



13 July 2006

Report to

Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure and Libraries)

Report of

Director of Community Services

Title

Oak Farm Play Area, Binley – Petition

Ward

Wyken

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet Member of a petition bearing 302 signatures, requesting the City Council to remove the newly constructed Play Area at Brinklow Road Open Space (known locally as Oak Farm Play Area - **Appendix 1**) in the Oak Farm area, presented to Council on 27 June 2006 by Councillor Dixon.
- 1.2 To recommend and seek Cabinet Member approval to retain the Play Area, while working with locally based internal and external partners to address the growing anti-social youth culture currently at the site.

2 Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the petition presented by Cllr Dixon and the concerns raised by the signatories.
- 2.2 Approve the retention of the recently constructed Play Area previously approved by the Cabinet Member (Area Co-ordination, Leisure, Arts and Sports) in a report dated 27 May 2004.
- 2.3 Approve the measures indicated in paragraphs 3.16 to tackle the issues raised by the petition.
- 2.4 To report back to Cabinet member (Culture, Leisure & libraries) after a period of six months to ensure the success of the measures taken in dealing with Anti-Social behaviour.

3 Information/Background

2006

- 3.1 A petition was submitted to Council on 27 June 2006, by petitioners from the local area, requesting the removal of the newly developed Play Area.

1994 – May 2004

- 3.2 Prior to the boundary changes in 1994, the area fell under the ownership of Rugby Borough Council (RBC). In 1994 boundary changes resulted in the land being appropriated to the city as it now fell within the city.
- 3.3 Coventry City Council, in its efforts to recover the outstanding developers' contributions (from one of the original three developers), incurred significant delay in delivering the new play area, to discharge conditions associated with planning consent for the housing development.
- 3.4 RBC's planning condition to the developers included the provision of 'public open space' and a 'play area' for the new housing development.
- 3.5 To this effect a decision to proceed with the development of the play area was eventually approved (May 2004).
- 3.6 This was also in response to a petition with 251 in favour 'for' the play provision submitted to Council on 28 April 2004.
- 3.7 A design consultation programme was conducted as follows:
- Promotional leaflet – **Appendix 2**
 - Design Consultation Sessions (9th, 11th & 12th June 2004), over 145 participated and completed questionnaires.
 - Drop-in exhibit of draft design consultation (25th June 2004), over 40 attendees, overall view was in support of the proposed draft design
 - Play Area design proposal – **Appendix 3**
- 3.8 Following the design consultation process, a further petition with 83 signatures, opposing the play area was submitted to Council in September 2004.
- 3.9 However, after considering all factors including national best practice and guidance, and site-specific constraints, a further recommendation to proceed with the planned capital works programme received full approval from Cabinet Member (Adult Education, Libraries, Sport & Leisure) in December 2004.
- 3.10 **Appendix 4** displays the range of play equipment that was installed as a result.
- 3.11 In addition to the petitions, the following table indicates the level of communication (Letter, Telephone, Email) highlighting a debate 'For' and 'Against' the play area. In particular, it highlights the main point, that being, to disperse anti-social activity within the community.

Description	Period	Amount
In support 'For' the play area	Aug 2003 – Oct 2005	13
In support 'Against' the play area	June 2005 – June 2006	4
The need to address Anti-social issues	May 2005 – Sept 2005	16

- 3.12 Information from the Council's Community Safety Team further highlights the rise in anti-social activity (**Appendix 5**)

