

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

Summary
Report
Consultation Draft



Contents

The Need for this Strategy

1	Why We Need a Strategy	4
2	How has it been developed?	4
3	The National Context	4
4	The Local Context for the Strategy	4
5	The Content of the Strategy	4
6	What is "Open Space"?	5
7	Format of the Strategy	5
8	Acknowledgments	5

Summary Key Points

1	Key Findings	5
2	The Basis for the Strategy	5
3	The Strategy's Priorities	5
4	Components of the Strategy	5
5	The Vision Underpinning the Strategy	6
6	The Strategic Aims	6
7	Strategic Priorities	6
8	The Strategy's Key Objectives	6
9	Annual Delivery Plan	6
10	Key Target	6
11	Borough-wide Spaces and Facilities	7
12	Specific Recommendations	7
13	Review of Sites	8
14	Planning Policy	8
15	Implementation and Review	8

ANNEX 1

Accessibility, Quality and Value Maps

1A	Allotments	9
1B	Allotments	10
2	Outdoor Bowling Greens	11
3A	Children's Equipped Play Areas	12
3B	Children's Equipped Play Areas	13
4	Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards	14
5A	Multi-functional Greenspaces	15
5B	Multi-functional Greenspaces	16
6A	Parks and Gardens	17
6B	Parks and Gardens	18
7A	Natural Greenspaces	19
7B	Natural Greenspaces	20
8A	Grass Pitches	21
8B	Grass Pitches	22
9	Artificial Turf Pitches	23
10	Tennis Courts	24
11	Multi-courts	25
12A	Teenage Facilities	26
12B	Teenage Facilities	27
13	Indoor Sports Halls	28
14	Indoor Swimming Pools	29
15	Indoor Bowls	30

ANNEX 2

Quality Standards for Open Spaces

	Introduction	31
	General Requirements	31
	Accessible Natural Greenspace	32
	Allotments and Community Gardens	32
	Amenity Greenspaces	33
	Civic Spaces	33
	Seafront Areas	33
	Green Corridors	34
	Play Provision	35
	Sports Pitches (grass and artificial turf)	36
	Outdoor Sports Facilities: Athletics Tracks	36
	Bowling Greens	37
	Tennis Courts and Multi-courts	37
	Urban Parks	37
	Teenage Areas	38
	Indoor Sports Halls and Swimming Pools	38
	References	39

The Need For This Strategy

1.0 Why We Need a Strategy

The Council together with its partners manages a large number of open spaces in the Borough. There are several key reasons why a strategy is now required.

- To provide strategic direction for the development and management of the Borough's Parks & Open Spaces.
- To address the importance of open spaces in making Hastings a good place to live, work, relax and visit.
- To comply with Government changes in the Planning system, which require the Council to formally assess the provision for Open Space, sport and recreation in the Borough.
- To identify priorities and enable the Council to bid for external funds where having a strategy is a requirement of the bidding process.

2.0 How has it been developed?

The Council has developed the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy with the assistance of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE Space), who have provided enabling support. The Council and its partners appointed consultants Kit Campbell Associates to undertake an Open Spaces audit and produce this Strategy. The consultant's work was overseen by a Steering Group comprised of various departments within the Council, 1066 Housing Association and Sea Space (a development company of the Hastings & Bexhill Task Force).

3.0 The National Context

3.1 When people step outside their home, or place of work, they enter the public realm – the streets, squares and greenspaces which are an essential component of our villages, towns and cities. If well designed and maintained, they contribute hugely to making somewhere an attractive place in which to live. This is something which the Georgians, in particular, understood well, with their squares and crescents, all facing onto attractive greenspaces.

3.2 The planning of open spaces as part of urban development has lacked fore thought and innovation since the 1850's. The great Victorian parks, the garden city movement and the "new town" developments are exceptions.

The change of approach to management and maintenance brought about through Compulsory Competitive Tendering in the late 1980's effectively distanced managers from the frontline of the service. Emphasis was placed on economies/efficiencies, rather than effectiveness or in providing good value.

3.3 At the same time, there has been an increase in vandalism and anti-social behaviour. One result has been that the quality of the public realm has declined significantly in just twenty or thirty years. But in the past 4-5 years, a new greenspace movement has emerged in the UK which champions the value of networks of high quality greenspaces and sport and recreation facilities. Reversing the trend of the three decades will take some time, but the Government has recognised the problem and, with the publication of Planning Policy Guidance PPG17, Open Space, Sport and Recreation, requires planning authorities to undertake assessment of needs and opportunities in

their area. More generally, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister presents much of its work on sustainable communities under the broad strap line of "Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities" and is requiring local authorities to deliver them.

- 3.4 There is a great opportunity to reassert the importance not only of providing high quality greenspaces but ensuring that they remain of high quality through effective management. Effective provision and good management and maintenance are different sides of the same coin and one without the other is likely to be a waste of time and resources. Almost all of the cost of managing and maintaining open spaces in the Borough is met from either taxation or housing rents. As there are many other competing priorities for resources, there is an obvious need to ensure value for money.
- 3.5 This provides the background for an Open Spaces Strategy for Hastings and St Leonards. It can be summarised as relating to three key objectives:
- The need to comply with Government planning guidance.
 - The need to bring planning and management together to ensure that the Borough is an attractive place in which to live, work and play or to visit.
 - The need to identify priorities for action and resources.

4.0 The Local Context for the Strategy

- 4.1 Care has been taken to identify key strategies in order to understand how parks and open spaces contribute towards the Council's key aims and objectives.
- 4.2 This Strategy is very much a local one, of specific relevance to Hastings and St Leonards. The local context for it is set primarily by the Community Strategy and the Local Plan. The Hastings and St Leonards Community Strategy 2003-2013, is the over-arching strategy for the Borough Council and its partners, including the local community. It seeks to bring together all of the issues affecting the town's future to ensure that everyone is "pulling in the same direction". The Local Plan (soon to be superseded by the Local Development Framework) sets out the Council's policies relating to future land use across the Borough.
- 4.3 This strategy sits beneath the community strategy, supports the Local Plan 2004 and achievement of the objectives of the Cultural Strategy, Seafront Strategy and Regeneration plans for the town. Links are made with the healthy living agenda and sports and play action plans.

5.0 The Content of the Strategy

- 5.1 The Borough Community Strategy 2003-2013 sets out a clear vision, or aspiration, for the future:
- "We want our town's strong community spirit, culture, young population and extraordinary natural environment to be the foundations for a safer, healthier and more prosperous place with lasting opportunities for everybody"*
- 5.2 This statement makes clear that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) acknowledges and endorses the fact that effective greenspace planning, provision and management has the potential to make a major contribution to the Borough's regeneration and its residents' quality of life. There are some excellent examples of well-managed open spaces in the town. As a simple illustration of this, we highlight an unsolicited comment from a passer-by on the recent upgrading of Alexandra Park: "Fantastic, isn't it!"

- 5.3 This assessment therefore covers all aspects of open space, sport and recreation provision in Hastings and St Leonards. More specifically, it:
- Reviews the amount, distribution and quality of existing provision.
 - Identifies where there is a need for more or better provision and the types of enhancements which will benefit existing facilities and spaces most.
 - Suggests appropriate provision standards for the Borough Council to use as part of the planning process.
 - Suggests how to tackle the key issues relating to open space, sport and recreation provision facing the Borough Council and its partners.
 - Recommends priorities for the future.
 - Identifies less well used sites, those with least value to the community and suggests a review of their future use.

6.0 What is “Open Space”?

- 6.1 The Plan uses the definition of “open space” given in PPG17:

“... 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”.

7.0 Format of the Strategy

- 7.1 This summary sets out the main elements of the Strategy, which is due to be adopted by the Borough Council and its partners. As most people will be interested mainly in the broad principles in the Strategy, rather than the fine detail of it, it is deliberately reasonably short
- 7.2 The Strategy summary report contains annexes which are necessary parts of the main plan. The final Strategy will also include a number of appendices which contain supporting information.
- 7.3 The annexes to the Strategy are:
- Annex 1. Accessibility, Quality and Value Maps showing dwellings and the Distance Thresholds of different forms of provision.
 - Annex 2. The Council’s Quality Standards (based on the National Green Flag Award and other standards).

8.0 Acknowledgments

The Council and its partners wish to thank the members of the Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the Borough Council, 1066 Housing Association, Sea Space and CAFE Space, for their inputs to the Strategy but most especially the various representatives of local organisations who gave up their time to help by answering our questions and supplying information. We also wish to thank Kit Campbell Associates, the consultants who undertook this assignment.

Summary Key Points

1.0 Key Findings

- The Community Strategy target of providing accessible open space within 300m of 90% of the households in the Borough by 2013 has been met.
- The Borough has some excellent open spaces such as Alexandra Park and Hastings Country Park as well as a rich diversity of other sites.
- The main focus of future work will be to improve the quality and value of existing open spaces, rather than establish new ones.

2.0 The Basis for the Strategy

- 2.1 We have based this Strategy on a considerable amount of background work, including:
- A review of relevant national, regional, County-wide and local plans and strategies.
 - A special survey of the Borough’s Citizen’s Panel which generated a total of 1,149 responses.
 - A special survey of the Borough’s Youth Panel which generated a total of 1,175 responses.
 - Interviews with representatives of a number of local groups and Council or other officials.
 - A detailed on the ground audit of some 280 sites across the Borough.

3.0 The Strategy's Priorities

- 3.1 The Community Strategy sums up Hastings neatly as “a place of contradictions”. In terms of open space and sport and recreation provision, it has the coast and seafront, an unusually large amount of woodland and some fine Victorian parks and gardens. At one end of the spectrum Alexandra Park and many of the Borough’s natural greenspaces are superb but the quality of some of the smaller spaces is quite poor by comparison. It seems clear from the results of our Citizen’s Panel survey that many residents by-pass their nearest greenspace in order to get to others they perceive as being of better quality.
- 3.2 Against this background, this Strategy seeks:
- To ensure that open spaces or facilities of Borough-wide significance are accessible and of high quality and high value to local residents and wildlife.
 - To ensure that 90% of households have at least one good quality, good value local space or facility within a 300m walk of home.

4.0 Components of the Strategy

- 4.1 The Plan has five main components:
- A vision setting out the Plan’s long term aspirations.
 - A small number of key aims supported by measurable objectives and a recommended new target for the Community Strategy.
 - Clear priorities for the Borough Council and its partners.
 - Recommendations on a number of key issues which face the Borough Council and its partners.
 - A detailed delivery plan that will be drawn up after the adoption of the strategy.

5 The Vision Underpinning the Strategy

- 5.1 Hastings will have a network of high quality, accessible greenspaces and sport and recreation facilities which meet local needs, are financially and environmentally sustainable and support community cohesion, health promotion, "livability", economic regeneration and nature conservation.

6 The Strategic Aims

- 6.1 **Borough-wide Provision:** to deliver and manage a network of good quality/value, and safe greenspaces and sport and recreation facilities which are accessible to all residents and visitors and serve a Borough-wide function in terms of its overall image and meeting local needs, engendering pride in all its citizens and supporting bio-diversity.
- 6.2 **Neighbourhood Provision:** to ensure that local greenspaces and sport and recreation facilities throughout the Borough are accessible, meet the Council's quality standards and are attractive to potential users.
- 6.3 **Community Involvement:** to work with local communities to ensure that local spaces are sustainable and meet local needs.
- 6.4 **Management and maintenance:** to ensure that the management and maintenance of greenspaces and sport and recreation facilities are balanced against available resources and external funding is sought where available.

7 Strategic Priorities

- 7.1 The priorities of the Council and its partners will be:
- The progressive enhancement of existing provision rather than the creation of more provision so that priority is given to sites within or adjacent to the most deprived neighbourhoods.
 - The development of the network of designated Borough-wide spaces and safe pedestrian and cycle path links to and through it.
 - Working with local communities to foster the enhancement of local greenspaces and residential environments, initially in the regeneration areas.

8 The Strategy's Key Objectives

- 8.1 **Borough-wide Provision**
- Within 3 years of adopting this strategy, prepare a signage, development and management plan for each of the key designated Borough-wide greenspaces (listed on page 7). After preparing these plans commence with implementation.
 - To develop a 3-year marketing plan to promote green spaces including a diverse programme of events for the network of designated Borough-wide spaces within one year of the adoption of this Strategy and then deliver it, rolling the marketing plan forward annually.
 - To achieve Green Flag statuses for five of the key designated Borough-wide greenspaces by 2010 and retain this status annually thereafter.
 - To prepare a 5-year plan for the delivery of a network of well signed and maintained existing pedestrian and cycling routes, improving access to Borough-wide spaces and facilities and separated from traffic as much as possible, within one year of the adoption of this Plan, and then deliver it.

8.2 Neighbourhood Provision

- To raise the current percentage (60%) of households within 300 m of a multi-functional greenspace which meet the Council's quality standard in all relevant respects by not less than 4% in each of the next five years and to at least 90% by 2013.
- To work with and through the Borough's new Neighbourhood Areas or other appropriate community groups to identify local needs, resolve any local concerns there may be relating to local greenspace or sport and recreation provision and plan the enhancement of local spaces.
- To foster and support initiatives which will promote the "livability" and distinctiveness of local neighbourhoods, such as signage or the incorporation of public art into the street scene or greenspaces.

8.3 Community Involvement

- To ensure there is an active "Friends" group for each of the designated key Borough-wide greenspaces within five years.
- To support community-based organisations involved in local greenspace management and maintenance in order to develop their skills and abilities and ensure that they are sustainable.
- To work with local communities and local businesses throughout the Borough in order to improve the appearance of open space.

8.4 Management and Maintenance

- To re-prioritise the revenue funding available for greenspace management and maintenance in order to deliver this strategy.
- To assist and support local community groups willing to get involved in local greenspace management and maintenance.
- To consider harmonising management and maintenance standards amongst the different agencies responsible for maintaining open spaces within the Borough.

9 Annual Delivery Plan

- 9.1 These aims and objectives provide the basis for the preparation of an annual delivery plan designed to deliver the key objectives and guide the work of the Borough Council and its partners.

10 Key Target

- 10.1 By 2013, there should be at least one multi-functional greenspace meeting the Council's quality standard in all relevant respects within 300 m of at least 90% of households in the Borough (note: it is proposed this should replace existing target 20 in the Community Strategy, which has already been met but does not take into account quality).
- 10.2 Achieving the target will require a programme of greenspace enhancements, mainly in the following areas:

Priority 1

- Baird (southern part)
- Gensing (central area)
- Hollington (central area)
- Ore (north-western part)

Priority 2

- Ashdown (eastern half)
- Braybrooke (western half)
- Conquest (central area)
- West St Leonards

11 Borough-wide Spaces and Facilities

11.1 Our audit of provision has identified a number of spaces which the Council and its partners will designate as the network of spaces and facilities of Borough-wide significance:

Greenspaces

- Alexandra Park (F)(GF)
- Bos Field
- Church Wood (F)
- Gensing Gardens
- Hastings Cemetery (GF)
- Hastings Country Park (F)(GF)
- Old Roar Ghyll (GF) – part of Alexandra Park)
- Ponds Wood (F)
- St Leonards Gardens (F)(GF)
- St Helen's Wood (F)
- Warrior Square
- West Hill
- White Rock Gardens (GF)
- A site to be designated in the Millennium Community area of the Ore Valley once the detailed design of the area is known.

Note: (F) indicates a space for which there is already a Friends Group, or something similar, in existence Other Spaces. (GF) indicates the proposed sites for entry into the Green Flag Award scheme.

Other Spaces

- The pedestrians-only streets in the town centre
- The seafront

Sport and Recreation Facilities

- Bexhill Recreation Ground (football)
- Hornty Park
- White Rock Gardens (bowling greens)
- William Parker Sports College
- Sandhurst Recreation Ground (cricket)
- Tilekiln Recreation Ground (football & cricket)

12 Specific Recommendations**12.1 The Open Space Network**

The Borough Council should actively promote the existing network of open spaces linked by walking, cycling and other routes. Wherever possible the Council should seek to ensure the routes to open spaces are safe, accessible and easy to follow in order to increase their use and make them attractive to users. In accordance with the above recommendations, it should give priority to those routes that will provide access to the network of spaces designated as of Borough-wide significance.

12.2 Children's Play Provision

The Borough Council and 1066 Housing Association should adopt a new approach to children's play provision based on:

- Designing local greenspaces in such a way as to maximise their play value for children of different ages with opportunities to hide, climb, run around, see nature at work, handle sticks and stones and get dirty or wet.
- Having a relatively small number of large equipped play spaces, such as the recently built play area in Alexandra Park, at key locations around the Borough.
- Requiring developers to design housing environments in which children have space to play safely and have priority over vehicles and to contribute to the provision of open space.
- Planning traffic calming schemes with the objective of making streets child-friendly rather than simply slowing down traffic.

12.3 Access

The Council will adopt Universal Design Principles (which are intended to make facilities and services accessible to all) in its approach to improving access to and within open spaces. This approach will seek to have open spaces accessible to all, and promote those sites and facilities that have good access. In situations where there are constraints that mean a site or facility may not be fully accessible, the Council will adopt the least restrictive option. That is the option that will present a barrier to the least number of people who want to access the site or facility.

12.4 Hastings Country Park

The Council should continue to invest in improving Hastings Country Park. The enhancements to which it should give priority are a new interpretation centre, more information and interpretation for visitors, resurfacing and providing better signage for the main paths and creating circular walks.

