

USE OF S106 FUNDING (STREETS AND OPEN SPACES)



To:

Councillor Martin Smart, Executive Councillor for
Open Spaces and City Services
Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee 16 January 2025

Report by:

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Wards affected: All wards, but particularly Abbey, Cherry Hinton, Newnham,
Queen Edith's and Romsey

Non-Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

The Council helps to mitigate the impact of housing development on local facilities and amenities by using S106 contributions from developers. This report:

- a. takes stock of the generic and specific S106 funds that are available in the contribution types within the Executive Councillor's remit (play provision for children and teenagers and informal open spaces) – see paragraphs 3.7-3.9 and Appendices A and B;
- b. recommends that the remaining generic S106 play provision funds with time limits in the next few years be allocated to eligible play area improvement projects, supplemented by relevant specific contributions for those play areas – see Section 4 and Appendix C;
- c. looks ahead to a range of further projects, funded from specific S106 contributions, which will need to be developed in the coming years as part of a programmed approach – see Section 5;
- d. provides an update on how the business intelligence platform behind the Council's Outdoor Play Investment Strategy is helping to identify options for seeking specific S106 contributions from new developments for high priority play areas.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to allocate, subject to local consultation and business case sign-off, the remaining generic S106 contributions for play provision to the following project proposals alongside the specific contributions already received for those projects:
- a. Allocate strategic S106 funds from a major development close to the boundaries of South, East and West/Central areas (around £18,300), alongside relevant specific contributions (currently around £7,500), for improvements to Lammas Land play area;
 - b. Allocate the remaining generic contributions from Romsey ward (around £3,800), alongside relevant specific contributions (currently around £8,800), for improvements to the Romsey Rec play area;
 - c. Allocate generic S106 contributions from Queen Edith's (around £6,500), alongside relevant specific contributions (currently around £3,700), for improvements to Nightingale Avenue Rec play area;
 - d. Allocate the remaining generic S106 contributions from Abbey ward (around £5,400), alongside relevant specific contributions (currently around £11,500), for improvements to Ditton Fields play area;
 - e. Allocate the remaining generic S106 contributions from Cherry Hinton ward (around £5,200), alongside relevant specific contributions (currently around £4,700) for improvements to Reilly Way play area.
- 2.2 The Executive Councillor is also asked to:
- a. Note that the Council will make arrangements for the specific contribution for Kathleen Elliot Way play area (around £4,700) to be used to improve that play area; and
 - b. Note the current 'target list' being used to seek specific S106 contributions for play area improvements, based on the business intelligence platform behind the Council's new Outdoor Play Investment Strategy (see Section 6 and Appendix D).

3. Background

- 3.1 ***Developer contributions:*** S106 funds are secured from developers by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service¹ to mitigate the impact of development. The Council uses these funds for providing or improving relevant facilities and amenities, including play areas and designated parks and open spaces. Every ward in Cambridge has benefitted from S106-funded projects. At the same time, it is important to recognise constraints arising from national official regulations, which have limited how S106 funds can be used and where were they are now available.
- 3.2 The Council's [Developer Contributions](#) web page features an overview of S106 funding, which:
- a. explains why they are collected and how they have to be used in line with official regulations, planning policy and legally-binding S106 agreements between the Council and the relevant developers;
 - b. describes the different S106 contribution types and the distinction between generic contributions and specific contributions²;
 - c. sets out how the Council assesses proposals for S106 funding against selection criteria relating to eligibility, affordability, effective

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1. See the Council's [Local Plan and neighbourhood planning](#) web pages, which includes information about the Infrastructure Funding Statement and the Planning Obligations Strategy 2010. The [Greater Cambridge Shared Planning](#) website also provides more details about emerging planning policy, including the draft Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.
 2. Generic S106 contributions (couched in broad terms to provide/improve relevant facilities in Cambridge) were agreed before official regulation changes in April 2015. Those that are still available were received in 2016 or 2017. This report seeks Executive Councillor approval to allocate them to projects, so that they can be used on time. Since April 2015, the Council has secured specific contributions. These can only be used on particular facilities stipulated in S106 agreements following planning approval by the Council's Planning Committee (or Joint Development Control Committee). As specific S106 contributions have already been agreed by councillors, they do not need to come back to committee for funding authorisation. That said, the development of business cases (setting out the details of the projects to be implemented) provides opportunities for local councillors and communities, to be engaged and consulted as appropriate.

use (e.g., informed by the Council's Outdoor Play Investment Strategy), accessibility and deliverability of projects; and

d. outlines which relevant S106 contributions fund which projects.³

3.3 The Council's [Mitigating the impact of urban growth](#) web page features a photo gallery of recently completed S106-funded projects in each ward. It also includes links to recent committee reports on the use of S106 funding (e.g., relating to informal open spaces in March 2024 and play provision in June 2024).

