



# SIX

## Open Land

*The degree of protection for open land and ‘greenfield’ sites against development.*

### Introduction

- 6.1** There has been considerable research into strategic and local open land in the Borough: firstly in terms of the identification of defensible Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) boundaries, and, secondly, into the supply and demand for open space and level of pitch provision.
- 6.2** This section summarises the research and the findings set out in the Report of Studies (2006) and sets out the additional evidence gathering which has been undertaken subsequently in order to meet requirements identified in the 2006 Report of Studies on issues such as the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), Urban Green Space (UGS) and other Open Land issues.
- 6.3** Given the finite land resources available in the Borough there are continuing development pressures on all spaces particularly for housing. Accordingly, this report also seeks to identify whether any open spaces would be required or suitable for release for development.
- 6.4** This Section also identifies what additional research is required to be undertaken prior to the submission of the Core Planning Strategy.

### Green Belt

#### Background

- 6.5** In the London Borough of Sutton there are two areas of Green Belt located to the south of the Borough: the ‘Little Woodcote Area’ to the southeast; and the ‘Cuddington Area’ to the southwest (Map 6.1). Currently 616 ha of the Borough are designated as Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 6.6** Land within the Borough has been designated as Green Belt for many years. In 1935 the London County Council started acquiring land to protect open spaces from development. This approach was eventually given the sanction of Parliament in the Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act 1938.
- 6.7** Government guidance on the Green Belt in Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2) (1995) makes it clear that once the general extent of a Green Belt has been approved it should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. There is a requirement in PPG2 for local planning authorities, when

preparing new or revised plans, to satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the Plan period. In some cases, in order to ensure the protection of the Green Belt within this longer time frame, PPG2 advises that safeguarded land may have to be identified. In view of this, the Council has, through the preparation of all its development plans, reviewed Green Belt boundaries and the need for safeguarded land. Whilst the 2006 Report of Studies sets out the results of these reviews in detail, the outcome of each is summarised below.

#### The Sutton Local Plan (1988)

- 6.8** A review of the Green Belt boundaries was required in the mid-1980s in response to revised Government guidance on development in the Green Belt (Circular 14/84) and three reports by the Standing Conference on London and the South East Regional Planning into the need to improve London's Green Belt; the need to make clear defensible boundaries; and the need to promote recreational facilities in the Green Belt. A review was required in terms of the context of changing Guidance but also because of local circumstances. There were concerns about the impact of rationalisation of smallholdings by Surrey County Council in the Little Woodcote Estate; the need to ensure protection and enhancement of nature conservation in the area; and concerns over the continuing development pressures in the Cuddington area, which up until this point, had not been designated as Green Belt.

- 6.9** The Council's arguments for the designation of the low density housing at Cuddington as Green Belt were that if the area was not designated it would result in a fragmented Green Belt boundary which would be less defensible and there was a need to consolidate the Green Belt in line with Reigate and Banstead. Consequently, the Cuddington Area was designated as Green Belt.

#### Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Green Belt (1997)

- 6.10** There were no fundamental objections to the Green Belt designations through the preparation of the Sutton UDP, which was adopted by the Council in March 1995. However, in 1995 the Council resolved to review the Green Belt boundaries and policies in view of: the revised government guidance on Green Belts set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2) issued in 1995; the continued pressure for development in the Green Belt; the need to provide guidance on the redevelopment of a number of institutional/employment sites within the Green Belt (particularly the former Queen Mary's Hospital and Medical Research Centre (MRC) sites); and, the Boundary Commission Changes in 1994.

- 6.11** The review of boundaries resulted in:

- A change in the designation of Cheam Park. As Nonsuch Park was no longer designated as Green Belt, the Council considered that the reason for designation of the Cheam Park and Recreation Ground as Green Belt, to ensure continuity with the adjacent Green Belt in Epsom and Ewell, was no longer applicable. Therefore this area of land, which would otherwise be an isolated pocket of Green Belt, was proposed for de-designation as Green Belt and re-designated as Metropolitan Open Land; and

- Minor additions to the Green Belt boundary as a consequence of the Boundary Commission Changes.

**6.12** Apart from these changes to the Green Belt boundary the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Green Belts concluded that there were no additional land requirements to serve the development needs of the Borough that would justify further amendments.

**6.13** Finally, the MRC and the Former Queen Mary's Hospital sites were identified as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Guidance.

#### Revised Sutton UDP (2003)

**6.14** The proposals from the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Guidance were incorporated into the draft Revised Sutton UDP. In response to representations to the draft Revised Sutton UDP, the Council undertook a further review of the boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt for purpose of the Public Local Inquiry.

**6.15** Following this review the Council concluded (as set out in the Proof of Evidence on the Green Belt) that the two parcels of land proposed for continued designation as Green Belt in Sutton (the Little Woodcote Estate and land at Cuddington) met four of the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt as set out in PPG2 and that the inner boundary of the Green Belt (following the rear of properties or roads) was clear and defensible. As this accords with Government guidance in PPG2 the Council concluded that boundaries should not be altered.

**6.16** The Inspector in his report to the Public Inquiry into objections to Green Belt felt the identification of the Little Woodcote Area was logical, and Cuddington should remain designated as Green Belt and should not be identified for development over and above the acceptable uses in the Green Belt as set out in PPG2. It was also considered that there was neither a regional nor local requirement for housing provision that would lead to the need to reappraise the Green Belt boundary.

**6.17** Finally, only the Orchard Hill site was identified as a Major Developed Site in the Sutton UDP as the former MRC and Queen Mary's sites had already been given planning permission for residential development and work on these schemes had commenced.

#### Review of Green Belt (2006)

**6.18** In view of the fact that Green Belt boundaries should only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances and then through the development plan process, the Council again reviewed the Green Belt boundaries in 2006 as part of the preparation of the Core Planning Strategy: Issues and Options Report.

