



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP



GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE, BIODIVERSITY AND OPEN SPACE STUDY

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

SUMMARY REPORT

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 TEP was commissioned by the London Borough of Merton (the Council) to assess the borough's green and blue infrastructure, biodiversity and open spaces and provide an evidence base document to inform the preparation and implementation of the new Local Plan.
- 1.2 The study assesses the quantity, accessibility, quality and value of open spaces throughout the borough and has been carried out in line with guidance on both a national and London level.
- 1.3 The objectives of the study were to:
 - Evaluate the quantity, quality, value and accessibility of different types of open space and green infrastructure throughout the borough;
 - Identify any specific needs or areas of deficiency in access to green and open space and nature conversation areas and how these deficiencies should be addressed;
 - Determine the impact of projected population changes across the borough and housing intensifications in the identified growth areas and other small sites, on open spaces;
 - Identify any areas of open space and nature conservation areas that are surplus to requirements, and in accordance with agreed criteria, any areas that have potential to be designated as Local Open Space and/or Metropolitan Open Land;
 - Undertake a biodiversity assessment of the borough's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and identify any special protection green areas of local importance;
 - Support the borough's health and wellbeing priorities as set out in Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
 - Undertake consultation with user groups in the borough to determine perceptions of Merton's open spaces and priorities for the future; and
 - Provide information that can be used to underpin the preparation and implementation of new Local Plan policies and the revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and support the future management of green, open and recreational spaces.
- 1.4 The study is aligned with other evidence base documents including the Playing Pitch Strategy (2019) and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2019) and will support the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). In turn, this will aid in the justification of future development contributions and the collection and spending of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 1.5 The summary report and the set of accompanying technical reports set out the findings of the assessment and provide recommendations and a set of priorities for how the vision for green and blue infrastructure can be delivered in Merton.

Context of the Summary Report

- 1.6 This summary report has been informed by a number of technical assessments and associated reports as part of the overall Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study, as shown in Figure 1.

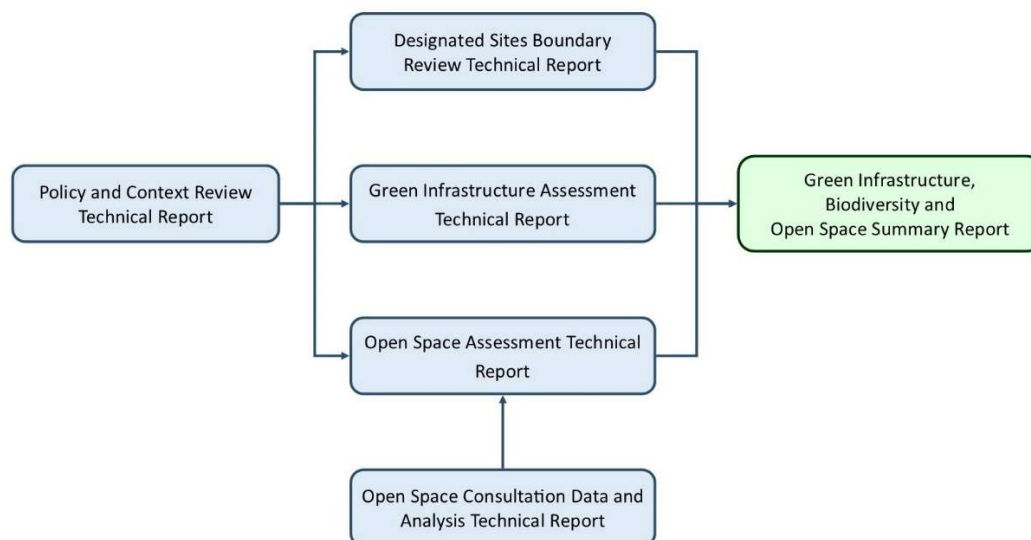


Figure 1: Merton Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

Summary Report Structure

- 1.7 Chapter 2 sets out the Vision for Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space in Merton, against the following headings:
- A Greener Place
 - A Well-Connected Place
 - A Place for Wildlife
 - A Happy Place
 - A Forward-Looking Place
 - Celebrating Our Place
- 1.8 Chapter 3 sets out the Benefits, Challenges and Opportunities for Merton, including summarising the 2018 General Assessment of London's Environment (Appendix 1 of the London Environment Strategy), from which key messages are included for:
- Air Quality
 - Open Spaces
 - Biodiversity
 - The Urban Forest
 - Rivers and Water Quality
 - Climate Change
- 1.9 Chapter 4 includes a brief summary of the methods, findings and recommendations from the Technical Assessments and Reports as follows:
- Policy and Context Review
 - Designated Sites Boundary Review

- Open Space Assessment
 - Open Space Consultation
 - Green and Blue Infrastructure Assessment
- 1.10 Chapter 5 covers Priorities for green and blue infrastructure, which are derived from Merton's strategic objectives; the emerging Merton Local Plan; the Greater London Plan; the Mayor's London Environment Strategy; and the All London Green Grid.
- 1.11 The priorities for Merton are:
- Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Adapting to Climate Change and the Urban Heat Island Effect
 - Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life
 - Supporting Economic Growth and Investment
 - Improving Air and Water Quality
 - Encouraging Walking and Cycling
 - Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation
 - Supporting Learning about the Environment
 - Supporting Food-growing
 - Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience
- 1.12 Chapter 6, Delivery sets out ways to deliver the Vision for Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space. This is set out in six delivery areas, each relating back to the Vision:
- Enhancing our Assets (A Greener Place)
 - Accessing our Spaces (A Well Connected Place)
 - Wildlife & Biodiversity Value (A Place for Wildlife)
 - Healthy Spaces (A Happy Place)
 - Protecting Spaces for Future Communities (A Forward Looking Place)
 - Celebrating our Environments (Celebrating our Place)

