

Appendix A: Cabinet report draft Estates Local Plan - 19 January 2015

Options for keeping communities together at Eastfields Estate – first phase of development

- A.1 The Eastfields Estate regeneration area as set out in the council's draft Estates Local Plan is denoted in figure 1 below and follows the boundary of Eastfields Estate. Situated in the Figges Marsh ward Eastfields is located to the east of Mitcham Town Centre and covers an area of approximately six hectares.
- A.2 The site is bound by Acacia Road and Mulholland Close to the North, Clay Avenue to the east and south and Hammond Avenue to the west. The site is surrounded to the north by two schools which are St Mark's Church of England Academy and Lonesome Primary School.

Fig 1 – Existing Eastfields Estate in the draft Estates Local Plan



Keeping communities together – first phase of development

- A.3 Unlike High Path and Ravensbury, there is no available land (for example garage sites) within Eastfields Estate to allow new homes to be built for the first phase without demolishing existing homes.
- A.4 Building new homes for existing residents to move into while their home is being built is very important for keeping existing communities together as far as is possible to create the foundations for a sustainable community long-term.
- A.5 This therefore represents a challenge to demonstrating the Estates Local Plan's deliverability.

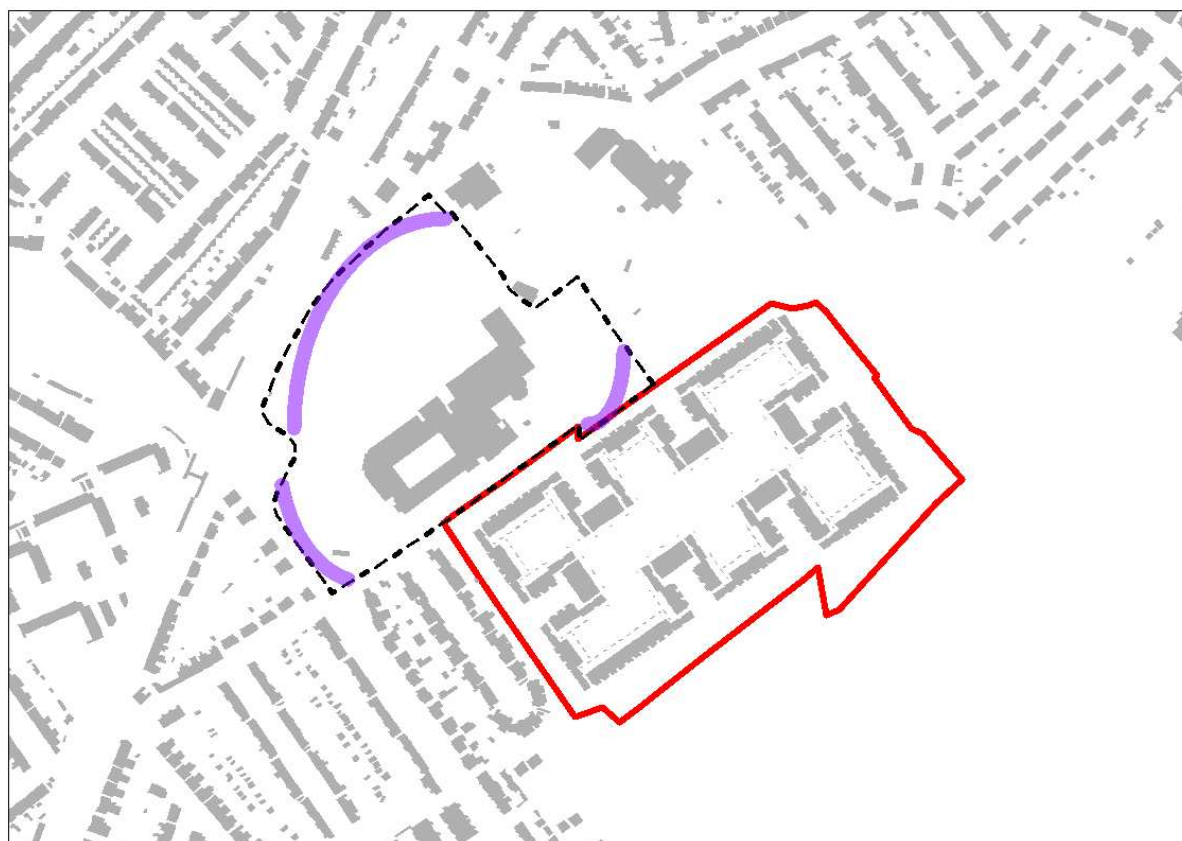
Options for first phase of development on Eastfields

A.6 To try and find a potential site suitable for the initial phase of new homes, officers reviewed several sites in the vicinity of Eastfields estate. In summary the criteria were:

- Close proximity – all sites under half a mile from Eastfields Estate.
- Minimal disruption – given the close proximity of the potential sites, relocation of existing estate occupants to these may help to minimise uncertainty and disruption and in turn help to keep the existing community together.
- Single ownership.
- Sites that could provide more than 50 new homes on one site.

A.7 An option to provide a site for new homes is land on the edge of the boundary of St Mark's Academy.

A.8 Homes could be built along the boundary of land within St Marks Academy, between Eastfields Estate and Eastfields train station, preserving playing space while providing new homes that create better access between the station and the estate.



- Existing CHMP site boundary
- Potential Phase 1 decant / enabling development

Opportunities of development around St Mark's Academy

A.9 The site is very close to Eastfields Estate, ideal for keeping existing communities together.

A.10 The site may also facilitate the provision of a new sixth form building for St Mark's Academy as part of the development. St Mark's Academy is currently being considered by the council

for expansion to provide new secondary school places, which would include improving the sixth form facilities. However, as described in the Secondary School Expansion report to this Cabinet, expansion isn't being pursued immediately.

A.11 Providing new homes along the road frontage with Grove Road would contribute to place making, townscape, connectivity and integration of the Eastfields neighbourhood with the surrounding area.

A.12 Providing new homes on this site may reduce the length of disruption and uncertainty to residents by acceleration of the Eastfields regeneration programme.

A.13 The site is in single ownership.

Risks of development around St Mark's Academy

A.14 Development around St Mark's Academy will result in a net loss of designated open space contrary to national and local Development Plan policies unless open space can be robustly demonstrated as surplus to requirements or a greater quantity and quality of school playing fields be reprovided elsewhere. Research would have to be undertaken to justify this. It is currently not known whether research would support this approach or not.

A.15 Sport England would also object to the loss of school playing fields, should the development result in their loss. This matter is referable to the Secretary of State.

A.16 Reliance on designated open space loss to facilitate delivery of Estates Local Plan represents a high risk strategy.

A.17 The area is designated as playing field under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, and as such disposal requires approval of the Secretary of State for Education. The departmental guidance states that the Secretary of State is unlikely to approve applications that result in the school's playing field provision falling under the area guidelines (as is in this case) but there are cases where a strong justification has resulted in approval.

A.18 The approval would require the support of the school's governing body and Academy trust, who hold the land on a 999 year lease from the council.

Other alternative options

A.19 Other potential sites have been identified and are not recommended to be taken forward.

- Eastfields Allotments: rejected as in use as allotments
- BMX track, adjacent to St Mark's Academy and Lonesome primary school: rejected as new Sport England funded facility, recently opened in 2012. Would represent loss of sports facilities.
- Lonesome Primary school: rejected as lack of available space.
- Laburnum Estate car park: owned by CHMP, rejected as too small (only 445sqm)

This page is intentionally left blank