

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Earith, Sawtry and Stilton Needs Analysis of Open Space & Play Facilities.
Meeting/Date:	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy & Growth) – 12 January 2016
Executive Portfolio:	Councillor Robin Carter – Executive Councillor for Operations & the Environment
Report by:	Alistair Merrick – Interim Head of Service (Operations)
Ward(s) affected:	Earith, Sawtry & Stilton

Executive Summary:

1. The report provides the opportunity for the Panel to scrutinise the green spaces and play needs analysis for Earith, Sawtry and Stilton before they are adopted.
2. The Greenspaces and Play Needs Analysis for Earith is the needs analysis work completed for Earith of current provision against the benchmarks for provision. The conclusions reached are as follows:
 - With green space provision in Earith being very limited with the only benchmark currently being met is for green corridors; it is recommended that any future housing development of over 10 houses should include open space provision on site or make a contribution to open space provision off site in Earith. This provision needs to include parks and gardens, amenity green space, natural and semi-natural spaces and allotments.
 - Play provision is largely fit for purpose in Earith with the village having two play areas, a skate park and multi-use games area. Within the current resources for on-going maintenance and cleansing this is determined as adequate for a village of the size of Earith.
3. The Greenspaces and Play Needs Analysis for Sawtry is the needs analysis work completed for Sawtry of current provision against the benchmarks for provision. The conclusions reached are as follows:
 - Overall there is sufficient green space provision in Sawtry and it is well distributed throughout the village. The new development off Gidding Road will provide extra allotments for the community and

also a natural/semi-natural area which includes newt ponds providing a haven for wildlife in the village. The only area of green space that is lacking is Parks and Gardens, unfortunately there is no amenity green space within the village that could be suitably changed, and therefore prioritising the creation of such space is not recommended.

- Sawtry currently has one play area, a youth shelter and a multi-use goal end. Another play area (Leap) is going to be installed early in 2016 on a new development off Gidding Road. Against the policy benchmark for provision there is a deficiency in play provision across parts of the village but by upgrading St Judith Field (Parish Council owned) to a Leap/Neap play facility through investment (when it becomes available as part of a Section 106 Agreement) would create an adequate level of play provision.

4. The Greenspaces and Play Needs Analysis for Stilton is the needs analysis work completed for Stilton of current provision against the benchmarks for provision. The conclusions reached are as follows:

- Green space provision in Stilton is again very limited with no provision for allotments, community gardens or natural or semi-natural areas. Consequently it is recommended that any future housing development of over 10 houses should include open space provision on site or make a contribution to open space provision off site in Stilton. This provision needs to include parks and gardens, green corridors, natural and semi-natural spaces and allotments. The only benchmark currently being met is for amenity green space.
- The village has two play areas, a skate park and multi-use games area but this is lacking because of their location which leaves certain households without ready access to this provision. Therefore it is recommended any future housing development in the village should seek the appropriate provision of play facilities as part of the development.

Recommendation(s):

1. The Panel are invited to make comments that will be included in the future reports to Cabinet concerning the needs analysis work carried out and the consequent recommendations for the future development priorities of open space and play facilities should resources become available.

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The report provides the Panel with the opportunity for the Panel to scrutinise the green spaces and play needs analysis work for Earith, Sawtry and Stilton before it is adopted.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The report also allows the Panel to scrutinise the further needs analysis work that has been done for Earith, Sawtry and Stilton. These villages have been prioritised to enable the Operations Service to respond to a proposed affordable housing development in Earith and highways/parking issue in Stilton. This Panel had previously agreed to prioritise Sawtry for review.

