

17 Accessibility

The quality of the buildings, streets and spaces of the borough affects the quality of life for all groups in society. Therefore, the design of any development must be sensitive to the needs of users with disabilities, parents with young children and the elderly, and encourage all parts of society to take part in borough life.

The public realm of Merton will be developed to ensure clarity and safety of movements between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Appropriate signage and material changes will be implemented to ensure safe passage of pedestrian traffic at all times. Streets and pavements will be developed as integral to the overall public realm.

The design requirements of any street are as follows:

- » Pavements and walkways should be of a sufficient width to allow the unimpeded passage of wheelchairs and pushchairs.
- » The use of tactile and hazard warning paving will be proposed in compliance with British standards and building regulations. All such instances will be developed with consideration of associated access strategies, best practice guidance and research in support of Merton's access requirements.
- » Pedestrian walkways must provide a dropped/sloping kerb to ensure easy and safe crossings points.
- » Pedestrian pavements will take in to account roughness of material and adequate slip resistance to ensure comfortable and safe walking experience.
- » Street furniture should not reduce the width of the pavement to a degree that the movement of wheelchair users and pushchairs is impeded.

- » Street furniture should be strategically placed at regular intervals in order to provide a degree of legibility for the visually impaired.
- » Where possible, signs should be located within the reach of the pedestrian and have tactile lettering.
- » Signs should consist of clear text and pictograms which contrast with the background to ensure clarity and legibility.
- » Stepped areas must ensure that a suitable alternative is provided for disadvantaged users in the form of a ramp.
- » Lighting should ensure visual acuity and provide security for all users.
- » Any manhole covers should be flush with adjoining surfaces.

The Built Form and Access

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) requires building owners/occupiers to provide dignified access for disabled users. It is essential that new developments integrate such access at the design stages.

- » For existing buildings, changes in level between the street and ground level should, wherever possible, be accommodated within the building envelope to avoid ramps projecting onto the footway.
- » Steps should not be used as the key focus of important desire lines as this creates visual barrier to disadvantaged users.

- » Whenever possible, entrances should be at grade to limit any adverse effects on the visual and physical quality of the streetscape. Where entrances are not at grade ramps and stairs with suitable rest platforms and handrails should be incorporated. Ramps should have small kerbs on exposed sides to ensure the safety of the user.
- » Doors to buildings should be of adequate width to allow wheelchair users easy access. Wherever possible automatic doors are preferred. If not possible, consideration must be given to the opening direction and force required to open it to ensure that it can be operated by all user groups.
- » Disabled car parking spaces should always be provided even in areas where private cars are normally prohibited. Parking spaces should be on level ground as close to facilities and amenities as possible. Wherever possible, covered parking should be provided to ensure the comfort of the user.
- » Access to new buildings should comply to building regulations 'Part M'.

18 Maintenance/Management

18.1 Introduction

The strategic public realm guidance promotes investment in the borough spaces and streets. However, the value of this investment is reduced if the urban environment is not managed and maintained effectively to promote a positive image of the borough.

Within the urban environment, projects have to be considered not only in terms of their implementation, but their future maintenance and care. Design and maintenance need to be considered together to guarantee that the public realm functions properly and maintains its high quality and if the streetscape environment is to add value to the image and perception of the streets and spaces.

Also, management and maintenance of the activities that happen within the streets and spaces are of fundamental importance. This facet of the functioning of the public realm is very dynamic and must be constantly revised to follow changes in planning, design and use of the public realm.

The development of common objectives and a co-ordinated programme for management and maintenance among the various public agencies is essential to achieve and sustain improvement to public spaces and ensure continuing corporate investment in the city.

This section identifies the existing management and maintenance regimes and the requirements of future interventions that result from the implementation of these guidelines.

18.1.1 Existing Responsibilities

Currently maintenance and management responsibilities of Merton's public realm are shared primarily between the Council and TfL, with some structures owned and maintained by Network Rail.

TfL is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the TLRN roads and adjacent pavements. These roads cross Morden's Town Centre and Colliers Wood local centre, resulting in two separate approaches to the maintenance and management in adjacent areas and different objectives and results.

18.1.2 Current Maintenance and Concerns

After public consultation and several community forums a series of issues were raised:

- » Perception of poor maintenance/management in the borough, with Mitcham as a particular example of this;
- » Too much street clutter in the borough is seen as a problem;
- » Advertising (in general) and billboards in Raynes Park are seen as a negative;
- » There is a desire for more car-parking for local shops in Colliers Wood;
- » Sustainability of proposals;
- » Street traders;
- » Public toilets.

