

## Play Strategy



Cheshire West  
and Chester

# Locality Play Improvement Framework

2016 to 2030

Incorporating First Annual Review  
(December 2017):

Ellesmere Port

Tier 2 (Part 2 of 2)



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## Overview and key points of Locality Play Improvement Frameworks

Each of the four Locality Play Improvement Frameworks provide an evidence base that can be used by all partners/stakeholders with an interest in play and youth facilities. It is called a **framework** document rather than a plan because it does not aim to produce a prescriptive play area delivery plan that partners must follow; rather it provides evidence that partners can use in reviewing, developing and implementing their own individual delivery plans.

It is important to note that the frameworks are 'live' documents which will be the subject of continuing updates and review. There is need for the Play Strategy to be managed by a partnership/monitoring structure, and one of the key recommendations from the initial stakeholder workshop in December 2015 was to set up a 'Play Partnership', which is being pursued by Cheshire West and Chester Council as a priority.

The Play Strategy framework documents cover all publicly accessible outdoor children's play spaces and youth facilities (they do not cover outdoor/green gyms, which are included within the Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study), and provide a strategic play profile for each Locality. They include recommendations for prioritising sites for improvements, sites with potential for alternative open space use, and areas where new provision would reduce gaps in accessing these facilities.

These recommendations (for improvements, alternative open space use, or areas for new provision) have been based on a clear process of prioritisation that has been consistently applied to all sites. The factors used in prioritisation of sites for improvement were agreed by the Play Strategy Steering Group following a number of stakeholder workshop sessions, and are based on: the current quality of sites and their potential for improvement; proximity to other play spaces and schools; child population; child health (excess weight); levels of child/youth deprivation and geographical barriers to services (i.e. rurality).

A number of play spaces have been recommended to have potential for alternative open space use (because they have poor play value/are of poor quality and their removal would not result in a gap in access). It is important to recognise that these spaces are only considered to have **potential** for alternative open space use – it is not the final recommendation of the report that alternative open space use is sought, but rather that further investigation and/or public consultation is required. It should also be noted that if any play spaces recommended for alternative open space use have funds secured for improvements e.g. S106 funds or parish council funding, then they would not be considered suitable for alternative open space use.

Scope for the provision of new play space has also been considered where this would reduce gaps in access (and shortfalls in provision). It should be emphasised that the decision to install a new children's or youth play space on a site will depend on the availability of funding (the council do not currently have funding for the installation and maintenance of

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new play areas) and the needs of the local community. It is important to note that open spaces listed are those with **potential** for new provision – it is not the final recommendation of this framework that they are implemented, but that they could be pursued further if and when new funding becomes available.

It should be noted that any site assessments undertaken to formulate this framework take account of site conditions at that particular time and understandably sites may be subject to additional improvements/review taking account of site aspirations and the availability of funding.

## **Locality Framework and First Annual Review (December 2017)**

This Locality Framework incorporates the first annual review of the Tier 2 Locality Play Improvement Framework for Ellesmere Port (covering the period 2016/17). It provides updated quality audit information for play spaces that have had capital investment and includes newly mapped play spaces that have been identified since the previous report/audit.

Since the draft Play Strategy was produced in 2016/17 there have also been changes to the Cheshire West and Chester parish boundaries. The new parish boundaries have been used for the updated analysis within the Rural Communities and Winsford and Northwich Play Improvement Frameworks, which use parish boundaries for the analysis. The population figures used in the analysis have also been updated to the 2015 mid-year population estimates<sup>1</sup>.

Generally speaking, the contextual information remains largely unchanged (apart from where the updated parish information is used, along with the 2015 mid-year population estimates which may also result in changes to supply figures, or where maps have been updated). The main changes are to the quality tables in section 5 of each framework document and also the results of the prioritisation process and recommendations where relevant (section 8).

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<sup>1</sup> These population estimates were provided by CWAC. It should be noted that in some cases the Output Area boundaries do not fit neatly with parish boundaries, but these were the most accurate figures for the new parish boundaries at the time of writing.

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# Locality Play Improvement Framework: Ellesmere Port

## 1.0 Introduction

The Cheshire West and Chester Play Strategy is a two tier strategy and is presented in two parts. Tier 1 (part 1 of 2) sets out relevant policy, standards and good practice guidance around design, risk and challenge, inclusion and sustainability. Tier 2 (part 2 of 2) comprises four Locality Framework Plans which provide localised information, applying the tier 1 policy and strategy and identifying priorities, issues, challenges and aspirations.

Cheshire West and Chester Council provide many local community services within a Locality Area framework. The four Locality Areas are:

- Chester
- Ellesmere Port
- Northwich & Winsford
- Rural Communities

The Locality Frameworks should be read in conjunction with the main Play Strategy report (tier 1 - part 1 of 1). Each Locality Framework includes the following information:

- A description of the area
- Maps showing the provision of play areas and youth provision
- Quantitative analysis of current provision of play space (children and youth)
- Analysis of access to children's play areas and youth provision
- Summary of quality issues (Ethos Audit)
- Summary of consultation undertaken
- Prioritisation methodology
- Results of prioritisation process (play spaces with high, medium and low potential for improvement, those sites with potential for alternative use if appropriate, and open spaces with potential for new play space provision); and
- Key issues, challenges, aspirations and priorities.

The Framework documents provide a valuable evidence based resource that can be used by all partners with an interest in play and youth facilities. The Frameworks list all designated play spaces and youth facilities within the locality i.e. those managed by the borough council, town and parish councils, housing associations, recreation trusts etc. In addition, they provide a strategic play profile for the locality; and a guide to making prioritising choices in relation to potential improvement works.

### Prioritisation Framework

**Planning for Play** suggests that prioritisation for play space improvements should be based on an objective assessment to determine where improvements are most needed. The

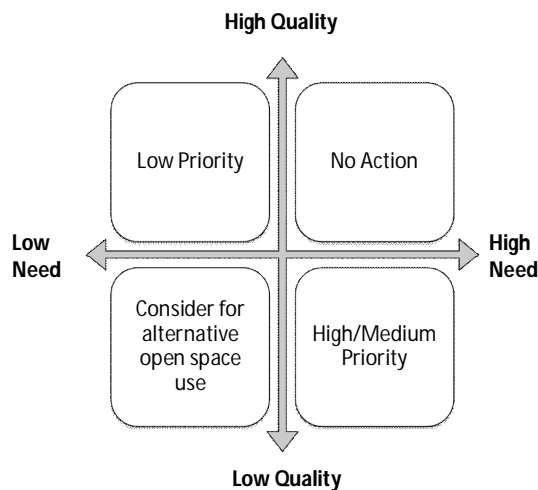
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strategy follows this guidance by applying needs criteria to all sites (the criteria were developed following consultation via four locality area play workshops)<sup>2</sup>.

The criteria are based on:

- Current quality of sites and their potential for improvement
- Proximity/access to other play areas; and proximity to community facilities
- Demographics e.g. numbers of children and young people in the area/catchment
- Child health and wellbeing
- Levels of child/youth deprivation
- Geographical barriers to play – rurality

The principal behind the prioritisation approach is illustrated by the diagram below.



As a result of this process the Framework categorises all sites in the locality under four broad headings:

- High priority for improvement
- Medium priority for improvement
- Low priority – no significant improvement action needed
- Consider alternative open space use

It is important to understand that in the latter option refers to the specific designation as a play area meaning that the space could be considered for other uses or be adapted as unequipped playable space where it may well provide useful 'doorstep' type provision.

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<sup>2</sup> Full details of the criteria and the rationale for their selection can be found in section 7 of this report.

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## **Why a Framework?**

It is called a framework document rather than a plan because it does not aim to produce a prescriptive play area delivery plan that partners must follow; rather it provides evidence that partners can use in reviewing, developing and implementing their own individual delivery plans.

The Framework simply provides an overview of all sites in the locality area and applies objective needs based criteria to all those sites - to arrive at the strategically determined site categorisation classifications.

