

Analysis and planning policies - Eastfields



Location

Eastfields Estate

3.8 Situated in the Figge's Marsh ward, Eastfields is located to the east of Mitcham Town Centre and covers an area of approximately six hectares. 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 (St Mark's Church of England Academy and Lonesome Primary School) and by the South London Crematorium, Streatham Park and the Jewish Cemeteries and Long Bolstead Recreation Ground to the west. The nearby Mitcham Eastfields railway station acts as a key local hub.

3.9 The estate was designed by Richard MacCormac and was built in the 1970s and consists of 465 homes. The Eastfields homes are a combination of three storey houses with integral garages and flats in three storey 'walk up' blocks each having one or two bedrooms. The homes are all of 'Wimpey no-fines' construction, clad with enamel panels. The Eastfields Estate has an inward looking layout distinct from the surrounding neighbourhood. The surroundings have a suburban residential character dating predominantly from the inter-war era, with some earlier late 19th Century development in Grove Road.



Historical context

3.10 The Eastfields area played a significant part in the early history of Mitcham. It was the site of a number of local and world renowned businesses that brought employment to the area. Up until the 1880's however, Eastfields retained a medieval open field system. The neighbourhood takes its name from the East or Common fields which were cultivated in strips with different crops. Much of the area was used for the cultivation of herbs, roses and lavender. Adjacent to the estate, Mitcham Little Wood once occupied the site of the Streatham Park Cemetery and a few isolated oaks from the hedgerows still remain today.

3.11 In 1868 the Mizen family established a flourishing horticultural business in the Eastfields area. As was the tradition in Mitcham, the Mizen family for a time grew lavender, as well as culinary herbs such as chervil and tarragon. By the late 1880's, Eastfields Farm was thriving with extensive glasshouses covering much of the area

between Grove Road and Acacia Road which is now occupied by Lonesome Primary School and St. Marks Academy.

3.12 As industry expanded in the area, the crops were affected by the coal smoke and the family business was moved. Pain's fireworks factory stood from the 1870's on a site known as Oak Stubbs comprising three different parts. One of these was on the site of the Eastfields Estate off Clay Avenue. Pains fireworks mounted displays for Queen Victoria and at their height traded across the world. Firework production stopped in 1965 and shortly after this the housing estate was developed.

3.13 To the east of Pains Fireworks was Mitcham Little Wood. This remained as woodland until 1907 when it was gradually cleared for use as Streatham Park Cemetery. The cemetery is formally laid out towards the crematorium and



Mizen Brothers nursery, Eastfields, Mitcham

Source: Merton Memories Photographic Archive

chapel at its northern end and more informal towards the southern end where it joins the recreation ground. The mortuary chapel was built in the 1930's in a formal art deco/classical style. The impressive crematorium was built later in a well detailed Art Deco style with raised brickwork details around the windows and moulded plasterwork decoration. Adjacent to the cemetery, and developed a little later, is a separate Jewish cemetery. The appearance of this is significantly different to the Streatham Park Cemetery. Its plots are rigidly aligned, compact and consist of more substantial memorials above ground, giving it a far more urban character compared to the 'parkland' feel of its neighbour.

3.14 To the north of the Eastfields estate there was once a rural area known as Lonesome. This area was one of the most isolated parts of Mitcham and was reached by rural lanes from the surrounding areas, such as Mitcham and Streatham, but which did not quite establish themselves as a through route between places. The arrival of the railway in 1868 created a physical barrier between its east and west sides, particularly north of the level crossing at Locks Lane, ensuring the area of Lonesome became even more isolated. As recently as the 1930s much of this area consisted of little more than dirt tracks, which quickly turned into quagmires during wet weather. Even today, this area retains something of an 'in between' area on the way from Mitcham to Streatham.



Map of Eastfields area 1896-1899

Source: Ordnance Survey

Historical context

3.15 The Lonesome Chemical Works operated in the second half of the nineteenth Century, established here due to the sparse population. The presence of industry continued into the 1960s when Beck and Company manufactured petrol pumps on the site. At the end of the 19th Century Lilian Road and Marian Road were laid out and developed. In the second half of the twentieth century a further phase of residential development occurred with the redevelopment of the remaining industrial land into Veronica Gardens and Ebenezer Walk.

3.16 Tamworth Park, an area between Tamworth Lane and Commonsides East was partially laid out as building plots by 1868, but by the turn of the century only a few medium-sized houses in large grounds had been completed. There were aspirations to transform the area into an affluent Victorian suburb as had happened in nearby Streatham however development was stagnated by economic depression and the area's attractiveness for residential development was adversely affected by fumes emitted from local industries. Maps from 1896 also show a street of detached villas south of the chemical works known as Blake's Folly. However these were never completed and subsequently demolished in 1927.

3.17 The housing development which followed was smaller modest housing and in the 1930s the area steadily became suburbanised and housing estates began to appear along Tamworth Lane, Oakleigh Way and Woodstock Way. The rapid suburbanisation of the area resulted in an increase in traffic particularly at the level crossing; work began in the 1960s to ease this by widening the crossing and the creation of a new roundabout. Public transport provision in Eastfields was poor right up until 2008, when Mitcham Eastfields station opened at the level crossing providing an regular train service into Central London.

3.18 Up until the late 1960s the appearance of the Eastfields site was much the same as at the turn of the century. The site was approached from 'Firework Lane' now Acacia Road. The area retained a rural appearance due to the proximity of the site of Mizzen Brothers market gardens and the landscaping around the adjacent cemetery. The

fireworks factory site comprised a range of brick built offices and small wooden weather-boarded manufacture huts loosely dispersed around the site. Due to the marshy nature of the soil wooden walkways connected the individual huts.

3.19 Transformation of the Eastfields site began in the early 1960s with the demolition of Mizzen's greenhouses. This site was developed as Eastfields School and sports ground – now St. Mark's Church of England Academy. The Pains fireworks factory changed ownership and eventually ceased production in 1965. Part of the site passed into municipal ownership and was redeveloped into the Eastfields Estate. The estate comprises 466 houses and flats and was completed in 1972 by the same design team that developed the Pollards Hill Estate.

3.20 The estate consists of three-storey terraces throughout, in a mix of houses and flats in a uniform architectural style. The terraces enclose a large, long rectangular open space with smaller squares leading off it. It was designed as an alternative to the high rise schemes of the previous decade and was in a tight pattern of buildings in a "castellated" pattern. The layout and design concept of the estate is an example of high density low rise social housing of the 1970's and forms part of a group of estates in the borough which include Pollards Hill, Watermeads and the Cherry Tree Estate which were designed along similar principles.

3.21 Upon its completion the estate was considered iconic. However, over time the appearance of the estate has weathered poorly, cladding panels have deteriorated and replacement glazing has diluted the initial design intent of the scheme. The generous spaces in front of the houses and flats have also fared less well, becoming ill-defined spaces of tarmac and concrete.



Industrial building Lonesome area



Lonesome Lane circa 1895



Pains fireworks factory 1965



Eastfields level crossing 1961



Eastfields Estate 1975



Mitcham Eastfields station 2008

Source: Merton Memories Photographic Archive



Site analysis

1. Character areas

3.22 The Eastfields Estate is located to the east of Mitcham town centre and north of Mitcham Common. The wider area is defined by the railway line to the west, with Eastfields Station acting as major gateway.

3.23 The map above illustrates the main character areas in the surrounding neighbourhood including the Eastfields Estate. The estate itself is distinctive enough from its surroundings to form its own character area. This is also the case for the area occupied by St. Mark's Academy and Lonsome Primary School. To the east is the large open space comprised of Long Bolstead Recreation Ground, Streatham Park Cemetery, Rowan Road Jewish Cemetery and Westminster City School Sports Ground.

