

Accessible Natural Greenspace: an Introduction

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NIA Best Practice Event: People, Place & Economy

Franklin's Gardens, Northampton

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What is ANGSt?

- ‘Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard’
- Deliver quality green spaces near where people live
- Developed in the 1990s
- Based on research into minimum distances people would travel to access nature
- Reviewed in 2008
- Updated in 2010

What is 'accessible'?

- Physical access
- Available for the general public to use *free of charge* and *without time restrictions*
- Available to all
 - Every reasonable effort made to comply with DDA requirements
- Known to the target users

What is 'accessible'?

- Therefore not
 - Seasonal places closed for part of the year
 - Many National Trust properties (charge for admittance)
 - Rights of Way (linear only)

What is 'natural'?

- 'Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate'
- Evaluated using a proxy of naturalness

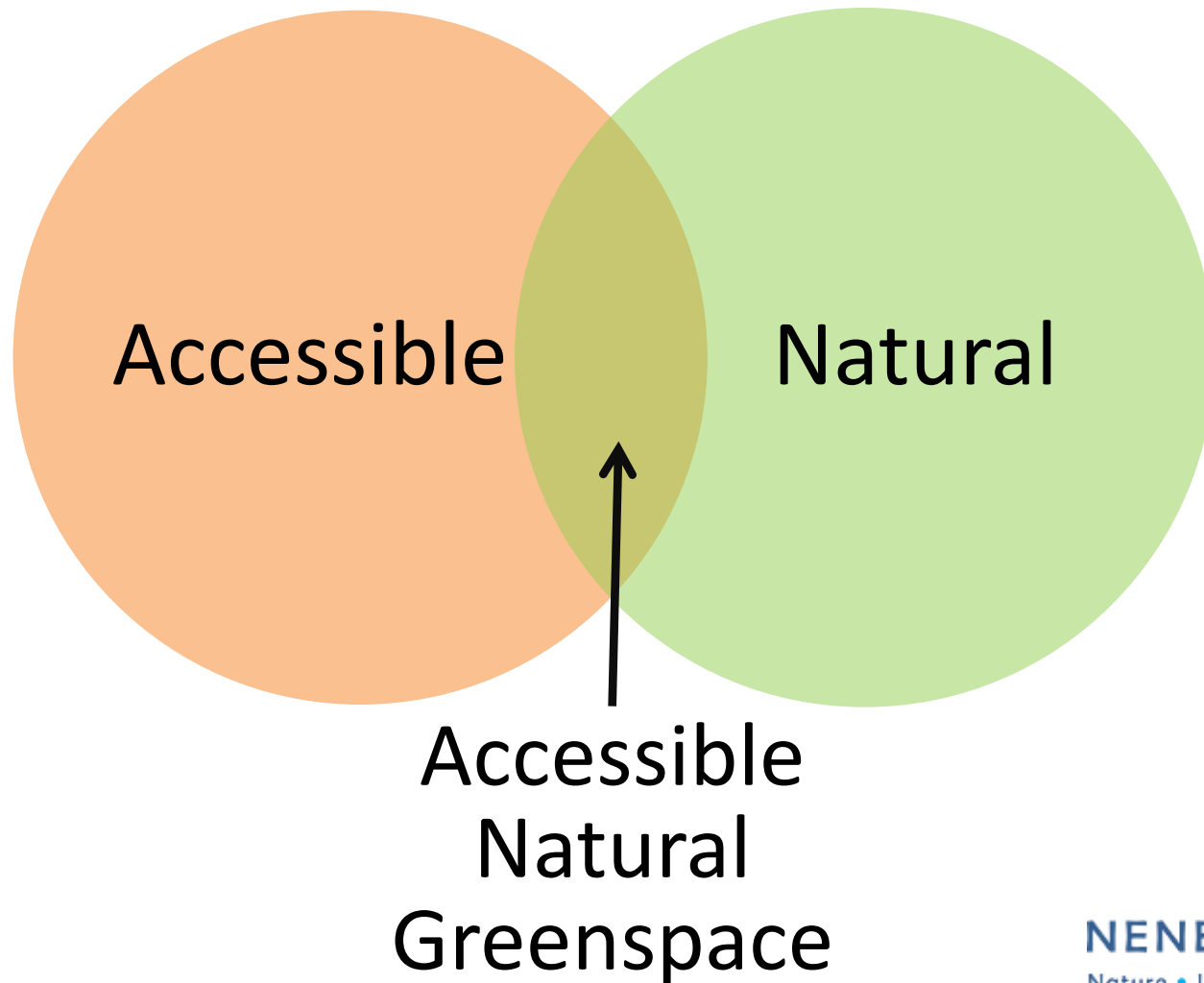
What is 'natural'?

