

# **Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan**

## **Background to the Revised Public Open Space Standards and Surplus and Deficiency Maps**

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**IPSWICH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## Context

- 1.1 This note has been prepared in order to support the draft Public Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by providing background information. It explains the approach used to review and update the adopted open space, sport and recreation standards proposed through Appendix 6 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document Review November 2014 (the 'Core Strategy Review') and how this information has been used to prepare maps included within the draft Public Open Space SPD which show areas of open space surplus and deficit within the Borough.
- 1.2 The current adopted quantitative standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities are those set out in Appendix 6 to the adopted Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document, December 2011.

## National Policy

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that planning policies should be informed by an up to date assessment of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision (paragraph 73). The information gathered should be used to identify deficits and surpluses and therefore what new provision is needed. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.
- 2.2 The Planning Practice Guidance advises that the Sport England Guidance should be used to assess the need for sport and recreation facilities. The Sport England 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance 2014' advises specifically in relation to indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

## Local Policy

- 3.1 In February 2013, the Council adopted its Open Space and Biodiversity Policy 2013-23<sup>1</sup>. This policy establishes guiding principles for the provision and management of green space within Ipswich Borough, and recommends a strategy for its protection and enhancement. The document links closely to other Council-wide policies and strategies including the Local Plan. The Open Space and Biodiversity Policy makes recommendations as follows:
  - 22% tree canopy cover to be achieved by 2050, based on the maximum existing cover in the most wooded areas of Ipswich and potential for further planting;
  - Reviewing the adopted open space standards (in the adopted Core Strategy 2011);
  - Providing more guidance on the format of information required from developers to inform the adoption of open space by the Council;
  - Developing a new SPD for open space and equipped children's play provision; and
  - Seeking opportunities to address quantitative or qualitative deficiencies.
- 3.2 The Council has updated its Children's Play Strategy 2007 with a revised Equipped Play Strategy 2014-2021<sup>2</sup>, which was adopted by the Council on 7th October 2014. This sets out a standard for the provision of equipped play facilities and provides the

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<sup>1</sup> Documents referred to in this document are available to view through the Ipswich Local Plan Core Document Library, which is located on the Council's website and also in paper form at the Central Library and at the Council's offices at Grafton House. The Open Space and Biodiversity Policy is document reference ICD23

<sup>2</sup> Equipped Play Strategy 2014-2021, Ipswich Borough Council - Core Document Library reference ICD78

framework for managing and planning the provision of children's play equipment. It increased the quantity standard for play areas from 0.05 hectares (ha) per 1000 population in the adopted Core Strategy to the 0.08ha per 1000 population proposed through the Core Strategy Review and for young people from 0.02ha per 1,000 population to 0.04ha.

- 3.3 The Council has also updated its Allotment Strategy 2005. The revised Allotment Strategy<sup>3</sup> runs from 2014 to 2020. The provision of allotments is a statutory duty, with local authorities required to provide sufficient land to meet the demand for allotments from residents living within the borough. The service is provided in partnership with the Ipswich Allotment Holders Association (IAHA), which plays a significant role in the letting of plots and day to day management of fields. Occupancy rates have increased dramatically in recent years due to issues such as environmental concerns and the cost of food. The updated strategy increased the quantity standard from 0.35ha per 1000 population in the adopted Core Strategy to the 0.41ha per 1000 population standard proposed through the Core Strategy Review.
- 3.4 An Ipswich Playing Pitch Strategy has been prepared, in consultation with Sport England, which identifies current provision and whether there is a need for additional provision of outdoor playing pitches for football, cricket, hockey and rugby. Upon its publication, the Ipswich Playing Pitch Strategy will inform the need for additional or enhanced outdoor playing pitch facilities to be provided in connection with new development, and the need to protect existing facilities where development may be proposed. The Ipswich Playing Pitch Strategy has also assessed other outdoor sports, looking at the need for tennis, athletics, cycling and bowls provision.

#### Background to the adopted Core Strategy standards

- 4.1 The Council published an Open Space Sport and Recreation Study in 2009<sup>4</sup>, which informed the standards for provision set out in the adopted Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document 2011. The study was undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) and its Companion Guide, which was the national policy and guidance in force at the time. It has since been superseded by the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance. The PPG17 Companion Guide set out a five stage process for local assessments, which was followed in undertaking the Ipswich study:
- Identify local needs
  - Audit existing provision
  - Set local standards
  - Apply local standards
  - Analyse results and draft policy.