## **How can it be used?**

Some examples are provided below:

- As a reference in relation to developing or reviewing individual partners' delivery plans.
- Reference to the Framework can help partners to decide which of many potential improvement projects could be most effectively targeted in relation to need and external funding bids.
- Where sites are identified as priorities in the Framework this identification, along with providing details of the objective means by which they were highlighted, will add significant weight to any potential funding bids.
- It can help partners to decide which projects to focus resources on in terms of further investigation and in relation to providing advice and guidance to local community play space initiatives.
- If there are a high number of small poor quality sites in an urban area, say, the Framework's identification of potential sites for alternative open space use can help in deciding options for the future e.g. to consider the viability of some sites and consider the option of providing a smaller number of accessible higher quality sites.

The Play Strategy recognises that in terms of the different partners' own delivery plans there are key additional practical factors that need to be considered, most notably in relation to the availability of capital funding and management/maintenance sustainability<sup>3</sup>.

In practice this may mean that in certain circumstances the strategic priority classification will take second place to practical achievability. To illustrate by way of some examples:

- A site that is identified as a medium strategic priority may in practice have attracted

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<sup>3</sup> This relates primarily to the need to be able to show that there is sufficient capital funding to implement the scheme; and that there is also a clear and robust plan to demonstrate how the play area will be maintained in the future e.g. is there confirmed revenue funding sufficient to maintain the site long term; a long term commuted sum from a developer ongoing community commitment to manage the site etc.

capital or S106 funding and demonstrable sustainability that makes its improvement achievable. This project is therefore included in the partner's delivery plan.

- A strategically identified high priority site is able to secure capital/S106 funding but cannot demonstrate ongoing sustainability. This project is not included in the partner's delivery plan (until the sustainability issue is overcome).
- A site that is identified as a medium priority has strong active community support including a commitment to raise capital funds and to demonstrate long-term sustainability. This project is added to the partner's delivery plan.

## 1.2 Geographical area

The Ellesmere Port Locality Area consists of the wards of Ellesmere Port Town, Whitby, Strawberry, Sutton, St Paul's, Grange, Ledsham and Manor, Netherpool and Rossmore, as shown in figure 2.

## 1.3 Population

The total population for the Ellesmere Port Locality Area is 60,254 (2015 mid year estimate). The breakdown by ward (including the child population by ward) is shown in the table below.

Table 1 Ward population statistics (2015 mid year estimates)

Ward	Child population (Age 0-19)	Total population
Ellesmere Port Town	2,428	9,330
Grange	1,263	4,647
Ledsham and Manor	1,548	7,687
Netherpool	834	3,514
Rossmore	1,157	4,323
St Paul's	2,150	9,107
Strawberry	1,099	4,921
Sutton	1,982	8,965
Whitby	1,653	7,760
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,114</b>	<b>60,254</b>

## 1.4 Overview of the area

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies sets out the profile of Ellesmere Port as follows:

Ellesmere Port is the second largest settlement with over 60,000 residents and the most industrialised part of the borough and was a major centre for manufacturing. The town has suffered a sharp decline in employment and there has been a 50 percent reduction in manufacturing employment leaving a legacy of derelict brownfield sites and some contamination issues. The industrial legacy and the presence of the M53 motorway cutting through the town has led to image and perception problems.

However, the area provides a major employment land resource for the borough and has become increasingly successful in attracting new employment opportunities. Wages are



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higher than in the rest of the borough, albeit workers rather than residents are the beneficiaries reflecting the presence of high value manufacturing in automotives and chemicals. There are pockets of high deprivation particularly in northern parts of the town. The presence of the Manchester Ship Canal, ease of access to the national motorway network and availability of land provides considerable opportunities for improving the economy of the town and the borough as a whole.

Ellesmere Port town centre serves as a local shopping centre and provides access to wider facilities and services.

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## 2.0 Existing provision of play space

There are a total of 22 children's play areas and 18 youth facilities (excluding teen shelters) within the Locality Area.

The breakdown for youth facilities is as follows:

Type of youth facility	Number
MUGA	10
Basketball	5
Skate park/BMX	2
Parkour	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

Large scale maps showing the geographical locations of the play and youth facility sites and a GIS database of sites have been provided as an electronic database to the Borough Council and can be made available to all partners.

The section below provides an analysis of the existing quantity of play space within the Ellesmere Port Locality Area.

### 3.0 Analysis of existing quantity of play space

Table 2 shows the existing provision of play space across the Ellesmere Port Locality. The second column 'Existing Provision (ha)' shows the total amount of play space for each typology in hectares. The third column 'Existing Provision (ha/1000)' shows hectares of play space per 1000 of the population (using 2015 mid year population estimates).

Table 2 Existing provision of play space across the Ellesmere Port Locality Area

Typology	Existing provision (Ha)	Existing provision (Ha/1000)
Play Space (Children)	2.01	0.03
Play Space (Youth)	0.91	0.02

This section provides an analysis of the existing quantity of play space within the Ellesmere Port locality area. It uses the quantity standards for play space from the Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Open Space Study, and summarised in table 3.

Table 3 Quantity standards for play space (from Cheshire west and Chester Open Space Study)

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1000 population)
Play Space (Children)	0.05
Play Space (Youth)	0.03

The following tables show the existing supply of play space within the locality area. Figures are given for the overall locality area, and for individual wards. Where there is insufficient supply of play space, the minus number is highlighted red to make this stand out.

Table 4 Existing Supply of children's and youth play space across the Ellesmere Port Locality Area

Typology	Existing provision (Ha)	Existing provision (Ha/1000)	Required provision (Ha)	Required provision (Ha/1000)	Supply (Ha)	Supply (Ha/1000)
Play Space (Children)	2.01	0.03	3.01	0.05	-1	-0.02
Play Space (Youth)	0.91	0.02	1.81	0.03	-0.9	-0.01

Table 5 Supply (ha) of children's and youth play space (hectares) by ward

Ward	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)
Ellesmere Port Town	-0.13	0.01
Grange	-0.09	-0.07
Ledsham and Manor	-0.38	-0.23
Netherpool	0.1	-0.08
Rossmore	-0.12	-0.09
St. Paul's	0.01	0.01
Strawberry	-0.25	-0.15
Sutton	-0.13	-0.22
Whitby	-0.01	-0.09

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As can be seen from Table 4, there is an under-supply of both children's play space and youth play space across the Ellesmere Port Locality Area. Table 5 shows how the provision varies within individual wards. Only Netherpool and St Paul's meet the quantity standard for children's play space, and only Ellesmere Port Town and St Paul's meet the standard for youth play space.

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## 4.0 Analysis of existing access to play space

This section provides maps showing access to children’s play space and youth play space across the Ellesmere Port Locality Area using the CWAC access standards developed as part of the Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study (as summarised in table 6).

Table 6 Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study - Access Standards for children and youth play space

Typology	Access standard
Play Space (Children)	480 metres or 10 minutes’ walk time
Play Space (Youth)	600 metres or 12-13 minutes’ walk time

The main gaps in access to children’s play space are in the wards of Ledsham and Manor, Strawberry and Whitby, with smaller gaps in Ellesmere Port Town and Sutton.

The provision of youth play space is more sporadic, with gaps in access across all wards, with the whole of Strawberry ward with no access to youth play space within 600m. Other wards with large access gaps are Whitby, Ledsham and Manor and Netherpool. Wards with the best access are Grange, Sutton, St Paul’s and Ellesmere Port Town.

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## 5.0 Quality Assessment

This section provides a summary of the quality audit for play areas that was undertaken as part of the Open Space Study/Play Strategy. The audits were undertaken in September/October 2015. It also includes updated quality audits undertaken in October 2017 in order to inform this annual review.

The audits were undertaken using a standardised methodology and consistent approach. However, audits of this nature can only ever be a snap-shot in time and their main purpose is to provide a consistent and objective assessment of a sites' existing and potential quality rather than a full asset audit.