- Designated sites (*e.g.* SSSI, LWS, LNR)
- Open countryside
- Unimproved farmland, grassland
- Country parks
- Open access land

Not 'natural' are:

- Allotments
- Churchyards, cemeteries
- Formal recreation space (recreation grounds)
- Improved farmland

When worlds collide...



Accessible
Natural
Greenspace

Accessible Natural Greenspace

- Not simply 'open space'
- An important *component* of green infrastructure
- Less common than you might think

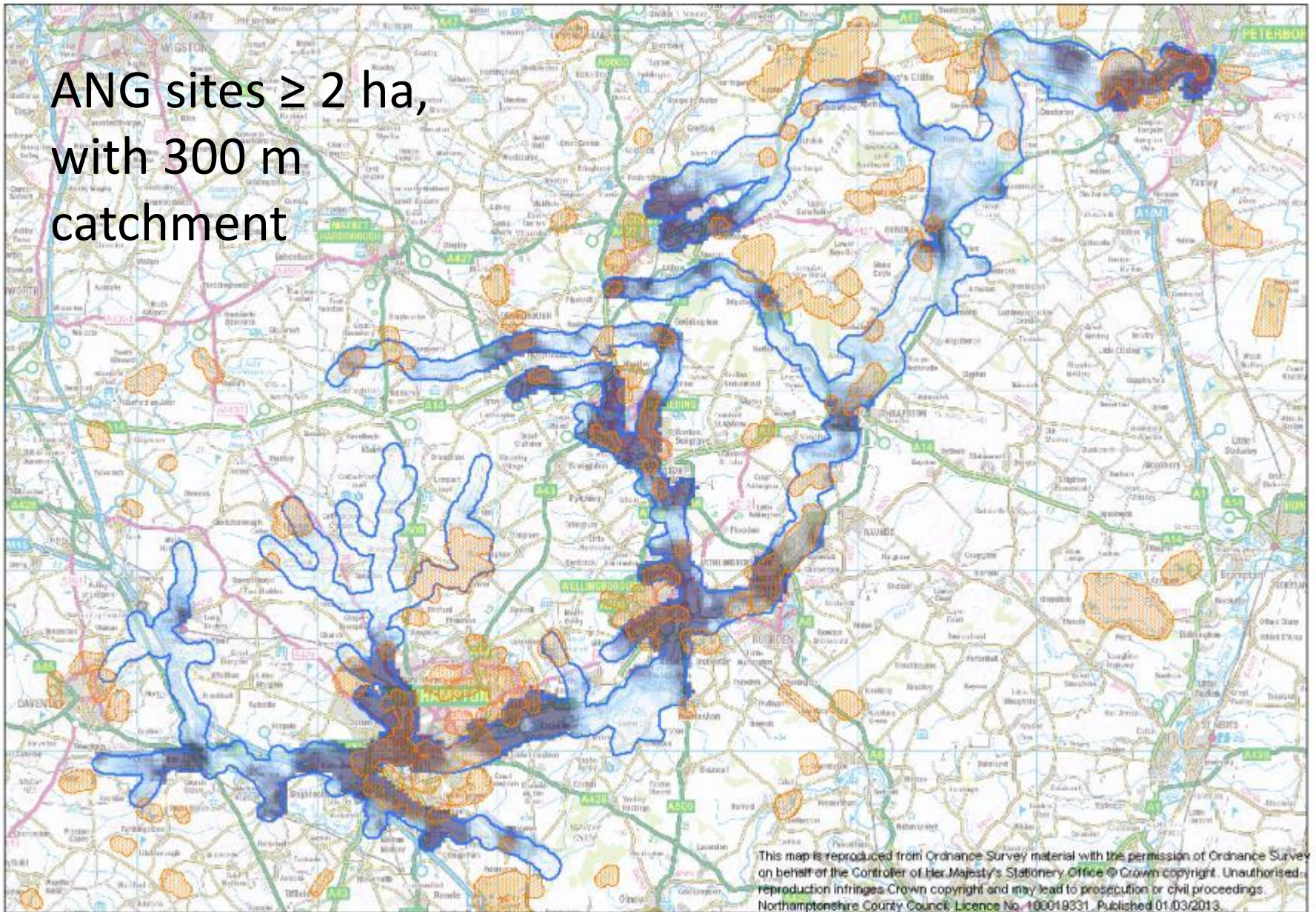
ANG catchments

- People will travel farther to access larger green spaces
- Measured at different scales:

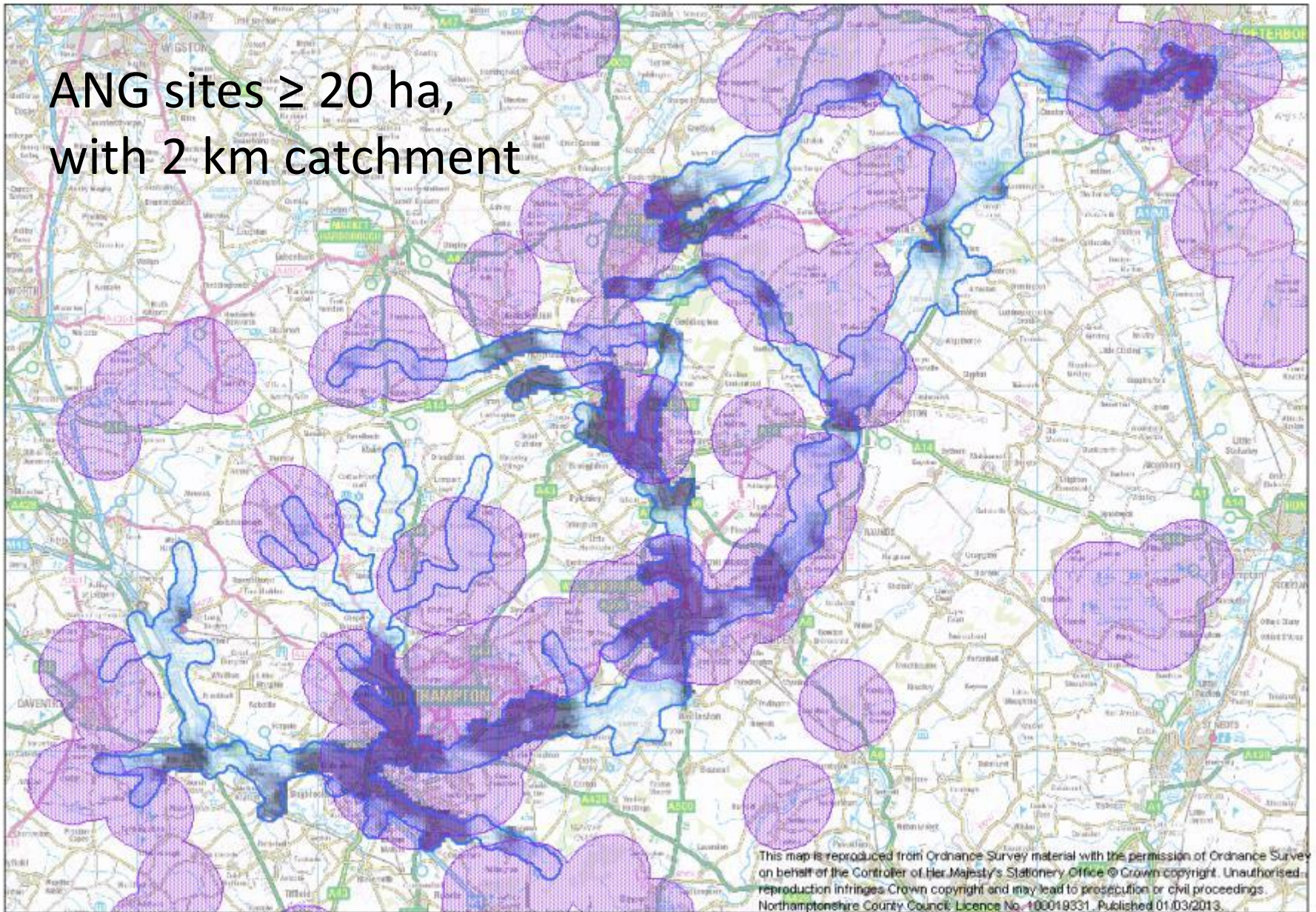
Size of site	Catchment radius
2 ha	300 m
20 ha	2 km
100 ha	5 km
500 ha	10 km

