


# CAPITA



## Murton Gap Open Space Assessment

July 2015

## Quality Management

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Murton Gap, along with Killingworth Moor, has been identified as a suggested strategic allocation within the emerging North Tyneside Local Plan, as a key strategic site to contribute towards the borough's objectively assessed needs for housing provision. Ensuring that development at this suggested site creates safe, sustainable and attractive places for existing and future residents is therefore of crucial importance to the future of North Tyneside as a whole.

1.1.2 This requires a thorough and robust understanding the impacts and requirements of proposed development at this suggested site and a range of studies are proposed to for this purpose. This Open Space Assessment is part of this process. Open Space Assessments outline the quantum and quality of existing open spaces in the area and the amount needed to meet demand created by new development.

1.1.3 As specified in the NPPF<sup>1</sup>, the planning process requires that Open Space Assessments are prepared for proposals for development on public open space. The Murton Gap suggested site is largely farmland and is not designated public open space. However, an assessment is deemed necessary to ensure that new residents in the area are provided with sufficient open space and that they do not create an over-demand of existing open space in the wider area. This approach is advocated in Chapter 8 *Promoting healthy communities* of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (March 2012), as stated in paragraph 128:

*“Access to good quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities. The planning system has a role in helping to create an environment where activities are made easier and public health can be improved.”*

### 1.2 This Open Space Assessment

1.2.1 This Assessment will contain the following:

#### 1.2.2 Planning policy and guidance context

1.2.2.1 This section will review the national and local planning policy context relevant to open space provision in relation to residential development. This would cover the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Planning Policy Guidance and the emerging Local Plan.

1.2.2.2 North Tyneside Council also has a Green Space Strategy (2015), an Allotment Strategy (2009) and a Playing Pitch Strategy (2013) that serve as

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG, March 2012

guidance. The Green Space Strategy recommends locally derived standards for open spaces and informs appropriate policy in the merging Local Plan. All documents will be reviewed for their position on open space provision for residential developments.

### 1.2.3 Assessment of existing open space

1.2.3.1 An assessment of the existing open space in the vicinity of Murton Gap will be undertaken. This will look at the typologies of open spaces defined in the Council's Green Space Strategy (plus playing pitches and allotments), the quality of them, their locations and their quality. The typologies are:

- Equipped Areas for Play
- Parks
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces
- Playing Pitches
- Allotments
- Amenity Green Space

1.2.3.2 The existing open space has been reviewed in the context of the adopted policy, guidance and local provision standards that have been examined as set out above. A conclusion will be provided regarding the current situation.

1.2.3.3 Plans are also be provided illustrating the existing open space and its quality.

### 1.2.4 Needs arising from proposed development

1.2.4.1 Taking into account the policy position and local provision standards, the current situation on open space provision, and the indicative scale of development proposed at Murton Gap, a suggested open space provision for the suggested site will be set out. This will be for each of the typologies listed above. Recommendations will be provided regarding how open space provision could be achieved, such as through suggested broad locations for new provision or financial contributions to improving the quality and capacity of existing open space.

1.2.4.2 This process will involve consultation with North Tyneside Council service delivery teams – particularly Sport and Leisure, and Horticulture and Parks.

## 2 Planning Policy and Guidance Context

### 2.1 National Planning Policy and Guidance

2.1.1 Open space is described in the NPPF<sup>2</sup> as:

*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 act as a visual amenity.*

2.1.2 Central government published the NPPF in March 2012. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with the planning system performing an economic role, social role and environmental role simultaneously.

2.1.3 The NPPF, in paragraph 73, advocates the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation to contribute to the health and well-being of communities. The NPPF does not seek to set any specific national standards, but advises that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.

2.1.4 In 2014, Central government released Planning Practice Guidance. The guidance on "Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space"<sup>3</sup> is specific to the management of green space in the planning process, and states "Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space". "Health and wellbeing"<sup>4</sup> and "Natural Environment"<sup>5</sup> also have relevance.

### 2.2 Local Planning Policy and Guidance

#### Local Plan

2.2.5 North Tyneside Council is currently preparing a Local Plan, which will replace the UDP<sup>6</sup>. The Local Plan is proposed to be adopted in early 2017. The Local Plan will provide a planning policy framework to help achieve sustainable development: the core principle underlying planning, appropriate to the distinctive characteristics

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<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space, Planning Practice Guidance, DCLG, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Health and wellbeing, Planning Practice Guidance, DCLG, 2014

<sup>5</sup> Natural Environment, Planning Practice Guidance, DCLG, 2014

<sup>6</sup> North Tyneside Council Unitary Development Plan, 2002

and needs of North Tyneside. It will set out the development needs of the Borough and provide guidance on how they can be met. The priorities that the Local Plan will address include:

- The homes and jobs needed in the Borough.
- Retail, leisure and other commercial development.
- Infrastructure provision for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water, flood risk, coastal change, minerals and energy.
- Provision of health facilities, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Conservation and enhancement of natural and built environment.

2.2.6 The most recent consultation draft version of the Local Plan<sup>7</sup> was published in February 2015 and contained policy DM8.3 *Green Space Provision and Standards* that was informed by the findings of the Green Space Strategy<sup>8</sup>. It sets out the distances all households should aim to be located within parks, semi-natural green spaces, general open space and children's equipped play areas.

2.2.7 DM8.3 is not adopted policy. The current planning policy in North Tyneside is contained within the UDP. As this report will inform suggested site allocations within the emerging Local Plan, it is not considered appropriate to look to the current North Tyneside UDP that it will supersede.

### Green Space Strategy

2.2.7 As required by national planning policy, the Council have undertaken an assessment of both the quality and quantity of their open space provision. The details of this assessment form the Green Space Strategy, which is an updated version of a Strategy that was first approved by the Council in April 2007 and updated in December 2008. In addition to providing an audit of provision across North Tyneside, the Strategy also provides information on a ward level, and sets a number of objectives for the future provision of open space.

2.2.8 The majority of these objectives relate to distance thresholds between households and a given type of Green Space, summarised as below. Generally, the principle is that new development should sustain or improve the current performance levels as recorded in the Green Space Strategy.

- **Objective 1: Quality and Value of Green Spaces**

All green spaces should be at least of medium quality and medium value.

- **Objective 2: Equipped Areas for Play**

All households should be within an acceptable distance to some kind of equipped play area (local area for play (LAP), local equipped area for play (LEAP),

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<sup>7</sup> Local Plan Consultation Draft, North Tyneside Council, 2015

<sup>8</sup> Green Space Strategy, North Tyneside Council, 2015

neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) and a strategic equipped area for play (SEAP)). This will be calculated using distance thresholds<sup>9</sup>.

- **Objective 3: Parks**

All households should be within 900 metres straight line walking distance of a park.

- **Objective 4: Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces**

All households should be within:

- 300m of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 2ha in size
- 2km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 20ha in size
- 5km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 100ha in size
- 10km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 500ha in size

- **Objective 5: Playing Pitches**

The standards for quality, quantity and management set out in the North Tyneside Playing Pitch Strategy 2013-23 should be followed.

- **Objective 6: Other Outdoor Facilities**

A range of outdoor facilities should be available within an appropriate travelling distance for all.

- **Objective 7: General Standard**

All properties should be within 300 metres of at least 0.1ha of accessible, free and usable green space. It is likely that informal green spaces will also fall into another typology discussed in this Strategy. All spaces should first and foremost be assessed under the provisions of their individual typology.

- **Objective 8: Allotments**

North Tyneside's allotments will be provided, maintained and managed in line with the North Tyneside Allotment Strategy 2009-15 and its associated Good Allotment Standard.

- **Objective 9: Design of Green Spaces**

Green spaces should be designed to:

- Be accessible to all;
- Ensure their facilities that are accessible to all;
- Maximise safety and minimise the potential for anti-social behaviour through maximising casual surveillance, preventing any sense of isolation or insecurity and using appropriate lighting;
- Minimise any detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents;
- Deliver biodiversity benefit through integrated habitat areas within the space and its borders to support and allow movement of wildlife;
- Promote, where appropriate, the use of sustainable transport corridors such as wagonways, cycleways and bridle paths;

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<sup>9</sup> See page 13 for distance thresholds



- Protect and, where appropriate, enhance any green space that is of heritage value in its own right, or that is important to the setting of any heritage asset;
- Implement, where appropriate, flood storage or sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) to negate flood risk issues.

- **Objective 10: Green Space Provision Associated With New Housing Provision**

Within new residential developments, green space will be provided to meet the standards of this Strategy and secured by planning obligations (delivered through Section 106 Agreements) as set out in the Planning Obligations SPD.

- **Objective 11: Management and Maintenance**

No scheme that creates new green space or improves existing should proceed until the funding to secure its maintenance and management has been identified. Where funding will be secured by planning obligations, the guidelines set out in the Planning Obligations SPD will be followed.