3.24 The surrounding residential areas are predominantly low rise inter-war suburban housing of semi-detached or short terraced houses.

However, there are some pockets of earlier late Victorian cottages and a number of late 20th century infill developments, usually replacing former industrial uses, as was the case with the Eastfields Estate. The significant amount of open space within the area.

3.25 In the wider area a large proportion of the properties date from the 1930s and represent good quality examples of suburban design of the era. The 1970s Eastfields Estate has a very distinctive layout and architectural style that sets it apart from the surrounding street pattern and building forms. There are also two large new housing developments nearby at Brenley Park and Rowan Park, which offer good examples of how new development can fit into the area without replicating it.



Distinctive layout of the Eastfields estate



Eastfields Estate - Clay Avenue



St. Marks Academy



Streatham Cemetery



Level crossing at Mitcham Eastfields station



Long Bolstead Recreation Ground



Tamworth Lane



Woodstock Way



Site analysis

2. Current land use

3.26 The wider area is predominantly residential. Although there are some flats on the Eastfields Estate and in the area to the west of Tamworth Lane, the majority of the residential properties are two storey terraced and semi-detached houses. Lonesome Primary School and St.Marks Academy occupy a large site off Acacia Road. There is a BMX track adjacent to the estate and also the small attractive play area of Long Bolstead Recreation Ground. Within the grounds of St. Marks Academy is the recently built Acacia intergenerational centre with adventure playground. There are two small retail areas in the neighbourhood on Tamworth Lane and the northern end of Grove Road which is designated as a neighbourhood parade. There are a number of recreation grounds and playing fields as well as the Streatham Park Cemetery which occupies a large area on the eastern boundary of the neighbourhood.

Key

-  Residential
-  Education - schools
-  Cemeteries
-  Open space - recreation ground
-  Industrial - warehousing
-  Local shops
-  Mitcham Town Centre
-  Railway



Residential - Woodstock Way



BMX track Mulholland Close



Acacia intergenerational centre



Streatham Cemetery



Eastfields Estate



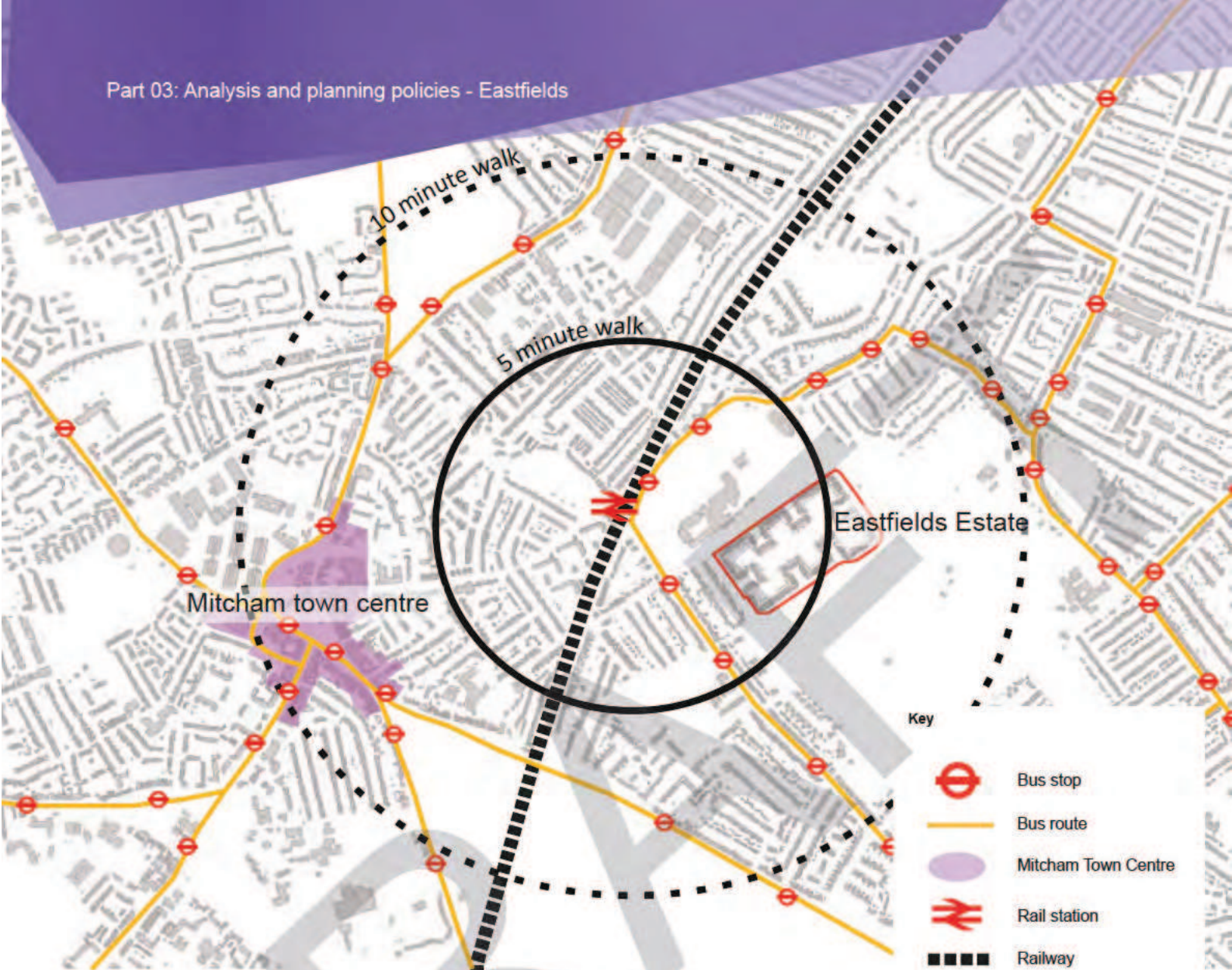
Oakleigh Way Recreation Ground



Meopham Road



Tamworth Lane



Site analysis

3. Transport connectivity

3.27 Eastfields sits within a wider area which has a predominantly residential street network, to the east of Mitcham Town Centre. The railway line, school grounds and cemetery land create physical barriers in the wider area which restricts accessibility by any means into the estate.

3.28 Eastfields is approximately 400m or 3-4 minutes walking distance, to the east of Mitcham Eastfields station, this opened in 2008 providing direct rail services to central London and into Surrey. It is also served by buses along Tamworth Lane, Grove Road and Woodstock Way. Bus services are limited, with only two routes (463 and 152) serving the railway station. Although accessibility has been significantly improved with the opening of the station, the isolated location of the Eastfields area, the limited number of trains stopping and the limited number of bus routes mean that the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) score is low at only 2 which is defined as poor by the London Plan.



3 storey apartment blocks Eastfields



2 storey houses at Rowan Park

Site analysis

4. Existing building heights

3.29 Building heights across the estate do not vary and are consistently 3 storeys. Surrounding housing is consistently 2 storeys with pitched roofs, so there is little contrast in building heights, the character being uniform in this respect. St. Mark's Academy buildings are only 2 storey. The nearest taller buildings are by the railway station, at 6 storeys.

3.30 In the wider area Rowan Park, located off Rowan Road and completed in 2012, consists of a variety of housing types. The heights range from 2-4 stories. Brenley Park is a development completed in 2013, located to the south-west of Eastfields off Cedars Avenue. The development is predominantly 3-4 stories. There are very limited views of taller buildings in the distance in Croydon.