18.1.3 Future Responsibilities

The maintenance of the public realm is recognised as a crucial factor in the perceived success of the public realm works. LB Merton will be responsible for management and maintenance of most of the public realm on completion of projects, so the extend of ownership and responsibility should be established early in the design process.

Also, it must ensure that future private developments adhere to and adopt the Council's Public Realm Design Guidelines. Maintenance responsibilities need be agreed with the Council and the Council's regime has to be followed as a set minimum standard.

The developed public realm will be:

- » Durable, robustly detailed and specified in order to minimise any future disturbance to the works;
- » Developed with a clear knowledge of existing and proposed maintenance regimes, such as cleansing procedures, waste collection and loading requirements;
- » Monitored and managed to address vandalism. Materials will be selected with aftercare in mind;
- » Safety and security issues will be given prime consideration in the design and maintenance of new projects.

18.2 Maintenance

18.2.1 Materials

The maintenance of the public realm is twofold:

1. The **maintenance of the materials** in the streets, including:

- » Reinstatement of paving surfaces to the standard and specification of the original works;
- » Co-ordination of public utilities - both in the design process to promote creative resolutions to the integration of services and access points, and in the programming of services renewal;
- » Responding immediately to failures in the materials (i.e. vehicle overrun causing cracking to slabs) to ensure the safety of users of the space is maintained, and that the problem does not spread;
- » A stockpile of paving materials must be set aside to ensure that stock is available for reinstatement work and repair.

2. The **general upkeep of the environment** including:

- » Litter and refuse collection, both from the streets and from the bins;
- » Removal of flyer postings;
- » Cleaning of the street (washing, specialist steam cleaning for chewing gum on pavements, removal of oil staining);
- » Removal of graffiti.

Procurement of materials

As one of the aims of these guidelines is to promote the long-term sustainability of projects and interventions there needs to be an approach to material procurement which ensures availability of products in the long term. Continuity of supply of frequently used man-made and natural products, e.g. life

span of a quarry for paving material etc., should be evaluated during selection and procurement. The large quantities involved may enable custom products to be developed for the site where suitable products cannot be sourced from standard ranges.

Trees for strategic infrastructure items such as boulevards may be procured together and retained in the nursery field until required for each stage of implementation. This approach will ensure continuity of age and size of plant material along the length of the routes.

Reinstatement

To ensure that reinstatement is carried out to a similar specification as the original works a maintenance manual should be prepared by the original designer before works are completed.

The maintenance manual should incorporate:

- » 'as built' drawings;
- » procedures for maintenance works;
- » the materials used;
- » the names and contact information of all suppliers;
- » procedures for reinstatement.

18.2.2 Coordination with Utilities

There is a need for good co-ordination between the provision of the public realm and utilities if a quality environment is to be delivered and sustained. Provision must be made in the utility infrastructure for future expansion and flexible delivery

of development areas, to eliminate or reduce the need to dig up services in completed areas of the public realm. Where there is uncertainty in the provision, temporary surfaces or those with a flexible construction that allow for easy reinstatement should be used.

18.2.3 Street Cleansing Regime

The use of high quality paving will create a robust and beautiful streetscene which if appropriately maintained will last for many years ahead. To protect this investment a cleansing regime should be put in place which:

- » Provides cleansing of all street pavements;
- » Where any street and outdoor cultural event takes place, suitable cleansing regimes will be employed so that the public realm will be maintained to acceptable safety and cleanliness.
- » Regularly removes stubborn stains and chewing gum to prevent the paving becoming permanently stained;
- » Takes into account the construction of surfaces including sub-bases, bedding layers, materials and joint types and fillers;
- » Ensures the construction and detailing of the surfaces, particularly around and below street furniture, is developed with maintenance operations in mind;
- » The 1990 Environmental Protection Act contains a Code of Practice for Litter and refuse which can be used as a minimum standard for cleanliness within LB Merton.

Impact of Cleaning Methods

The impact of cleaning methods must be considered when establishing a cleansing regime for the streets. Many materials and laying methods need time for the joints to seal and for the pavements to become more impervious. Vacuum suction and high pressure hoses should not be used in the initial months of a project's life, with operations restricted to manual sweeping.