#### Reason for updating the standards

- 5.1 The Council's Parks and Cemeteries Department has revised and updated the provision standards from the adopted Core Strategy, because some aspects of open space provision within Ipswich have moved on since the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study, which informed the standards, was published in 2009. Drivers for the review include the following:

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<sup>3</sup> Allotment Strategy 2014 to 2020, Ipswich Borough Council - Core Document Library reference ICD74

<sup>4</sup> Open Space Sport and Recreation Study, 2009, PMP - Core Document Library reference ICD43

- the number of sites and the number of some of the typologies has increased over recent years. This increases as more sites are adopted through the planning process. For example, the Equipped Play Strategy indicates that the number of sites has increased from 72 to 100 facilities in recent years;
  - since the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study was published in 2009, many sites have been improved, for example through changed management regimes, improving accessibility and quality;
  - major improvements to a number of sites have been possible since the original study due to national funding schemes, e.g. The Big Lottery Play Programme and Liveability Programme;
  - changes have been made to site management in some open spaces that could alter their character, such as leaving areas of long grass to provide more diverse habitat; and
  - review of the original typology of sites and the accuracy of typology boundaries within individual sites.
- 5.2 Together these changes have affected the overall quantity of open space provision, its quality and accessibility and how certain spaces may be classified in terms of the open space typology. In addition, there were some open spaces which had been omitted from the original audit in 2009 and which need to be included, or which had been incorrectly classified or mapped.
- 5.3 The adoption by the Council of a new Allotment Strategy and Equipped Play Strategy in 2014 also needs to be reflected through revised standards.
- 5.4 Thus the revised standards set out in Appendix 6 of the Core Strategy Review November 2014 result primarily from an update to the audit of existing provision and its knock-on effect on quantity standards.

### Methodology

- 6.1 The review covers only those types of provision which have a quantity standard, therefore, it has not altered the adopted approach to cemeteries and churchyards, green corridors or civic spaces. Although the quantity standard for outdoor sport has been amended, the new Ipswich Playing Pitch Strategy referred to in paragraph 3.3 above will form the most up to date evidence of need, and therefore surplus or deficiency, when it is published.
- 6.2 The review looks only at provision within Ipswich Borough.
- 6.3 In terms of demand for facilities other than outdoor sports, the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study in 2009 was based on a detailed audit and wide ranging public consultation exercise. It is, therefore, considered to remain a valid assessment of needs. The focus of this review has been on updating the audit information and population information and making consequential minor amendments to the quantitative standards to reflect the updated population and open space provision situation as at 2014.
- 6.4 The classification and mapping of open spaces was checked and updated to correct boundaries (and therefore areas) where necessary, amend classification in the typology if appropriate and to add any new areas or remove areas that had been lost

or incorrectly classified. The main changes between types affected the classification of parks and gardens, amenity green spaces and natural and semi-natural green spaces. A map showing the revised classification of sites is attached at Appendix A. Total provision figures (in hectares) under the revised classification are set out in Appendix B (see the first part of the table headed 'Total Provision – Existing Open Space (ha)').

- 6.5 When revised figures for the types of open space had been calculated, these were compared against updated population figures. In calculating provision per head of population, the review has factored in the 2011 Census data for Ipswich.
- 6.6 The next stage was to check back to the original survey results from the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study 2009 indicating whether the public and user groups considered the provision of public open spaces was 'about right', 'not enough' or 'more than enough' (see the middle section of Appendix B headed 'Consultation responses %'). Taking into account this feedback from the 2009 study and the revised and updated provision figures, proposed revised standards have been identified, which generally represent small variations on the level of current provision (see 'Recommended Provision' line in Appendix B).
- 6.7 The revised standards for children's play (0.08ha per 1,000 population), young people (0.04ha per 1,000 population) and allotments (0.41ha per 1,000 population) were also considered through the preparation of the two revised Council strategies: the Equipped Play Strategy 2014-2021 and the revised Allotment Strategy 2014-2020.
- 6.8 The revised quantity standards for play and allotments were subject to targeted consultation with stakeholders from February to May 2014 (the Equipped Play Strategy) and January to December 2013 (the Allotment Strategy). The consultation was carried out through contacting the Parks and Cemeteries Department's consultee list, making available hard copies at sports centres, libraries and publically accessible IBC centres and publishing information on the Council's website. The Equipped Play Strategy also included consultation of local groups (such as the Scouts), schools and parents' events and the use of both email and survey monkey to reach consultees. The consultation feedback on allotments was reported to the Council's Executive on 24th March 2014 (report reference E/13/95) and for play on 14th October 2014 (report reference E/14/39).
- 6.9 The revised public open space standards have also been subject to consultation through the Core Strategy review process. Revised quantitative standards are set out in Appendix 6 of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy Review November 2014 (submitted for independent examination in December 2015), with two further minor corrections made through the Pre-Submission Additional Modifications September 2015.
- 6.10 Finally, the revised standards were tested against existing provision by ward and area committee area to obtain a detailed picture of the deficit or surplus of each type of facility across the Borough. The resulting maps are included as Appendix 2 to the Draft Public Open Space SPD, which is available for public consultation until 7th March 2016.