### 5.1 Audit methodology

Sites were visited and a photographic record made of key features, along with a description of the site and recommendations for improvements. An assessment of the quality of the site was undertaken using the following criteria:

- Play Value
- Management and maintenance
- Accessibility
- Safety

For each of the criteria a score of 1 - 5 is given, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good. These scores are added together to provide an overall existing score for the site. Using these scores, each site is then ranked for its existing quality and its potential to improve, as follows:

#### ***Existing score/rank***

A rank from A – D has been given for the average existing total score as follows:

- The existing quality score of the site is totalled;
- This is divided by the number of criteria for which a score was given to give an average total score;
- The scores are ranked from A – D, where sites with rank 'A' are within the top 25% of quality, and sites with rank 'D' are in the bottom 25% of quality – **i.e. sites with rank 'A' have the best existing quality, and sites with rank 'D' have the poorest quality.**
- The breakdown of scoring into the different rank scores for the existing quality is as follows:
  - A: 16-20
  - B: 12-15
  - C: 8-11
  - D: 4-7

#### ***Potential score/rank***

A rank from A – D has been given for the average gap/potential score as follows:

- The potential quality score of the site is totalled
- This is divided by the number of criteria for which a score was given to give an average potential score
- The scores are ranked from A – D, where sites with rank 'A' are within the top 25% of potential improvement and sites with rank 'D' are in the bottom 25% of potential improvement – **i.e. sites with rank 'A' have the most potential to be improved, and sites with rank 'D' have the poorest potential to improve**
- The breakdown of scoring into the different rank scores for the potential quality is as follows:
  - A: 10-14
  - B: 7-9
  - C: 4-6
  - D: 0-3

## 5.2 Summary of quality audit results

The details of the quality audit are held within the quality database provided to the council as part of the Open Space Study. A summary of the play areas included within the quality audit for the Chester Locality Area is shown in Tables 7 and 8 below. Audits were undertaken in September/October 2015 and in October 2017 as part of this annual review. The year the audit was undertaken is provided within the table below.

Table 7 Ethos quality audit of children's play spaces within Ellesmere Port Locality Area

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
1652	Bebington Road Play Area	Sutton	Play space which is outdated, contains swings, rocking horse and other apparatus, access via small path, needs updating fully.	D	B	Needs replacing fully, access could be improved.	2015
1653	Delamere Drive Play Area	St. Paul's	Play space with rope and wooden climbing frames, swing has been removed, not maintained, weeds growing around the play space.	D	C	improve maintenance, weeds killed, swings need replacing	2015

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
1654	Westminster Park Play Area	Rossmore	Play space with range of equipment. Most was modern and well maintained	B	D	Some equipment could be updated <sup>4</sup>	2015
1655	Hillside Drive	Netherpool	Play space with a set of swings and some climbing bars. Limited play value on site and no signage.	C	C	Add signage and boundary, or remove. <sup>5</sup>	2017
1660	Cambridge Road Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play space with climbing frames, swings and a rope apparatus, benches and bins, perimeter fence, no issues.	C	C	Dated equipment, surfacing poor <sup>6</sup>	2015
1662	Somerville Crescent Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Small LAP, fenced, swings and rocker, bin, bench	C	B	Opportunity to extend play area and provide additional facilities, currently poor play value	2015
1663	Heath Grove Play Area	St. Paul's	Dated play space with old equipment.	C	B	Equipment needs updating	2015
1664	Parklands View Play Area	St. Paul's	Poor childrens play area with 2 swings, rockers, grass area, fencing, bin, bench	D	A	Needs full restoration and replacement of equipment	2015
1667	Truman's Lane Play Area	St. Paul's	Decent play space with good signage and a good boundary fencing. Play equipment is somewhat outdated	B	D	Refurbish equipment, or remove <sup>7</sup> .	2017

<sup>4</sup> There are plans to improve this play area during 2018

<sup>5</sup> CWAC note small scale improvements and installation of new fitness equipment, refurbished swings in 2016/17.

<sup>6</sup> CWAC note there are plans for small scale improvements in 2018

<sup>7</sup> New site access path installed in 2017



ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
			however.				
1668	Wenlock Lane Play Area	Sutton	Poor, neglected play area with limited equipment. Grass is really overgrown and soaking. The equipment is outdated and in poor condition.	D	B	Remove space, or considerable refurbishment <sup>8</sup> .	2017
1670	Whetstone Hey Play Area	St. Paul's	Play space with new modern equipment. Good signage on site.	A	D	None.	2017
1672	School Road Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Small play space with different equipment and MUGA. Play space doesn't have signs on all entrances. Play space has some damage equipment and some apparatus is dated.	C	B	Improve maintenance and update some equipment	2015
1673	Luton Road Play Area	Grange	Play space next to school fields. Site has basket hoop MUGA and children's play. Play space basic with dated equipment	C	C	Some equipment needs updating	2015
1674	Seacombe Park (Lupus Way) Play Area	Sutton	Good play space with wide range of equipment. Most equipment is modern with a few	B	D	Sign installed on entrance.	2015

<sup>8</sup> CWAC note that there are plans to consider improvements to the site in 2018/19.

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
			exceptions. There is no sign on entrance				
1676	Whitby Park Play Area	Whitby	Playarea with modern toddler equipment and noticeably older junior equipment. Site has good play value with good signage and accessibility.	A	D	No issues <sup>9</sup> .	2017
1678	Wolverham Park Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play space with updated, modern equipment. The space is pleasant with decent signage and good access.	A	D	No issues.	2017
1681	Naylor Green	Netherpool	Play space in housing estate. dated apparatus which could be improved.	C	C	Update equipment	2015
1687	Thornton Road Playing Field Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Modern play space for toddlers to teens, fenced with open entrances (dogs could get in) benches, bins and bike rails. Good path network leading to play area	A	D	No priorities <sup>10</sup>	2015
1770	Festival Park Play Area	Grange	Wooden play space with climbing frame and slide, swing removed, just	C	B	Poor play space, swings need replacing, new sign and some signs of vandalism throughout site. <sup>11</sup>	2015

<sup>9</sup> CWAC note that the original helter skelter was removed in November 2017 due to health and safety issues

<sup>10</sup> CWAC note that there are plans for small scale improvements in 2018.

<sup>11</sup> CWAC note that there are plans for improved landscaping and play area improvements in 2018.

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
			structure left, damage to sign, some graffiti and litter.				
1798	Blackstairs Road	Netherpool	Play space with 2 climbing frames, swings and rope apparatus, suitable for toddlers, unsure about piece of equipment, can't tell if it's damaged.	B	D	Good play space, no issues	2015
1812	Trinity Road Play Space	Ellesmere Port Town	Small fenced LAP with spring and toddler climb/slide	C	B	Opportunity to extend play area and provide additional facilities, currently poor play value	2015
1975	Wharfe Lane Play Area	Rossmore	Large play area with modern and diverse, wooden equipment. Pleasant site with good bins, benches and signage present.	A	D	None.	2017

Table 8 Ethos quality audit of youth play spaces/facilities within Ellesmere Port Locality Area

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
1470	Cambridge road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	MUGA with a damaged basketball hoop and graffiti, otherwise no issues	C	D	Basketball hoop needs replacing	2015
1707	Heath Grove Football Pitch and Basketball Hoop	St. Paul's	Single basketball hoop and hard standing area.	C	D	Could have markings put down, or could be turned into a MUGA.	2015
1723	Lime Street Basketball Ring	Rossmore	Single basketball hoop, hard	B	C	surface needs improving and/or enlarging to	2015

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
			surface.			increase usability. somewhat outdated.	
1797	Little Sutton Library Basketball	St. Paul's	Single basketball hoop in library grounds.	B	C	Outdated, needs replacing or removing.	2015
1881	Luton Road Basketball	Grange	Single basketball hoop on a hard surface.	C	C	Could be upgraded to a Half MUGA.	2015
1709	Luton Road MUGA	Grange	Play space next to school fields. Site has basket hoop MUGA and children's play. MUGA is good with built in teen shelters in the form of dug outs.	C	C	Some equipment needs updating	2015
1705	Oasis Club, Coronation Road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	MUGA with basketball hoops, grass growing out of the ground	C	D	Weeds killed, possible resurface	2015
1722	Parklands MUGA	St. Paul's	Average MUGA with good signage.	C	C	Some signs of vandalism with scorch marks on the surface. litter was also prominent around site.	2015
1728	Poole Hall Lane Basketball	Netherpool	Single basketball hoop with hard surface.	C	C	Could be converted to a MUGA to improve usability.	2015
1552	School Road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Small play space with different equipment and MUGA. MUGA is average with no obvious signs of damage.	C	B	Improve maintenance and update some equipment	2015
1841	Seacombe Park (Lupus Way) MUGA	Sutton	MUGA with perimeter fencing, football goals and basketball hoops.	B	D	In ok condition but has potential for future improvements.	2015

