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myatts field north

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Figure 2.1: Historic map showing the Myatts Field area within Lambeth in 1844

2.1 History of the Area Et Development of the Estate

Myatts Field North Estate is located on land that prior to the early 1880's was previously used as farmland. By the mid 1800s the area was developed into traditional Victorian worker housing and was characterised by long linear roads and small back-to-back gardens, as illustrated in Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

At the southwest corner of the area was Melbourne Square a traditional London square designated under the London Square Preservation Act of 1931. This square no longer exists and was demolished in the early 1960's to make way for the estate.

Up until the 1960's the area occupied by the Estate was defined by what was then Camberwell Park (now Myatts Field Park) and other urban development and was described as North Brixton.

In the early 1970s the site was cleared as part of a wider policy of slum clearance undertaken by the local authority. The current Myatts Field North Estate was designed by the borough architect at the time and developed out largely in accordance with the original design concept, which envisaged a new way of housing and a break with the past.

2.2 The Estate Today

The Estate today comprises 477 residential units, of which 92 are leasehold or freehold and the remainder Council housing stock. Of these, some 200 units (40%) were improved under the Estate Action Programme in the 1990's, and although many are now in good condition externally, little work has been done to improve their interiors. Also within the study area there are also 28 sheltered housing units in Patmos Lodge and a currently vacant elderly persons care centre.

The Estate comprises two principal types of housing. Firstly, there are the spine blocks, including Carlton, Crawshay and Treherne Courts and Fountain Place. These include deck access to the majority of the properties, large underground garages (which have been out of use for most of their life on safety grounds) and long unsupervised stairways to large groups of top floor units. Secondly, there are over 80 properties with gardens fronting onto estate roads.

A census was carried out for the Council by MORI in May 2003, partly to establish definitively who was housed on the Estate but also to understand their current housing needs with respect to redevelopment options. In terms of the make-up of the residents, some of the key findings were:

- Two-thirds of the residents receive housing benefit;

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- 52% of residents are economically active. This is an increase of some 22% from the original estate action submission in 1992/93;
- Almost half the residents feel unsafe on the Estate after dark;
- There is general satisfaction with local facilities such as buses, health facilities, community facilities, sports pitch and youth facilities;
- Almost two-thirds of residents would wish to remain on the Estate in a new built home; and
- Levels of satisfaction in relation to various factors were significantly higher amongst residents of the improved properties, than amongst unimproved properties.

The Estate also includes a number of public open spaces and amenity areas. This includes Mostyn Gardens, which is the principal public space. Hammelton and Bramah Greens are smaller open spaces within the Estate. There are also a number of 'left over' spaces, which have no specific purpose. Although there are a number of public spaces, they all lack a clear character and role and are poorly overlooked, which raises safety concerns. The open spaces are characterised by man-made mounds of mown grass and some trees. Overall the public open spaces equate to approximately 4 hectares.

2.3 Estate Regeneration

A number of significant problems have been identified in relation to the layout of the Estate, the blocks and individual dwellings. These problems relate to:

- Identity;
- Movement;
- Lack of safe access;
- Poor and unsafe parking;
- Lack of permeability;
- Poor and unsafe amenity space in Mostyn Gardens; and
- Design conflicts due to the scissor design of the units (i.e. noise, plumbing, access for maintenance).

In the late 1990s using Estate Action funding, the Council began to tackle these problems. The chosen solution was to focus on the external envelope of all the units and on removing the walkways on the spine blocks. The underground garages below the walkways were to become a new street, and the areas below the buildings would be incorporated into the housing units. As part of this initiative improvements

were made to several blocks and the eastern most spine block (Carlton Court) was refurbished. However, there was insufficient funds to tackle the remaining two large spine blocks and other parts of the estate.

By 1998, some of the Estate had been completed, but 283 dwellings remained to be improved. The works carried out under the Estate Action programme have made significant improvements to some of the homes.

