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FAITHFUL AND GOULD

WHITEMOSS ROAD AND DAM HEAD DRIVE, MANCHESTER

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 2022

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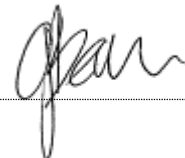
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

1.1.1 A 'City Wide Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study' was undertaken by Manchester City Council (MCC) in 2009 and currently forms the most up to date assessment of provision of all typologies of open space within the authority area. The work undertaken in this assessment has informed the current Development Plan, which includes the 2012 Core Strategy as the principal Development Plan document.

1.1.2 We would note that the adopted Development Plan is significantly dated, preceding all current national policy guidance and frameworks, with the 2009 open space assessment in particular having been compiled prior to any iteration of the NPPF. To remedy this, MCC is currently preparing a new Local Plan, however this is not yet adopted, and there is currently no updated draft evidence pertaining to open spaces. As such, the adopted documents remain the principal points of consideration for the purposes of this report.

1.1.3 The NPPF's definition of 'open space' is: *"All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity"*.

1.1.4 The 2009 study evaluates the following typologies of open space within the assessment:

- parks and gardens
- natural and semi natural open space
- amenity greenspace
- provision for children
- provision for young people
- outdoor sports facilities
- allotments and community gardens
- green corridors
- churchyards and cemeteries.

1.1.5 The definitions utilised in the 2009 study are in broad accordance with the overarching NPPF description and therefore remain relevant in the current policy context.

1.2 **Assessment Objectives**

1.2.1 This study, undertaken by Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) on behalf of Faithful and Gould, considers the quantity and distribution of open space in the Northern area of Manchester City to evaluate the potential policy impact of the development of land at Whitemoss Road - M9 6DA & Dam Head Drive - M9 6LX (site centre coordinates Easting: 386474, Northing: 403413). The assessment will provide the following:

- An overview of the current site and its context,
- An assessment of Local and National Planning Policy in relation to the development of open space,
- An assessment of existing supply of amenity space
- An assessment of the impact of the loss of the site in terms of quantity and accessibility
- Conclusions

1.2.2 At the outset we would identify that we believe the site to be surplus to requirement in the context of Planning Policy and supporting guidance. The following chapters within this report will justify the reasoning for this view and demonstrate that the surplus provision in place will be sufficient to meet need.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The site is located between Whitemoss Road - M9 6DA & Dam Head Drive - M9 6LX, with the site centre coordinates being Easting: 386474, Northing: 403413 (see Figure 1). The site is situated in the northern extent of MCC authority area.
- 2.1.2 The site measures 1.1ha and comprises a predominantly grassed area with areas of overgrown boundary vegetation and trees dispersed throughout the site. There are footpaths within the site which are largely located around the margins, connecting to nearby residential streets. The site is surrounded by existing development with housing to the north, east and west, while the southern boundary abuts an area identified as natural/semi natural open space within the 2009 study. The southern section of the site is not identified as an open space in the 2009 study, however given its connection to the northern section it is included for consideration as part of this assessment. The southern sections do not appear maintained to any significant degree, and largely comprise overgrown scrub.



Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

2.1.3 The northern part of the site is identified within the 2009 Study as 'Amenity Green Space'. There are a number of similar spaces within the locality of the site, alongside an array of other open space typologies falling into the categories mentioned previously in this assessment. The quantity and location of nearby amenity greenspaces will be discussed in greater detail later in this statement.

2.2 Site History and Usage

2.2.1 The northern area of the site appears to have comprised functional open space since developed from farmland identified on historic mapping. The southern section of the site to the south of Dam Head Drive historically comprised a concreted, hard standing area which became grassed circa 2003 and has remained so since. As noted, the southern section of the site is not formally identified as open space for the purposes of the 2009 assessment. There are no recent planning permissions of relevance to the site, with notable historic permission on the northern site area being as follows:

- F05681/LA – Application submitted in 1976 for play equipment and seating area. No decision available
- 030557 – Application approved in 1988 for the provision of 2 kick-around areas, fencing, wild natural area, landscaping & seating.