**6.19** The key findings from the 2006 review regarding boundary changes, as set out in the 2006 Report of Studies, are:

- That the residential redevelopment of the former Queen Mary's Hospital Major Developed Site did not appear to contribute to the objectives or the purposes of the Green Belt. Consequently, the 2006

Review questioned whether a more logical and defensible boundary may be to exclude this developed area. A possible boundary amendment was suggested as shown in Map 6.2 although no conclusion was reached;

- That the Green Belt boundary at the Orchard Hill site (within the Woodcote Green Belt area) should be reviewed and maybe amended. The Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust carried out extensive consultation over the future of the Orchard Hill site. It was clear that this site would become redundant and redeveloped in some form in the future. However, any work on the amendments to the Green Belt boundary at Orchard Hill would have to take into account decisions over the boundary review at the former Queen Mary's Hospital and any decision over how to progress the redevelopment of the Orchard Hill site; and
- it was agreed that the residential re-development at the former MRC Major Developed Site (Wellfield Road) forms an isolated pocket of development, separated from the suburban development to the north by the Wellfield Plantation. Therefore it would not be appropriate to remove its designation as Green Belt.

**6.20** The key finding from the 2006 review regarding Major Developed Sites, as set out in the 2006 Report of Studies is:

- Whilst originally the British Industrial Biological Research Association (BIBRA) site was not designated as a Major Developed Site, it is now vacant and there is evidence that the buildings cannot be re-used due to their physical condition. It was therefore considered that it might be appropriate to designate BIBRA as an MDS in the Core Planning Strategy in order to manage the proposed redevelopment in the area.

**6.21** Finally, the Housing Chapter of the 2006 Report of Studies indicated that further work was required to assess how different levels of housing growth can be accommodated in the Borough in the most sustainable way. Accordingly the 2006 Report of Studies indicated that a review of the need for safeguarded land or further amendments to the Green Belt boundary would have to be undertaken in conjunction with the work on housing needs.

**6.22** Further work has been undertaken on these issues as part of the preparation of this report of Studies and conclusions are set out below.

#### Review of Green Belt (2007)

##### *Boundaries and Development Need*

**6.23** In terms of the review of the Green Belt boundary at the Queen Mary's Hospital site, the Council has concluded that the current boundary is clearly visible and defensible as it follows the rear of gardens and roads. An amended boundary to exclude the residential development would result in an awkward shaped boundary, which would not be defensible. Furthermore, changing the boundary to remove the residential development from the Green Belt would also mean that the Council would have less control over the development of this area, and could lead to development, which would detract from Green Belt.

- 6.24** In terms of reviewing further residential development needs, the Housing Chapter of this Report of Studies demonstrates that the Council will be able to meet the Mayor's housing target within the urban/built up area of the Borough. Consequently, it is again considered that there is no need to identify safeguarded land and that the current Green Belt boundary should remain unaltered.

*Major Developed Sites (MDS) Issues – Orchard Hill*

- 6.25** As indicated above the Orchard Hill site is currently being proposed for redevelopment. It is identified as an MDS in the Saved Policies of the UDP and the intention is to maintain its status as an MDS. Consequently, it is not appropriate to amend the Green Belt boundary. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has now been approved (Nov 2007) setting out guidance for the redevelopment of this site. The SPD identifies two approaches. The Preferred Development Proposal is to develop a new secondary school with residential and other uses; and an Alternative Development Proposal is just to develop residential and other uses.

- 6.26** The SPD establishes eight objectives for any redevelopment including:
- To create a sustainable development;
  - To provide a robust and flexible framework capable of including a secondary school;
  - To establish a new community incorporating an integrated mix of high quality housing and appropriate community amenities;
  - To ensure Orchard Hill has a clearly identifiable character and positive identity;
  - To create a place that is easy to get to and move through;
  - To create and enhance public access to the open countryside;
  - To make the most of the site's context and assets; and
  - To deliver wider community benefits.

*Major Developed Sites (MDS) Issues – British Industrial Biological Research Association (BIBRA)*

- 6.27** In the previous Report of Studies it was advised that whilst the BIBRA site was formerly not designated as a MDS, circumstances have changed as the site is redundant and there is evidence that the buildings cannot be reused due to their physical condition. Although this in itself does warrant the designation of the site, it is considered that in this instance it would be advisable to, as it would allow clear guidelines for the redevelopment of the site to be put in place.
- 6.28** It would therefore be sensible to have this parcel of land identified as an MDS. This would allow the redevelopment of the site in line with saved UDP policy OE6 'Major Developed Sites' and PPG2 which impose strict controls to ensure the openness of the Green Belt is not adversely impacted.

## **Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)**

Background

- 6.29** Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) is strategically important open space, which is of metropolitan significance in terms of openness, leisure, recreation,



sport, landscape, nature conservation or heritage. The Mayor's London Plan is clear that although MOL may vary in size and primary function in different parts of London it should be of strategic significance. MOL is the same as Green Belt in terms of protection from development and serves a similar purpose. The Mayor is clear that the boundaries of MOL should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and alterations should be undertaken through the development plan process in consultation with the Mayor (Policy 3D.9 of the London Plan Further Alterations).

- 6.30** 530ha of open space in the Borough are designated as MOL. There are currently 21 sites designated as MOL in the adopted Sutton UDP on the basis of their strategic significance for meeting one or more of the following criteria: physical structure, recreation, landscape, nature conservation, heritage and, their contribution as an integral part of Green Chains of Metropolitan Significance. The sites are identified on Map 6.1 and listed within the UDP and the 2006 Report of Studies.