Site analysis

5. Public realm and open space



3.31 The map above shows how the land around the buildings is used. It shows a distinct contrast between the spaces around the perimeter of the buildings compared to the spaces within. The outer perimeter of the estate is dominated by garage doors to houses at the ground floor, with recessed front doors between. These are dark and unwelcoming spaces, and there is no natural surveillance at street level. The space in front of the perimeter consists of a parking access road, street parking and a general access road bounding this. This creates a large area of hard-standing that is ill-defined and unattractive. The fronts or 'public face' of the estate is very stark, forbidding and unattractive. The small cul-de-sacs leading off the perimeter are little better, and include bib-stores and parking in the centre.

3.32 This poor quality exterior is in complete contrast to the calm, attractive, landscaped appearance of the interior. The open spaces are defined by the building which comprises six large areas of communal space leading off a larger central space. There is no vehicular access to this series of spaces, which are dominated by a number of impressive mature trees and enclosed by the regular form of the buildings. The houses back gardens facing onto the open space setting up an uneasy relationship between public and private space. Despite there being 28 gated pedestrian entrances into this interior space, it is completely invisible from the exterior. These entrances are so narrow and unobtrusive that they are easily missed, seeming like private back alleys, rather than entrances to parkland.



ill defined space around perimeter of the estate



Parking dominates public space



Narrow alleyways leading into open space



Cul-de-sacs



Garage doors dominate public space



Landscaped interior open space



Established trees

Site analysis

6. Streets and frontages



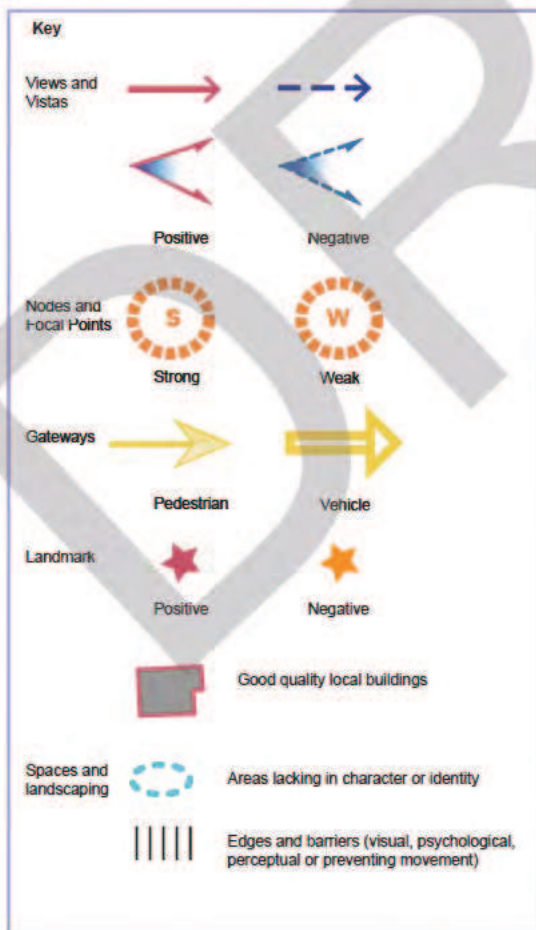
3.33 The wider context is characterised by low density housing fronting onto traditional streets. The Eastfields Estate sits in stark contrast to this, as it has a very rigid form of streets and spaces, with the spaces being internal to the estate and not visible or noticeably accessible from outside it.

3.34 The map above shows that although there are spaces that are physically well defined by buildings, they fail to work as traditional streets because they do not accommodate cars efficiently and unobtrusively and because the buildings offer no visual interaction or surveillance with the outside world at ground floor level.

3.35 The shape of the estate layout, garage door dominated frontages and means of access to the interior make this estate a fortress. The

access roads to and around the estate reinforce its isolation and difference from surrounding development. Access for vehicles is confusing as the estate is part accessed from Acacia Road and part from Woodstock Way. There is a natural through link between these two streets however vehicular movement is not possible due road closure.

3.36 Inside the estate around the edge of the pleasant green spaces, back gardens with a variety of boundary treatments detract from the otherwise neat and pleasant communal open spaces. There is an uneasy relationship between the private back gardens and the communal areas, making the small back gardens feel less private and secure.



7. Townscape analysis

3.37 The map above shows an analysis of the 'components' or parts of the local area that shape people's perception of it and encourage or limit movement around it. It gives a sense of how the estate is connected to and relates to its immediate surroundings. This includes things like views, vehicle and pedestrian access, local landmarks and focal points for activity or orientation. These are identified as being strong or weak, positive or negative, and give ideas as to what new development could do to improve connections with the wider area.

Site analysis

8. Landscape analysis



3.38 The Eastfields estate has a large, pleasant green space at its centre, that is cut-off from its surroundings, both for people and biodiversity. It contains pleasant grassed areas and key mature tree groups. By contrast, there is limited green space around the perimeter of the estate. It is only at the edge that patches of unmaintained scrub and unchecked boundary vegetation exist. These are generally negative and there appears to have been no planned landscape around the edge of the estate beyond roads and hardstanding for vehicles. The unchecked boundary vegetation also increases the sense of isolation, minimising the landscape effect of a number attractive individual trees and limiting views to the surroundings.

Spaces and landscaping		Areas of high landscape value
		Areas of poor landscape value
		Ill-defined space (hard or soft landscaped)
		Established trees



Poor public realm arrangement



Road closure between Acacia Road and Mulholland Close

Issues and opportunities

Issues summary

Integration

3.39 The estate has an inward looking layout whereby the position of buildings creates one uniform edge of development distinct from the surrounding area. The main access road passes the estate, but is incomplete due to road closure and lacking in visual and vehicular connectivity. This road and the estate street network are a series of cul-de-sacs, the inefficient layout restricts accessibility for vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists.

Estate architecture

3.40 The estate has uniform architectural style, the finish on buildings is rigid and unvarying, in stark contrast to its surroundings. It projects its difference through its appearance and this adds to its visual isolation from the surrounding area. The buildings have weathered poorly in places and positive elements of the consistent architectural style have been eroded by a variety of alterations.

Estate layout

3.41 The estate design has imposed a rigid road layout which prevents movement through the estate and restricts movement around the estate. The street network comprises a sole perimeter road with buildings on one side only, and a series of short cul-de-sacs. Fronts and backs are poorly arranged, with fronts dominated by garage doors and backs facing the open spaces. The public realm is poor because of this, and the wide expanses of tarmac.

Quantity v quality of landscaping

3.42 The publicly accessible designated open space around the perimeter is isolated by the access road, poorly surveyed, in poor condition and essentially un-useable. The large central semi-private non-designated open space in the interior is of high quality and useable, but the smaller spaces leading off this are less successful, as they are in close proximity to the back gardens of the surrounding houses.

Visual connectivity

3.43 There is a lack of visual connectivity to the generally attractive surroundings of the playground and cemetery, and generally to longer views that would visually link the estate to its surroundings. This exacerbates the estate's isolation and breaking down these barriers, such as the unchecked perimeter vegetation and opening up views across neighbouring land, could engender a wider community feel and make residents feel they are part a wider community.



Create clear east-west street between Tamworth Lane and Woodstock Way

Issues and opportunities

Opportunities summary

Legible residential streets

3.44 Create a legible hierarchy of streets and blocks which allow for movement of pedestrians and where appropriate vehicles throughout site. This is to make the area feel connected to its surroundings and allow for easier access across it between the surrounding areas. Streets should be designed as traditional residential streets where fronts of buildings face each other to enclose the street and buildings overlook the public realm.

Street network

3.45 Creating an east-west link will help to integrate the estate into the wider area. This could be achieved by creating a clearly visible east-west through street between Tamworth Lane and Woodstock Way by fully connecting up Acacia Road, Mulholland Close and Clay Avenue. The creation of a clearly visible north-south street from Grove Road, through the estate to the southern boundary will also help to integrate the estate into wider area. This connectivity will enable the site to overcome its isolated feel by linking it to the area beyond.

