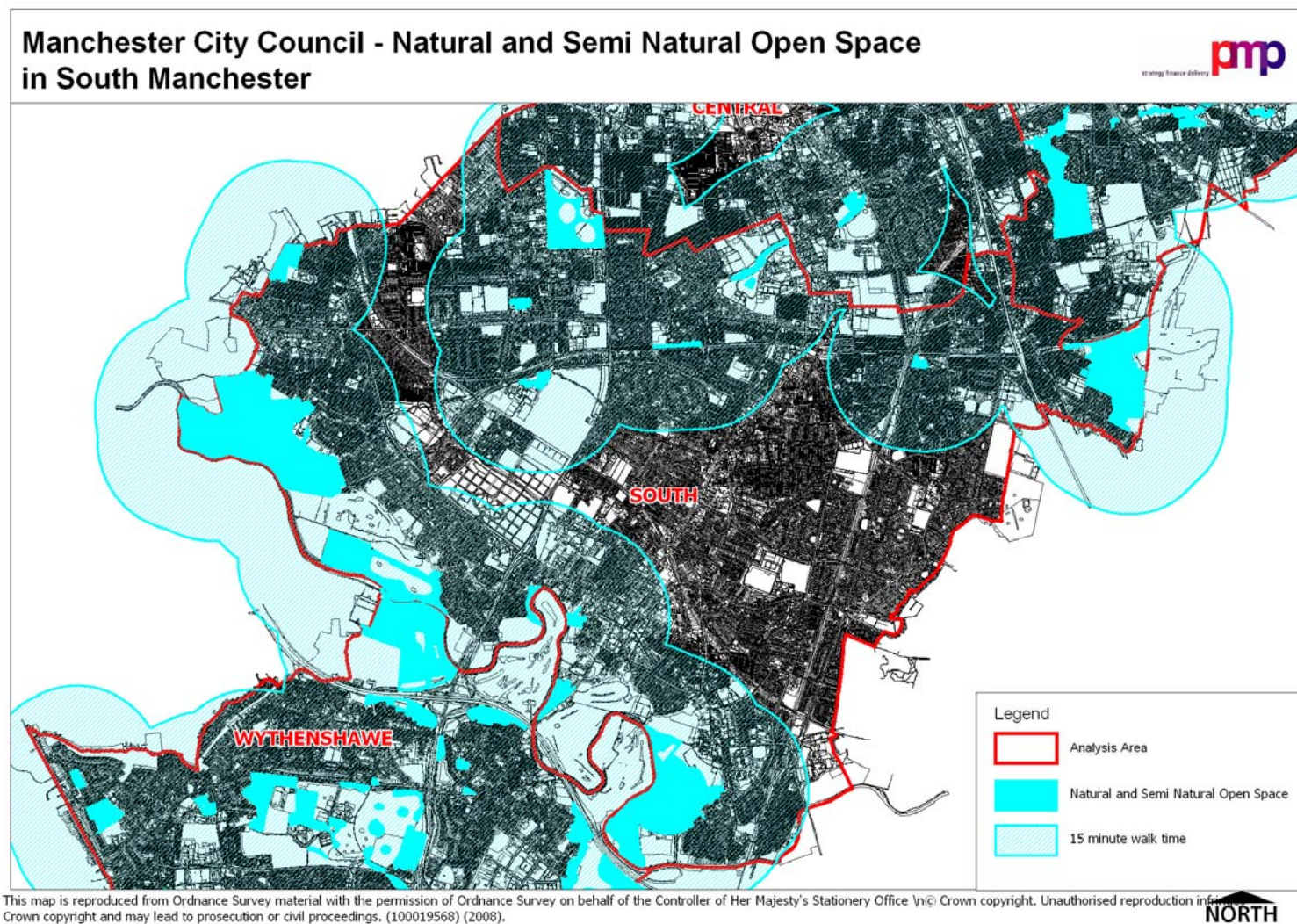


Map 16.4 – Local Parks in South Manchester



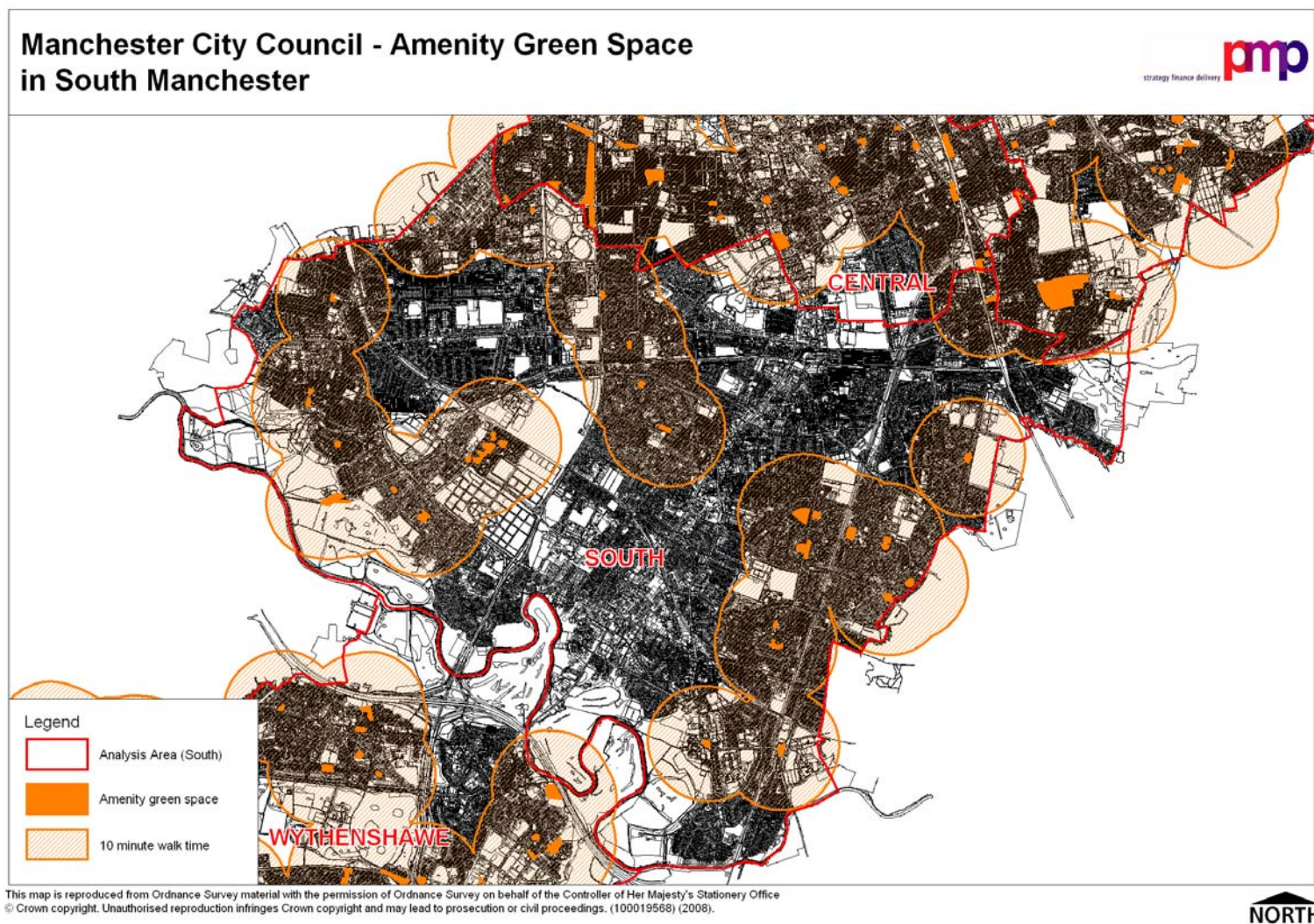


Map 16.5 – Natural and semi natural open space in South Manchester



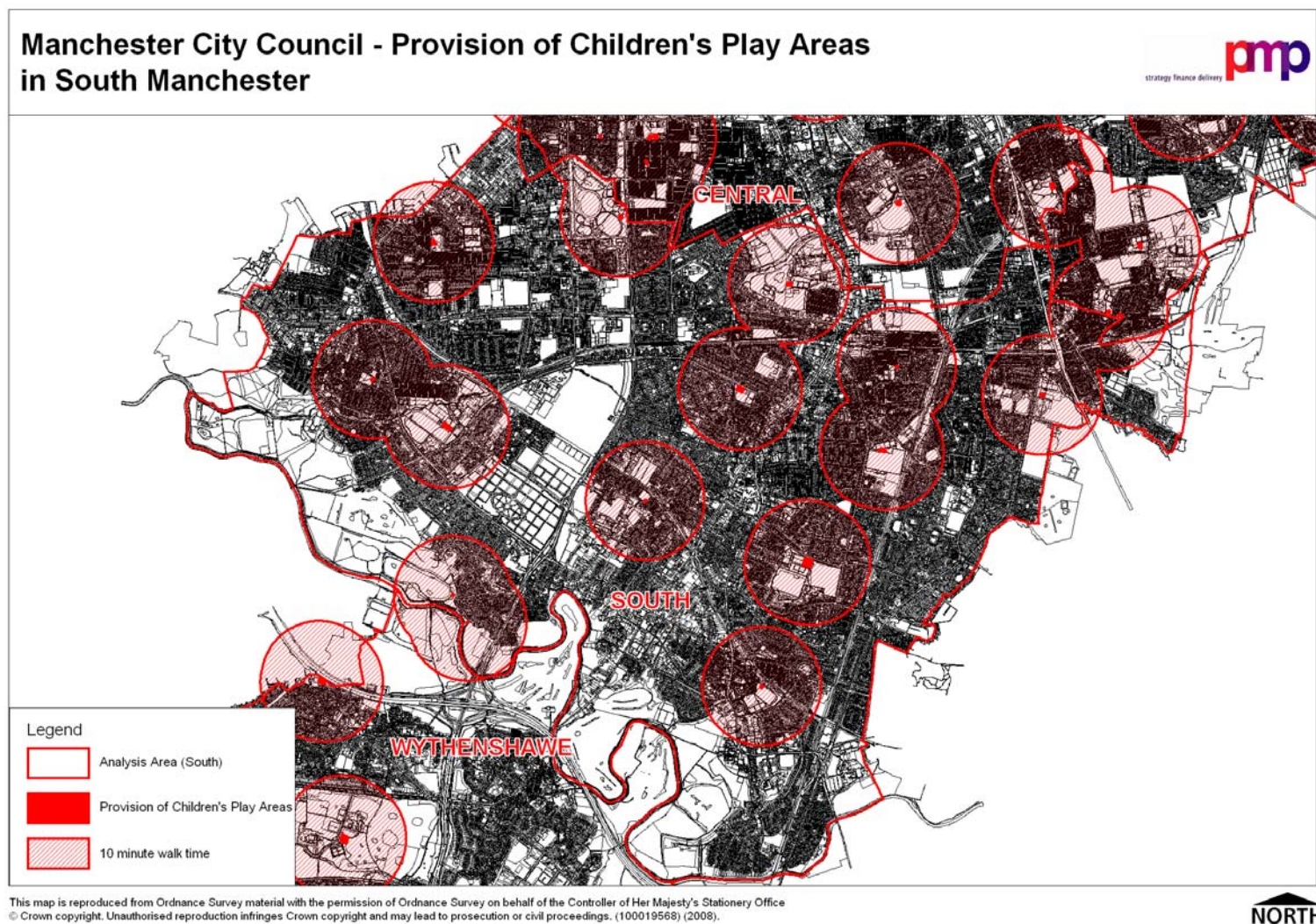


Map 16.6 – Amenity green space in South Manchester

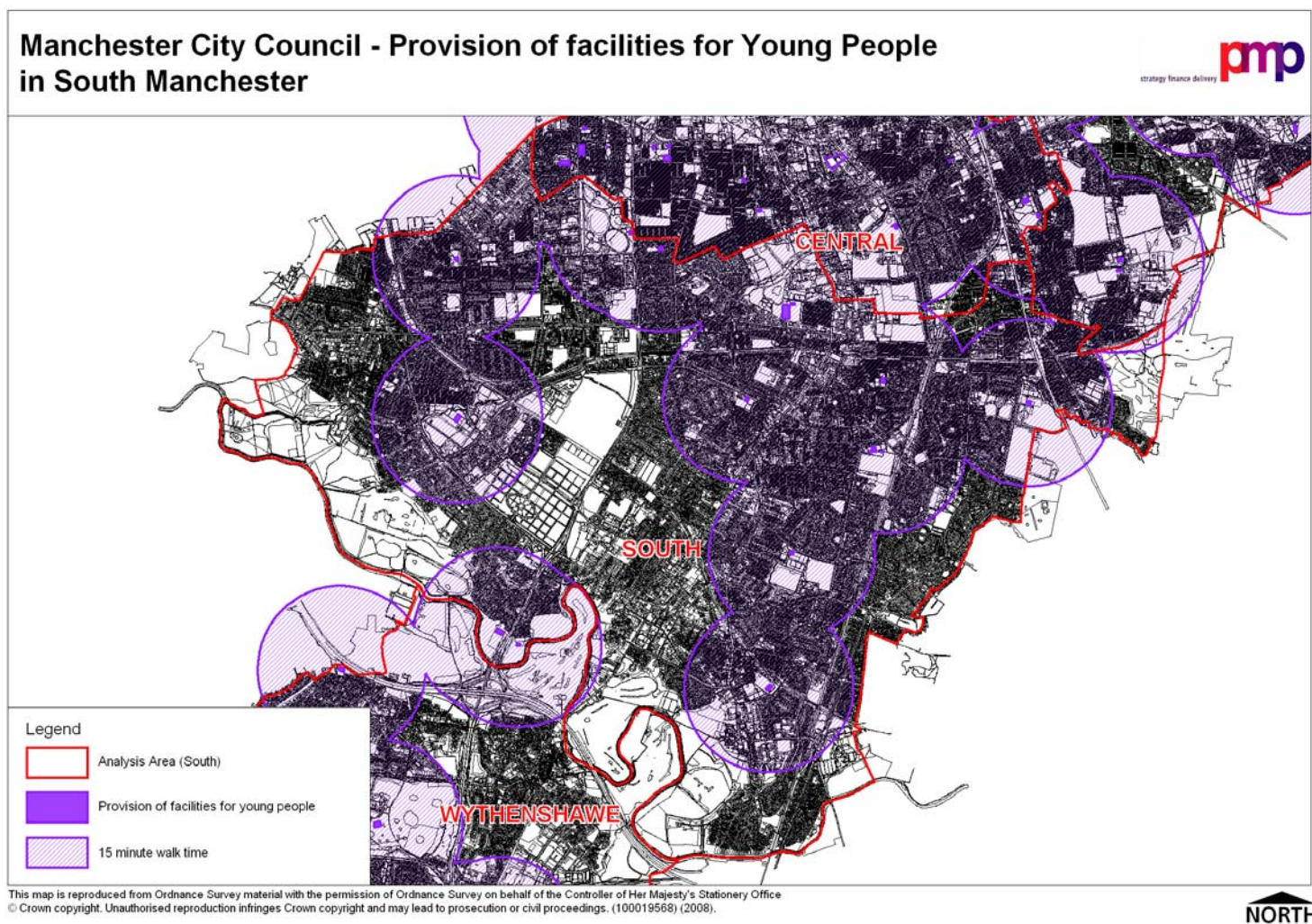




Map 16.7 – Children’s play areas in South Manchester

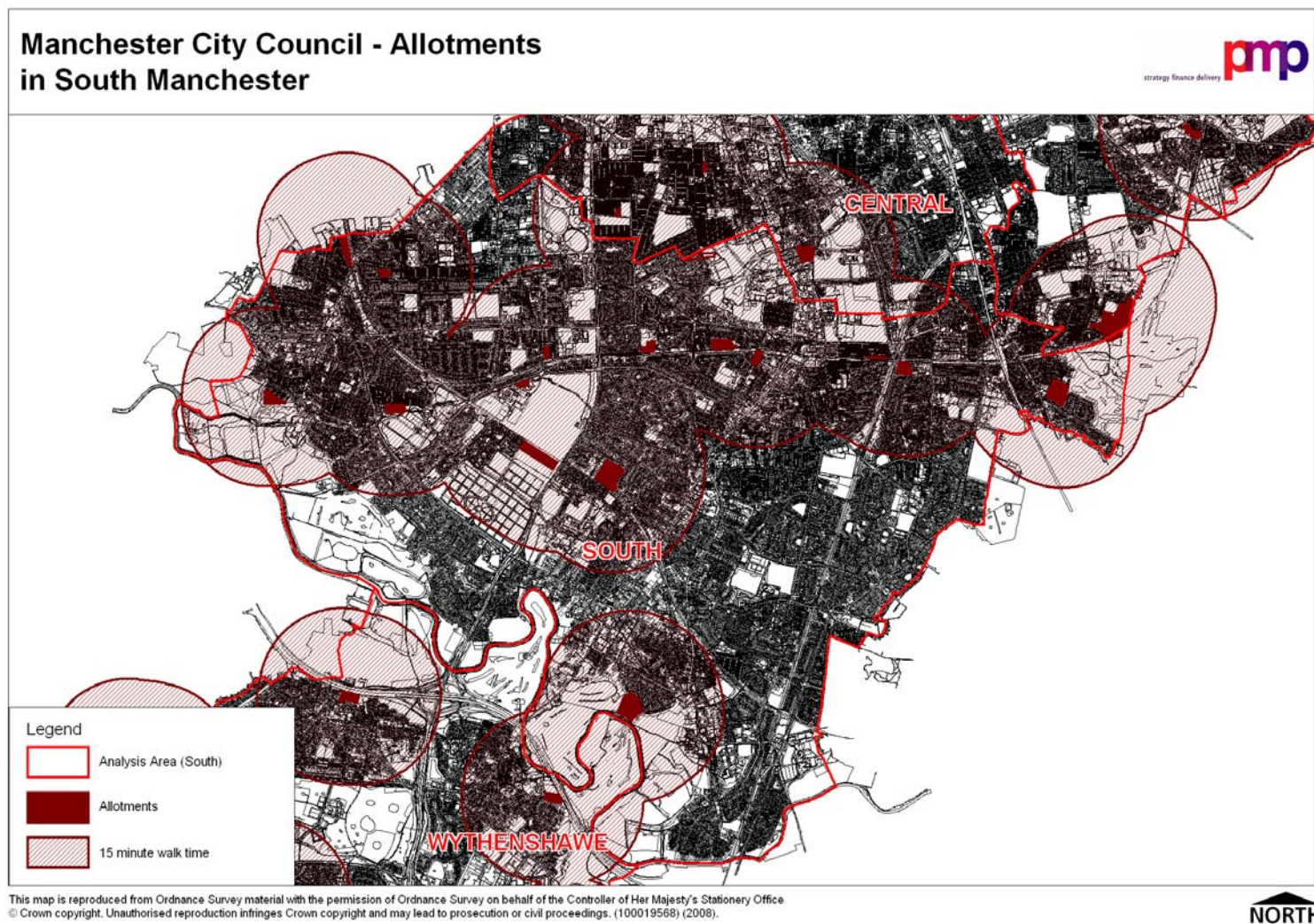


Map 16.8 – Provision for young people in South Manchester