Checklist For Aftercare

'Streets Ahead', a publication produced by English Heritage, offers technical guidelines for quality public realm projects, and provides the following checklist for aftercare:

- » Contractors should attend to emerging defects immediately;
- » The maintenance advantages of flexible laid surfaces should be considered;
- » Flexible laid surfaces should be allowed time to mature;
- » Avoid the use of vacuum suction operations where there is risk of disturbance to a surface;
- » The method of street cleaning should follow the requirements of the design;
- » Avoid the use of joint sealing bonding agents for prominent block paving surfaces;
- » Investigate the effect of using salt-grit for de-icing on proposed surfaces;
- » Maintenance requirements should be specified, calculated and approved prior to implementation.

18.2.3 Drainage/ Water Conservation

- » Watering points for planting irrigation will be carefully considered and located where appropriate.
- » Any drainage water systems and storage points will be developed in accordance with borough wide drainage strategies, ensuring the coordination and maximum reuse of available water is offered.
- » Watering of all planting will be required to observe a watering schedule, particularly in the summer, that will state frequency of visits and regimes to ensure appropriate plant husbandry.

18.2.4 Trees and Planting

- » Regular pruning and clipping of shrubs and trees and mowing of grassed areas will ensure all areas of softworks are carefully maintained and contribute to a safer environment.

18.3 Management

18.3.1 Public Realm Manager / Champion

To maintain an attractive, high quality and clean environment and encourage economic success throughout the borough public realm managers could be installed to work with shopkeepers, business and the general public. Their role should also include:

- » Ensure that once implemented, public realm projects are managed and maintained properly;
- » Monitor cleansing operations, and review the appropriateness of street related procedures, including making council officers aware of deficiencies in reinstatement by statutory authorities and maintenance work required.;
- » Help to co-ordinate the activities of services departments;
- » Monitor and co-ordinate management and maintenance activities with other agencies, and ensure that new developments adopt Council's guidelines.
- » Seek to improve the methods used;
- » Work with the police and private security companies to ensure a safe and secure environment;
- » Raise public awareness of the value of the public realm.

Additionally, the role of town centre manager should be promoted and supported so that the managers work with shopkeepers, business and the general public on the particular issues that affect each town / local centre.

18.3.2 Design Manuals

The proposed maintenance procedures for any major public realm projects should be compiled in a manual prior to completion of the contracted works. The manual should:

- » incorporate the agreed procedures for maintenance works;
- » identify the exact materials to be used;
- » provide the names and contact information for all suppliers;
- » outline procedures for reinstatement works by Public Utility companies.

19 Conclusion

Merton's street scene is its public face through which the borough presents itself to the community and visitors. The Council has launched an exciting initiative to enhance the quality of its streets and spaces with the aim of developing and securing its role as a pre-eminent and sustainable place for living and working in London.

This study is intended to replace the existing 'Merton Street Design Guide' and aims to provide practical details which can be used as a reference for design standards. Fundamental to the approach contained within this report has been the principle of ordering the treatment of the street to create an uncluttered, simple and robust public environment.

It is envisaged that a commitment through focused investment with partners and considered redesign, during replacement and enhancement programmes, will create a public realm that reflects the aspirations of the people of Merton to create a quality environment in which to live, work and relax, and build on the strong sense of community within the Borough.

It should be noted that this guide will be used as a reference for the Council and its partners in future schemes and it is not the Council's intention to replace street scene elements before the end of their useful life unless part of a wider improvement programme or decluttering exercise.

The document has set out a palette of materials and furniture and details for the arrangement and installation within the street scene. Adherence to these guidelines will help to transform the quality of Merton's public realm and create consistency and quality within the street scene.