Create a focal point for the area that links the estate to the surrounding area

3.46 The focal point could be at the intersection of the north-south and east-west streets. This will link the estate to its context and allow local people from the wider area to interact with the estate.

Reconfiguration of open space to create functional open spaces

3.47 Develop undesignated open spaces to allow for better distribution of functional open space throughout the estate. Retain existing established mature trees in the central green space. Make this, or a similar replacement(s) publicly accessible and a basis for the creation of new open space and potential local focal points, squares, communal gardens, food growing etc.

Visual links to surroundings

3.48 Create visual connectivity to the generally attractive surroundings of the playground and cemetery and to make the BMX track less visually isolated. This could be achieved by retaining the mature trees surrounding the site, whilst thinning the smaller scrub and vegetation from between them, so opening out longer and wider views.

DRAFT

Site specific policies

Policy

EP E1 Townscape

- a)** Proposals should demonstrate a well defined building line fronting onto the combined East-West street. Buildings should provide continuity and enclosure along the route ensuring buildings address the street.
- b)** This frontage should not present a fortress-like wall between the street and the estate beyond. Therefore this frontage should be broken at intervals by streets into the estate.
- c)** Proposals should create a focal point in the estate. The most suitable location for this is at the intersection of the north-south and east-west streets.
- d)** The massing and layout of proposals should enable visual connectivity from within the estate to the attractive surroundings of the playground and cemetery.

Further guidance

- 3.49** Landmark buildings should be located around the focal point at the intersection of the north-south and east-west streets.
- 3.50** Landmark buildings could be differentiated by appearance and to a degree by height; however they should be designed to ensure that they are sensitive to the general character of the rest of the development.

Justification

3.51 The existing estate is very uniform and fortress-like in its appearance. It is visually distinct from the surrounding housing but other than this, the uniformity of the buildings makes it difficult to understand and navigate around the estate. The internal open space is completely hidden from the outside. The continuous frontage of the estate and the prominent garage doors present a forbidding and unwelcoming visual prospect. This, and the recessed front doors present a visually hostile frontage to the streets. Combined with the large areas of parking these elements break down any sense of there being streets at all, merely spaces that are used to access houses and park cars in.

3.52 Redevelopment should enable the creation of a neighbourhood that is easier to get around and understand, open, inviting and visually attractive, without necessarily encouraging large numbers of people simply to wander around. A strong active frontage will help the neighbourhood to become more outward looking and better integrated into the wider area. Streets which intersect with the frontage will enable the creation of a well-connected neighbourhood.

3.53 A suitably located focal point will aid the integration of the neighbourhood in its location reducing the insularity of the estate whilst proving a key orientation focus which will help to orientate people getting around the neighbourhood. A focal point at the intersection enables future development potential to the north of the estate to be brought forward in an integrated manner. Landmarks are useful in providing reference points for orientation and emphasize the street hierarchy.

3.54 Views through to landscape areas, such as the playground and cemetery, will better integrate the estate into the wider context.

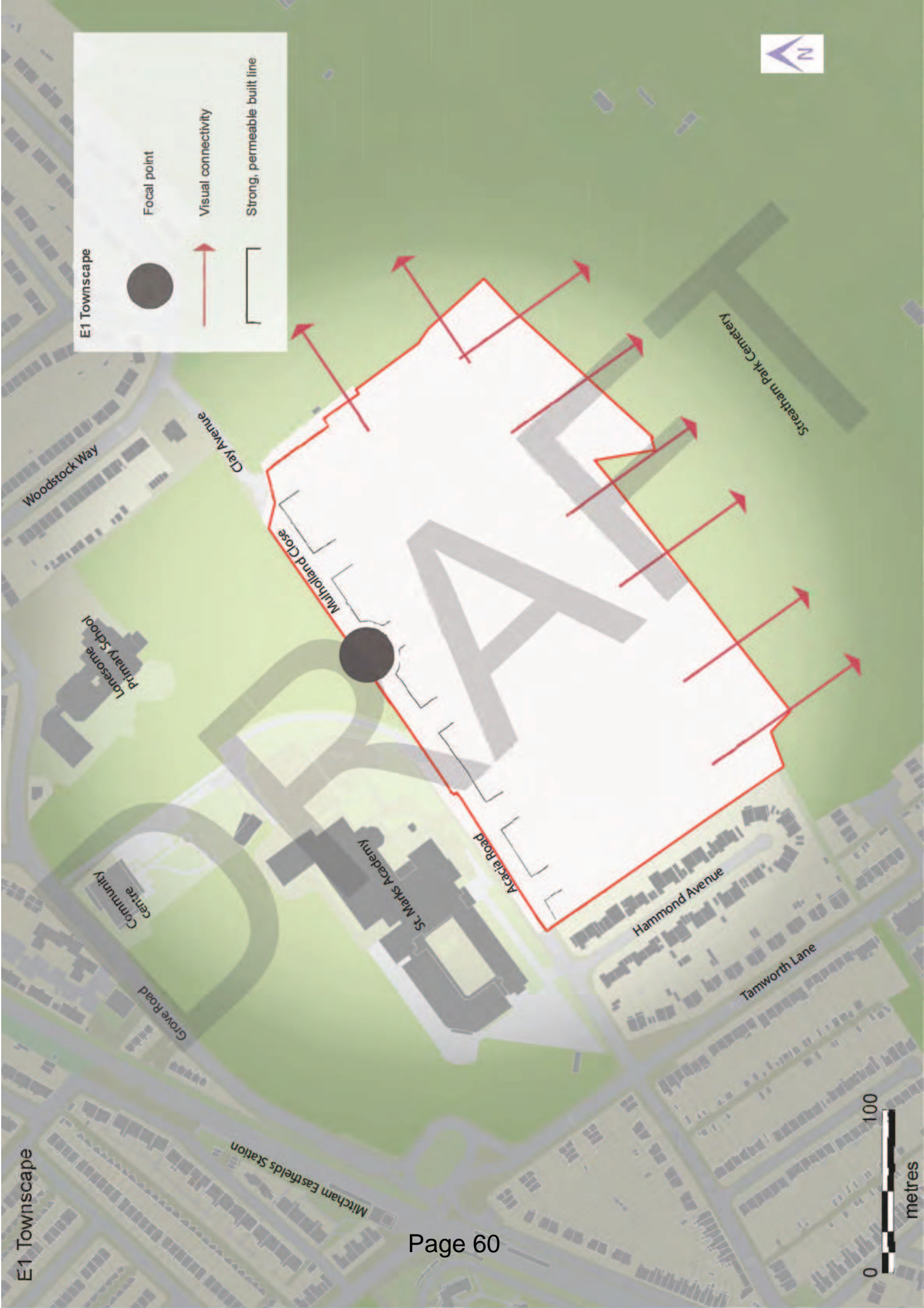


E1 Townscape

Focal point

Visual connectivity

Strong, permeable built line



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E2 Street network

- a)** The three streets of Acacia Road, Mulholland Close and Clay Avenue should be combined into one continuous East-West street on as straight an arrangement as possible.
- b)** The estate layout should accommodate the potential for a new traditional street following the location of the existing footpath running from Grove Road to form a junction with Mulholland Close. This new street should be continued through the estate, creating a new North-South street to the boundary with the cemetery with uninterrupted views.
- c)** A new street should be provided parallel to Hammond Avenue such that the backs of new housing on its west side can face the backs of the existing bungalows on Hammond Avenue.
- d)** On the east side of the estate a new street should be created to face Long Bolstead Recreation Ground and the cemetery, in order to retain the visual and physical link between the estate and the recreation ground.
- e)** To the south of the estate there is a wide expanse of under-utilised road space and parking. Here, the existing perimeter street of Clay Avenue should either:-
 - (i)** be positioned closer to the estate boundary and lined with housing frontages overlooking the cemetery, the street being suitable as mews type street; or
 - (ii)** a new traditional street provided, set further north to enable new housing frontages to face north onto it, with backs facing the cemetery. This second option should also allow for North-South streets to penetrate this frontage and open up public views and potential future access into the cemetery.