12.5 The Proposed Pebsham Country Park

In terms of open space provision, the Council and its partners regard the Pebsham proposals as being of strategic importance, but these need to be balanced against the needs of other open spaces within the Borough. In the short term implementing the proposals will require resources which will be better spent elsewhere on implementing this Strategy and may result in the Borough having under-resourced Open Spaces overall.

12.6 White Rock Gardens

The Council should review the future use of the western part of White Rock Gardens.

12.7 William Parker Sports College

The William Parker site should be developed further as the main "club hub" in the Borough through a partnership between the Council, the County Council, the College and the Rugby Club, subject to appropriate planning conditions on any new facilities on the site.

12.8 The Borough's Woodlands

In parallel with the support of the Green Network and open space network, the Council should work with Friends groups to enhance access to appropriate areas of woodland and its subsequent management.

12.9 The Ore Valley Millennium Community

The Council should see the quality and accessibility

standards set out in this Plan as complementing the existing design coding proposals for the proposed greenspaces within the Millennium Community site in Ore Valley. In addition, it should seek to ensure that the greenspaces form a network of attractive routes through the area, linking to specific facilities such as the railway station, shops and community buildings.

12.10 Livability

There is no point in having superb parks and other greenspaces if local residents perceive the network of streets, public footpaths and cycle paths leading to them as unsafe or unpleasant. Accordingly the Council should work with the Neighbourhood Renewal Team to further focus on livability issues, including the “busy-ness” of streets, particularly in the key regeneration areas.

12.11 The Seafront

The seafront is a defining characteristic of Hastings and St Leonards, but cut off from the rest of the town by the A259. It also has some poor quality spaces and facilities. The Council and its partners should seek to re-establish safe pedestrian links between town and seafront and enhance the quality of the seafront in conjunction with the Seafront Strategy and the emerging Masterplan for Central St. Leonards.

12.12 Allotments

Allotments provide an important healthy living leisure activity and contribute to the Borough’s green spaces, but are not publicly accessible (except by allotment holders). The Council will seek to implement the existing Allotment Strategy in line with the priorities contained within the Allotment Development Plan.

13 Review of Sites

13.1 The audit of Open Spaces places sites and facilities in one of four categories according to their assessed quality and value (see maps in annex 1). The categories are:

- High quality, high value spaces/facilities with scores above average for quality and value (coloured green on the maps). It is recommended that these sites should be protected and maintained at this quality/value.
- Low quality, high value spaces/facilities with scores below average for quality and above average for value (coloured blue). It is recommended that these sites should be protected and their quality enhanced.
- High quality, low value spaces/facilities with above average scores for quality and below average scores for value (coloured pink). It is recommended that these sites are retained and ways to enhance their value sought.
- Low quality, low value spaces/facilities with below average quality and value scores (coloured red). It is recommended that the future use of these sites be carefully reviewed. The Council will consider disposing of those sites for which there is no alternative greenspace use and no real need for the site.

There is an additional category for greenspace sites that are of Green Flag standard shown on maps 5A and 5B (coloured hatched green).

14 Planning Policy

- 14.1 The Council should adopt a planning policy for open space, sport and recreation provision which gives priority to the enhancement of existing greenspaces over significant additional provision. In addition, it should use the development process as one means of funding this enhancement through the pro-active use of planning agreements. In particular this could be used to support the proposals for the Millennium Community, the Masterplan for Central St. Leonards, play provision and the open space network.
- 14.2 The Council will separately identify any significant development sites where on site provision will be required.

15 Implementation and Review

- 15.1 The Council will form a Steering Group comprised of partners and other agencies to oversee the implementation of the Strategy. The Steering group will report progress on the implementation of the Strategy on an annual basis to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee responsible for Leisure & Cultural Development.
- 15.2 The Steering Group will create a mechanism for reporting on progress towards the revised Community Strategy target 20 to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The target will be formally reviewed in 2008 and again in 2013.
- 15.3 Detailed delivery plans will be drawn up in consultation with the Council’s partners, the new area management boards and the existing Neighbourhood Forums.

ANNEX 1

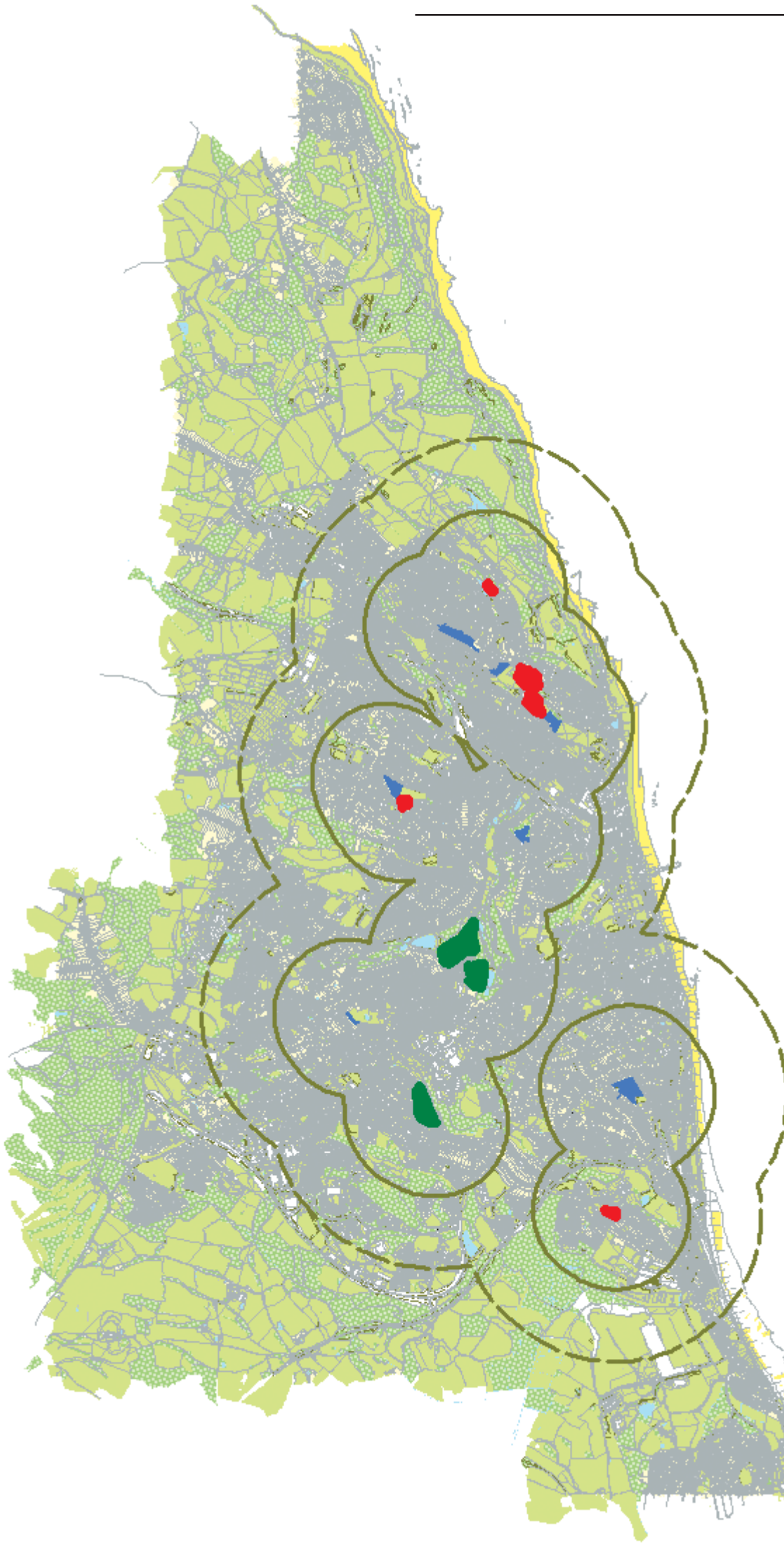
Accessibility, Quality and Value Maps

The maps in this annex show the quality and value scores from the audit. The accessibility of sites is indicated by the use of distance thresholds that show how far away the site or facility is from people living in the Borough either by walking or cycling.

The quality and value categories shown on the maps are:

- High quality, high value spaces/facilities with scores above average for quality and value (coloured green on the maps). It is recommended that these sites should be protected and maintained at this quality/value.
- Low quality, high value spaces/facilities with scores below average for quality and above average for value (coloured blue). It is recommended that these sites should be protected and their quality enhanced.
- High quality, low value spaces/facilities with above average scores for quality and below average scores for value (coloured pink). It is recommended that these sites are retained and ways to enhance their value sought.
- Low quality, low value spaces/facilities with below average quality and value scores (coloured red). It is recommended that the future use of these sites be carefully reviewed.

There is an additional category for greenspace sites that are of Green Flag standard shown on maps 5A and 5B (coloured hatched green).

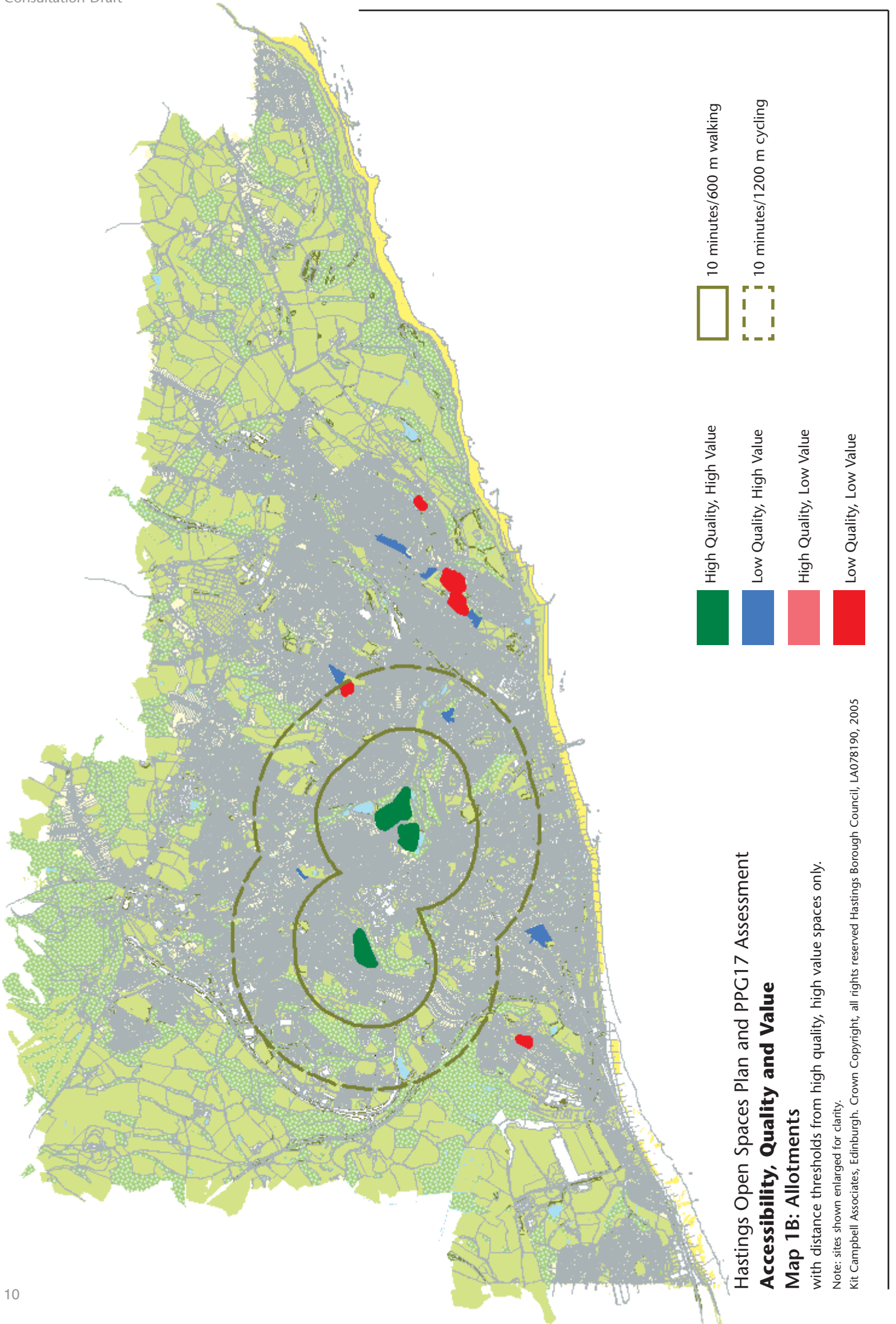


10 minutes/600 m walking
10 minutes/1200 m cycling

High Quality, High Value
Low Quality, High Value
High Quality, Low Value
Low Quality, Low Value

Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 1A: Allotments

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



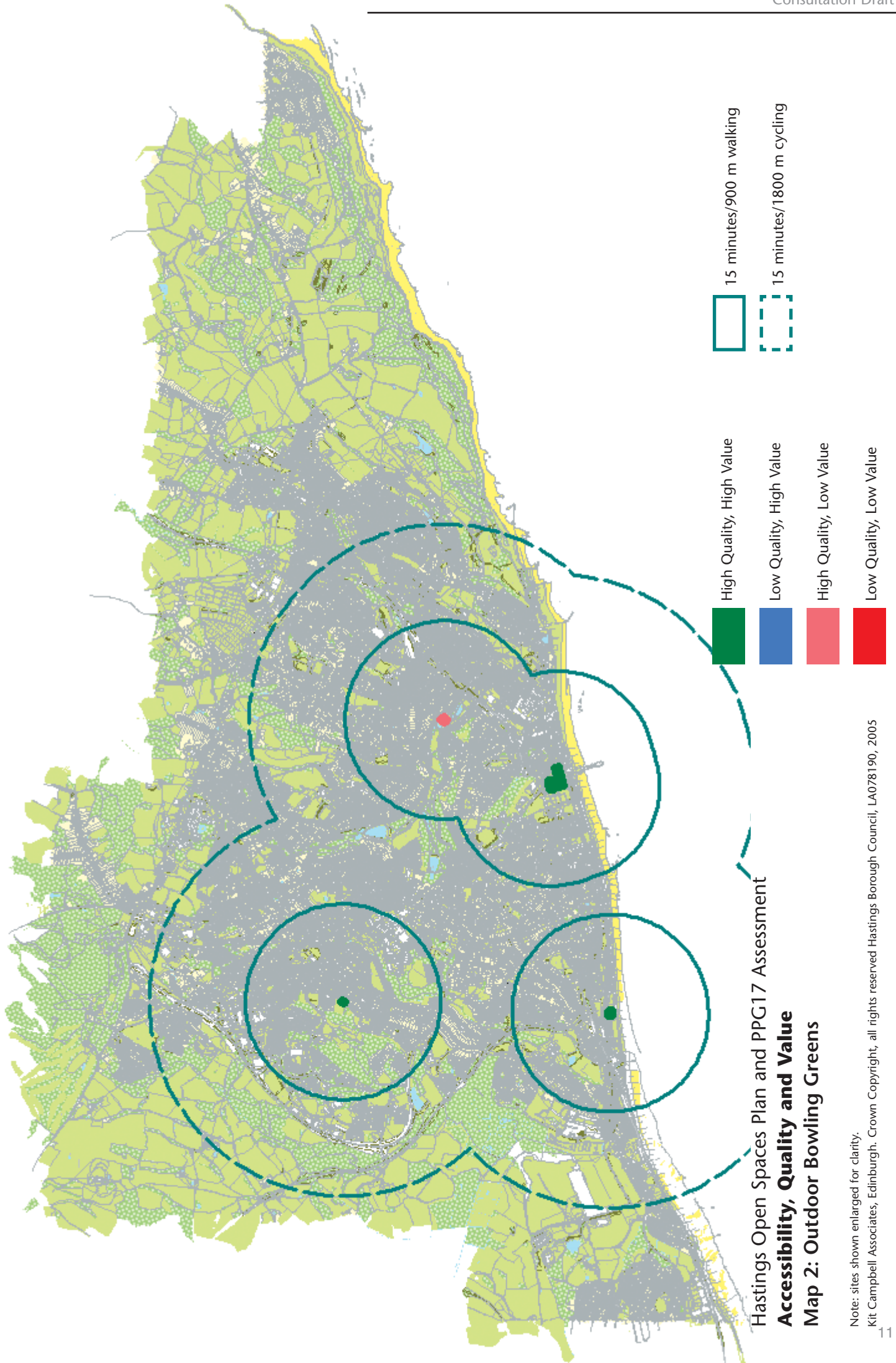
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment Accessibility, Quality and Value

Map 1B: Allotments

with distance thresholds from high quality, high value spaces only.

