

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham  
Local Development Framework

**Background paper: Metropolitan Open Land and other  
open space boundary changes**

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## **1.0 Purpose of the Document**

- 1.1 This document provides background evidence to support the proposed alterations to the boundaries of a number of areas of the borough's Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) shown on the adopted Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. In addition, the document provides details of changes to other open space designations. The alterations to MOL boundaries and other open space changes are being proposed as part of the process to adopt the borough's Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy. This document, together with the Generic Development Management DPD, will replace the UDP.

## **2.0 Policy Context:**

### National Policy

- 2.1 Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' sets out the policies to be taken into account by local planning authorities in the preparation of development plans. In particular local authorities should undertake assessments and set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their areas.

### London Plan (2008)

- 2.2 The MOL designation is unique to London and protects strategically important open spaces within the built environment. The London Plan indicates that MOL can vary in size and primary function in different parts of London. It states that it should provide three valuable functions:
- Protecting open space to provide a clear break in the urban fabric and contributing to the green character of London
  - Protecting open space to serve the needs of Londoners outside their local area
  - Protecting open space that contains a feature or landscape of national or regional significance
- 2.4 Policy 3D.10 states that boroughs should maintain the protection of MOL from inappropriate development and that land designated as MOL should satisfy one or more of the following criteria:
- *Land that contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area*
  - *Land that includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London.*

- *Land that contains features or landscapes of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at metropolitan or national level.*
  - *Land that forms part of a green chain and meets one of the above criteria.*
- 2.5 MOL is protected within the London Plan and afforded the same level of protection as the green belt. Alterations to the boundary of MOL are required under policy 3D.10 to be undertaken as part of the Development Plan Document process in consultation with the Mayor and adjoining authorities.
- 2.6 The Mayor's consultation draft replacement London Plan (October 2009) reiterates much of the adopted London Plan.

#### Hammersmith and Fulham UDP as amended 2007

- 2.7 The Hammersmith and Fulham UDP has defined four areas of MOL, namely Kensal Green and St. Mary's cemeteries; Wormwood Scrubs; Bishops Park and the Warren Allotments; and Hurlingham Club and Park. These open spaces are predominantly open in character and are of more than borough significance by virtue of their size and catchment area. The boundaries of these areas of MOL are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 2.8 UDP policy EN24 has a general presumption against inappropriate development within the areas of MOL
- 2.9 Open space in the borough which does not fall within MOL is subject to either UDP policy EN22 'Public Open Space and other Green space of Borough-wide importance' or policy EN22X 'Public and Private Open Space of Local importance'.

### **3.0 Background to MOL alterations**

- 3.1 In October 2005, the council consulted on LDF Issues and Options and included the statement that it considered there was a case for examining the possibility of excluding Linford Christie Stadium from the Wormwood Scrubs MOL. The council's Core Strategy Preferred Options (June 2007) set out the council's preferred option to remove the stadium from the MOL, but also identified the proposed addition of land adjoining the Old Oak Community Centre as new MOL. The proposals for Wormwood Scrubs were reiterated in June 2009 in reissued Core Strategy Options, and the council also announced its intention to remove some residential properties from Hurlingham Club and Park MOL.

### **4.0 MOL Details**

- 4.1 This section provides detail on the proposed MOL alterations.

#### **Wormwood Scrubs**



- 4.2 Wormwood Scrubs is approximately 68.36 hectares (169 acres) in area. It has been identified in development plans and on Proposals Maps since the 1981 District Plan. It is used for formal and informal recreation, with football pitches, rugby pitches, and cricket squares laid out and maintained by the council. It also contains the boroughs only designated local nature reserve. Wormwood Scrubs is also used less formally for flying kites and model aeroplanes, walking, cycling and dog walking. Linford Christie Stadium lies within Wormwood Scrubs on the southern fringe of the Scrubs. Old Oak Community Centre is located along the southern boundary, outside of the MOL designation in Braybrook Street.

#### Linford Christie Stadium (LCS)

- 4.3 The LCS is an outdoor athletics stadium on Wormwood Scrubs at the rear of Hammersmith Hospital. It is a newly refurbished outdoor sports provision with a variety of activities run by QPR FC and Chelsea FC. It is also the base for the Thames Valley Harriers athletic Club and other sports clubs. On site there are track and field events, rugby facilities, and a third generation 11 Astroturf football pitch as well as a car park.