- **Objective 12: Loss of Green Space**

Any proposal that would result in the loss of green space will be determined in accordance with paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

## Playing Pitch Strategy

2.2.9 The Playing Pitch Strategy<sup>10</sup> provides a framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities over the next ten years. It covers the sports of football, rugby, cricket and artificial grass pitches (AGPs) and:

- provides an investment strategy for playing pitch facilities;
- provides a framework for all playing pitch providers, including the public, private and third sectors;
- addresses the needs of all identified pitch sports within the local area;
- addresses issues of accessibility, quality and management with regard to pitch provision.

2.2.1.1 A summary of the Strategy's Borough-wide findings are as follows:

- The surplus of senior football pitches and a deficit of mini pitches. (This includes school sites identified as having existing community usage. It does not include school sites that do not have or allow community use. Pitches on sites not permitting community usage are difficult for organisations such as NTC to gain access).
- The improvement of poor quality football pitches and ancillary facilities to increase capacity rather than providing new provision to satisfy current demand.
- The implications of 9v9 football on current and future provision.

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<sup>10</sup> Playing Pitch Strategy 2013-2023, North Tyneside Council, 2013

- Need for access to at least one better quality cricket pitch to service Tynemouth CC.
- The requirement for new AGP provision to satisfy any potential future growth in hockey and training facilities for other clubs.
- The need to resurface the AGP located at Marden Bridge Sports Centre.
- The need to encourage usage of sites with no community use or those that are under used to accommodate overplay of rugby pitches.
- The lack of interest or willingness of certain education sites to accommodate community use.

## Allotment Strategy

2.2.1.2 The North Tyneside Allotment Strategy 2009-2015<sup>11</sup> sets out the Council's commitment and vision for allotments. The Strategy identifies:

- What the Council wants to achieve through the allotment service for current and future plot holders and other North Tyneside residents,
- How the Council will work with plot holders, site associations, members of the local community and other voluntary and statutory organisations to make its vision a reality,
- The resource implications of the Strategy and how the Council plans to attract those resources.

2.2.1.3 The number of allotments required in any area is a function of demand. The Allotment Strategy acknowledges this and sets out the supply and demand within the Borough.

2.2.1.4 The Allotment Team has developed their own Good Allotment Standard that they use to undertake their own assessments. The Standard considers if allotments have good access, good security, well-maintained paths, adequate water provision and are free from neglected plots.

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<sup>11</sup> Allotment Strategy 2009-2015, North Tyneside Council, 2009

## **3 Assessment of existing open space and needs arising from proposed development**

### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to provide an assessment of both the quality and quantity of existing open space provision in the locality of the suggested site, with reference to typologies of open spaces defined in the Council's Green Space Strategy (plus playing pitches and allotments), as follows:

- Equipped Areas for Play
- Parks
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces
- General Green Space
- Playing Pitches
- Allotments

3.1.2 The Green Space Strategy provides information on a number of spatial levels. In this regard, the suggested site falls predominately within the Collingwood ward, which is classed as being within the southeast area forum of the Borough. A small section of the east side of the suggested site lies in Monkseaton South ward and a small section of the west is within the Valley ward; both of which are within the northeast area forum. The suggested site's boundary and ward boundaries are shown on Map 1. Wherever possible and appropriate, this assessment of open space provision will provide information on a ward level.

3.1.3 At present, the indicative scale of development at Murton Gap suggested site is up to 3,000 homes. The distribution of this development around the suggested site is yet to be determined and will, in part, be informed through this and the other studies being prepared.

3.1.4 Taking into account the policy position and local provision standards, the current situation on open space provision, and the indicative scale of development proposed at Murton Gap, a suggested open space provision for the suggested site will be set out. This will be for each of the typologies listed above.

3.1.5 Recommendations will be provided regarding how open space provision could be achieved, such as through suggested locations for new provision or financial contributions to improving the quality and capacity of existing open space.

3.1.6 This has involved the input of North Tyneside Council service delivery teams – particularly Sport and Leisure, and Horticulture and Parks.

### **3.2 Equipped areas for play**

3.2.1 Equipped areas for play are those areas for children with equipment for them to play on such as slides, swings and climbing frames. In North Tyneside, there are

several categories of equipped areas for play depending on their size: Local area for play (LAP), Local equipped areas for play (LEAP), Neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAP) and Strategic equipped areas for play (SEAP).

3.2.2 The following is included within the Green Space Strategy (Objective 2) and the emerging Local Plan (policy DM8.3):

Equipped Areas for Play

All households should be within an acceptable distance to some kind of equipped play area (local area for play (LAP), local equipped area for play (LEAP), neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) and a strategic equipped area for play (SEAP)). This will be calculated using the following distance thresholds:

Play Area Type	Min. Size of Play Area	Min. No. Of Play Units	Radial Straight Line Distance
<b>LAP</b>	100m <sup>2</sup>	Designated playspace with 4 or less play units	120m
<b>LEAP (1)</b>	400m <sup>2</sup>	5	240m
<b>LEAP (2)</b>	600m <sup>2</sup>	6	360m
<b>LEAP (3)</b>	800m <sup>2</sup>	7	480m
<b>NEAP (1)</b>	1,000m <sup>2</sup>	8	600m
<b>NEAP (2)</b>	1,200m <sup>2</sup>	9	750m
<b>NEAP (3)</b>	1,400m <sup>2</sup>	10	900m
<b>SEAP</b>	1,600m <sup>2</sup>	11	+1,000m

3.2.3 How the Borough is currently performing with regards to these standards is illustrated in Map 2, along with the approximate boundary of the suggested site outlined and shaded in blue. The current Borough average is that 85.2% of households are within a suitable catchment of an equipped area for play. Valley ward performs particularly well with 99.9% but Monkseaton South and Collingwood wards do not, with 61% and 48.3% respectively.

3.2.4 Despite low household catchment totals at ward level, Map 2 illustrates that the suggested site is mostly well covered by existing provision. Those sites providing this coverage are NEAP 3 at Wilton Drive, South Wellfield, SEAP with MUGA<sup>12</sup> at the Adventure Playground, Brenkley Avenue, Shiremoor, and SEAP with MUGA at the Hilltop Millennium Green, New York. However, it is noted that the Metro line

<sup>12</sup> Multi use games area

represents a barrier to accessing the Wellfield NEAP 3. Approximately 100m outside of the suggested site boundary to the east is a standalone MUGA at Langley Playing Fields, Monkseaton. The Green Space Strategy, whilst recognising the excellent opportunities for play offered by MUGAs, (also skateparks, water play facilities, etc.) does not include a provision standard for them. It is considered that to count these towards the overall equipped play coverage across the Borough would not represent an accurate picture, due to the specific nature of the kind of play they offer that may not be suitable for everyone.

3.2.5 The Green Space Strategy expects that all green spaces be of at least medium quality and medium value, and the results of such an assessment are illustrated in Map 8 and 9. The above mentioned playsites have been assessed as being of at least medium quality and medium value (as shown on the map as green in colour).

3.2.6 New development should sustain or improve the percentage of households within catchments of green spaces and ideally would improve them. It is clear from Map 2 that, unless all new development was constrained to the western part of the suggested site, new equipped play provision would be required in the eastern part of the suggested site. A larger equipped area for play, such as a NEAP or SEAP would ensure sufficient coverage for new households and provide the opportunity to improve access for existing residents in the Collingwood and Monkseaton South wards.

3.2.7 A smaller equipped area for play could prove beneficial within the northern part of the suggested site depending on what, if any, new access would be put in place to cross the Metro line. Should access be put in place that would provide a suitable link from the suggested site towards Wellfield beyond the Metro line, then such a site would not necessarily be required.

### 3.3 Parks

3.3.1 Within the Green Space Strategy, parks are defined as providing accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events. They could include landscaping with a mixture of colours, scents and sounds, and could contain seats, paths, shelters and toilets. They could be urban parks, country parks or formal gardens.

3.3.2 The Green Space Strategy (Objective 2) and the emerging Local Plan (policy DM8.3) expect that all households should be within 900 metres straight line walking distance of a park.

3.3.3 How the Borough is currently performing with regards to these standards is illustrated in Map 3, along with the approximate boundary of the suggested site outlined and shaded in blue.

3.3.4 The current Borough average is 78.7% of households are within a suitable catchment of a park. Collingwood and Valley wards all perform poorly for parks provision with 45.5% and 47.5% respectively. Map 3 reveals this part of the Borough to be lacking in park provision. Monkseaton South performs well with 83.9%, due to the presence of Crawford Park and several within the Whitley Bay area.

3.3.5 Crawford Park's catchment falls within the eastern part of the suggested site and the Silverlink Biodiversity Park's catchment falls within the western part of the suggested site. Both parks are of acceptable quality and value (see Map 8).