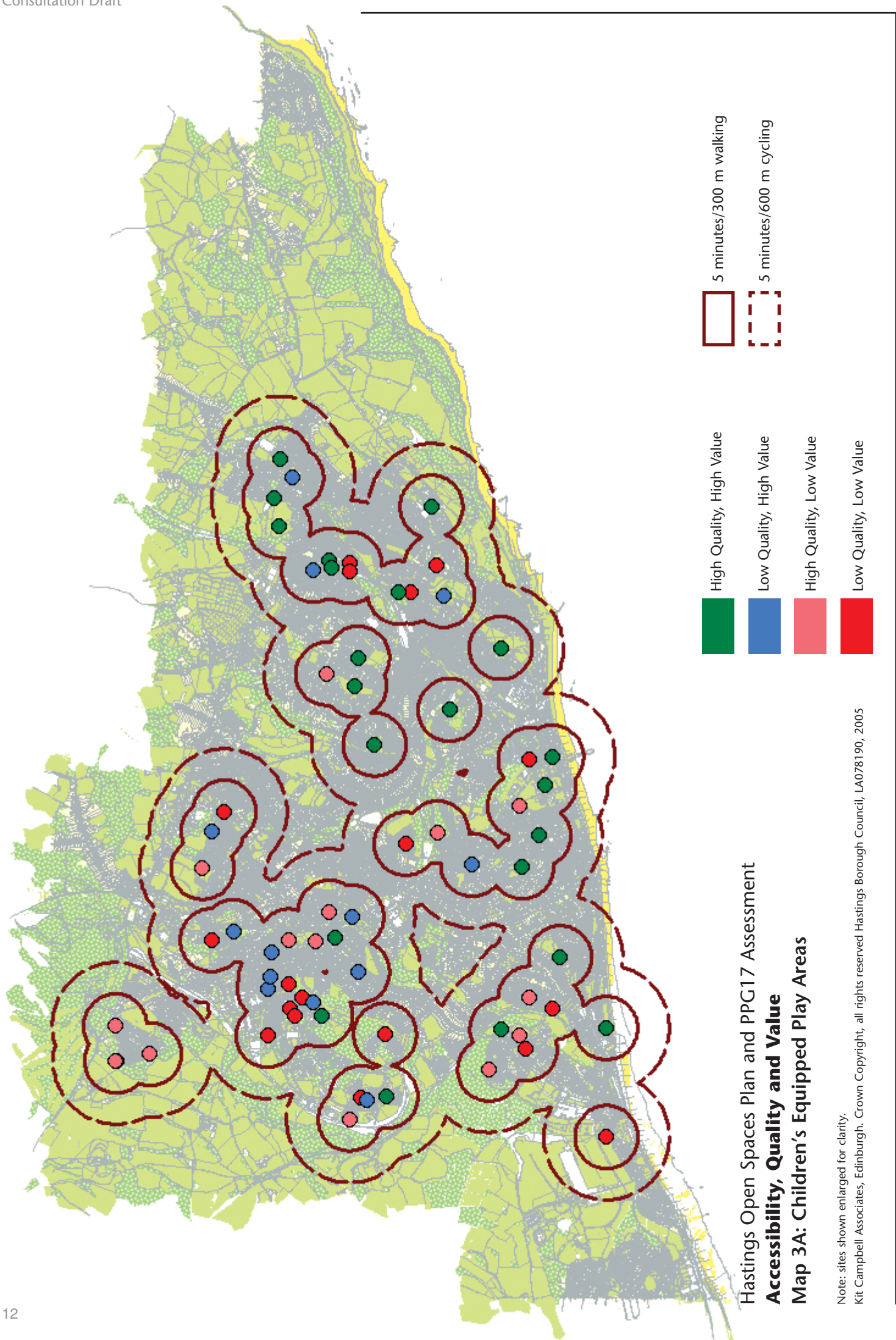
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



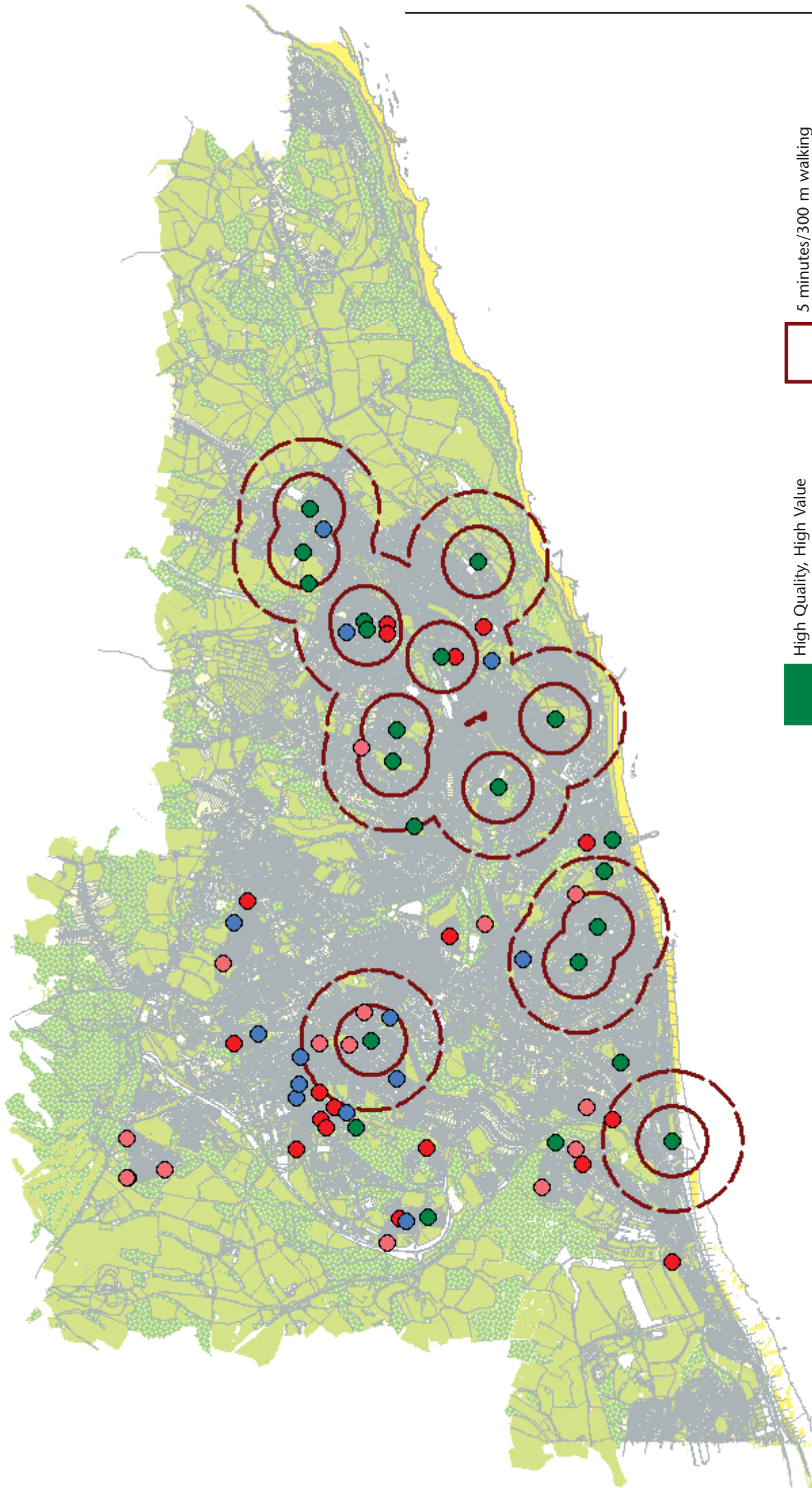
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 3A: Children's Equipped Play Areas

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



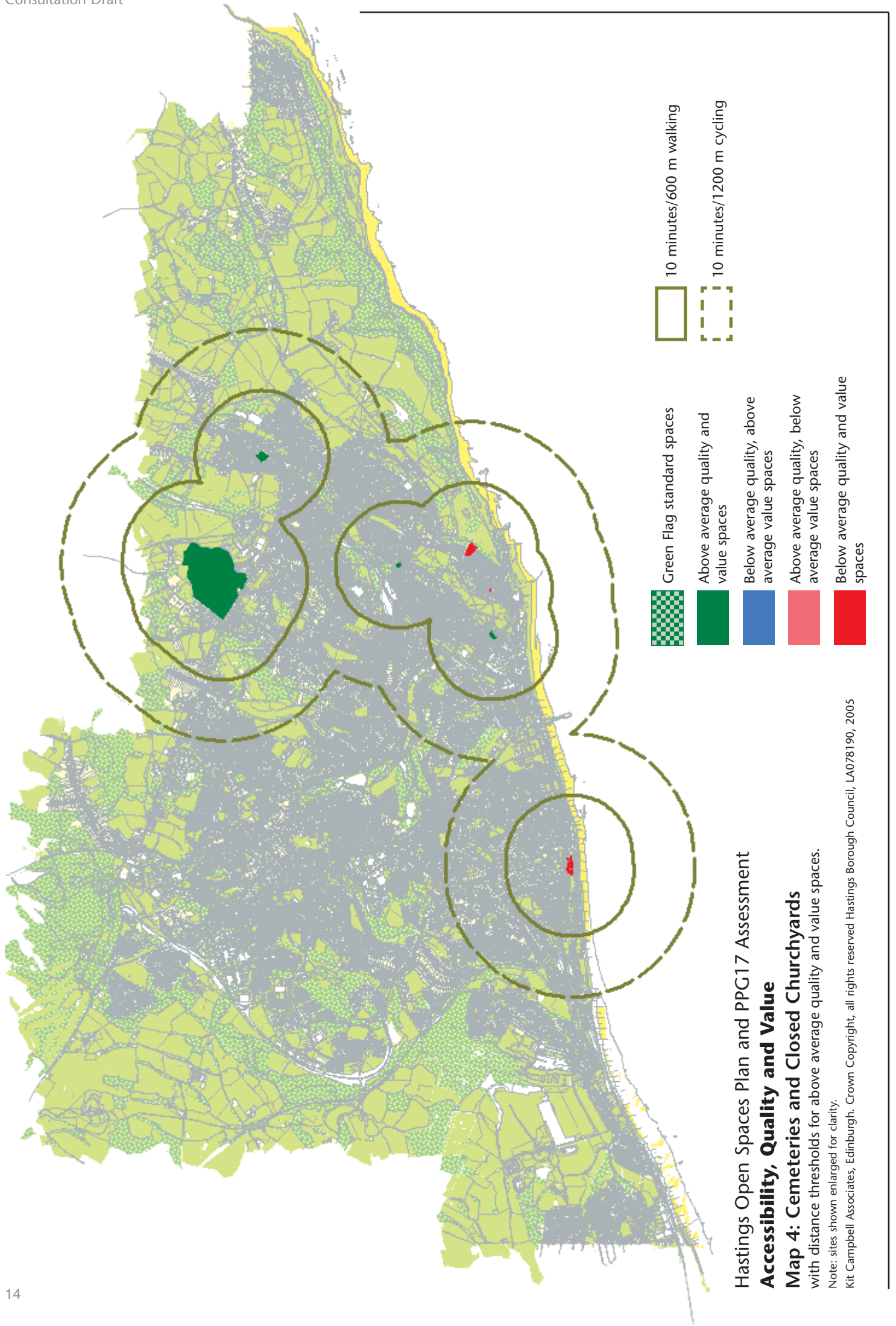
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value

Map 3B: Children's Equipped Play Areas

with distance thresholds from high quality, high value sites with unrestricted access.

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

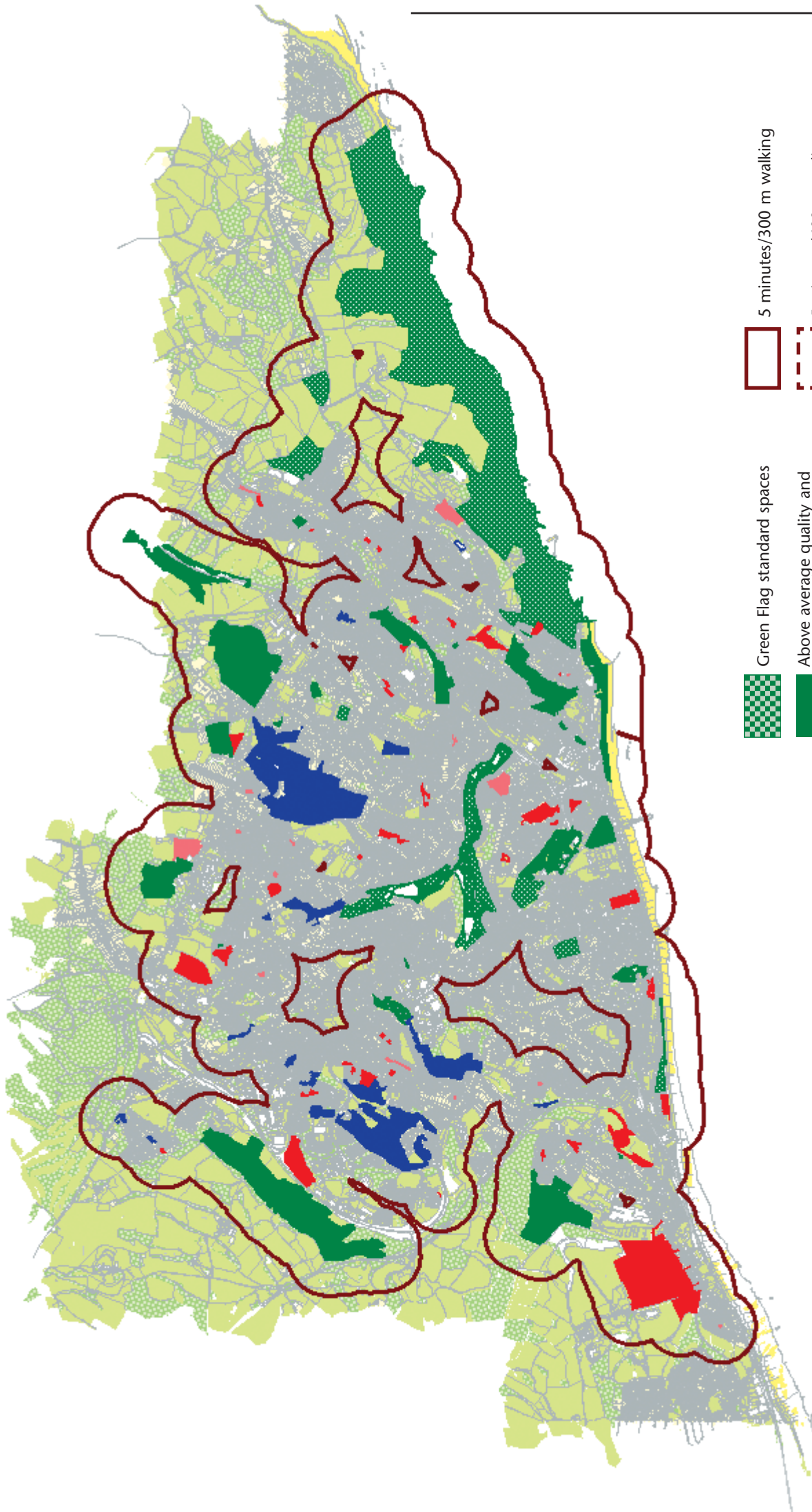
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value

Map 4: Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards
 with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

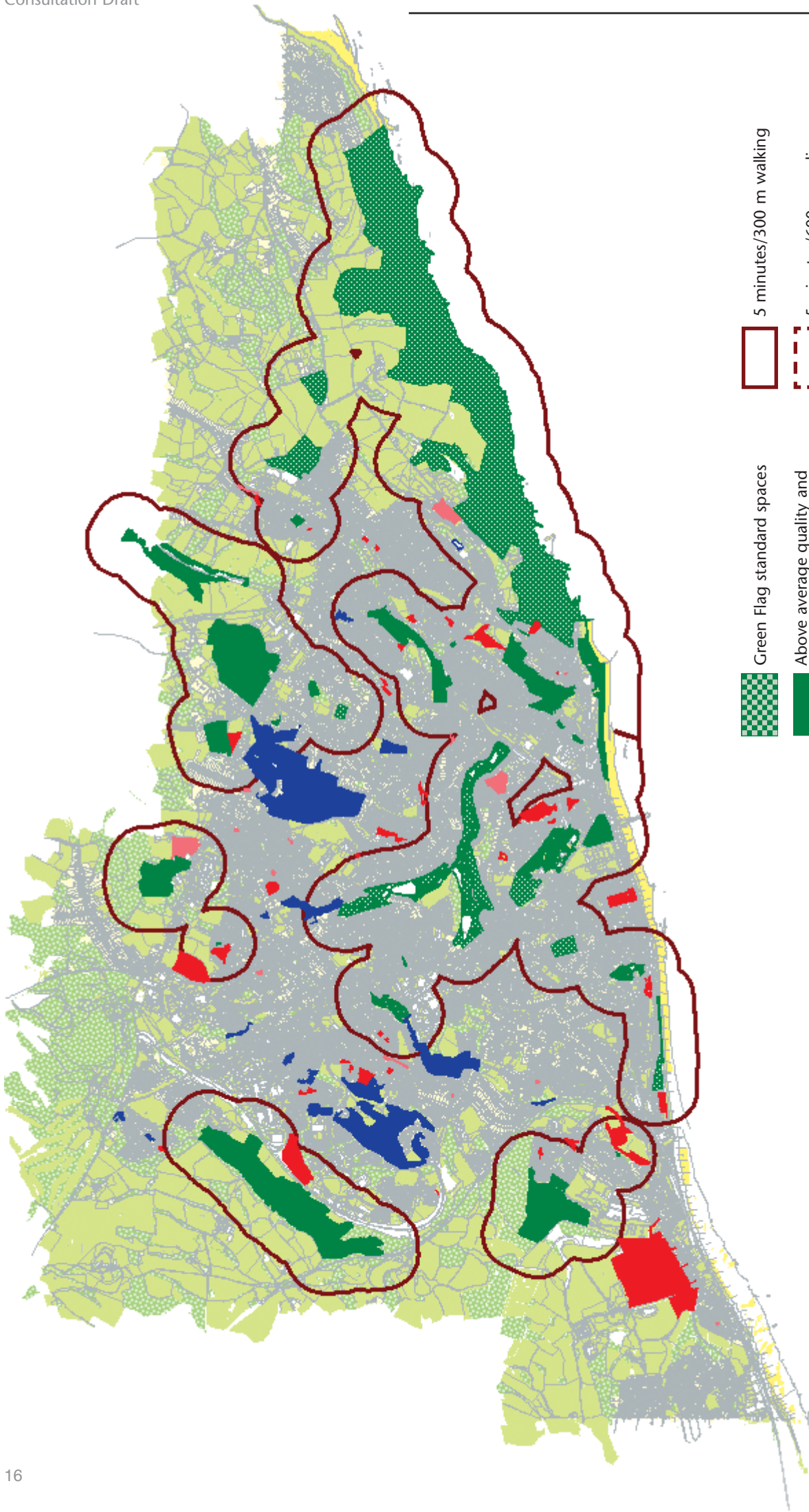
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
 Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 5A: Multi-functional Greenspaces