Whilst the central objective of the regeneration has been the improvement of poor quality, inefficient to maintain housing the problems associated with the poor layout of the estate has meant that a more comprehensive approach is now needed. Simply upgrading the existing housing would leave a number of inherent (and avoidable) problems in place, including poorly protected and exposed rear gardens, poor circulation routes and a lack personal safety. In addition, the existing layout of the Estate dictates the location of the public open spaces, which currently exist with no passive supervision, sight-lines or the inability to sustain facilities that would provide safety through their use. Finally, many of the existing residents of the Estate wish to stay and therefore decanting them off the Estate would impact on the cohesiveness of the area an attribute that the Council is endeavouring to encourage across all communities of the Borough.

As a result of the above, Lambeth have been pursuing further options to complete the task of improving Myatts Field North Estate. Rising construction costs, a levelling market and the desire to maintain existing levels of open space there are few viable options for this regeneration.

Between 1999 and 2002, Lambeth commissioned a comprehensive option appraisal, ranging from do-minimum option to the complete demolition of the estate. This rigorous evaluation delivered a preferred option of retaining and improving many of the properties improved under Estate Action funding, while demolishing and replacing those, which did not benefit from this investment. This accords with the intuitive sense that the fundamental problems arising from the design of the Estate can only be tackled through changing the layout. However, this change can only be achieved by losing a small proportion of the estates action-improved units.

To complete the works Lambeth Council require significant additional funding and comprehensive regeneration. In order to generate the funds needed, Lambeth has successfully pursued a PFI bid, which will allow for a combination of investment in quality housing, the reconfiguration of the homes and provide the opportunity to revitalise the community and give it the potential for a prosperous and successful future.



Figure 2.2: Extract from Charles Booth's Poverty Map of 1898-99



Figure 2.3: Figure ground immediately prior to the redevelopment of the Victorian streets in 1974

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Figure 2.4: Existing buildings within Myatts Field North Estate

	Bungalows / single storey dwellings
	Spine development
	Christchurch Primary School
	Patmos Lodge
	Development improved with Estate funding
	Office
	Community Centre
	Health Centre
	Mixed use residential above local shops
	DPG site boundary

The intention of the PFI bid is to retain (and further improve) all but 30 of the 'improved units' and to demolish and reprovide the remainder of the Estate. There would be no loss of affordable rented units, and the leasehold units would be reprovided or repurchased. In addition, the PFI contract would provide a new park to replace the existing poor quality open spaces and a small community facility to replace the existing tenants' hall (Bramah Green).

More specifically, the PFI project objectives have been identified as follows:

- To provide high quality homes that meet Decent Homes standard through further investment to properties already improved under Estate Action funding, and through demolition and re-provision of properties where rehabilitation does not represent good value for money.
- To create an environmentally sustainable community with significantly reduced CO2 emissions and major inroads into fuel poverty.
- To remove those design features of the existing housing which contribute markedly to the lack of security and personal safety experienced by residents, principally the underground garages, the walkways, the screened access to individual entrances, the lack of hierarchy of routes, unsafe open space etc.
- To create a traditional street pattern with the new housing, comprising the maximum number of terraced houses with gardens that funding and space constraints will permit. As far as possible to integrate the retained housing into comparable streetscapes through the addition of strategically placed additional units that provide a street grid and close off exposed rear gardens.
- To design out crime so far as possible and to create a sense of security as well as actual safety for residents.
- To create a hierarchy of streets which will provide safer pedestrian routes through the housing, and allow the better integration of local vehicular traffic, and the discouraging of rat-running.
- To replace the existing poor quality, unsafe and under used public open space with a high quality park which will serve the needs of the new and improved housing, as well as the residents of the ward more generally. This will integrate into the Council's open space strategy to create a network of linked public space, which will bring economic activity into the wider area, and change the public perception of this part of the borough.
- To replace the existing tenants' hall with community facilities of at least comparable size.
- To provide integrated neighbourhood management for all aspects of the redevelopment area - housing, park and community facilities.