Metropolitan Open Land Topic Report (1997)

- 6.31** A review of MOL was required as part of the revised UDP. In accordance with RPG3 the Council appraised all MOL sites in the borough. However, in order to be comprehensive all major areas of open land were also reviewed. A total of 47 sites were assessed and the following criteria were used to determine whether a site should be designated or not:

- Physical structure
- Recreation
- Landscape
- Nature Conservation
- Heritage Importance
- Green Chain

- 6.32** In order to ensure consistency, it was considered that boundaries of MOL should be amended to exclude built development for unacceptable MOL uses such as residential units. This would allow the most important attribute of MOL, its openness, to be reaffirmed.

- 6.33** Details of the assessment of sites are set out in the 2006 Report of Studies. In summary, the MOL Topic Report concluded that that two sites originally designated as MOL did not warrant continued designation as they were only of local significance – Land North of Goat Road and Thomas Wall Park. An additional eight sites appeared to be suitable for designation as they appeared to have a strategic function, namely: Cheam Park and Recreation Ground; Westbourne Primary School Grounds; Collingwood Recreation Ground and Allotments; Seeers' Park and Perrett's Field; Mellows Park; Grove Park and Carshalton Ponds; Carshalton Park; and Queen Elizabeth Walk. The total area of these proposed additional sites was approximately 70 hectares.

- 6.34** Boundary amendments were proposed at six sites: Surrey Tennis and Country Club (the club buildings); Wilson's School (the school buildings); Rosehill Recreation Grounds (the former social club); Beddington Farmlands and Sewage Treatment Works (residential and some industrial buildings);

Worcester Park STW (residential buildings); and Green Lane Primary School (the school buildings).

**6.35** The MOL Topic Report also identified the following issues that had implications for boundaries and the future development potential of MOL sites:

- the possible identification of MOL sites as MDSs. However the Council considered that no MOL sites were suitable for identification as MDSs;
- the very special circumstances of the need for intensification of the sports facilities at the Sutton Arena;
- the very special circumstances for the need for the redevelopment of the housing estate at Roundshaw and the consequent need to delete the designation of that part of MOL affected by the proposed redevelopment.

#### Revised Sutton UDP (2003)

**6.36** Following the consultation over the Draft Revised UDP, a number of objections were raised to the proposed boundary amendments. Following the consideration of these objections a number of changes were made to MOL boundaries in the Amended Draft Revised Sutton UDP (Amended Plan). The key changes to MOL were:

- In view of concerns by GOL that a number of sites proposed for designation as MOL were too small and only locally significant, contrary to criteria in RPG3, only Cheam Park and Recreation Grounds and Grove Park and Carshalton Ponds continued to be proposed as additional MOL;
- A new policy was included (OE15a) setting out the Council's objectives for the redevelopment of the Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works site and highlighting possible boundary changes; and
- A number of minor boundary amendments were also proposed.

**6.37** At the Public Local Inquiry into objections the Council sought to demonstrate that land north of Goat Road did not meet any of the criteria for continued designation as MOL. However, the Inspector concluded that this site forms part of an arc of generally open land, a series of open spaces currently all MOL, stretching from Rosehill Recreation Ground in the west to Beddington Farmlands in the east. The Inspector concluded that the land forms a crucial part of the Green Chain and as such it should continue to be identified as MOL.

**6.38** The Council considered that the designation of the Beddington Farmlands and Sewage Treatment Works as MOL was justified as it contributes towards the physical structure of this part of London; is part of a Metropolitan Green Chain; and has both nature conservation value and heritage value of Metropolitan Importance.

**6.39** Thames Water Property sought two boundary alterations along the eastern boundary of the site in order to remove two parcels of land which front onto Beddington Lane. The inspector allowed the northern part to be retained as MOL as it was distinguishable from the built up area and on leisure and recreation grounds. In relation to the southernmost parcel of land the

Inspector considered that *“to create a defensible MOL boundary in this area ... a relatively small further adjustment should be made.... Currently, this land is surrounded on three sides by development, the industry to the north, the agricultural and other buildings to the east, and the sewage treatment works to the south. It is also dominated by electricity pylons.”* The Inspector concluded that whilst this part of the site made a very limited contribution to the objectives of the MOL its de-designation would create opportunities for a comprehensive redevelopment of this land together with a small parcel of land identified by the Council for de-designation.

- 6.40** On the issue of the identification of the Beddington Sewage Treatment Works site as a MDS, the Inspector agreed with the Council that given the sensitivity of the integrity of the MOL designation of this site to development proposals, the site should not be identified as a MDS and any application should continue to be very carefully assessed in accordance with PPG2.

Review of MOL Boundaries (2006)

- 6.41** RPG3 states that the principles of control over development in the Green Belt as set out in PPG2 apply equally to MOL. Accordingly, any strategic review of MOL boundaries would have to be progressed through the Core Planning Strategy.

- 6.42** Having re-assessed the MOL in the Borough it was considered that the sites currently identified continue to meet criteria for designation and the Council is not therefore considering de-designation of any sites. There was however one contextual issue which required an updated assessment of MOL boundaries and which may result in the need for boundary amendments. The issue is the new and significant built waste sorting facilities to the east of Beddington Farmlands. This facility has a negative impact on the appreciation of the openness of the Farmlands Site and affects the contribution of the site towards the physical structure of London.

- 6.43** In the further evidence gathering it was decided that the Council will also need to consider reviewing MOL boundaries having regard to development needs. The Council may also have to review the need for the use of MOL at St Helier for the development of a critical care hospital, however the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust have not finalised the decision over site location. These issues will be addressed below.

Review of MOL Boundaries (2007)

*Reigate Avenue Recreation Ground*

- 6.44** Since the 2006 review of MOL boundaries an application has been approved subject to a legal agreement for the development of an Autism Spectrum Disorder Unit at Glenthorne High School, which encroaches marginally onto MOL. Accordingly, there should be a minor boundary change to reflect this decision once the planning permission has been finalised.

