

Analysis and planning policies - High Path



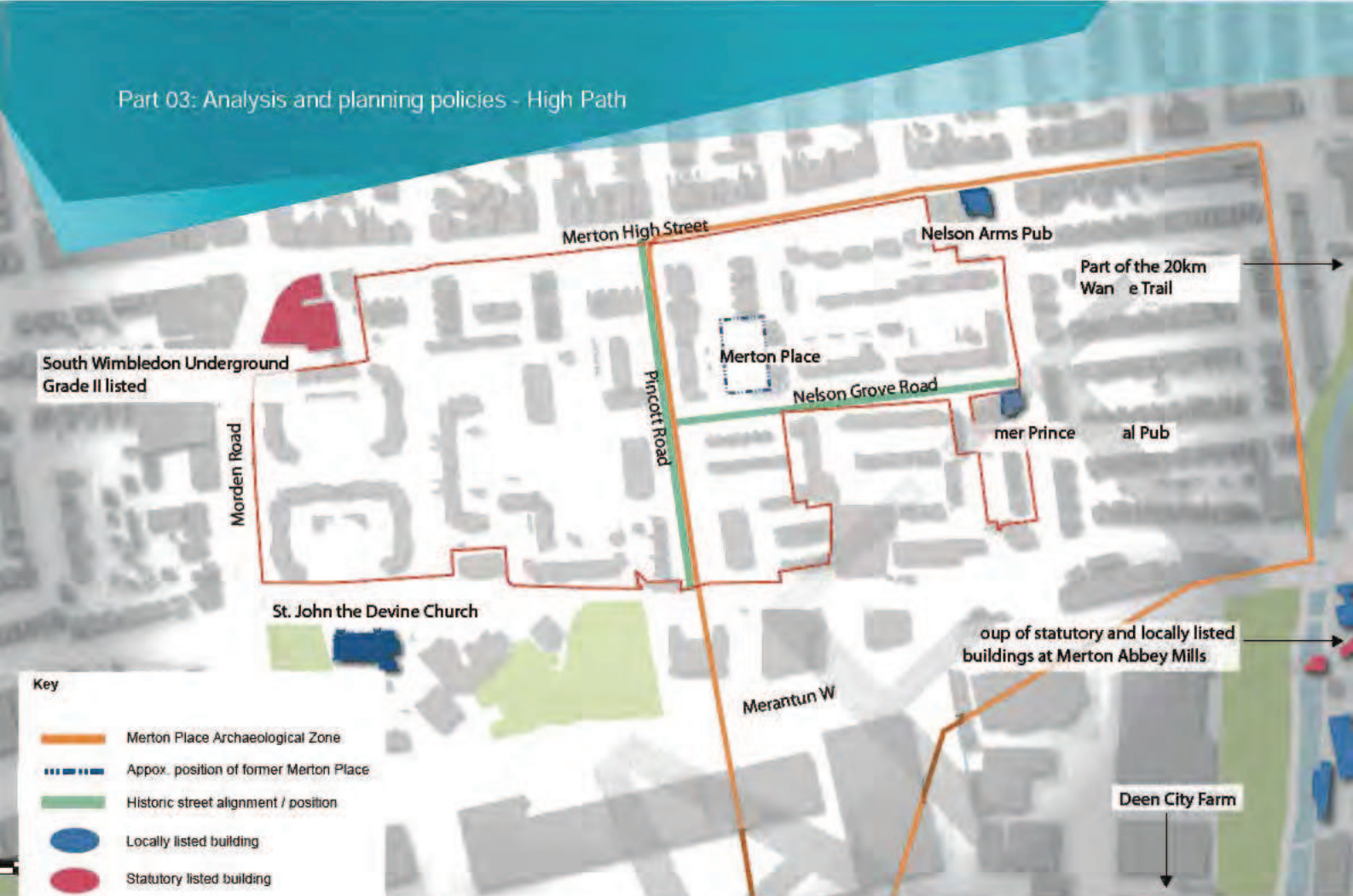
Location

High Path Estate

3.92 High Path is situated in Abbey Ward. The estate is located in South Wimbledon covers an area of approximately seven hectares. The area is bound by Merton High Street to the north, Abbey Road to the east, High Path to the south and Morden Road to the west. South Wimbledon Underground station on the north-west and the area on south-east of the estate which is defined by Rooney Place are excluded from the boundaries as Figure X shows.

3.93 The estates comprise 608 homes and is characterised by a mixture of architectural types. The estate was built according to a masterplan which was executed between 1950s-1980s, after the clearance of artisan cottages on land formerly part of the Merton Place estate. The earliest part just north of St. John the Devin consists of four storey towers arranged around yards. At the centre of the area are three high rise towers and adjacent to Merton High Street the scale gradually decreases down to four storey blocks and low terraces. Almost 60% of the provided units are CHMP tenanted properties and the remainder are privately owned.





Historical context

3.94 The High Pa state is adjacent to Merton High Street w is at the core the neighbourhood known outh Wim was once a thriving high s t ho ever now feels placeless congested and un of its identity. The H ate has a ce l location within th neighbourho With frontage Merton High Street and Mor Road, rede pment of the estate provides th portunity to pair the urban fabric and streng the identity of a place at is actually quite rich ocal history.

3.9 During the Roman period the line of the Roman Road 'Stane Street', the major Roman thoroughfare from London to Chichester, crossed the River Adur to the south-east of the High Path Estate through what is now Merton Abbey Mills. Stane Close on the High Path estate takes its name from this Roman association. During the Medieval period the area around this river crossing was developed as part of the Merton Priory estate. The main building of Merton Priory Church was located on the alignment of the Roman Road where it crossed the river to the south east of the High Path Estate.

3.9 The remains of the Priory complex are situated under the SavaCentre supermarket and Merantun Way road. The Chapter House is today preserved in a viewing chamber, visible from under Merantun Way. The names of roads such as Priory Close and Abbey Road make reference to this early monastic settlement. From the 17th century the former site of Merton Priory became commonly known as "Merton Abbey" and due to its proximity to the River Wandle and its mills, became a textile manufacturing centre.

3.97 Merton Abbey Mills is a small enclave of former textile factory buildings, which lie to the south west of the High Path Estate and is the site of the former Liberty of London silk printings works. The printworks buildings date from the 18th and 19th century and are the few remaining physical remnants of the area's industrial past. Most of the buildings are either locally or statutorily listed. The textile industry further intensified in the area, which became home to two of the country's major influences in textile design - William Morris and Arthur Liberty - who utilised adjacent factory buildings on the banks of the Wandle at Merton Abbey.



Artists impression of Merton Place

3.98 The wider area remained predominantly rural until the development of Merton Place upon which the High Path Estate stands. Merton Place was the most notable large house in the area. It was built on part of the old Merton Priory estate during the 1750s. It had a number of owners prior to its most famous residents Admiral Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton. The estate consisted of 52 acres but most of the land was separated from the house by a turnpike road which is now Merton High Street.

3.99 After Nelson's death the house was demolished in 1823. The estate was then sold in lots suitable for detached villas. The first Ordnance Survey maps from 1865 show the area as largely farmland dotted with some cottages or houses along Merton High Street. Central to the area were the remnants of Merton Place then known as Nelson Fields. Following its further subdivision into farmland the area became gradually developed by small scale housing. This was the first concentration of urban housing development in the area as long rows of cottages and other artisan dwellings were built along roads such as Pincott Road and Nelson Grove Road.

3.100 In 1868, the opening of the Merton and Wimbledon Railway led to a branch line from the Wimbledon and Croydon Railway at Merton Park, cutting through Nelson's former estate and the site of Merton Abbey to the east of Nelson's Fields. Merton Abbey Station was built to the south east of the High Path Estate, directly on top of part of the Abbey complex. It served the then burgeoning industry in the vicinity of the River Wandle.

3.101 Most of the land surrounding Merton High Street remained undeveloped until the end of the 19th century. Around this time most of the residential streets that remain today were laid out. These remain quiet, desirable residential streets of Victorian and Edwardian terraces with road names such as Victory, Nelson, Hardy, Hamilton and Trafalgar, all alluding to Lord Nelson. It was during this period that Merton High Street was developed with purpose built commercial buildings



Merton Abbey Mills circa 1913

and began to acquire its character and role as a busy local shopping street and a distinct place. Growth was stimulated and assisted by the arrival of trams in Merton High Street. Today the Nelson Arms built in 1910 and situated on the High Street, marks the site of the lodge and entrance gates to Nelson's Merton Place.

3.102 Another building memorial to Nelson is the Grade II listed John the Divine Church and the adjacent Nelson Gardens. The church and gardens were built in 1913-14 to mark the centenary of the death of Admiral Lord Nelson. The building and gardens are on the Nelson Trail, a walking route which encompasses a number of sites in the locality associated with the life of Nelson.