- 4.4 LSC forms part of the MOL designation for Wormwood Scrubs and is currently subject to UDP policy EN24 which means that there is general presumption against any further development on this site unless it meets certain criteria set out in policy. The council propose to remove the stadium from MOL because it is a large structure that is separated from the open grassed area by a brick wall. It is not clearly distinguishable from the built up area of the borough and it does not contribute to the green character of the borough or London (London Plan policy 3D.10). The stadium only meets one of the four criteria outlined in the London Plan, namely "open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London". However, the council consider that given the circumstances of this site, this criterion should not be sufficient on its own to maintain the MOL status.
- 4.5 In addition, Linford Christie Stadium needs to provide for a more intensive sports and recreation use and has been designated as a school sports zone. The removal of the stadium from MOL and its release from the restrictive MOL policy will make it easier for the development of improved sports facilities on the site should proposals come forward. This development may need to include some form of non sports use as an enabling development if it is to be viable and will ensure the long term future of the facility.
- 4.6 At the UDP Inquiry in 2001, the Inspector considered the issue of the inclusion of the stadium in the MOL. He concluded that the land (both buildings and car park) was suitably included in the MOL because it met criteria set out in

Regional Planning Guidance. However, for the reasons stated above the council consider that although the land occupied by the stadium “includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London” it is still appropriate that it is removed from MOL designation (see appendix 1 for a map of the change). This removal from MOL would not detract from the openness and public use of the MOL as a whole. The stadium would remain an important sports facility in the borough and would be designated as an outdoor sporting facility in the Core Strategy and be subject to appropriate Core Strategy policies that seek to improve and retain the range of sports facilities.

#### Old Oak Community Centre

- 4.7 The Old Oak Community Centre includes a community centre and grounds used by local community groups. The centre and grounds are currently outside of Wormwood Scrubs MOL. The land comprises the football playing area and other open space surrounding the existing community centre building and are subject to UDP policy EN22X Public and Private Open Space of Local importance’.
- 4.8 The council propose to include the area around the Old Oak Community Centre in the Wormwood Scrubs MOL designation. This land is open and is visually and functionally a continuation of Wormwood Scrubs. Only the footprint of the Old Oak Centre building, which does not meet MOL criteria, should be excluded (see appendix 2 for a map of the change).

#### **Hurlingham Club and Park**

- 4.9 Hurlingham Park is a large park located in the south of the borough, comprising a mix of secluded gardens, sporting facilities, a large pavilion and a large playground. On the edge of Hurlingham Park, but included within the MOL boundary, there is a disused council depot in Hurlingham Road and three residential dwellings and their adjoining gardens, Hurlingham Lodge, Hurlingham Cottage and Field Cottages in Hurlingham Road and Broomhouse Lane. The depot and three residential plots are currently subject to UDP policy EN24 where there is a general presumption against development.
- 4.10 Hurlingham Park has been identified as MOL in development plans and on Proposals Maps since the 1981 District Plan. However, there have been changes to the MOL boundary, and the 2003 Proposals Map excluded residential properties to the rear of Napier Avenue that had been included within the MOL designation. In addition, the boundary in the vicinity of Hurlingham Lodge and Hurlingham Cottage has varied in different development plans. In the 1994 and 2003 UDPs, the MOL boundary on the Proposals Map included Hurlingham Lodge and Hurlingham Cottage, whereas the 1989 Borough Local Plan and 1981 District Plan excluded the properties. It is considered appropriate, therefore, to look again at the boundary of Hurlingham Park MOL and to amend it by excluding Hurlingham Lodge and Hurlingham Cottage as well as Field Cottages which are private residences,

not open space and have no public access. Because the private residences are separated from, and are not part of, the park and do not fit well with the policy restrictions of MOL designation it is considered appropriate to remove them from the MOL (see appendix 3 for a map of the change).

- 4.11 In respect of the depot, this is of poor quality and no longer in use and has no public access or open space function. The restrictive MOL policy designation could preclude the possibility of a number of new uses for this site and as such the council consider it appropriate to remove the depot from the Hurlingham Park MOL designation (see appendix 3 for a map of the change).