2.0 Vision for Merton's Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 2.1 Good quality and valued open spaces make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of the local Merton residents. They also contribute to social cohesion, promote cultural heritage and mitigate some of the impacts of a changing climate.
- 2.2 As one of the greenest boroughs in London, Merton's broad range of parks, open spaces and nature conservation areas are worth £2.5 billion¹ in terms of the benefits they bring for health and wellbeing, property values, water quality improvements and carbon storage.
- 2.3 As an outer London borough, Merton has a wealth of green open spaces including Mitcham, Wimbledon and Cannon Hill Commons, Morden Hall Park, Morden Park and Ravensbury Park. The Wandle Valley Regional Park, one of the greatest networks of open space in London, also runs through the centre of Merton providing a suburb leisure and nature feature for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- 2.4 Every summer the eyes of the world are on Merton, as the host of the Wimbledon Championships, one of the biggest sporting events on the planet. Green infrastructure is an essential part of the setting of the tournament as millions of TV viewers see the stars being interviewed against the backdrop of the famous green wall at the All England Lawn Tennis Club.
- 2.5 Over the next 15 years, the population and housing growth will place pressure on the open spaces and it will be important that health and wellbeing is embedded into all aspects of development.
- 2.6 Tackling the effects of climate change will remain a challenge; one that the Council has placed at the forefront of its agenda by declaring a climate emergency in 2019 and setting ambitious carbon reduction targets to make Merton carbon neutral by 2050.
- 2.7 This vision below sets out how and why green and blue infrastructure can be enhanced throughout the borough; a vision for the entire community to take forward together.

A Greener Place

- 2.8 The provision of **new and affordable homes** and infrastructure is a key part of future growth in the borough. To support good growth, the existing green and blue infrastructure should be maintained and enhanced to ensure that new development helps to make the borough greener. Aiming for and achieving '**net environmental gain**' will bring many benefits through ensuring that new development creates proud civic places and high quality **public realm** for residents to enjoy with biodiverse trees, planters, green roofs and walls.

¹ Natural Capital Accounts for Public Green Space in London (Vivid Economics, October 2017)

- 2.9 Net environmental gain is an important feature as a **changing climate** brings problems of heat, drought and flood risk; all posing direct risks to people, property and vegetation. The past century of urbanisation has resulted in incremental losses of local vegetation and the sealing over of natural ground surfaces, which has made towns more vulnerable to heatwaves and to flash floods at times of high rainfall. The reversal of this process can begin by making grey areas greener.

A Well-Connected Place

- 2.10 Merton is very well connected and will become more so with the arrival of **rail infrastructure** improvements to Crossrail 2 and the Northern Line. Connectivity is great but **traffic congestion** is a major concern as it lowers **air quality** and fragments the urban environment for those seeking to walk and cycle. Green and blue infrastructure provides a place to escape from the hustle and bustle so it is important that major parks are diverse and inclusive places where there is something for everyone and people can experience nature.
- 2.11 Equally it is vital that main roads and town centres are greener and calmer than they are at present. Green infrastructure helps calm traffic flows and makes a small but useful contribution to air quality. It's also important to have good **walking and cycling** connections across the borough, with footpaths and cycleways integrated into parks and open spaces.

A Place for Wildlife

- 2.12 Wildlife and trees are under massive threat from climate change. Summer droughts, and pests and diseases are placing trees under great stress. Insect life on the planet is under great threat from habitat loss and pesticides. Yet urban areas can actually be an oasis for wildlife if we use parks, civic spaces and private gardens to plant **native trees** and create **orchards and meadows** to improve the **resilience** for future generations.

A Happy Place

- 2.13 It is well understood that **mental and physical well-being** relies on a regular '**dose of nature**'. Even walking along a tree-lined street can lift the spirit. To counter the stresses of modern life, parks should be attractive and safe for all ages and all groups of society and have something for everyone to enjoy. Going beyond this parks and open spaces should be places for active **learning, healing and volunteering**. Through activities such as **social prescriptions and green gyms** local residents can become more engaged in the use of local parks.
- 2.14 Not everyone can get to a park on a daily basis, but almost everyone does go to the shops regularly. Through making town centres attractive with trees and pockets of greenery, more people will be able to receive a daily dose of nature.

A Forward-Looking Place

- 2.15 Future generations will rely on investment in green and blue infrastructure today. Part of the vision for the borough should be to **involve every young person** in tree-planting, food-growing, outdoor exercise and learning about nature, so they can understand how they can **positively shape their own environments**.

Celebrating our Place

- 2.16 As Merton is one of the greenest boroughs in London, it makes a proud contribution to London as a **National Park City** and should continue to enable and encourage residents, local businesses and visitors to the borough to enjoy green and blue spaces.

3.0 Benefits, Challenges and Opportunities

Benefits

- 3.1 Government guidance on green infrastructure² provides a useful context for demonstrating the environmental, social and economic benefits, or 'ecosystem services'.

What can green infrastructure include?

Green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies.

Why is green infrastructure important?

Green infrastructure is a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at a range of scales. For communities, these benefits can include enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling, and the management of flood risk. These benefits are also known as ecosystem services.

What planning goals can green infrastructure help to achieve?

Green infrastructure can help in:

- *Building a strong, competitive economy;*
- *Achieving well-designed places;*
- *Promoting healthy and safe communities;*
- *Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change; and*
- *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.*

- 3.2 In addition, the emerging Green Infrastructure Policy for the new London Plan³ acknowledges that green and blue infrastructure meets multiple objectives, alongside traditional functions such as space for play, sports and recreation, including:

- Mental and physical health;
- The heat island effect;
- Air and water quality;
- Landscape and heritage conservation; and
- Learning about the environment.

Challenges and Opportunities

- 3.3 The 2018 General Assessment of London's Environment (which forms Appendix 1 of the London Environment Strategy⁴) sets out the London wide challenges. These have been summarised in this chapter, followed by the opportunities for Merton.

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan>

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

3.4 The challenges and opportunities are set against the following topics:

- Air Quality
- Open Spaces
- Biodiversity
- The Urban Forest
- Rivers and Water Quality
- Climate Change

Air Quality

London wide Challenges

3.5 Significant numbers of people across London live in areas exposed to levels of particulate and nitrogen dioxide that exceed legal limits. The adverse exposure is greatest in the poorest areas, meaning that the problem can often reflect social inequalities.

3.6 Whilst the problem can only be fully addressed through reduction in harmful emissions, green and blue infrastructure has a small role to play through absorption of some particulates on foliage and by providing open spaces for recreation and active travel that are relatively distant from road traffic.

Opportunities for Merton

3.7 There are opportunities for new development throughout Merton to include tree-planting, urban greening and sustainable drainage systems in order to mitigate air quality problems on transport corridors, water quality problems and local flooding in built-up areas and to increase shade.