Further guidance

3.55 Within the body of the estate, there should be a clear and easy to navigate network of streets to enable free movement around, into and out of the estate. These should be a mix of traditional streets and mews type streets.

3.56 The new East-West street should have the character of a traditional street, with carriageway flanked by footways either side. As it passes to the north of the estate, it should not be designed to feel as part of the estate, rather just as another local street. Consideration should also be given to allowing through traffic on this street and the potential for new or diverted bus services to use it, based on appropriate impact assessment and consultation.

Justification

3.57 The new street network should make the estate feel more open and connected to the surroundings. It will also improve integration of the new street network with the surrounding streets. However it is acknowledged that the surrounding road network and location of open space limits the degree to which this can be done.

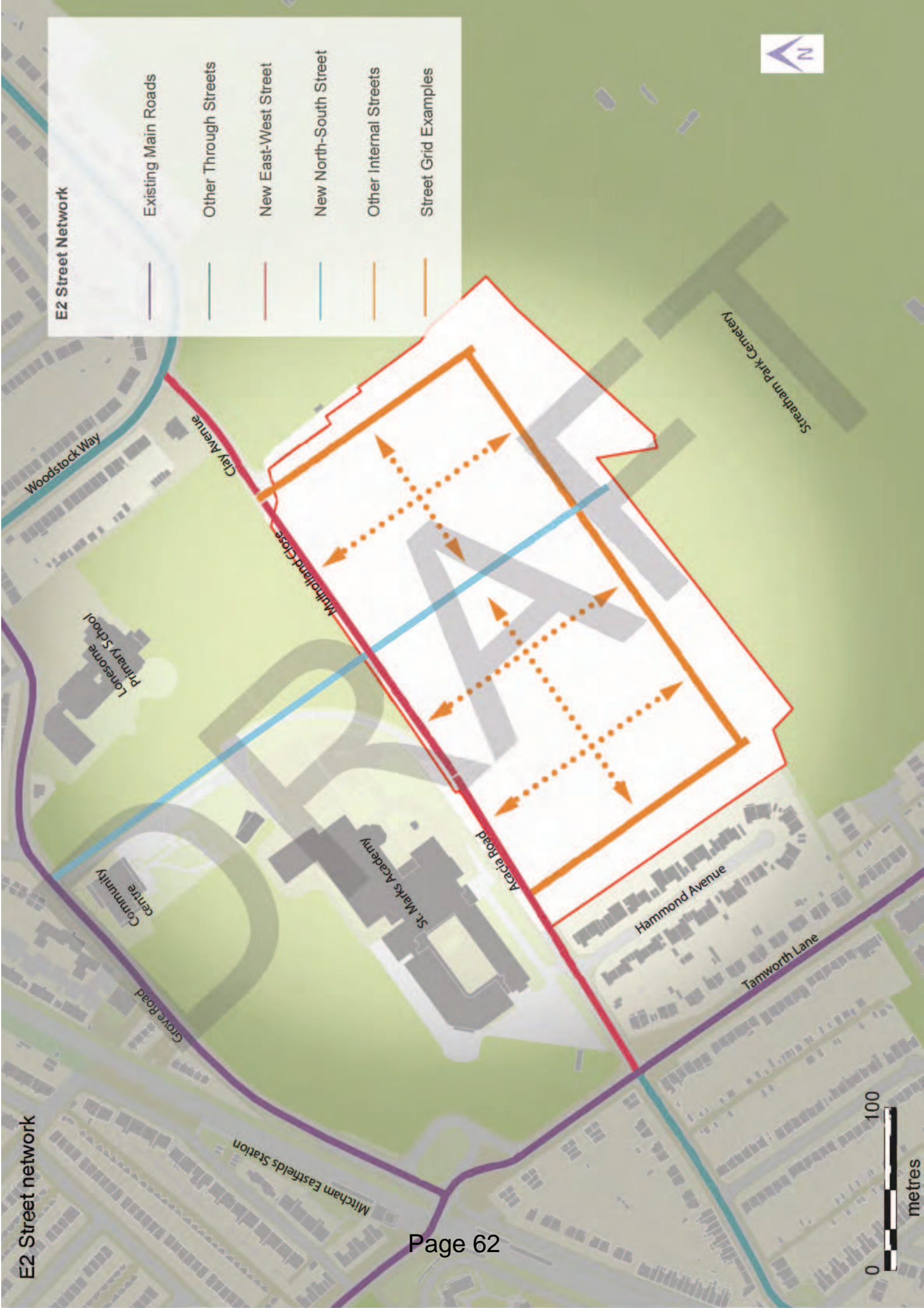
3.58 The existing street network is a fragmented mix of streets created at different times. This is a major factor in making the estate feel fortress-like and impenetrable as well as difficult to navigate around the network of streets.

3.59 Combining the three streets of Acacia Road, Mulholland Close and Clay Avenue to form a new street will aid navigation and ensure visibility of the route between the residential areas either side of the estate.

3.60 Converting the existing footpath running south from Grove Road to Acacia Road to a new street will create improved links to the existing street network in this area. It will improve pedestrian and cycle links between the estate and across the existing railway footbridge and to the north and provide clear visual links to the surrounding greenspace.

E2 Street Network

- Existing Main Roads
- Other Through Streets
- New East-West Street
- New North-South Street
- Other Internal Streets
- Street Grid Examples



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E3 Movement and access

- a)** Vehicular access arrangements should not divide the estate into two. Proposals for the estate must investigate the feasibility of Acacia Road, Mulholland Avenue and Clay Avenue being combined into a single street with full vehicular access at both ends.
- b)** Pedestrian and cycle access from the north should be improved by upgrading the existing footway/access running south from Grove Road towards Mulholland Close. The potential to widen this link into a proper street with carriageway and footways either side should also be explored.
- c)** Internal north-south streets should penetrate to the site boundary with the cemetery in a number of places on the southern boundary.

Further guidance

3.61 In order to improve bus reliability and accessibility for the estate, proposals should investigate the potential implications of routing one or more bus services away from the level crossing and along Acacia Road, Mulholland Avenue and Clay Avenue.

Justification

3.62 The Eastfields Estate sits on the outskirts of Mitcham and is considered to be relatively isolated from the surrounding neighbourhood. Situated away from the main road network the most important traffic routes are Grove Road and Tamworth Lane, which are designated local distributor roads.

3.63 Mitcham Eastfields Railway Station is located about 5 to 10 minutes' walk away and provides links to Central London and East Croydon. Access by bus is provided by the route 152 and 463 services. The nearest sizable retail and service offer is at Mitcham town centre, which

is located about 1km to the west. The Laburnum Road home zone and St Marks Road provides a convenient walking and cycling route to the centre.

3.64 The estate essentially operates as two large cul-de-sacs, accessed from either the east or west. Vehicles on one side of the estate are required to travel via Grove Road in order to get from one side of the estate to the other and the residential areas beyond. This is inconvenient, inefficient and adds to congestion on this already busy road and the level crossing.

3.65 Pedestrian/cycle access exists east-west across the north side of the estate, but the route is far from obvious, being made from three different roads all on slightly different positions and with a visual 'block' of tree planting and scrub vegetation in the middle. Pedestrian/cycle access also exists from the north via a footpath from Grove Road. However, this is narrow and poorly overlooked and curves away from the estate at its south end. The estate layout prevents any access across it, or views to the cemetery to the south, where there are also no links into it.