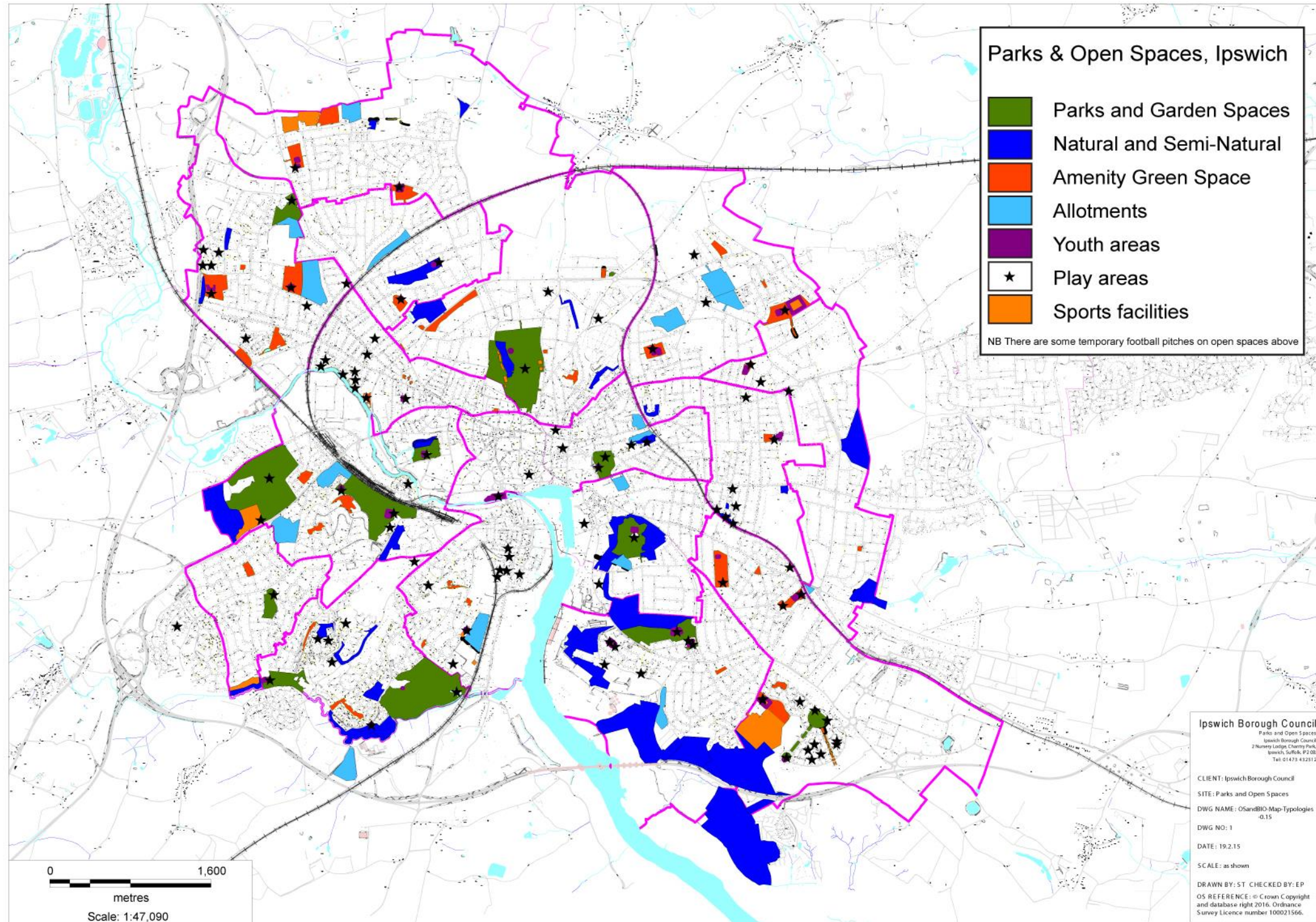
## Conclusion

- 7.1 The improvements made to open space provision since 2009 and the availability of updated Census population figures and Ipswich Borough Council population

projections have prompted a re-appraisal of the open space standards established through the adopted Core Strategy 2011.