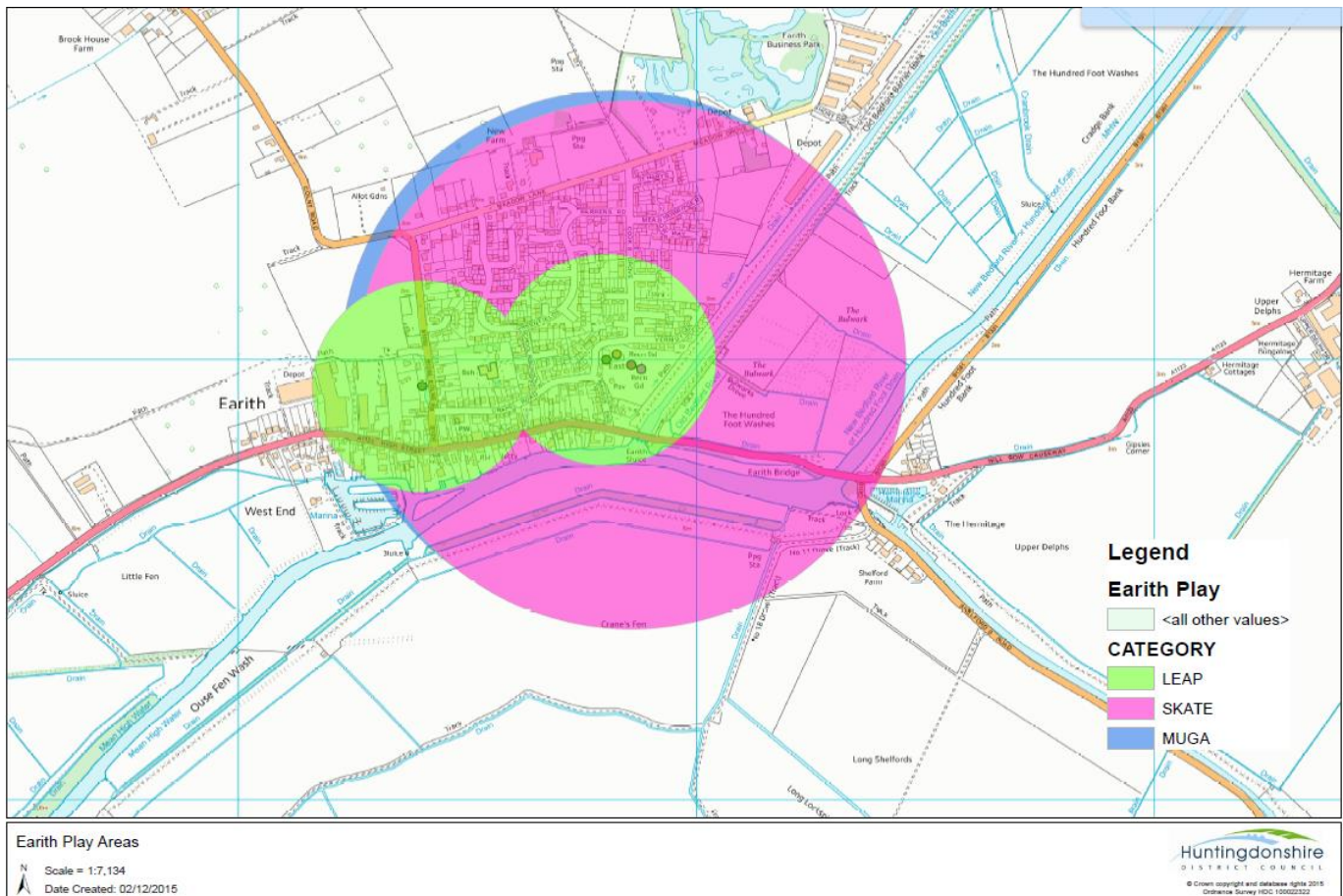
3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

3.1 Earith is a village in the east of the Huntingdonshire with a population of 1,563. The needs analysis work conducted has confirmed the following profile of current open space and play provision against the adopted policy benchmarks:

Green Space Provision (ha) – Categories	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
Parks & Gardens	0.75	0.00
Green Corridors	0.00	0.03
Natural & Semi-natural Areas	0.36	0.00
Allotments & Community Gardens	0.50	0.15
Amenity Green Spaces	1.70	1.50
Total Green Space	3.31	1.68
Play Provision (ha)	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
All play facilities	0.39	0.08
Note *1 = All assets are included, HDC, Parish Council and third party owned assets.		