3.4 ***On-going S106-funded projects:*** Projects allocated S106 funding in March and June 2024 are currently being implemented or planned for delivery soon, alongside a number of other projects which were agreed previously. These include:

Under way:

- open space improvements in Petersfield ward (including wildflower meadow-planting and tree-planting);
- play area improvements at Flower Street and Ravensworth Gardens;
- mature tree-planting programme across all 14 of the city's wards;
- a range of open space and biodiversity projects previously assigned Environmental Improvements Programme funding.

Being planned:

- Pearl Close open space improvements;
- footpath improvements at Five Trees open space, East Chesterton;
- Romsey Rec Ground open space improvements;
- biodiversity improvements at Logan's Way local nature reserve;
- Lichfield Road play area improvements;
- Trumpington Rec play area improvements;
- Harvest Way public realm improvements.

3. Whilst S106 contributions from a ward often fund projects in the same ward, it does not necessarily have to be like that, particularly where nearby facility improvements in another ward help to mitigate a development's impact. The use of up to half the S106 funds from major developments – to fund a strategic project in the same/neighbouring area of the city (or a project of city-wide importance) - is also well-established. In line with the approach taken to expiry dates that are set in some S106 agreements, the Council aims to make appropriate use of all contributions within 10 years of receipt.

- 3.5 Good progress has also been made in delivering the delayed BMX track improvements at Coldham's Common. The original budget for this project was £85,000 of S106 funding. Detailed discussions last summer with track users, councillors, contractors and local residents identified a two-stage approach to enhancing the site and its surroundings.
- a. The first phase – improving the track's layout and adding new features (including novice/intermediate user 'runs', drainage and a new landscaped boundary bund and fence) - was completed during early autumn 2024.
 - b. Once new fencing and signage is added, alongside setting safe conditions of use, the facility will be brought back into public use.
 - c. A further development phase, possibly delivering more extensive drainage improvements (if needed), landscaping, storage and biodiversity enhancements, will be undertaken in early 2025.
 - d. The business case for this project has been reviewed. Taking account of inflation and cost increases since the original budget was set, the likely project costs are now expected to be around £110,000, of which around £90,000-£95,000 is likely to be S106-funded (with the remainder coming from other sources). The updated business case has been signed-off by the officer-level S106 Monitoring Board and supported by the Director of City Services.

- 3.6 ***Need for a programmed approach to future S106-funded projects:*** The S106 report in June 2024 highlighted the need for a programmed approach to the use of remaining generic S106 funds alongside newer specific contributions related to particular locations.
- a. S106 contributions with more immediate time limits need to be used first, before those not reaching the end of their expected shelf-lives until much later. There may, of course, be exceptions – for example, where there is a particular need to improve a particular facility.
 - b. Officers are also mindful of seeking opportunities to make better use of local generic S106 funding with shorter shelf-lives by supplementing them with the use of relevant specific contributions with a longer shelf-lives.