- There are currently no 500 ha sites in Northamptonshire

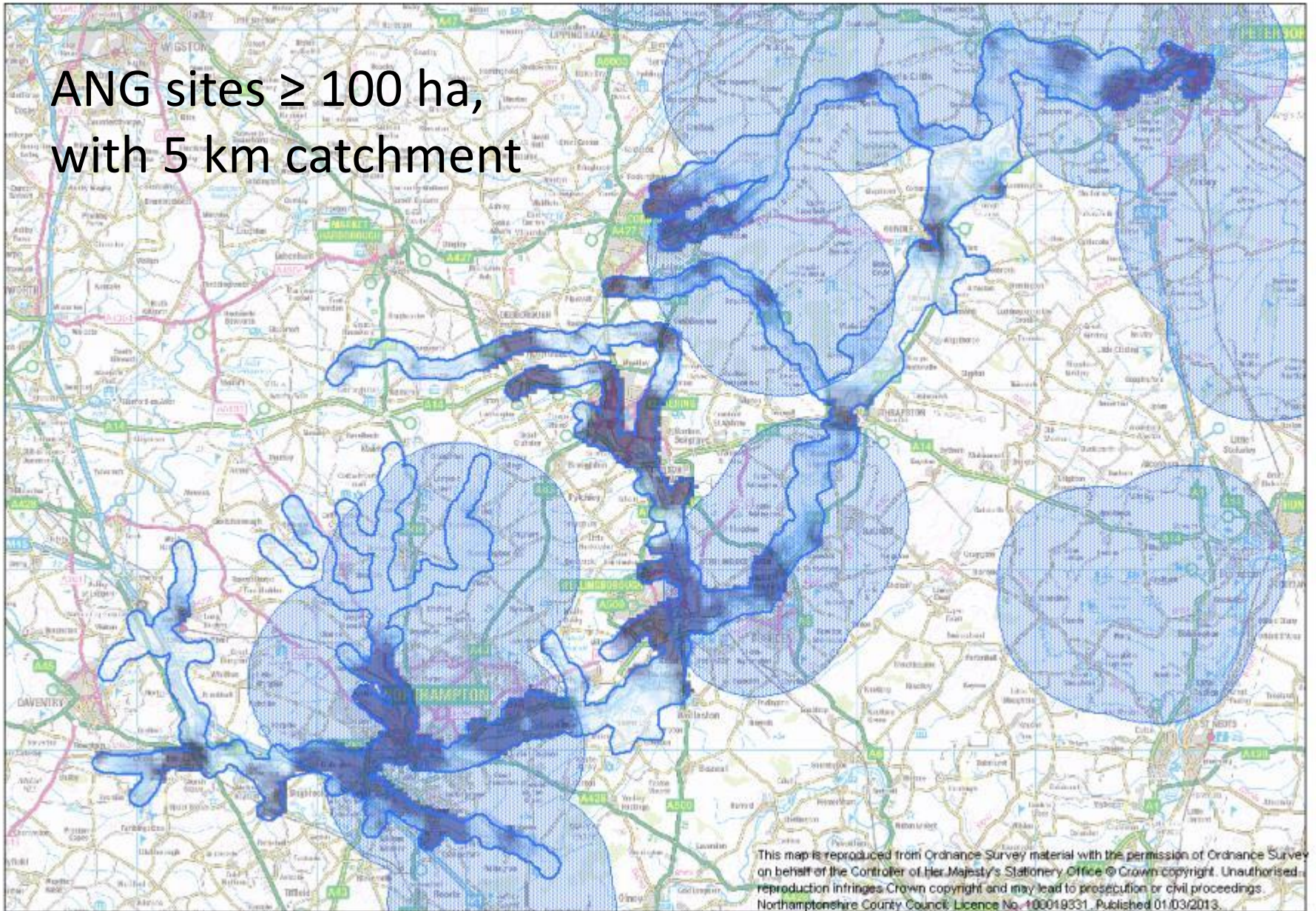
ANG sites ≥ 2 ha,
with 300 m
catchment



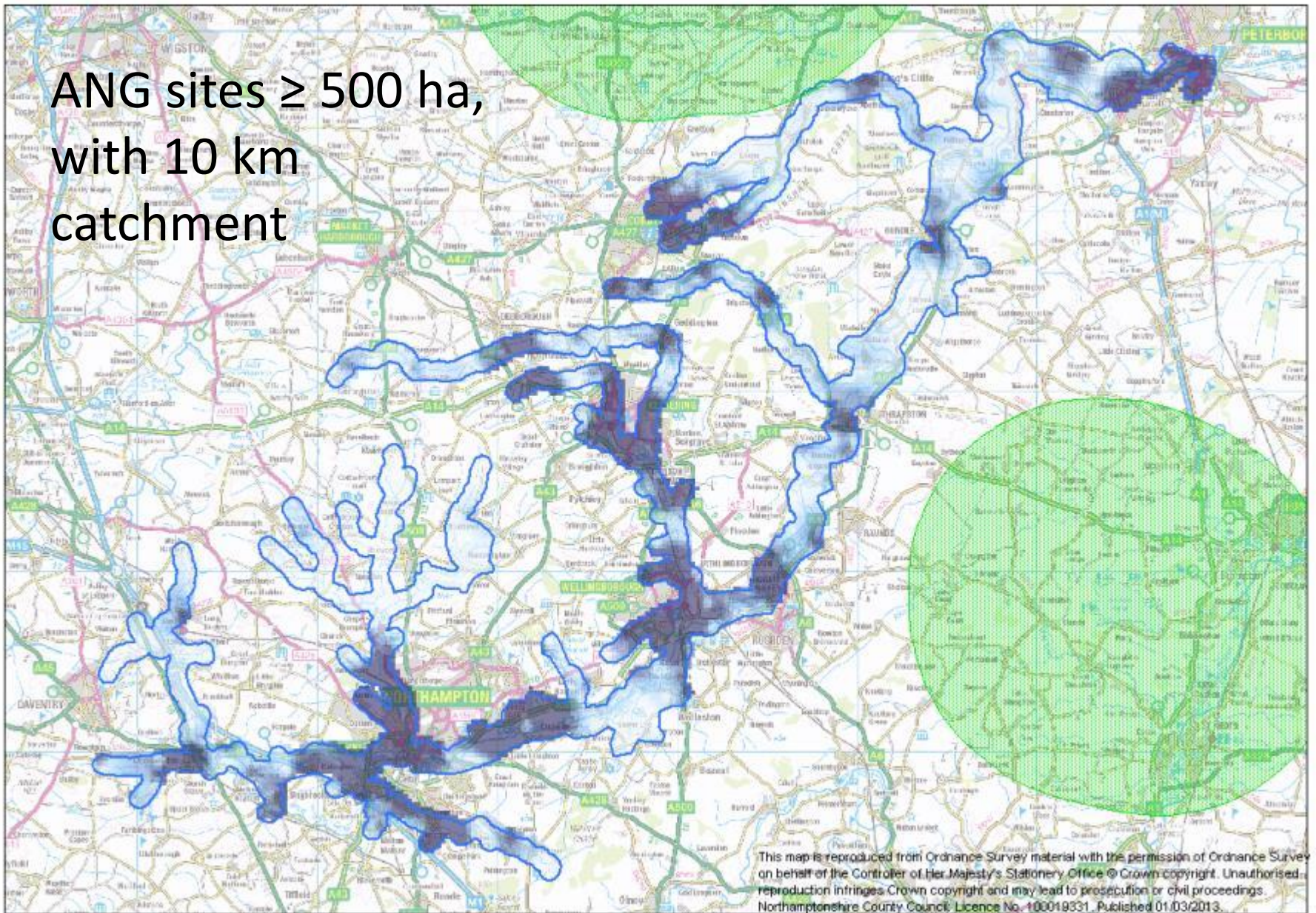
ANG sites ≥ 20 ha,
with 2 km catchment



ANG sites ≥ 100 ha,
with 5 km catchment



ANG sites ≥ 500 ha,
with 10 km
catchment



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On a smaller scale...