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



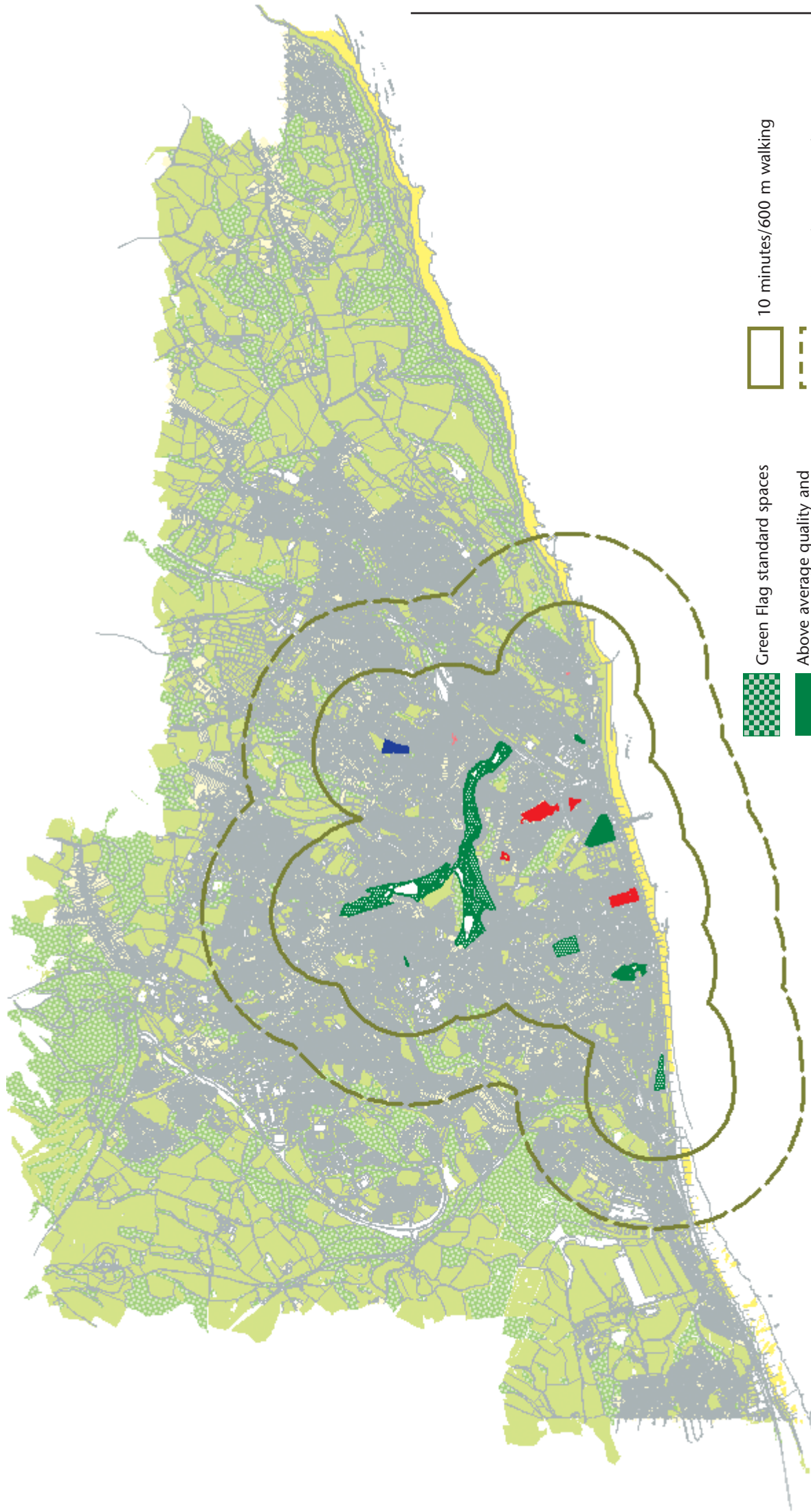
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value








Map 5B: Multi-functional Greenspaces

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

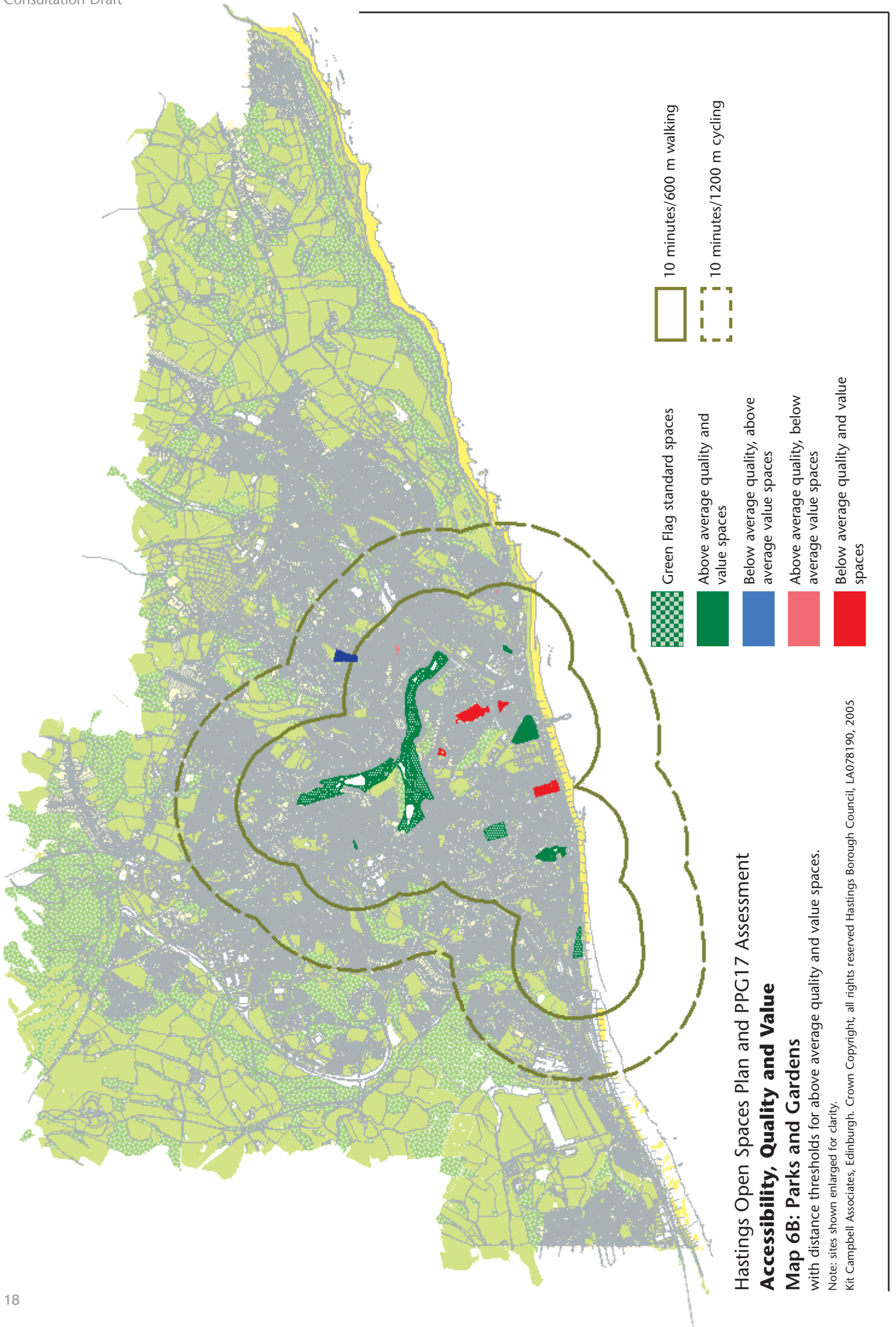
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



-  Green Flag standard spaces
-  Above average quality and value spaces
-  Below average quality, above average value spaces
-  Above average quality, below average value spaces
-  Below average quality and value spaces
-  10 minutes/600 m walking
-  10 minutes/1200 m cycling

Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 6A: Parks and Gardens

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
 Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



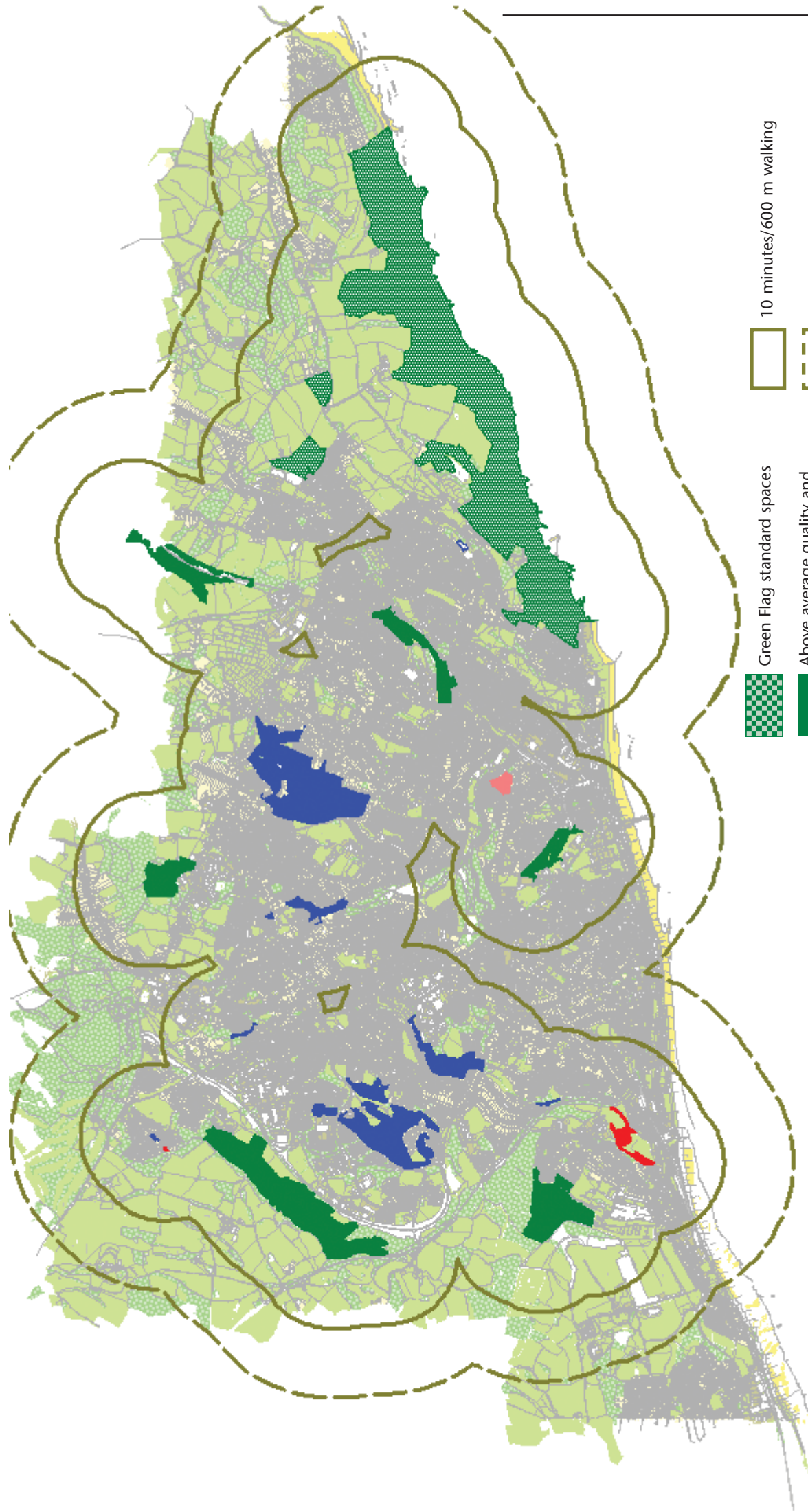
**Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value**

Map 6B: Parks and Gardens

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



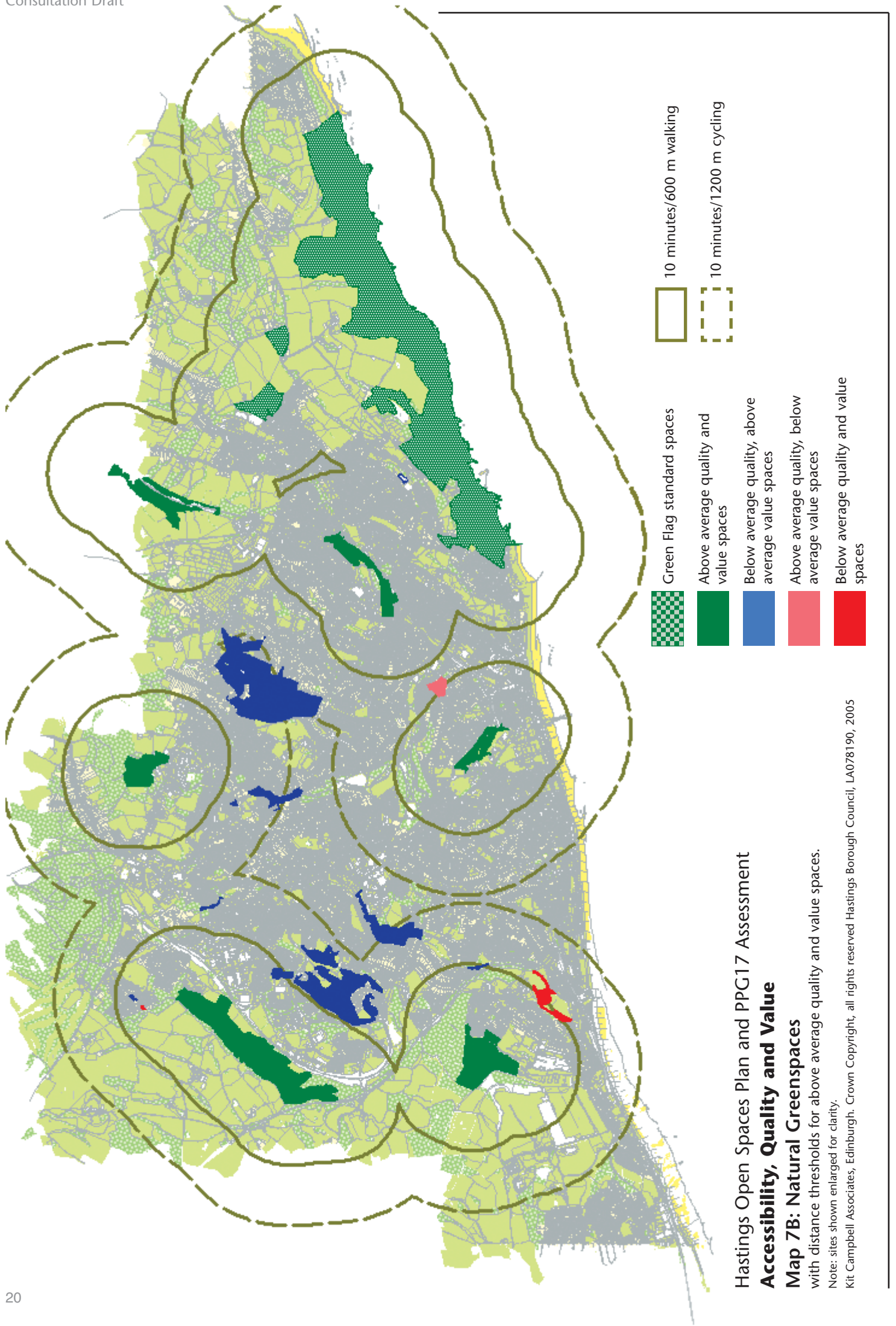
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value