- 3.7 **S106 funding availability:** An updated analysis of S106 funding availability (both generic and specific contributions) within the ‘play provision’ and ‘informal open spaces’ types is set out in Appendices A and B. This represents the amounts available for new S106 funded projects, including those featured in the recommendations (Section 2).
- 3.8 Appendix A shows that the only wards with generic play provision S106 funds left available are Abbey, Queen Edith’s and Romsey. In addition, there are generic funds from a major development close to the boundaries of South, East and West/Central areas suitable for play area improvements at Lammas Land, as a strategically important destination play area within Cambridge. All of these generic contributions have to be contractually committed between spring 2026 and the following winter 2026/27. The table sets these remaining generic contributions in the context of specific contributions⁴ that have been received. More details about the projects recommended in Section 2 can be found in Section 4.
- 3.9 Appendix B highlights that all the generic S106 funds for informal open spaces in Cambridge have already been used.
- a. To enable officers to focus on delivering the on-going projects set out under paragraph 3.4 and the new play area improvement projects recommended in Section 2, there are currently no proposals to bring forward projects solely based on informal open space specific contributions at this stage. The longer-term programme of future S106-funded projects is considered further in Section 5.
 - b. Besides the specific contributions set out in Appendix B, there are a couple of projects in East Area for which specific contributions have been collected improvements agreed from developments in Romsey and Petersfield wards that no longer seem to match local needs and wishes. Officers are exploring options for possible ways forward and some initial discussions with councillors have taken place. Further work is being undertaken with the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service and further discussions will take place with the relevant local councillors.

4. Specific contributions can only be used for their intended purposes, unless a formal deed of variation can be agreed with the relevant developer for the S106 agreement.

4. Play area improvements projects recommended for use of generic and specific S106 funding

- 4.1 For most of the projects recommended for S106 funding in Section 2, officers have already had some initial discussions about the sort of play area improvements that might be possible in each case. For example, proposals might include:
- a. Lammas Land play area - installing a new rocking horse and cable way (zip line);
 - b. Romsey Rec play area - improvements to surfacing to reduce long-term maintenance costs and support year-round use, and/ or new fencing and better provision for toddlers;
 - c. Ditton Fields play area - improvements to surfacing and installation of new inclusive swing units;
 - d. Nightingale Avenue Rec play area - improvements to the toddler play area, such as a new inclusive basket-swing, roundabout or safety surfacing;
 - e. Reilly Way: improvements to the toddler play area; such as a roundabout, swing(s) and/or slide.
- 4.2 Officers are keen to secure funding authorisation for the play area improvements highlighted in Section 2, so that the proposals can be developed in more detail with local councillors and communities.
- 4.3 Play area equipment can be expensive to purchase, with specialist safety surfacing and installation costs also high. In this context the generic S106 contributions remaining are relatively modest. By combining them with particular local specific contributions that are available, this will help to bring about more meaningful improvements to play areas.

5. Longer-term programme of future specific S106-funded projects for play area and open space improvements

- 5.1 Whilst it makes sense to start taking forward the projects recommended in Section 2 first, officers will need to develop their approach to a further tranche of investment priority projects over the coming year.

5.2 Beyond those projects recommended for delivery over the next three years, the table below is a summary of the other projects mentioned in Appendices A and B for which specific S106 contributions have been collected (9 play area projects and 18 open space projects):

By value	Play provision	Open spaces
Under £5,000	2	0
£5,000 to under £10,000	3	9
£10,000 to under £20,000	2	6
£20,000 to £30,000	1	0
Over 30,000	1	3

a. The largest of these play area projects is for Petersfield play area, with over £50,000 of specific contributions. The earliest time limit attached to the specific contributions collected is autumn 2030.

b. The largest informal open spaces projects are:

Project	Overall value	Earliest time limit
Coldham's Common	£73,000	Winter 2026/ 27
Cherry Hinton Rec	£41,400	Autumn 2027
Coleridge Rec	£31,500	Summer 2029

Each of these is funded by several specific contributions with different timescales, which could allow a phased approach to improvements.

5.3 Here is a further analysis looking at the earliest time limits for the current set of future projects:

	Spring 2027- Winter 27/28	Spring 2028- Winter 28/29	Spring 2029- Winter 29/30	Spring 2030- Winter 30/31	Spring 2031- Winter 31/32	Spring 2032- winter 22/32	Spring 2033- Winter 33/34	Spring 2034- Winter 34/35
Play areas	-	-	3	1	1	1	2	1
Open spaces	2	1	7	2	2	2	1	1

