

Subject: **Destination Sites**

Background

Whilst the strategy has been substantially based on a typological (as opposed to hierarchical) approach, early recognition was given to the role of sites that went beyond what was seen as satisfying the need of a particular local catchment. The *Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17* simply acknowledges that 'a large park is likely to attract users from a wider area than a small neighbourhood one.'

Destination Sites

Four key destination sites have been identified. They are:

1. Ashton Court Estate,
2. Blaise Castle/ Kingsweston Estates combined,
3. Clifton & Durdham Downs,
4. Oldbury Court Estate/Snuff Mills.

They already function, as destination sites that at least serve a citywide catchment.

1. Ashton Court Estate.

Whilst most of this greenspace lies outside the Bristol City Council Boundary, falling within the North Somerset council planning area, it is owned by the former. However, given the degree of use by Bristol residents, and its overall significance to the city, its inclusion within the Parks and Green Space Strategy, was considered vital to the overall picture.

The Estate's destination park status arises not just from its size or the degree of its use by people from within the city, but reflects the degree of use by those who visit from within the sub region and beyond. Visitor figures for 2006 were 1,647,498. This is borne out by figures from the *Visitor Survey, 1997*. Truly local use (Bedminster, Cabot, Clifton, Southville being the most adjacent wards) was limited to 16.9%. However, the greatest use, by far, is by those who live either further afield within the city, or still further beyond; this was 83.1%.

2. Blaise Castle/ Kingsweston Estates.

Blaise Castle and Kingsweston Estates combined, is regarded as the destination park for north Bristol with overall visitor figures of over 750,000 per year (2006). The *Visitor Survey, 1997* was able to identify 58.5% of people as coming from the 'local' wards of Avonmouth, Kingsweston, Henbury, Henleaze, Southmead, Stoke Bishop and Westbury-on-Trym, whose collective residential area wraps around the estates; whilst their extent exceeds what may be considered truly local in the context of typology-based catchments, it gives a good overall impression. However, the balance of 41.5%, includes 20% of people who come from beyond the local wards listed, and 21.5% who travel from beyond the city boundary, and justifies their joint inclusion as a destination site. This position has been re-affirmed with data, derived in 2000, relating to usage of Blaise Play Area, which set the visitor level at 53% for local usage (in this case Bristol postal districts BS9, 10 and 11), and 47% for those travelling from elsewhere in Bristol, or beyond the city boundary.

3. Clifton & Durdham Downs.

Clifton and Durdham Downs occupy a key location just to the north of the central area. According to a *Visitor Survey, 2004*, 60.7% of people come from areas (defined by Bristol postal districts of BS6, 8 and 9), that are either immediately local or, further afield (e.g. BS6 includes parts of Redland that are over a mile away). However, the same survey identifies 39.3%, as coming from either elsewhere within Bristol or, beyond the city boundary, highlighting its much wider significance. As The Downs are associated with iconic tourist attractions, such as the Avon Gorge, Clifton Suspension Bridge, and Bristol Zoo, it is inevitable that they will continue to be visited by people from far off places.

4. Oldbury Court Estate/Snuff Mills.

Oldbury Court Estate, particularly in the context of being a key space within the Frome Valley corridor, is regarded as a key destination park on the east side of the city with a well used children's play area, the River Frome running through to Snuff Mills, and a vast woodland to explore. It borders South Gloucestershire and attracts many visitors from outside the local area, some of whom follow the Frome Valley Walkway through the estate.

Potential new destination site

Hengrove Park

There is the potential for the new park at Hengrove to act as a destination park for South Bristol where there is currently a gap. The site is currently the subject of a programme to regenerate much of the site as an attractive new park, in conjunction with the development of complementary built uses. Once this has been realised, the belief is that Hengrove Park will become attractive to at least citywide, if not sub-regional use.

The play area at Hengrove attracts over 94,000 visitors annually, largely from the wider South Bristol area acting as a destination play space. The *Hengrove Park Play Area Visitor Survey, 2004* found 98.5% coming from the four South Bristol postal areas (BS3, 4, 13 and 14), and just 1.5% coming from elsewhere. If limiting figures for 'local' catchment to the two postal areas most adjacent to the site (BS13 and 14) the figure may be adjusted to 65% for local and 35% from elsewhere.

Destination Parks and how they relate to the overall resource

As explained the above Destination Parks are vital to the city's green space resource as a whole. However, in mapping their physical contribution, care has been taken to ensure their presence, as such large tracts of land, does not unduly distort an understanding of the amount Bristol needs to serve the truly local needs of its population.

Exclusions

In the interests of seeking balance in how greenspace quantity is calculated, a number of greenspace sites, which might otherwise have been considered 'destination parks', have been excluded. They are central area sites, which 'multi task'. Apart from meeting the needs of city centre residents, many serve as attractions for visitors to the city, act as lunchtime refuges for office workers, provide relaxation for shoppers, and some function as

venues for major city events (e.g. Harbourside Festival and open air concerts). Some are hard paved spaces, as opposed to true green spaces, but all come under what is termed 'public realm'. Among the sites that fall into this category are:

- Anchor Square,
- Brandon Hill Park,
- Castle Park,
- Lloyds Arena,
- Millennium Promenade,
- Millennium Square, and
- Queen Square.

Whilst each green space functions, to a greater or lesser degree, as a 'destination park', their significance, as local provision, is continuing to increase with the influx of new city centre residents. They are also located within the central area where the overall public open space resource will fall below any quantity standard. In this context, these sites have been excluded as 'destination parks', but included as greenspaces of a type required for local provision.

Planning Obligations

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 4 - Achieving Positive Planning through the use of Planning Obligations, Adopted, October 2005, contains a formula for calculating open space contributions. Whilst most of this money will be spent within the vicinity of the development site, a small proportion of each *Section 106* agreement goes to funding strategic facilities which serve the city as a whole.

Conclusions

- Four of the five sites above (Ashton Court Estate, Blaise and Kingsweston Estates combined, Clifton and Durdham Downs, and Oldbury Court Estate), already function as destination parks.
- Hengrove Park has the potential to be a destination park in the South of the City.

Author:

- Steve Hardiman, Landscape Design Team Manager, Planning Services, PT&SD

Advisers:

- Jane Greenaway, Marketing Officer, Bristol Parks, Culture and Leisure
- Keith Chant, GIS & Resource Officer, Bristol Parks, Culture and Leisure
- Phil Chichester, Strategic Planning Officer, Planning Services, PT&SD
- Jim Cliffe, Project Manager - Planning Obligations, Strategic Development, PT&SD