Map 7A: Natural Greenspaces

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



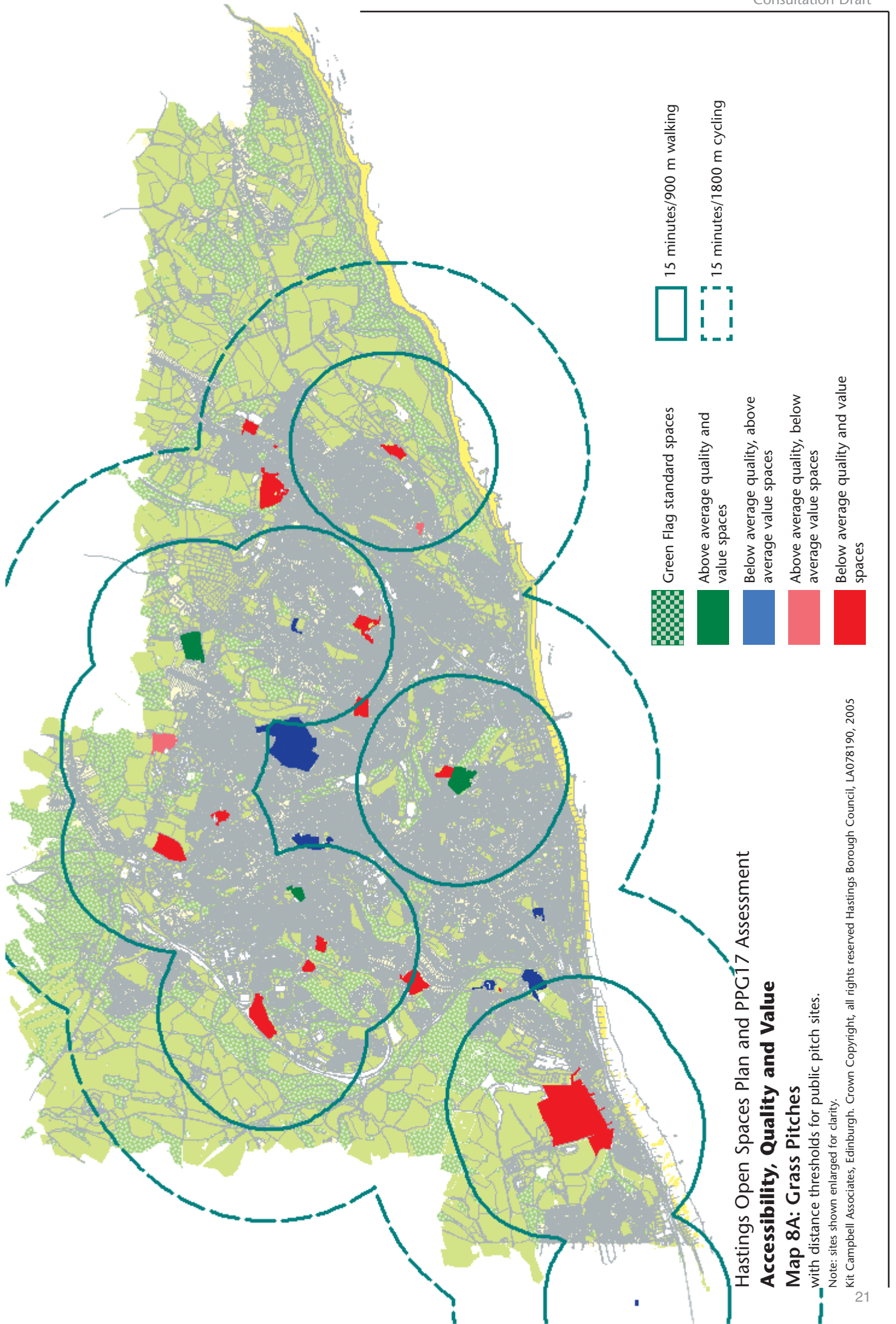
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value

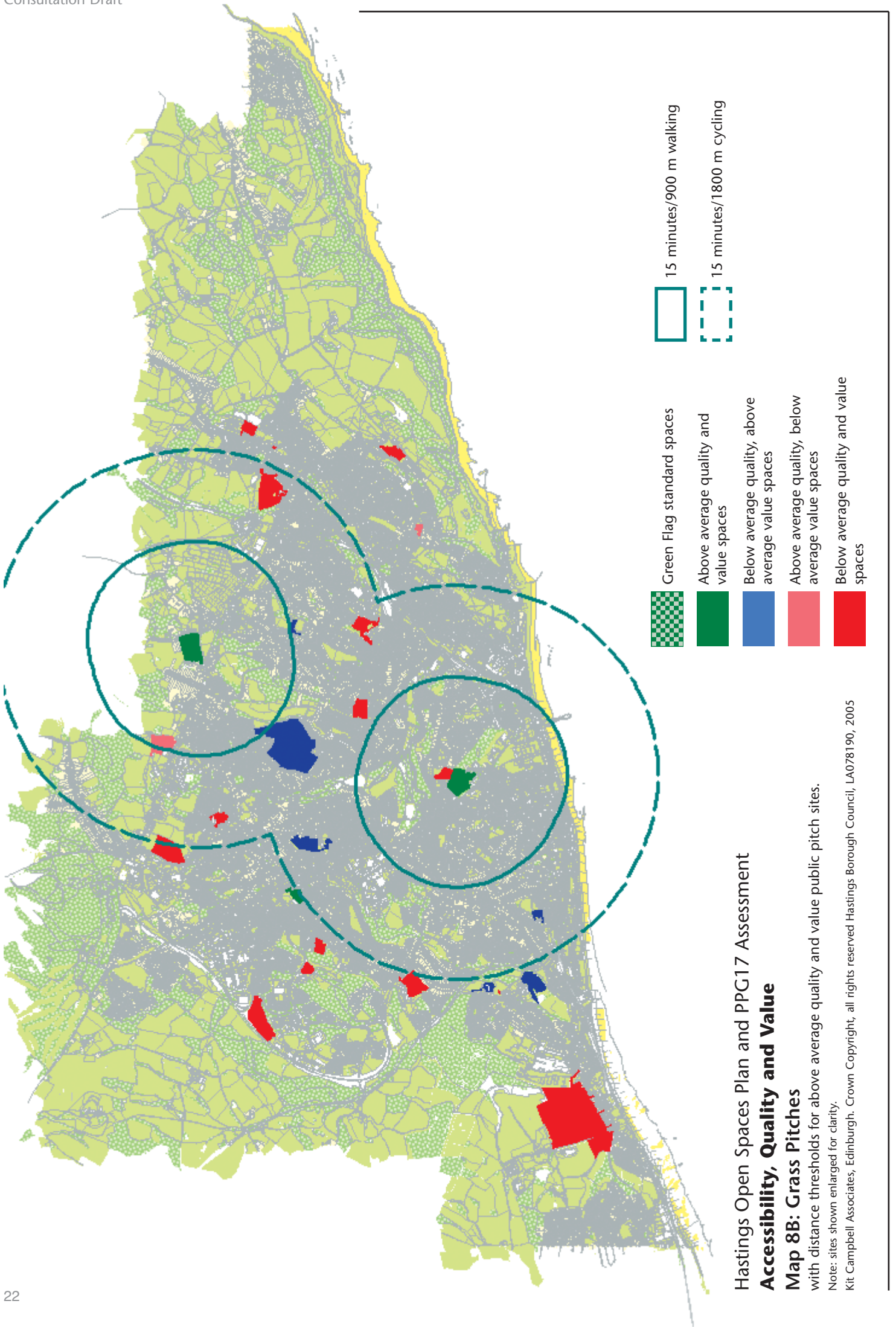
Map 7B: Natural Greenspaces

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005





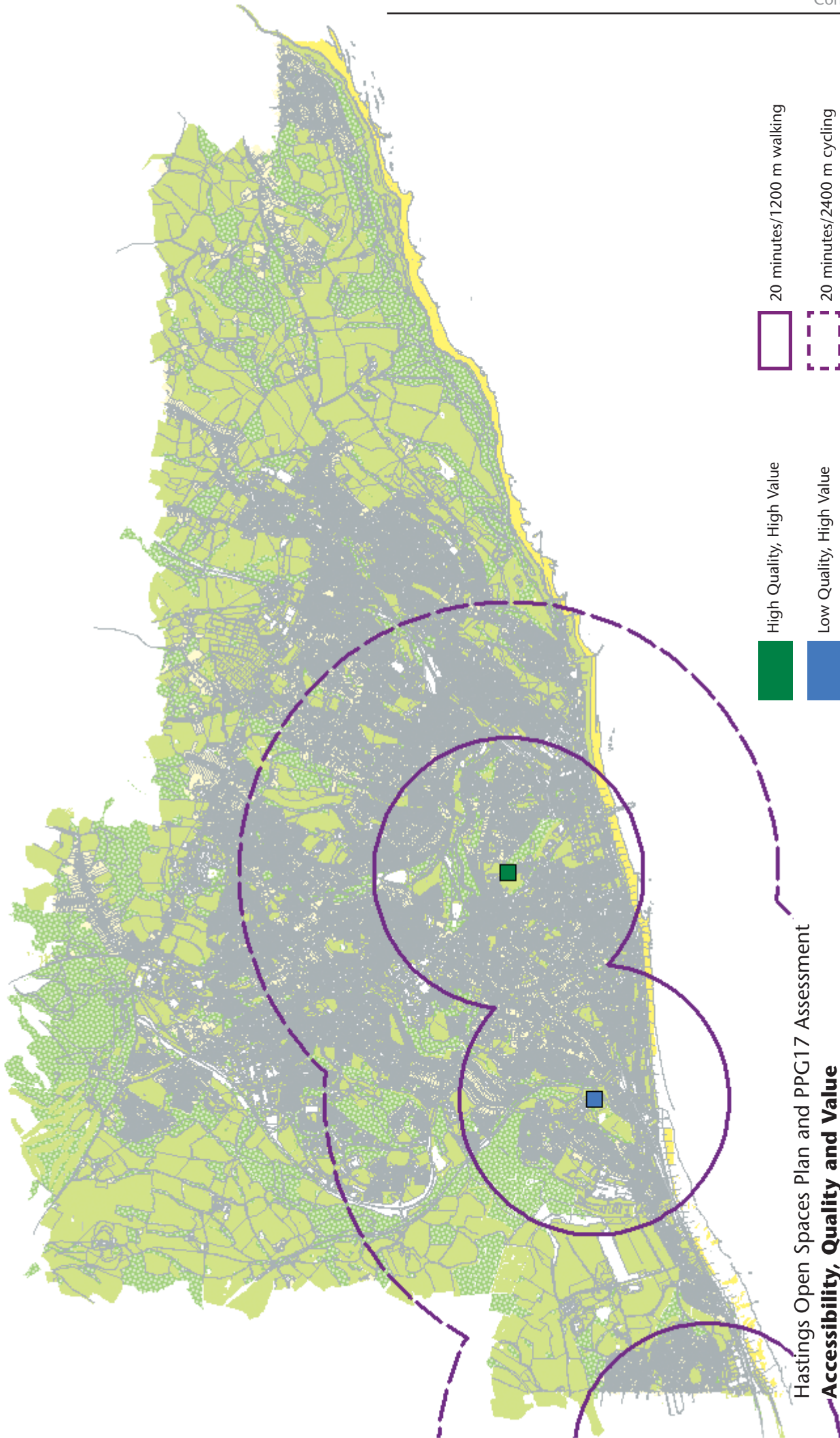
Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value

Map 8B: Grass Pitches

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value public pitch sites.

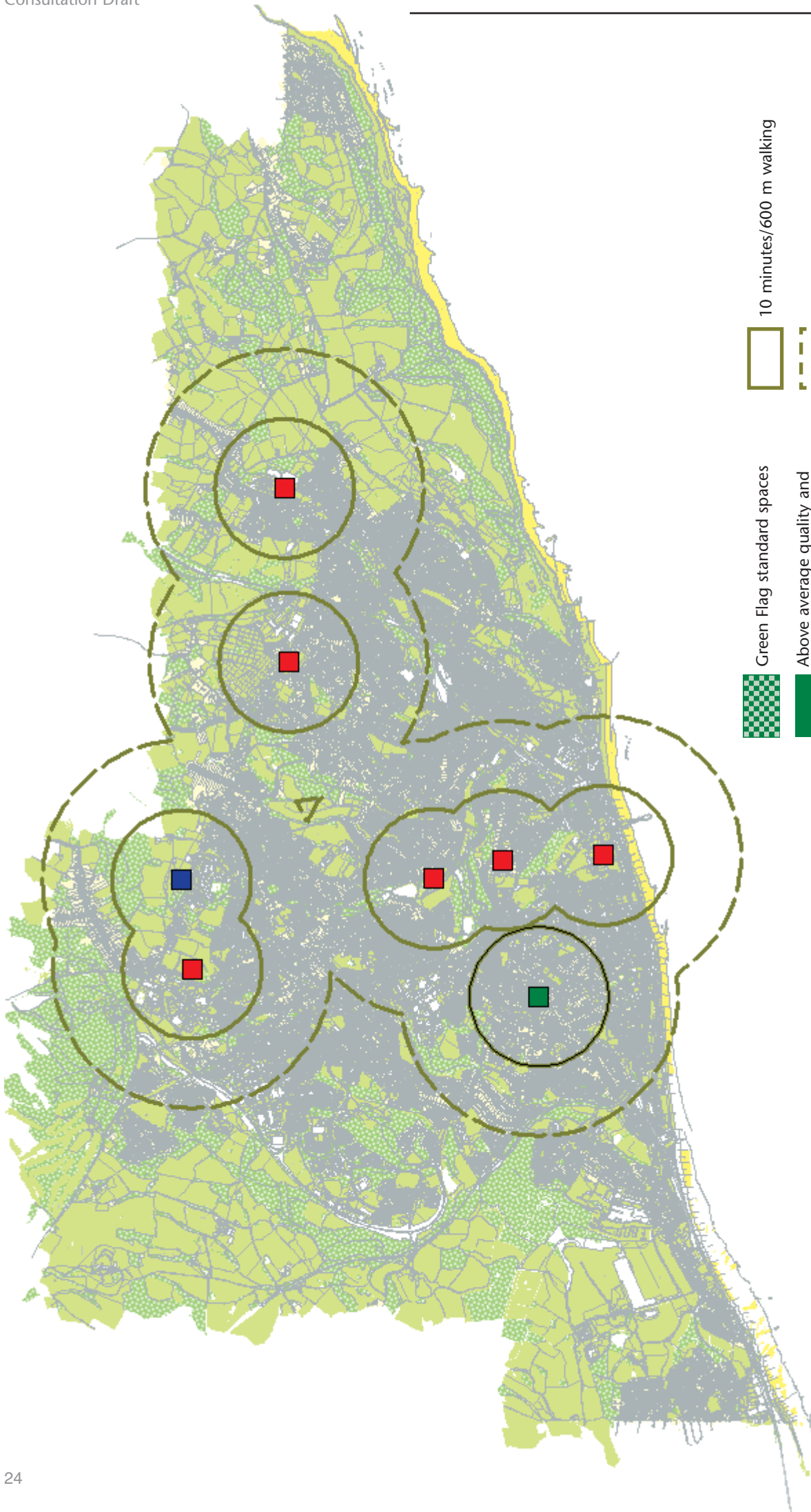
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 9 Artificial Turf Pitches

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



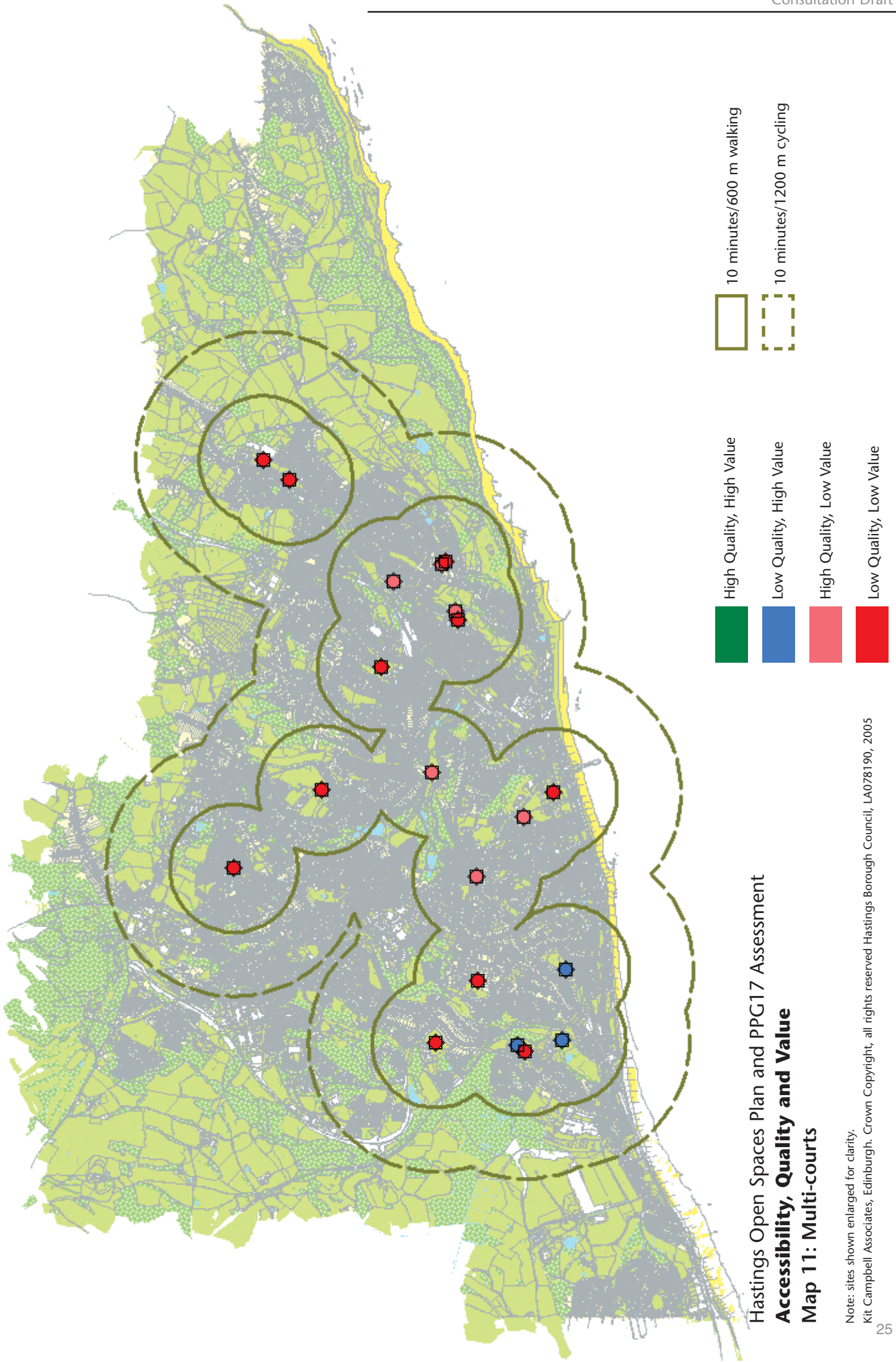
**Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value**

Map 10: Tennis Courts

with distance thresholds for above average quality and value spaces.