*St Helier Open Spaces*

- 6.45** The previous report of studies identified that the use of MOL north of St Helier Hospital for the development of a critical care hospital should be



considered. However, the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust has now indicated<sup>1</sup> that they are not looking at any additional sites over and above the present hospital for future developments. A review of the MOL boundary of the St Helier Open Spaces is therefore no longer required.

## Open Spaces

### Background

- 6.46** There are over 500ha of public open space (with unrestricted access) on 244 sites within the Borough. These areas consist of:
- 2 Metropolitan Parks providing a total of 125.99 ha;
  - 3 District Parks providing a total of 80.32 ha;
  - 36 local parks providing a total of 217.84 ha
  - 203 small areas of public open space providing a total of 93.86 ha.
- 6.47** Six of these sites (19.53 ha) are located within the Green Belt, and 23 sites (281.39 ha) are located within MOL. Since 2003 an additional area of public open space (approx. 9.3 ha) has been created at the former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works.
- 6.48** The Council has undertaken two significant reviews of open space. The first was completed in 1997 and was undertaken and best practice advocated by Llewelyn Davies and the former London Planning Advisory Committee. The second recent assessment, which was completed in 2005, updated results on supply and demand for open space, and was prepared to provide evidence for the Core Planning Strategy and the preparation of an Open Space Strategy in accordance with the Greater London Authority Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies (GLA, March 2004). The results of both studies are set out in detail in the 2006 Report of Studies and are summarised below.

### Open Space Study (Llewelyn Davis, 1997)

- 6.49** The Council commissioned Llewelyn Davis to undertake a review of open spaces and recreation facilities as part of the review of the UDP. The results of the research suggested that Sutton was less well provided with public open space, in quantitative terms, than expected. Quantitative deficiencies, relative to land area and population, were particularly evident in Cheam South, St Helier South and Wallington North. However overall the ratio of residents to public open space is higher than the London average and significantly above that of other comparable boroughs in Outer London.
- 6.50** The research concluded that Sutton West, Sutton Central, Worcester Park North and Rosehill wards should be given landscape improvement priority before new public open space provision is contemplated.
- 6.51** The creation of the Wandle Valley Country Park was seen by Llewelyn-Davies as the most significant opportunity to create a major new space to meet the recreational needs of the Borough, but the report recognised the financial difficulties in the creation of the Park and recommended that some

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<sup>1</sup> Better Health Care Closer to Home: Report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Sept 2007

facilitating development be allowed on the fringes of the MOL at Beddington to enable the scheme to go ahead.

Open Space Study, Scott Wilson (2005)

- 6.52** Sutton Council commissioned consultants, Scott Wilson, to undertake a study into the current supply, deficiency, quality, demand and use of open space in the Borough, and to suggest recommendations for managing the Borough's open space. This Study and subsequent recommendations have been used to inform the preparation of the Borough's Open Space Strategy (2006).
- 6.53** 678 open spaces were identified and audited. Of these 450 had unrestricted public access (i.e. available to everyone at all times). The largest concentration of sites with restricted access (i.e. out of bounds to the general public) is in Beddington North (particularly the Beddington Farmlands) and Carshalton South and Clockhouse (the agricultural smallholdings in the Little Woodcote Green Belt area).
- 6.54** Whilst the current Borough wide level of unrestricted open space exceeds the National Playing Field Association standard, the amount of open space varies widely between Wards. The lowest quantity is found in Wallington South and Sutton South with 0.14 and 0.15ha of open space per 1,000 population respectively. At the upper end of the scale, Beddington North, Beddington South and Carshalton South & Clockhouse have over 6 Ha per 1,000. Two thirds of Sutton's wards fall below the Borough Average of 2.88ha per 1,000 population.
- 6.55** A high proportion of the Borough has access to at least one open space of Metropolitan importance. Although there are deficiencies in access to spaces of Metropolitan importance in parts of the north, central and southern areas of the Borough, it is unlikely that there are any opportunities to create additional Metropolitan sites.
- 6.56** The Study concludes that the following areas are deficient in both Metropolitan and District level provision:
- St. Helier (north west portion);
  - Stonecot (north east portion);
  - Sutton North (majority of ward);
  - Sutton Central (central portion running north south); and
  - Carshalton South & Clockhouse Ward (southernmost area).
- 6.57** The Study identified that the following key areas are deficient in Access to Local or Small Local Open Spaces however they have differing issues and therefore require different specific recommendations which are set out in the 2006 Report of Studies:
- Beddington North;
  - Cheam;
  - Sutton Town Centre; and
  - Wallington South.

- 6.58** Analysis of access to play facilities shows that there is an uneven distribution of play facilities with good coverage for all ages in the north, and poor coverage in the south of the Borough. There are also Wards with clusters of play facilities where Scott Wilson indicated that rationalisation might be an option, to provide fewer, better facilities.

London Borough of Sutton 'Townscape Appraisal' (1998)

- 6.59** During 1996 and 1997 the Council carried out a comprehensive appraisal of the townscape (including landscape) of the Borough to provide the basis for identifying priority areas for enhancement and areas of high quality landscape which need protecting. This involved a comprehensive analysis of the quality and character of the open environment of the Borough. This led to the production of a register of sites and Borough-wide maps.

## **Urban Green Space**

Background

- 6.60** Urban Green Space (UGS) is described in the Sutton Unitary Development Plan as land which may have restricted public access but which can often have an important recreational or non-recreational value. This can include private sports clubs, which can contribute towards meeting local/regional recreational needs for their members and often have significant visual amenity and ecological benefits within the surrounding area. As well as amenity or ecological value other non-recreational benefits include structural value, (i.e. open spaces that help define Sutton's distinctive communities), and educational or cultural value. Open space which meets either the recreational or non-recreational criteria and is located in areas of open space deficiency, or areas generally with a low proportion of green space to built up area, should be identified as UGS.

- 6.61** Llewellyn Davies originally assessed open land in 1996/7 as part of the Open Space Study against these criteria in order to establish the list of UGS. Currently 45 sites are identified as UGS in the UDP.