ID	Site Name	Ward	Description	Existing Rank	Potential Rank	Recommendations for improvement	Year of audit
1724	Thornton Road MUGA area	Ellesmere Port Town	Old dated Half MUGA with basketball hoop and goal mouth	D	C	Poor MUGA with dated apparatus. site could be renovated and improved with full MUGA and better floor markings.	2015
2026	Valley Drive BMX	St. Paul's	New BMX track in good condition with excellent signage.	A	D	None.	2017
1706	Westminster Park MUGA	Rossmore	MUGA with no perimeter fencing and teen shelter.	B	D	Average facilities. site could be improved with some side panels to prevent the games spilling out onto the rest of the site.	2015
1714	Whitby Park MUGA	Whitby	Average MUGA	B	D	Average facilities that should be better considering the status of Whitby Park. MUGA Could be improved with more sturdy and modern fencing.	2015
1726	Whitby Park Wheeled Sports Park and Parkour Free Running Facility	Whitby	Skate ramps and excellent new parkour facility. Both generally new looking facilities but with good usage and management. There is a lack of signage on site and a lack of bins and benches.	A	D	Could add bins, benches and signage, not priority.	2017
1710	Wolverham Park MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Modern MUGA with low side panels.	B	D	Good MUGA with no recommendations.	2015

As can be seen from tables 7 and 8, there is a huge variation in the quality of play space within Ellesmere Port Locality. Sites with the lowest existing quality scores (scoring C or D), and with the most potential to be improved (scoring A or B) are:

- Bebington Road Play Area (Sutton)
- Festival Park Play Area (Grange)

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- Heath Grove Play Area (St Paul's)
  - Parklands View Play Area (St Paul's)
  - School Road MUGA (Ellesmere Port Town)
  - School Road Play Area (Ellesmere Port Town)
  - Somerville Crescent Play Area (Ellesmere Port Town)
  - Trinity Road Play Space (Ellesmere Port Town)
  - Wenlock Lane Play Area (Sutton)

## 6.0 Consultation

As part of the Cheshire West and Chester Open Space Study, consultation was undertaken during 2015 which included surveys of households, local groups and organisations (including play and youth organisations) and town and parish councils.

The key headline findings regarding children’s play space and youth play space are as follows:

- Significant numbers of stakeholders highlighted facilities for teenagers including multi-use games areas as being of poor quality
- The majority of respondents would not expect to travel more than 10 minutes on foot to access children’s play areas. Respondents would be prepared to travel further if safe access to sites was improved, and the facilities were more interesting/varied
- A majority of respondents suggest a need for more facilities for teenagers, however for children’s play areas, the majority of respondents suggest that that are enough play areas, and the priority is for improvements to existing play areas.

Further consultation was also undertaken to inform the Play Strategy including a stakeholder workshop, four locality area workshops and further consultation with town and parish councils (details are included in section 6).

Ellesmere Port does not have Parish/Town Councils. Therefore, to provide a local input on known play and youth facility issues, locality managers were contacted to provide an overview. The Ellesmere Port Locality Managers comments (verbatim) are included in table 9 below.

Table 9 Locality Managers’ comments regarding Ellesmere Port (as at 2016)

Facility/ Aspect	Issues/comment/observations
Children's play areas	<p><b>Naylor Green:</b> Part of new Rivacre Village development. Concerns over entry point due to proximity of two lane roundabout. Possible safety barrier needed between pavement and road.</p> <p><b>Blackstairs Road:</b> Part of new Rivacre Village development. Large round swing removed after play area opened due to ASB. Unfortunately, it was located in an in-appropriate position and was far too close to a property. Also had problems with children kicking balls against fence lines. Additional signage and planting to help manage issue which seems to be working.</p> <p><b>Rivacre Village:</b> There will be additional informal greenspaces within this development though none are listed as having play facilities. The original plans indicate installation of a MUGA next to Wharf Lane play area though concerns that this will be too close to properties if it goes ahead.</p> <p><b>Plantation Drive<sup>12</sup>:</b> This Play Area is in an unacceptable state and concerns have been raised about the site on numerous occasions over the last few years. The facility is located in an area of predominantly older people but is the only play area</p>

<sup>12</sup> This has been mapped as Hillside Drive within the Ethos audit, and has come out of the Framework as a medium priority site (See table 14).

Facility/ Aspect	Issues/comment/observations
	<p>on this side of two busy main roads (Rossmore Road West and Rivacre Road/Netherpool Road)</p> <p><b>Festival Road Park:</b> This park includes a football pitch, play area and large green areas used by dog walkers. The park is a shortcut and therefore has a large footfall on a daily basis. It is subject to regular fires, litter issues and fly tipping on the Festival Road side of the park. The large round swing has been burnt on 2 occasions and has not been replaced. Play equipment is of a wooden design (less for slide) with a sand base. This remains unpopular due to lack of regular swings and play equipment.</p> <p><b>Luton Road Park:</b> This park has a MUGA, Basket Ball Hoop, 2 Youth PODS, fenced in Children's Play Area and open green space used for dog walking. This park is subject to some ASB and youth nuisance issues. Some equipment was recently lost due to fire.</p> <p><b>Heath Lane:</b> Nice small park and play area that is locked at night by local residents. This has helped reduce incidents of ASB.</p> <p><b>Whitby Park:</b> Contains a large children's play area which is well used. Whilst this play park has managed to avoid being vandalised, offensive graffiti is reported from time to time.</p> <p><b>Elm Grove:</b> This park contains no play equipment. Two consultations have been held with residents regarding the installation of play equipment but there is no support for this.</p> <p><b>Seacombe Drive:</b> The park has recently been refurbished and improvements made.</p> <p><b>Bebington Road Play Park:</b> The park is accessed via a pathway between two properties and is kept reasonably well. No reports of vandalism or complaints about its upkeep.</p> <p><b>Wenlock Lane:</b> The park contains a few items of play equipment. The park has suffered from severe flooding in the past and is not well used due to the proximity of Seacombe Park.</p> <p><b>Parkour Zone:</b> a new Parkour facility has been provided in Whitby park.</p> <p><b>General Comment:</b> Most play areas in Ellesmere Port are subject to complaints regarding general maintenance and vandalism. Residents would also like a mix of equipment for all ages in all areas.</p>
Teenage facilities (e.g. skate parks)	<p>The town has a well-used BMX track and Skate Park and is about to have a purpose built Parkour facility<sup>13</sup>. However, more activities and teenage targeted facilities are always requested.</p> <p>The Skate Park has had some vandalism (mostly small fires) and the bending of the safety barriers.</p>
Multi-Use Games Areas	<p>Whitby Park has a well-used MUGA.</p> <p>Seacombe Park has a well-used MUGA which has had fire damage to the surface in the past (now repaired).</p> <p>General Comment: The key issues and complaints regarding MUGAs relate to improper use, litter and noise.</p>
General	<p>It was also noted that most complaints regarding play areas fall into three areas: general maintenance (grass cutting/bins emptied/dog fouling); graffiti; and poor/dated equipment and upkeep. Most complaints regarding green space relate to the up keep and maintenance of areas.</p>

<sup>13</sup> The Parkour Facility has now been installed.



## 7.0 Prioritisation of play space methodology

### 7.1 Priority Factors/Criteria

Following a series of four Locality Area Workshops with key stakeholders, eight criteria for prioritising play areas for improvement were agreed by the steering group. These are set out within table 10 below.

Table 10 Priority factors and how they have been measured

Priority Factor	Statistics used/ how measured
1. Demographics (% of 0-19 year olds within each ward)	Office for National Statistics (ONS) Population of 0-19 year olds at ward level (mid-year 2015 estimates)
2. Child excess weight (overweight and obese combined)	Excess weight in reception and year six children - 2013/14 to 2014/15 pooled by ward and compared to England levels (Cheshire West and Chester JSNA)
3. Proximity to schools	Mapping
4. Proximity to other play areas	Mapping
5. Child/youth deprivation	Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) – Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) (2015)
6. Rural deprivation to services	Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) - Geographical Barriers (subset of the Barriers to Services domain) by LSOA (2015)
7. Existing Quality	Ethos quality audit rank scores (from Open Space Study/Play Strategy)
8. Potential Quality	Ethos quality audit rank scores (from Open Space Study/Play Strategy)

#### 7.1.1 Demographics

Table 11 below shows the child population within each ward compared to the total ward population, and for the locality area as a whole. The last column shows the percentage of the population within each ward (and the total for the Ellesmere Port Locality Area) that is between age 0-19 (i.e. the child population).