Conclusion

- 3.13 The current petition raises concern on the increasing anti-social youth culture amongst young people aged 12 to 15 years at the site. This activity is rapidly escalating attracting young adults aged 16 to 20 years, with reports of underage drinking and use of illegal substances, which could attract and encourage associated criminal activity (**Appendix 5**).
- 3.14 With the exception of the Brinklow Road Open Space, the growing number of young people (12-15 years age) involved in anti-social activity in the area, may be a resultant of limited youth provision within the area.
- 3.15 The Oak Farm area is currently outside of the AIMS 'Hotspot' area, however, further consultation of the AIMS data, could result in the re-deployment of the area based staff.
- 3.16 The proposal is to broker local partners (internal – Neighbourhood Management, Youth Services, etc; and external agencies – Police Authority, Connexions, etc) including the community, to deliver a combination of activities of which some are listed below:
- Implement and enforce designated Dispersal Orders (**Appendix 6**)
 - Consult AIMS data, to consider re-deployment of area based staff
 - Detached youth engagement work
 - Involve Trading Standards to undertake test purchasing on alcohol sales within the area
 - Explore the potential for this work feeding into Coventry Fusion
- 3.17 This approach will ensure a more long-term sustainable measure is implemented to actively address some of the growing concerns of the petitioners, while addressing the needs of those under represented sections of the community (children and young people).
- 3.18 The petitioners have raised legitimate concerns around anti social behaviour, some of which they believe is exacerbated/caused by the play area facility.
- 3.19 The request to remove the play area is only one measure that 'may' or 'may not' resolve the anti-social issues and removal **may not** resolve the issues.
- 3.20 In the absence of a formally adopted Play Strategy, Cabinet Members have formerly supported a Play Area Renewal Programme, approving funds from the Capital Programme, in the aim of working towards achieving play areas within a half mile radius citywide.
- 3.21 The removal of the play area, will create a shortfall in play provision within the area as highlighted in **Appendix 7**, children and young people, within the community. This would contrary to the City Council's aspiration to provide play facilities and promote physical activity amongst children and young people.
- 3.22 In order to allow the facility to function properly the City Council recognises that anti-social behaviour must be tackled in conjunction with key partners such as the Police Authority.

4 Proposal and Other Options to be considered

- 4.1 Option 1: To remove the play area, and hope that the issue does not transfer else where in the community,
- 4.2 Option 2: To keep the play area for younger children, and work with the community and local partners to re-engage or control the behaviour of the older children.

5 Other specific implications

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value		
Children and Young People		
Comparable Benchmark Data		
Corporate Parenting		
Coventry Community Plan		
Crime and Disorder		
Equal Opportunities		
Finance		
Health and Safety		
Human Resources		
Human Rights Act		
Impact on Partner Organisations		
Information and Communications Technology		
Legal Implications		
Neighbourhood Management		
Property Implications		
Race Equality Scheme		
Risk Management		
Sustainable Development		
Trade Union Consultation		
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		

5.1 Children & Young People

The removal of the play area would result in the loss of quality play provision, within the community. The lack of adequate youth provision has led to the emergence of the growing anti-social youth culture amongst older children and young adults.

5.2 Crime and Disorder

The Oak Farm Area has been served with a 'Notice for Dispersal of Groups' order by the West Midlands Police Authority, which recently has been granted an extension of three months, from the date of the last order (28 June 2006).

5.3 Equal Opportunities

Children and young people as a social group within the community can become under-represented within what usually is an adult process. Therefore it is essentially recognised that the need to preserve adequate provision, while engaging with this group, can lead to a more sustainable resolve, using inclusive community cohesion practices.

5.4 Finance

Cost of removing and disposal of play equipment is likely to be £25,920 and would put further strain on existing service budgets.

As the area is outside of AIMS 'Hotspot' area the re-deployment of area based staff may impact on the Neighbourhood Management service budgets, as would the redeployment of any other City Council service not currently operating within the area.

5.5 Neighbourhood Management

The role of Neighbourhood Management is fundamental in unblocking any organisational barriers, and highlighting a 'common purpose' shared by all, including the local adult community, to tackle the main issues of concern. To this effect Neighbourhood Management within the Chief Executive's Directorate will take a lead in facilitating the process.

5.6 Risk Management

The risk of negative media attention, likely to be generated from the removal of a previously approved and funded City Council scheme, could be damaging.

6 Monitoring

6.1 The Parks & Open Spaces Section will continue to monitor the issues and a report will be brought back to the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure and Libraries) on the success of the measure taken within six months.

7 Timescale and expected outcomes

7.1 It is expected that networking to bring local partners together will commence without delay, with the view to reducing youth anti-social activities at the site.

	Yes	No
Key Decision		
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		

List of background papers

Proper officer:

John Bolton, Director of Community Services

Author:

Telephone 024 7683 2379

Bakim Dayaram, City Parks & Open Spaces Officer, Community Services Directorate
(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:

Alice Davey, Head of Culture, Leisure and Libraries, Community Services Directorate x2380