Today, one of the most prominent buildings in the area is the Modernist form of South Wimbledon underground station originally South Wimbledon (Merton) a Grade II listed station designed by Charles Holden and built in 1926.

3.104 Industrial uses in the surrounding area continued to intensify, particularly during the late 1920s. The combination of tram services and the extension of the underground from Tooting to Morden in 1926 reduced demand for passenger services on the Merton Abbey branch line, and these were withdrawn in 1929. Merantun Way, an incomplete attempt to by-pass Merton High Street and Kingston Road, was built along the former railway in the 1980s.

3.105 From the 1950s, the organically developed housing on Nelson Fields was gradually replaced with the current council housing now known as High Path Estate. The development of the estate was incremental over a number of years, from the 1950s to the 1980s. The name 'Merton Place' was given to a block of maisonettes which is thought to cover the site of Nelson's former residence. There is a plaque on an adjoining terrace of houses on Doel Close making reference to the likely position of the house in the vicinity of Merton Place. However, it is clear that, as no plans of the original house have come to light, the exact location of the house is unknown. Part of the High Path Estate is within the Merton Place Archaeological zone.

Historical context

3.106 The earliest part of the estate to be built is its western end, fronting Morden Road. It consists of 4-storey red-brick blocks arranged in courtyards by A. J. Thomas. The next stage to be built, at the centre of the area are the three high-rise towers which dominate the skyline. These are by William Ryder and date from 1964, 1968 and 1970. They were built according to a master plan of 1956 by Clifford Culpin & Partners and A. J Thomas. These prefabricated, 12-storeys, rectangular towers are arranged at an angle, in a row, surrounded by adjacent car parking and play area. The towers are built in a mix of red brick and concrete giving a striped appearance. The towers are set back from the street with murals on the ground floor walls depicting the local historical link to Lord Nelson.

3.107 Surrounding these towers, and comprising the central part of the estate, are blocks of flats of varying but similar sizes. They date from the 1960s and are low-rise 3-storey flats and maisonettes mostly in a mottled sandy coloured brick.

3.108 The last part of the estate to be developed was that fronting Merton High Street dates from the 1970s and the early 1980s. As recently as 1982, Will Mill Court – the most recent estate - had not yet been built. This area consists of a number of short terraces of houses or small blocks of flats – the most recent ones designed to look like pairs of semi-detached houses. Buildings are two or three storeys and are finished in a darker red brown brick. Much of this phase was completed by William Ryder and Partners.

3.109 Although there was an initial estate master-plan, and it would be said to have been conceived using Modernist principles, the piecemeal execution of the concept over three decades has undermined its successful realisation. There is lots of space between buildings, but no actual designed, designated public parks or gardens designed for people to use. There is a lack of distinction between roads and the parking courtyards they often seem to merge into each other with no clear sense of what is public or private. The estate has become a collection of poorly related buildings sitting in ill-defined spaces.

3.110 An array of remnants of old buildings in proximity to the High Path estate provides clues to the once rich local history, such as the Carter House, St. John the Evangeline Church, Merton Army Mills and the Nelson Arms. These local features and historic associations also provide much inspiration from which to draw upon in the future regeneration of the estate.



Aerial view Merton High Street - High Path Estate near completion in 1982



Interior of house in Pincott Road 1961 (prior to demolition)



Opening of Merantun Way 1989



Merton Abbey Station



Merton High Street 1910



High Path 1913



Merton High Street 1910



Pincott Road 1953



South Wimbledon station 1926

Source: Merton Memories Photographic Archive



Site analysis

1. Character areas

3.110 The map shows the general areas of character in the area surrounding and including the High Path estate. The estate itself is distinctive enough from its surroundings to form its own character area. Despite the varying ages and styles of the buildings it is easily identifiable as public housing.

3.112 To the east is the Mill Road area, an enclave of Edwardian Cottages on a tight knit street pattern with some modest but interesting detailing. These are relatively isolated, hemmed in by the estate, Merton High Street, Merantun Way and the River Wandle. To the West, beyond Morden Road, is another larger area of similarly aged housing. This however, is less isolated and consists of larger houses in a wider mix of styles known locally as the Australians.

3.113 To the south of these residential areas lies the large expanse of Morden Industrial Area. This is physically isolated from the north by Merantun

Way and High Path and the area around these streets is an unclear, fragmented mix of a range of different uses. It is also isolated on other sides by the River Wandle, tram line and Morden Road.

3.114 To the north of the residential areas is the commercial and retail street of Merton High Street and Kingston Road. This is a linear high street that in places has become fragmented and suffered decline in the past, but is seeing new investment and businesses in areas. This street is the community focus of the local area, centred around the tube station, but also suffers from acute congestion from local and through traffic.

3.115 To the north of the high street is a large predominantly residential area of traditional terraced housing, first developed in the late 19th Century. This is known collectively as the Wimbledon Grid and separates South Wimbledon from Wimbledon Town Centre. Today this area contains a variety of house types, sizes and ages, but the grid like street pattern remains the defining characteristic of the area.



Character area 7: Traditional terraced houses typical of the Wimbledon grid



Character area 6: Merton High Street



Character area 2: Mill Road



Character area 1: High Path Estate



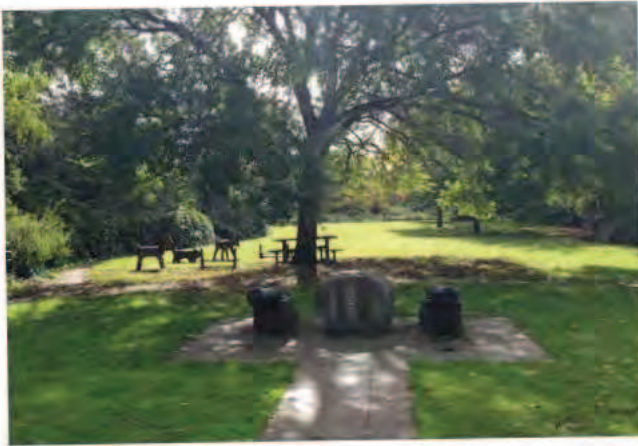
Character area 3: Brisbane Road



Character area 5: Merantun Way - High Path



Character area 4: Morden industrial area



Nelson Gardens



Residential use o Croft Road



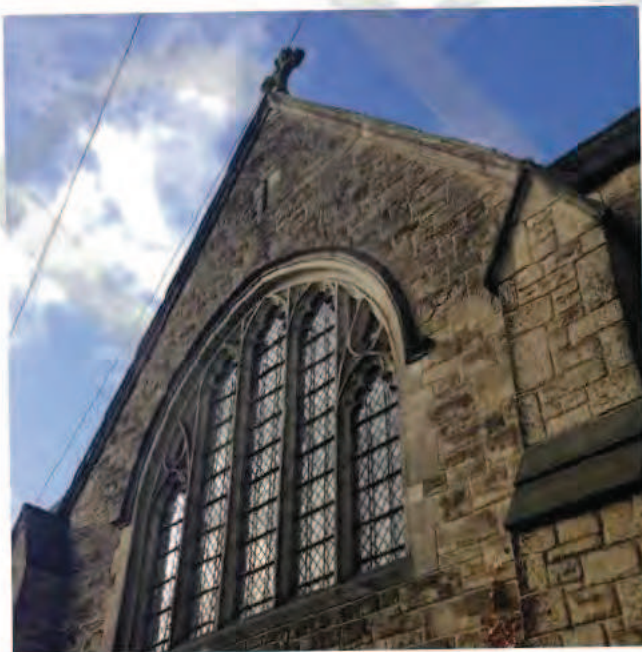
Trafalgar Pub gh Path



High P



Merton High Street



St. John the Devine Church



Residential - High Path Estate



Site analysis

3. Transport connectivity

Public transport links are excellent with the area having a PTAL of 5. South Wimbledon underground station is located on Merton High Street, there are two tram link stops approximately 5 minutes' walk to the south and west. There is also a relatively dense network of six bus routes serving Merton High Street, primarily linking Wimbledon and Colliers Wood. Wimbledon is 20 minutes' walk away or a short bus ride, with mainline rail, tram and district line connections.