The child population within Ellesmere Port is 14,114 which is 23.42% of the total population of 60,254. Some wards have a significantly higher percentage of children, notably Ellesmere Port Town (26.02%), Grange (27.18%) and Rossmore (26.76%). Play spaces within these wards with the highest percentages of child population (25-30%) have scored more highly compared to play space in other wards, as there is likely to be more demand for play facilities in these areas (see table 12 for detailed scoring and weighting).

Table 11 Population of 0-19 year olds at ward level (mid-year 2015 estimates)

Ward	Population Aged 0-19	Total population	% Population Under 19
Ellesmere Port Town	2,428	9,330	26.02
Grange	1,263	4,647	27.18
Ledsham and Manor	1,548	7,687	20.14
Netherpool	834	3,514	23.73
Rossmore	1,157	4,323	26.76
St Paul's	2,150	9,107	23.61
Strawberry	1,099	4,921	22.33
Sutton	1,982	8,965	22.11
Whitby	1,653	7,760	21.30
<b>Total for Ellesmere Port Locality Area</b>	<b>14,114</b>	<b>60,254</b>	<b>23.42</b>

### 7.1.2 Excess Weight in reception and year 6 children

Play areas that are within wards with significantly higher levels of excess weight in reception and year six children (compared to England) score highly, as good quality and engaging play facilities that meet local needs within these areas will be important in encouraging children to play outdoors, leading more active and healthy lifestyles. Reducing childhood obesity is a key target for public health in Cheshire West and Chester.

Ellesmere Port Locality Area has significantly higher levels of excess weight in both reception and year 6 children compared to England.

The majority of wards are significantly higher in child excess weight compared to England, with the exception of Ledsham and Manor, Strawberry and Whitby wards. Sutton ward is significantly higher than England for excess weight in reception children, but has no significant difference to England in year six children.

### 7.1.3 Proximity to schools

This was measured using ArcView GIS, using the education sites data collected as part of the CWAC Open Space Study. The closer a play area is to a school, the higher it scores.

### 7.1.4 Proximity to other play areas

This was measured using ArcView GIS. The further away a play area is to another play area, the higher it scores.

### 7.1.5 Child/youth deprivation (IDACI)

The income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) is an index of deprivation used in the United Kingdom. It measures in a local area (called a lower super output area (LSOA), which is a small fixed geographic area encompassing a population of approximately 1,000 people) the proportion of children under the age of 16 that live in families that are income deprived i.e. in receipt of income support, income based jobseeker's allowance or pension credit, or those not in receipt of these benefits but in receipt of Child Tax Credit with an equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) below 60% of the national median before housing costs. The LSOA with a rank of 1 is the most deprived. Play space within the areas with the lowest ranks i.e. the most deprived areas (with a rank of between 1 and 3) are given the highest score.

The wards with the highest levels of child/youth deprivation are Netherpool, Ellesmere Port Town, Rossmore, Grange (entire ward), St Paul's and Sutton. Strawberry, Ledsham and Manor and Whitby wards are less deprived.

### 7.1.6 Rural deprivation to services - geographical barriers

Geographical Barriers to Services is a sub-domain of the Barriers to Housing and Services domain, which is one of the domains that make up the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It measures physical proximity to essential services and assigns each local area (LSOA) a deprivation score based on the road distance to a GP, shop, primary school and post office. The LSOA with a rank of 1 is the most deprived.

The most deprived wards are Netherpool, Rossmore, Strawberry, Ledsham and Manor and Whitby (with a small area around the northern fringes of St Paul's).

### 7.1.7 Existing quality and potential quality

The methodology for the Ethos quality audit which ranks play spaces for their existing quality and potential to improve is explained under section 5. A summary of the play areas included within the Chester Locality quality audit, with their rank scores is provided in tables 7 and 8.

## 7.2 Scoring play areas

For each of these criteria/priority factors listed in table 10, a scoring and weighted rank has been applied as set out in table 12 below, in order to prioritise each play area.

Table 12 Desktop assessment criteria for prioritising sites

Priority Factor	Scoring	Weighted Ranking
1. Demographics	12-20% of ward population is between 0-19 years old: <b>score 1</b> 20-25% of ward population is between 0-19 years old: <b>score 2</b>	4

	25-30% of ward population is between 0-19 years old: <b>score 3</b>	
2. Child weight excess	Significantly higher than England: <b>score 2</b> No significant difference to England: <b>score 1</b> Significantly lower than England: <b>score 0</b>	1
3. Proximity to schools	<100 metres: <b>score 3</b> 100-300 metres: <b>score 2</b> 300-500 metres: <b>score 1</b> >500 metres: <b>score 0</b>	3
4. Proximity to other play areas	<b>Children's play space:</b> <80 metres: <b>score 0</b> 80-280 metres: <b>score 1</b> 280-480 metres: <b>score 2</b> >480 metres: <b>score 3</b> <b>Youth play space</b> <200 metres: <b>score 0</b> 200-400 metres: <b>score 1</b> 400-600 metres: <b>score 2</b> >600 metres: <b>score 3</b>	3
5. Child/youth deprivation (Rank 1 = most deprived 10% and Rank 10 = least deprived)	Ranked between 1-3: <b>score 3</b> Ranked between 4-6: <b>score 2</b> Ranked between 7-9: <b>score 1</b> Ranked 10: <b>score 0</b>	2
6. Rural Deprivation to services (Rank 1= highest barriers/most deprived and Rank 10= least deprived)	Ranked between 1-3: <b>score 3</b> Ranked between 4-6: <b>score 2</b> Ranked between 7-9: <b>score 1</b> Ranked 10: <b>score 0</b>	2
7. Existing Quality	Rank A (excellent quality site): <b>score 0</b> Rank B: <b>score 1</b> Rank C: <b>score 2</b> Rank D (Poor quality site): <b>score 3</b>	5
8. Potential Quality	Rank A (high potential to improve): <b>score 3</b> Rank B: <b>score 2</b> Rank C: <b>score 1</b> Rank D (no/limited potential to improve): <b>score 0</b>	5

### 7.2.1 Priority scores

The total score for each play area is calculated by multiplying the score by the weighted ranking and then adding the weighted rankings for each of the criteria/priority factors to give an overall score. The range of total scores (from 15 to 62) for each site has been used to group the play areas into 3 priority categories, as follows:

- 
- **Total score between 15 and 30: Low priority for improvement**
  - **Total score between 31 and 46: Medium priority for improvement**
  - **Total score between 47 and 62: High priority for improvement.**

Sites have also been considered for alternative use where their removal would not result in any gaps in access (i.e. there is a cluster of sites in close proximity).

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## **8.0 Results of prioritisation process**

This section sets out the results of the prioritisation process explained in section 7.

### **8.1 High priority sites**

There are 13 play spaces that have been identified as a high priority for improvement within the Ellesmere Port Locality Area (i.e. those sites which scored between 47 and 62). These high priority play areas are shown in table 13 below.

The 'Ethos recommendations' column considers the quality audit, the priority for improvement and the quantity and access analysis (columns 5 to 10) and recommends if sites should be retained, retained and improved, or if they have potential for alternative open space use (which feeds into section 8.4).

