



City of York

## Commuted Sum Payments for Open Space in New Developments – A Guide for Developers

Approved by Planning  
Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> April  
2007 for the purpose of  
Development Control.  
**UPDATED 1 June 2014**



## Introduction

The purpose of this advice note is to advise developers of the levels of commuted sum payments for open space provision, where it is established that a commuted sum will be required for residential development, and employment, retail and leisure developments of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space or greater.

This advice note should be read in conjunction with policy L1c (Provision of New Open Space in Development) from the City of York Development Control Local Plan (April 2005), attached as Appendix A to this advice note. Advice on the application of this policy will be provided by the Development Control case officer – see contact details at the end of this advice note.

Where it is established that a commuted sum payment is required in lieu of provision of open space on site, the following standards will apply.

### For residential developments:

Policy L1c (Provision of New Open Space in Development) requires a commuted sum payment towards open space provision in residential developments:

- of less than 10 dwellings; and of 10 or more dwellings, where there is not enough space to meet open space requirements on-site.

In developments of 10 or more dwellings, on-site provision should be provided, unless it could be proven that on-site provision would not be feasible, in which case, a commuted sum payment should be provided. Where a commuted sum payment is proposed, the payment will be made towards increasing capacity and accessibility of existing provision.

The table below shows the commuted sum payments required for residential developments. Commuted sum payments will be secured by a Section 106 Agreement.

*Commuted sum required per dwelling for increasing capacity and access of existing provision (excluding the land cost element)*

No of bedrooms in a single dwelling	Children's equipped play Space (£)	Informal Amenity Open Space (£)	Outdoor Sports Facilities (£)
1	£N/A	£151	£213
2	£526	£302	£426
3	£1052	£453	£639
4	£1578	£604	£852
5+	£2104	£775	£1065

(Source: Based on existing schemes within the City of York, upgraded, using the inflation trades data figure from the Building Costs Information Service Tender Price Index, as provided by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Prices will be updated annually in line with the Building Costs Information Service Tender Price Index)

Please note that inflation at the time of the signing of the Section 106 Agreement must be added to the above figures, where necessary – for example, if the Section 106 Agreement was signed after revised figures were published to take into account of annual inflation.

However, in situations where commuted sum payments are required for the provision of new open space, appropriate land values at the time of determining the planning application would need to be considered in addition to the figures shown in the table above, to allow for the purchase of new land. This would normally occur when adequate, accessible open space does not exist close to the development site.

### **For employment, retail and leisure developments:**

Policy L1c also establishes the need for employment, retail and leisure uses with a gross floorspace of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> or greater, to provide for amenity open space. If it is established that a commuted sum payment is appropriate, an amount of £151 per employee would be required (calculations based on 9m<sup>2</sup> of open space per employee). Where a planning application does not establish a number of employees within a development, the following figures would be used to calculate the required payment.

Proposed Use Class	Number of employees per hectare
B1 (Business) uses within the City Centre, as shown on the City of York Local Plan Proposals Map (April 2005)	667
B1 (Business) uses outside the City Centre, as shown on the City of York Local Plan Proposals Map (April 2005)	200
B2 (General industrial) uses	133
B8 (Distribution or storage) uses	100

These figures are based on average densities on B1 / B2 / B8 schemes undertaken within the City of York.

In schemes which don't specify the breakdown of B1 / B2 / B8, the number of employees used in calculating the required commuted sum payments will be based on the highest number of employees per hectare.

Due to the diversity of possible uses within retail and leisure proposals over 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, it is difficult to establish the average number of employees. Therefore, where retail and leisure uses are proposed, officers will establish an estimate of the number of employees through discussion with the applicant.

## Appendix A: City of York Draft Local Plan Incorporating the 4<sup>th</sup> Set of Changes (April 2005)

### **Policy L1c (Provision of New Open Space in Development)**

Developments for all housing sites or commercial proposals over 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space will be required to make provision for the open space needs of future occupiers. This should be provided in addition to any area required for landscaping.

For sites of less than 10 dwellings a commuted sum payment will be required towards off site provision.

For sites of 10 or more dwellings, an assessment of existing open space provision accessible to the proposed development site including its capacity to absorb additional usage will be undertaken. This is to ascertain the type of open space required and whether on-site or a commuted sum payment for off-site provision is more appropriate (this will include the cost of land purchase), based on individual site circumstances.

The level of provision or commuted sum equivalent will be based on the following figures (a breakdown of these figures for each dwelling will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Guidance document covering open space).

The following provision of open space (or commuted sum equivalent) will be required:

- a) 0.9ha per 1,000 population / or 1,000 employees of informal amenity open space;

In addition, for housing developments:

- b) 1.7ha per 1,000 population of sports pitches;
- c) 0.7ha per 1,000 population for children's equipped play spaces.

Applicants will be expected to enter into a Section 106 Agreement towards ensuring the provision and future maintenance (whether by means of a commuted sum payment or by some other means) of the open space facility for a period of 10 years.

Rest homes and nursing homes will only be expected to provide amenity open space. Single bedroom dwellings and student accommodation will not be expected to provide children's play space.

The Council considers that all residents should have access to safe, attractive and useable public open space and the Local Plan Strategy aims to promote accessible open space in new residential, employment, retail and leisure developments.

Policy L1c aims to secure open space of a useable and maintainable standard in new residential, employment, retail and leisure developments. The thresholds for the policy to come into force have been chosen to ensure the deliverability of open space of a size, which will be of use to the community

who will use it and would be viable for applicants to provide.

Where residential applications are for less than 10 dwellings, in most cases, a commuted sum payment towards open space provision will be acceptable. In residential developments of 10 or more dwellings and commercial developments of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space an assessment will be undertaken of existing open space in the vicinity of the proposed development. The results of this assessment will help to determine what form the open space should take and whether it should be provided on-site, or a commuted sum payment should be made towards off-site provision (this will include the cost of land purchase). The assessment should also consider whether existing non-public open space or sports pitches can be brought into public usage.

A commuted sum payment will also be expected from applicants to cover future maintenance of open space, in accordance with Circular 1/97. A period of 10 years will be applied when calculating the maintenance payment to ensure that the open space can become an established feature within the local community. ]

Policy L1c should be read in conjunction with any planning advice note produced by the Council on open space at that particular time.

For more information on planning applications and the planning application process, please contact:

Planning & Building Control Services  
City of York Council  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York  
YO1 6GA  
Tel: (01904) 551550

For more information on commuted sum payments and existing open space provision, please contact:

Public Realm Service  
City of York Council  
Hazel Court  
James Street  
York  
YO10 3DS  
Tel: (01904) 553386