- Barnwell Country Park extension



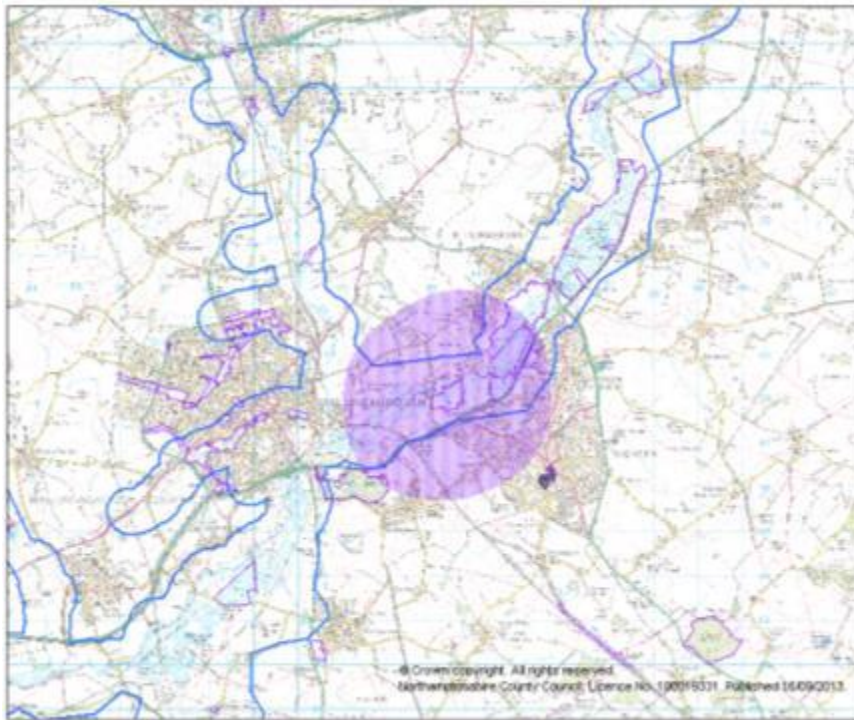
Before



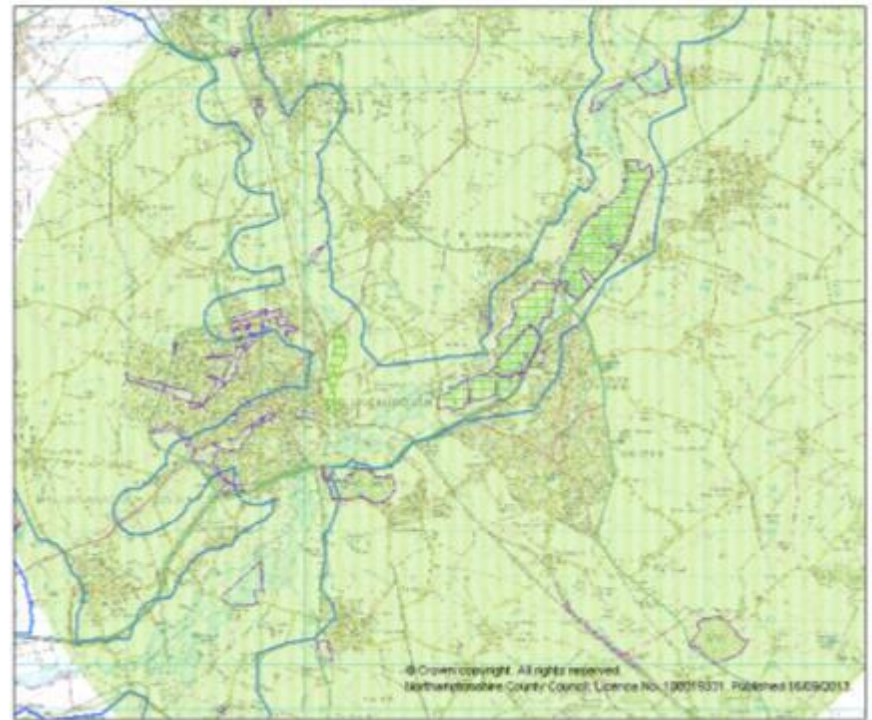
After

On a smaller scale...