- Through internal decanting and schemes to retain leaseholders, to largely keep the existing community intact, and thereby retain the high levels of mutual support and cohesiveness displayed by residents, along with their commitment to living in this area.
- To diversify tenure and thereby increase the range of economic power within the community.
- To use the opportunity for reviewing the arrangement of land use in the area to provide alternative sites for other regeneration partners with capital programmes to replace existing facilities (schools, health centre etc).
- To use the physical development to assist with economic regeneration and to provide a focus for personal capacity building, skills training etc.
- To change the ethos of the area, so that residents are no longer associated with an 'estate', but have an identity based on a street address, which will be free from the negative connotations and stigma previously suffered.

2.4 Consultation Undertaken by PFI Team

There are many different groups that will be affected by the redevelopment of Myatts Field North. Given that the PFI project involves the redevelopment of a substantial quantity of existing housing, it has been an important part of the Housing Departments preparation of a vision and subsequent proposals for the Estate to ensure that existing residents have been consulted and are a key part of the development of proposals.

The Estate is currently managed by a Tenants Management Organisation (TMO). The TMO and the residents have been provided with the services of an Independent Tenants Advisor to aid with the regeneration process. In addition to consulting with estate residents the needs of the wider community also need to be considered as they make use of some of the facilities (in particular the health centre, community building and primary school). There are also a number of organisations or stakeholders that are interested in the redevelopment of the Estate and that need to have input into the development process. These have included Lambeth Environment, Lambeth Primary Care Trust, Christchurch Primary School, Vassall Area Regeneration Group (VARG) and Vassall Vision.

The key principles identified to date by the workshops and public consultation undertaken as part of the Cross Subsidy Proposals/PFI bid process are as follows:

- Substantial agreement on the location and shape of the park and connections to and through the park;

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- A strategy for the relationship between public open space and amenity spaces;
- The replacement of demolished council blocks with traditional street properties on conventional street patterns, including street parking;
- A clear hierarchy of car and pedestrian routes in support of 'home zones' and pedestrian priority development;
- A strategy for massing and development heights, including the relationship between the park and the new housing;
- Agreement to a phasing strategy that builds on current open space to enable 'one move' decanting and replacement of the whole open space by completion of the project;
- Consideration of 'By Design' and other guidance concerning movement, permeability and personal safety.

Based on the above principles, the overall scheme for the Estate outlined as part of the PFI ballot (as shown in Appendix D), includes:

Enabling works:

- Decanting and rehousing of existing tenants on and off-site as the new build programme progresses; and
- Repurchase of existing lease and freehold dwellings (where necessary).

Initial capital works:

- Retention and refurbishment of 134 rented dwellings, and 38 lease and freehold dwellings – the refurbishment programme excludes internal works to leasehold properties and all works to freehold properties;
- Demolition of 251 rented homes and 54 lease and freehold dwellings;
- New build of 251 rented dwellings;
- Removal and reprovision (in an alternative location on-site) of the public open space currently centred on Mostyn Gardens;
- Demolition of the existing community facility and replacement with a similar facility (the demolition of the existing facility is required to enable the redevelopment of the housing);
- Around 250 new build homes comprising of private market, affordable and shared ownership housing.

Ongoing service to provide management, maintenance and cyclical repair (life cycle) for the:

- Refurbished and new building housing (including any housing amenity land);

- Public open space;
- Community facility.

This scheme would result in a total of around 700 units, which is an increase of approximately 200 units.

The PFI contractor will need to put a scheme together based on an output specification produced by the PFI team as part of the tender process. This next stage is anticipated to commence during 2005.

2.5 Feedback from First Stage Consultation on Draft DPGs

The first stage of consultation in relation to the preparation of these DPGs involved a stakeholder workshop, which was held in the Patmos Community Centre on 10th November 2005. The purpose of the workshop was to introduce the role of the Development Planning Guidelines and to establish key issues and priorities for a range of stakeholders. A comprehensive summary of those who attended the workshop, the structure of the workshop and the feedback received is outlined in Appendix A of this document.