2.2.2 There are no components from either application currently present on the site.

2.2.3 The 2009 Study notes a broad definition of amenity green space which is as follows:

"Amenity green space is most commonly found in residential areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing. It fulfils a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work. Amenity green space is also often used for landscaping purposes".

This definition is in broad accordance with the current NPPF definition of general open space:

"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".

2.2.4 To inform this assessment, a site visit was made and a survey undertaken which reviewed the sites current context, condition, and features present. This survey is included in full at appendix 1 of this report, however in summary it was clear that the site attributes meant it is still accurate to for it to be considered amenity greenspace for the purposes of this report. Notable aspects include the opportunity for informal

recreation and provision of greenspace near housing, while providing some general landscape amenity. The site has no formal recreation provision or facilities of any sort and is not considered to fall within any other category.

3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 National Planning Policy

NPPF

3.1.1 For the purposes of assessment, the site is partially identified as ‘amenity open space’ within the adopted Development Plan. The NPPF provides specific guidance on the importance of open space, and how it should be considered as part of the development process. Paragraph 8(b) identifies that open space is important in creating social sustainability, addressing current and future needs within communities. This is further echoed at paragraph 93 of the framework within Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities).

3.1.2 It is however inevitable that pressure to accommodate sustainable development within settlement boundaries means that open spaces must be reviewed to assess whether they would be better suited to accommodate development proposals. The NPPF recognises this and details mechanisms through which alternative uses may be found suitable. Paragraph 99 is of specific note and states:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*

3.1.3 Of pertinence to the assessment is also the requirement for Local Plans and policies contained within to be based on up-to-date evidence and to be in accordance with National Planning Policy. This consideration applies to open space provision as per any other policy, with paragraph 98 of the framework identifying in the context of open spaces that:

“Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision”.

- 3.1.4 It is therefore clear that the NPPF places significant weight on the role that open space and associated facilities play in the sustainability of communities. However, it is equally clear that there is recognition that pressure to accommodate sustainable development may require that open space uses be reviewed where they are no longer necessary, and alternative uses would better suit.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.1.5 The PPG provides further guidance on the consideration that should be applied to open space within the planning and development process. Given the date of the current Open Space Assessment (2009), it will have been informed by PPG 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. This guidance describes the role of the planning system in assessing opportunities and needs for sport and recreation provision and safeguarding open space with recreational value and was adopted in 2002.
- 3.1.6 This guidance is now significantly dated, however it does include a definition for amenity green space which is broadly in keeping with current guidance:
- “v. amenity greenspace (most commonly, but not exclusively in housing areas) – including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens”*
- 3.1.7 Overall, it is our contention that the 2009 assessment cannot be considered fully up to date, however we consider the general approach to quantifying amenity space adopted in the assessment remains broadly relevant although it is necessary to update the previous assessment to reflect additional potential amenity green space not currently recognised, and consider the implications of developing identified open spaces in the current context.

4 EXISTING SUPPLY OF AMENITY GREEN SPACE

4.1 Amenity Green Space Standards

4.1.1 The 2009 Study provides the overall definition for amenity green space in Section 6 of the document, which is exclusively focussed on this typology. There is no overt identification of the smallest land area which can be considered ‘amenity green space’ within local or national guidance documents, however table 6.2 of the 2009 Study identifies that the smallest site in North Manchester currently quantified as amenity green space measures 0.02ha. As part of this new assessment, this figure has been applied in order to assess provision of wider amenity green space not currently in the dated 2009 Study.

4.1.2 The chief qualities for amenity green space identified by the 2009 Study include the following:

- Proximity to residential development and accessibility
- Informal recreation and greenspaces
- Affords the opportunity for informal recreation activities
- Provides elements of visual amenity and landscaping

4.1.3 Amenity green spaces are typically less formal than equipped open space areas such as parks, sports facilities, while they are more closely managed than semi-natural green spaces. It is these definitions and standards which have been applied for the purposes of this assessment in order to ensure an accurate comparison and update to the findings of the 2009 assessment can be made.

4.2 Quantity Assessment Methodology

4.2.1 To provide a robust up to date assessment, an appraisal has been undertaken of the current quantum of open space identified in the 2009 Study and plotted on up-to-date OS base mapping for accuracy. The 2009 Study identifies a 10-minute walking radius (circa 480m based on the mapped data within the study) which forms the catchment area for each amenity green space. This is also noted within the 2012 Core Strategy.