6. Review of target list for seeking further specific contributions from new major developments in Cambridge

- 6.1 Since 2016, the Council has used evidence-based ‘target-lists’ to identify local facilities which might benefit from specific S106 contributions from new planning applications for local major developments. Following the introduction of the Council’s new Outdoor Play Investment Strategy last year, the choice of local play areas to be targeted for specific S106 contributions is informed by the latest data from the new business intelligence platform.
- 6.2 The business intelligence (BI) platform behind this strategy identifies those existing play area sites having the most potential and in greatest need for further investment. It has been informed by an updated audit of outdoor play provision including an assessment of current quantity, quality against current and future population growth. All 103 outdoor play areas in Cambridge have given a ranking of between Tier 1 (highest) and Tier 4, related to their proximity to other sports facilities/other amenities, their accessibility and population catchment. They have been further categorised by their strategic value to the city’s play offer, and the condition of each site’s existing equipment.
- 6.3 A list of play areas can be found in Appendix D. This currently informs the approach to seeking specific S106 contributions from new major developments. As the platform continually updates to reflect changing circumstances, the target lists for seeking further specific contributions will also be updated. Please also note that:
- a. being on a ‘target list’ does not necessarily mean S106 funds will be secured for a particular play area: the specific contributions agreed will take account of the nature & location of proposed developments and any updates available on local facility needs and improvements;
 - b. officers may identify other projects to mitigate the impact of proposed developments;

7. Implications

a) Financial Implications

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report are aimed at helping to make sure that S106 funding received by the Council can be used effectively and in a timely way. If S106 funds cannot be used for their intended purposes or cannot be used or contractually committed on time, developers could ask for unspent amounts to be returned.
- 7.2 The aim is for some of the play area projects recommended for S106 funding in paragraph 2.1 to offer long-term savings to the Council offered via improvements to play area surfacing. This could help to achieve significant reductions in maintenance costs.

b) Staffing Implications

- 7.3 The projects recommended for funding will be managed by the Streets & Open Spaces team in the City Services Group to ensure that effective and timely use of S106 contributions received can be made. The advice of other colleagues (including officers on the S106 Monitoring Board and at the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service) will be sought as needed to ensure that requirements are being applied consistently.
- 7.4 Taking a programmed approach to the development and delivery of new S106 investment projects has always been important; and particularly so now given the financial challenges facing the Council in the coming years.
- 7.5 The development and delivery of S106-funded projects over the next few years will be set in the context of changing resources, roles and responsibilities for the management of S106 funding.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

- 7.6 See the Equality Impact Assessment in Appendix C. This concludes that S106 funding of new or improved infrastructure can make a significant positive impact across local communities that benefit from these projects. S106-funded improvements can benefit everyone by providing better

facilities locally in which to play, exercise, enjoy leisure time and relax, socialise, and appreciate/ be inspired by nature/ biodiversity.

d) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 7.7 Wherever not specifically targeted towards environmental and/ or ecological enhancement gain, projects undertaken will seek opportunities to deliver positive impact in these areas. This includes using environmentally friendly and locally sourced materials, and local labour, wherever practicable. As a result, the overall impact of S106 funded enhancements on the environment for Cambridge typically rates as +L to M.

e) Procurement Implications

- 7.8 Procurement of services needed will either be in house or via partners, through existing term service contract arrangements, from specialist named suppliers, or subject to individual competition as appropriate. The requirements of current national public contracts regulations will always be met.

f) Community Safety Implications

- 7.9 Investment in and enhancements to local infrastructure demonstrate commitment on the part of the Council and can help foster increased pride of place and community cohesion. In developing and delivering schemes, care will be taken by officers to ensure that schemes support local community safety work (for example designing out crime) wherever practicable.

8. Consultation and communication considerations

- 8.1 All enhancement projects include appropriate engagement with elected members, the public and stakeholders at the planning/ design stage, with the level and type determined by, and proportionate to, the nature, scale and scope of the changes proposed.
- 8.2 The [Developer Contributions](#) web page include links to the guides to completed S106-funded projects in Greater Cambridge, produced by the

Shared Planning service. Meanwhile, officers will update the [Mitigating the impact of urban growth](#) web pages, included the [photo gallery](#) of recent projects as further improvements to play area, open spaces and other facilities are completed.

9. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- [‘S106 funding programme \(Streets and Open Spaces\)’](#) report to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, 27 June 2024
- [‘S106 funding round \(Streets and Open Spaces\)’](#) report to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, 21 March 2024
- [‘Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy’](#) report to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, 21 March 2024
- [Developer contributions - Cambridge City Council](#)
- [Overview of S106 funding – Cambridge City Council](#)

10. Appendices

Appendix A: S106 funding availability: play provision

Appendix B: S106 funding availability: informal open spaces

Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment relating to the use of play areas S106 funding.

Appendix D: Outdoor play provision future investment priorities

11. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers, or if you have a query on the report, please contact:

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APPENDIX A:

S106 funding availability: PLAY PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

This table sets out the availability of unallocated generic S106 funds for play area improvements received from non-growth sites in the city, as well as unspent specific contributions secured for improving particular play areas. The contributions recommended for allocation in Section 2 of the report are highlighted in bold.

Towards the end of this table, reference is made to strategic funds from major developments, which can be used on strategic projects in a neighbouring area of the city: this is in line with the Council's approach over the last 12 years or so and is reflected in section 4 of the [Overview of S106 funding](#).

This report calls for a programmed approach, first making appropriate use of remaining generic S106 funds with the shortest time limits (supplementing where possible specific contributions for relevant projects). Projects based solely on specific contributions, with longer 'shelf-lives', will need to be carried out at a later stage.

The details in this table are subject to review and may change. Time limits for using S106 funds are shown as: Spring (March-May); Summer (June-August); Autumn (September-November); Winter (December-February).

Play provision	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest 'use by'	Unallocated	Summary of specific S106 contributions for play areas
NORTH AREA			
Arbury	-	£0	None
East Chesterton	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,200 (Summer 2029) and £3,200 (Summer 2029) for Chesterton Rec play area • £9,100 (Summer 2031) for Green End Road Rec play area

Play provision	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest 'use by'	Unallocated	Summary of specific S106 contributions for play areas
King's Hedges	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,400 (Autumn 2033) for Nun's Way Rec play area • £9,400 (Summer 2034) for King's Hedges Rec play area
West Chesterton	-	£0	None
EAST AREA			
Abbey	Autumn 2027	£5,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £11,500 (Autumn 2030) for Ditton Fields Rec play area
Coleridge	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25,900 (Winter 2029/ 30) for Coleridge Rec play area
Petersfield	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30,700 (Autumn 2030) and £19,400 (Winter 2032/ 33) for Petersfield play area
Romsey	Winter 2026/27	£3,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8,800 (Spring 2031) for Romsey Rec play area
SOUTH AREA			
Cherry Hinton	Spring 2026	£5,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £4,700 (Autumn 2027) for Reilly Way play area • £4,700 (Autumn 2027) for Kathleen Elliot Way play area • £1,400 (Autumn 2033) and £14,600 (Summer 2034) for Tenby Close play area
Queen Edith's	Winter 2026/27	£6,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £3,700 (Winter 2030/31) for Nightingale Ave. Rec play area
Trumpington	-	£0	Already allocated.

Play provision	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest 'use by'	Unallocated	Summary of specific S106 contributions for play areas
WEST/ CENTRAL AREA			
Castle	-	£0	£4,100 (Spring 2029) for Storey's Field play area
Market	-	£0	None
Newnham	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £7,500 (Summer 2031) for Lammas Land play area • £14,900 (Winter 2032/33) for Penarth Place play area
FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS OF STRATEGIC/CITY-WIDE IMPORTANCE			
Strategic funds	December 2026	£18,300	None

APPENDIX B:

S106 funding availability: INFORMAL OPEN SPACES

This table shows sets out the availability of unallocated generic S106 funds for open space improvements received from non-growth sites in the city, as well as unspent specific contributions secured for open spaces.

As there are no unallocated generic S106 funds for informal open space received left available from non-growth sites in the city, this table focuses on the unspent specific contributions secured for improving particular parks and open spaces (informed by the ‘target list’ referenced in the [Overview of S106 funding](#)).

This report highlights the need for a programmed approach, first making appropriate use of remaining generic S106 funds with the shortest time limits (supplementing where possible specific contributions for relevant projects). Projects based solely on specific contributions, with longer ‘shelf-lives’, will need to be carried out at a later stage.

The details in this table are subject to review and may change. Time limits for using S106 funds are shown as: Spring (March-May); Summer (June-August); Autumn (September-November); Winter (December-February).