Gill Carter, Legal and Democratic Services Directorate x 3116

Kathryn Sutherland, Finance and ICT Directorate x2528

Mary Young, Finance and ICT Directorate x3460

Carol Williams, Human Resources, Community Services Directorate x3444

Michelle Salmon, Legal and Democratic Services Directorate x3065

John Bodie, Community Services Directorate x3401

Paul Whiteside, Corporate Communications, Chief Executive's Directorate x2808

Jan Nichols, Neighbourhood Management, Chief Executive's Directorate x1097

Paul Hargrave, Community Safety Team, Chief Executive's Directorate x 2063

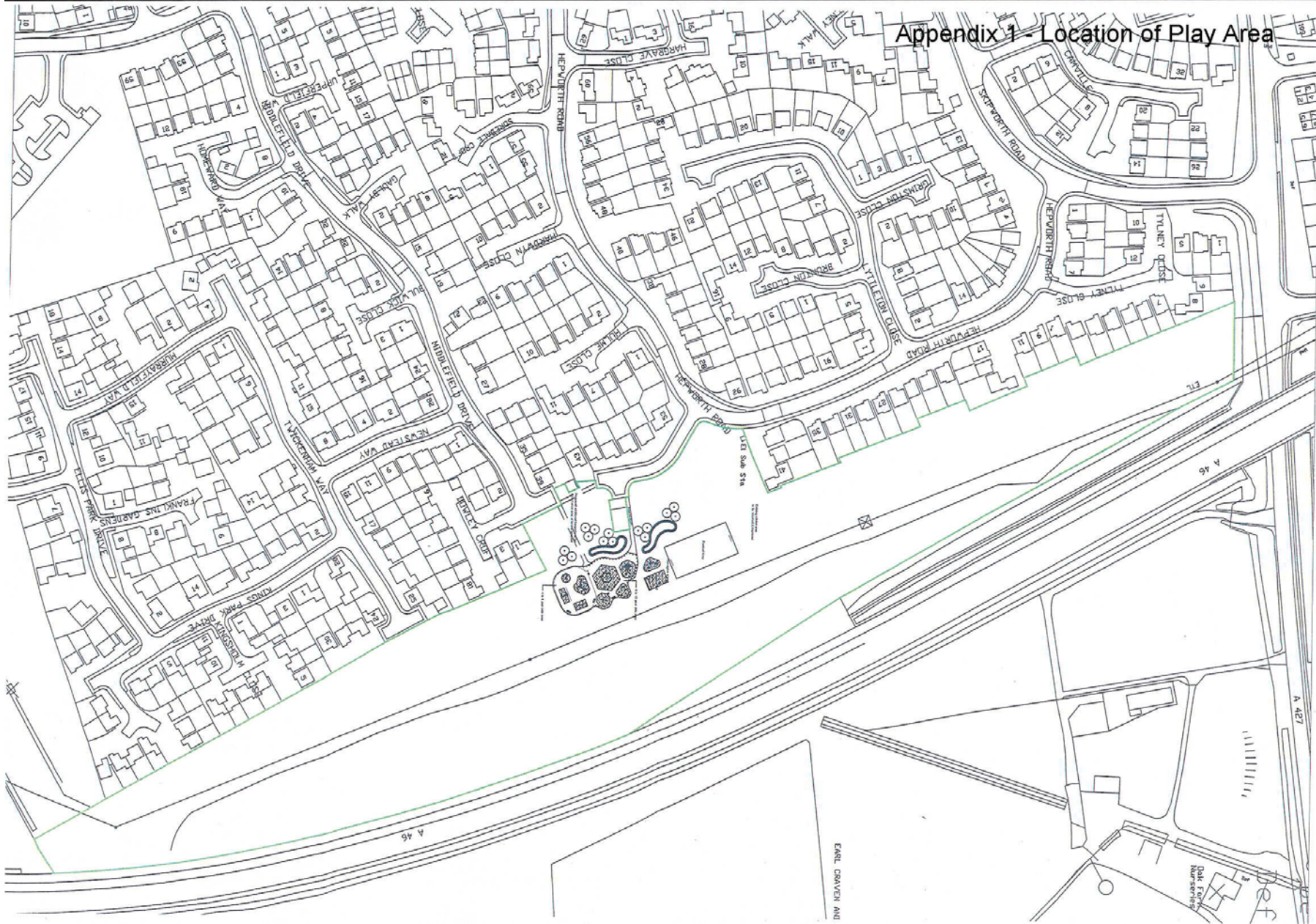
Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Project File

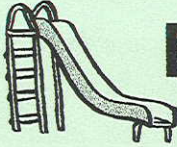
Location

2nd Floor, West Orchard House



Appendix 2 - Consultation Programme Flier

A NEW PLAY AREA FOR OAK FARM



WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SPEND £160,000!

Come and help us design a new play area for Brinklow Road Open Space, to be installed in the Autumn.

