

Position Statement

22 January 2026

Land adjacent to Ewell East Station (LAA reference NON013)

1) Background

This Position Statement provides the background to omission site NON013 – Land Adjacent to Ewell East Station (document reference [HB02b](#) page 77). The site has been promoted by planning agents Carter Jonas on behalf of the landowner Coldunell Limited throughout the local plan process.

Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan

The site was identified as an allocation in the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan (document reference [PV01](#) allocation on page 110), which was subject to public consultation between 1 February and 19 March 2023.

Site Allocation SA8: Land adjoining Ewell East Station was allocated for a residential led development, comprising:

- At least 350 net zero carbon dwellings
- Building heights up to 6 storeys
- New local retail provision at ground floor
- The re-provision of the playing pitches at Hook Road Arena

Responses to Reg 18 Consultation

The agent representing the landowner responded to the Regulation 18 consultation ([link to representation](#)) and was supportive of the inclusion of the allocation confirming the site's availability, suitability and achievability.

Sutton and Epsom Rugby Club (a leaseholder for part of the site) responded to the consultation ([link to representation](#)) objecting to the allocation of the site for development. The response highlighted that the Club is a long-established sports club in the borough operating from 2 sites with approx. 2,000 members (playing and non-playing). The priest hill site is a key part of their pitch provision located approximately 1 mile from their other site at Cuddington Court that has 2 pitches, the club house and gym. The club were concerned about the loss of the playing fields (and potential relocation to Hook Road Arena) and the detrimental impact this would

have on the operation of, membership levels of and the financial viability of Sutton and Epsom RFC.

Sport England responded to the consultation ([link to representation](#)), and highlighted para 99(b) of NPPF and Sports England's Exception test (E4) which states that "the area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements."

Sport England considered that there was insufficient information and detail to assess whether the E4 exception and para 99(b) had been met.

Following the Regulation 18 consultation, EEBC planning policy officers met with the agents and landowner promoting site allocation NON013 to highlight concerns raised during the consultation and to understand the position of the leaseholders, the length of the lease and whether there were any break clauses.

The freeholder confirmed that there were no break clauses within the long leases held by Sutton and Epsom Rugby Football Club and Old Suttonians, both of which run up until 2079. The Council highlighted its concerns about the availability and developability of the site over the Local Plan period due to the lease arrangements and requested written evidence of agreement between the freeholder and leaseholders that they would be willing to surrender their leases to enable development of the site.

The site did not feature in the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan as the Council's concerns about the availability and deliverability of the site remained at the time the plan was published in November 2024.

Regulation 19 Consultation

The agent representing the landowner responded to the Regulation 19 consultation ([link to representation](#)). It was stated that the site should be allocated in the local plan to increase housing need and states that no consideration has been given to the series of engagement works and the formal pre-application submission progressed by the freeholder with the Council to date to deliver a development and relocation strategy for the development of both Priest Hill and Hook Road Arena sites to deliver a new home for Sutton & Epsom RFC. Concept plans for both sites are included in the Regulation 19 response, although the Hook Road Arena proposals are not endorsed by the Council (the owner of the site).

Inspectors Matters Issues and Questions (MIQs)

The agent representing the landowner responded to the [MIQs](#) stating that:

- they consider further reassessments of sites that are well served by public transport would be necessary for the Plan to be sound.
- significant further work has been undertaken since their Regulation 19 submission to demonstrate the site's deliverability. Given the Borough's acute unmet housing needs, they respectfully request the Council to revisit their assumptions and undertake a fresh assessment of the Priest Hill site so that its full potential for residential allocation can properly be considered.