Open Spaces

London wide Challenges

3.8 An increasing population will mean additional demand for access to open space and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. This is set against a baseline situation where there are many communities still experiencing deficiencies in access to open space, with the consequential threats to mental health that arise from lack of exposure to nature.

3.9 Local authority parks maintenance budgets are being reduced, potentially leading to reductions in quality and security; albeit partly compensated by an increase in creative means of revenue-generation and greater involvement of local communities.

Opportunities for Merton

3.10 Merton's parks and open spaces deliver exceptional value for money, in terms of the natural capital value they provide. Maintenance budgets will remain under pressure, but the increase in population offers an opportunity to generate more revenue and drive development-related funds towards essential improvements in park quality and accessibility. Continued advocacy of the value of parks is essential to maintain political and community support.

Biodiversity

London wide Challenges

- 3.11 Some recovery of wildlife has occurred, notably amongst breeding birds and fish, but there is evidence of continued decline of sensitive species and habitats across London.
- 3.12 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are no longer being systematically monitored across London. Whilst they enjoy good policy protection from adverse effects of development, they are at risk of decline through lack of management. About 500 of London's SINC's do not receive regular management, making them more vulnerable to pests and loss of the habitats that are of particular value.
- 3.13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest enjoy strong policy protection and generally are under a management regime. Wimbledon Common SSSI is an area of lowland acid grassland and dwarf shrub heath and deciduous woodland.
- 3.14 Research for the London Plan⁵ found that there is a London-wide need for an increase in quantity and quality of certain habitats, the "Big Four" being species-rich woodland, flower-rich grassland, rivers and streams and reedbeds. The greener outer London boroughs, such as Merton, are seen as most appropriate for new woodland planting and conversion of patches of amenity grassland to a pollinator-friendly grassland sward. Improvement of river, stream and reedbed habitat can be opportunistic based on improvements to existing waterbodies and floodplains.
- 3.15 The report also noted that there is a London-wide problem with inconsistent and patchy baseline data on extent and quality of habitats, which makes target-setting and biodiversity action planning difficult. This applies to Merton, where the formulation of this study has been hampered by inconsistent mapping of grassland and woodland cover.

Opportunities for Merton

- 3.16 There are many opportunities in the borough for residents, developers, housing associations and the council to take a lead in biodiversity enhancements on private and public land, housing estates, local parks and open spaces. Some examples include pollinator-friendly meadows, tree-planting, green walls, green and blue roofs and rain gardens which can have multiple benefits including enhanced biodiversity, the provision of additional green spaces for enjoyment and mitigating against air pollution.

The Urban Forest

London wide Challenges

- 3.17 London's urban tree cover is estimated to be 20%⁶. The city's overall tree population is expected to gradually rise as a result of planning policy to increase tree planting during new developments, alongside local authority and resident initiatives.

⁵ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_habitat_targets_report_-_lwt_-_march2017.pdf

⁶ London Environment Strategy (GLA, 2018) <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

- 3.18 Nevertheless the London Environment Strategy sets an ambitious target of a 10% increase in overall tree canopy, reflecting that several species of tree are at risk from pests and disease e.g. ash dieback, oak processionary moth, chestnut blight.

Opportunities for Merton

- 3.19 Although Merton has an overall tree canopy cover that is greater than the London average, a sustained expansion of the urban forest through new tree and woodland planting is essential. This is needed to address ongoing biodiversity declines, increase resilience of the urban forest to pests and diseases, increase shade and tackle climate change.

Rivers and Water Quality

London wide Challenges

- 3.20 London's rivers have been very badly affected by historic pollution and ongoing problems with bank and channel modifications, over-engineering, fish barriers and diffuse and point source pollution. Although there have been some local restoration projects, overall there has been little improvement, and possibly some decline in water quality and habitat condition in London's rivers. Addressing the requirements and meeting the objectives of the Water Framework Directive is an important element for London's rivers.

Opportunities for Merton

- 3.21 The Wandle and Beverley Brook catchments are critical pieces of London's blue infrastructure so delivery of river restoration projects, habitat creation projects, increases of permeable surfaces and management of surface water flood risk are critical for improving water quality and reducing flood risk. This will also help meet Water Framework Directive requirements for restoration of good ecological potential.

Climate Change

London wide Challenges

- 3.22 Climate change will exacerbate the "urban heat island" effect across most of London. Whilst the temperature effects will be most marked in inner London, the greatest mortality risk is likely to be on elderly populations in the outer London boroughs, due to the increased vulnerability to heat-related physiological problems associated with age.
- 3.23 Predicted increases in frequency and intensity of rainstorms mean there will be more chance of local flood disruption due to stream, river and sewer/drain blockages (fluvial and pluvial flooding). This is a particular problem where the sewer system is at or near full capacity, in floodzones 2 and 3 and in areas where there is a high proportion of impermeable surfaces.

Opportunities for Merton

- 3.24 Mitigation measures for an increase in temperature includes increased tree planting to create shade, reduction in sealed surfaces which can “bounce” radiated heat back into the urban environment and greater provision of parks which remain cooler than surrounding urban areas.
- 3.25 Mitigation measures for flooding include the use of sustainable drainage systems in new development and by retrofitting in built-up areas, increased tree-planting and the creation of swales along fluvial and surface water flowpaths. Swales can also be created anywhere there is sufficient space. Further guidance on sustainable drainage design can be found in the Merton SPD on Sustainable Drainage and Design (2020)⁷.

⁷ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/streets-and-pavements/surface-water-drainage-and-suds>

4.0 Findings and Recommendations

4.1 This chapter provides a summary of the findings from the technical assessments and associated reports. It provides a focus for identifying where action is needed to safeguard, manage and/or enhance Merton's green spaces. Recommendations are also made for areas that can be reviewed through the new Local Plan. The following reports are summarised:

- Policy and Context Review
- Designated Sites Boundary Review
- Open Space Assessment
- Open Space Consultation
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assessment

Policy and Context Review Technical Report Summary

4.2 The following paragraphs summarise the Policy and Context Review Technical Report. The full report includes a more detailed policy review, including comparing adopted and emerging policies, such as for the new London Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019⁸) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these should be applied. NPPF paragraph 96 sets out that *'planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision.'*

4.4 Strategic Policies of the NPPF (paragraph 20) also state that sufficient provision should be made for the *'conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation'*.

London Plan

4.5 The London Plan is an overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years. It provides policies of a strategic importance for Greater London, with a focus on three main themes.