3.2 With green space provision in Earith being very limited with the only benchmark currently being met is for green corridors; it is recommended that any future housing development of over 10 houses should include open space provision on site or make a contribution to open space provision off site in Earith. This provision needs to include parks and gardens, amenity green space, natural and semi-natural spaces and allotments.

3.3 Play provision is largely fit for purpose in Earith with the village having two play areas, a skate park and multi-use games area. Within the current resources for on-going maintenance and cleansing this is recommended as adequate for a village of the size of Earith. Detailed overleaf is mapping of the current facility that evidences the recommendation.

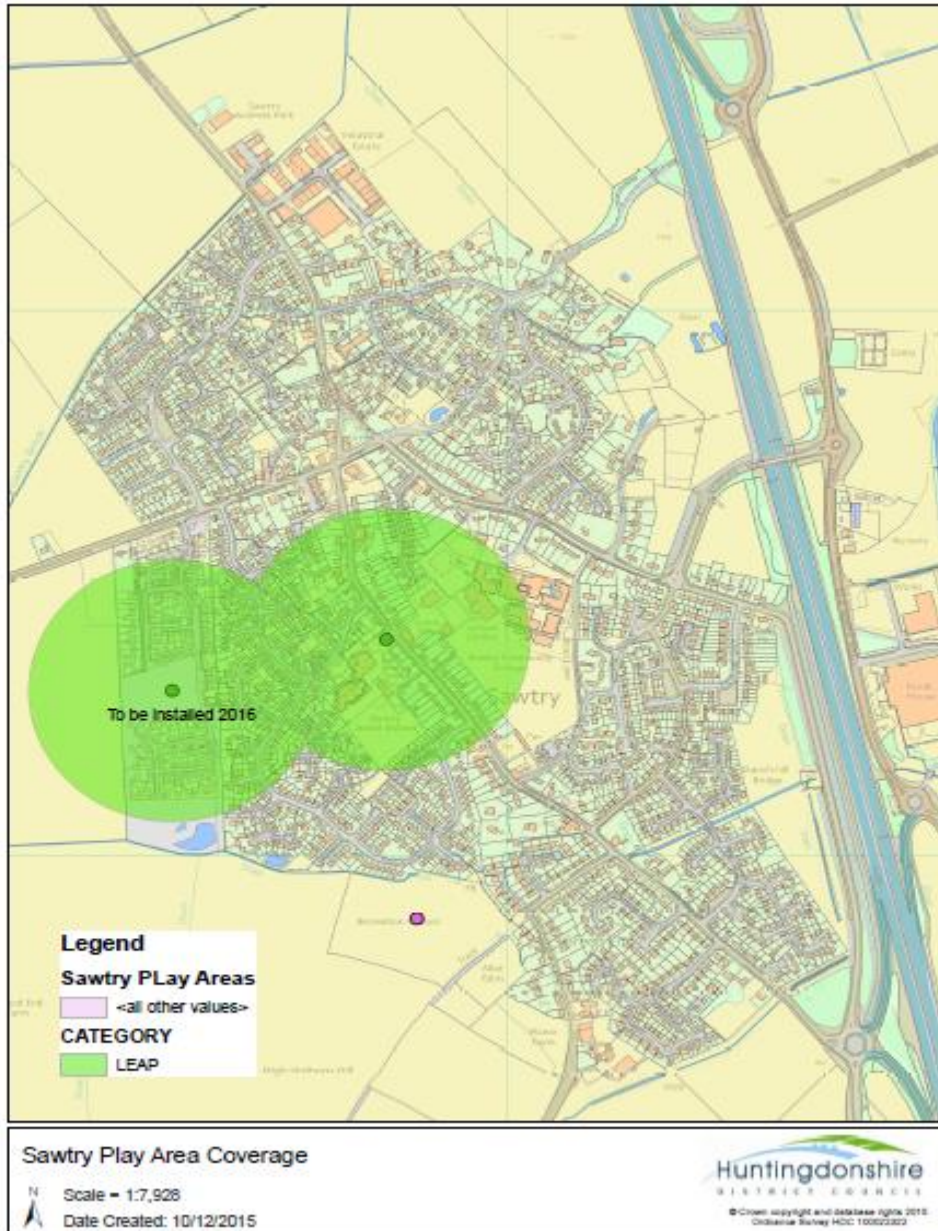


3.4 Sawtry is a village in the north west of the Huntingdonshire with a population of approximately 5,058. The village is in close proximity to the A1 (M) and is six miles from the A14 which makes it a popular location for commuters. The needs analysis work conducted has confirmed the following profile of current open space and play provision against the adopted policy benchmarks:

Green Space Provision (ha) – Categories	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
Parks & Gardens	2.43	0.00
Green Corridors	0.00	0.00
Natural & Semi-natural Areas	1.16	1.37
Allotments & Community Gardens	1.62	1.20
Amenity Green Spaces	5.51	12.10
Total Green Space	10.72	14.67
Play Provision (ha)	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
All play facilities	1.26	0.08
Note *1 = All assets are included, HDC, Parish Council and third party owned assets.		

3.5 Overall there is sufficient green space provision in Sawtry and it is well distributed throughout the village. The new development off Gidding Road will provide extra allotments for the community and also a natural /semi-natural area which includes newt ponds providing a haven for wildlife in the village. The only area of green space that is lacking is Parks and Gardens, unfortunately there is no amenity green space within the village that could be suitably changed, and therefore prioritising the creation of such space is not recommended.

3.6 Sawtry currently has one play area, a youth shelter and a multi-use goal end. Another play area (Leap) is going to be installed early in 2016 on a new development off Gidding Road. Against the policy benchmark for provision there is a deficiency in play provision across parts of the village but by upgrading St Judith Field (Parish Council owned) to a Leap/Neap play facility through investment (when it becomes available as part of a Section 106 Agreement) would create an adequate level of play provision. Detailed overleaf is mapping of the current facility that evidences the recommendation.



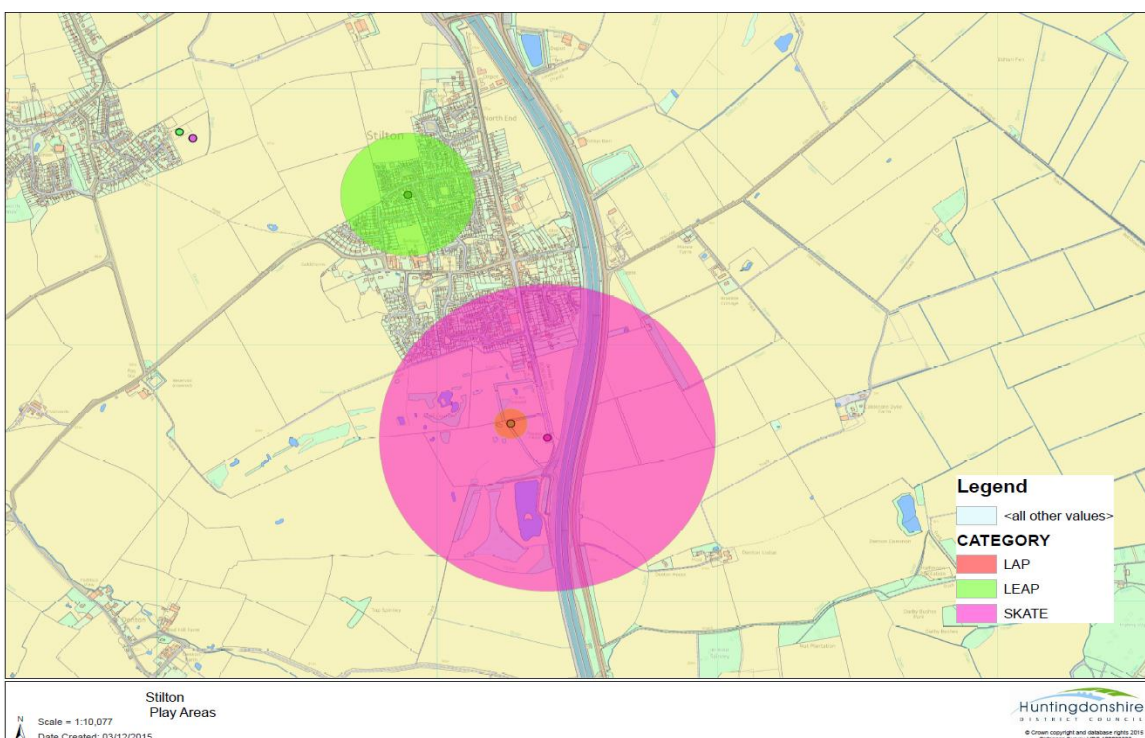
3.7 Stilton is a village in the east of the Huntingdonshire with a population of 3,024. The needs analysis work conducted has confirmed the following profile of current open space and play provision against the adopted policy benchmarks:

Green Space Provision (ha) – Categories	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
Parks & Gardens	1.46	0.00
Green Corridors	0.00	0.00
Natural & Semi-natural Areas	0.70	0.00
Allotments & Community Gardens	0.97	0.00
Amenity Green Spaces	3.31	3.12
Total Green Space	6.43	3.12
Play Provision (ha)	Policy Requirement (ha)	Actual (ha)*1
All play facilities	0.76	0.05

Note *1 = All assets are included, HDC, Parish Council and third party owned assets.

3.5 Green space provision in Stilton is again very limited with no provision for allotments, community gardens or natural or semi-natural areas. The only benchmark currently being met is for amenity green space. Consequently it is recommended that any future housing development of over 10 houses should include open space provision on site or make a contribution to open space provision off site in Stilton. This provision needs to include parks and gardens, green corridors, natural and semi-natural spaces and allotments.

3.6 Stilton has two play areas, a skate park and multi-use games area but this is lacking because of their location which leaves certain households without ready access to this provision. Therefore it is recommended any future housing development of over 10 houses in the village should seek the appropriate provision of play facilities as part of the development or make a contribution to off-site provision.



3.7 The Panel are invited to scrutinise the needs analysis work conducted and draft recommendations and propose any amendments for consideration by the Portfolio Holder.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

4.1 Comments of the Panel will be included in future reports to the Cabinet concerning the needs analysis work and recommendations submitted for approval.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS AND HOW THESE WILL BE ADDRESSED

5.1 The structured approach (involving full consultation with Town and Parish Councils) being adopted for the needs analysis work is to ensure priorities are being identified through robust assessment to then ensure capital and revenue resources to be more accurately targeted to the priorities. This is critical at a time of diminishing resources. It will also help to ensure the maintenance costs of the provision are sustainable in the medium term.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The findings of all the needs analysis work completed and programmed will be consolidated into a new Open Spaces and Play Strategy for the Cabinet to consider in early 2016/17.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

7.1 The outputs and outcomes from these projects will fundamentally contribute to the Corporate Plan as follows:

- a) Enhancing fundamentally the built and green environment of the District.
- b) Empowering local communities to become involved in the design of services.
- c) Operations becoming much more business-like and efficient in the way it delivers services.
- d) Ensuring that service improvement planning (priority setting) and service delivery in Operations is driven by customer engagement, strategy formulation and robust business planning.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The detail of individual projects to meet the priorities identified by the needs analysis work will be the subject of local consultation to finalise the detail of each project.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no immediate legal implications concerning the needs analysis work and recommendations submitted for scrutiny.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no immediate resource implications concerning the needs analysis and findings submitted for scrutiny. The work has been done within existing resources. The purpose of the needs analysis work for green spaces and play facilities is to better target future S106 monies to priorities that have been clearly quantified. The Council will not be directly funding any of the identified deficiencies from mainstream funding but the detail in the report does provide the opportunity for communities to develop their own plans to meet the identified need.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The needs analysis work seeks to ensure an appropriate and equitable balance in the provision of green space and play facilities across the District to militate against under provision so that no residents are unreasonably excluded from such provision.

12 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

12.1 The scrutinising of the needs analysis work and findings give the Panel the opportunity to influence the final decision making regarding the future provision of green spaces and play provision in Earith, Sawtry and Stilton.

13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

13.1 None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Alistair Merrick – Interim Head of Service (Operations)

Tel No. 388635