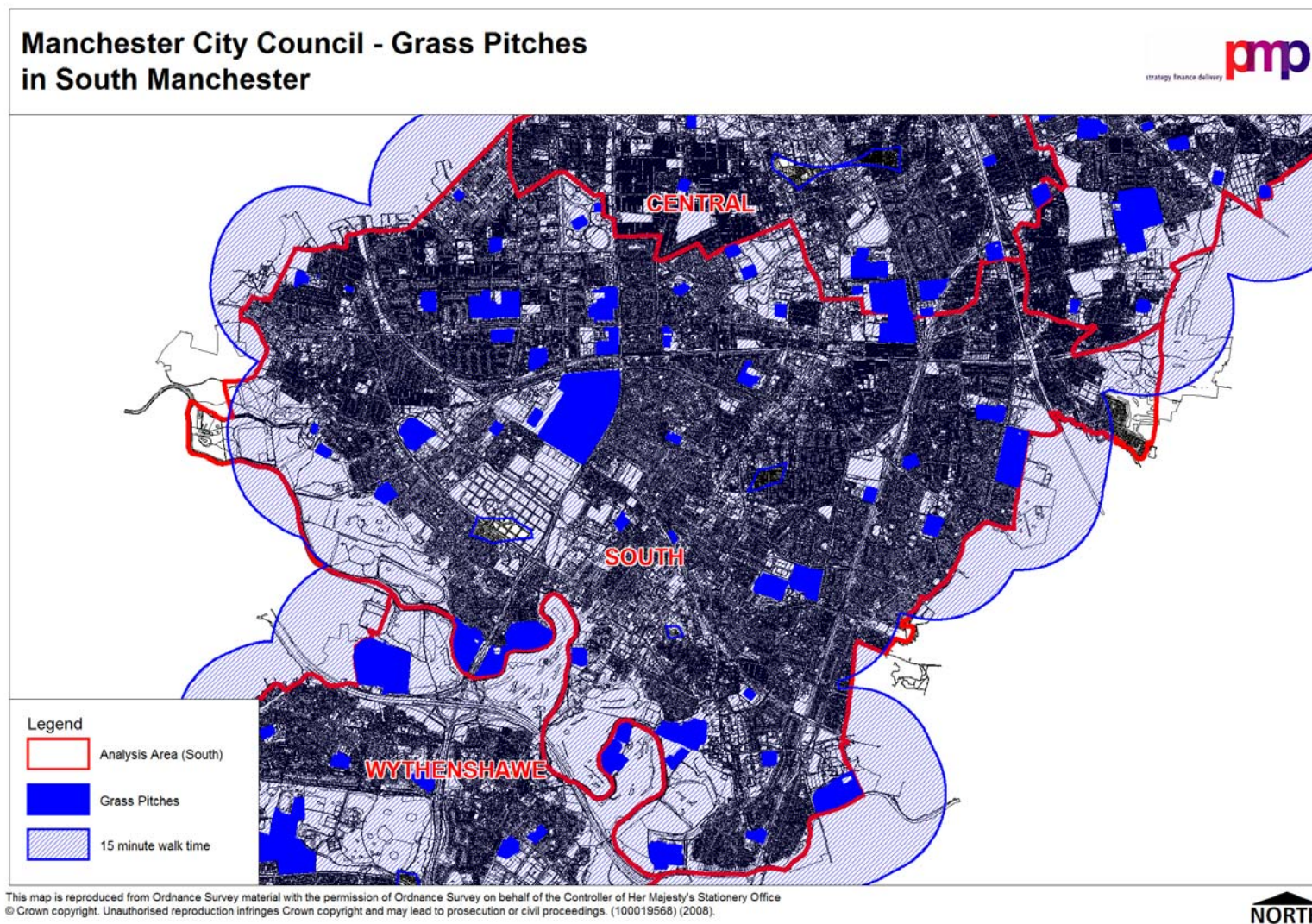


Map 16.9 – Provision of allotments in South Manchester



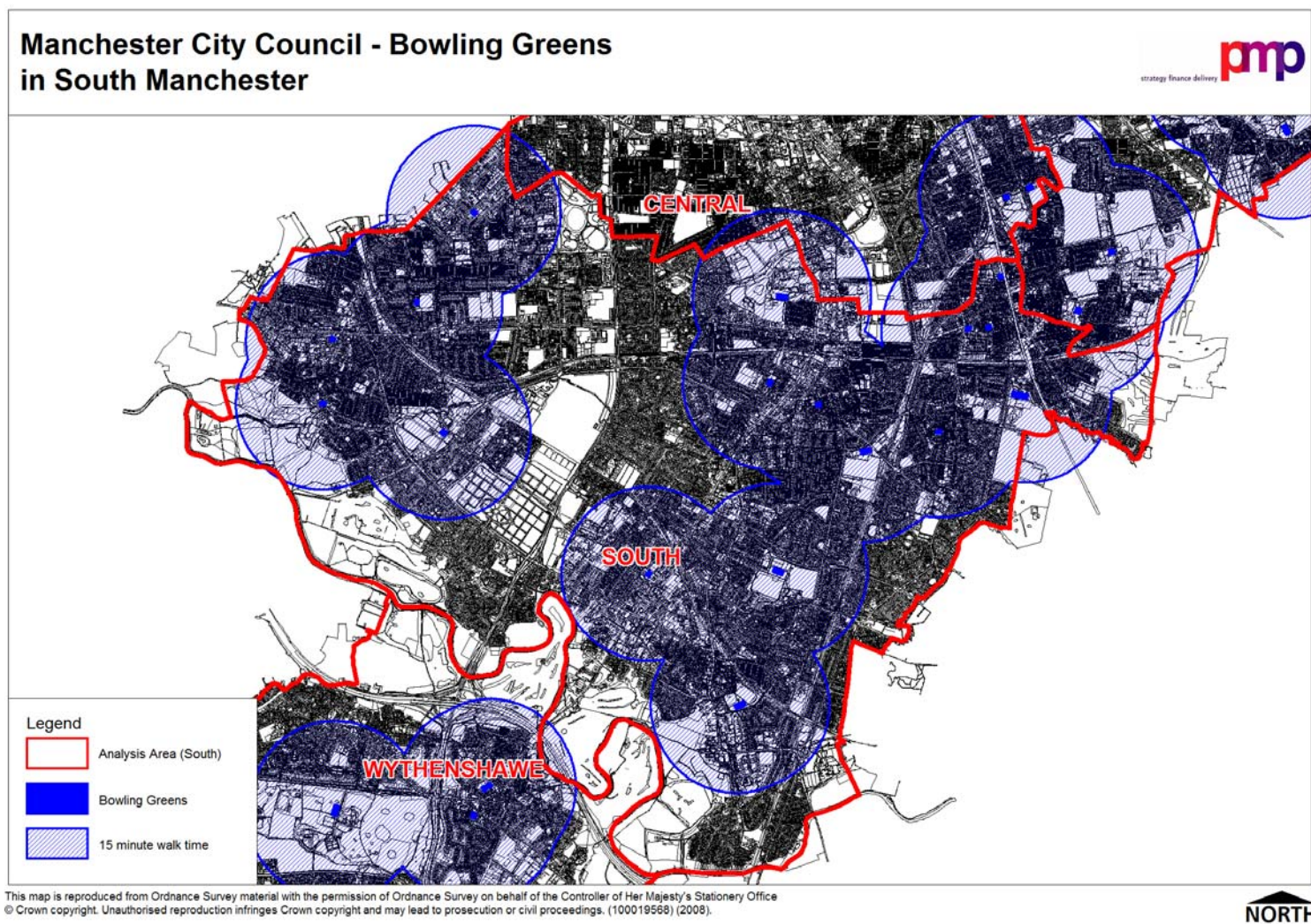


Map 16.10 – Provision of grass pitches in South Manchester



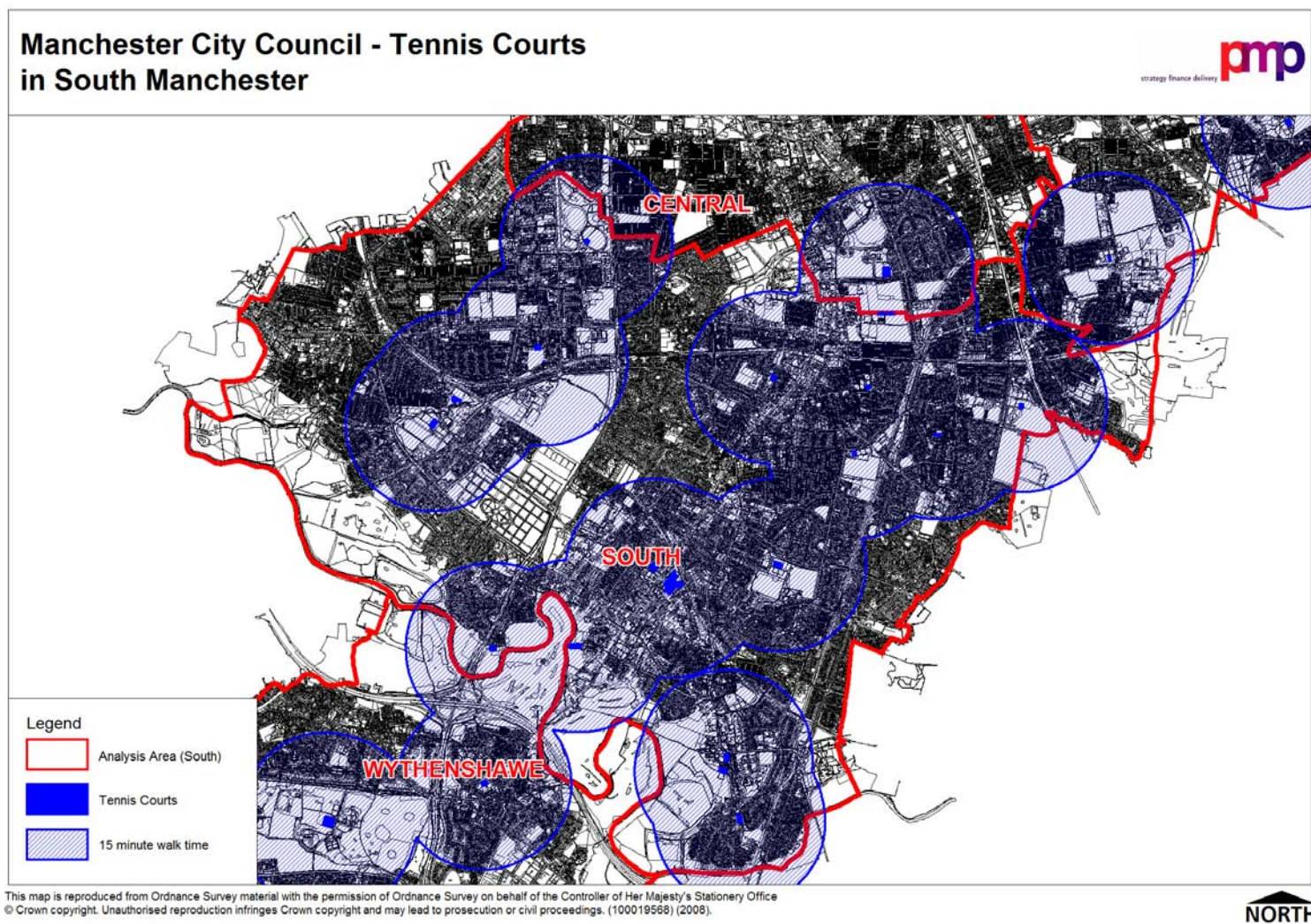


Map 16.11 – Bowling greens in South Manchester





Map 16.12 – Tennis courts in South Manchester





**Priorities in South Manchester**

- 16.19 Table 16.5 summarises the key issues arising in South Manchester with regards