4.2.2 We have then undertaken a further survey of other amenity open spaces not included in the 2009 Study, identified through a combination of site visit and desktop review utilising online mapping software. These additional sites identified meet the criteria for amenity green space identified in the 2009 Study as well as the overall open space criteria noted within the NPPF. They are also of a size in keeping with the thresholds identified in table 6.2, i.e. no less than 0.02ha.

4.2.3 Figure 2 below plots the sites noted in the 2009 assessment in addition to the sites identified through the desk top / site study within a 10-minute walking radius of the site.

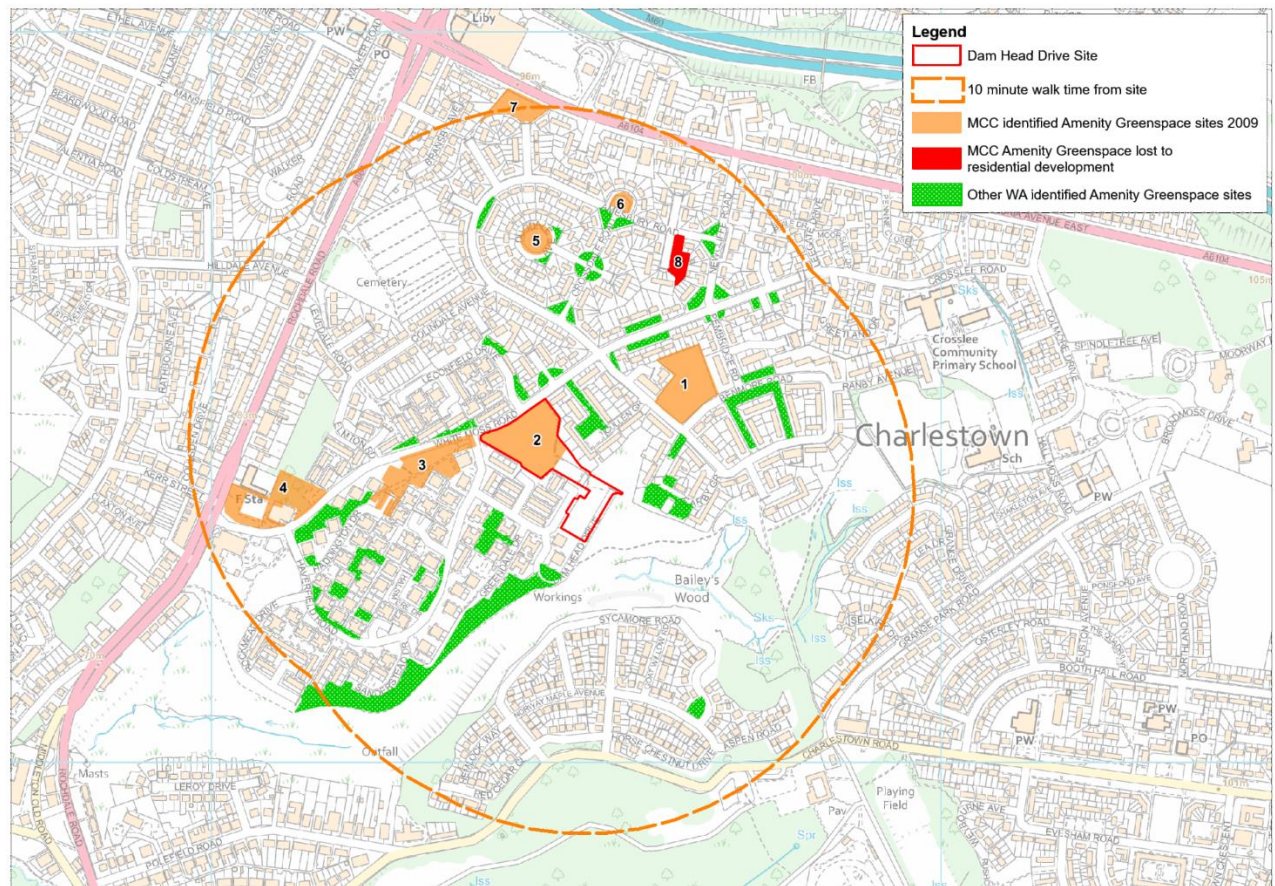


Figure 2 – Amenity Green Space within 480m the site boundary

- 4.2.4 The adopted requirement identified in the 2009 Study for the provision of amenity open space is 0.4ha per 1,000 population, which was subsequently incorporated into the 2012 Core Strategy.
- 4.2.5 The overall average amenity green space throughout the authority meets this requirement precisely, while the quantum for north Manchester exceeds this figure slightly at 0.44ha per 1,000 people. The table below is taken from the 2009 Study and identifies amenity green space provision at the time of the assessment.

Table 6.2 – Provision of amenity green space across Manchester

Area	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	Current provision per 1000 (hectares)
City Centre	4.40	18	0.04	0.54	0.44
East	56.60	119	0.07	7.55	0.78
Central	31.58	60	0.07	2.79	0.42
South	8.75	29	0.06	1.02	0.06
North	39.31	87	0.02	6.26	0.44
Wythenshawe	42.07	52	0.08	8.15	0.60
Overall	182.70	365	0.02	8.15	0.40

Table 1 – Quantity of Amenity Green Space and ha / 1000 population