Open spaces	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest ‘use by’	Availability	Summary of specific S106 contributions for open spaces
NORTH AREA			
Arbury	-	£0	None
East Chesterton	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">£5,100 (Summer 2029) and £9,300 (Summer 2029) for Chesterton Rec Ground fit kit and benches

Open spaces	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest 'use by'	Availability	Summary of specific S106 contributions for open spaces
King's Hedges	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,000 (Spring 2029) for open space at Brown's Field Youth and Community Centre. • £18,100 (Autumn 2033) for Nun's Way Rec Ground • £7,200 (Summer 2034) for King's Hedges Rec Ground
West Chesterton	-	£0	None
EAST AREA			
Abbey	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £9,800 (Winter 2026/27)⁵, £9,800 (Autumn 2028) and £53,400 (Spring 2031) for Coldham's Common • £14,000 (Autumn 2030) for Ditton Fields Rec • £7,000 (Summer 2031) for Stourbridge Common
Coleridge	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8,400 (Summer 2029) and £23,100 (Winter 2029/30) for Coleridge Rec Ground
Petersfield	-	£0	None

5. Some of this specific contribution is allocated to landscaping works as part of the Coldham's Common BMX track improvement project – as the scale of drainage and other works are still to be confirmed, the amount available for other open space improvements may change.

Open spaces	Generic S106 funds		Rounded down to nearest £100. (Time limits in brackets)
Ward	Earliest 'use by'	Availability	Summary of specific S106 contributions for open spaces
Romsey	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £8,000 (Spring 2031) for Romsey Rec Ground⁶
SOUTH AREA			
Cherry Hinton	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £8,300 (Autumn 2027), £19,000 (Autumn 2033) and £14,400 (Summer 2034) for Cherry Hinton Rec Ground £5,400 (Winter 2029/30) for Lime Kiln Close open space
Queen Edith's	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,400 (Winter 2030/31) for Nightingale Avenue Rec
Trumpington	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £15,000 (Winter 2029/30) for Trumpington Rec Ground
WEST/ CENTRAL AREA			
Castle	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,600 (Spring 2029) for Storey's Field open space
Market	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £15,700 (Winter 2029/ 30) for Coe Fen
Newnham	-	£0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £9,500 (Winter 2032/ 33) for Cobbetts Corner open space £9,500 (Winter 2032/ 33) for Penarth Place open space

6. Part of this specific contribution for Romsey Rec open space improvements may be used towards the planned open space improvements there, which were allocated £11,500 of generic informal open space contributions in March 2024.

APPENDIX C

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
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S106 Funding – Outdoor Play Areas (Streets & Open Spaces)

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
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More information about the Council's approach to S106 funding can be found on the Developer Contributions web page. In particular, please refer to the Overview of S106 funding briefing note.
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3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

This assessment relates to an S106 report recommending outdoor play area S106 funding for a number of projects, in order to make improvements to Cambridge's streets and open spaces.

The purpose of S106 funding is, first and foremost, to mitigate the impact of development in line with planning policy, official regulations and the terms of legally binding S106 agreements. S106 funding for a particular contribution type has to be used on projects relevant to that sort of infrastructure improvement.
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The S106 funding of new or improved infrastructure can make a significant positive impact across local communities that benefit from these projects. Better play facilities (accessible for children of all abilities), more opportunities to appreciate and
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be inspired by nature and biodiversity, and measures to improve the appearance of local neighbourhoods.

The report to Environment & Community Scrutiny Committee on 16 January 2025 recommends the investment of S106 outdoor play area funding towards facilities at Ditton Fields (Abbey), Romsey Recreation Ground (Romsey), Lammas Land (Newnham), Nightingale Avenue Recreation Ground (Queen Edith's) and Reilly Way (Cherry Hinton). The Council allocates S106 funding collected for the enhancement of play areas in accordance with its approved investment strategy. This strategy is based upon a sound understanding of existing asset condition, equipment life expectancy and the value of each play area to the surrounding and broader community. The recently adopted business intelligence platform is feeding in updated information as each site is routinely safety assessed.

4. Responsible Team and Group

Streets & Open Spaces, City Services

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

Residents

Visitors

Staff

Cambridge residents, community groups and others who visit Cambridge will all be able to make use of and enjoy the S106-funded improvements to these facilities.