- Economic development and wealth creation;
- Social development; and
- Improvements of the environment.

4.6 The new London Plan⁹ will run from 2020-2041 replacing the current adopted London Plan (2016). The new London Plan focuses on 'good growth', which means growth which is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable. Chapter 1 'Planning London's Future' covers six good growth policies. These are:

- Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities;

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan>

- Policy GG2 Making the best use of land;
- Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city;
- Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need;
- Policy GG5 Growing a good economy; and
- Policy GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience.

4.7 All of these policies are broadly relatable to green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity, but in particular GG2 'Making the best use of land' supporting text states:

Existing green space designations will remain strong to protect the environment, and improvements to green infrastructure, biodiversity and other environmental factors, delivering more than 50 per cent green cover across London, will be important to help London become a National Park City.

London Public Green Space Natural Capital Account (2017)

4.8 This report, published by the Mayor in 2017 highlights the economic value and benefits provided by public parks and green spaces.

4.9 In line with this report, Merton's publicly accessible major greenspaces have a natural capital value of £2.5bn¹⁰. This value arises from avoided healthcare costs (£464m), provision of recreation opportunities (£453m), carbon sequestration (£5m), temperature regulation (£14m) and property value (£1.62bn).

4.10 Merton's major greenspaces thus provide £657 value per year to each Merton resident. This is a benefit to cost ratio of 31:1, based on estimated expenditure by the borough on parks maintenance.

4.11 The borough-wide natural capital account is conservative for two reasons; firstly it excludes the value of biodiversity and air quality regulation which could not be monetised at the time of the study. Secondly, it covers only the major greenspaces (1053Ha), whereas it would be expected that smaller greenspaces, street trees, verges, institutional grounds and other non-garden green and blue infrastructure (474Ha) will also provide natural capital value.

London National Park City

4.12 The London National Park City is a movement to improve life in London by encouraging people to enjoy being outdoors more and helping to make London greener, healthier and wilder.

4.13 This movement encourages residents, visitors and partners to:

- Enjoy London's great outdoors more: Connecting more people to nature and the outdoor culture, improving health, well-being and social cohesion.
- Make the city greener, healthier and wilder: Creating more high quality green and blue space, making London over 50% green and blue, delivering improvements for wildlife, people's enjoyment and an attractive and sustainable environment for visiting, living and working in.

¹⁰ Natural Capital Accounts for Public Green Space in London (Vivid Economics, 2017 for National Trust and Mayor of London)

- Promote London's identity as a National Park City: Helping residents and visitors to appreciate its value and potential for a rich cultural life anchored in its outdoor heritage.

Merton's Local Plan

- 4.14 The Local Plan¹¹ sets out vision and policies to guide future development in the borough. The statutory development plan comprises the Core Strategy (2011), Site and Policies Plan (2014), the South London Waste Plan (2012) and the Estates Local Plan (2018).
- 4.15 A new Local Plan is being prepared¹², and the Stage 2 Consultation Draft was consulted on between October 2018 and January 2019.

Core Strategy

- 4.16 Merton's Core Strategy (2011) is the key document in the Local Development Framework that sets out the spatial strategy for the borough and key elements of the planning framework. It includes Policies such as Policy CS5, which identifies the Wandle Valley as a key green infrastructure opportunity on a regional and local level and Policy CS13, which sets out the aims and objectives for open space, nature conservation, leisure and culture in the borough.

Sites and Policies Plan

- 4.17 Policy DM01 Open Space of the Sites and Policies Plan (2014) aims to protect and enhance open space and improve access to open space. Policy DM02 aims to protect and enhance biodiversity including trees and hedges, particularly on sites of recognised nature conservation interest.

Estates Local Plan

- 4.18 Merton's Estates Local Plan adopted in 2018, contains detailed planning policies, which guide development on three estates in Merton; Eastfields (Mitcham), High Path (South Wimbledon) and Ravensbury (Mitcham/Morden). The key drivers for the plan include providing opportunities to improve parks and landscaped areas within the identified areas to create sustainable neighbourhoods.

Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report Summary

- 4.19 Land in Merton is currently designated for a number of open space and biodiversity purposes through the Sites and Policies Plan and Maps (2014):
- Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
 - Open Space
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
 - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
 - Green Corridors

¹¹ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan>

¹² <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/newlocalplan>

- 4.20 The full accompanying technical report details boundary reviews including proposed additions and omissions for sites designated under the Local Plan.
- 4.21 Sites designated as MOL, Open Space, SINC and Green Corridors have been reviewed. The criteria for these designations is detailed in the technical report, including where there are differences between the adopted and emerging London Plan. Open Space designation criteria form part of Merton's Local Plan, therefore as part of the emerging Local Plan process, the technical report provides a review and makes recommendations for updating the criteria for Open Space.
- 4.22 The report does not review SSSI and LNR as these are both national designations which are under the jurisdiction of Natural England.

Open Space Designations

Metropolitan Open Land

- 4.23 Merton has 9 designated areas of MOL, which cover an area of 960Ha (26% of the borough). The largest areas of MOL are Wimbledon Common and Mitcham Common, which together account for over 55% of the designation area. MOL is also found in the Wandle Valley, Morden Park, Lower Morden and Cannon Hill.

Open Space

- 4.24 Merton's adopted Sites and Policies Plan (2014¹³) defines Open Space as:

All the land that is predominantly undeveloped, other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use, and bodies of water that are indicated as open space on Merton's Policies Map. The definition covers a broad range of types of open space within Merton, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted.

- 4.25 This includes all open spaces within the borough such as parks, commons, play grounds, sports fields, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, urban farms and woodlands.

Biodiversity Designations

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 4.26 SSSI are designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. SSSIs are the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features.

¹³ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/localplan/sitesandpoliciesplan.htm>

- 4.27 Wimbledon Common is Merton's only SSSI¹⁴, designated for its wide expanse of wet heath on acidic soil, which also supports a number of ecological communities which are uncommon in London. Wimbledon Common is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its role as a habitat for the Stag Beetle *Lucanus cervus* (JNCC, 2019)¹⁵.