open space, sport and recreation facilities and highlights recommendations for the delivery of open spaces across the area.

**Table 16.5 – The future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities in South Manchester**

Open space type	Issues	Recommendations
Parks and Gardens	<p>The highest quantity of Local Parks is found in South Manchester and application of the quantity standard indicates that provision exceeds the minimum standard. The current provision of Local Parks is sufficient to accommodate a population growth of 17,219.</p> <p>Despite there being sufficient provision of Local Parks, accessibility mapping indicates that there is a poor distribution of sites with the majority of parks located in the east (around Fallowfield, Withington and Didsbury), which means that a large number of residents in the west of the area are outside the accessibility catchment of a local park.</p> <p>Although residents in this area of deficiency are within a 15 minute drive of a City Park, the two City Parks in the area (Alexandra Park and Platt Fields Park) are located on the edge of the northern boundary of South Manchester, which means that residents do not have local access to a park.</p> <p>The quality of City Parks is very good, with the average quality score of a site being 87%. Furthermore, Platt Fields Park is the highest quality City Park in Manchester (100%).</p> <p>The quality of Local Parks is good. The average quality score of a site is 76% and quality scores range from 58% - 92%. Only two sites, Clinton Avenue Park (58%) and Kingswood Park (68%), scored below 70%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the quality of the seven existing Green Flag parks (Ongoing)</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of existing parks (Short – medium term)</li> <li>• Promote the development of green linkages connecting residents with open spaces in nearby areas. 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 – medium term)</li> <li>• Investigate the feasibility of providing a new park in the Whalley Range / Chorlton Park area of the City where there is currently a small gap in existing provision (Medium – long term)</li> <li>• 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 (Ongoing).</li> </ul>
Natural and Semi	Application of the quantity standard reveals that there is insufficient natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of</li> </ul>