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

New

Major change

Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)?

Yes

No

City Services will develop and deliver the S106-funded projects with support and advice from the Greater Cambridge Planning Service and the Council's S106 Monitoring Board, as necessary. This board comprises officers from a number of teams with particular knowledge of planning policy, programme management, financial and legal considerations relating to the use of S106 funding.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee?? If so, which one?

Yes; this latest report will be considered by the [Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee meeting on 16/1/2025](#).

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Projects proposed for S106 funding are assessed against the Council's S106 selection criteria (see the [Overview of S106 funding](#) briefing note). This is primarily focused on mitigating the impact of development in those parts of the city where relevant S106 funds are available.

The assessment also considers how far the proposals would provide additional benefit for all sections of the community and would represent an effective use of resources (in the context of strategic objectives). As part of this, accessibility issues and people's perceptions of safety are important considerations.

The development of projects (following committee scrutiny of recommendations and funding approval by the Executive Councillor) takes account of consultation with users of streets and open spaces as well as the wider local community. The specific equality impacts of particular projects are assessed at that stage.

With S106 contributions recommended for play equipment, a Business Intelligence (BI) platform is used to identify existing play area sites having the most potential and in greatest need for further investment. This platform has been informed by an updated audit of outdoor play provision including an assessment of the play portfolio's current quantity, quality, and accessibility against current and future population growth.

The BI platform has been utilised to rank all 103 outdoor play areas across Cambridge by Tier (1-4; related to their proximity to other sporting and support facilities, accessibility, and population catchment) and further categorised by strategic value to the city's play offer, and condition of the existing equipment. It is proposed that the categorisation of the 103 areas will be used to guide planning officers in future S106 funding considerations – and these future decisions will themselves be subject to EqlAs.

This EqlA also draws on Index of Multiple Deprivation information on Cambridgeshire Insight: [Cambridge-City 1.1.pdf \(cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk\)](#)

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

Beyond the general comments in answer to Q3 (about the positive impact that inclusive streets and open space improvements can make for everyone), the following answers give examples of particular considerations that may apply to particular protected characteristic groups.

(a) Age: Please consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

Improvements to outdoor play areas and other open spaces provide educational and recreational opportunities for developing young minds, fostering an early sense of social responsibility and supporting community cohesion. Play areas, in particular, invested in provide a broad range of facilities for children of varying ages – from under 5s to teenagers and in some cases young adults (e.g. wheel-sports facilities). Fencing and gates within parks (especially around play areas) can help to keep young children safe.

The provision of benches in parks and play areas can be appreciated by older people and others who may value opportunities to sit, rest and relax.

Cambridge's larger play areas normally include greater diversity of equipment suited to multiple needs and age ranges. With regards to the investment recommendations for play areas in the committee report, it is anticipated that facilities might be improved for children in the following ways:

- Ditton Fields – large site with provision for a wide age-range. Improvements are likely to feature enhancements to safety surfacing along with the installation of new swing units suited to inclusive use
- Romsey Rec – intensively used site with provision for a broad age-range. Improvements to surfacing for safety and all-weather use, along with (if funds permit) new fencing and better provision for toddlers, would enhance the site
- Lammas Land – large strategic destination site with provision for a wide age-range. The installation of a new rocking horse for younger children, and a zip-line for older children, would enhance the play offer
- Nightingale Avenue Rec – large site with provision for a wide age-range. Improvements to the toddler play area, for example the provision of an inclusive-use basket swing and/ or roundabout, along with better safety surfacing, would enhance the facility following completion of the new pavilion
- Reilly Way – enhancements would focus on the site's provision for toddlers, for example a new roundabout, swing(s) and/ or slide

(b) Disability

The outdoor play equipment assessment BI platform in part ranks the 103 play areas by accessibility for disabled people, so it is a useful assessment to guide planning officers on future decisions on S106 funding. Whilst new and enhanced site facilities will always seek the provision of fully inclusive equipment, this unfortunately is not always possible due to space and funding limitations. In looking at the condition of existing play equipment and using this as a criterion to assess priority for works, this should help to improve safety of the equipment preventing injury that could result in disability.