3.66 Despite the naturally isolated location, there are possibilities for improving movement and access, better linking the area to the surroundings. In particular, combining Acacia Road, Mulholland Avenue and Clay Avenue into a single street with full vehicular access at both ends should help to address the localised congestion at the level crossing, aid navigation and ease of movement around the area and estate generally. It is not intended to propose any through routes through the estate itself.

3.67 Improvements to pedestrian and cycle access from the north could create a clear, open and well surveyed street to link up with the railway footbridge to the north and into the estate and cemetery to the south.



E3 Movement and access

E3 Movement and access

New east-west access street

Northern access street

Across estate access street

Potential bus diversion



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E4 Land use

a) The primary land use for the site will be residential, to accord with the predominant land use of the existing site and surrounding area. The land use for the estate will remain residential with open space provision and with re-provision of existing non-residential uses and designated open space to meet relevant planning policy.

residents and businesses to apply for employment and other opportunities during the construction of developments and in the resultant end-use. Merton's Local Plan identifies a local deficiency in convenience retail provision to the east side of the estate. Any proposals for retail provision will need to accord with Merton's Local Plan policies including CS7 (Centres) and DM R2 (Development of town centre type uses outside town centres).

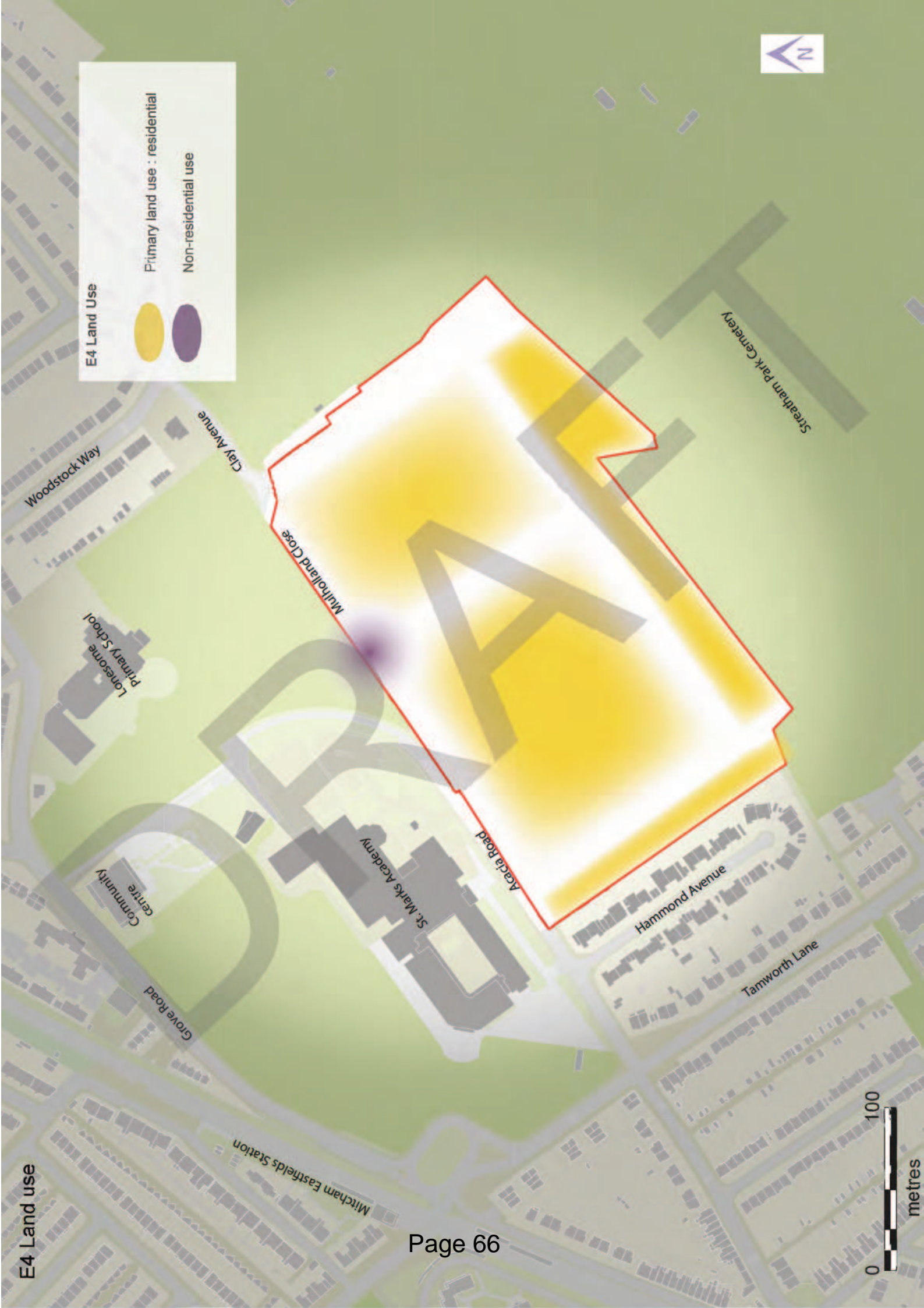
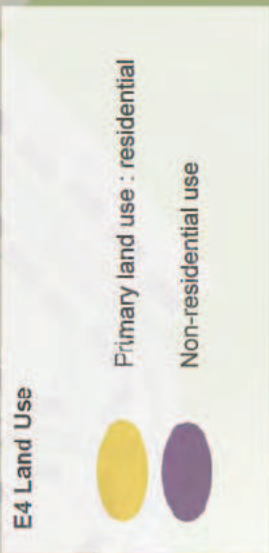
Further guidance

3.68 Where there is considered to be demand for, or the desire to, locate non-residential uses on the estate such as business space or local retail facilities, these could be located at the focal point where the North-South and East-West streets intersect (see E2 Street network map page 66). This will make them most easily accessible to all, including those outside the estate, and support local legibility and orientation.

Justification

3.69 Eastfields is located within an area with a low Public Transport Accessibility Level and a suburban character. Taking account of these factors, and the existing number of homes, and application of the London Plan matrix a range of 464 - 644 (gross figure) new homes are anticipated on this site. The council's expectation is for development proposals to be at the higher end of this range.

3.70 Development proposals should contribute to the provision of a greater choice and mix of housing types sizes and tenures, including affordable housing provision, in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies (e.g. Core Planning Strategy Policy CS8 and CS9 and Sites and Policies Plan Policies DM H1, H2 and H3). Proposals should seek to provide a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. In accordance with policy DM E4 (Local Employment Opportunities) major developments proposals will be expected to provide opportunities for local



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E5 Open space

- a)** Equivalent or better re-provision of the area of designated open space at the boundary with the cemetery in terms of quantity and quality to a suitable location within the estate, with high quality landscaping and recreational uses.
- b)** Suitably designed plays space(s) for all age groups need to be provided in accordance with the Mayor of London's 'Play and Informal Recreation' supplementary planning guidance document (2012).
- c)** As there are groups of large mature trees in the existing main open space, any new open space should incorporate these trees into it as key landscape feature.
- d)** All new houses should have gardens that meet or exceed current space standards.

However, updated, Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) of the public open spaces surrounding the Estates Local Plan sites and a number of other major development sites, following a review undertaken in 2015 indicates that a relatively small area (0.2ha) at the south western corner of the site is deficient in access to Local Parks and Open Spaces. The Street Network (EP E2) and Movement and Access (EP E3) policies will however ensure that the site will be more permeable and will create shorter routes for residents to nearby parks and open spaces and will therefore address this matter.

3.74 Subject to meeting appropriate minimum standards concerning the provision of outdoor amenity space and play space, there is no requirement to provide additional public open space within the development.