Source: Manchester City Council City Wide Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study
2009

4.3 Assessment of Need

4.3.1 To supplement the existing high-level assessment undertaken for north Manchester as a whole, we have undertaken an area specific assessment to calculate a requirement for amenity open space within the circa 480m catchment area around Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive.

4.3.2 In order to calculate this figure, the average population density for the Charlestown ward as a whole was calculated to be 42 persons per hectare based on an overall population of 16,237 (ONS Census data). A 10-minute walking radius around the site boundary was then applied (as per figure 1) which comprised a total area of 74.24ha. Based on the MCC recommended standard of 0.4ha of amenity green space per 1,000 population, the requirement within this radius is 1.247ha to serve a population of 3,118 persons. This breakdown is expressed below in Table 2 for clarity.

Survey Area (HA)	Ward Population	Population Density (per ha)	Population within Survey Area	Required standard per 1,000 population	TOTAL REQUIREMENT (HA)
74.24	16,237	42	3,118	0.4	1.247

Table 2: Amenity Green Space Requirements

5 IMPACT ARISING FROM LOSS OF OPEN SPACE

5.1 Quantity and Accessibility

5.1.1 In order to assess the impact of the potential loss of the site at Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive, we have quantified the actual provision of amenity green space within the catchment area. Figure 3 below identifies the site as the central focal point of the assessment and all the sites which fall in its 10-minute walk time catchment area, alongside each of those sites catchment areas.