Key

-  Bus stop
-  Bus route
-  Colliers Wood town centre
-  Wimbledon town centre
-  Rail station
-  Railway
-  Underground station
-  Tramlink stop
-  Tram route



Phase 1: 1950s









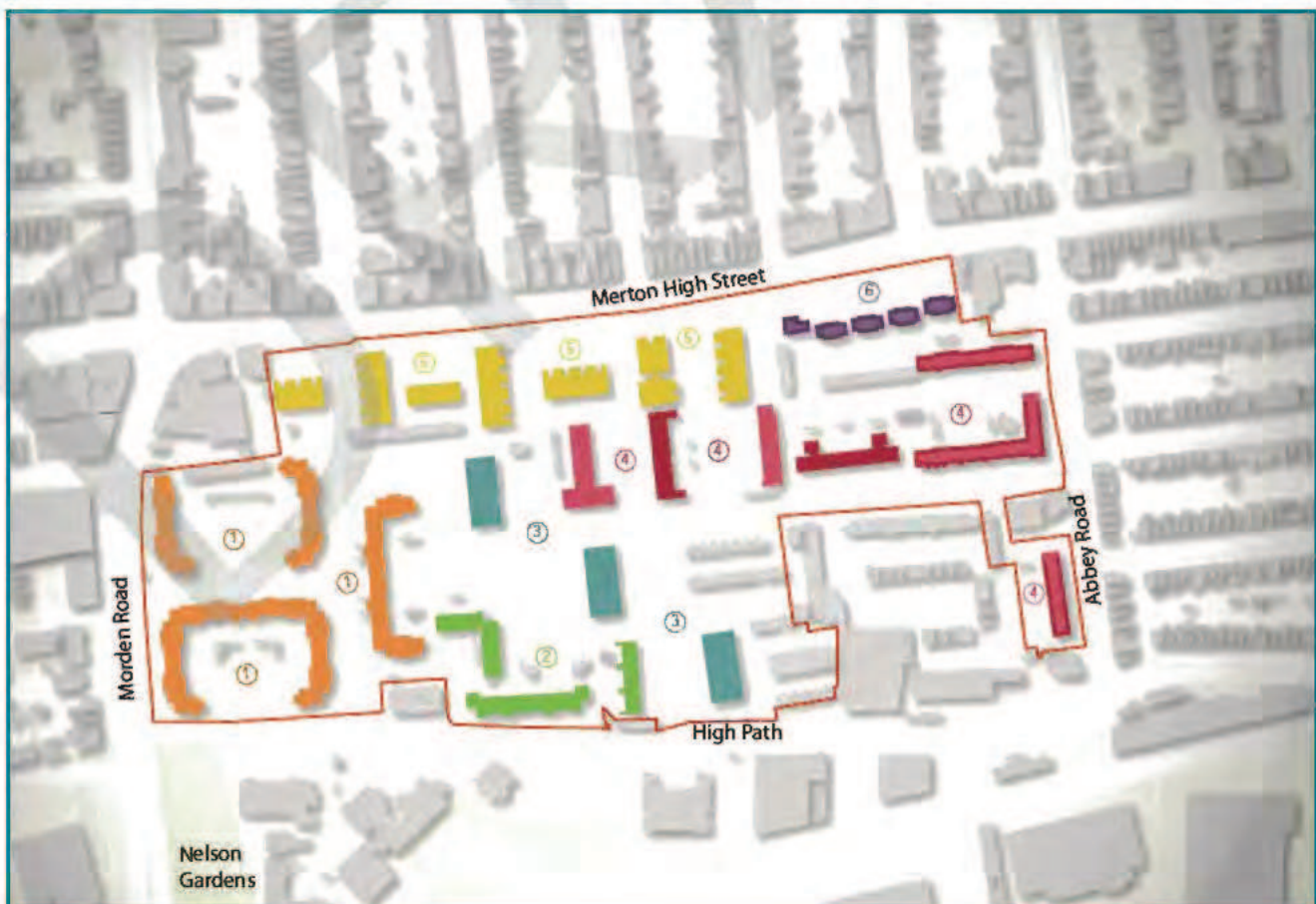
Phase 5: 1970s houses and flats with the 1960s tower visible in the background

4. Estate development timeline

3.119 The map below shows how the estate was developed over a relatively long time, from the late 1950s to the early 1980s. The original 19th Century housing and shops fronting Merton High Street were gradually cleared to make way for each new phase of development. The long period of time taken to develop the estate means that it shows different types, styles and layouts of buildings, spaces and streets. It charts the changing philosophies and attitudes applied to how best to house people over a period of approximately 35 years.

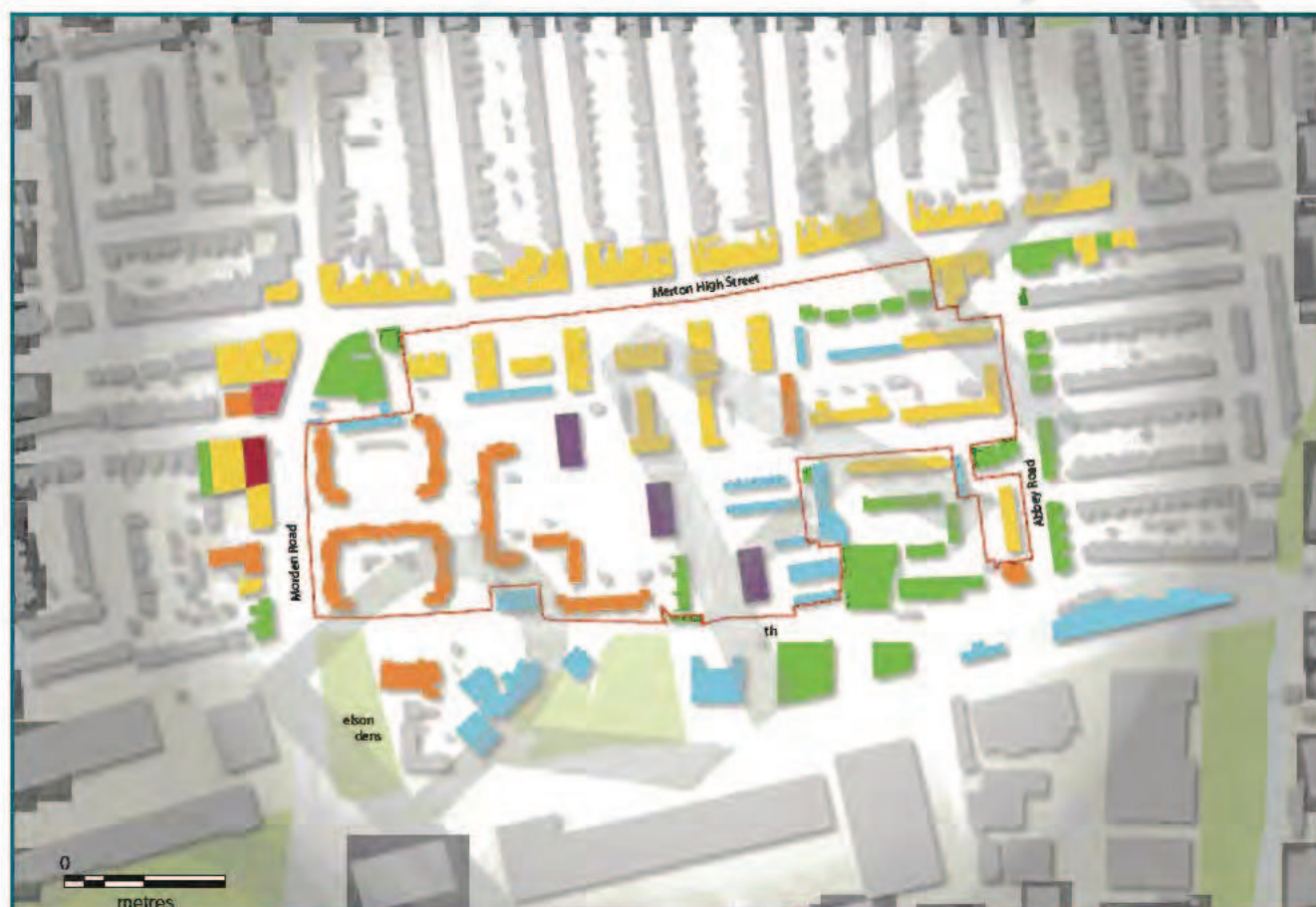
Key

-  Phase 1: Late 1950s
-  Phase 2: Early 1960s transition
-  Phase 3: 1960s tower blocks
-  Phase 4: 1970s low rise blocks
-  Phase 5: 1970s houses and flats
-  Phase 6: 1980s sheltered flats



Site analysis

5. Existing building heights



3.120 The plan shows buildings on the estate and its immediate context in terms of the number of storeys or equivalent. The plan shows that, with the exception of the three 10-storey tower blocks, the building heights over the estate and surroundings are quite uniform, being within 2-4 storeys range. Commercial buildings along Merton High Street may seem a bit higher than 3 storeys due to their generous ceiling heights. The only place where higher buildings are evident is fronting the west side of Morden Road. Spur house is under construction at 9 storeys and the adjacent car park has planning permission for a 7-storey equivalent building. Morden Road is wider than most other local streets and is a busy highway. This is probably the most appropriate location for taller buildings in the area.