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Open space type	Issues	Recommendations
Natural Open Space	<p>and semi natural open space to meet the minimum standard, with the shortfall equating to 58.83 hectares.</p> <p>Accessibility mapping illustrates this shortfall, with the majority of residents in the east of the area (around Fallowfield, Burnage and Levenshulme) unable to access this type of open space.</p> <p>The quality of natural and semi natural open space in South Manchester is the greatest of all areas in the City, with the average quality score of a site being 70%. Although, the quality of natural open space is highest in this area of the City, six sites scored below 70% and only one site achieved a quality score that falls within the top quartile level (85% and above). Focus should therefore be placed on enhancing the quality of natural and semi natural open space in South Manchester.</p>	<p>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)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
Amenity Green Space	<p>South Manchester is the only area of the City where current provision is below the minimum standard, with the shortfall equating to 45.17 hectares. Accessibility mapping illustrates this deficiency, with residents in the south, north east and north west outside the catchment of an amenity green space.</p> <p>When combining the provision of parks and amenity green space accessibility deficiencies are still evident. The location of Alexandra Park negates the need for amenity green space in the west and residents in the north east have access to a local park within a 10 minute walk time. However, residents in the south west of the area do not have access to an amenity green space or park and garden.</p> <p>The quality of amenity green space in South Manchester is average. The</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive a programme of improvements to the quality of existing amenity spaces. Consider opportunities to provide new amenity space and / or a local park in areas currently devoid of provision (Short term)</li> <li>• Ensure that amenity spaces are integrated within the overall green space network and that they are connected with other larger spaces (Longer term).</li> </ul>

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Open space type	Issues	Recommendations
	average quality score of a site is 68% and quality scores range significantly from 51% - 100%. 13 sites achieved quality scores below 70%, highlighting the need for qualitative improvements to a number of sites in the area.	
Provision for Children	<p>The greatest quantitative shortfall of children's play areas is found within South Manchester (1.90 hectares).</p> <p>As may be expected in light of the high shortfalls in provision, accessibility mapping demonstrates several areas of deficiency, particularly around Whalley Range, Mosside and Chorlton Park.</p> <p>In addition to a lack of amenity green space or children's play area in the Whalley Range area, there are also no parks. This means that there is a lack of informal opportunities for play in this area.</p> <p>The quality of existing play areas is average, with the average quality score of a site being 73%. Quality scores range from 60% - 100% and only one site achieved a quality score which falls within the top quartile level. This highlights the need to enhance the quality of play areas to ensure high quality provision in South Manchester.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide new facilities across South Manchester to address existing deficiencies, particularly in Whalley Range. New development will further exacerbate demand for facilities and the need for new provision should be evaluated on a case by case basis (Short term)</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
Provision for Young People	<p>Consistent with the findings for children's play areas, the greatest quantitative shortfall of facilities for young people is found in South Manchester (2.32 hectares).</p> <p>Accessibility mapping illustrates this shortfall, with a large number of residents in the centre of the analysis area outside the catchment of a facility for young people, particularly in Chorlton Park and West Didsbury.</p> <p>The quality of facilities for young people is the highest of all areas in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide new facilities across South Manchester to address existing deficiencies, particularly in West Didsbury and Chorlton Park. New development will further exacerbate demand for facilities and the need for new provision should be evaluated on a case by case basis (Short term)</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>



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Open space type	Issues	Recommendations
	<p>City in South Manchester. The average quality score of a site is 76% and nine sites achieved a quality score which falls in the top quartile (80% and above). However, despite the general good quality of facilities, six sites achieved quality scores below the top quartile level, indicating that there is a need for qualitative enhancements if a network of high quality facilities for young people is to be provided in South Manchester.</p>	

**Summary**

- 16.20 With the exception of parks and outdoor sports facilities, the quantity of all other types of open space falls below the recommended minimum standards. This is also reflected in the application of the accessibility standards, with several gaps in provision highlighted, in particular in facilities for children and natural and semi natural open space.
- 16.21 The quality of facilities in the South of Manchester is average. The quality of outdoor sports and facilities for young people is particularly high. The overall average score disguises a range in the quality of provision.
- 16.22 The character of South Manchester 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.