- 6.62** The Sutton Open Space Strategy (Action 21) indicated that the Council should assess the quality/value of sites with limited/restricted public access and identify sites, which might be suitable for alternative uses.

Review of UGS (2007)

- 6.63** A review of all UGS was carried out in 2007 in the context of the definition of open space deficiencies in the Open Space Study carried out by Scott Wilson. Sites were considered to meet an open space deficiency if: the ward they fall within is below the borough average for open space; the site does not have access to a metropolitan site; the site does not have access to a district site; the site has a deficiency in access to small open spaces; and, if the site has a deficiency in access to local parks. Scott Wilson assessed the value of a number of sites based on context; level and type of use; and the wider benefits of a site. Where this value calculation has been undertaken on UGS the results have also been reported.

- 6.64** The result of the review of UGS land is set out in Table 6.1, which lists each site and which of the criteria it meets.

- 6.65** Having carried out the analysis of all UGS it appears that there are two sites which no longer meet any of the criteria: the Women's Cricket Club/BT site at Plough Lane; and Mill Green Allotments. The Council will need to look specifically at the value of these sites to see if they still merit designation as UGS through the LDF process.

## **Playing Pitches**

### Background

Playing Pitch Strategy for the London Borough of Sutton, PMP (2004).

- 6.66** In August 2003 the Council commissioned consultants PMP to undertake an independent assessment of the adequacy of the Borough's playing pitches. A survey reviewed the supply of, and demand for, association football, rugby union, cricket, hockey, hurling and baseball pitches in the Borough.
- 6.67** The Playing Pitch Strategy identified an appropriate local standard of playing pitch provision of 0.45ha/1,000 population. The current level of accessible playing pitches within the borough equates to 0.43 ha/1,000 population, which is below the recommended level to meet demand. The study also identified specific existing shortfalls in pitches for mini-soccer and junior rugby. There is a need to consider how these shortfalls can be addressed. Two playing fields within Sutton are under threat from development (North Cheam Sports and Social Club fields, Croygas Sports Ground). Given the existing shortfall in provision, particularly for mini-soccer and junior rugby, there remains a need to ensure that existing playing field provision is protected.
- 6.68** No further evidence gathering has been carried out on playing pitches since this study.

## **Allotments**

### Background

- 6.69** There are 36 Council-owned allotments sites, with over 2,200 plots in the Borough. These are listed in the Schedule in Table 6.2. Of these sites five are non-statutory. The majority of allotments are located across the north-eastern and central part of the Borough, serving many of the higher density housing areas. A number of Wards do not have any allotment provision at all, including Belmont, Carshalton Central, Wallington South, Beddington South and St Helier North.
- 6.70** There are no privately owned allotments, although until recently there was one at Aultone Way, Sutton Garden Suburb. The owners closed the site in anticipation of residential development for 28 houses. The application (Ref. APP/A/98/29815) was refused in July 1998.
- 6.71** The 2006 Report of Studies indicated that as part of the Action Plan of the Open Space Strategy the Council should carry out an allotment survey into the demand, quality and use of allotments and produce an allotment strategy.

Revised Sutton UDP (2003)

- 6.72** An assessment of the supply and demand for allotments was undertaken as part of the review of the Sutton UDP. The assessment looked at quantity, quality and distribution of provision as well as identifying the catchment areas of current sites. It also looked at the uptake of plots, the number of sites with waiting lists and analysed the reasons for these waiting lists and looked at the distance travelled by plot holders to their sites. The results are set out in the Statement of Council's Case No 6: Allotments Policies, Sutton UDP Review: Public Local Inquiry (April 2001).
- 6.73** Research in 2001 identified that in relation to the standards in the Thorpe Report, the London Borough of Sutton was well provided for in terms of its allotment provision. Given the number of plots identified in 2001, there were 12.6 plots per 1,000 population.
- 6.74** The Council was ranked ninth out of the 33 London Boroughs in terms of level of allotment provision, and, of the outer south west London Boroughs (Croydon, Sutton, Merton, Richmond and Kingston) it ranked second (LPAC Borough Council's Questionnaire, 1994).
- 6.75** The landscape quality of allotments is varied. The Review of the Sutton UDP Landscape Appraisal (1998) sets out the appraisal results of nearly 20 of the allotment sites within the Borough. A number of plots are noted as being well managed and having high landscape value ratings, for example Fryston Avenue. However, a number of allotments are not well maintained, have the appearance of scrub land and have poor landscape ratings, for example Bushey Lane Allotments (Landscape quality rating - generally poor quality) and Bute Road Allotments (landscape quality rating - very poor quality).

Open Space Study, Scott Wilson (2005)

- 6.76** The Open Space Study conducted by Scott Wilson looked at the value and quality of a number of the allotments and identified nine allotment sites within the Borough that scored Poor for Quality and Low for Value. Scott Wilson recommends that both the Quality and Value should be improved. Scott Wilson also recommends that an Allotment survey be carried out into the demand, quality and use of allotments.
- 6.77** Figures identifying supply and demand for allotments and take up rate for individual sites are set out in Table 6.2 and illustrated in Figure 6.1. It is clear from these figures that there has been resurgence in the demand for allotments. Whereas in 2001 there were waiting lists for eight allotments, fifteen sites now have waiting lists. The number of vacant plots recorded in September 2007 is 224, down from 372 identified in the 2006 Report of Studies, and 677 recorded in November 2003.
- 6.78** The Council is intending to produce the Allotment Strategy within the next financial year.



## **Further Evidence Gathering (2008)**

### Sports and Recreational Facilities

**6.79** As reported in the 2006 Report of Studies, the Draft Joint Physical Activities Strategy identifies the need to:

- work with Sutton Judo Club, Sutton School of Gymnastics and the relevant governing bodies to provide a new facility in the borough;
- work with Carshalton Athletic and Sutton United football clubs to help them improve their facilities; and
- assess the best way forward for Westcroft and Cheam Leisure Centres.