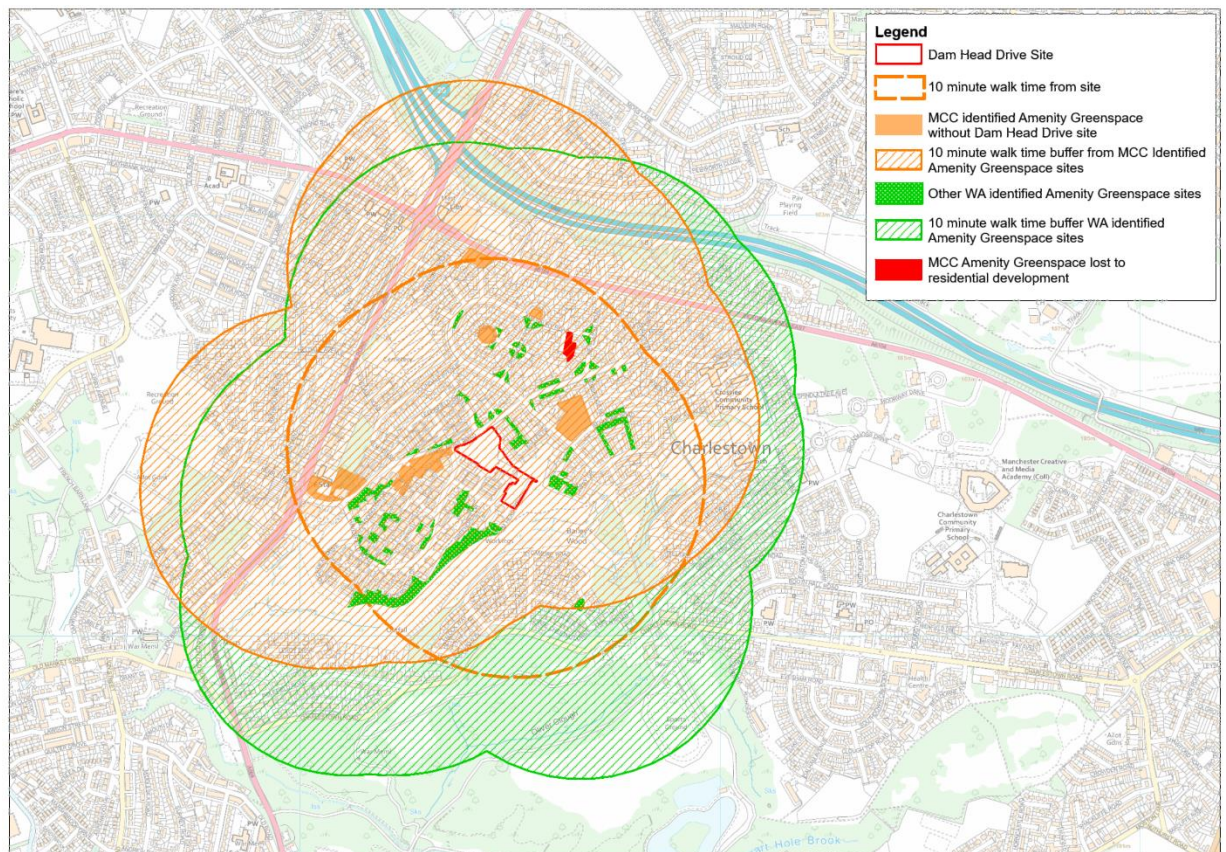


Figure 3: Amenity Green Space Sites and zones of influence

5.1.2 For the purposes of assessment of actual provision, we have excluded Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive and the Former Whitemoss Daycare Centre, (labelled 1 and 2 on Figure 1) as these are both being considered for development. Solely including the remaining sites (3 – 7 on Fig 1) there is still an excess in open space provision within the immediate area, totalling 1.253ha with sites 1 and 2 discounted. The breakdown for this is identified below:

Figure 1 I.D.	Amenity Open Space Name	Area (ha)
3	White Moss Rd / Haddington	0.4705
4	Ex Service Mens Club	0.4164
5	Dugdale Avenue	0.1304
6	Amesbury Rd	0.0504
7	Langsdale Ave / A6104	0.1857
Required Amenity Green Space		1.247
Actual Amenity Green Space		1.253

Table 3: Existing Amenity Green Space

- 5.1.3 From the above, it is clear that even without the inclusion of the additional amenity sites identified by this study, there is an excess in provision should the site be developed.
- 5.1.4 The additional amenity green identified in the survey / desk top study undertaken in support of this assessment are identified in green on Figures 2 and 3, and all fall within the catchment area of the site at Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive. The total quantum of these additional amenity spaces is identified below and is in addition to the sites derived identified in the 2009 Study.

Amenity Open Space Name	Area (ha)
Benmore Road	0.0453
Munslow / Bloxham Walk	0.2202
Cullen Grove	0.1209
Leconfield Drive	0.0265
Sycamore Road	0.0449
Haverfield Road Estate	1.5066

Amenity Open Space Name	Area (ha)
Dugdale Avenue	0.0224
Amesbury Road	0.1189
Crossdale Road	0.0625
Amesbury Rd / Newcliffe Rd	0.0391
Earby Grove	0.1964
White Moss Rd frontage	0.3375
Total Additional Amenity Green Space	2.74

Table 4: Additional Amenity Green Space

5.1.5 The total amenity space provision when combining the sites identified in tables 3 and 4 is 3.99ha. This is a significant surplus over the 1.247ha base requirement calculated for the locality.

5.2 Accessibility

5.2.1 We would also draw attention to the catchment areas detailed on Figure 4. These demonstrate that accessibility for the vast majority of residents to the existing amenity green spaces from the 2009 Study is available. The only exception is a small area to the south which extends beyond the other existing amenity space zones.