## **5.0 Other Open Spaces**

- 5.1 This section provides detail on other proposed open space alterations

### **South Park**

- 5.2 South Park is a large park in the south of the borough and is designated as an open space of borough-wide importance in the borough's UDP.
- 5.3 In the north west corner of the park there is a depot and lodge buildings which are set together on a raised terrace, fenced off from the rest of the park. South Park Depot, together with all its outbuildings and Clancarty Lodge are within the borough-wide open space designation. The depot and lodge buildings are subject to UDP policy EN22 (Public and Private Open Space of Borough-wide importance). This policy will not permit development unless it can be shown that such development would preserve or enhance its open space character, its function as a sport, leisure or recreational resource; and its contribution to biodiversity and visual amenity..
- 5.4 The depot and Lodge buildings have not recently been put to any use linked to South Park, nor have they been available for public use. The orientation of the buildings within this area is poor, having occurred as a result of various uncoordinated historic changes to the working nature of the site. In summary, the area contributes poorly to the overall workability and appearance of the boundary alignments within the park.
- 5.5 The depot is not used in connection with the park and is no longer required by the council. By taking it out of the open space boundary it allows more flexibility for reuse. It is possible that some of the land occupied by the depot could be integrated into the north west corner of the park to make a larger useable public open space. The lodge adjoins the depot. It is no longer required by the council. The site is not in open space use and is predominantly occupied by a building. Taking the site out of the open space boundary reflects the fact that it is not open space and allows more flexibility for reuse, perhaps with the depot site (see appendix 4 for a map of the change).

- 5.6 Rather than open space policy guiding the future of these sites, the future of the depot and the lodge would be subject to other Core Strategy policies. The amount of useable open space in South Park would not decrease as a result of these changes. Indeed, there may be an opportunity of increasing the amount of open space as a result of some of the depot site being integrated into the open space.

#### **Rowberry Mead Park and Imperial Wharf Park**

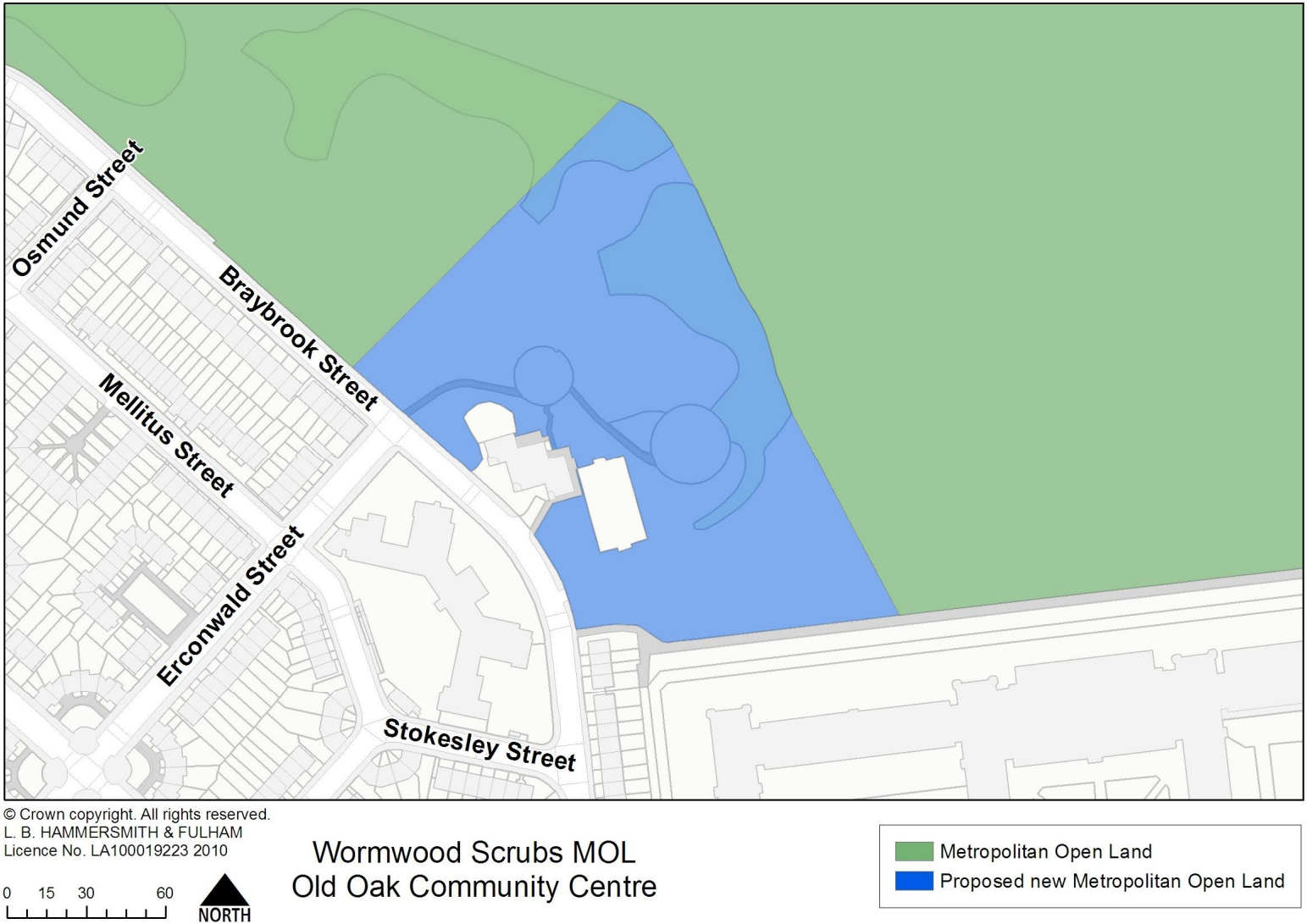
- 5.7 Rowberry Mead Park and Imperial Wharf Park are two newly created parks in the borough. The council considers that these parks have characteristics that merit designation as open spaces of boroughwide importance. (See appendix 5 and 6 for maps of these new open spaces).