Local Nature Reserves

- 4.28 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. LNRs are for people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.
- 4.29 Merton has 15 LNRs. There are clusters of sites surrounding the River Wandle, and in the south- west of the borough. The largest LNRs are Morden Park, Cannon Hill Common and Ravensbury Park. Morden Park is designated for its rich woodland and bird community; Cannon Hill Common is designated for its rich collection of grasses and associated butterflies; and Ravensbury Park is designated for its mixture of habitats which support wetland birds.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

- 4.30 The London Plan (2016) does not have a definition of SINC, but the draft new London Plan (2019) definition of SINC is:

Areas of land chosen to represent the best wildlife habitats in London and areas of land where people can experience nature close to where they live and work. Sites are classified into Sites of Metropolitan, Borough and Local Importance depending on their relative value. Unlike SSSIs, SINC are not legally protected, but their value must be considered in any land use planning decision. Procedures for the identification of SINC are set out in Appendix 5 of the Mayor's London Environment Strategy.

- 4.31 There are 56 SINC in Merton, covering an area of 833Ha (22% of the borough). The largest SINC are Wimbledon and Mitcham Common. There are also a number of SINC in the Wandle Valley, and in the south-west of the borough. Of the SINC, 4 are of Metropolitan Importance, 11 are of Grade 1 Borough Importance, 23 are of Grade 2 Borough Importance and 18 are of Local Level Importance.

Green Corridors

- 4.32 The draft new London Plan (2019) definition of Green Corridors is:

Relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may link to each other and to the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land. They often consist of rivers, railway embankments and cuttings, roadside verges, canals, parks, playing fields and extensive areas of private gardens. They may allow animals and plants to be found

¹⁴ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1004317.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0030301>

further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

- 4.33 There are 18 designated Green Corridors in Merton, covering an area of 1023ha (27% of the borough). The largest Green Corridors are at Wimbledon Common, Mitcham Common, Morden Cemetery, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park and the River Wandle.

Open Space Assessment Technical Report Summary

Purpose and Scope

- 4.34 The purpose of the Open Space Assessment was to assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of the existing provision of open space in Merton. It builds on and updates existing studies; assesses future needs and deficiencies; and makes recommendations for locally derived standards.
- 4.35 The Open Space Assessment was carried out in line with the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for Open Space.
- 4.36 Figure 2 shows the different types of open space that formed part of the assessment.

Quantity Assessment¹⁶

- 4.37 The quantity assessment was carried out using open space data mapped in a Geographic Information System (GIS). This allows the total amount of open space, and the percentage land cover to be measured. The area of open space was assessed against population data to give provision in 'hectares per 1,000 population'.
- 4.38 Merton has 1,329 hectares of open space, which accounts for 35% of the borough. Of this, 21% is public open space. In comparison, London has 42% open space, and 18% public open space¹⁷. Merton's Open Space land cover is similar to neighbouring outer boroughs Kingston (37%) and Sutton (34%). The largest open spaces in Merton are Wimbledon Common and Mitcham Common, with other large clusters of open space in Morden Park, Cannon Hill and the Wandle Valley.
- 4.39 In terms of the main types of Open Space, Merton has less Parks and Gardens, Green Corridors and Amenity Space than London wide; but more Natural and Semi-Natural, Outdoor Sports Facilities, and Cemeteries and Churchyards.
- 4.40 Applying GLA population projections¹⁸, open space provision in 2018 is 6.3 hectares per 1,000 population, but with anticipated population growth (up to 2035), this will reduce to 5.6 hectares per 1,000 population. Using high and low population projections from Merton's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)¹⁹, future provision ranges from 5.3 to 5.9 hectares per 1,000 population. Figure 3 illustrates the quantity provision breakdown by ward.

¹⁶ Drawing G7118.019 in the Open Space Technical Report

¹⁷ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/keyfigures/>

¹⁸ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/projections>

¹⁹ Demographic projections (Merton Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Draft Report October 2018)

Quality Assessment²⁰

- 4.41 The open space quality assessment method is aligned to the Green Flag Award²¹, widely recognised as a quality benchmark for parks and green spaces, and advocated by Fields in Trust and used by many other local authorities as part of their Open Space Assessments. The Open Space Quality Assessment evaluated 106 sites throughout the borough.
- 4.42 Overall, 60% of open spaces fall into the Fair/Good/Very Good bandings; whilst 40% fall into the Poor banding. The average scores for Parks and Gardens, Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities; Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms; and Cemeteries and Churchyards all fall into the Fair/Good banding; whilst the average score for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Green Corridors; and Amenity Greenspace and Education fall into the Poor banding. This shows a general trend of the less formal types of open space being lower quality.
- 4.43 Each type of open space is audited on its own merits, and not on whether it does or doesn't provide certain facilities, so the lower scores for informal/natural open spaces does not mean they should all be 'upgraded' to more formal provision. However improvements should be focused on ensuring the sites are 'Welcoming'; 'Healthy, Safe & Secure'; and 'Well Maintained and Clean' in line with the Green Flag Award benchmarking criteria, which can include:
- Better signage at entrances (this can be as simple as the name of the site and contact details, and for more formal sites, information on facilities and events);
 - Improvements to access into and around the site (including gates, barriers, footpath improvements);
 - Improvements to access to the site from surrounding roads/footpaths such as road crossings;
 - Appropriate levels of vegetation management (not all sites should be 'pristine', but a balance of amenity and nature conservation should be sought);
 - High levels of maintenance of site furniture (e.g. signs, seats, bins, lighting), equipment (e.g. play equipment), and infrastructure (e.g. paths, car parking).

²⁰ Drawing G7118.017 in the Open Space Technical Report

²¹ Raising the Standard: The Green Flag Award Guidance Manual, updated 2016; available at <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/>