3.75 Except for the enclosed games court, the relatively narrow strip of designated open space adjacent to the cemetery is of poor quality. The regeneration of this site provides an opportunity for the on-site re-provision of this open space to a better quality and in a more suitable location.

Further guidance

3.71 The number of open spaces and their individual size is not prescribed. Open space can be provided in the form of a single space or a number of smaller spaces. However, one of the key positive characteristics of the existing estate is the large central space, and it is anticipated there should be at least one large public open space in the new development.

3.72 The streets meeting the southern boundary with the cemetery should preferably do so in the form of pocket parks that can be utilised for a range of uses including allotments and food growing.

Justification

3.73 The estate is within easy access to a variety of parks and play facilities including Long Bolstead Recreation Ground, a BMX track and the Acacia Centre with its adventure play area. It is not in an area deficient in access to public open space.

3.76 Where the provision of a large public open space is justified, the design of the space should be flexible enough in terms of scale, layout and design so that it can play host to a variety of activities such as food growing, running tracks, playgrounds, sports courts, informal and flexible space which can support occasional use for a broad range of community events.

3.77 There are also potential opportunities for off-site play space enhancements that might address the need for certain age groups while there will also be a need for some on-site play space. Any proposal should clearly demonstrate how the play space needs of all the age groups will be provided for with reference to the guidance in the Mayor of London's 'Play and Informal Recreation' supplementary planning guidance document (2012).

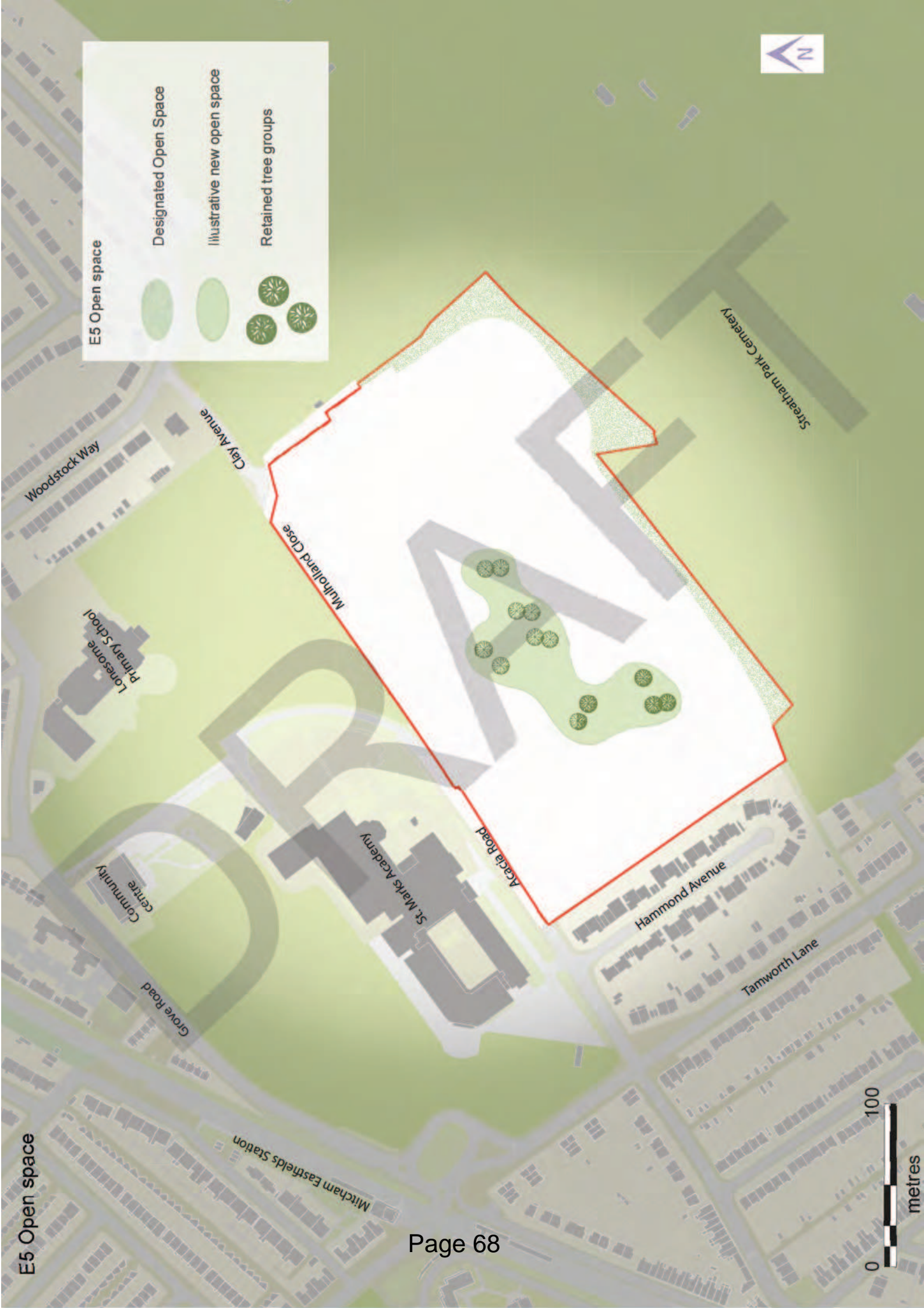
3.78 The provision of gardens that meet space standards increases their functionality, potential for tree planting and the promotion of biodiversity. Front gardens or defensible space that allows for some planting, is also encouraged.

E5 Open space

Designated Open Space

Illustrative new open space

Retained tree groups



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E6 Environmental protection

a) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be part of any major development proposal and can include a range of measures such as rain gardens, green roofs, balancing ponds, filter strips, green verges and swales; these should be designed to reduce post development runoff rates and to provide water quality, amenity benefits and to enhance biodiversity.

b) The proposed development must aim to reduce post development runoff rates as close to greenfield rates as reasonably possible, as set out in London Plan policy 5.13 and the Mayor's sustainable design and construction supplementary planning guidance (April 2014) and Defra's non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (2015). The development must be designed to take into consideration flow routes should flooding occur, i.e. designing for exceedence.

c) Proposals should seek to link existing and proposed open space in a unified landscape layout; this should include minor green corridors that will encourage species to move from the cemetery into or through the development.

3.81 The land is relatively flat however a culverted ditch passes between the estate and Long Bolstead Recreation Ground. De-culverting could provide opportunities to create distinctive landscaping and improved biodiversity, as well as addressing surface water flooding that occurs here – a legacy from a long silted up pond. The existing drainage plans for the area show the historic watercourse as an adopted Thames Water surface water sewer, so any deculverting of this asset will require Thames Water approval. An 'offline' linear sustainable drainage feature may also provide significant benefits, i.e. if it is not possible to deculvert the sewer.

Further guidance

3.79 The proposals should actively consider the creation of a small linear park on the north eastern boundary of the estate, to incorporate a swale or linear water feature to be facilitated by the de-culverting of the existing historic watercourse that flows underground in this vicinity.

Justification

3.80 The estate is highly urban in form and the internal green space and mature trees are isolated from the surrounding green space. A more physically open feel with better linked landscape and vegetation will aid biodiversity and better link surrounding green spaces.