Appendix I

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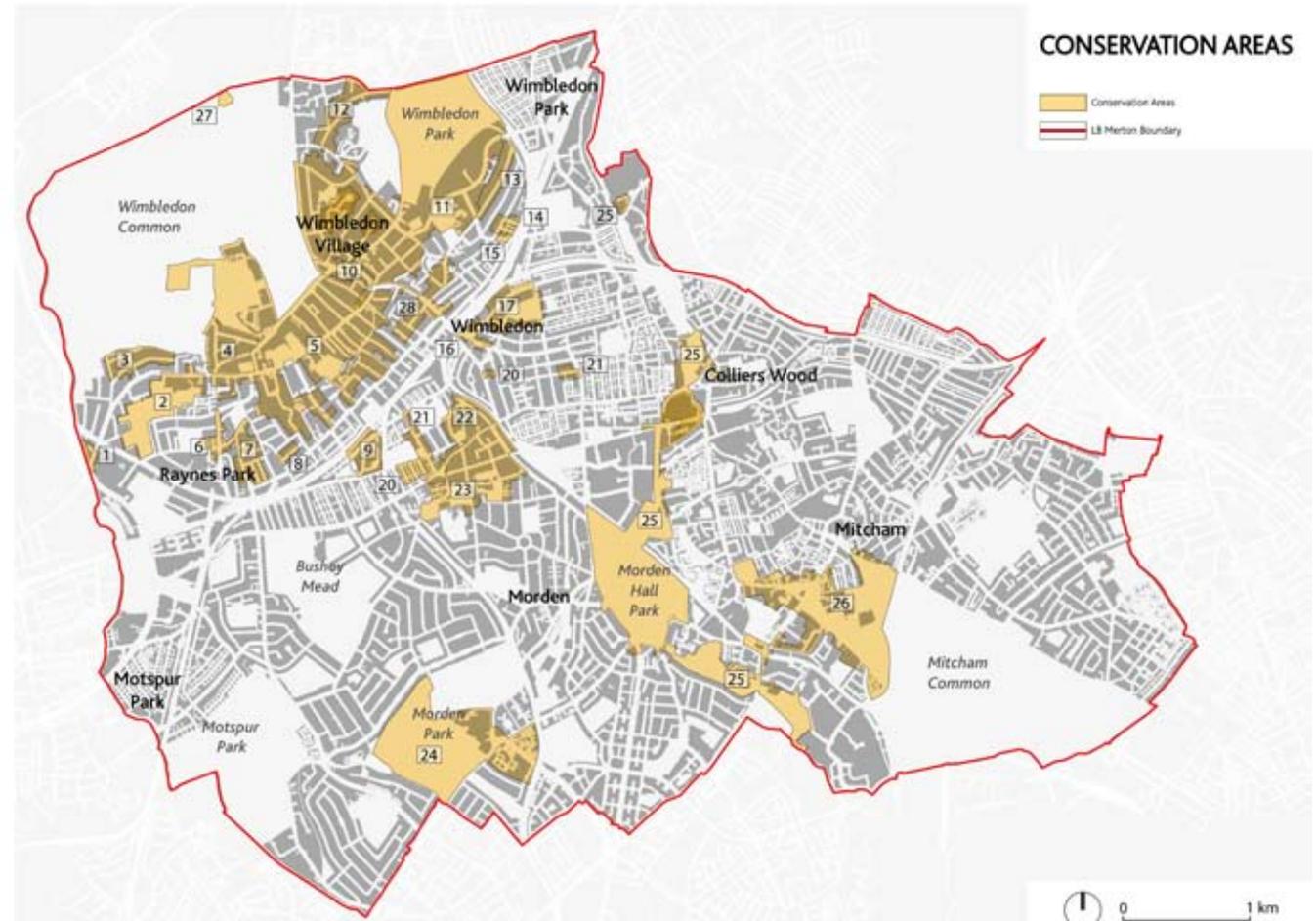
Appendix II

Conservation Area List

Merton has 28 Conservation Areas that have been designated because of their special historical, architectural, townscape and landscape qualities. They vary greatly in age, size, character and style. The adjacent figure includes 28 areas identified in Merton's Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP). These are:

1. Westcoombe Avenue
2. Copse Hill
3. Drax Avenue
4. Wool Road
5. Wimbledon West
6. Durham Road
7. Lambton Road
8. Dunmore Road
9. Dennis Park Crescent
10. Wimbledon Village
11. Wimbledon North
12. Bathgate Road
13. Vineyard Hill Road
14. Kenilworth Avenue
15. Leopold Road
16. The Broadway
17. Southpark Gardens
18. Bertram Cottages
19. Pelham Road
20. Wimbledon Chase
21. Merton Hall Road
22. Wilton Crescent
23. John Innes-Merton Park
24. Upper Morden
25. Wandle Valley
26. Mitcham Cricket Green

27. Wimbledon Windmill
28. Wimbledon Hill Road



Historic Street Furniture List

Local List – (Street Furniture Items only)