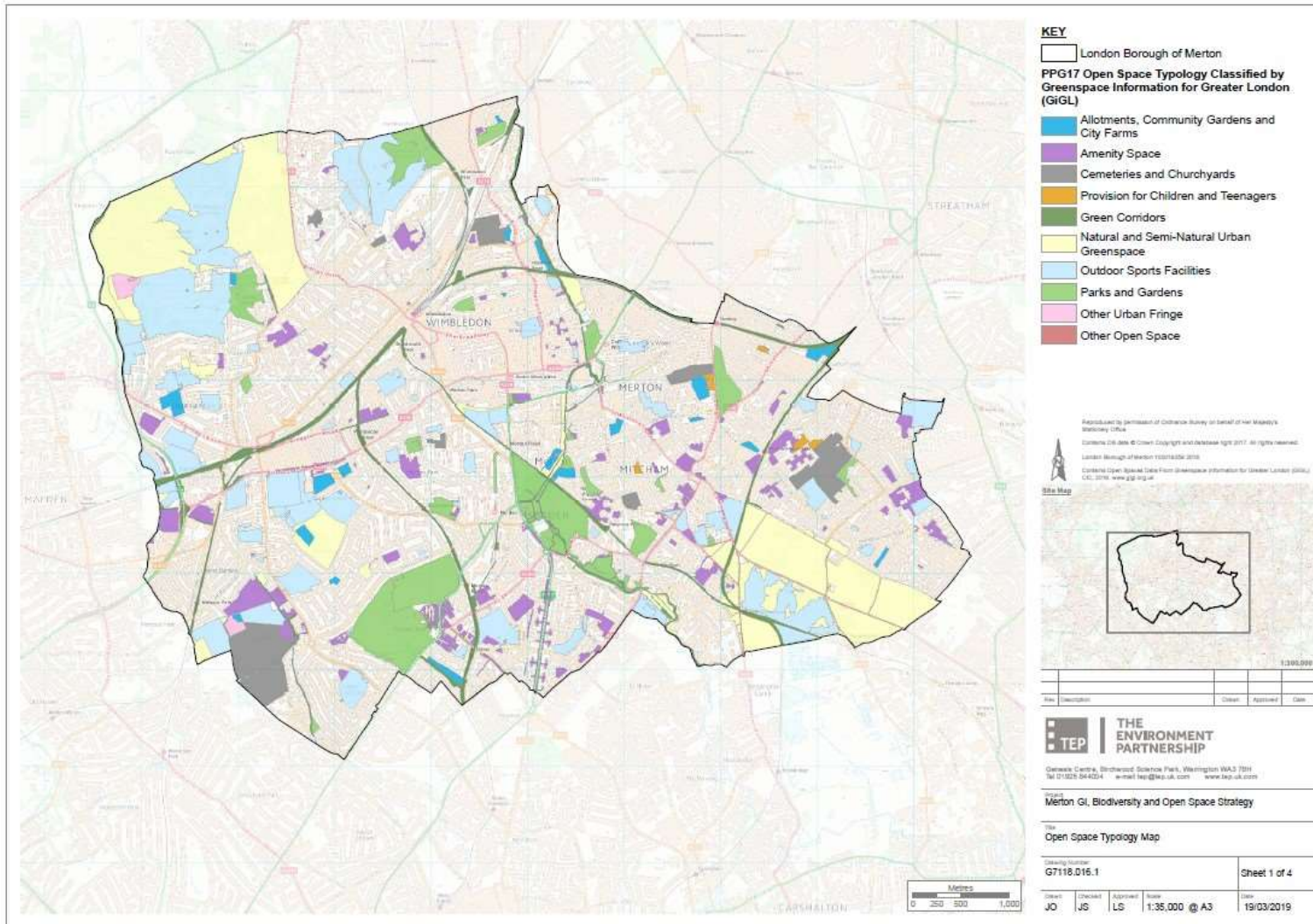


Figure 2: Open Space Typologies

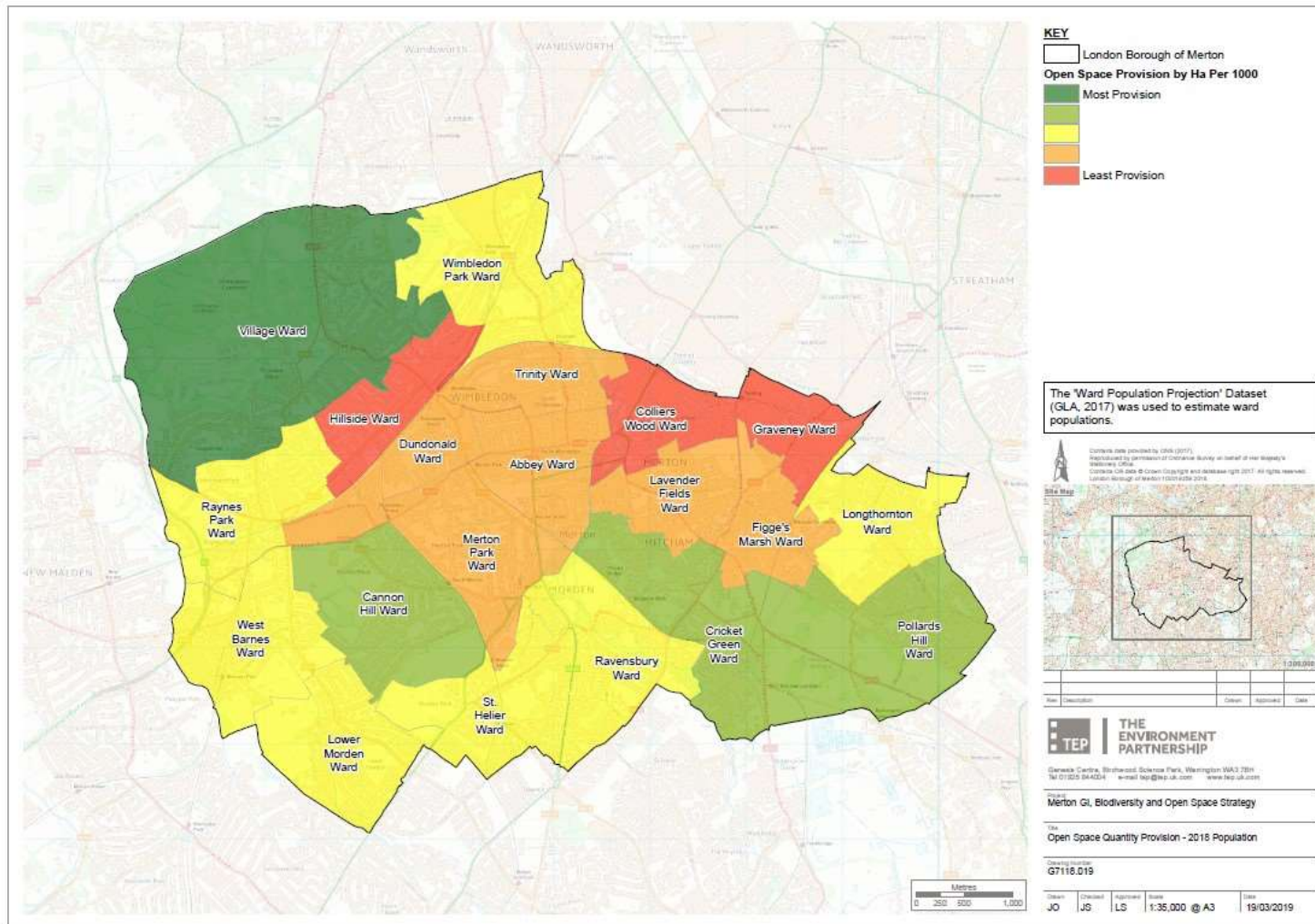


Figure 3: Open Space Quantity Provision by Ward

Play Area Quality Assessment²²

- 4.44 82 play areas were audited as part of the Open Space Assessment; 5 were neighbourhood facilities, 56 were local facilities and 21 were doorstep facilities.
- 4.45 The play area quality assessment was undertaken in accordance with a Play England assessment method²³. The play area audits shows opportunities for improvements across all types of play areas, with 61% of play areas falling into the 'Average; Needs Some Improvement' banding. No sites had 'Serious Weaknesses'. The neighbourhood play areas (with an average score in the Good banding) tended to score better than the local and doorstep play areas (both with average scores in the Average banding).
- 4.46 Future improvements should be focused on 'Location'; 'Play Value'; and 'Care and Maintenance' in line with the Play England benchmarking criteria. It is acknowledged that not all criteria are applicable to the doorstep play areas (such as play for different ages, and toilets/changing facilities).

Accessibility Assessment²⁴

- 4.47 The accessibility assessment is carried out using open space data mapped in a Geographic Information System (GIS), to analyse access to Public Open Space, Play Areas and Nature. The assessment identifies Areas of Deficiency (AoD) in access to open spaces.
- 4.48 AoDs for Public Open Space and Nature are calculated by GiGL using their AoD data model. It involves the integration of access points to an open space with Ordnance Survey's Integrated Transport Network dataset to better predict the accessibility of open spaces in comparison to linear 'as the crow flies' measurements.
- 4.49 Public Open Space categories are defined in The London Plan and provide a benchmark for the provision of publicly accessible open space across the capital, categorising spaces according to their size, facilities and local importance.

Access to Public Open Space

- 4.50 Merton has high accessibility to Regional Parks (98%) and Metropolitan Parks (99%). There is also a good level of accessibility to District (77%) and Local (72%) Parks. There is a notable gap in access to District Parks indicated by a continuous band of deficiency from west to north east through Raynes Park, Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Mitcham. Open spaces are evident within the area of deficiency to District Parks, but these spaces either do not meet the criteria for a District Park, or are not publically accessible.