Please come along to the consultation caravan located adjacent to the Pumping Station on Hepworth Road; at the following times and tell us what you want!

- **Wednesday 9th June 2004 3 –5pm**
- **Friday 11th June 2004 3 - 5pm**
- **Saturday 12th June 2004 10am – 12 noon**

The most popular suggestions will be incorporated into the final design which you can view, in the same location, on **Friday 25th June 2004 3 – 5pm**

If you require any further information please contact Sarah Smith on 024 7683 2445



Coventry City Council



City Development Directorate
Culture and Leisure
Coventry Parks Services
Spire House
New Union Street
Coventry, CV1 2PS

Appendix 3 - Play Area Design Proposal

OAK FARM PLAY AREA PROPOSAL



Oak Farm Play Area



SMP Rotterdam



Kompan Dorado Unit



Kompan Hopper



Kompan Dorado Unit



Kompan Fiveway



Lappsett Waltz



Appendix 4 - Visual - Range of Play Equipment

Oak Farm Play Area



Entrance



Dorado Unit



Overall Play Area



Cricket Wicket



Kompan Springboard



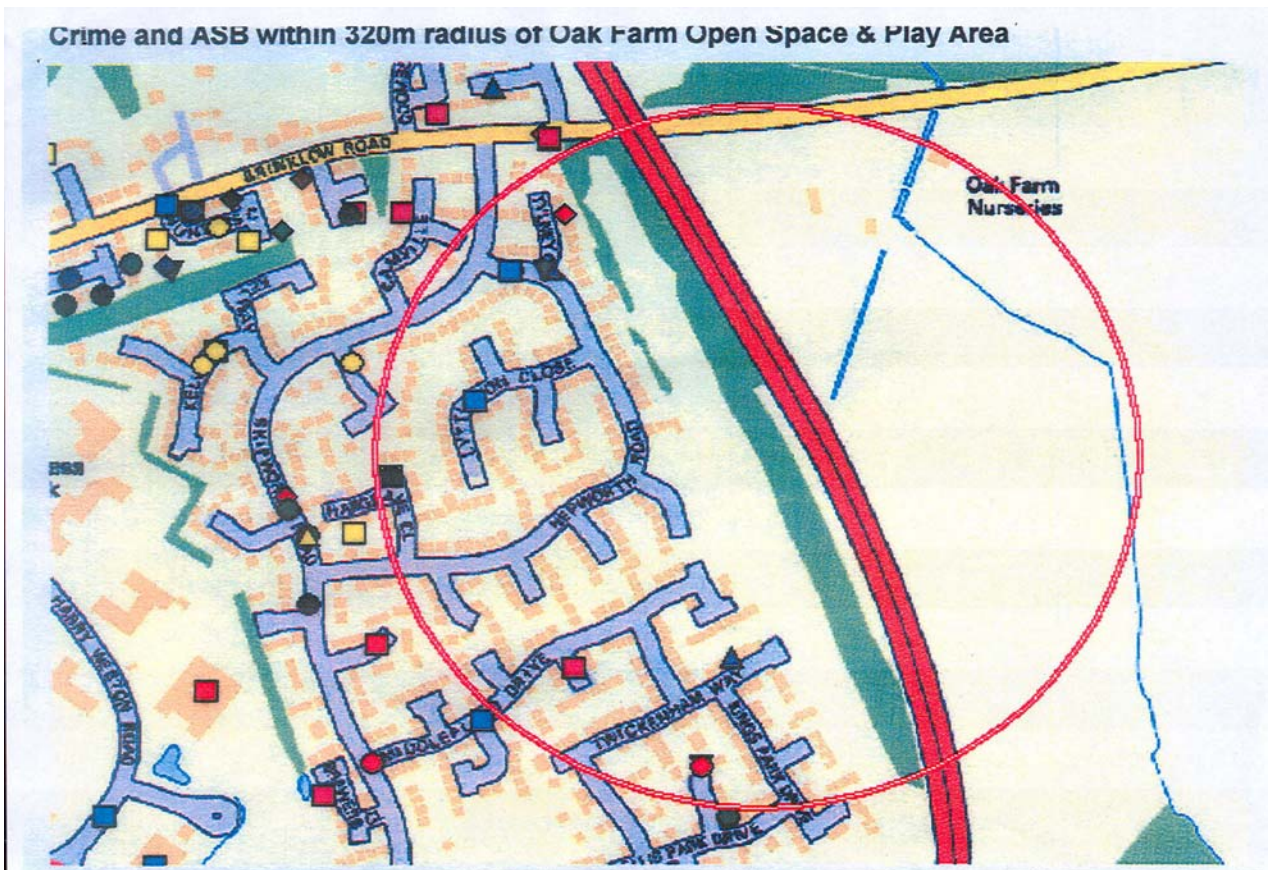
Kompan 'Spicas'