Cottenham Park Road	» Horse trough (near j/o Coombe Lane)
Wimbledon High St	» Horse Trough (west side of j/o Belvedere Grove)
Lake Rd	» Brick Piers

Other Identified Historic Street Furniture

Bertram Cottages	» Bollards and barriers (Corner of Hartfield Road) » Barriers and Bollards (corner of Gladstone Road) » Street lamps
Cambridge Rd	» Vent Pipe (junction with Coombe Lane)
Camp Rd	» Vent pipe (junction with Eversley Park)
Church Rd Wimbledon	» Revolving gate (junction with Dairy Walk) » Street lamps (junction with High Street)
Cricket Green Mitcham	» Railings (surrounding cricket ground) » Vent pipe (corner of London Rd)
Edge Hill	» Cast iron bench (opposite Sacred Heart Church)
The Grange	» Octagonal drain cover (near 1a) » Granite kerbs and corner blocks

The Green, SW 19

High Street SW 19

Kingswood Rd

Lambton Road

Lancaster Road

Murray Road

Ridgway

Thornton Hill

Walnut Tree Cottages

Worple Road

Various locations

and red granite setts in gulleys.

- » Hoggin surfacing.
- » Street lamps.
- » Granite setts at crossovers and driveways.
- » Areas of York stone paving around street lights.
- » Cast iron coal hole covers.
- » Railings and fingerpost sign at the roundabout.
- » Vent pipe
(corner of Cambridge Road)
- » Stone flag paving
(corner of High St Wimbledon)
- » Bollards
(junction with the High Street)
- » Vent Pipes
(j/o Southside Common)
- » GPO letterbox set into wall
(junction with the Grange)
- » Street name sign
(junction with Worple Rd)
- » Paving surface.
- » Vent pipe
(c/o Thornton Road)
- » New cast metal "Conservation Area" type street name signs.
- » Original cast metal street name signs.
- » Granite setts along gulleys.
- » Granite kerbstones.
- » Granite crossover edging corner blocks.



Conservation area street name sign, Cricket Green, Mitcham



Drinking fountain and horse trough, Parkside Avenue, Wimbledon

Appendix III

Street Elements

NATURAL STONE	NATURAL STONE	HISTORICAL NATURAL STONE	CONCRETE FLAG
			
MATERIAL: Granite	MATERIAL: Granite	MATERIAL: Varies, typically granite setts	MATERIAL: Artificial Stone Paviers (ASP)
COLOUR/FINISH: Mid-Grey	COLOUR/FINISH: Mid-Grey		
DIMENSIONS: 900x600mm	DIMENSIONS: 100x200mm		DIMENSIONS: 900x600mm
BOND: Staggered bond with a 300mm offset	BOND: Stretcher bond		BOND: Staggered bond with a 300mm offset
CONSIDERATIONS: Paving flags to be laid perpendicular to the dominant kerb line (the line of pedestrian movement)	CONSIDERATIONS: Setts to be laid perpendicular to the dominant kerb line. Maximum joint width 10mm	CONSIDERATIONS: Repair and replace with like materials where necessary	CONSIDERATIONS: Paving flags to be laid perpendicular to the dominant kerb line (the line of pedestrian movement)

Street Elements

AGGREGATE - PERMEABLE	AGGREGATE - PERMEABLE	ASPHALT / MACADAM	RECESSED MANHOLE COVER
			
<p>MATERIAL: Permeable resin bound gravel</p>	<p>MATERIAL: Resin bound gravel over tarmac paving</p>	<p>MATERIAL: Mastic Asphalt or Bituminous macadam with fine grade aggregate</p>	<p>MATERIAL: Recessed</p>
<p>COLOUR/FINISH: Harvest buff for trees pits</p>	<p>COLOUR/FINISH: Grey for verges and private forecourts</p>		<p>CONSIDERATIONS: Details to be approved by service providers</p>
<p>CONSIDERATIONS: Installed to manufacturer's specification</p>	<p>CONSIDERATIONS: Installed to manufacturer's specification PC concrete pin kerb to all edges to soft landscape</p>		<p>CONSIDERATIONS: Realign: edges parallel to kerb lines Paving slabs cut to fit the shape of the cover and so that the joints and paving pattern are not broken by the cover Gaps between cover and paving slabs to be a maximum width of 50mm, filled with mortar</p>