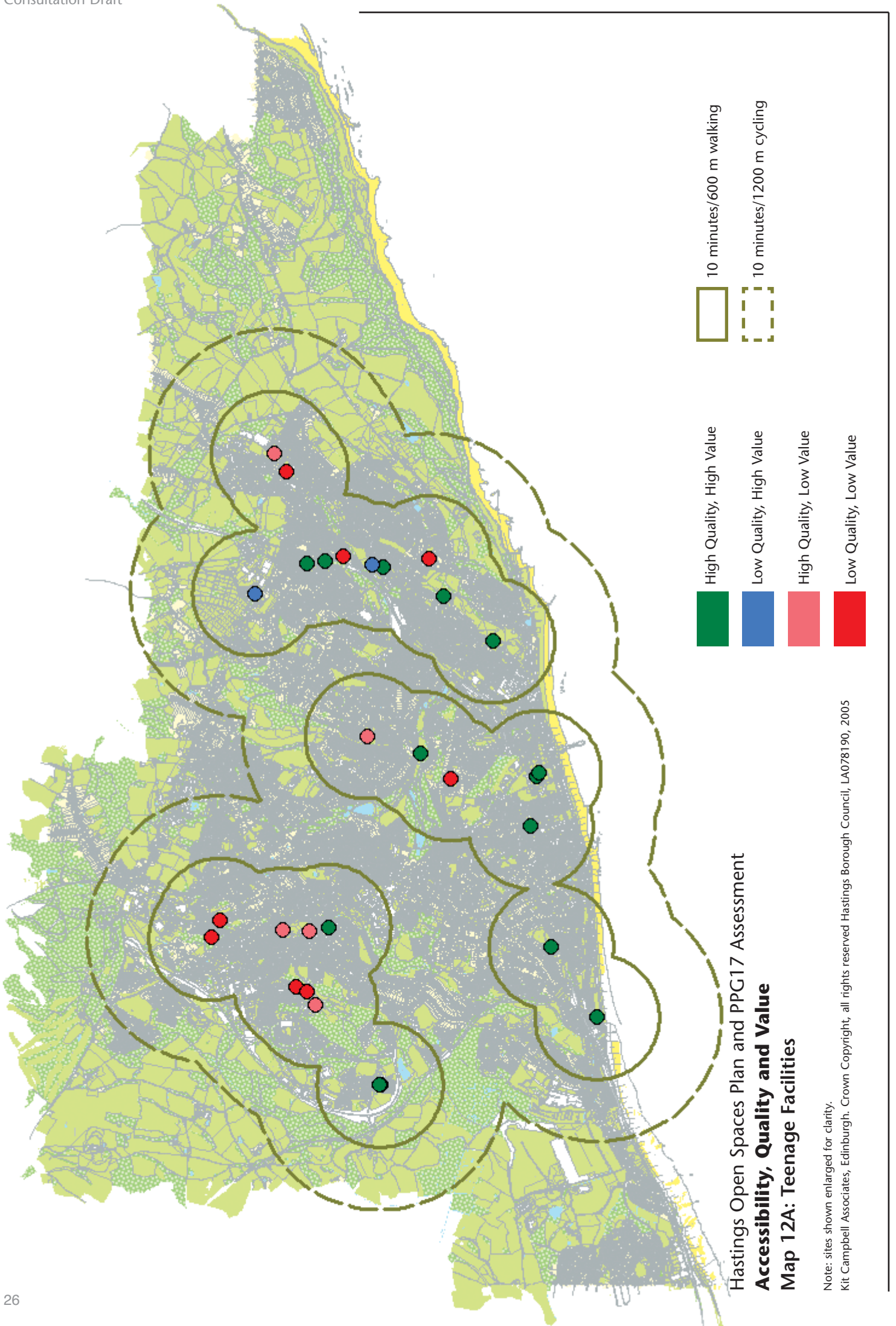
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

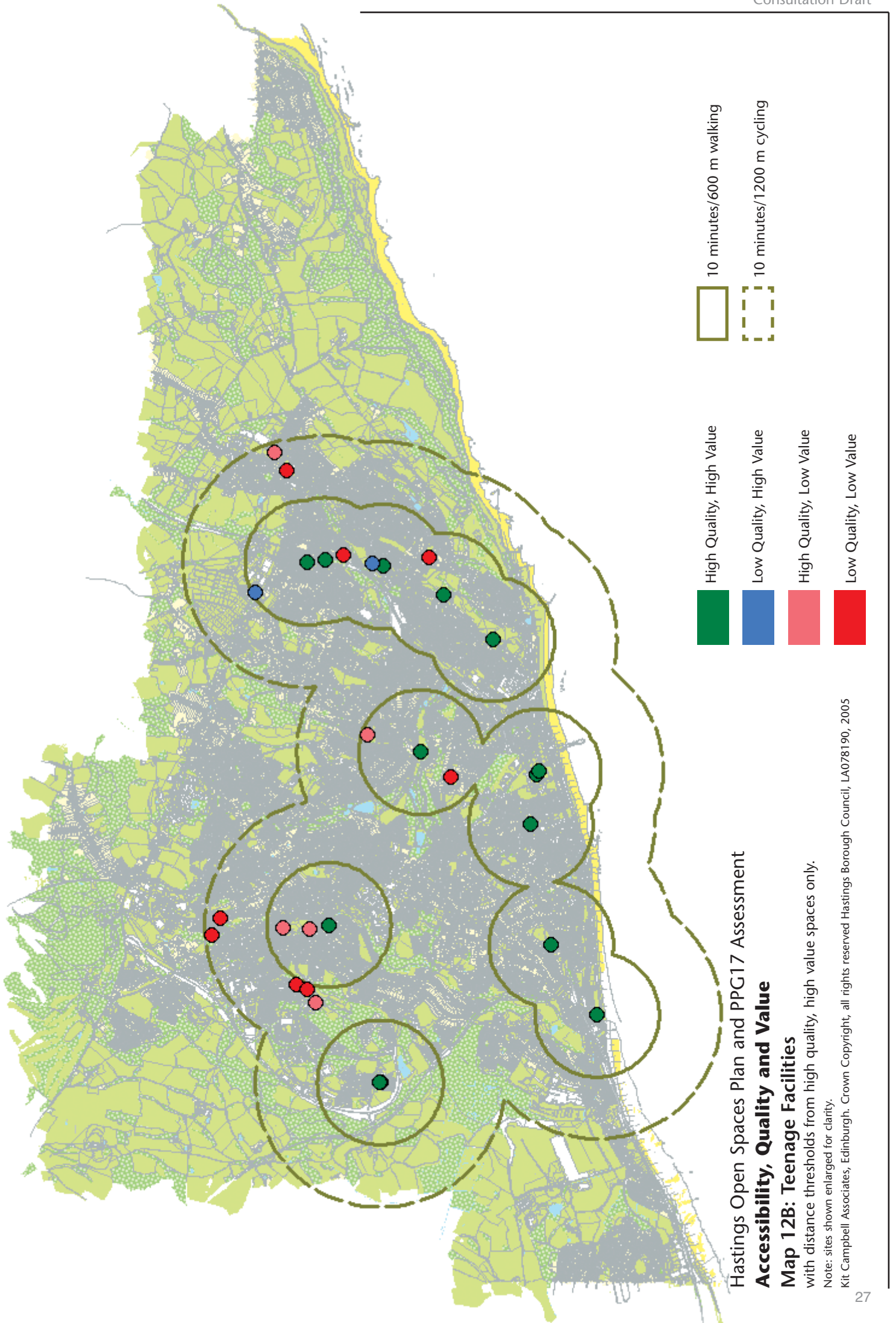
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005

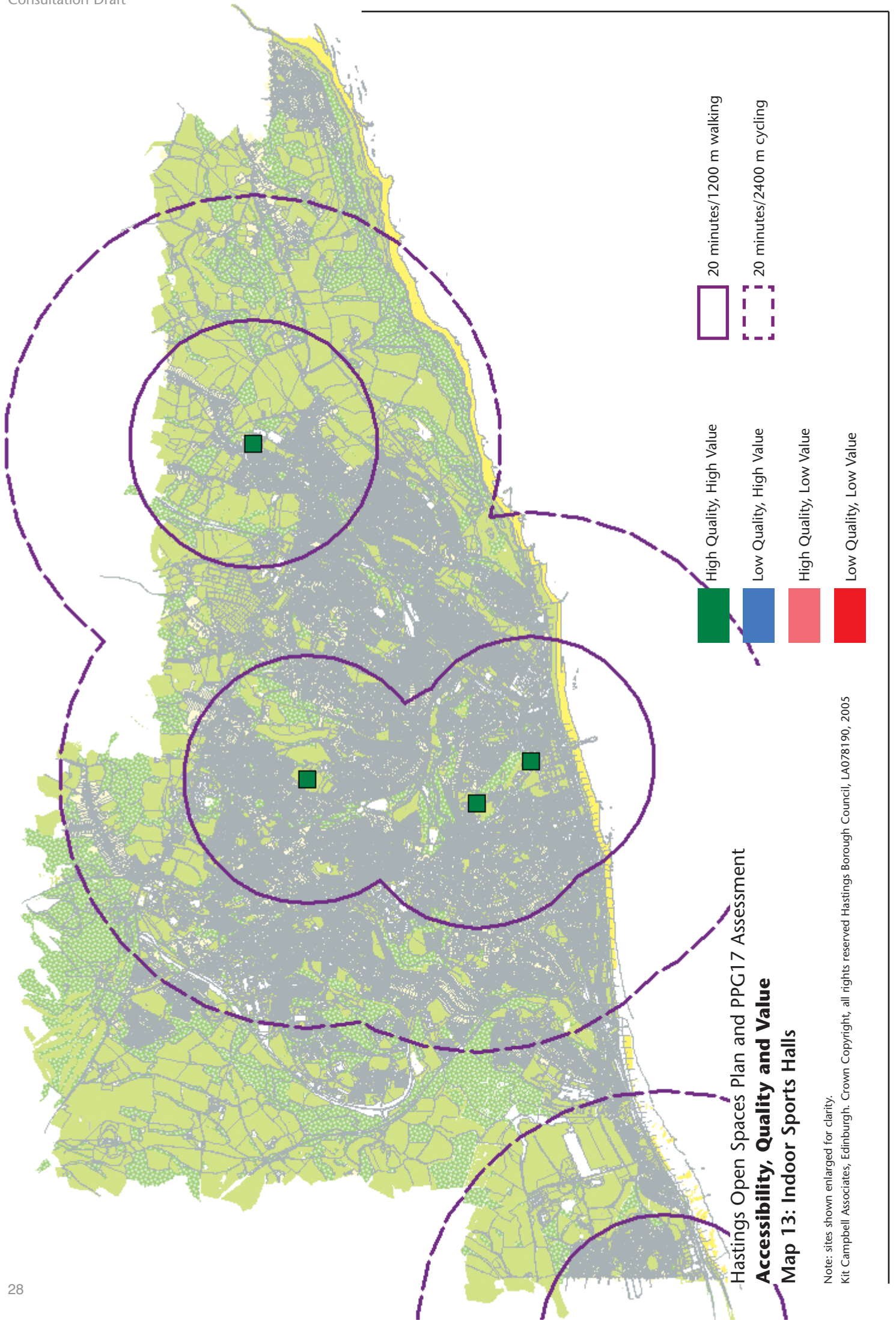


Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 11: Multi-courts

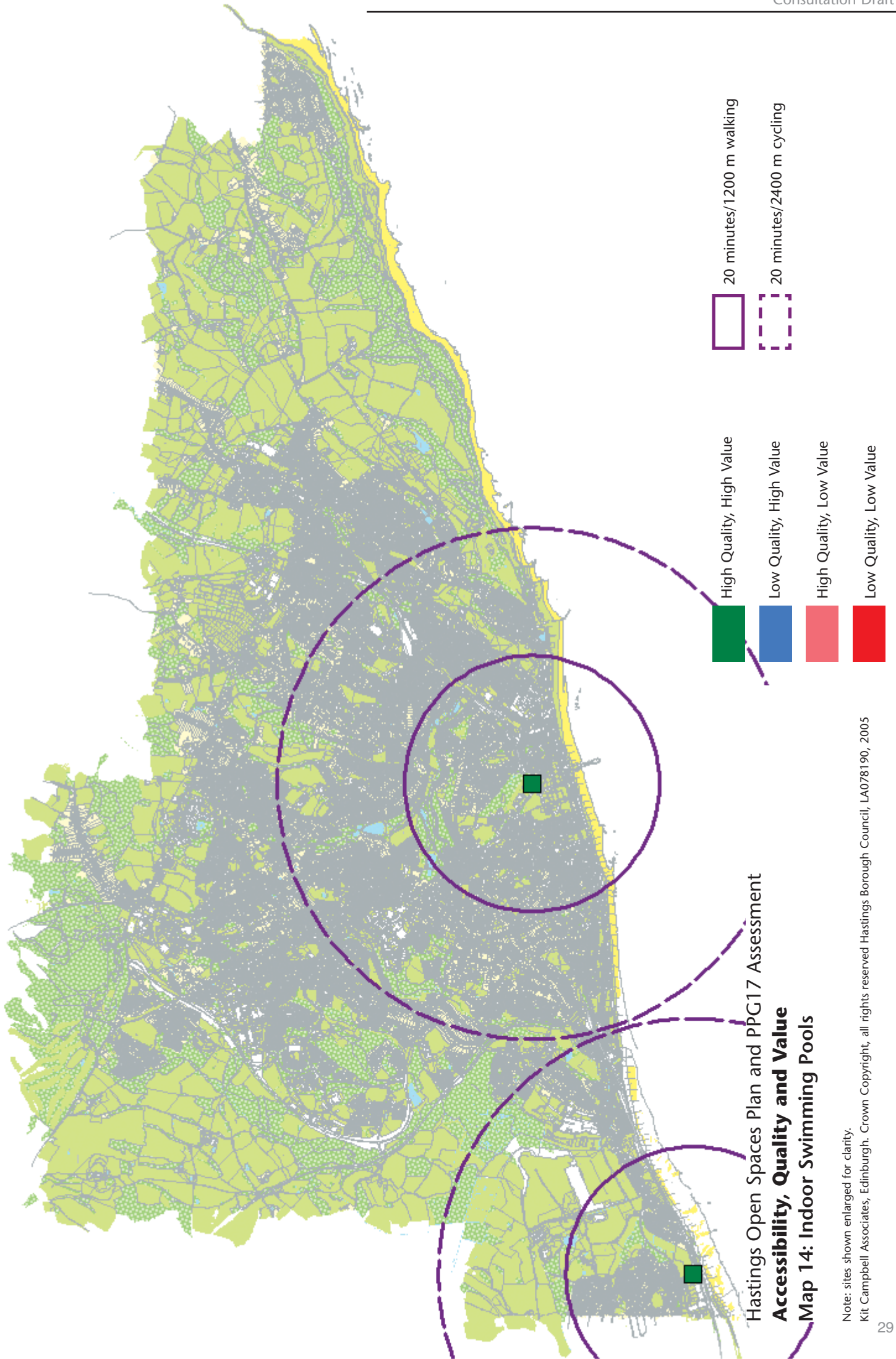
Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005