5.2.2 When the additional amenity green spaces identified within this assessment are factored in, the whole of the population catchment area can be seen to be clearly provided with access to amenity green space within a walkable distance. For a complete and thorough assessment, we have also provided Figure 5 on the following page.

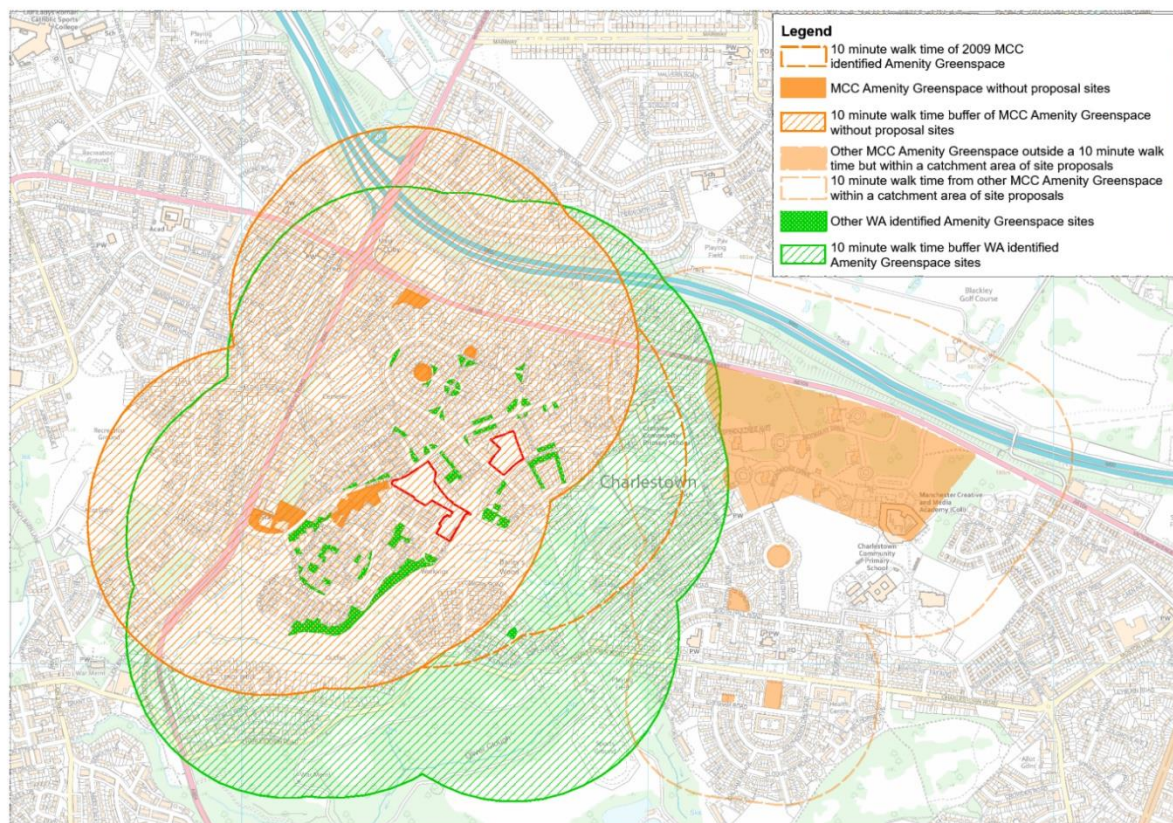


Figure 5: Wider Amenity Green Space Availability

5.3 Other Open Space Typologies with Catchment Area

- 5.3.1 In addition to the above, it should also be noted that the area is also well served by access to additional green space notably the presence of the Baileys Wood which is a substantial area of 'natural and semi natural open space' which serves the area.
- 5.3.2 Based on this assessment it is clear that there is still a surplus of amenity green space should the site be developed, while there will be no detrimental impact on the wider accessibility of amenity green space to any residents within the zone of influence.