E6 Environmental protection

Swale

Watercourse



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E7 Landscape

- a)** Street tree planting should be a key feature of landscape strategy which links into proposed open space with significant trees, the recreation ground and the adjacent cemetery.
- b)** Landscaping layouts should where possible, form green links between open space and the public realm whilst framing visual links from the estate onto the adjacent cemetery and recreation ground.
- c)** There should be street tree planting on the combined East-West street of Acacia Road, Mulholland Close and Clay Avenue, including the retention of established trees as well as the planting of new trees.
- d)** Additions to existing tree planting should where necessary, reinforce the linear nature of the East-West street. In addition tree planting should create a landscape buffer between new development and any traffic flow on the route.
- e)** Tree species should be specified to mitigate against pollution and noise. Planting layout and species need to be considered to ensure an attractive street scene whilst taking care not to restrict light or cause overshadowing to adjacent buildings.
- f)** Landscaping proposals should address the perimeter of the estate in a unified manner. Unattractive scrub particularly on Mulholland Close should be removed to improve the setting of established trees and visual links to the surrounding area. Mature trees around the estate should be retained and the boundary treatment enhanced.
- g)** The estate currently has a group of established mature trees in the central green space. These trees should be retained and be used to inform the design of landscape arrangements for example to provide cues for the location of focal points.

Further guidance

3.82 There is scope to strengthen green links to the cemetery by terminating North-South streets adjacent to the cemetery with pocket parks. Pocket parks will strengthen green corridors and enhance views of the adjacent landscape.

Justification

3.83 The estate is a highly urban form in a low density suburban landscape setting. This setting is defined largely by the surrounding large open spaces of Streatham Park Cemetery, Long Bolstead Recreation Ground and the playing fields and open space associated with St. Marks Academy and Lonesome Primary School to the north. This setting is also responsible for the site's isolation relative to surrounding residential development.

3.84 At the estate level the urban form isolates the inner landscape, open space and trees from the surroundings, as does scrub vegetation around the site boundaries.

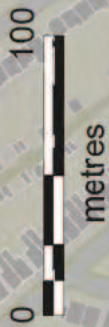
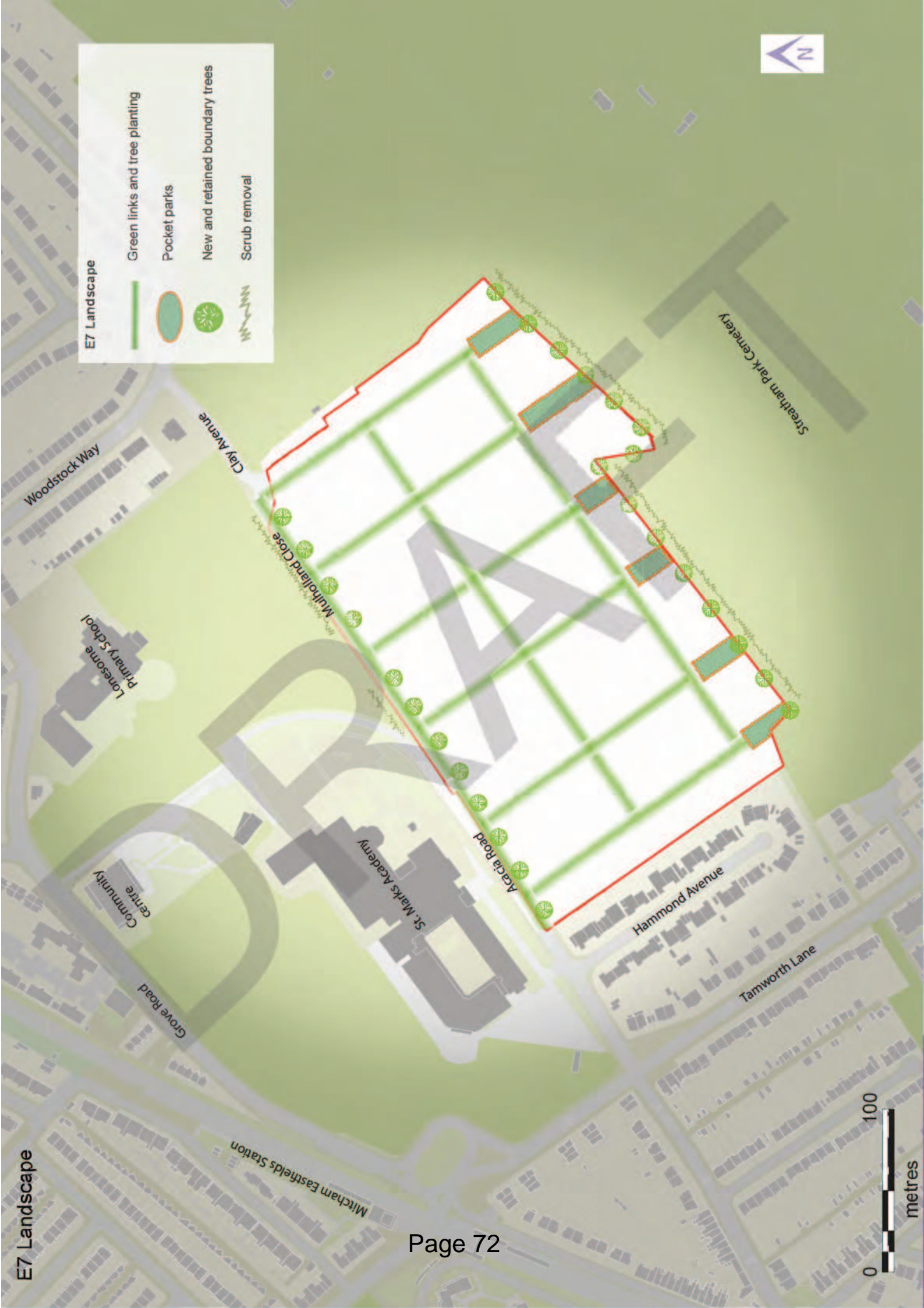
3.85 There is much scope to improve views of and the physical link between the surrounding landscape and the estate, without undermining the calm character it gains from its relative isolation. Linking the landscape to the surrounding area should enable the development to better integrate into the wider suburban area.

3.86 Planting arrangements help strengthen the avigation of the route and enhance views between the residential areas either side of the estate. A balance needs to be made between tree planting defining the space whilst not undermining views of the route past the estate.



E7 Landscape

- Green links and tree planting
- Pocket parks
- New and retained boundary trees
- Scrub removal



Site specific policies

Policy

EP E8 Building heights

- a)** The majority of buildings across the estate should not extend higher than 2-4 storeys to contribute to achieving consistency with the surrounding character.
- b)** A number of taller buildings are considered appropriate in landscape and townscape terms and to facilitate intensified use of the site. The exact storey heights should be informed by the existing mature trees within and surrounding the estate and should complement, rather than compete with the scale of this vegetation.
- c)** When viewed from outside the estate, taller buildings should not be seen to dominate the landscape or skyline.

3.91 Development proposals will need to demonstrate careful consideration of proposed building heights in relation to internal open space and views into the estate from the wider area, across the cemetery and any other longer vantage points. A clear strategy on building heights will be needed to ensure the suburban character of the area is not unduly compromised.

Further guidance

3.87 Taller buildings may be appropriate in certain places and careful consideration should be given to ensure they are located so as to appear in harmony and complement the mature vegetation and physically define open spaces.

3.88 Taller buildings must be carefully placed so as not to create poor microclimates or large areas of shaded streets or spaces.

3.89 Where taller buildings are proposed, they should also be used to reinforce the sense of space or the character of a street, rather than fragment it with excessively varied building heights.

Justification

3.90 The existing estate has a consistently uniform height of three storey buildings with flat roofs, that gives the estate its distinctive character. This presents something of a fortress feel from the outside, but a strong sense of calm enclosure from the inside. This height and isolated location mean the estate is not a dominant form in the wider townscape.



E8 Building heights

Heights over 2-4 storeys

Views into estate



Woodstock Way

Clay Avenue

Mulholland Close

Streatham Park Cemetery

Lonsome Primary School

Community centre

Grove Road

St. Marks Academy

Acacia Road

Hammond Avenue

Tamworth Lane

Mitcham Eastfields Station

E8 Building heights