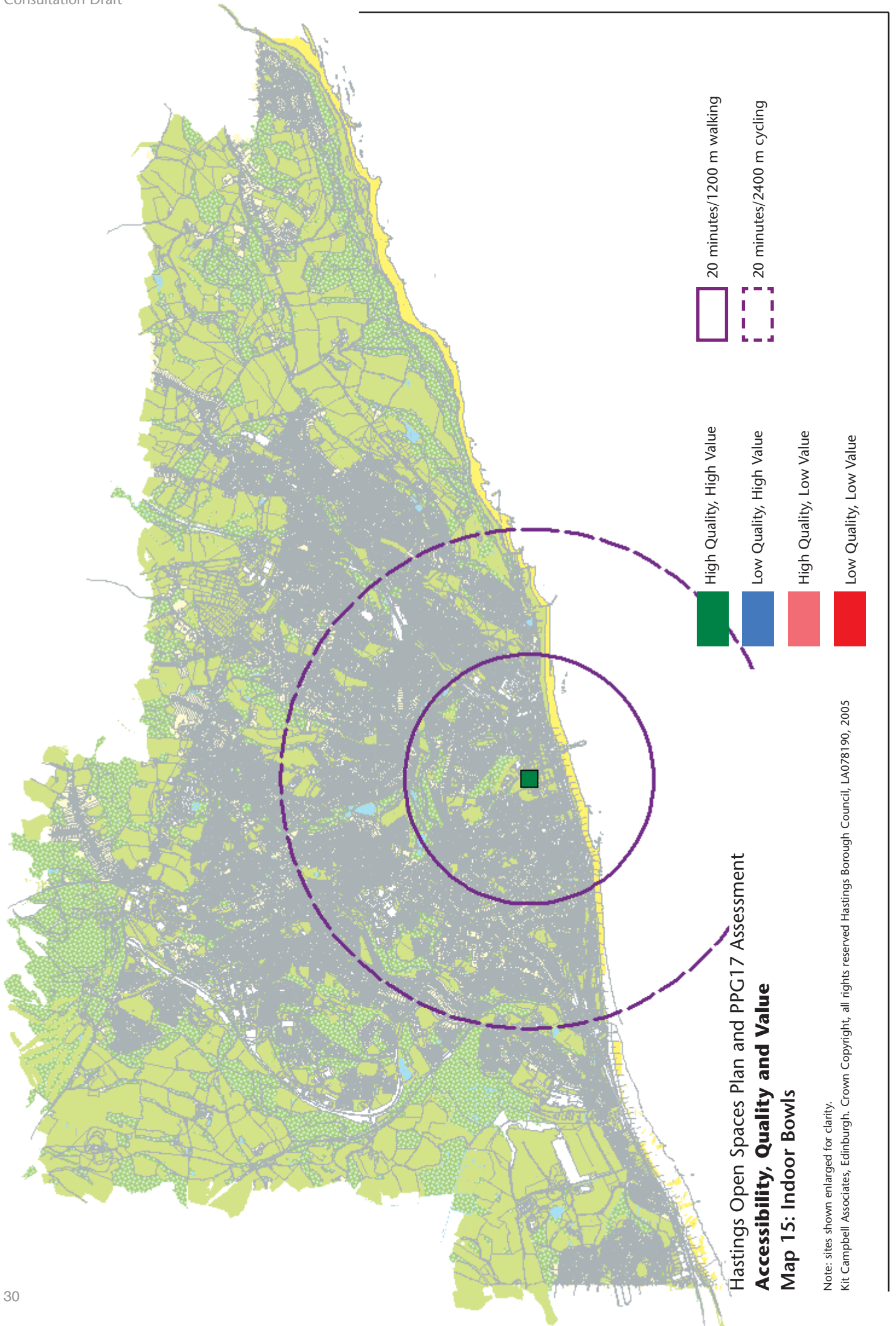


Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.

Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005



Hastings Open Spaces Plan and PPG17 Assessment
Accessibility, Quality and Value
Map 15: Indoor Bowls

Note: sites shown enlarged for clarity.
Kit Campbell Associates, Edinburgh. Crown Copyright, all rights reserved Hastings Borough Council, LA078190, 2005

ANNEX 2

Quality Standard for Open Spaces

Introduction

The purpose of quality standards is to set out the quality of provision the Council wishes to see in its area. Such standards have two main uses:

They provide a benchmark for the Council to assess and compare the quality of different spaces or facilities of the same type within its area as an aid when determining priorities for improvement or changes to management regimes. Given that it will not always be possible to achieve all aspects of the quality standards - for example because of a lack of resources - quality standards are an aspiration in relation to existing provision. As such they should be challenging, but broadly achievable, and the Council should aim to achieve them wherever it is practicable to do so.

They set out the Council's requirements as a guide for developers on the quality of provision the Council will expect them either to provide or fund. In this context, quality standards are a requirement, although they must obviously be applied in a way which is reasonable given the specific circumstances of a proposed development.

This chapter sets out a number of general requirements plus draft quality standards for:

Greenspaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible natural greenspace Allotments Amenity greenspaces Civic spaces and seafront areas Green corridors Local equipped play areas Neighbourhood equipped play areas Sports pitches Athletics tracks Bowling greens Tennis and multi-courts Urban parks and recreation grounds Teenage Facilities
Indoor provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community centres and halls Indoor sports halls and swimming pools

Each of the quality standards is derived from examples of best practice, such as the Green Flag Award criteria for parks, or published guidance, for example from English Nature or Sport England, and links directly to the Kit Campbell Associates (KCA) audit forms.

General Requirements

The following requirements for design quality, accessibility and management and maintenance are common to all spaces and are therefore set out at the start of the standards rather than repeated for each different form of provision. There are also some additional requirements under these headings for specific types of space which are

set out in the appropriate sections below.

Design Quality

Design quality is fundamental to ensuring that spaces are fit for purpose, attractive to potential users and easy to maintain. As a general principle, all greenspaces should be designed by experienced landscape architects working to the following design objectives:

- Character: each space should have its own specific identity which responds to the character of the area in which it is set
- Continuity and enclosure: there should be a clear distinction between public and private spaces
- Quality of the public realm: spaces should be attractive, safe, uncluttered and designed in such a way as to be attractive and usable by everyone
- Ease of movement: it should be easy to get to and move through spaces and individual public spaces should be connected with one another as much as possible. In residential areas, people should generally have priority over vehicles.
- Legibility and clear routes: the routes through spaces should be clear, with landmarks or directional signs at appropriate locations
- Adaptability: spaces should be able to change over time to meet evolving local needs
- Diversity: spaces should offer variety and choice to potential users

Accessibility

Accessibility has two key components: making it easy for potential users to get to spaces and making it easy to use them. Accordingly it is concerned with all potential users and not just those who are disabled in some way.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and PPG17 both promote the design of inclusive public spaces and environments that everyone can use. Since October 2004 service providers have been required to take reasonable steps to ensure that people with disabilities are able to use premises and spaces without unnecessary constraints. There is no clear definition of "reasonable" in this context, but it seems that there is no requirement to make all spaces accessible to people with disabilities all of the time. A useful policy is that greenspaces should be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

In greenspaces, the key requirements are:

- Spaces should be linked to local pedestrian and cycle path systems
- Spaces and publicly accessible buildings or facilities within them should be fully accessible to people with disabilities
- Adequate car parking (if required) should be either on site or close to the entrances
- Spaces should be traversed by a network of hard surfaced paths, where appropriate, which are hard surfaced, well drained and suitable for wheelchairs and baby buggies; maximum slope not more than 1:12 and then only for short distances; otherwise not more than 1:24. Paths must also be wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass and broadly follow desire lines to link the entrances to the space with points of interest either within the space or close to it (note: on some sites, such as playing fields and sports pitches, it will be necessary not to compromise the main use of the site). In some locations, it may be necessary to provide tactile clues to alert people with

limited vision to trip hazards or changes in level.

- Clear and uncomplicated written information, signage and way-marking, with good colour contrast and simple sans serif lettering
- Easy to use latches and gates

Wherever possible, greenspace designers should consult local disabled groups over the design of spaces and facilities.

Management and Maintenance

A superbly designed but badly managed or maintained space is probably of less value to a local community than a poorly designed but superbly managed and maintained one. The key management and maintenance requirements are that:

- Litter should be seen clearly to be under control with litter bins emptied regularly and no dangerous litter such as broken glass
- There should be at most only limited evidence of vandalism or graffiti coupled with rapid and effective removal
- There should be very little or no evidence of dog fouling, with dog bins available at various points, plus notices relating to the avoidance of dog fouling. Pooper bins must also be clearly identifiable and separate from litter bins – for example, a different colour and clearly marked.
- There should be no or very little evidence of flytipping and rapid, effective removal of tipped material
- All paths should be kept clear of debris and chewing gum; with surfaces in good condition and repaired or marked as necessary
- All facilities should be in clean, safe and usable condition
- Path or other lighting should be adequately maintained and working
- Grounds maintenance standards should be consistently high and demonstrate clearly that spaces are well maintained
- Grassed areas to have a low preponderance of broad leaved weeds; they must be cut to an even length and if clippings are left in place after cutting they must be short so as not to have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the area
- Horticultural areas and flower/shrub beds weed free and ideally mulched
- Flowering plants dead headed and pruned as necessary
- Woodland areas maintained and thinned to provide easy access

Ideally, at least the main parks and the largest and most high profile greenspaces in any local authority area should be of Green Flag Award standard.

Accessible Natural Greenspace

Definition

- Natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces - including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (eg downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (eg cliffs, quarries and pits).

Minimum Size

- 1,000 sq m (0.1 ha)

General Characteristics

- Naturalistic appearance which incorporates a range of habitats and therefore supports wildlife.
- Only limited internal areas of poor visibility
- Good use of views out of or across the site
- Good use of topography, space and planting

Accessibility

- Entrances or access points and internal paths linked to rights of way, bridlepaths, quiet lanes and cycling routes and water courses to create wildlife corridors and a network of greenspaces

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good mix of native species and habitats, depending on site characteristics
- Wildlife protection areas
- Clearings or gaps in tree crowns to allow light penetration to woodland floor, where appropriate
- Well developed shrub, field and ground layers and wide, species rich edge, where appropriate

Facilities and Features

- Clear and coherent signage to and throughout the site as appropriate
- Built heritage structures and natural features conserved
- Interpretation of flora and fauna as appropriate
- Litter bins and seats at key points
- Signs requiring dogs to be kept under control and fouling disposed of into dog bins
- Adequate safety measures adjacent to areas of water (will depend on size, depth and current, if any)
- Way marked routes, where appropriate

Management and Maintenance

- Managed primarily for wildlife and nature conservation

Allotments and Community Gardens

Definition

- Both statutory and all other allotment sites.

General Characteristics

- Screen planting to provide some privacy while also allowing views into and out of the site
- Clear separation between adjacent allotments
- Signage at site entrances giving details of ownership and how to apply for an allotment; also emergency telephone numbers
- Securely fenced with lockable gates

Accessibility

- Site entrance not more than 400 m from nearest bus stop and preferably not more than 250 m

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good mix of species in planting around and within the site
- Dense, bushy hedgerows (where present)

Facilities and features

- Water point serving each group of allotments

Management and Maintenance

- All facilities in clean, safe and usable condition

Amenity Greenspaces

Definition

- Informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing areas and village greens.

Minimum Size

- 1,000 sq m (0.1 hectare)

General Characteristics

- Part of a network of greenspaces within residential or other areas which link to major walking and cycling routes and bus stops
- Located away from sources of potential danger to unaccompanied children such as roads and areas of water
- Designed to create a sense of place and provide a setting for adjoining buildings, with sun traps but without small areas of left-over space with no clear purpose
- "Cared for" general appearance
- Clear definition between public and semi-private areas for residents and private spaces (eg domestic gardens)
- Views out of or across the space, ideally to local landmarks
- Designed and constructed in such a way as to ensure that the space cannot become waterlogged after heavy rain; this may require field drains or field drains plus soil amelioration

Planting and biodiversity

- Good balance of mown grassed areas, in varying widths or sizes (large enough for informal recreation such as kickabouts or mini-soccer where appropriate) and mixed indigenous and ornamental species and ages of trees or shrubs, but with a predominantly open character
- Range of habitat types eg woodland, ponds, grasslands, hedgerows
- Buffer or shelter planting as necessary

Facilities and Features

- Should incorporate informal provision for children or teenagers (eg kickabout areas, quiet places to meet with informal seating and natural play features such as boulders, logs and hollows)
- Adequate litter bins
- Signs indicating that dog fouling should be picked up and disposed of responsibly
- May incorporate public art or heritage features (eg statues)
- Seats, in both sunny and shaded areas
- Adequate safety measures adjacent to potentially dangerous areas of water (eg rivers, canals)
- Path lighting where appropriate
- Passive surveillance from nearby properties, but in a way which respects the privacy of occupants

Civic Spaces

Definition

- Town centre squares, pedestrian streets and other hard surfaced areas designed primarily for pedestrians

Minimum Size

- 1,000 sq m (0.1 hectare) for civic spaces; no minimum size for seafront areas

General Characteristics

- Attractive spaces with a mix of hard and soft landscaping, in which pedestrians have priority over vehicles
- Design and detailing appropriate to the local context, with reasonable consistency in the choice of street furniture and signage, but used in such a way as to give each space a unique character with high quality materials appropriate to the local context
- Surrounding buildings front on to the space and contribute to its vitality both during the day and the evening
- Minimum of overhead wires and other intrusive elements

Accessibility

- Readily accessible by public transport from a wide area
- Adequate car parking within 250 m

Planting and Biodiversity

- Depends on the nature and location of the space but planting should consist of ornamental species and be designed to enhance the space, provide shade and provide a setting for important buildings

Facilities and Features

- Effective street lighting (including the floodlighting of key adjoining civic and other buildings and decorative lighting)
- Informative and easily understood directional and other signs grouped where appropriate but without unnecessary visual clutter
- Pavement cafes and similar facilities to add vibrancy in good weather
- Good mix of retail outlets (if appropriate)
- Active frontages to buildings
- Fountains and public art desirable

Seafront Areas

Definition

- The area between the sea at high tide and the southern edge of the A259 (ie beach, foreshore, promenade and adjoining areas).

Minimum Size

- Not applicable

General Characteristics

- Attractive space with high quality but durable hard landscaping materials, facilities and features, plus appropriate soft landscaping, where relevant in timber or other naturalistic planters
- Consistent approach to surfacing materials, railings and lighting columns along the full length of the seafront
- Minimum of overhead wires and other intrusive elements

- Clearly defined zones with specific characteristics and features
- High level of “busyness” throughout the day
- Well designed Pedestrian crossings on the A259 located to suit pedestrian desire lines
- Clearly marked cycle route along the length of the promenade
- Well designed retail outlets with design coded shop fronts and lighting concentrated in the Pier and Rock-a-Nore areas

Accessibility

- Priority for pedestrians (including people in wheelchairs) over cyclists and vehicles
- Ramped access suitable for wheelchairs to boardwalks on the beach at suitable points
- Pedestrian crossings on the A259 located to suit pedestrian desire lines
- Clearly marked cycle route along the length of the promenade
- Readily accessible by public transport from a wide area
- Adequate car parking

Planting and Biodiversity

- Areas of vegetated shingle
- Natural features protected as appropriate
- Planting designed to enhance the spaces, provide shelter, enhance the visual qualities of the space and provide a setting for buildings and other features

Facilities and Features

- Comprehensive and consistent signage along the full length of the seafront
- Interpretation boards to a consistent design at appropriate points e.g. The Stade, Pelham Crescent, Marina
- Landmark public art features and possibly fountains (but designed to avoid significant windblown spray) at appropriate points along the seafront e.g. Warrior Square and The Stade
- Adequate lighting of all pedestrian paths and stairs/ramps
- Floodlighting of key landmarks and building facades and decorative lighting of visitor features such as pavilions and shelters
- Modern shelters with clean lines and large areas of glass looking out to sea
- Planters with colourful ground cover to complement seasonal bedding and other horticultural features
- Colourful and dynamic features such as flags
- Pavement cafes and similar facilities selling healthy and nutritious snacks
- Seafront buildings maintained to a consistent high standard

Management and Maintenance

- All promenade areas free of potholes and similar hazards to people with disabilities and cyclists
- Balustrades, railings and all other metal or timber elements secure, free from rust or decay and painted to a consistent colour scheme
- Co-ordination of all signage, including highways signs, to

minimise the number of poles required

- All built facilities in clean, safe and usable condition
- Street and other lighting adequately maintained and working
- Trees, shrubs and grassed areas maintained to appropriate horticultural/British Standards

Green Corridors

Definition

- Pedestrian and cycling routes through urban areas, including river and canal banks and cycleways, which are separated from motor traffic and link residential areas to town or village centres and community facilities such as schools, play areas, community centres and sports facilities.

Minimum Size

- There is no minimum size, but corridors should generally be not less than 500 m (0.5 km) long

General Characteristics

- Clear signposted accesses to the network
- Welcoming and apparently safe with no signs of possible danger such as litter, graffiti or damaged vegetation
- Surfaced paths at least 2 m wide, suitable for wheelchairs
- Adequate litter bin and dog bin provision, with bins located at points where they can easily be accessed for emptying from the road system
- Freedom from flooding so that paths are not susceptible to water damage or become icy in winter

Accessibility

- Appropriate safety features adjacent to areas of water (eg life buoys, warning notices)
- Appropriate safety measures adjacent to or at crossings of rail lines or busy roads
- Good sightlines along the route so that users can see potential danger well ahead

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good balance and variety of plants and shrubs, including flowering and non-flowering species
- Range of tree species and ages
- Range of habitat types
- Paths free from overhanging branches within reach of users
- Good range of habitats

Facilities and Features

- Internal signposting to places of interest or destinations (eg shops, leisure facilities, schools)
- Adequate street lighting

Management and Maintenance

- Boundary fencing, gates, posts etc fit for purpose and well maintained
- Surfaces fit for purpose (inclusive of markings) and well maintained
- Management regime to suit particular landscape/habitat type eg differential mowing may be suitable to promote wildlife interests; not less than 1 m close mown edges to paths

- All paths kept clear of overhanging branches which cyclists or other users might hit
- All built and other facilities in clean, safe and usable condition

Play Provision

Definition

- Green and hard surfaced spaces offering informal play opportunities for children aged between about 2-3 and 16 years. Younger children will normally be accompanied by an adult or older child while older children will probably use the facilities on their own. Much play provision will probably be used by children of different ages at different times of the day.