- Nene Valley: Ditchford Lakes and Meadows and Wilson's Pits



Before



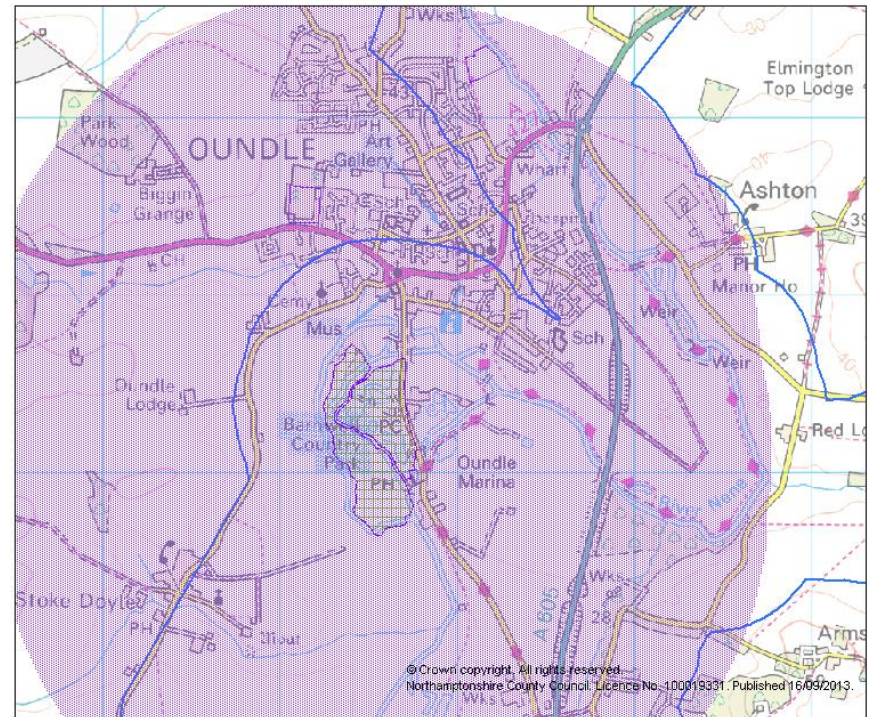
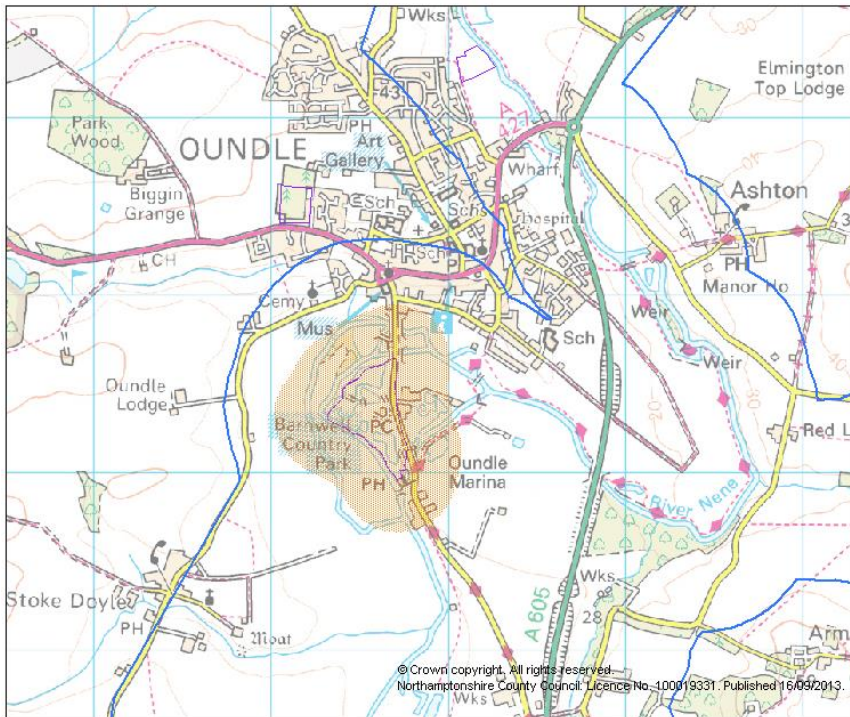
After

ANG and planning: the conundrum(s)

- Local provision standards: x ha/1000 people
 - Not helpful for small developments
- Large development sites in multiple ownership or with multiple developers
 - Leads to ‘bitty’ greenspace
- Stringent s.106 tests
 - What is ‘directly related to development’?