**6.80** This work was identified in the 2006 Report of Studies and is still outstanding.

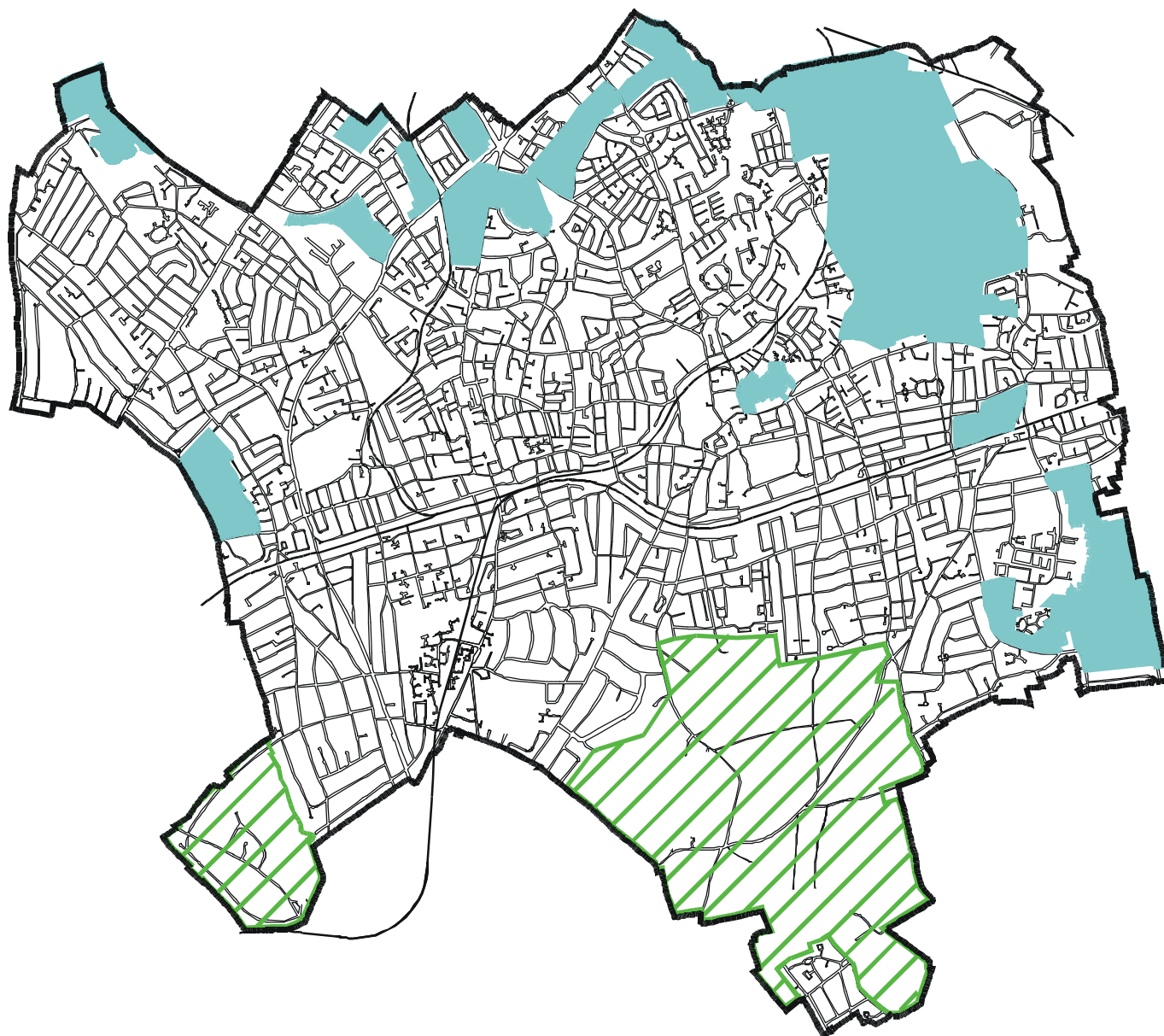
### Biodiversity

**6.81** There are a number of statutory designations for wildlife sites within the European Union e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, Ramsar Site. Below this tier of statutory designations is a system of locally valued non-statutory sites.

**6.82** A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is a non statutory designation used to identify high quality wildlife sites in the borough.



**6.83** In order to choose sites for protection it is necessary to have good survey information on the habitats and species of all candidate areas. The Greater London Authority Act (1999) requires the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy to contain information about the ecology of Greater London and the wildlife of Greater London and its habitat. This is implemented through the London Open Spaces Survey.

**6.84** London boroughs have had a systematic survey carried out of wildlife habitats using the London Ecology Unit's specification (as amended and updated) since 1985. The GLA has recently carried out a habitat survey of open space and wildlife habitat in Sutton as part of the Mayor's 10-year rolling programme. This work will need to be reviewed as part of the work on site designation through the next stage of the preparation of the LDF.