²² Drawing G7118.018 in the Open Space Technical Report

²³ <http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/211694/quality-assessment-tool.pdf>

²⁴ Drawings G7118.053 to G7118.060 in the Open Space Technical Report

- 4.51 The best reflection of deficiency in access to open space is to the Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks (Figure 4). In these areas of deficiency (which appear as pockets of deficiency, fairly evenly spread across the borough) the lack of open spaces is more evident, although there is some evidence of existing open space which is not publically accessible. There are some areas (particularly noticeable around Raynes Park) where there are gaps in access to both District and Local Parks, therefore these areas should be targeted for improvements in accessibility.

Access to Play Areas

- 4.52 Accessibility standards, as defined by the Mayor's SPG on Children's Play and Informal Recreation (2012²⁵), provide a benchmark for the provision of play areas across the capital, categorising spaces according to the age range of the play area.
- 4.53 Access to Play Areas varies greatly in Merton depending on the age range, with over 12 years having 95% accessibility; between 5 and 11 years having 76% accessibility; and under 5's just 27% accessibility. Whilst access to play provision includes both formal equipped play areas and informal play in open spaces, there is a notable lack of equipped play areas in the north west of the borough.

Access to Nature

- 4.54 The AoD for access to nature is defined in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy and cited by GiGL²⁶ as: 'areas where people have to walk more than one kilometre to reach an accessible wildlife site of metropolitan or borough importance', the accessible wildlife sites being Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- 4.55 Overall, there is good accessibility (84%) to nature in the borough, as shown in Figure 5. The most notable gap is running through the borough from west to north through Raynes Park and Wimbledon. There are some existing open spaces in the areas of deficiency, so there may be opportunities for enhancement depending on their current use. This is also linked to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Assessment Technical Report, and the multi-functionality of open spaces.

²⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/planning-guidance-and-practice-notes/play-and-informal>

²⁶ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/designated-sites/areas-of-deficiency-in-access-to-nature/>