Appendix 5 - Anti Social Activity - Data and Spread

Crime	Jun-05	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06	Apr-06	May-06	Total
ABH												1	1
Arson													0
Burg Dwel			1	1	2								4
Burg Oth								1					1
Common Assault													0
Crim Dam - Dwe		1						1					2
Crim Dam - Veh													0
Harassment	1												1
Oth Crim Dam													0
TFMV									1	1			2
TO				1								1	2
TO P/Cycle													0
TOMV			1										1
Veh Interference													0
Wounding													0
Total Crime	1	1	2	2	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	14

ASB	Jun-05	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06	Apr-06	May-06	Total
Animal Problems													0
Breach of Peace													0
Civil Dispute													0
Community Probs													0
Disorder													0
Disorder Street													0
Domestic Dispute													0
Drunkness													0
Hoax Calls													0
Noise Nuisance													0
Nuisance Veh's										1	4	1	6
Rowdy/Nuis Beh	3	3	3	7	2				1	7	4	4	34
Street Drinking										1			1
Threat Aban Phone	1												1
ASB	4	3	3	7	2	0	0	0	1	9	8	5	42



Appendix 6 - Dispersal Order

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 PART 4



Notice for the Dispersal of Groups

The local Police and the Local Authority have both agreed that there are grounds to believe that members of the public have been intimidated, harassed, alarmed or distressed as a result of the presence of two or more persons and that anti social behaviour is a significant and persistent problem in the below affected area.

Relevant Locality (affected area)

An area of Wyken bounded the A46 Eastern By-Pass, Clifford Bridge Rd, Dorchester Way (including all the 'closes' that run off this road), Clifford Bridge Rd, Ansty Road, Hipswell Highway, The Drive (around and including Ventnor and Triumph Closes), River Sowe, Clifford Bridge Road, Brinklow Road, The Greensward and taking in Gainsford Rise and the Skipworth Estate. See map, right.

I, Robert Bird, Superintendent, West Midlands Police, with the consent of Coventry City Council being the relevant Local Authority, hereby authorise uniformed Constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to disperse groups as defined under Part 4 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 from the above area during the relevant period detailed below:

Relevant Period

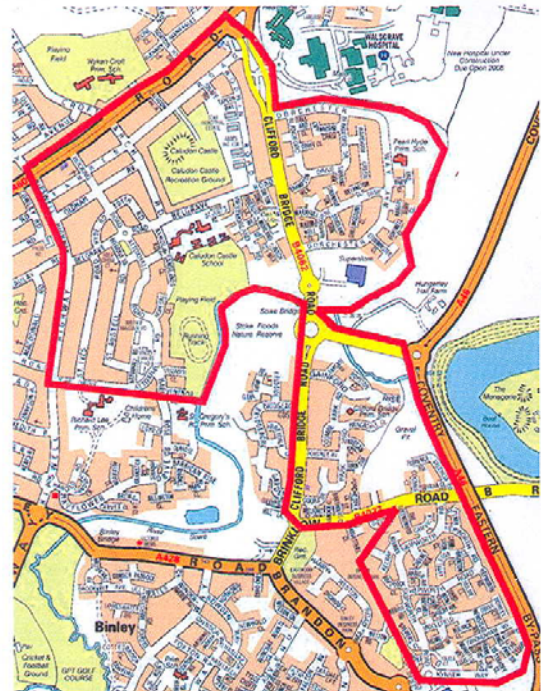
From 0001 hrs (24 hour clock) on 29 March 2006
To 2359 hrs (24 hour clock) on 28 June 2006

Directions

During the times and dates specified above a Constable / PCSO may give one or more of the following directions:

- Tell people in the group to leave the area (either immediately or at a stated time and in a stated way).
- Tell people who don't live in the area to leave (either immediately or at a stated time and in a stated way).
- Tell people who don't live in the area not to return to the area or any part of it for such period (not exceeding 24 hours) from where the direction was given, as he / she may specify.

Take note: To remain or return to this area having been told to leave may be an offence under Section 30 (4) of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, punishable by 3 months imprisonment and / or a fine of up to £2500. A notice will be displayed in the affected area announcing the end of the authority when it no longer applies.