3.3.6 The space within the suggested site that does not fall within the catchment of an existing park stretches through the central part of the suggested site from the most northern part of the suggested site at the Metro line to the most southern part at Rake Lane and extending south east along that southern boundary. To provide one park within the development to serve all these areas may be possible but it may leave some outer edges out of catchment. This may not be an issue if those particular areas have no homes. It may be more appropriate to make available two or more spaces throughout the suggested site. Parks need not be massive in scale to fulfil their function: Northumberland Square in North Shields (TYNEM036 on Map 3) and Crawford Park in Monkseaton (MONS 011) are smaller in scale than other parks but provide seats, grass, planting, walkways and opportunity for events (Victorian Christmas Market at Northumberland Square) and sports (Bowling Green at Crawford Park).

## 3.4 Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

3.4.1 The Green Space Strategy considers natural and semi-natural green spaces as those that offer wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. The Strategy looks to Natural England for further advice; they define natural spaces as "places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate" and suggest that those areas designated for their biodiversity quality, woodlands, country parks and open land could fall within the definition<sup>13</sup>

3.4.2 The following provision standards in the Green Space Strategy (Objective 4) and the emerging Local Plan (policy DM8.3) are based on the Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)<sup>14</sup>, in which four sizes of space is set out. It is acknowledged that the standards can be difficult and sometimes impossible to achieve.

### Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces

*All households should be within:*

- 300m of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 2ha in size
- 2km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 20ha in size

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<sup>13</sup> Nature Nearby - Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, Natural England, 2010

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

- *5km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 100ha in size*
- *10km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 500ha in size*

3.4.3 How the Borough is currently performing with regards to these standards is illustrated in Maps 4, 5 and 6, along with the approximate boundary of the suggested site outlined and shaded in blue.

3.4.4 The results of Households within 5km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 100ha in size are shown in Map 4. The Boroughwide average is that 75.8% households are within the acceptable catchment. The only space in the Borough within this size bracket is the Rising Sun Country Park. Its catchment covers a great deal of the Borough, including the Murton Gap suggested site.

3.4.5 The results of Households within 2km of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 20ha in size are shown in Map 5. The Boroughwide average is that 74.5% households are within the acceptable catchment. Valley ward falls completely within the catchments of natural land at the Rising Sun and at Holywell, and much of Monkseaton South is covered within the coastal strip's catchment. Collingwood ward however only sees 9.5% of households within the appropriate catchment. This is clear from looking at Map 5, on which it is illustrated that the Murton Gap suggested site sees very little coverage from existing provision. It is unlikely to be possible that 20ha of natural green space could be provided either within or off site to improve on this provision. This does not seem unreasonable given that the provision standards are acknowledged to be difficult or even impossible to fulfil, the high level of coverage across the suggested site otherwise and the opportunity that exists to provide high quality smaller green spaces in that particular area of the suggested site – see below.

3.4.6 The results of Households within 300m of a natural or semi-natural green space of at least 2ha in size are shown in Map 6. The Boroughwide average is that 35.8% households are within the acceptable catchment. Valley ward has similar coverage with 35.5%, whereas Monkseaton South (11.2%) and Collingwood (9.4%) have much lower totals.

3.4.7 At present, only very small parts of the northern and western areas of the suggested site fall within the catchment of existing provision and so consideration must be given to how this shortfall could be addressed site-wide. There are a number of ways this could be addressed, for example though provision of wooded areas or routes through the suggested site, meadowland or ponds related to SuDS. This illustrates the multifunctionality that green space represents. It is considered reasonable that provision should aim to match or exceed the Borough average of 35.8% of households within catchment.

3.4.8 As discussed above, it is officially acknowledged that the provision targets are difficult and sometimes impossible to achieve. For this reason, the coverage of natural and semi-natural green space of at least 500ha and its suggested 10km catchment is not mapped within the Green Space Strategy. The Town Moor in

Newcastle just about falls within that distance (for parts of North Tyneside) but is less than 500ha in size. It would appear very unlikely that a new 500ha public semi-natural or natural open space could be created nearer to or within North Tyneside.

### 3.5 General Green Space

3.5.1 The Green Space Strategy includes a “general standard” for green space access; this covers areas that already serve a "main" purpose, such as those already discussed in this Assessment or those that do not have a main defined role but are still crucial in providing opportunity recreation and relaxation: activities such as jogging, sunbathing, dog walking, and children's play.

3.5.2 The Green Space Strategy (Objective 7) and the emerging Local Plan (policy DM8.3) expect that all properties should be within 300 metres of at least 0.1ha of accessible, free and usable green space. 300 metres straight line walk equates to around five minute's journey time.

3.5.3 The standard acknowledges that all areas of the Borough, not just residential areas, require access to green space so that visitors and workers have spaces to relax and enjoy recreation in. For this reason the standard is based on all properties in the Borough, not just households.

3.5.4 How the Borough is currently performing with regards to these standards is illustrated in Map 7, along with the approximate boundary of the suggested site outlined and shaded in blue.

3.5.5 The current Borough average is 97.9% of properties are within the acceptable catchment of accessible, free and usable green space. All three relevant wards perform well (Monkseaton South - 94.3%, Valley - 99.1%, Collingwood 99.9%).

3.5.6 Map 7 illustrates that much of the suggested site falls within the catchment of existing green space. Not all of which is of an acceptable quality however; a site north of Murton Village and a site on New York Road have both been assessed as being of poor quality (see Map 8 and 9). Should the suggested site need to rely on these existing sites to meet their open space needs, contributions must be sought to ensure their improvement.

3.5.7 More green space must be delivered within those areas not currently within a suitable catchment to ensure that the percentage of properties within catchments does not drop. This is namely the eastern area and a small part within the west of the suggested site, and potentially the northern part depending on access arrangements across the Metro line. It is likely that through fulfilling the requirements discussed elsewhere in the Assessment that sufficient open space will be provided; however should this not be the case, steps should be taken to deliver further green spaces in those areas where standards fall short.

### 3.6 Playing Pitches



3.6.1 North Tyneside Council has produced a Playing Pitch Strategy that for the period 2013 to 2023 provides a framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities over the next ten years. It covers the sports of football, rugby, cricket and artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

3.6.2 Identified as an issue around the Borough is the inability for some school fields to accommodate use outside of school hours. Any new schools included within the suggested site should be designed to accommodate community use.

3.6.3 Generally speaking, in order to accommodate current and future demand for playing pitches, the need is not to supply more but to improve those that exist. The following action points are put forward in the Playing Pitch Strategy for those pitches within the vicinity of the Murton Gap site; some could be pursued in order to ensure new development at Murton Gap does not create a decline of playing pitch provision in the area. However, please note that these suggestions date from 2013 and as development plans evolve it would be prudent to continue dialogue with the Council's Sport and Leisure team.

Site	Issue	Suggested Action (in 2013)
<b>Collingwood View Playing Fields</b>	Site has poor drainage and is prone to vandalism (e.g. bonfires & motorbikes). Also has a problem with dog foul on the pitch. Current spare capacity is noted for Sat AM and Sun AM/PM. Pavilion accommodating four changing rooms is small for size of site.	Improve the quality of pitches which will increase the carrying capacity and use. Explore options of funding sources (e.g. Sport England) and work in with club(s) to maximise funds for quality improvements. Support North Shields FC in aspiration to build new changing facilities, which will enable current provision to be used by other clubs.
<b>Foxhunters Playing Field</b>	Poor drainage and no changing accommodation at present. Poor quality of pitch results in a low carrying capacity. The site is currently undergoing refurbishment works to its ancillary facilities. Works should be complete by spring 2013 and will include changing provision for 6/8 teams, installation of drainage to one pitch and a new 60x40 size floodlit 3G AGP.	Ensure completion of ongoing works. New AGP facility will help meet demand for training. Consider with Whitley Bay FC (as main user) sources of funding for installation of drainage to other pitches on site in order to further increase carrying capacity.
<b>Langley First School (Langley Playing Fields)</b>	Two poor quality football pitches. No competitive play identified. Whitley Bay Barbarians RFLC is currently considering relocating to site.	Support the Club in its decision as to whether to relocate and any potential improvements to ancillary facilities. A community use agreement with the Whitley Bay Barbarians may offer opportunities to access funding.
<b>South Wellfield</b>	Site has one senior, two junior	Work with Whitley Coast Soccer

	and one mini pitch. Poor drainage and no changing or parking for community use	(as main user) to improve the quality of the pitches (mini and junior being the priority). This will increase the carrying capacity and meet latent demand expressed by Whitley Coast Soccer.
<b>Star of the Sea</b>	School has one mini pitch (of poor quality) available for community use.	Work with the School and Whitley Bay FC (as main user) to explore options of accessing funds to improve the quality of the pitch, which will increase the carrying capacity for further community use.
<b>Percy Park RFC</b>	Pitches are used beyond their capacity.	Explore potential of club using Marden High School rugby pitch for training purposes (Rockcliffe RFC also interested in using for training).