Table 13 Play areas that are a high priority for improvement

ID	Site Name	Ward	Typology	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1652	Bebington Road Play Area	Sutton	Play Space (Children)	D	B	51	-0.13	0.12	31.34	Poor quality site with potential for improvement. The site is located in a high priority for improvement area. If the site were to be removed it would worsen the shortfall in ward supply and create a large gap in access. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained and enhanced in line with the quality audit.
1660	Cambridge Road Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	C	C	49	-0.13	0.09	22.29	Dated site with poor surfacing. The site is in a high priority area and its removal would result in a large gap in access. It is recommended that the site is retained and improved. There are small scale improvements planned for 2018.
1653	Delamere Drive Play Area	St. Paul's	Play Space (Children)	D	C	48	0.01	0.15	2.66	Poor quality play space. There is sufficient ward supply and only a small gap in access if removed. It is therefore considered that the site may have potential for alternative open space use, provided that a nearby site is extended by the same area to avoid a shortfall within the ward.
1770	Festival Park Play Area	Grange	Play Space (Children)	C	B	53	-0.09	0.09	38.6	Poor site in need of improvements. The site is a high priority for improvement and there is an existing shortfall in supply. The removal of the site would also result in a large gap in access. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained and enhanced in line with the quality audit. Plans for landscaping as well as play area improvements to take place in 2018.

ID	Site Name	Ward	Typology	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1673	Luton Road Play Area	Grange	Play Space (Children)	C	C	49	-0.09	0.05	33.58	Average site with dated, basic equipment. The ward has an existing shortfall in supply, and the site is located in high priority for improvement zone. A large gap in access would also occur if the site was removed. It is recommended that the site is retained and improved.
1664	Parklands View Play Area	St. Paul's	Play Space (Children)	D	A	60	0.01	0.14	32.95	Average site with potential for improvements. The removal of the site would create a large gap in access and it is a high priority for improvement. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1728	Poole Hall Lane Basketball	Netherpool	Play Space (Youth)	C	C	48	-0.08	0.03	117.06	Site is an average, single hoop basketball facility with high priority for improvement. The site is also located in a ward with a shortfall in supply and no other youth facilities are nearby to the site (there would be a large gap in access if removed). The site should therefore be retained and enhanced in line with the quality audit.
1552	School Road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Youth)	C	B	51	0.01	0.04	0.01	Average quality MUGA with high priority for improvement. The removal of the site wouldn't result in a gap in access (although further consideration may need to be given to the A5032 acting as a barrier). Therefore, it is considered that space may have potential to be used for alternative open space (provided the A5032 does not act as a barrier, and provided that a nearby youth play space can be extended by the same area to avoid creating a shortfall within the ward).



ID	Site Name	Ward	Typology	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1672	School Road Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	C	B	52	-0.13	0.06	14.94	Average quality play space with potential to improve. Its loss would result in a gap in access, and there is already a shortfall in ward supply. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1662	Somerville Crescent Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	C	B	51	-0.13	0.02	2.48	Small, average play space with poor play value. The removal of the site would not result in a gap in access. It is considered that the site may have potential for alternative open space, provided that a nearby site is extended by at least the same area to avoid worsening the shortfall.
1724	Thornton Road MUGA area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Youth)	D	C	54	0.01	0.05	77.64	Poor MUGA site in need of improvement, assessed as being high priority for improvement. The loss of the site would result in a shortfall in the ward supply and it would create a large gap in access. The site should therefore be retained and improved in line with the quality audit.
1812	Trinity Road Play Space	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	C	B	51	-0.13	0.02	27.48	Small site with potential for improvement. There is an existing shortfall in supply and its loss would result in a gap in access. Therefore, it is recommended it is retained and improved.

ID	Site Name	Ward	Typology	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1668	Wenlock Lane Play Area	Sutton	Play Space (Children)	D	B	50	-0.13	0.01	51.33	Whilst the site is currently in poor condition, improvement works are ongoing. The removal of the site would result in a large gap in access and worsen the shortfall in supply. It recommended that the site is retained and enhanced.

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## **8.2 Medium priority sites**

There are 20 play spaces that have been identified as a medium priority for improvement within the Ellesmere Port Locality Area (i.e. those sites which scored between 31 and 46) – nine children’s play spaces and 11 youth facilities, as shown in table 14 below.

The ‘Ethos recommendations’ column considers the quality audit, the priority for improvement and the quantity and access analysis (columns 5 to 10) and recommends if sites should be retained, retained and improved, or if they have potential for alternative open space use (which feeds into section 8.4).

Table 14 Play areas that are a medium priority for improvement

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1798	Blackstairs Road	Netherpool	Play Space (Children)	B	D	36	0.1	0.08	1.26	The site is an average quality play area with average play value. The site is in an area of need (medium priority for improvement), there is sufficient supply within the ward and there would be hardly any gap in access if it were to be removed. It is considered that the site may have potential for alternative open space use, but this would need further consideration as it appears relatively recent investments have been made to the site.
1470	Cambridge road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Youth)	C	D	43	0.01	0.04	21.43	Average quality MUGA, in an area of medium need/medium priority for improvement. The site's loss would create a large gap in access. It is therefore recommended that the facility is retained.
1707	Heath Grove Football Pitch and Basketball Hoop	St. Paul's	Play Space (Youth)	C	D	34	0.01	0.01	62.14	Single basketball hoop, low play value. There is sufficient supply of youth provision within the ward, however the loss of the site would result in a gap in access. The site should therefore be retained and enhanced in line with the quality audit.
1663	Heath Grove Play Area	St. Paul's	Play Space (Children)	C	B	43	0.01	0.05	39.74	Average site with dated equipment. Whilst there is suitable ward supply, the gap in access is large. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained.

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1655	Hillside Drive	Netherpool	Play Space (Children)	C	C	46	0.1	0.04	46.6	Average site with limited play value. Recent improvements have been made on site including a new trim trail and swings. If the site was removed it would create a considerable gap in access. On this basis, it is recommended that the site is retained.
1723	Lime Street Basketball Ring	Rossmore	Play Space (Youth)	B	C	43	-0.09	0.01	34.98	An average quality basketball hoop located in a ward with a shortfall in supply and the site's removal would result in a large gap in access. On this basis, it is recommended that the site is retained, and could be upgraded to a MUGA (or other youth facility) to improve play value.
1797	Little Sutton Library Basketball	St. Paul's	Play Space (Youth)	B	C	37	0.01	0.07	44.6	Basketball hoop with low play value. In a ward with sufficient supply. There would, however, be a large gap in access if the site were to be removed. The site should therefore be retained and improved in line with the quality audit.
1881	Luton Road Basketball	Grange	Play Space (Youth)	C	C	45	-0.07	0.01	2.85	The site is a single basketball hoop within a ward with a shortfall in supply. However, the loss of the site would only result in a very small gap in access (due to adjacent MUGA). Due to the low play value of this facility, and considering the access to nearby youth facilities, it is considered that this facility may have potential for alternative open space use, provided that nearby facilities are improved/extended to avoid making the ward shortfall worse.

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1709	Luton Road MUGA	Grange	Play Space (Youth)	C	C	45	-0.07	0.06	4.04	Average quality MUGA. Its loss would result in a gap in access and worsen the existing shortfall within the ward. Therefore, it should be retained and improved.
1681	Naylor Green	Netherpool	Play Space (Children)	C	C	45	0.1	0.16	10.7	The site is somewhat dated. The ward has sufficient supply and hardly any gap in access would occur if the site was removed. It is considered that the site should be retained and enhanced.
1705	Oasis Club, Coronation Road MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Youth)	C	D	42	0.01	0.1	0	Poor quality MUGA with basketball hoops, medium priority for improvement and in a ward with sufficient youth play supply. The removal of the site would not result in a gap in access, however it would result in a shortfall in supply within the ward. It is therefore considered that the site has potential for alternative open space use, provided that a nearby site could be expanded by the same area, to prevent a shortfall in the ward supply.
1722	Parklands MUGA	St. Paul's	Play Space (Youth)	C	C	45	0.01	0.04	30.43	The site is in poor condition with lots of graffiti and scorch marks. The site is also in St. Paul's Ward which has sufficient youth play supply. However, the site is located in an area of high need/ high priority for improvement and the removal of the site would create a substantial gap in access. The site should therefore be retained and improved.