5.4 Potential Development at the Former Whitemoss Daycare Centre

- 5.4.1 Whilst this Open Space Assessment is submitted principally in support of the potential development at Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive, it has included the potential for development of the Former Whitemoss Daycare Centre for robustness in its assessments, although it is stressed it does not form part of this application submission.
- 5.4.2 These sites are identified on figure 3 as sites 1 and 2, and as noted, for the purposes of robustness have been excluded from the calculation of existing amenity green

space owing to the possibility they both may be developed. Whitemoss Daycare Centre measures 0.53ha and Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive measures 1.1ha.

- 5.4.3 The table below identifies all amenity green space scenarios were sites 1 and 2 both included and excluded from the assessment.

Amenity Green Space Requirement (ha)	Existing Provision <u>without</u> Sites 1 & 2 (ha)	Existing Provision <u>with</u> Sites 1 and 2 (ha)	Existing Provision and table 3 amenity space <u>without</u> sites 1 & 2 (ha)	Existing Provision and table 3 amenity space <u>with</u> sites 1 & 2 (ha)
1.247	1.253	2.88	3.99	5.62

Table 5: All Amenity Open Space Assessment Outcomes including/excluding Sites 1 and 2

- 5.4.4 It is clear that in all scenarios where sites 1 and 2 are included within the assessment, the quantum of amenity green space significantly exceeds the required quantum in all circumstances.
- 5.4.5 Figure 5 provides an additional layer of accessibility analysis and assumes both sites 1 and 2 may be developed. This is done to provide a completely robust assessment of all potential development outcomes and clearly demonstrates that even with both sites developed, any areas served by the sites will not experience a shortfall in, or lack of access to alternative amenity green space. In particular we would note the further amenity green space identified in the 2009 strategy to the east of the proposals location which offers significant amenity provision in this locality. It therefore clear there is substantial provision available to compensate for any loss through development.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Open Space Summary

- 6.1.1 The NPPF provides the overarching policy framework when considering the potential development of public open space. Paragraph 99 identifies the circumstances under which it may be considered acceptable to develop open spaces, in particular we draw attention to part 'a' which identifies that open space should not be built on unless:

“an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements”.

- 6.1.2 The proposals site is designated as 'amenity green space' within the 2009 Open Space Study, which, while significantly dated, remains the most recent document adopted by MCC for the purposes of this open space assessment. For the purposes of robustness and continuity, this report has updated the now historic assessment and incorporated areas of amenity green space that were either previously overlooked or potentially not in existence at the time of the study.
- 6.1.3 These identified sites and catchment areas (10-minute walking distance) have then been applied to OS base mapping to provide a clear visual representation of local context. The analysis of ONS data has then provided an accurate calculation of the population within the catchment area of the site which would be affected by its potential development / loss. This figure has then been used to establish the open space requirement based upon the population within the catchment area and whilst still benchmarking against the adopted 2009 Study and 2012 Core Strategy figure of 0.4ha per 1,000 residents.
- 6.1.4 This report has clearly demonstrated that by any metric of assessment, the locality will maintain a sufficient level of provision for amenity green space against the adopted Development Plan requirement, regardless of whether the site at Whitemoss Road/Dam Head Drive comes forward for development alone, or whether a possible development at the Former Whitemoss Daycare Centre also comes forward in addition.
- 6.1.5 The report also identifies that accessibility to amenity green space is still secured for the population within the catchment area. Given these findings, it is our considerations that the facets of NPPF policy 99(a) apply in full, and the test to justify the area of designated open space is surplus to requirement has been met.

APPENDIX 1
OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT SURVEY AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Guinness Partnerships: Whitemoss Road and Dam Head – AMENITY GREEN SPACE REVIEW – SURVEY SHEET

SITE INFORMATION

Site Name & Unique ID	GM12647
Address	Whitemoss Road - M9 6DA & Dam Head Drive - M9 6LX
Coordinates (centre)	Easting: 386474, Northing: 403413
Area	1.1ha
SHLAA SITE (Details if yes)	Char_Cap_401
Planning Designations	Open Space
Other Designations	
Other Notes (e.g. Potential or Additional ARL): Identified in 2022 SHLAA as having capacity for up to 40 dwellings deliverable in 1.5 years. Address given as Whitemoss Road / Haverfield Road.	

SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Primary Amenity Value

Recreation (Physical)	☒	Aesthetic (visual)	☒
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Physical Analysis

Criteria	✓	Notes / Other			
Access:					
Car parking		Bicycle provision		Disabled access	
Circulation:					
Footpath	✓	Cyclepath		PRoW (incl. connections)	✓
Vehicle access		Desire lines		Access restrictions	
Signage:					
Boundaries:					
Walls	✓	Fencing	✓	Hedges	✓
Furniture:					
Seating / tables / benches		Bins / dog bins		Lighting	✓
Buildings / Facilities:					
Building/Permanent Structure		Hardstanding		Drinking water / other	
Play / Sport:					

<i>LAP/LEAP/NEAP/MUGA</i>		<i>Other child/teen play</i>		<i>Trim trail / Adult provision</i>	
<i>Pitches / courts</i>		<i>Play / Safety surfacing</i>		<i>Dog fencing</i>	
Security:	✓				
Vegetation / Habitat:	✓				
<i>Amenity grass</i>	✓	<i>Meadow area / margins</i>		<i>Naturalised grass</i>	
<i>Woodland / woody scrub</i>	✓	<i>Tree groups / avenues</i>		<i>Individual / scattered trees</i>	✓
<i>Ornamental planting</i>		<i>Water / Wetland</i>		<i>Other</i>	
Multifunctionality:					
Connectivity:	✓				
Other Notes / observations: - The site forms a pedestrian connection between White Moss Road, Woodmere Drive and Dam Head Drive. Links to the wider estate area. - Limited tree grouping present, largely central and boundary areas. - Some fencing in place, varies between small circa 2ft fencing to more substantial circa 7ft security fencing, although does not prevent access by virtue of gates and other access. - Grassed areas appear maintained, boundary and southerly scrub areas largely unmaintained, some paths overgrown.					

Visual Analysis			
Visual amenity: residential	✓	Visual amenity: commercial	
Visual amenity: public	✓	Setting (to a building or structure)	
Gateway / strategic visual space		Functional (Screening / shelter)	✓
From local vantage points (describe below)		Notable outward views (describe below)	
Other Notes / observations: - Site appears to form largely amenity greenspace/open space and is surrounded by residential development to the north, east and west, with the southern boundary linking to wider amenity open space – largely wooded/semi-natural. - Provides visual amenity to the immediate surrounding developments and a notable features in the local area delineating movements from one residential space to another.			

GREEN SPACE DEFINITION			
Mown grassed area for informal recreation	✓	Incidental green space within residential area	✓
Highway land / verge / landscaped roundabout		POS around memorial	
Roof garden		Area of formal planting (incl. hedging)	

Other / Further details:

- The site forms largely amenity greenspace for nearby housing with a large, grassed area which appears to be maintained periodically. There are trees present are mostly located within the margins and are surrounded by unmaintained scrub.
- The southern section of the site is not identified as formal greenspace/openspace, forming 'incidental green space' adjacent to dwellings.

GREEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

Site meets criteria of another Typology?		a) Site to have split typologies	✓
b) Site to have multiple typologies		c) Reassign the Typology	
Playgrounds		Allotments	
Formal Parks & Gardens		Green Corridor River or Canal	
Cemeteries & Churchyards		Semi-natural Green Space	

Details:

- The northern area of the site is assigned the 'amenity greenspace' typology within the 2009 assessment and appears to retain this typology in 2022. Lack of maintenance however has led to woody scrubland growth in certain areas, notably to the south.
- The southern section of the site is not categorised as open space within the 2009 assessment, rather forming incidental greenspace adjacent to dwellings.

BARRIERS TO POTENTIAL AMENITY RECREATION QUALIFICATION

Physical limitations to accessibility	✓	Restricted views (for any / all receptors)	
Lack of identified visual receptors		More closely fits another typology	
Can limitations be addressed? (detail below)		Other (detail below)	

Observations / Recommendations:

- The site has limited access for wheelchair and pram users as there are various steps along the footpaths owing the sloping topography. This could be addressed with a redesigned footpath route utilising ramps instead of steps.
- The southern area of incidental open space is mostly secured by fencing and walls around the boundary, limiting access. There is a single gate on the southern boundary which would enable people with limited mobility access, however there are no footpaths around the site or other features which would assist movement.



















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