The key issues highlighted during the workshop included:

Buildings and Density

- Quality of materials was important, with traditional materials generally being preferred. Homes for rent and sale should not be different in design.
- Homes to have a clearly defined back and front with front doors opening onto the street. Houses and flats should be double aspect.
- Gardens and/or balconies should be provided for all homes where possible.
- Flats are acceptable and family homes should be located at ground floor level.
- Four storey maximum height preferred as it relates to the scale of the existing development and does not incur additional management costs associated with running a lift.
- Environmentally friendly, energy efficient buildings would be welcomed.
- Some concern that development would be too dense.

Movement and Parking

- New development should be more permeable than currently, with clear, direct routes through, but not opened up too much.
- More frequent or additional buses are needed.

- Routes should be pedestrian-friendly, with wider streets if shared with cars. Current roads are too narrow. Could create 'Home Zone' characters within the new development.
- Would like cars to be able to park close to owner's homes, but don't want to generate more rat runs or traffic from elsewhere.
- Car club scheme to help overcome the problem of the lack of local shops.
- Parking could be better integrated into house design.
- Closure of parks at night (gated for security reasons).
- Housing closer to Akerman Road in order to increase safety.
- No underground car parking because perceived to be unsafe and under-utilised
- Create connections along desire lines to Brixton Road and Camberwell New Road (to reach bus stops and local shops).

Open Space and Community

- Open space to be useable, safe and functional with clear, visible routes and to cater for everyone and not replicate current provision in the neighbourhood.
- How about themed spaces, not one big park? Funding and management are important and need to be resolved very early.
- Existing mature trees are important to retain, tree-lined streets would be nice.
- Could link green spaces like Mostyn Gardens to Myatts Park.
- Community facilities are essential and spaces need to be multi-functional.
- Keep the Community Centre and Health Centre near to the park and other active uses.
- Resources for older children (12+) are needed.
- The shops on the estate could be redeveloped. Foxley Square fails because of lack of access.

2.6 Results of Stage 2 Consultation

The second stage of Consultation was carried out after the draft document had been approved by The Executive and comprised the following elements:

- Summary of the DPG's and survey delivered to all residents on the site and the surrounding area;
- An exhibition;
- A workshop; and
- Canvassing of those that had received the summary and survey.

Full detail of the consultation carried out and the feedback received is set out in Appendix A of this document.

In general a good level of support was received for the DPG's and on the majority of issues and the majority of the feedback was supportive. In particular:

- Nearly 90% of the survey respondents agree or tend to agree with principle of creating a network of more traditional streets that connect local destinations and public transport routes;
- Nearly 80% supported the principle of on street car parking;
- Over 85% supported the principle of no net loss of open space;
- 90% supported improved and relocated community facilities;
- 80% supported the provision of new homes with a greater diversity of tenures and types of housing;
- Over 90% supported the principle of all homes having appropriate amenity space or good access to local green space;
- 60% supported the principle of new buildings generally being 3-5 storeys in height;
- Over 55% supported an increase in density to create additional new homes to support the redevelopment of the estate;
- Over 80% supported the need for the future development to have a strong and distinctive character and relate well to the rest of the neighbourhood, including the neighbouring conservation areas;
- Over 90% supported the creation of a range of types of housing in high quality buildings that form pleasant and attractive streets; and
- Over 90% supported the principle that new development should comply with the objectives of sustainable construction and best practice to reduce energy demand, incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.

The workshop event also allowed a number of more detailed issues to be raised, including the traffic impact on the surrounding area, concerns about the impact on Patmos Road.

Although most of those consulted agreed with the Draft Development Guidelines there were a number of exceptions that have where possible and appropriate been taken on board in this final version for Adoption by the Council. See appendix A for full further detail.