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1841	Seacombe Park (Lupus Way) MUGA	Sutton	Play Space (Youth)	B	D	34	-0.22	0.05	118.45	MUGA in Decent condition. There is a shortfall in supply within the ward and its removal would result in a very large gap in access. It should therefore be retained.
1687	Thornton Road Playing Field Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	A	D	34	-0.13	0.12	54.28	Decent facility with good play value. The site is in an area of need (medium priority for improvements, there is a shortfall in ward supply and a large gap in access if the site were to be removed. The site has also secured S106 funding for improvements. It is therefore recommended that the site is improved.
1667	Truman's Lane Play Area	St. Paul's	Play Space (Children)	B	D	35	0.01	0.04	62.87	Whilst no new equipment has been added, a path to the play space has. The removal of the site would create a large gap in access. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1706	Westminster Park MUGA	Rossmore	Play Space (Youth)	B	D	37	-0.09	0.03	15.59	Average MUGA with potential to improve. The site is located within a ward with a shortfall in supply of youth provision, which would be worsened if the site were to be removed. A considerable gap in access would also be created if the site were to be removed. On this basis, it is recommended that the site is retained and improved (by installing side panels).

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1654	Westminster Park Play Area	Rossmore	Play Space (Children)	B	D	40	-0.12	0.06	70.24	Decent play space with modern equipment. Whilst the site is in a medium priority area for improvement, its removal would increase the shortfall in access and create a large gap in access. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1975	Wharfe Lane Play Area	Rossmore	Play Space (Children)	A	D	33	-0.12	0.04	25.76	Excellent site with good facilities. There is an existing shortfall in supply and a large gap in access would occur if the site was removed. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1710	Wolverham Park MUGA	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Youth)	B	D	38	0.01	0.06	32.49	Decent MUGA with no need for improvements. The removal of the site would result in a large gap in youth play access. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained.
1678	Wolverham Park Play Area	Ellesmere Port Town	Play Space (Children)	A	D	31	-0.13	0.03	5.88	The site is very modern in large park. Whilst only a small gap in access would occur if the site was removed, it would also worsen the shortfall in supply. It is recommended that the site is retained.



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### **8.3 Low priority sites**

There are six play spaces that have been identified as a low priority for improvement within the Ellesmere Port Locality Area (i.e. those sites which scored between 15 and 30) – three children’s play spaces and three youth facilities, as shown in table 15 below.

The ‘Ethos recommendations’ column considers the quality audit, the priority for improvement and the quantity and access analysis (columns 5 to 10) and recommends if sites should be retained, retained and improved, or if they have potential for alternative open space use (which feeds into section 8.4).

Even though these play areas have come out of the framework as being low priority for improvement, local consultation will be needed to identify local issues and priorities.

Table 15 Play areas that are a low priority for improvement

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1674	Seacombe Park (Lupus Way) Play Area	Sutton	Play Space (Children)	B	D	30	-0.13	0.18	45.16	Decent facility in a low priority for improvement area. However, there is an existing shortfall in supply and a large gap in access would occur as a result of the site's removal. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained.
2026	Valley Drive BMX	St. Paul's	Play Space (Youth)	A	D	30	0.01	0.16	48.6	Very good quality facility located in a ward with sufficient youth play provision, however the removal of the site would create a large gap in access and recent improvements have been undertaken on site. It is therefore recommended that the site is retained.
1670	Whetstone Hey Play Area	St. Paul's	Play Space (Children)	A	D	24	0.01	0.08	11.79	Decent site with good quality, modern equipment. Whilst the site is in a low priority zone, and there is hardly any gap in access, it is recommended that the site is retained.
1714	Whitby Park MUGA	Whitby	Play Space (Youth)	B	D	28	-0.09	0.04	2.15	Good quality MUGA providing one of a number of youth facilities within this park. There is a shortfall of youth provision within the ward. Therefore, it should be retained.

ID	Site Name	Typology	Ward	Existing Quality Rank	Potential Quality Rank	Priority for Improvement Score	Ward Supply (ha)	Area of Site (ha)	Gap in Access if removed (ha)	Ethos recommendations
1676	Whitby Park Play Area	Whitby	Play Space (Children)	A	D	26	-0.01	0.38	38.1	Excellent play facility within a flagship park. A large gap in access would occur if the site was removed. The removal of the site would also worsen the existing shortfall in supply. It is recommended that the site is retained.
1726	Whitby Park Wheeled Sports Park and Parkour Facility	Whitby	Play Space (Youth)	A	D	23	-0.09	0.1	0.19	The site recently received improvements in the form of a new parkour area, but this has already been vandalised and some of the equipment has been removed. Remaining equipment is good quality and provides good play value within the park. There is a shortfall in supply of youth provision in the ward. On this basis, it is recommended that the site is retained.

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## 8.4 Play space with potential for alternative open space use

Some play spaces are limited in the play value that they can offer due to their size/location and/or may be of average/poor quality. Where these sites are overlapping in access (i.e. if they were removed, would not result in a gap in access), **and do not have funds secured for improvements/replacement**, they may be suitable for alternative open space use (e.g. informal play space), especially where other existing high quality play areas or high potential play areas are located in close proximity. This is irrespective of a sites priority for improvement.

Options to improve the sites visual amenity and biodiversity value could also be sought e.g. by native hedge/tree planting.

The decision if a site is suitable for alternative open space use will of course depend on the needs of the local community (who will be consulted before such a decision is made), and it is important to note that sites below are those with **potential** for alternative open space use – it is not the final recommendation of this framework that they are secured for alternative open space use, but rather that further investigation is needed.

The following sites have potential for alternative open space use (the decision making for each of these sites is included within the 'Ethos recommendations' column of tables 14 to 16):

- Delamere Drive Play Area (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), St Pauls
- School Road MUGA (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), Ellesmere Port Town
- Somerville Crescent Play Area (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), Ellesmere Port Town
- Blackstairs Road (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Netherpool
- Oasis Club MUGA (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Ellesmere Port Town
- Luton Road Basketball (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Grange

## 8.5 Potential for new provision

Open spaces where there is currently no provision of children's or youth play space have been considered for their potential to accommodate new provision where they would reduce gaps in access, enabling more areas of the Locality to meet the access standards for play space as set out within the CWAC Open Space Study and section 4 of this Framework. Open spaces with **potential** for new provision are highlighted **bold** in the table below.

The decision to install a new children's or youth play space on a site **will depend on the availability of funding** (Cheshire West and Chester Council is not currently committing to new play provision in the Borough, just consolidating existing provision) and the needs of the local community. It is important to note that sites below are those with potential for new provision – it is not the final recommendation of this framework that they are

implemented, but that they could be pursued further if and when new funding becomes available.

Ward	Comments
Ellesmere Port Town	<p><b>Children’s play space</b> There is a small gap in access in the south of the ward (there is also a large gap in access in the eastern part of the ward – but this area is industrial rather than residential) which could be removed by installing new provision in the western end of <b>Bunbury Green</b> amenity green space. This would also help alleviate the shortfall of children’s play space in Ellesmere Port Town.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b> The gap in access to youth play space is also within the same area (although the gap is smaller due to the larger access buffers for youth play space). There is also sufficient supply of youth play space within the ward, and due to the small access gap, improving existing youth facilities is likely to be most beneficial e.g. Thornton Road MUGA has been identified as a high priority for improvement (see table 13).</p>
Grange	<p><b>Children’s play space</b> There is a very small gap in access in the south of the ward, but very limited potential for new provision in this area. It is therefore recommended that existing play space is extended in order to alleviate the shortfall of children’s play space within this ward e.g. Luton Road Play Area has been identified as a high priority for improvement.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b> There is a small gap in access in the west of the ward which could be removed by installing youth provision at <b>Festival Park</b>. This would also reduce access gaps in St Paul’s (and potentially Netherpool although the railway line may be a barrier to access), and reduce the under supply of youth play space in Grange.</p>
Ledsham and Manor	<p><b>Children’s play space</b> There is currently no provision of children’s play space within Ledsham and Manor, with large gaps in access and an under supply of play space. There is potential for amenity green space to accommodate new provision (although relatively small in size – ranging from 0.2-0.3ha) e.g. <b>Cheviot Close</b> and <b>Thorne Drive</b>. There is currently a new housing development underway at Ledsham Road and this will provide additional play provision, and the locality framework will be updated once any new provision is in place.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b> There is currently no provision of youth play space in the ward (and therefore poor access and a shortfall of provision). Opportunity for new provision within existing open space is very limited. Little Sutton CE Primary School and Sutton Green Primary school have facilities (MUGA/netball court) that could be opened up to community use which would reduce gaps in access to youth provision.</p>
Netherpool	<p><b>Children’s play space</b></p>