Key

	Single storey
	Two storey
	Three storey
	Four storey
	Six-ten storey
	Above ten storey



3 storey block on Nelson Grove Road



2 storey houses fronting Merton High Street



3 storey buildings fronting Merton Road



Merton High Street / Merton Road



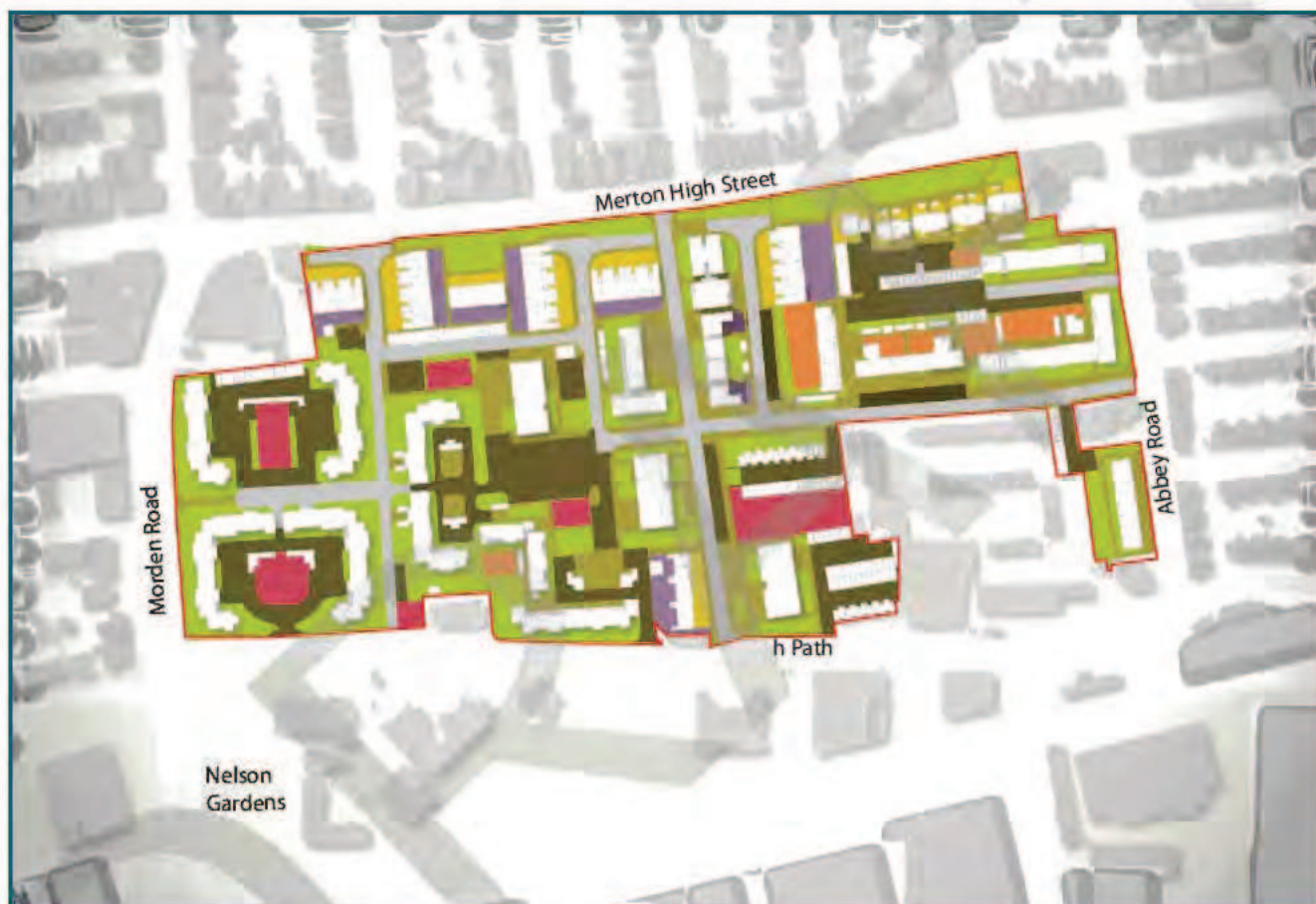
12 storey tower block High Path Estate



Morden Road (Spur House under construction)

Site analysis

6. Public realm and open space



3.121 The map above shows what all the space around the buildings is used for. The 'figure-ground' image on page 90 shows how little of the estate is actually covered by buildings, so the urban layout and design of the spaces between buildings has a strong impact on how the estate feels and functions. The map shows that there are large areas of tarmac, paving and grass that are simply a 'setting' to buildings. These areas have no active amenity value and in most cases are poorly defined and their purpose and relationship to buildings and ownership unclear.

3.122 There are also a lot of areas of tarmac dedicated to vehicle parking. There is no designated green public open space anywhere on the estate, and the formal play and exercise areas are fragmented around the estate and not

easy to locate. These different types of space are fragmented and unplanned and prevent buildings from being arranged into recognisable streets similar to the surrounding area.

Key

-  Communal amenity space
-  Play / exercise area
-  Incidental green space
-  Pedestrian areas
-  Parking courts
-  Estate roads
-  Front gardens
-  Back gardens



Green spaces with little amenity value



Large areas dedicated to vehicle parking



Unplanned exercise area



Fragmented public realm



Poorly defined pavement and parking arrangements



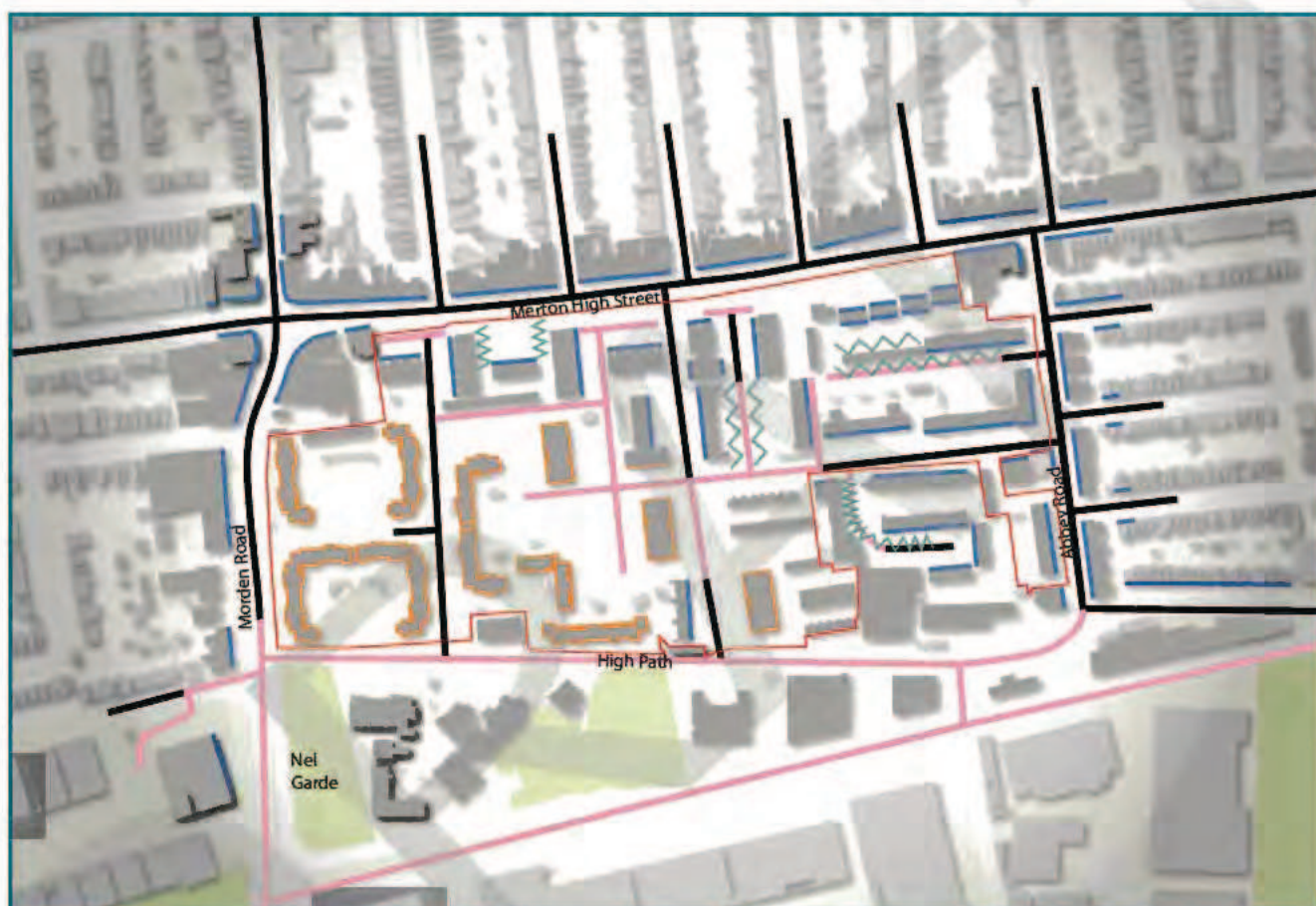
Large areas of tarmac



Figure ground

Site analysis

7. Streets and frontages



3.123 The map above shows the contrast between areas of the estate that have a layout that creates spaces that are clear and logically defined public fronts and private backs, and are the backbone of a clear understanding of how to find ones way around and feel comfortable, safe and secure. It also indicates how efficiently an area is developed.