## 3.7 Allotments

3.7.1 An allotment is generally defined as a plot of land rented to individuals so that they can grow fruit and vegetables for themselves and their families to eat.

3.7.2 North Tyneside Council has produced an Allotment Strategy that for the period 2009 to 2015 sets out the Council's commitment and vision for allotments. The Strategy identifies:

- What the Council wants to achieve through the allotment service for current and future plot holders and other North Tyneside residents,
- How the Council will work with plot holders, site associations, members of the local community and other voluntary and statutory organisations to make its vision a reality,
- The resource implications of the Strategy and how the Council plans to attract those resources.
- The supply of and demand for allotments within the Borough.

3.7.3 The Strategy sets out that there are 58 Council-owned sites containing a total of 1,870 plots. There are others that are privately owned. Within the Borough there are also a range of other food-growing initiatives including school allotments, allotment plots managed by voluntary/community organisations, community gardens, wildlife spaces and community based horticultural projects.

3.7.4 Those allotments that could be described as being within the near area of the development site are as follows. They are shown on Maps 10 and 11.

Site	Number of plots	Number of Vacancies	Number of unlettable plots	Number on waiting list
<b>Cragside, North</b>	6	0	0	10

<b>Shields (no.13 on Map 11)</b>				
<b>Beach Road, North Shields (no.4 on Map 11)</b>	109	3	3	122
<b>Preston Village, Monkswood, North Shields (no. 27 on Map 11)</b>	25	0	0	62
<b>Turner Street North, West Allotment (no.38 on Map 10)</b>	10	0	2	2
<b>Bertram Place, Shiremoor (no.47 on Map 10)</b>	36	0	0	82 (with Moor Edge)
<b>West View, Earsdon (no.44 on Map 10)</b>	55	0	0	95
<b>Edington Road, North Shields (no.49 on Map 11)</b>	44	0	0	18
<b>Leg of Mutton, Earsdon Road, Whitley Bay (no.52 on Map 10)</b>	70	0	0	95
<b>Turner Street East &amp; South, West Allotment (no.58 on Map 10)</b>	102	0	2	15
<b>Murton Lane, New York Village, North Shields (no.61 on Map 11)</b>	20	0	10	0
<b>Moor Edge, Earsdon Road, Shiremoor (no.54 on Map 10)</b>	60	0	0	82 (with Bertram Place)
<b>Sunningdale, West Monkseaton (no.42 on Map 10)</b>	8	0	0	86

3.7.5 Therefore, whilst there are allotments in the area, they are already well over-subscribed.

3.7.6 Analysis within the Allotment Strategy sets out that that at 2009 there were 1998 allotments and 1,515 residents on waiting lists, with 3,514 plots therefore needed to meet existing demand. Based on the then number of 93,620 households in the Borough, the level of demand was one standard size allotment (250 sqm) per 27 households. This demand was higher when just looking at the northeast of the Borough (one allotment per 18 households) and the southeast of the Borough (one allotment per 25 households), although being that allotment users in this part of the Borough could realistically travel into the northwest and southwest for allotments, these figures could not be seen as representing an accurate portrayal of the situation for this particular area.

3.7.7 The delivery of one allotment per 27 households appears appropriate in this case to ensure that new homes do not worsen the current over-demand. This would equate for this suggested site, should 3,000 homes be delivered, 111 allotments. The Council's Allotment team have examined the existing allotment provision in the area. At present it is not possible to identify where extra plots could be accommodated at sites in the vicinity. Further development would be constrained by boundaries with neighbouring properties. Therefore consideration should be given to the provision of adequate allotment space within the new development.

3.7.8 The Planning Obligations SPD<sup>15</sup>, which was adopted prior to the publication of the Allotment Strategy, advises that once standards for allotment provision have been adopted by the Council and any shortfall in provision identified, an indicative developer contribution per dwelling type will be calculated and included within the Planning Obligations SPD at its first review.

### 3.8 Management and Maintenance

3.8.1 It is essential that any new open space provision or improvements to existing open spaces within or associated with the suggested site remains at the highest quality and value to ensure they offer the best to their users. This can only be achieved through correct management and maintenance.

3.8.2 The Green Space Strategy recognises this and includes the following objective:

**Objective 11: Management and Maintenance**

*No scheme that creates new green space or improves existing should proceed until the funding to secure its maintenance and management has been identified.*

*Where funding will be secured by planning obligations, the guidelines set out in the Planning Obligations SPD will be followed.*

3.8.3 It is therefore necessary that prior to development, an agreement is reached with the developers and the Council that ensures sufficient funding and management can and will be resourced. This may be via a commuted sum from the developers, a

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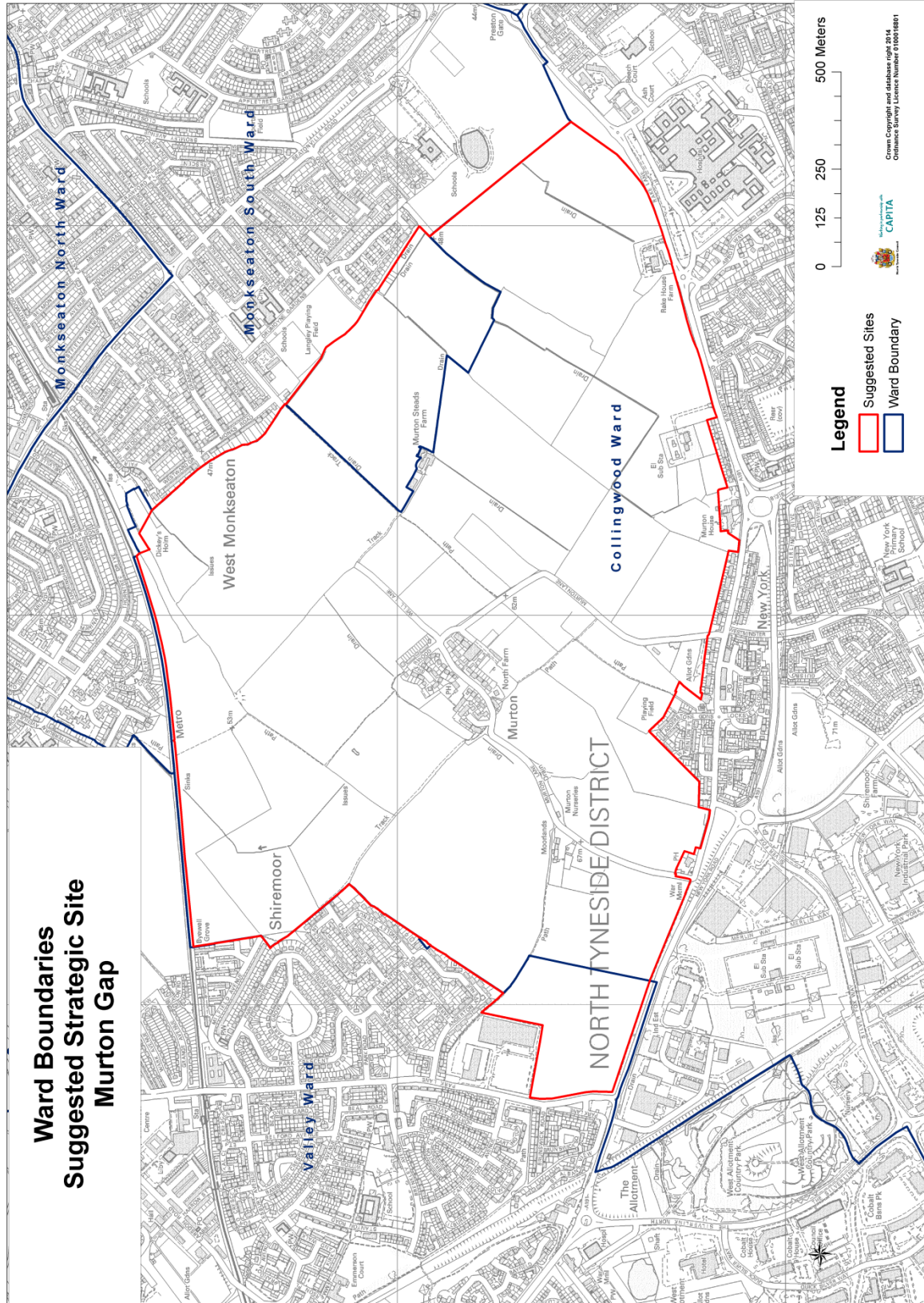
<sup>15</sup> Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, North Tyneside Council, 2009

residents' maintenance fee, an agreement that developers retain direct (or in-direct through a third party) responsibility for maintenance in perpetuity, or the formation of a residents' trust.