Map 6.1

## Metropolitan Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land

-  Metropolitan Green Belt
-  Metropolitan Open Land

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London Borough of Sutton. LA086555X

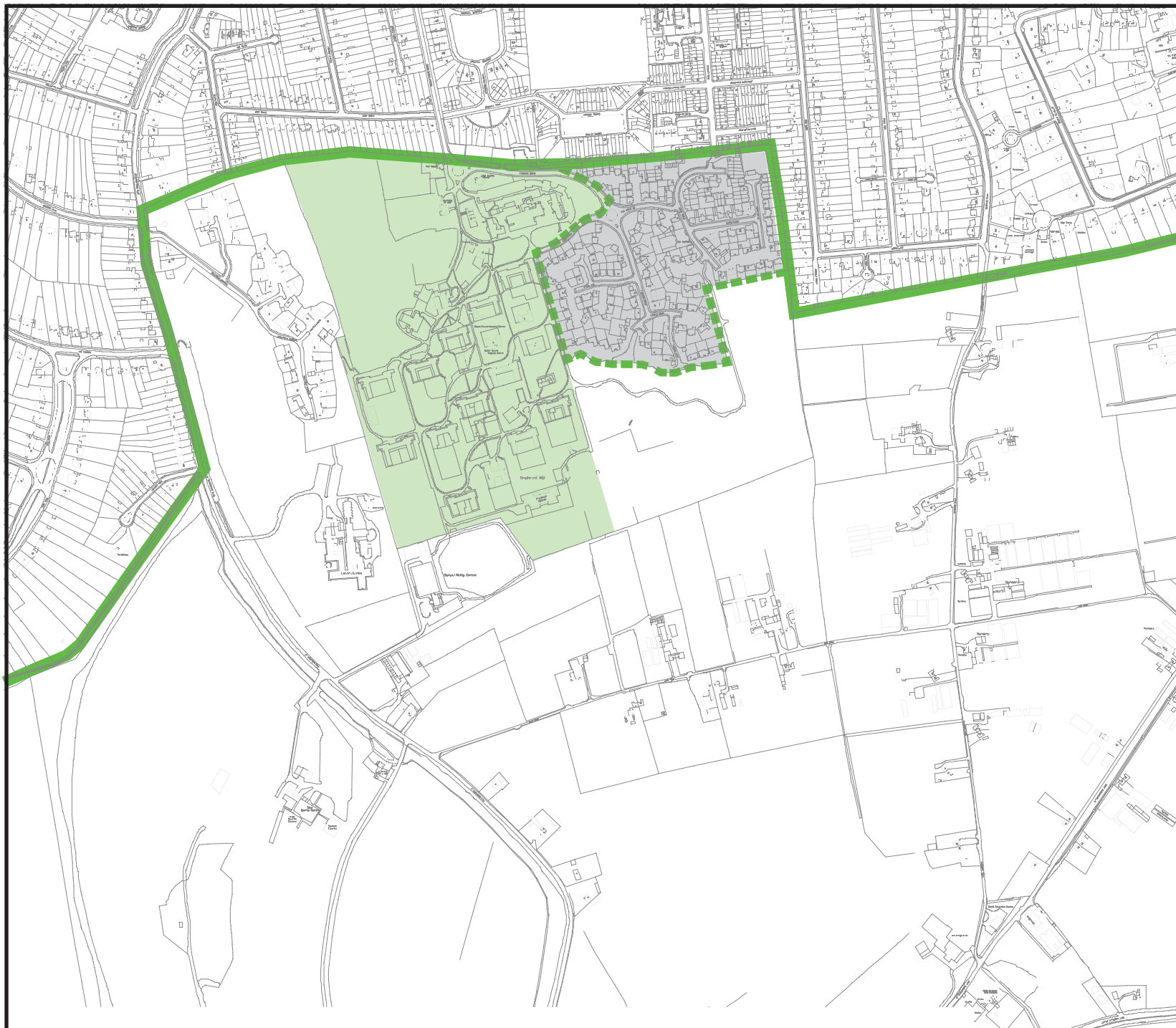
North



Drawn

Date  
October 2006

Scale  
1:50,000



## Map 6.2

London Borough of Sutton

### Possible Green Belt Boundary Alteration

- Possible new Green Belt Boundary
- Green Belt Boundary which may be amended
- Area which may no longer be designated as Green Belt
- Orchard Hill - Major Developed Site



October 2006

Not to Scale

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Table 6.1

## Review of Urban Green Space Sites

Name of Urban Green Space	Site No. OSS	Area OSS	Below bor av of 2.88 (ward)	Site Met Park Def	Site District Pk Def	Site Local Pk Def	Small Open Space Def	Overall Value Score	Meets Regs for Designation
Aultone Way Allotments	260	0.79	N	Y	Y	Y/N	N	Low	Y
Barrow Hedges Primary School Grounds	part 376	N/A	N	Y/N	N	Y	N	N/A	Y
Belmont Allotments	239	2.05	Y	N	N	Y	N	Average	Y
Benhill Estate Green Space	213	0.98	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y
Bushey Meadow Allotments	257	0.51	N	N	Y	N	N	Low	see report
Bute Road Allot' (north 263) (south no 264)	263/264	0.75+0.82	N	N	N	Y/N	N	Average	see report
Carshalton Athletic F.C., off Wrythe Lane	147	1.72	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	Y
Carshalton Lawn Tennis Club, off Beeches Avenue,	151	0.68	N	N	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y
Chaucer Road Allot' (opp side of track from bute rd)	258	0.62	N	N	Y	N	N	Low	see report
The Cheamfields Club, Devon Road, Cheam	154	0.61	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N/A	Y
Cheam Sports Club, Peaches	155	7.26	Y	N	N	N	N	N/A	see report

<b>Name of Urban Green Space</b>	<b>Site No. OSS</b>	<b>Area OSS</b>	<b>Below bor av of 2.88 (ward)</b>	<b>Site Met Park Def</b>	<b>Site District Pk Def</b>	<b>Site Local Pk Def</b>	<b>Small Open Space Def</b>	<b>Overall Value Score</b>	<b>Meets Regs for Designation</b>
Close, Cheam									
Croydon Gas Sports Club, Mollison Drive	142	3.51	N	N	N	Y	N	N/A	see report
Culvers Avenue Allotments	271	0.39	N	N	N	Y	N	Average	see report
Devonshire Avenue Nature Area	318	0.41	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y
Devonshire Primary School Playing Fields	400	0.44		N	Y		N	N/A	Y
Downs Tennis Club, Holland Avenue, Belmont	146	0.4	Y	N	N	N	N	N/A	see report
Duke Street Allotments (part)	254	0.31	Y	Y/N	Y	N	N	Average	Y
Gander Green Lane Allotments	262	3.57	Y	N	N	N	N	Average	see report
Green Wrythe Lane Allotments	274	1.85	Y	N	Y	Y/N	N	Average	Y
Manor Park Primary School	395	0.9	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N/A	Y
Mill Green Allotments	272	0.46	N	N	N	N	N	Average	see report
Orchard Allot' (behind school - north of Northway)	269	1.06	Y	N	N	N	N	Low	see report
Perrett's Field Allotments	261	0.9	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	Y
Playing Field, North of the	369	1.19	Y	N	N	N	N	N/A	see report