Enclosure and frontages		Clear, well defined streets
		Poor, ill-defined streets
		Clear building frontages
		Unclear building frontages
		Front / back discord

3.124 The arrangement of the buildings within High Path make it difficult for pedestrians to navigate around the estate. Front entrances facing rear gardens, lack of defensible space to ground floor units, unclear communal entrances to buildings and poor definition of backs and fronts to the buildings contribute to a confusing public realm in High Path.



Lack of defensible space



Ambiguous front and backs



Rear of building block along street frontage



Clear communal entrance with blank street frontage



Poorly defined public realm



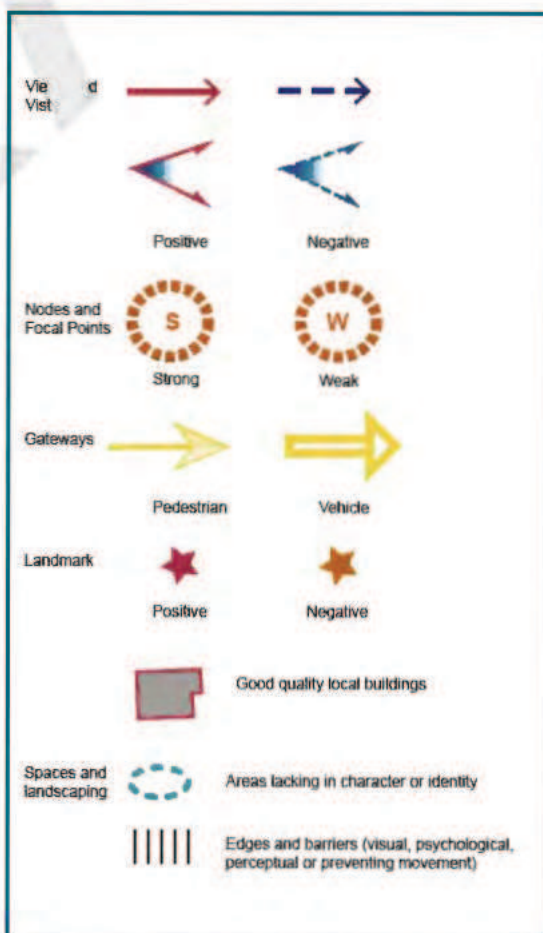
Unclear communal entrance



Site analysis is

8. Townscape analysis

3.125 The map above shows analysis of the 'com' 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 indications as to what new development could do to improve connections with the wider





South Wimbledon underground station



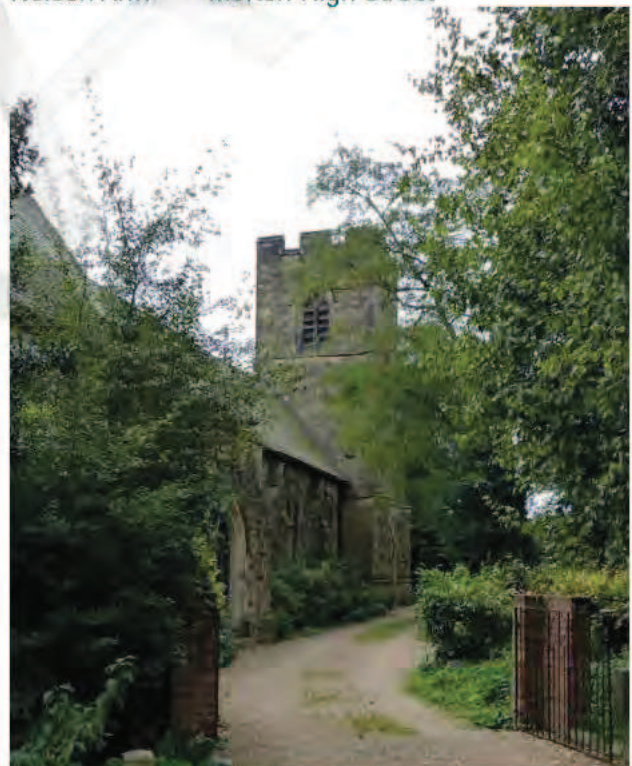
The three tower blocks dominate the skyline



Merton Abbey Mills is in close proximity to the estate



Nelson Arm Merton High Street



St. John the Devine Church

Site analysis

9. Landscape analysis



3.126 The High Path estate has a lot of incidental open green space but lacks significant high quality landscape, particularly trees. This plan shows the few places where there are important tree groups that are positive landscape features that would be worthy of retention in any regeneration proposals. These are primarily fronting Merton High Street and on Hayward Close, with a few other smaller groups within the estate. Also included is a general assessment of the landscape quality of the spaces between buildings and on the edges of the estate.



Some buildings on High Path Road have a negative visual impact



Lack of defined street frontage

tt Road

Issues and opportunities

Issues summary

Street frontage to Merton High Street

3.127 This undermines the commercial functionality and potential of the street and puts residential uses in an uncomfortable relationship with the busy commercial street. It also fails to physically define the street as a space, undermining its identity as a place.

Sense of place and active frontage on Morden Road

3.128 The varied arrangement, height, position and function of the buildings fronting this street undermines its ability to develop any distinctive identity. The lack of proper active ground floor uses undermines the commercial potential close to the tube station and creates an uninviting place, lacking in character and sense of identity, that does not function well as a main street.

Mix of building styles forms an orientation

3.129 This creates a lack of coherence in form and character, mixes up streets and backs and disrupts the traditional street pattern as most buildings fail to address the streets, turning them into functional access roads.

Development density

3.130 The site has high PTAL levels and could sustain a much higher density whilst still providing high quality homes and amenity spaces subject to meeting all other relevant policy considerations. The arrangement of buildings and piecemeal development of the estate results in lots of space between buildings, and unused garages, but hardly any functional, good quality public open space.

Connection to surroundings

3.131 Whilst there are remnants of a historic street pattern, this has been modified into a series of cul-de-sacs that make navigation around the estate unclear. This, along with the building types and spaces, make the estate an uninviting place to move through. There are perceptual and physical barriers to movement between the estate and its immediate surroundings both for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Nearby buildings and sites

3.1 Some buildings adjacent to the estate are assessed and should inform the design and layout of new development – for example Rodney Place. Others have a negative influence – particularly the varied buildings and sites between High Path, Station road and Merantun Way. These affect perceptions of the area and accessibility to the adjacent area and its uses and facilities.

Issues and opportunities

Opportunities summary

Frontage to Merton High Street

3.133 The street frontage on the south side of Merton High Street is at present fragmented, this could be repaired by the creation of a defined building line with active frontage on ground floor which will contribute to the vitality of the street.

Frontage to Morden Road

3.134 This is a street with a poorly defined frontage and broken character. The redevelopment should take the opportunity to develop Morden Road as a wide, straight, boulevard linking the area with Morden with building frontages of an appropriate scale for a wide busy street.

Create a clear internal network of clearly identifiable streets

3.135 Reintroduce traditional street layout. Streets are defined by the building that face them and the interaction that has with the public realm. They should have proper frontages with entrances facing the street and be laid out to create an easy to navigate and attractive network of routes across the estate. They should be based on the pre-estate historic street pattern that remains in the form of Nelson Grove Road, Pincott Road and High Path.

Use land efficiently and create a consistent urban character

3.136 Use land more efficiently by ensuring there is no leftover space and every space is designed to have a clearly defined use. This means increasing densities and ensuring open space is well located, well designed, functional and attractive. Presently the estate is a disparate mix of building styles and ages, regeneration of the estate presents the opportunity to create a consistent urban character.

Good quality landscaping and vegetation

3.137 There are a few key groups of trees and the impressive trees fronting Merton High Street, groups in courtyards and the avenue of mature trees on Hayward Close. These assets should inform the location and design of new buildings and be maintained unless there are other compelling reasons that provide benefits to outweigh this.

Attractive and functional open space

3.138 Existing recreational facilities could be better located and grouped to provide well defined and attractive space for residents. There is also scope to provide specific new public open space as well as active recreation. Although there could be done in a variety of ways it should be based on utilising the existing historical character and landscape assets of the estate.