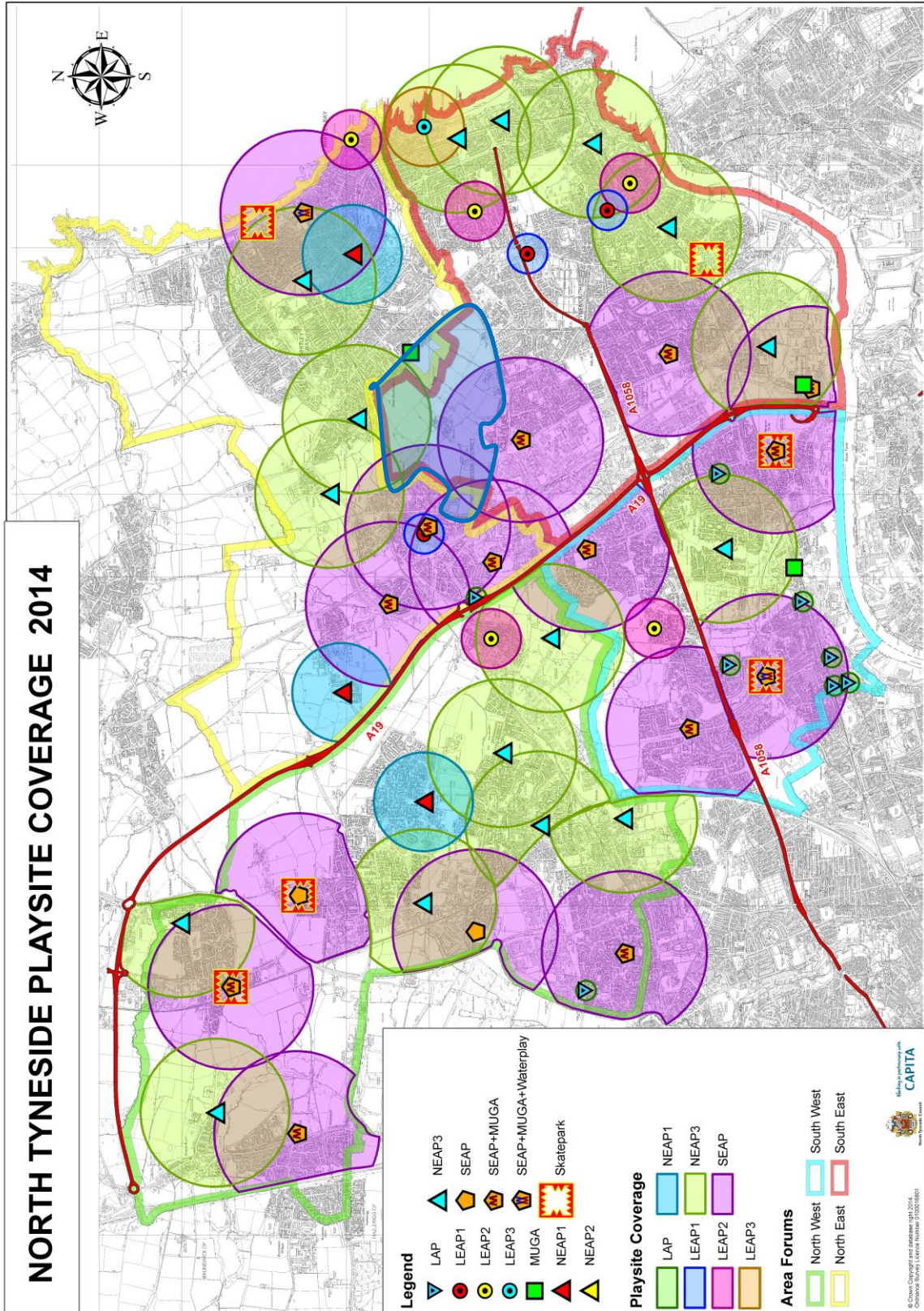
3.8.4 A management and maintenance plan can provide the clarity and reassurance for the local community about how the open space will remain safe and usable.