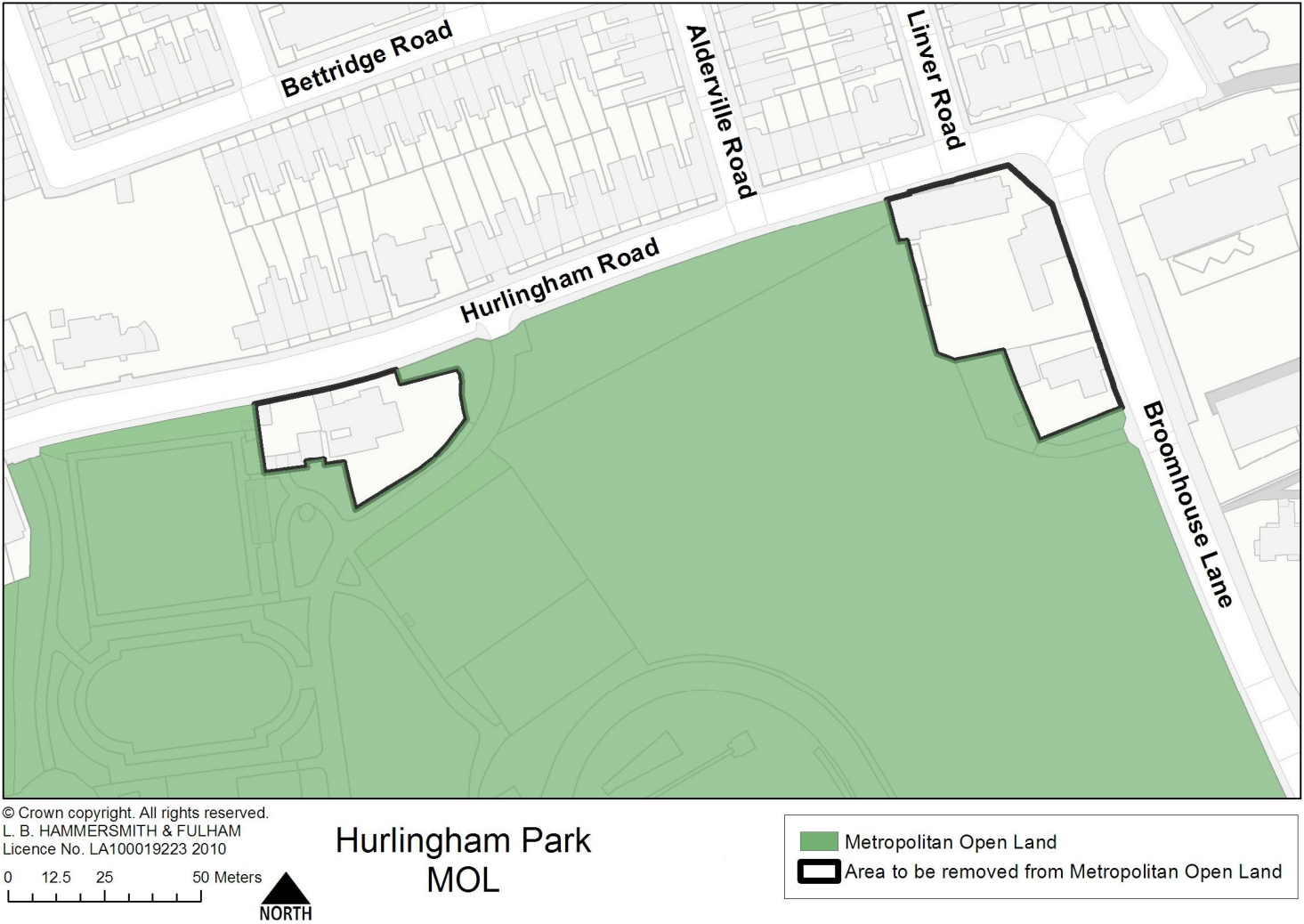
Appendix 1: Linford Christie Stadium



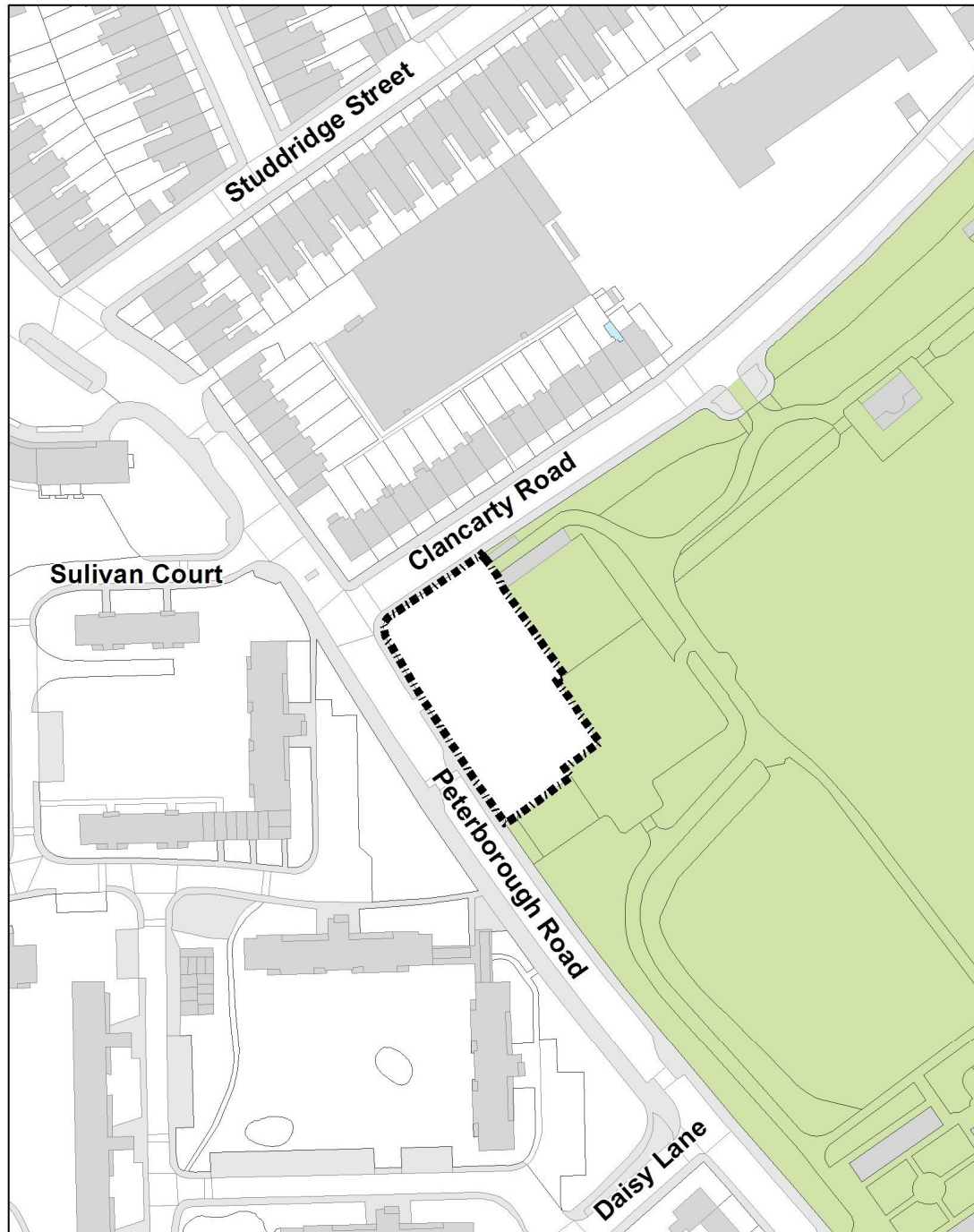
Appendix 2: Old Oak Community Centre



Appendix 3: Hurlingham Park