Bigger better greenspaces

- Build on accessible ANG sites

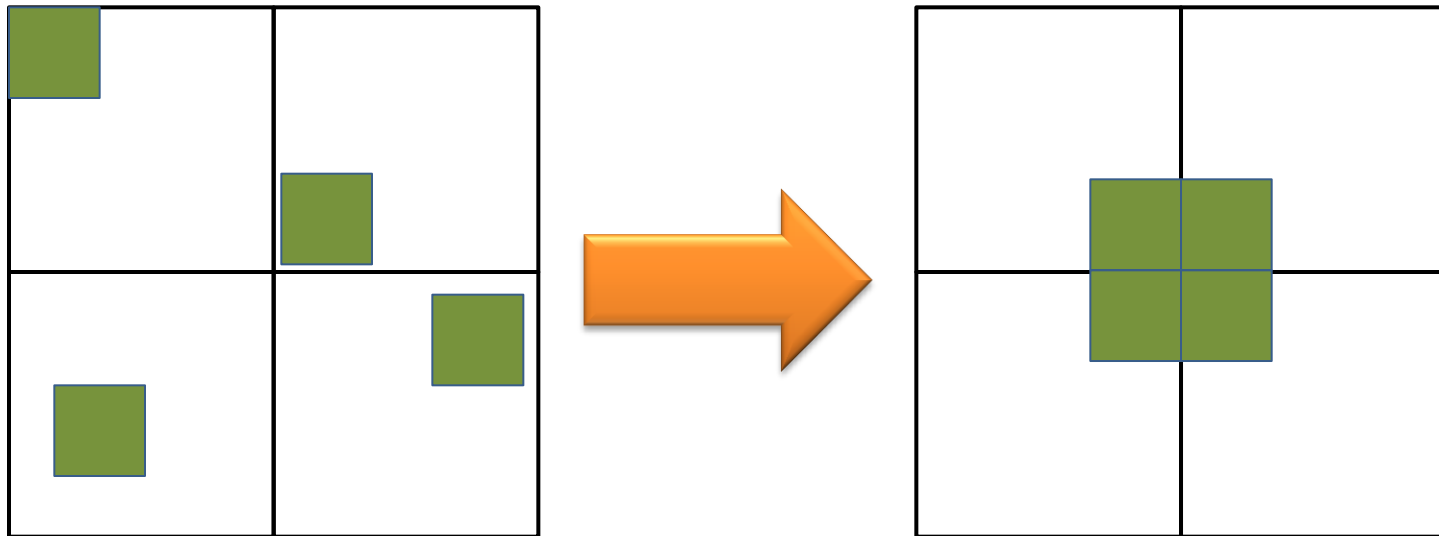


Bigger better greenspaces

- Increase accessibility of existing natural greenspaces
 - Agri-environment options
 - Permissive access
 - Open hours
- Naturalise existing open spaces
 - Amenity grassland

Bigger better greenspaces

- Developer collaboration



ANG and the NIA

- Monitored and reported annually to Natural England
 - Percentage of NIA residents with access to natural greenspace as defined by ANGSt
- Can link, buffer and/or enlarge existing natural areas
 - Improves habitat connectivity

ANG and the NIA

- When done properly can be multifunctional
 - Contribute to biodiversity, access, flood storage
- Having a standard lends weight to arguments to incorporate ANG into policy and developments
- Local data can provide evidence of need where ANG deficiencies exist

ANG and the NIA

but...

- Not all natural areas are suited to be ANG
 - Habitats and sites vary in their ability to absorb visitor pressure
 - Creating new ANG continues to be important

For more information

- Get in touch:

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