Name of Urban Green Space	Site No. OSS	Area OSS	Below bor av of 2.88 (ward)	Site Met Park Def	Site District Pk Def	Site Local Pk Def	Small Open Space Def	Overall Value Score	Meets Regs for Designation
Grove (Carshalton Pk)									
Purley Sports Club, off Lordsbury Field	140	3.52	N	N	N	Y	Y/N	N/A	Y
Radcliffe Gardens Green Space	part 376	N/A	N	N	N	Y	N	N/A	see report
Ridge Road Allotments	252	0.87	Y	Y	Y	Y/N	Y/N	Low	Y
LRT Sports Ground (N Cheam Sports and Social??)	158	1.89		N	Y/N	N	N	N/A	Y
Sheen Way Playing Fields	451	2.54	N	N	N	Y	N	N/A	see report
Southern Railway Sports Club, Mollison Drive	143	3.56		N	N	Y/N	N	N/A	see report
Spencer Road Allotments	270	1.03	N	N	N	Y	N	Average	see report
St. Philip's Churchyard and Cuddington Cemetery	282	1.34	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y
Stanley Rd Allot'	243	3.94	N	N	Y/N	Y	N	Low	Y
Sutton Bowling Club, off Dorset Road, Belmont	144	1.36	Y	N	N	N	N	N/A	see report
Sutton Churches Tennis Club, off Gander Green	164	0.62	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	Y

Name of Urban Green Space	Site No. OSS	Area OSS	Below bor av of 2.88 (ward)	Site Met Park Def	Site District Pk Def	Site Local Pk Def	Small Open Space Def	Overall Value Score	Meets Regs for Designation
Lane									
Sutton C.C., Cheam Road, Sutton	165	2.76	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y
Sutton United F.C. Borough Sports Ground	166	2.33	Y	N	Y	N	N	N/A	Y
Sutton Highfields Lawn Tennis Club, Mayfield Road	163	0.44	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y
Sutton Tennis and Squash Club, Devonshire Road	145	0.74							
Wallington Cricket Club	168	1.93	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y
Wandle Road Allotments	267	0.55	Y	N	N	Y	N	Low	Y
Watson Avenue Allotments	253	0.38	Y	N	Y	Y/N	N	Low	Y
Westmead Road Allotments	240	3.57	Y	N	Y	Y/N	Y/N	Low	Y
Women's Cricket, Plough Lane BT Sports	139	1.63	N	N	N	N	N	N/A	see report
Worcester Park A.C., Green Lane, Worcester Park	172	2.8	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y

**Table 6.2**  
**Review of Allotments (2007)**

Allotment Name	Total plots (Nov 03)	Vacant plots (Nov 03)	Vacant plots (April 06)	Vacant plots Sept 06	Waiting list April 06	Waiting list Sept 06	Total plots Sep 07	Vacant plots Sep 07	Waiting list Sep 07	No. on Waiting list Sep 07
Beddington Park	13	0	0	2	Yes		13	0	Yes	5
Belmont	124	6	0	0		Yes (24)	135	0	Yes	30
Benhill	167	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (9)	168	0	Yes	17
Buckland Way	93	32	28	21			95	9		
Bushey Meadow	22	6	4	3			23	3		
Bute Road	104	31	29	28			108	18		
Central Road	12	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (10)	12	0	Yes	10
Chaucer Road	38	27	27	24			38	14		
Cheam Court (A&B)	31	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (3)	31	0	Yes	11
Cheam Park Nursery	65	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (23)	65	0	Yes	22
Cheam Park Paddock	19	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (15)	19	0	Yes	12
Culvers Avenue	22	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (4)	22	0	Yes	11
Demesne Road	272	129	123	109			275	91		
Duke Street	27	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (7)	27	0	Yes	6
Fryston Avenue	23	0	2	0	Yes		23	0	Yes	6
Gander Green Lane	214	56	48	26			216	3		
Goose Green	60	9	9	3			61	3		
Green Wrythe Lane	104	38	38	31			109	12		
Lavender Road	20	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (12)	20	0	Yes	20
Mill Green	18	3	3	4			19	0		
Perretts Field	48	0	0	4	Yes		49	0	Yes	5
Priory Crescent	5	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (6)	6	0	Yes	8
Pylbrook Triangle	2	2	2	2			2	2		
Ridge Road	62	24	21	21			62	20		
Roundshaw	106	12	4	0		Yes (3)	106	0	Yes	7
Spencer Road	57	8	7	4			57	3		
Stanley Road	188	70	68	56			205	29		
The Warren	15	15	0	0	Yes	Yes (20)	15	0	Yes	39
Wandle Road	17	4	0	0		Yes (1)	23	0	Yes	5
Wandle Side	12	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (3)	14	0	Yes	5
Watson Avenue	26	3	3	4			26	6		
Westmead Road	170	50	48	32			173	11		
Wrights Row	13	0	0	0	Yes	Yes (13)	13	0	Yes	22
(Clensham Lane)	N/A						5	0		
(Bute Road Orchard)	N/A						3	0		
	2147	677	464	372	15	15 (153)	2238	224	18	241

Figure 6.1