## Maps

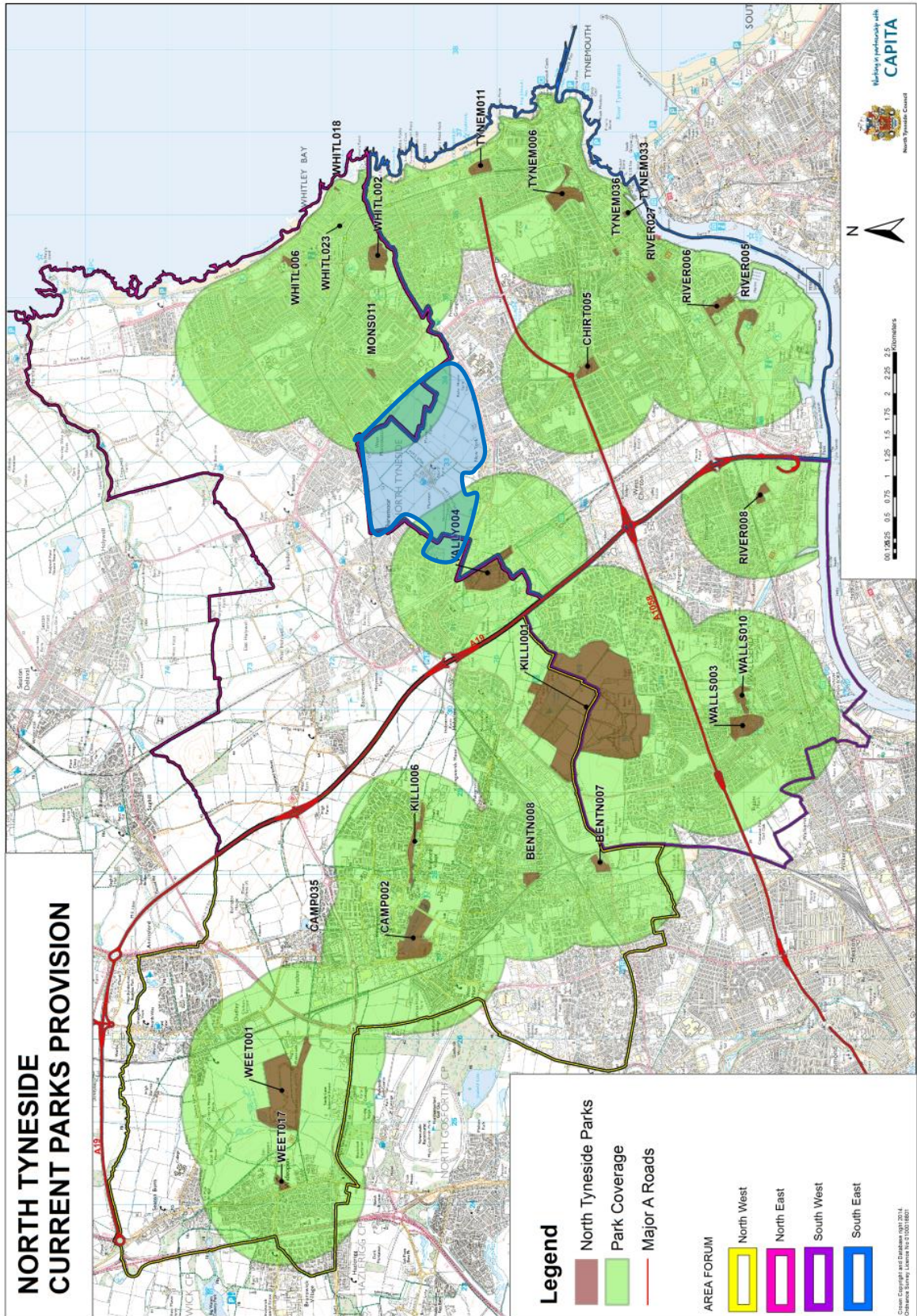
### Map 1



Map 2

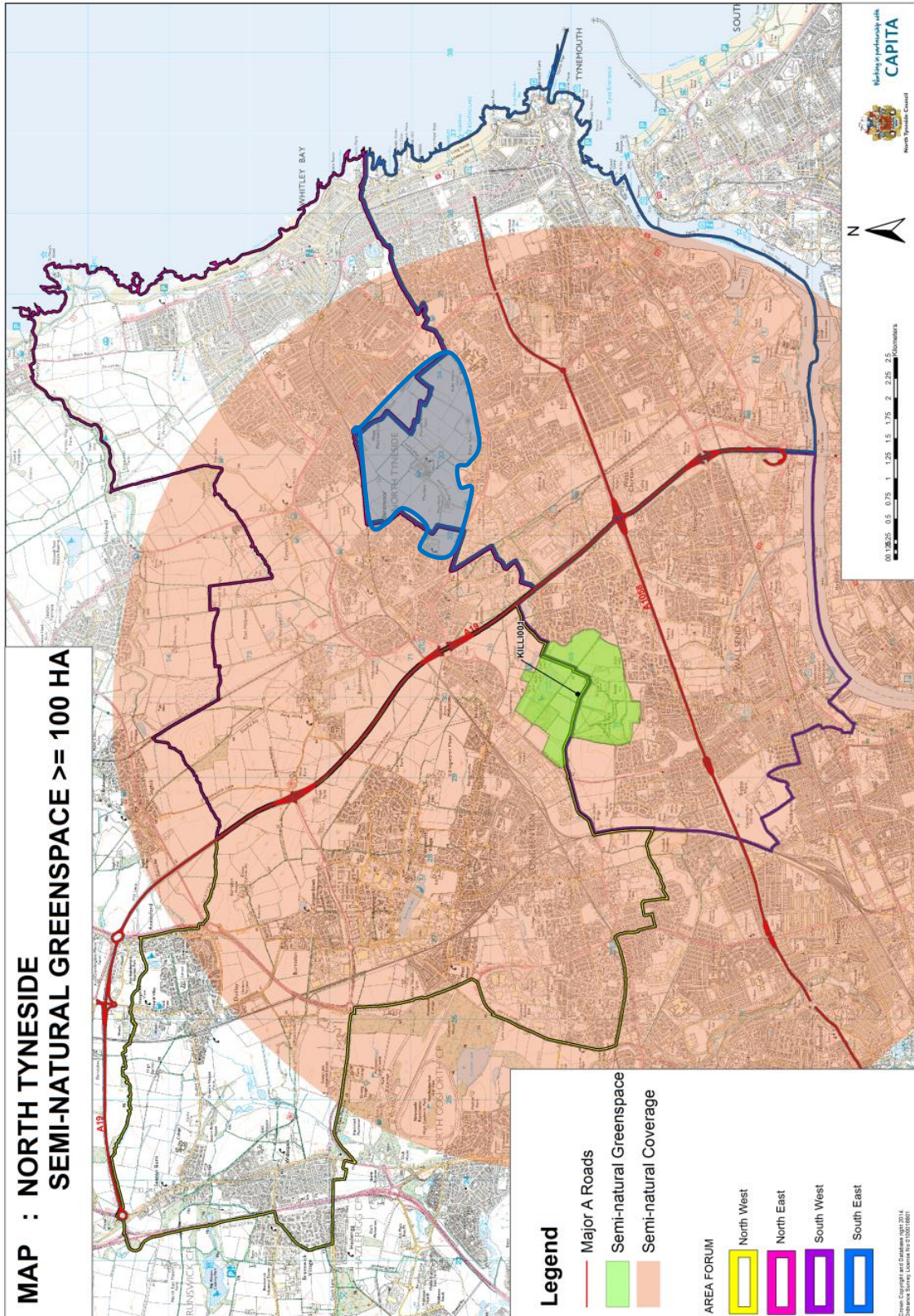


Map 3

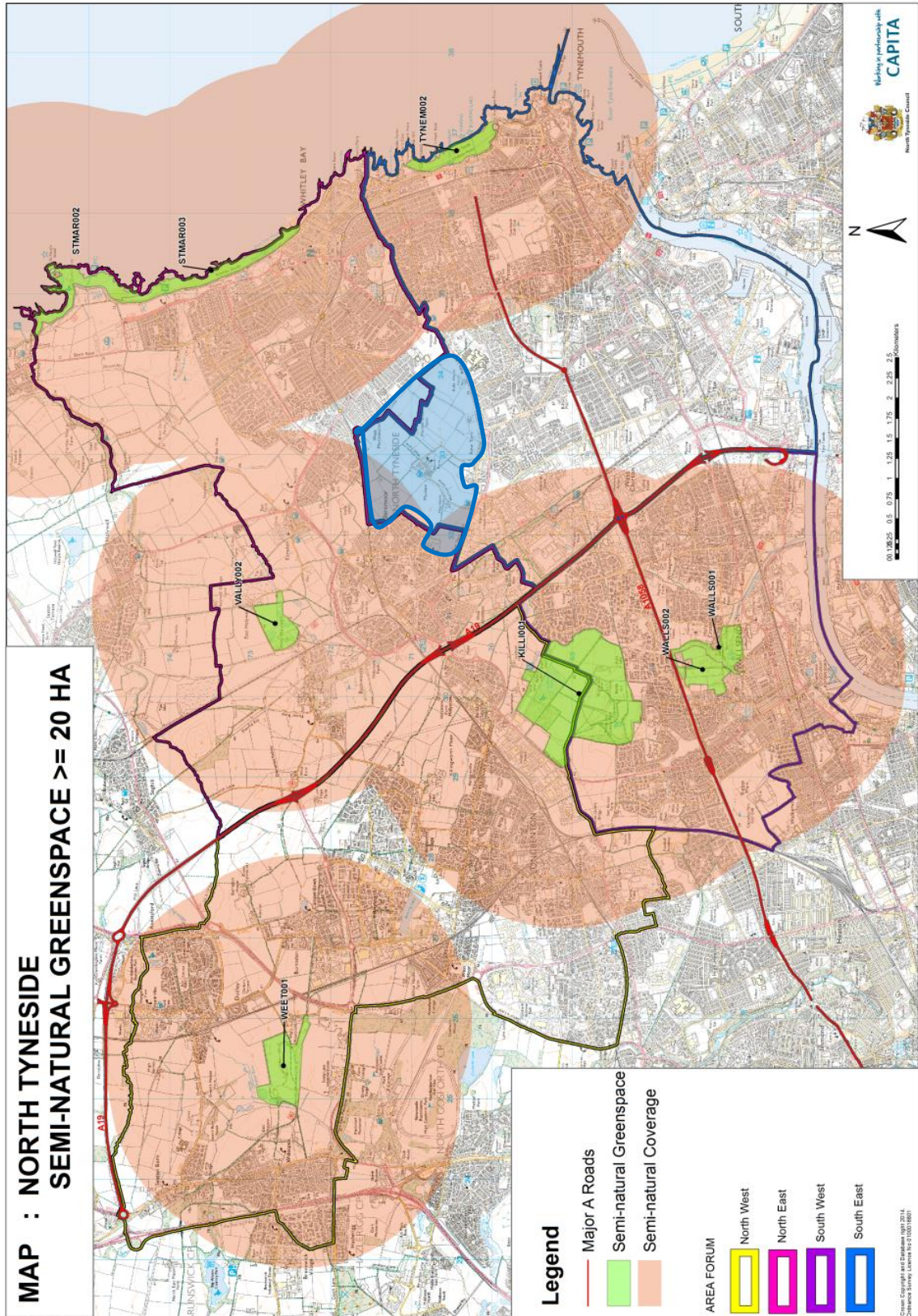