## Appendix 4: South Park





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NORTH

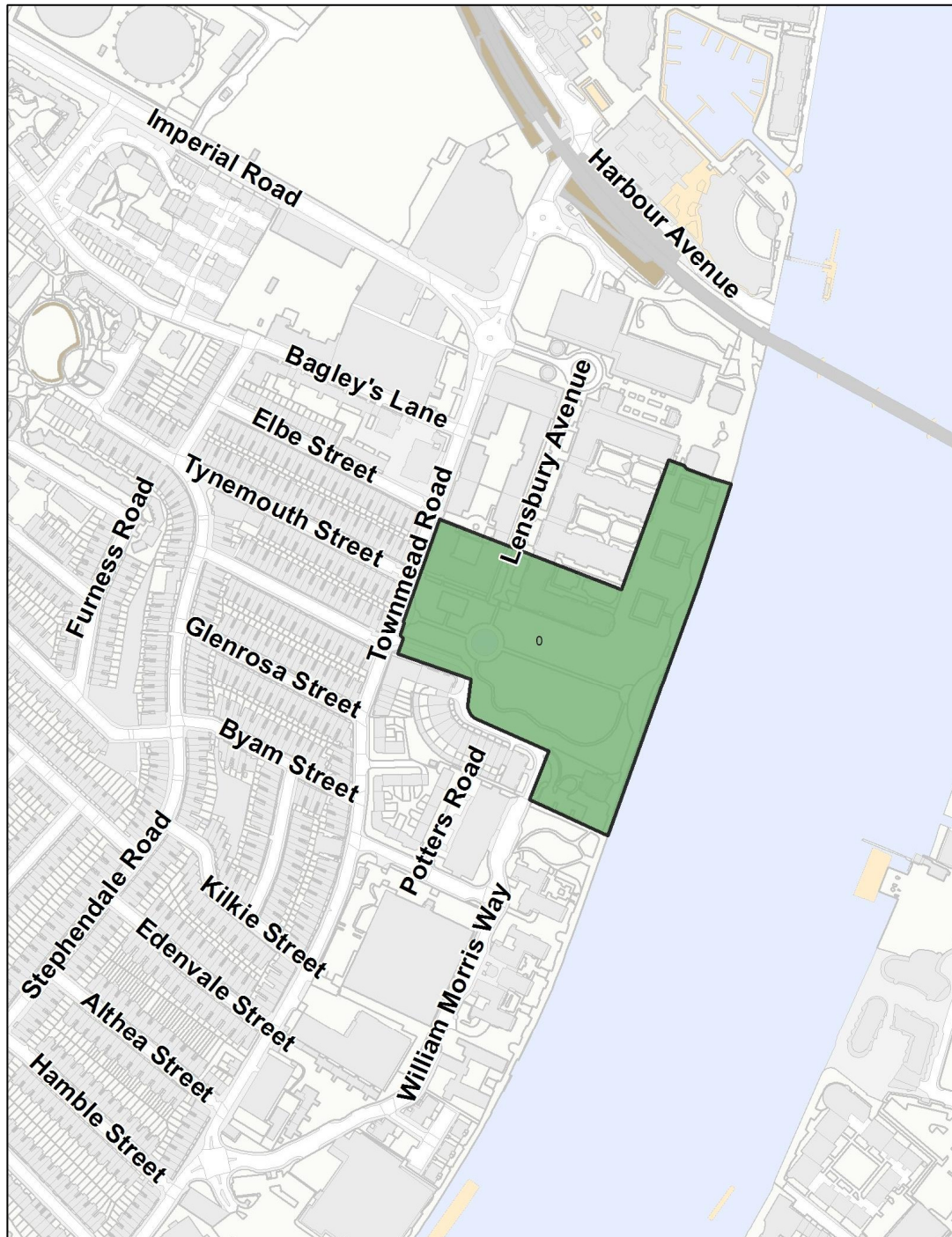
-  Area to be removed from Open Space Boundary
-  Open space of borough importance



Appendix 5: Rowberry Mead Park




## Appendix 6: Imperial Wharf Park



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 Imperial Wharf Open Space