Improved links into the estate

3.139 Poor pedestrian facilities, dominant and uncoordinated highway infrastructure, and traffic congestion on main roads make it difficult to enter and exit the area and should be improved. The Council's aspiration is to improve the public realm on Morden Road and Merantun Way by creating a better balance between vehicles and pedestrians. The aspiration could be achieved by encouraging the development of boulevards for these roads. This would enable them to become a more integral part of the surrounding area. Specific improvements that could be made are simplifying the junction of High Path, The Path and Morden Road and creating an attractive entrance and enabling views to Merton Abbey Mills. Future links to the south of Merantun Way should be planned for as well as east-west quiet-ways for cyclists and pedestrians.

Adjacent development potential

3.140 Proposals for the estate land should be designed so as to seamlessly knit into the surrounding area and enable integration of adjacent sites if or when they become available for development. This means designing streets, uses, densities and heights that are based on a thinking that goes beyond the current estate boundaries. These can then be used as broad guidelines for development of these sites in the future. Development should also be mindful of the council's aspiration to encourage the development of boulevards for Merantun Way and Morden Road which create a better balance between vehicles and pedestrians.

Site specific policies

Policy

EP H1 Townscape

- a)** Provision of a continuous building line fronting the street, punctuated by side streets into the estate, to the south side of Merton High Street, with buildings with entrances and windows facing the street (active frontages) and no blank walls or gable ends.
- b)** Discussions will be required with TfL to understand how proposals for a tram from Morden Road Tram Stop to South Wimbledon underground station including a new tram terminus, can be incorporated as part of any alterations to Morden Road.
- c)** Streets should be designed to allow for clear unobstructed views along the width of the street particularly along Pinnett Road and Nelson Grove Road.
- d)** The key entry points into the estate at either end of Pincott Road and Nelson Grove Road, are the most suitable locations for landmarks. Other suitable locations could be the junction of High Path and Morden Road (key) and in the junction of Hey Road and Merantun Way.
- e)** Design of a space as a focal point highlighting the significance of the area's local history particularly its connection to Lord Nelson.
- f)** Design of the estate should be well integrated into the surrounding area.

3.142 The new estate needs to ensure its built form gives clear definition of private and public space and a range of appropriate landmark views (vistas) and focal points to aid orientation around and within the estate.

3.143 Creation of clear and unobstructed views through the design of streets are important to find their way around (legibility) the estate and to physically and visually link the estate to the wider area.

3.144 The Tramlink extension proposals are still at a feasibility stage. Therefore early engagement with TfL will be required to inform development proposals for this site.

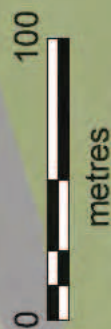
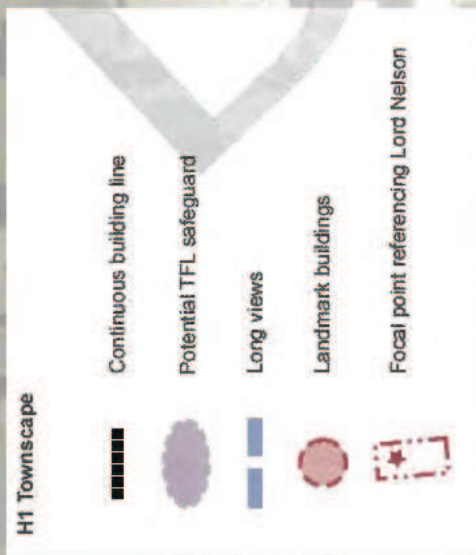
3.145 This engagement may also open up opportunities to improve the quality of Morden Road by enabling the creation of a consistent street width with parallel building lines, tree planting and appropriate building heights either side of the street.

3.146 Landmark buildings should be designed to be sympathetic to surrounding buildings and spaces.

3.147 Designing of the estate to ensure it seamlessly integrates into the surrounding area. In addition it will also help enable any future development on adjacent sites and the wider area such as the area to the southern side of High Path and northern side of Merantun Way. The creation of streets that meet the edges of the estate and can go beyond them at a later date is therefore a key element.

Justification

3.141 Orientation and getting around (legibility) within the estate is difficult mainly because of the siting of the current buildings. There is poor definition of streets and spaces and a lack of built or landscape enclosure to aid this making it unclear where the private or public spaces are.



Site specific policies

Required

EP H2 Street network

- a)** Nelson Grove Road and Pincott Road, provide appropriate basis for the design of the new street network and should form the basis of the main routes into and out of the estate. Extension of Nelson Grove Road from Abbey Road in the east to Morden Road in the west will help provide an east to west link, with clear views along its whole length.
- b)** The position of the historic street of High Path should be retained and the road should allow for improved accessibility from High Path to Nelson Gardens. The road should also respect the setting of St John's the Divine Church.
- c)** Retention of Hayward Close complements the historic street pattern with its attractive tree-lined character.
- d)** Design to increase accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
- e)** Retention of the existing vehicular links along Merton High Street.
- f)** Enable future extensions of the north-south streets ending at High Path to Merton Way subject to TfL's support

Further guidance

3.148 A new north-south street between Hayward Close and Pincott Road, linking Merton High Street and High Path to help link the estate with the surrounding road network.

3.149 North-south streets between Pincott Road and Abbey Road, linking Merton High Street and Nelson Grove Road. These new streets would help connect the new neighbourhood effectively with the existing grid pattern layout and also ensure efficient block pattern layout.

3.150 Layouts should be designed to allow for pedestrian access from South Wimbledon tube station into the estate should TfL support second tube station entrance/exit in the future. This could be located to the rear of the station building that links Morden Road and Hayward Close. This would increase public transport accessibility and provide additional pedestrian routes into and out of the new neighbourhood.

3.151 Mews Street development should be reserved for smaller streets such as Rodney Place.

3.152 Whilst Rodney Place is outside the estate boundary, linking it into the street pattern of the estate would improve links within the area and make it easier to get around.

Streets

3.153 Development of a new network of streets should ensure that the neighbourhood is easy to get around and understand and accessible for all users. This includes ensuring clear and seamless links between the estate and the surrounding neighbourhoods (which do not currently exist), and brings the grid-iron network of streets to the north of the estate. The new street network supports the 'New London Vernacular' guiding characteristic for High Path Estate which is explained in more detail in Section 3 of the Plan.

3.154 The creation of traditional streets north to south will help integrate and re-connect the estate to its surroundings. The creation of clear east to west link will help bring together all the different new character areas and offer a safe cycle and pedestrian priority link across the estate.

Merantun Way (TRLN)

Meriton High Street-Kingston Road-Morden Road
(Strategic Road Network)

Merton Road (London Distributor Road)

Abbey Road

Nelson Grove Road - Pincott Road
(Required historic street alignments)

High Path
(Required historic street alignment)

Hayward Close
(Required retained tree-lined street)

Rodney Place
(Required integration into street pattern)

North-South future extensions to Merantun Way
(Illustrative integration into street pattern)

Merton High Street to High Path / Station Road
(Illustrative North-South street alignments)

Morden Road to Hayward Close
(Illustrative link to support secondary tube entrance)

Traffic management

Main access street

Improved cycle & pedestrian access

Potential new access street



Site specific policies

Policy

EP H3 Movement and access

a) The main vehicle routes within the estate are currently Pincott Road and Nelson Grove Road, which are located centrally within the estate. Their character and layout should resemble a traditional street and serve the needs of all users, without the need to provide separate or segregated facilities for cyclists.

b) Streets in the estate should connect in an open and easy to understand way that encourage movement by pedestrians and cycles. All streets should be safe, attractive and sociable places designed so as to manage vehicle speeds. Where streets are closed to vehicles at one end they should not restrict the possibility of vehicular movement in the future.

c) Discussions will be required with TfL to understand how any proposals for a tram link extension to South Wimbledon underground station including a new terminus could be incorporated as part of any development proposals.

d) To ensure measures to reduce the physical barrier (distance) causing Morden Road to east-west pedestrian and cycle movement to better link The Path and Milner Road.

The pedestrian and cycle access from the north-east corner of the estate towards Abbey Mills and Merantun Way could be improved in quality including better pedestrian facilities on the route about serving Abbey Mills, and reassessment of the siting of the existing pedestrian crossing by the River Wandle Bridge and its approach from Abbey Road.

f) Parking should preferably be provided on-street in well designed places.

Further guidance

3.155 Consider the viability of removing vehicle movements from High Path into Morden Road in conjunction with the early plans for the South Wimbledon tram spur.

3.156 Since there exists for Abbey Road to be continued directly southwards to make a new junction with Merantun Way to make a more easy to navigate road layout. This could simplify the layout and the amount of road space taken. This approach could also support the siting of new bus stop facilities in the area.