Examination hearings

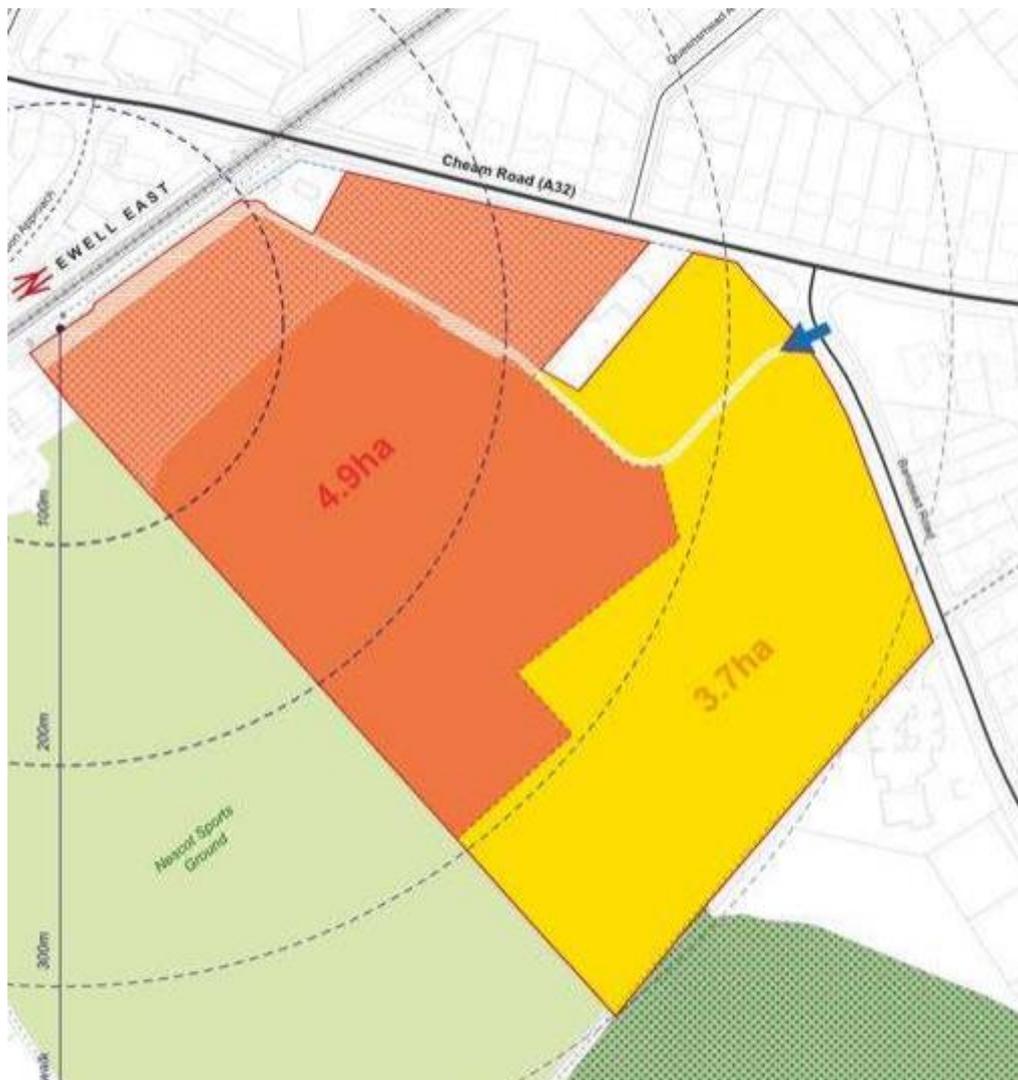
An Action of the examination hearing session on Matter 5 - The SA and Approach to site selection, Plan Viability and the IDP was that the council and agent representing the freehold landowner should meet outside of the hearings to discuss the latest position with the site. The following section summarises the outcome of this action and the outcomes of separate meetings held between the Council and the two leaseholders.

2) Current Position

The agents (on behalf of the landowner) are progressing a scheme on the site and are currently seeking pre-application advice from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

The latest scheme presented to the council proposes redeveloping the part of the site that is in the leasehold control of Old Suttonians (approx. 4.9ha) for a residential led development of up to 300 dwellings with the part of the site under the leasehold control of Sutton and Epsom Rugby Football Club (approx. 3.7ha) to remain as sports pitches (currently 3 senior pitches and 1 mini pitch). Figure 1 shows the leasehold control on the site with the orange area leased by Old Suttonians and the yellow area leased by Sutton and Epsom Rugby Football Club.

Figure 1: Leasehold control of the site



Source: Priest Hill pre-application report (December 2024), submitted as part of the agents Regulation 19 representation on behalf of the landowner ([link to representation](#)).

The Council met with a representative of Old Suttonians on the 18 December 2025 who confirmed that:

- their use of the site for sports ceased in 1999.
- the clubhouse and changing rooms were demolished in March 2015 in agreement with the freeholder following vandalism.
- over the past year they have been working with the freeholder and have recently signed an option agreement for their part of the site to enable it to be returned to the freeholder for redevelopment.
- They do not sub-lease or have use agreements with any other parties for the land in their leasehold control.

The Council met with representatives of the Sutton and Epsom Rugby Football Club on 6 January 2026 who confirmed that:

- They are a successful community club that fully utilise the land in their leasehold control (the term of the lease has a further 53 years to run) to provide 3 senior pitches and 1 mini pitch.
- There is a need to retain the existing provision for the continued successful operation of the club, particularly for Junior and Senior use.
- Through recent engagement with the freeholder they are aware of development proposals and have no intention of ending their lease prior to its expiry as explained.

3) Interested Parties

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Coldunell Limited (freeholder)

Old Suttonians (leaseholder)

Sutton and Epsom Rugby Football Club (leaseholder)