- 7.2 The proposed revised open space standards represent a minor adjustment to the existing adopted standards, based on the needs assessment contained in the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study 2009. The revised open space standards are reproduced in Appendix 1 of the draft Public Open Space SPD. They have been used to create the maps included as Appendix 2 to the draft SPD, which show the effect of applying the new standards across the Borough.

Appendix A Updated Classification of Sites which informed the revised standards



**Appendix B Revised Open Space Standards**

Category	Populations 2011-2021	Parks and Gardens (in hectares) 2014	Natural & Semi-Natural Space (in hectares) 2014	Amenity Green Spaces (in hectares) 2014	Children's Provision (in hectares) 2014	Young People's Provision (in hectares) 2014	Allotments (in hectares) 2014	Outdoor Sports Facilities (in hectares)	
<b>Total Provision - Existing Open Space (ha)</b>								without Golf	
CENTRAL	27,514	35.10	11.62	6.86	1.16	0.66	3.81	16.55	16.50
NORTH EAST	24,513	0.00	16.47	10.12	1.33	0.43	13.90	78.00	54.70
SOUTH EAST	25,582	24.10	134.12	11.76	2.60	1.77	5.97	24.91	24.91
SOUTH WEST	31,394	89.90	30.81	9.23	2.36	0.68	19.14	41.33	41.33
NORTH WEST	24,381	4.40	9.14	24.22	1.21	0.81	16.62	26.82	26.82
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>133,384</b>	<b>153.5</b>	<b>202.2</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>187.61</b>	<b>164.26</b>
<b>Existing Open Space (ha per 1,000 population)</b>									
CENTRAL	27,514	1.28	0.42	0.25	0.04	0.02	0.14	0.60	0.60
NORTH EAST	24,513	0.00	0.67	0.41	0.05	0.02	0.57	3.18	2.23
SOUTH EAST	25,582	0.94	5.24	0.46	0.10	0.07	0.23	0.97	0.97
SOUTH WEST	31,394	2.86	0.98	0.29	0.08	0.02	0.61	1.32	1.32
NORTH WEST	24,381	0.18	0.37	0.99	0.05	0.03	0.68	1.10	1.10
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>133,384</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>1.52</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>1.23</b>
<b>Consultation Responses %</b>									
More Than Enough		6	3	4	6	2	5	3	3
About Right		68	40	38	40	10	40	35	35
Nearly Enough		13	18	17	18	9	13	20	20
Not Enough		11	33	28	26	65	16	29	29
No Opinion		2	6	13	10	14	26	13	13
<b>RECOMMENDED PROVISION per 1000</b>									
		<b>1.16</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>1.42</b>	<b>1.24</b>
<b>Balance</b>									
CENTRAL	27,514	3.18	-30.48	-6.35	-1.04	-0.44	-7.47	-22.52	-17.62
NORTH EAST	24,513	-28.44	-21.03	-1.65	-0.63	-0.55	3.85	43.19	24.31
SOUTH EAST	25,582	-5.58	94.98	-0.52	0.55	0.75	-4.52	-11.42	-6.81
SOUTH WEST	31,394	53.48	-17.22	-5.84	-0.16	-0.57	6.27	-3.25	2.40
NORTH WEST	24,381	-23.88	-28.16	12.52	-0.74	-0.17	6.62	-7.80	-3.41
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>133,384</b>	<b>-1.23</b>	<b>-1.92</b>	<b>-1.83</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-0.98</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>-1.80</b>	<b>-1.13</b>
<b>Future Balance 2021</b>									
CENTRAL	29,962	0.34	-34.22	-7.52	-1.24	-0.54	-8.47	-26.00	-20.65
NORTH EAST	26,694	-30.97	-24.37	-2.69	-0.81	-0.64	2.96	40.09	21.60
SOUTH EAST	27,858	-8.22	91.50	-1.61	0.37	0.66	-5.45	-14.65	-9.63
SOUTH WEST	34,187	50.24	-21.50	-7.18	-0.38	-0.69	5.12	-7.22	-1.06
NORTH WEST	26,550	-26.40	-31.48	11.48	-0.91	-0.25	5.73	-10.88	-6.10
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>145,250</b>	<b>-14.99</b>	<b>-20.07</b>	<b>-7.53</b>	<b>-2.97</b>	<b>-1.45</b>	<b>-0.11</b>	<b>-18.65</b>	<b>-15.85</b>
NB 2021 Total based on PMP method									