3.157 Street parking should preferably be provided in underground carports at basement level, rather than ground level parking with communal car podiums above.

58 Should the land between High Path and Merantun Way become available for redevelopment this could provide the opportunity for a more comprehensive redesign of Merantun Way to form a boulevard style street with footways and segregated cycle lanes either side, whilst still maintaining its important movement function.

3.159 Proposals directly or indirectly affecting Merantun Way or the wider Strategic Road Network need to be discussed at an early stage with Transport for London.

Justification

3.160 Bounded by main roads including the A24 Merantun Way, A219 and A238 and the River Wandle the High Path Estate is well positioned within the road network. Vehicular access is managed to deter through movements by non-residents. Access is limited to a one-way entry point into Pincott Road from Merton High Street and side road accesses from Abbey Road and High Path. From the south the main access point is at the junction of Station Road and Merantun Way, where traffic movement is restricted to left in and left out only. The surrounding busy road network creates physical barriers to movement, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. This is particularly acute on Morden Road and Merantun Way and reinforces the need to better connect the estate to neighbouring areas.

3.161 Similarly where the River Wandle crosses Merantun Way this stops the estate from connecting with the wider surrounding area. Reviewing movement and crossing opportunities could help ease some of these connectivity issues.

3.162 Due to high traffic demand and widespread congestion in the local area this road connectivity brings specific problems to the estate. This essentially relates local streets, notably Abbey Road being used as a cut through to avoid the heavily congested South Wimbledon junction on the north-west corner of the estate. Physical measures are widely applied across the area to constrain traffic speeds. Regeneration of the estate provides an opportunity to tackle some of these problems by making features which reduce traffic speed integral to the street design.

3.163 Within the estate many of the pedestrian and cycle routes are poorly defined which makes it difficult to distinguish between public and private areas. The building layout makes the estate feel unsafe and unwelcoming.

3.164 High Path Road runs along the southern boundary of the estate. The road is tight and the western section between Pott Road and the western section between Pott Road is one-way towards Morden Road where it also passes St Mary's Primary School and St John's the Divine Church. The vehicular exit onto Morden Road is restricted to left turn only this manoeuvre can be particularly acute for large vehicles due to the limited amount of turning space available. A cycle facility also operates along the northern footway.

3.165 Although parking is restricted along High Path Road localised congestion frequently occurs during school peak times. To improve cycle access it may be necessary to further restrict vehicle movements by closing the western end of High Path to vehicle traffic, although careful consideration of the impacts on the school and alternative traffic routes will need to be fully understood. How any changes interact with outline plans for the South Wimbledon Tram extension will also need to be identified.

3.166 More recently demand for a new work by TfL has suggested that current annual passenger demand is expected to rise from 31 million around 56m by 2031 even without Crossrail which would serve the nearby Wimbledon town centre. This growing demand would significantly impact on passenger levels thereby supporting the case for new tram extension and capacity. The proposed extension from Morden Road Tram stop to South Wimbledon offers the potential to help meet this growth. Further engineering feasibility work is being undertaken during 2015 to better understand potential impacts.

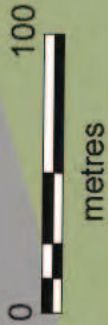
3.167 Preparation of development proposals will require the applicant to undertake discussions with TfL to determine the extent limits of land required to support future delivery of the supporting transport infrastructure. Delivery of the South Wimbledon Tram extension would increase the effectiveness of public transport connectivity in an area identified for intensification in the London Plan and population growth.

3.168 Located beside South Wimbledon underground Station the estate is attractive to commuters to central London. Overspill parking from nearby businesses have also encroached onto public streets serving the estate. This has necessitated the need for widespread parking controls to reserve the limited parking spaces for resident use only.

3.169 Well-designed parking provision helps create activity, vitality and provides overlooking of the street (natural surveillance) on the street. Where provision of parking is on-street to ensure that this is arranged and managed in a sensitive manner. For off-street facilities the preference for parking to be provided in full undercrofts at basement level avoids the creation of residential units with windows only located on one side of the building (single aspect) at ground level that are difficult to design well internally and restrict the type of residential units that are possible. It is expected that parking controls will need to be retained to ensure that parking is available for residents.



H3 Movement and access



H3 Movement and access



Redesign Merantun Way



Nelson Grove Road - Pincott Road
(Main vehicle routes)



Reduce severance on Morden Road



Improve pedestrian and cycle links to Merton Key Mills



Extension of Abbey Road to create new junction



High Path
(Required historic street alignment)



Merton High Street - Kingston Road - Morden Road
(Strategic Road Network)



Merton Road (London Distributor Road)



Abbey Road



Merton High Street to High Path / Station Road
(illustrative north-south street alignments)



Main access street



Improved cycle and pedestrian access



Potential new access street



Potential new access street

Site specific policies

Policy

EP H4 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.
- b)** Development proposals must make more efficient use of the land by building in accordance with the London Plan density matrix that are higher than current and improving the urban design quality of the estate.
- c)** In general, the residential density should be higher in the north-west corner of the site, gradually reducing towards the south-east, where the public transport accessibility (PTAL) is lower and there are smaller scale developments (e.g. Rodney Place) or more local street (High Path).
- d)** All new buildings must be provided that maximise the number of entrances and windows facing onto the street (active frontages) and for residential uses must provide well defined space between the front of building and the street (defensible space) e.g. landscaping and the street etc.

Further guidance

0 Wherever practical, different types of residential development (e.g. apartments, maisonettes and houses) should be located on the estate based on reinforcing local character.

3.171 Different street types should support residential types that are suitable to them. Therefore smaller scale, shorter and narrower streets will be more suitable for town houses and mews development. Wider, longer streets, with more vehicular traffic, will be more suitable for flats and maisonettes.

3.172 The frontages to Morden Road and Merton High Street may be appropriate locations for the provision of a wide range of commercial and community uses to support the new development subject to meeting relevant Local Plan policies.

Justification

3.173 High Path and the surrounding area are predominantly residential. High Path is located within an area with a good level of Public Transport Accessibility (PTAL). In accordance with the London Plan density matrix, regeneration offers opportunities to make more efficient use of the land with higher density development. Applying the matrix indicates and taking account of the existing number of homes, creates a range of 608 - 1,800 (figure) new homes for this site and the council's indication is for development proposals to be at the higher end of this range.

74 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 Policies 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 residents and businesses to apply for employment and other opportunities during the construction of developments and in the resultant end-use.

3.175 The site is bounded by major roads on two sides, lined predominantly by shops, cafes, restaurant and similar uses. Subject to meeting the Local Plan policies, provision of such uses (e.g. retail shops, financial and professional services, café/ restaurants, replacement of public houses, community, health, leisure and entertainment uses) may contribute to meeting the day to day needs of the local population. This would complement the area and provide services and facilities that may be needed. This also supports the principles of local context, sustainable development and active frontages. Within the estate the location of types of residential use should support the guidance on density and character and match residential type with appropriate street types.

3.176 Based on the Local Plan - Sites and Policies Plan Policy DM R2 the council supports the replacement of the existing convenience shop (i.e. shop selling everyday items) in Pincott Road. Any proposed new local convenience shop which is located outside the designated town centre and parades boundary and is above 280 sq m will be subject to sequential test and impact assessment.



H4 Land use



Primary land use : residential



Commercial and community
(subject to meeting relevant Local Plan policies)



Higher PTAL - higher density



Lower PTAL - lower density

Site specific policies

Policy

EP H5 Open space

- a)** Development proposals must provide public open space to address the identified deficiency in access to Local Parks and Open Spaces in accordance with London Plan Policy 7.18 'Protecting Open Space and addressing Deficiency'.
- 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)'.

Further guidance

3.177 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, proposals intending to provide a multifunctional area preferably provide one large area.

3.178 Open space should be provided in the most accessible point for all residents in the new neighbourhood. Open spaces should be situated in relation to size and function for example larger spaces should be centrally located and smaller spaces evenly distributed across the neighbourhood to ensure residents have access to open space. Deciding the location of public open space should where possible take as its cue, existing mature vegetation on the site and incorporate it into any new public spaces.

3.179 The individual design of public open spaces, themes and vegetation used, should have some local relevance, and include public art in a range of forms and media.

Justification

3.180 The estate is within easy access to a variety of public parks including Nelson Garden, Wandle Park, Nursery Road Recreation Ground and Haydon's Wood Recreation Ground. However, the updated Greenspace Information for Greater London (GL) 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 (0.5ha) on the eastern part of the site, near El Close and Merton Place, is deficient in access to Local Parks and Open Spaces (please refer to the GL's revised June 2015 maps, which are attached in appendix XX).