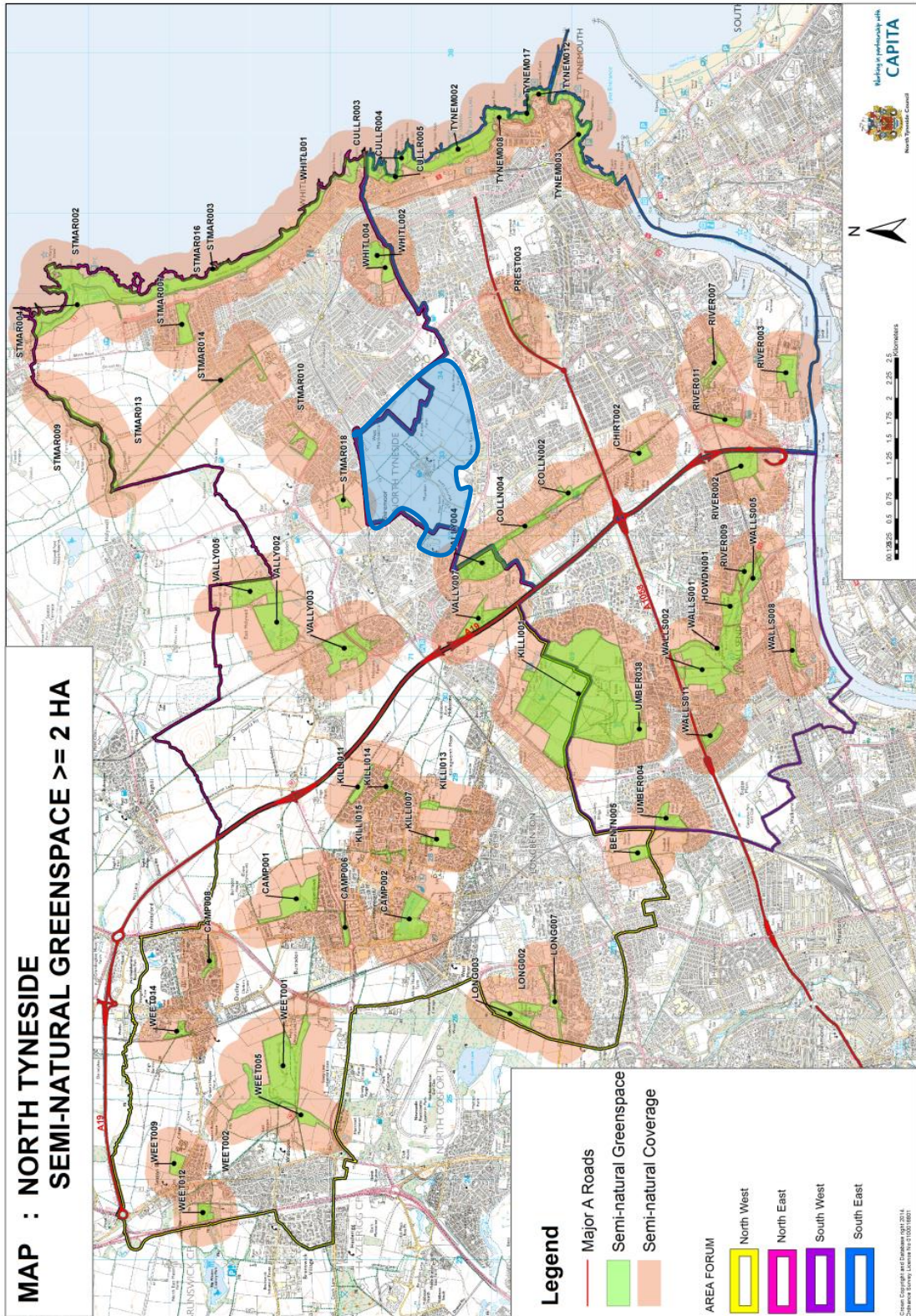
Map 4



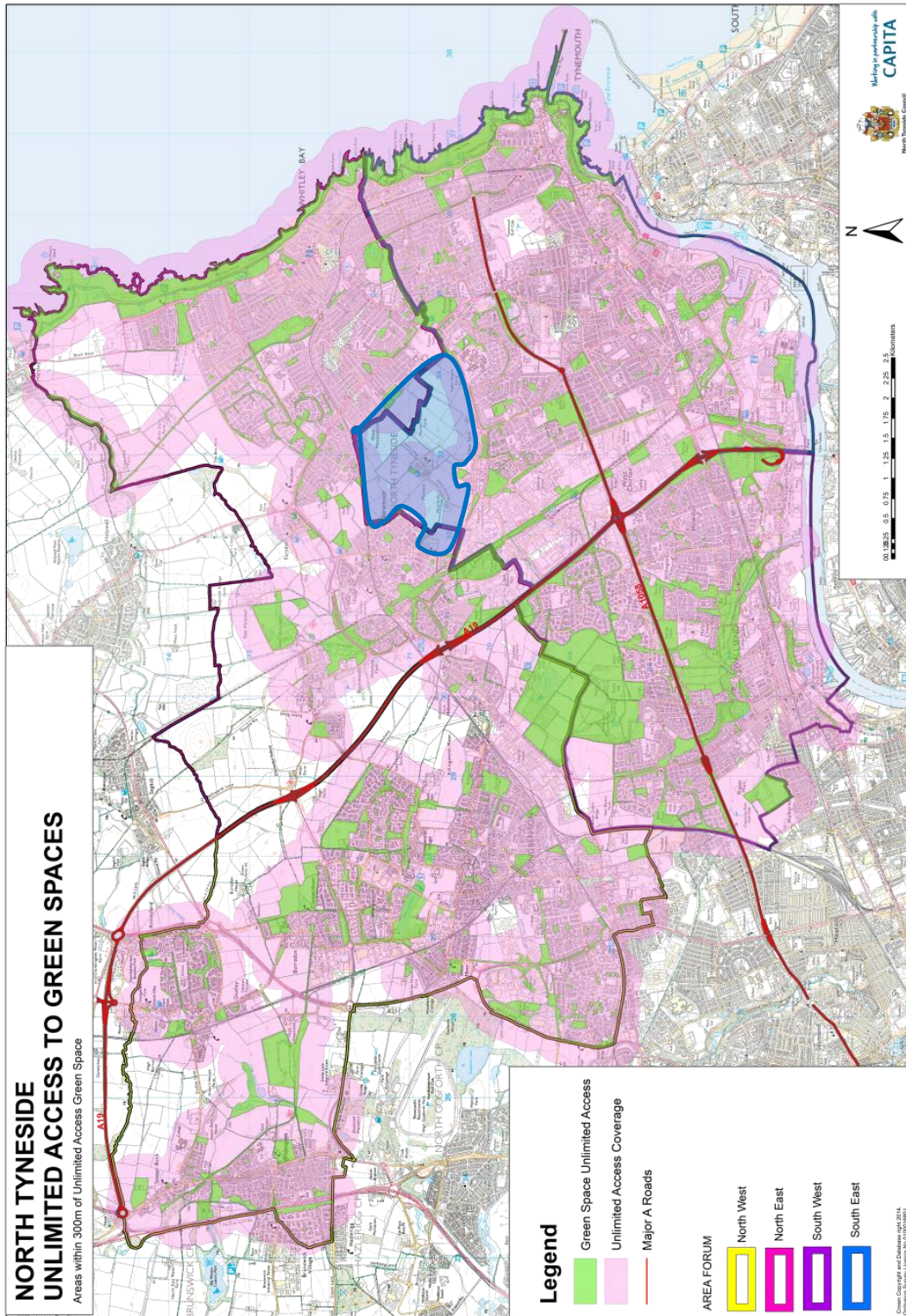
Map 5



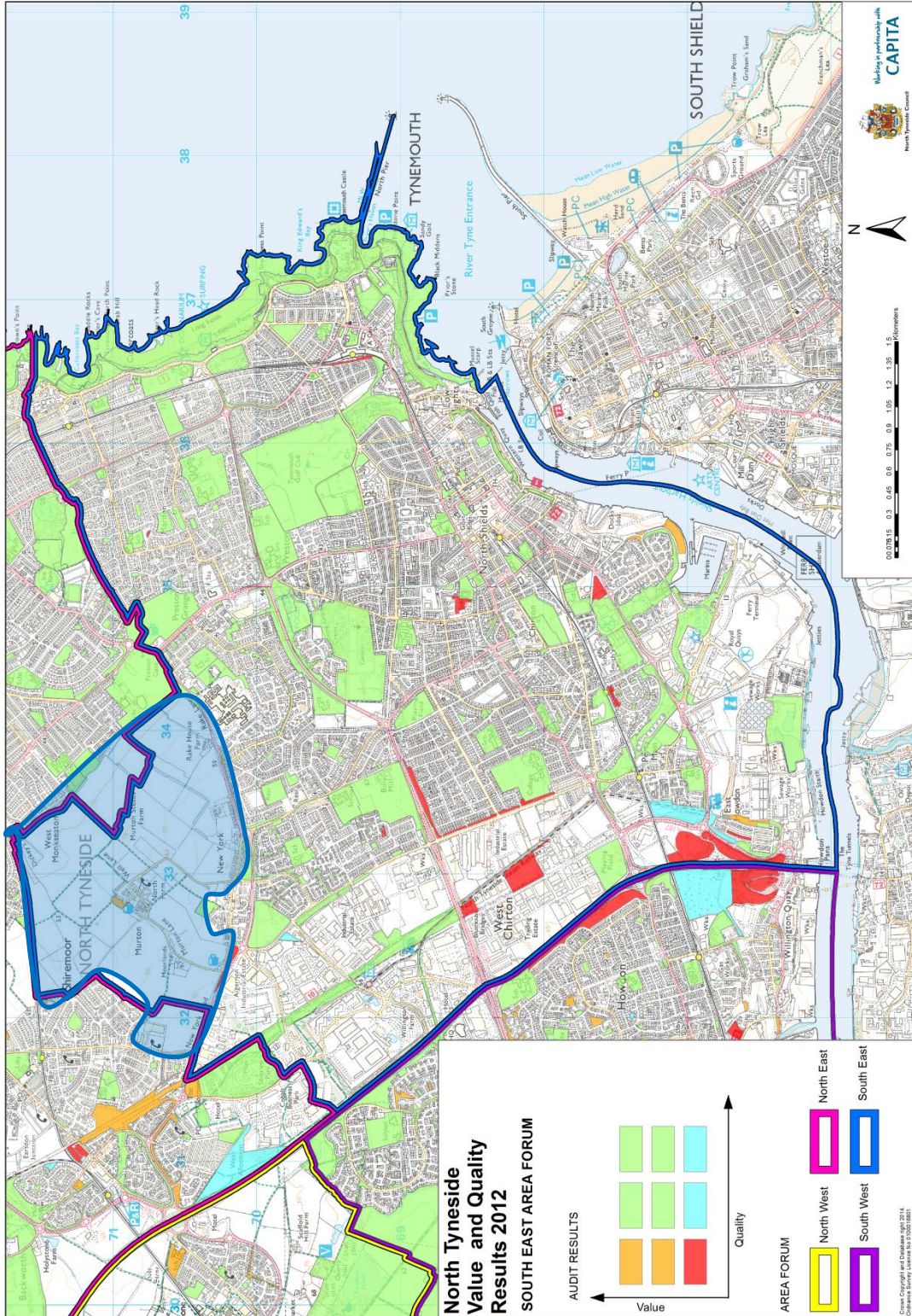