(c) Gender reassignment

No specific implications for this protected characteristic group identified.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

No specific implications for this protected characteristic group identified.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Secure play areas can also provide space for pregnant women and new parents to sit and rest with young children, often when siblings or friends are playing.

(f) Race - Note that the protected characteristic 'race' refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

No specific implications for this protected characteristic group identified.

(g) Religion or belief

No specific implications for this protected characteristic group identified.

(h) Sex

S106-funded improvements need to take account of differences in how far people (including women and girls) feel safe in streets and open and spaces. Encouraging recreation amongst teenage girls is a particular objective given the potential benefits in mental and physical health and wellbeing, and social inclusion, so important to the development of healthy lifestyles. Women in Sport have commissioned some specific research work around this topic that the Council is a keen participant towards.

(i) Sexual orientation

No specific implications for this protected characteristic group identified.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality

In particular, please consider the impact of any changes on:

- **Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**
- **People of any age with care experience – this refers to individuals who spent part of their childhood in the care system due to situations beyond their control, primarily arising from abuse and neglect within their families. The term “Care experience” is a description of a definition in law, it includes anyone that had the state as its corporate parent by virtue of a care order in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and amendments.**
- **Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Here you are being asked to consider intersectionality, and for more information see: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_l59kt25q).**

No impacts have been identified specifically for people with care experience.

Cambridge’s Council-run/managed parks and open spaces are fully inclusive and free for all individuals and groups of people to use for informal purposes, benefitting families in poverty and on low incomes. The parks can be used for free, with the facilities at Ditton Fields (Abbey) being in an area of higher deprivation.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly).

- a. Where possible (and affordable from available S106 funding), improvements incorporate positive adaptations to streets and open spaces, to reduce the risks of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- b. Conduct accessibility assessments to ensure that our public open spaces are inclusive.
- c. Engage with local members and communities to gather feedback and incorporate diverse perspectives into the design and planning process (particularly as part of the development of business cases for S106-funded project delivery).
- d. Monitor and evaluate the usage of open spaces and play facilities to identify any disparities or barriers faced by particular protected characteristic equality groups and consider appropriate adjustments (albeit that this may require resources other than S106 funding).
- e. Ensure that S106 funding investment is prioritised in accordance with established usage criteria and need, with all areas of the city benefitting over recent years.

Generic S106 contributions are often pooled with separate S106 contributions for specific facilities; ensuring best use of public funds overall.

- f. The Council's outdoor play investment strategy ensures that usable facilities are available in all areas of Cambridge; and the priorities now recommended ensure that monies currently available are targeted towards those areas, sites and facilities that would benefit from them most.
- g. All new play equipment provided has to comply with strict safety criteria, and the Council seeks to ensure that wherever possible this is fully accessible and inclusive (within the constraints of space and funding availability).

12. Do you have any additional comments?

N/ A

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this EqIA:

John Richards, Technical & Specialist Services Manager (City Services)

Names and job titles of other people consulted:

Helen Crowther, Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer

Tim Wetherfield, Urban Growth Manager (Policy & Partnerships, Chief Executive's Office)

Date of EqIA sign off: Updated January 2025

APPENDIX D

Priority Outdoor Play provision sites for future S106 investment

Projects	Area	Ward	Tier
Cherry Hinton Recreation Ground play area	South	Cherry Hinton	1
Coleridge Recreation Ground play area	East	Coleridge	1
Histon Road Recreation Ground play area	West/ Central	Castle	1
Lammas Land play area	West/ Central	Newnham	1
Nightingale Avenue Recreation Ground play area	South	Queen Edith's	1
Romsey Recreation Ground play area	East	Romsey	1
Trumpington King George V Recreation Ground play area	South	Trumpington	1
Ashbury Close play area	East	Coleridge	1
Coldham's Lane play area	East	Abbey	1
Huntsman Road play area	South	Trumpington	1
Abbey Pool play area	East	Abbey	2
Christ's Pieces play area	West/ Central	Market	2
Green End Road play area	North	East Chesterton	2
Stourbridge Common play area	East	Abbey	2
Nuns Way Recreation Ground play area	North	King's Hedges	2
King's Hedges Recreation Ground play area	North	King's Hedges	3