Minimum Size

- There is no minimum size requirement as informal play provision should be an integral rather than a separate part of the greenspace network in residential areas.

General Characteristics

- New housing development should follow home zone principles in that they should be designed as predominantly pedestrian environments into which vehicles can be admitted. This requires much more than simple traffic calming measures such as sleeping policemen.
- The whole of the outdoor environment should be safe but visually stimulating for both children and adults and offer opportunities for children to play in imaginative ways, both close to home and in any wooded or other greenspaces close to it which can be accessed without crossing a major road. The Greenspace network and related play provision must not be allocated to left-over areas or parts of sites unsuitable for building but designed in from the start and link to likely pedestrian desire lines.
- Areas in which children are likely to play should be unique and designed to offer a varied, interesting and physically challenging environment, accessible to everyone, which offers opportunities for running, jumping, climbing, balancing, building or creating, social interaction and sitting quietly.
- The design of play provision should derive from and reinforce the character and levels of the site and incorporate any natural features there may be on it such as rock outcrops or water courses. This will also help to encourage and facilitate use by children of all ages.
- Play provision should be designed generally to encourage children to explore their home environment and so incorporate hiding and secret places and links to nearby parts of the green network, especially woodland and other natural areas.
- There is still a place for some traditional fenced equipped play areas with slides, swings and the like but they should be the exception rather than the norm and at key strategic locations such as formal parks and similar greenspaces. Such facilities will generally be significantly larger than traditional Local or Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play.
- Play provision should stimulate the senses of sight, sound, touch and smell and offer opportunities for children to manipulate materials. Accordingly they should incorporate variations in level and a range of materials of different kinds, textures and colours, such as timber, sand, rocks, dead trees and other natural materials and incorporate trees, shrubs and grass. Examples of other

materials or forms that can be used include old car tyres (eg for swings or tunnels); logs (eg for climbing and balancing); ropes (for ladders, swings and bridges); tunnels and mounds or hollows (for various forms of play); tarmac areas (for ball games or other games such as hopscotch); grass surfaces (for ball games and sitting); low walls (for skateboard manoeuvres, sitting on, balancing or jumping off); sand (for digging, building and sifting); shrubbery (for dens, places to hide or look for small animals and insects); rocks (for hiding and climbing); trees with low branches (for climbing or swinging); and bollards (for leapfrogging).

- Passive surveillance from the windows of nearby buildings is desirable
- Greenspaces that children are likely to use for play must either be located in such a position that their use will not create disturbance for the occupants of nearby dwellings or be separated from them by a buffer zone of not less than 10 metres from the nearest dwelling boundary

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good mix of child friendly (ie not sharp, spiky or poisonous) plant and tree species in the vicinity
- Generous use of planting to enhance amenity, create a sense of enclosure and different rooms within large greenspaces and support bio-diversity

Facilities and Features

- Play provision can include:
 - Adventure playgrounds
 - Bike tracks and jumps (see Teenage Areas below)
 - Hangout or youth shelters (see Teenage Areas below)
 - Multi-use games areas (see Teenage Areas below)
 - Nature trails and activity courses
 - Sandpits
 - Seats and benches (sized for both adults and children)
 - Skateparks and BMX facilities (see Teenage Areas below)
 - Traditional equipped play areas
 - Clearings in wooded areas
- Parking for bicycles
- Grass areas must be equipped with field drains and constructed with free draining soil
- Any formal equipped play area (eg along the lines of an NPFA LEAP or NEAP) must be equipped with dog-proof fencing, at least 1 m high, fitted with at least two outward-opening, self-closing gates; seats for parents or carers; litter bin(s); signage to indicate that the area is intended for children and dogs should be excluded; the name and telephone number of the agency responsible for maintaining the play provision; suitable safety surfacing beneath and around play equipment; and suitable safety surfacing beneath and around any fixed play equipment. In addition, all play equipment must comply with the appropriate European or British Standards.

Management and Maintenance

- Safety surfacing, where present, in good condition
- Play equipment (including natural features such as fallen trees) in safe and usable condition
- Dog-proof fencing, where required, safe and effective at excluding dogs

- Seats for children or parents/carers in safe and usable condition

Sports Pitches (grass and artificial turf)

Definition

- Pitches for football (all codes), cricket, hockey, rugby (all codes)

Minimum Size

- 2 pitches with changing accommodation and parking

General Characteristics

- External lighting in car parking areas
- External lighting on pavilions with PIR detectors
- Signs indicating that dogs must be kept on a lead and any fouling picked up and disposed of responsibly
- Rows of more than eight parking spaces to be separated by soft landscaping
- Adequately separated from adjoining residential properties
- Adequate measures in place to control light spill from floodlighting to adjoining properties and related land

Accessibility

- Accessible by public transport: nearest bus stop within 400 m of entrance/access points, but preferably 250 m
- Wide access routes with clear sight lines at site entrance/egress
- Hard surfaced paths following desire lines from parking to pavilions
- Paths and buildings fully accessible by wheelchair where appropriate
- Path system appropriate to the circulation needs of players within the site, with wide, hard surfaces in heavily trafficked areas (to avoid constant muddy areas) and from changing pavilions to artificial surfaces

Planting and Biodiversity

- Strong structure planting around the perimeter of the site using native species (designed as buffer planting to reduce wind on pitches and noise or light spill as appropriate to the site and adjoining properties or roads and also to promote biodiversity)
- Internal structure planting where appropriate
- Amenity or naturalistic landscaping in the vicinity of buildings and car parking

Facilities and Features

- Changing pavilions
- Changing rooms (with the number of rooms appropriate to the number of pitches or other facilities on site) consisting of changing spaces, showers and drying area, plus separate changing for match officials where appropriate
- Capable of simultaneous male and female team and/or officials' use, where appropriate
- First aid room (essential only for pitch sports and athletics)
- Space for refreshments with kitchen
- No rooflights in flat roofs on single storey buildings
- Adequate secure maintenance equipment storage

- Lockable security shutters on all pavilion doors and windows
- Passive surveillance from nearby properties

Pitches, practice areas and other facilities

- Correct orientation (pitches generally between 35 degrees west and 20 degrees east of N-S; athletics tracks generally oriented so the finishing straight is not in line with the prevailing south-westerly wind)
- Playing facilities meeting relevant governing body requirements in terms of length, width, even-ness of surface, boundary distances (cricket) and side clearances or safety margins
- Artificial surfaces in good overall condition, free from tears and uneven areas
- Floodlighting to relevant governing body requirements for the standard of play
- No end to end slope on pitches greater than 1:40 (1:80 preferable); no side to side slope greater than 1:40 (1:60 preferable)
- No pitch more than 200 m from nearest changing pavilion
- Well drained pitch surfaces
- Winter sports grass pitches to have pipe drains plus sand slits where necessary (note: sand slits to be renewed every 10 years)
- Artificial surfaces to comply with relevant governing body requirements and BS 7044: Artificial Sports Surfaces
- All artificial surfaces (and any safety surround areas) to be fully enclosed within lockable chain link fence at least 3.0 m high

Management and Maintenance

- Grass lengths appropriate to sport with full grass cover on grass pitches
- Posts and goals safe and free from rust or sharp edges, with hooks for nets where appropriate
- Line markings straight and easily seen
- Surface repairs carried out quickly and effectively
- Surround netting and entrance gates to artificially surfaced areas in good condition
- Floodlights in full working order
- Information on site ownership and the facilities available at the site entrance
- Contact details for emergencies at any pavilion

Outdoor Sports Facilities: Athletics Tracks

Definition

- Facilities for track and field athletics training and competition

Minimum size

- 400 m x 6 lanes

General Characteristics

- Track and field facilities which comply with appropriate governing body standards
- Public tracks to have a synthetic surface in good condition; school tracks can be grass
- Oriented so neither the finishing straight nor the direction

of the javelin is in line with the prevailing (south-westerly) wind

- Spectator accommodation appropriate to the nature and standard of events likely to be staged
- Adequate changing and officials' accommodation, plus first aid room

Accessibility

- On-site car parking with sufficient spaces for athletes, officials and spectators
- Wide access routes with clear sight lines at site entrance/egress
- Track and adjoining areas fenced to prevent unauthorised access and use

Planting and Biodiversity

- Shelter planting as appropriate

Facilities and Features

- As required by the appropriate governing body standards

Management and Maintenance

- Grass length on central area of track appropriate to its use (may be for throwing events or pitch use)
- All equipment, including safety equipment, fit for purpose
- Track and field events markings easily seen
- Surface repairs carried out quickly and effectively
- Floodlights in full working order
- Information on site ownership and the facilities available at the site entrance
- Contact details for emergencies at any pavilion

Bowling Greens

Definition

- Lawn bowls green meeting appropriate governing body standards

Minimum Size

- 6 rinks plus banks and ditches, a pathway at least 2 m wide all round the green and a pavilion. This requires a site of not less than approximately 41 x 47 m, ie approximately 1,900 sq m (0.19 hectare).

General Characteristics

- Green, banks and ditches to meet relevant governing body standards
- No broad-leaved trees overhanging the green

Accessibility

- Accessible by public transport: nearest bus stop within 400 m of entrance/access points, but preferably 250 m
- Hard surfaced path all round the green

Planting and Biodiversity

- Shelter planting/screening to provide summer time shelter from wind, privacy for bowlers and support biodiversity

Facilities and Features

- Greens to have at least six rinks (to allow play along and across the green to even out wear)
- Changing pavilion with at least male and female changing rooms and social area

Management and Maintenance

- Grass sward kept short and clear of weeds

Tennis Courts and Multi-Courts

Definition

- Tennis courts and multi-use games areas, usually with a hard or synthetic surface, and used for tennis, 5-a-side football, netball, outdoor basketball and roller/in-line skating.

Minimum Size

- 36.5 x 18.25 m (court only) plus surround

General Characteristics

- Reasonably sheltered from the wind
- A free-draining or impervious surface laid to appropriate falls to shed water
- Surrounded by netting which prevents balls escaping from the court(s) area
- Oriented within 30 degrees of north-south

Accessibility

- Accessible by public transport: nearest bus stop within 400 m of entrance/access points, but preferably 250 m

Planting and Biodiversity

- Amenity planting composed mainly of native species to improve appearance, provide shelter, reduce noise transfer and promote biodiversity

Facilities and Features

- Posts and tennis nets in good condition, without large holes through which the ball can pass
- Clearly marked courts with adequate safety surrounds
- Basketball hoops and football goals, if present, securely fixed with no sharp edges
- Floodlighting (if present) to meet governing body requirements

Management and Maintenance

- Court(s) surface in good condition

Urban Parks

Definition

- Urban and country parks and formal gardens

Minimum Size

- 0.25 hectare

General Characteristics

- Well defined boundaries or perimeter, preferably enclosed with railings or walls
- A welcoming appearance at the entrance and therefore well maintained, free from litter and graffiti, with good views over an attractive parkland landscape with clear points of interest to draw visitors in
- Range of natural and man-made structures of heritage features such as ponds, statues, buildings and ornamental railings
- Good use of topography so that slopes are gentle, views across and out of the park are attractive and visitors can get a sense of scale

- Reasonable privacy for the residents of nearby dwellings; ideally, houses should not back on to the park, but be on the other side of the road

Accessibility

- Clearly visible entrances, ideally signed on nearby roads and pedestrian or cycling routes
- Secure bicycle storage at the main entrance to the park, at least, and ideally secondary entrances as well
- Main entrance, and ideally secondary entrances, within 400 m, at most, of the nearest bus stop, but preferably 250 m

Planting and Biodiversity

- Diverse species of flowering and non-flowering trees, of various ages, including native species; also shrubs and plants providing a wide range of habitats
- Hedgerows, where present, reasonably dense, thick and bushy so as to provide habitats
- Some areas of dense planting, difficult for people to penetrate and in areas where they will not provide hiding places, but providing habitats for small animals and birds
- Woodland areas to have clearings or gaps in crowns to allow light penetration to the woodland floor and development of undergrowth

Facilities and Features

- Equipped play areas for young children (under 10), where present – see separate quality standard
- Provision for teenagers, where present – see separate quality standards
- Sports facilities, where present – see separate quality standards
- Adequate litter bins – well designed, located adjacent to the path system, bird/squirrel/rat proof and cleared regularly
- Examples of public art, linked to the path system
- Bandstands, if present, well maintained
- Ornamental fountains, if present, in good working order and well maintained
- Café facilities in larger parks
- Good views through and across the park so that each visitor is providing a form of informal surveillance of other users
- Adequate safety measures adjacent to areas of water which might be dangerous (eg notices regarding depths, life buoys)
- Adequate lighting for appropriate paths
- Informative interpretation signs or other material relating to natural features (eg geology, land form); heritage features (eg statues, historic/listed buildings, bandstands); wildlife (eg details of the main birds and animals to be seen in the park); landscaping (eg information on trees and other planting and especially horticulture areas)
- Adequate signage giving directions both within the park and to nearby streets or features of interest outside it

Teenage Areas

Definition

- Provision for teenagers intended for young people approximately 13-18 years old and designed to allow

them to hang out and practise various sports or movement skills such as basketball, inline skating or skateboarding. Most teenage facilities include a mix of skateboard ramps, outdoor basketball hoops, shelters and other more informal areas. Ideally, they should be located close to a multi-court (see above).

Minimum Size

- 1,000 sq m (0.1 hectare) excluding buffer zone

General Characteristics

- Located close, but not immediately adjacent, to a well used pedestrian route but not less than 50 m from the nearest dwelling
- Area of at least 1,000 sq m, with facilities for teenagers (see definition above)
- Surrounded by a buffer zone, possibly with appropriate planting, between the play area and nearest dwelling boundary of at least 30 metres on all sides.
- Suitable safety surfacing beneath and around play equipment
- Accessible to children or adults with disabilities
- Effective drainage of all surfaces

Accessibility

- Accessible by public transport: nearest bus stop within 400 m of entrance/access points, but preferably 250 m

Planting and Biodiversity

- Tough, but not prickly landscaping in the immediate vicinity of the area

Facilities and Features

- Mix of facilities such as skateboard/BMX ramps, basketball goals, teenage shelters
- Casual seating
- Low level lighting with both light and dark areas
- Adequate provision of litter bins

Management and Maintenance

- Surfaces and structures in good condition and repaired as necessary

Indoor Sports Halls and Swimming Pools

Definition

- Large scale indoor sports facilities operated by the public, commercial or voluntary sectors

Minimum Size

- Sports halls: 4 badminton court hall plus changing
- Pools: 25 m x 4 lanes (8.5 m total width) plus changing

General Characteristics

- External lighting, with movement or passive infra-red (PIR) detectors
- Entrance clearly identifiable from the car park
- No landscaping in which potential attackers could hide

Accessibility

- Accessible by public transport: nearest bus stop within 250 m of entrance/access points
- Adequate parking for the range of facilities available, with a tarmac surface in good repair and at least two

designated disabled spaces close to the main entrance

- Cycle parking

Planting and Biodiversity

- Attractive landscaping to the site and building, incorporating native species where possible

Facilities and Features

Internal Support Areas

- Reception desk immediately inside main entrance and clearly visible
- Disabled toilets
- Baby changing facility in male and female changing areas or toilets
- General accessibility for people with disabilities – see separate checklist
- Décor and finishes in good condition
- Clear route from reception to changing and activity areas

Activity Areas

- Meeting appropriate governing body or Sport England standards
- Adequate storage, accessed from activity areas
- Mat storage, where required, physically separate and vented to outside air
- Décor and finishes in good condition

Changing Areas

- Separate male and female changing (although mixed sex villages desirable for pools)
- Adequate locker provision
- Adequate shower and toilet provision
- Décor and finishes in good condition

Management and Maintenance

- Professionally managed

References

- CABE Space (undated), A Guide to Producing Park and Green Space Management Plans
- CABE Space (undated), Green Flag Award Winners 2003-2004
- Children's Play Council (2002), More than Swings and Roundabouts: Planning for outdoor play
- DETR/CABE (2000), By Design – Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice
- DTLR (2002), Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces (report on research undertaken by the University of Sheffield for the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce)
- English Nature (1995), Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities (Research Report 153)
- English Nature (2002), Providing Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities
- Kit Campbell and Geraint John (ed, 1995), Handbook of Sports and Recreation Building Design, Volumes 1, 2 and 3
- National Playing Fields Association (2001), The Six Acre Standard
- Sport England (various dates), Lottery Guidance Notes
- Sport England (various dates), Planning Bulletins

Parks & Open Spaces
Aquila House
Breeds Place
Hastings
TN34 3UY

0845 274 1050