Ward	Comments
	<p>There is good access across the residential part of this ward (only a very small gap in the south of the ward), and as there is sufficient supply of children's play space, no new provision is currently required.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b></p> <p>There is a gap in access across the southern part of the ward, and an under supply. <b>Bailey Avenue</b> amenity green space is approximately 0.7ha in size, and may have potential to accommodate new provision to reduce the access gap and alleviate the shortfall in provision.</p>
Rossmore	<p><b>Children's play space</b></p> <p>There is a relatively small gap in access towards the west of the ward. New provision within the western part of <b>New Grosvenor Road Playing Fields</b> or <b>Lime Street open space</b> would largely remove this gap and reduce the under supply.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b></p> <p>There is a gap in access across the western part of the ward. There is very limited open space within the ward that could accommodate new provision and fill the access gap, although new provision at <b>Bailey Avenue</b> amenity green space (Netherpool) would help reduce the access gap in this part of the ward. Existing facilities within the ward e.g. at Westminster Park could be expanded and improved to reduce the shortfall.</p>
St. Paul's	<p><b>Children's play space</b></p> <p>There is good access and sufficient supply, therefore no new provision is currently recommended.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b></p> <p>There are gaps in access in the north east and south of the ward, and a shortfall in supply. Sites with potential to accommodate new provision include <b>Seymour Park</b> (in the north east) and <b>Festival Park</b> which falls just outside the ward (in Grange).</p>
Strawberry	<p><b>Children's play space</b></p> <p>There is no provision or access within this ward. There are a number of amenity green spaces with some potential e.g. <b>Sycamore Drive</b> and <b>St Asaph Road open space</b>. New provision within <b>Meadow Park</b> amenity green space (Sutton) or <b>Elm Grove Park</b> (Whitby) would also reduce the access gap.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b></p> <p>There is no provision or access within this ward. <b>St Asaph Road</b> or <b>Sycamore Drive</b> (the larger of the amenity green spaces in the ward) may have potential to accommodate youth facilities.</p>
Sutton	<p><b>Children's play space</b></p> <p>There are gaps in access within the northern and southern parts of the ward, and an under supply of provision. New provision at <b>Meadow Park</b> amenity green space would remove the access gap in the south (and also reduce the gap in Strawberry Ward). New Provision at <b>Capenhurst Lane Playing Field</b> would also remove the gap in the north of the ward.</p>

Ward	Comments
	<p><b>Youth play space</b>            Good access in the centre of the ward, with gaps in access around the fringes. There is very limited potential for new provision, and therefore it is recommended that the existing facilities at Seacombe Park (Lupus Way) are improved and extended to alleviate the shortfall.</p>
Whitby	<p><b>Children's play space</b>            There is poor access against the standard across the majority of the ward, although it is noted that the facilities at Whitby park are likely to draw people from a wider area. Potential for new provision at <b>Elm Grove Park</b> to reduce the access gap in the south of the ward (and also in Strawberry Ward). There may also be scope for the installation of natural play in <b>Stanney Woods</b> (although these woods are a Local Nature Reserve) so this would require careful consideration as to the appropriateness.</p> <p><b>Youth play space</b>            Poor access across south of ward but very limited potential for new provision.</p>

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## 9.0 Requirements from new development

The Local Plan (Part One) in Section 3.3.1.2 outlines the projected housing growth for the Borough which aims to deliver 22,000 new dwellings with 'the majority of new development to be located within or on the edge of the city of Chester and towns of Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford'.

For Ellesmere Port the projected housing growth is 4,800 new dwellings.

This would result in the following requirements for new play space based on the quantity standards in table 2, and assuming a population increase of 11,040 people (4,800 x 2.3):

Play Space (Children): **0.55ha**

Play Space (Youth): **0.33ha**

If housing development is within wards where there is currently no provision, shortfalls in supply, or in areas where there are gaps in access (see figures 5 and 6), then on-site provision of play space would be required. If development takes place in areas where the supply and access standards are met, then improvements to existing play spaces within the vicinity would be required. The highest priority sites for improvement are set out in table 13, and the medium priority sites in table 14.



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## **10.0 Key issues, challenges and aspirations for Ellesmere Port Locality Area**

### **10.1 Quantity**

- There are a total of 22 children's play areas and 18 youth facilities/play areas within the Locality Area.
- There is an overall under-supply of children and youth play space within the Locality
- There are no children's or youth play space in the wards of Ledsham and Manor and Strawberry.
- Only Netherpool and St Paul's meet the quantity standard for children's play space, and only Ellesmere Port Town and St Paul's meets the quantity standard for youth play space.
- Consultation with the Ellesmere Port Locality Manager has revealed that more activities and teenage targeted facilities are always requested.

### **10.2 Access**

- The main gaps in access to children's play space are in the wards of Ledsham and Manor, Strawberry and Whitby, with smaller gaps in Ellesmere Port Town and Sutton.
- For youth play space there are gaps in access across all wards, with the whole of Strawberry ward with no access to youth play space within 600m. Other wards with large access gaps are Whitby, Ledsham and Manor, St Paul's and Netherpool. Wards with the best access are Grange, Sutton and Ellesmere Port Town.

### **10.3 Quality**

- There is a large variation in the quality of play space within Ellesmere Port Locality, ranging from good quality sites offering excellent play value e.g. Whitby Park to very poor sites e.g. Bebbington Road Play Area and Hillside Drive.
- Consultation with the Ellesmere Port Locality Officer has identified that key issues and complaints regarding MUGAs relate to improper use, litter and noise. most complaints regarding play areas fall into three areas: general maintenance (grass cutting/bins emptied/dog fouling); graffiti; and poor/dated equipment and upkeep.
- Considering the quality audit, vandalism appears to be an issue in a number of areas, and this is echoed by the Locality Officer's comments.

### **10.4 Priorities for the area**

- There are 13 play spaces that have been identified as a high priority for improvement within the Ellesmere Port Locality Area (i.e. those sites which scored between 47 and 62) – ten children's play spaces and three youth facilities. See table 13 for high priority sites.
- 20 play spaces have been identified as a medium priority for improvement (i.e. those sites which scored between 31 and 46) – nine children's play spaces and 11 youth facilities (as shown in table 14).

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## 10.5 Sites with potential for alternative open space use

The following sites have potential for alternative open space use (the decision making for each of these sites is included within the 'Ethos recommendations' column of tables 14 to 16):

- Delamere Drive Play Area (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), St Pauls
- School Road MUGA (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), Ellesmere Port Town
- Somerville Crescent Play Area (High Priority for Improvement – Table 13), Ellesmere Port Town
- Blackstairs Road Play Area (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Netherpool
- Oasis Club MUGA (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Ellesmere Port Town
- Luton Road Basketball (Medium Priority for Improvement – Table 14), Grange

## 10.6 Potential sites for new play provision

A number of open spaces have been identified as having potential to accommodate new provision of play space (where none currently exists) to reduce gaps in access (subject to funding and community need). These are:

- Bunbury Green (for children's play space in Ellesmere Port Town)
- Festival Park (for youth play space in Grange and St Paul's)
- Cheviot Close and Thorne Drive (for children's play space in Ledsham and Manor)
- Bailey Avenue (for youth play space in Netherpool and Rossmore)
- New Grosvenor Road Playing Fields or Lime Street open space (for children's play space in Rossmore)
- Seymour Park (Lupus Road) (for youth provision in St Paul's)
- Sycamore Drive and St Asaph Road (for children's play space and youth in Strawberry)
- Elm Grove Park (for children's play space in Whitby and Strawberry)
- Meadow Park and Capenhurst Lane Playing Field (for children's play space in Sutton)
- Stanney Woods (for natural play in Whitby).

## 10.7 Requirements from new development

- The projected housing growth for Ellesmere Port is 4,800 new dwellings which would result in a requirement of 0.55ha of new children's play space and 0.33ha of youth play space within the Locality.
- Housing development within Ledsham and Manor and Strawberry wards (and in areas where there are existing gaps in access or shortfalls in supply) would require on-site provision of play space.