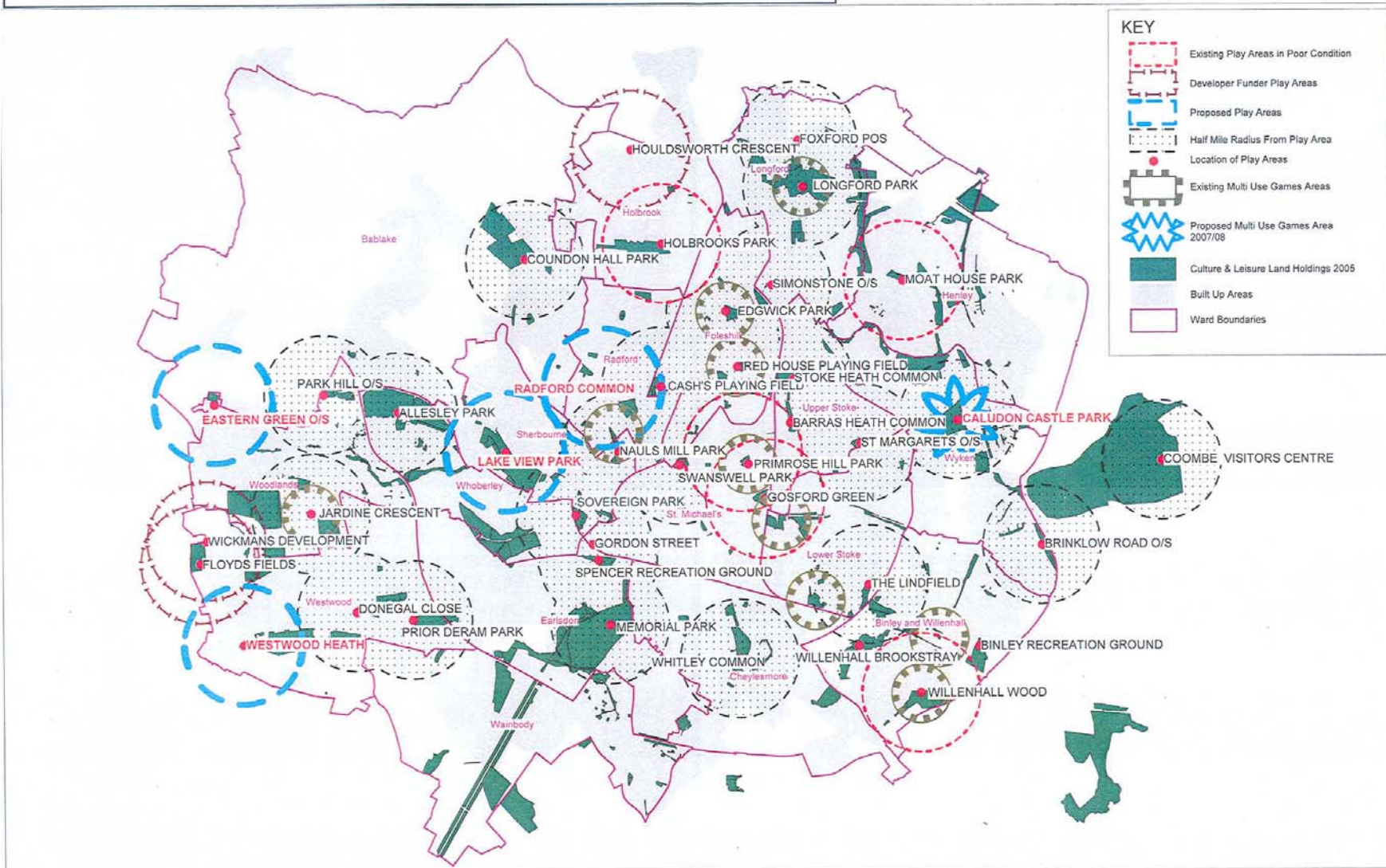
Map reproduced under © Crown copyright. WMP Licence No. 100022494 2005



For further information contact Chace Avenue Police Station on 0845 113 5000.

Coventry Parks Service, Community Services Directorate

Appendix 7 - City Wide Play Provision



PARKS CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006/07 & 2007/08	DRAWN BY DATE DRAWING NO REVISION	AJB 26/06/2006 CSL/062006 2	FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES ONLY - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED NOT TO SCALE
	This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office ©Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings Coventry City Council Licence No. 100026294 (2006)		