

## REPAIR Good Practice Example: Medway, Lower Lines



***The Lower Lines is an important area of green space situated in North Gillingham, perhaps not as well known as its sister the Great Lines, it can be found between Prince Arthur Road, Cumberland Road, Johnson Avenue and the Lines Fortifications in North Gillingham in Medway.***

*Historically the Lines were open spaces, across which guns were to be fired to repel an enemy advance.*

The site is also a natural haven for trees and wildlife including bats and woodpeckers but it has been allowed to become overgrown and a derelict space. Owned until recently by the Ministry of Defence, it was used as a place for dog walking by the public.

The Lower Lines was at risk of becoming lost to the community altogether until Mid Kent College applied for planning consent to develop a New Campus in the area of the Lower Lines. The Ministry of Defence agreed to the principle of releasing the land for a neighbouring public park, to be owned and managed by an independent Trust, providing a way forward to create a superb New Campus and Open Space for the community.

The Long Term Preservation of this site has been secured by the link between the Open Space and the College Campus - so long as the College and the need for higher education exists the Open Space will be secure and maintained by a Trust Fund

(endowment) made possible through a helpful approach to the Planning Tool – Section 106.

Section 106 (S106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is the approach or technique used to secure the Long Term preservation of the site. This tool allows a Local Planning Authority (LPA) to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the grant of planning permission.

The resulting obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement and is a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. Section 106 Agreements are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.

In the case of the Lower Lines and Mid Kent College New Campus, a flexible approach to the Section 106 Agreement was adopted and an endowment was established to ensure the maintenance of the site in the long term through an independent TRUST fund.

The impact delivered by this imaginative Re-Use of a Heritage site is that the community retains an improved Open Green Space and the adjacent buildings will transform vocational education in the Medway area.

*It has been said that we expect to see far more young people going on to university or higher level training. It is particularly exciting for us that the co-location Mid Kent College Campus with the universities and with the Royal School of Military Engineering will make Medway known as a centre of educational innovation throughout the country.*

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