3.181 London Plan Policy 7.2 describes 'Local Parks and Open Spaces' as areas "Providing for recreation, games, children's play, sitting-out areas, nature conservation areas" with a guideline size of 2 hectares and being within 400 metres from homes. Development proposals should demonstrate how the proposed new public open space would address the identified deficiency in access to public open space and that the appropriate minimum standards concerning the provision of outdoor amenity space and play space have been achieved.

3.182 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 is capable of accommodating 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.

3.183 Similarly, provision of a group of mid-sized spaces and pocket parks could create areas of local human scale and intimacy that have local relevance, good surveillance and are used largely by the local community.

H5 Open space



Mature tree groups to inform design of open spaces

Indicative locations of mid sized open spaces

Indicative location of large open space

Existing open space

Merton High Street

Abbey Road

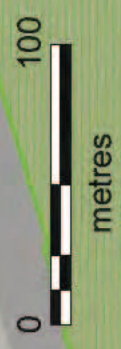
Rosey Place

High P

Merantun Way

Ne son
Gardens

Morden Road



Site specific policies

Policy

EP H6 Environmental protection

a) Retention of the existing mature tree groups and street trees including the trees fronting Merton High Street east of the junction with Pincott Rd are to form the basis of new open spaces and a network of biodiversity enhancing green corridors across the estate.

b) Public and communal open spaces must contribute to the creation of an efficient system for surface water run-off via SuDS and the enhancement of biodiversity.

c) Planting of new street trees on Pincott Rd and Nelson Grove Road to form the basis of a green corridor network across the estate based on the existing avenue of Hayward Cl

d) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuD must be part of any development proposal and can include a range of measures such as rain gardens, green roofs, tree strips, green edges and swales; these should be designed to reduce post development runoff and provide water quality, amenity benefits and enhance biodiversity.

e) The proposed development must aim to reduce post development runoff rates as close as possible to greenfield rates set out in London Plan policy 5.13 and the Mayor's sustainable design and construction supplementary planning guidance published in April 2014. The development must be designed to take into consideration flow routes should flooding occur, i.e. designing for excellence

f) The feasibility of CHP and district heating should be investigated. At a minimum this should include:

(i) An assessment of the secondary heat sources within a 100 metre radius of the site boundary (e.g. river water heat recovery from the Wandle, heat extracted from the London Underground).

(ii) Evidence to demonstrate engagement with key stakeholders as related with the potential secondary heat source such as transport for London and Environment Agency have been fully engaged in the development of the feasibility.

(iii) Consideration of air quality issues should include an investigation into the potential benefits a district heat network could deliver to the wider area through the connection to existing buildings or development sites outside of the high path regeneration.

Further guidance

3.184 Retention and management of the mature and semi-mature vegetation on the south side of High Path where possible to further develop a network of green routes across the estate.

3.185 An open section of the Bunces ditch (which is a designated main river) flows to the south of Merantum Way. There is a possibility that the upstream section of the culverted historic watercourse flows across the High Path estate and this should be fully investigated with a view to presenting opportunities for deculverting, where possible.

Justification

3.186 The early design stages for any development proposals for the estate provides opportunity to incorporate landscaping and permeable surfaces that enable biodiversity and reduce surface water run-off. Currently, whilst there is a lot of space between buildings, this is very poorly defined, and much of it is hard-standing. This leaves little opportunity for biodiversity or good natural drainage/ SuDs.

3.187 There are, however, areas with groups of mature and semi-mature trees that can form the basis of green corridors, sustainable urban drainage and a sustainable 'green' network of spaces across the estate. They should help to link the estate with Abbey Recreation Ground to the west and the River Wandle to the east.






3.188 The close proximity of the River Wandle puts the estate close to the fluvial rain and areas of the estate are at high risk of surface water flooding identified on Environment Agency flood maps, so it is important that redevelopment does not increase any local flooding issues and where possible, seek to improve matters.

3.189 Local environmental conditions such as air quality and overheating should be taken into consideration during the design process. Careful consideration should be taken in order to ensure that efforts to mitigate against these issues does not result in unforeseen negative impact on the residents.

3.19 Consideration of air quality issues is important in order to understand the long term air quality benefits that might arise from the growth of a district heating network with the High Path Estate as an energy centre nucleus.



H6 Environmental protection

-  Mature tree groups to inform design of open space
-  Conservation of vegetation south side High Path
-  Create green chain based on around w open space (linking to existing open spaces)
-  Develop green chain towards Wandle R
-  Green chain network str trees

Site specific policies

EP H7 Landscape

Required

a) Retention of:

i) the existing mature tree groups and street trees including the trees fronting Merton High Street east of the junction with Pincott Road;

ii) the tree planting along Hayward Close should be continued along the whole length of the street to strengthen the attractive 'avenue' character of this street;

iii) the mature tree(s) in the vicinity of the playground within the 'Priory Close' block;

iv) the line of mature trees in the block between the 'Ryder House' and Hudson Court blocks;

v) the mature trees in the playground to the north of the 'Marsh Court' block.

vi) the mature trees to the west and east of the 'Merton Place' block, to the north of the 'DeBurgh House' block.

b) Landscaping must be a key feature in the provision of private spaces fronting houses and blocks of flats (defensible space). Frontages must be designed to incorporate where feasible soft landscaping, appropriate seating and permeable surfaces.

c) Street trees should be located to enable the creation of well defined on-street parking spaces. This will reduce the visual impact of vehicles and enhance the street.

d) Landscaping the public open spaces and communal gardens must be of the highest quality, accessible and meet the needs of the residents by complying with the relevant policy requirements.

Further guidance

3.190 Retention of the mature trees fronting Merton High Street west of the junction with Pincott Road.

3.191 Retention and good management of the mature trees and vegetation on the south side of High Path

3.192 Retention of the tree identified by the council's arboricultural officer and illustrated in the accompanying map

3 Provision of a good variety and quantity of street

3.194 Consideration for soft landscaping in streets in terms of its appropriateness, robustness and maintenance.

Justification

3.1 Retention of trees has clear benefits in promoting biodiversity, sustainable development and contributing to flood risk mitigation and help reduce air pollution.

3.196 Retaining trees, as with historic streets, provides the basis from which to develop design proposals.

3.197 Landscaping has the potential to improve the quality of a place, but this will only work if it is appropriate to the location and there is a clearly defined, funded and managed maintenance regime in place.

H7 Landscape

H7 Landscape

- Mature trees groups and street trees fronting Merton High S east of the junction with Pincott Road
- Trees lining Hayward Close
- Mature trees within 'Priory Close' block
- Mature trees in car park between 'Ryder House' 'Hudson Close' blocks
- Mature trees to the west and south of 'Merton Place'
- Mature trees to the north of 'Marsh Court'
- Landscaping integral element of historic and indicative street alignment (Tree planting / soft landscaping / SUDs where appropriate)
- Mature trees to the west of the junction with Pincott Road



Ne son
Gardens

Site specific policies

Policy

EP H8 Building heights

- a)** The general building height across the site should be 5-6 storeys with variations (outlined below) in order to create a consistent height profile and street character that visually links with the surroundings.
- b)** Buildings fronting Merton High Street will be restricted to 4 storeys (with potential for a 5th storey setback) to ensure the environmental quality of the street does not unduly suffer from shading and blocking of sunlight.
- c)** Buildings fronting Morden Road should be 7-9 storeys to be similar to the existing and potential building heights on its west side and ensure a consistent and even street character.
- d)** Buildings on the west side of Abbey Road should be up to 4 storeys to relate well to the existing housing on the east side and new flats on the west side.
- e)** Building heights along High Path should be 3-4 storeys in height to reflect the historic character as a residential street and ensure that it sensitively takes account of the setting of St John's the Divine Church.
- f)** Land outside the estate boundary fronting Merantun Way is suitable for buildings of 7-9 storeys to promote the transformation of this road into an boulevard street.
- g)** Where Station Road, Abbey Road and Merantun Way is a sensitive area as there are likely to be awkward shaped sites. The close proximity of Rodney Place and Merantun Way create a need to respect existing low-rise development and make the most of the potential for taller buildings fronting Merantun Way. Storey heights in this general area should rise from 3-4 storeys to 5-6 storeys.

Further guidance

3.198 The potential widening of Morden Road to accommodate a tram extension needs to be taken into consideration should this proposal go ahead the resulting adjustment to street proportions may better accommodate taller buildings on the east side of Morden Road, however the transition to lower buildings further east into the estate and effects on the visual environment must be properly managed and guided.

3.199 Building heights along the lengths of streets should be similar or transition on either side in order to maintain a consistent character.

Justification

3.200 The existing estate has a wide range of building styles and heights. A more even distribution of heights will reduce these negative characteristics and help new development fit in comfortably with its surroundings. It will also create neighbourhood streets that are easy to get around. In order to fit well with the surroundings, it is important to ensure building heights on the edge of the estate relate appropriately to those adjacent to it.