Map 6



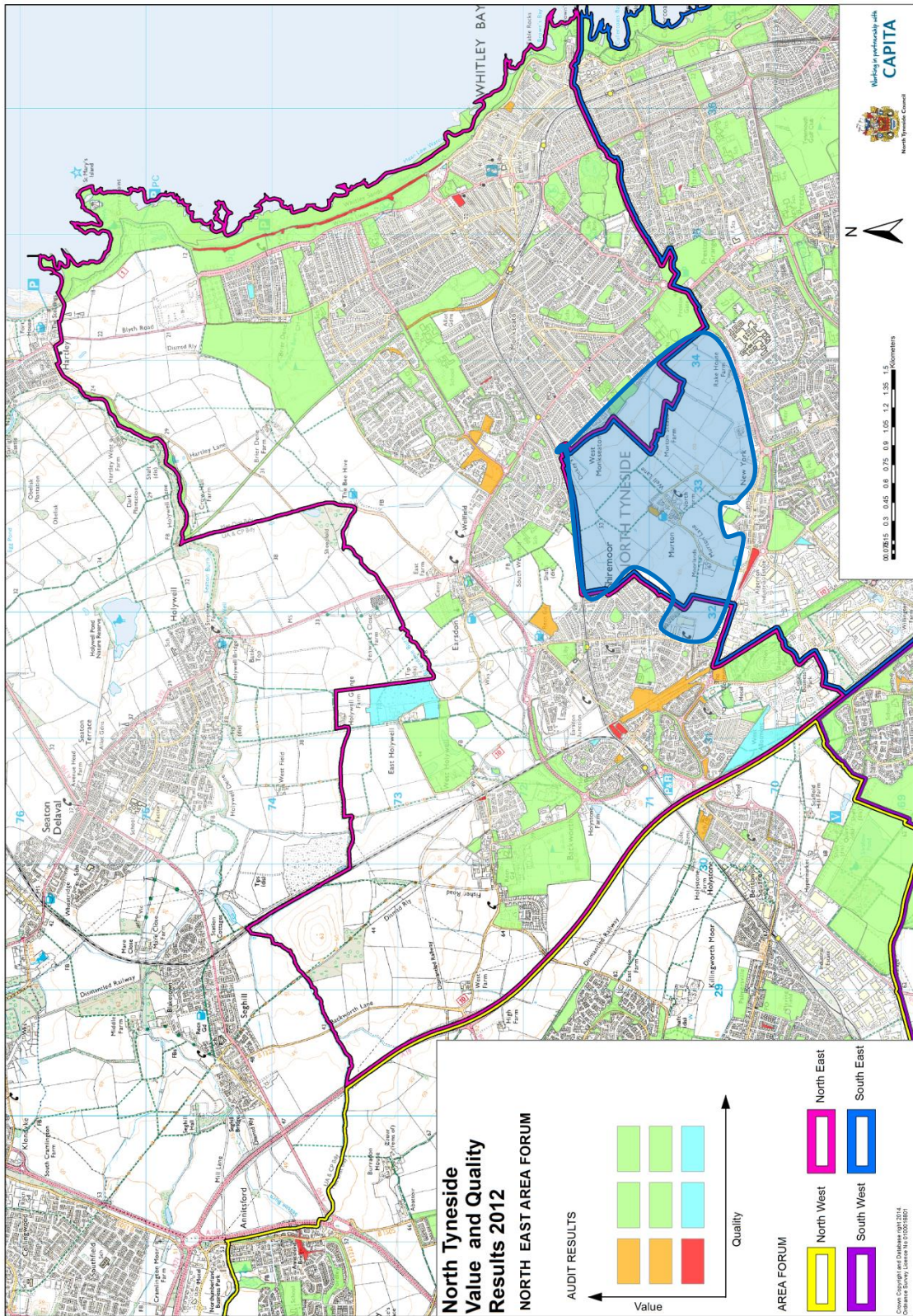
Map 7



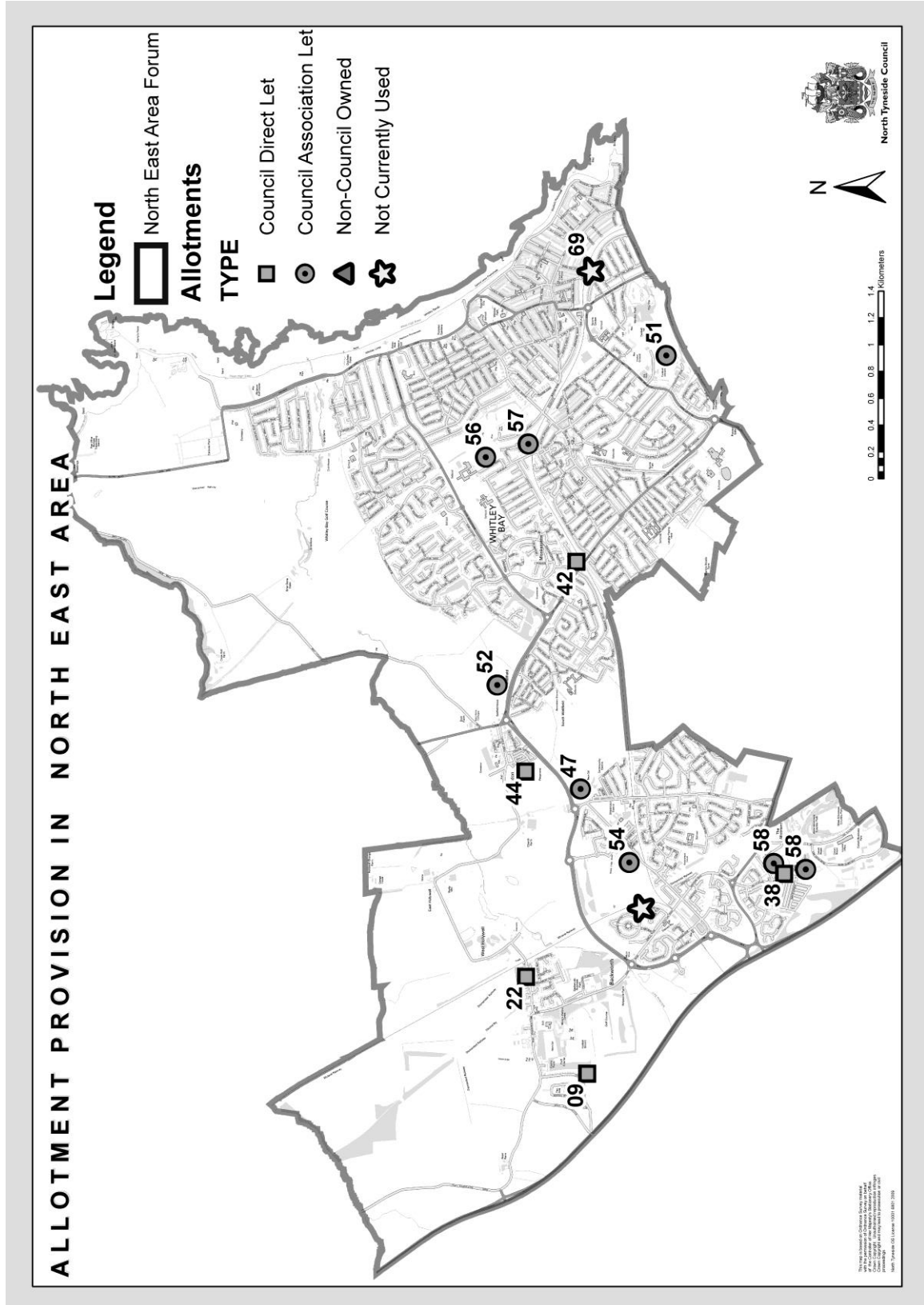
Map 8



Map 9



Map 10



Map 11