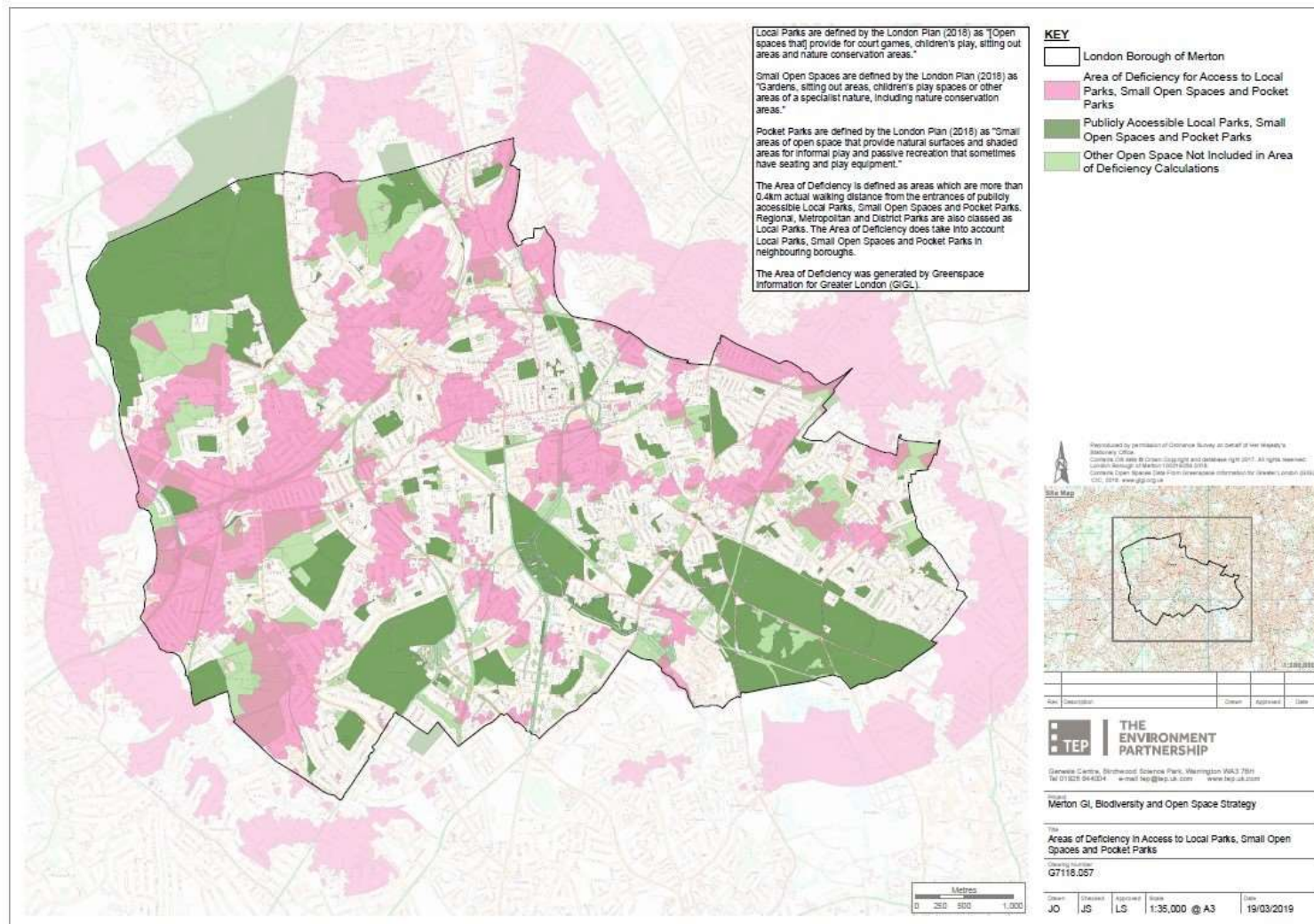


Figure 4 Areas of Deficiency in Access to Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks

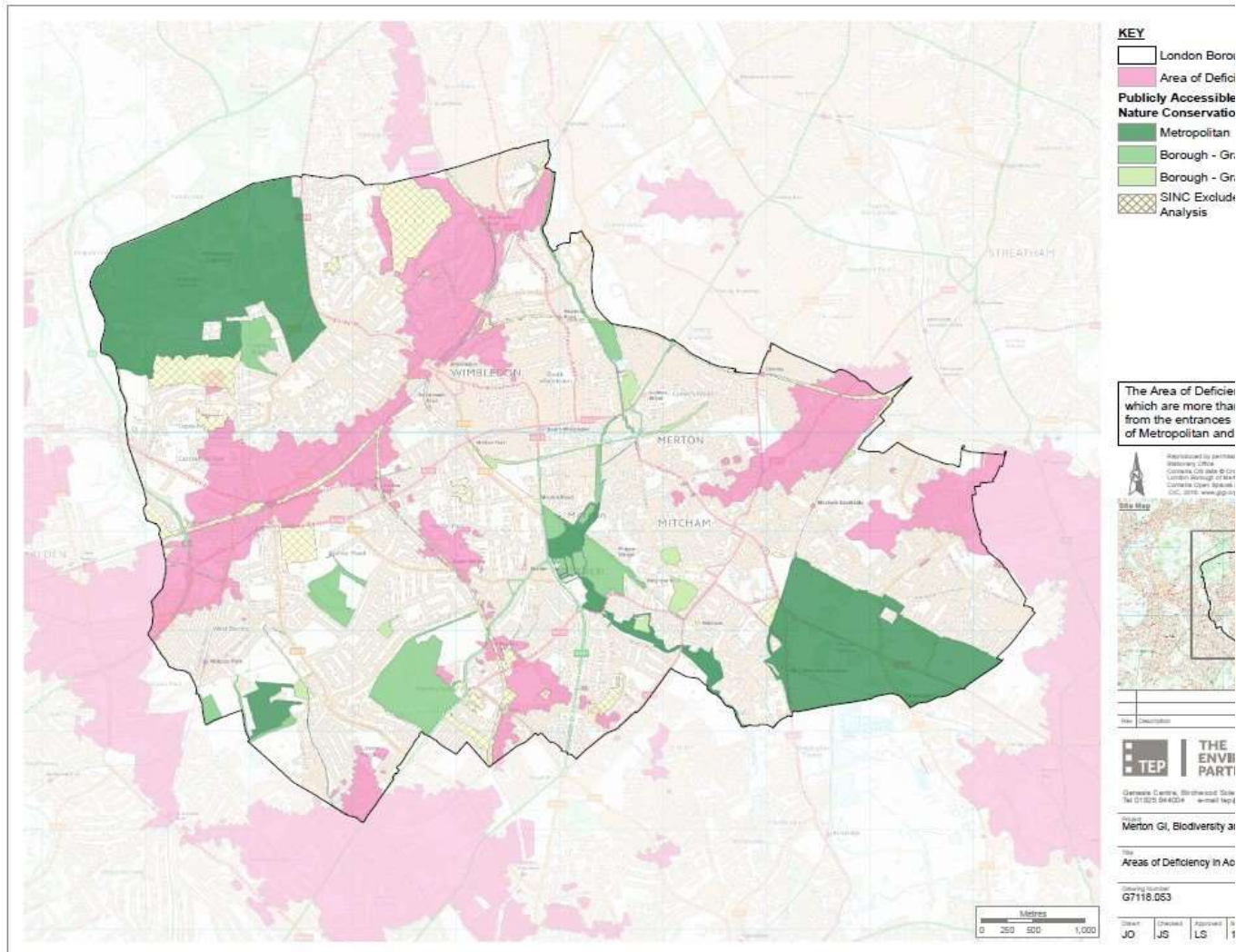


Figure 5 Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

Policy and Standards

- 4.56 Based on the open space assessment undertaken, the following policy and standards approaches are recommended for Merton to review for the new Local Plan.

Quantity

- No net loss of open space.
- Recognise that the borough wide 'hectare per 1000' provision will reduce as the population increases and quality improvements can be a focal point in suitable areas.
- Encourage the provision of additional and/or increased functionality of existing open space through major developments with a particular focus on areas deficient in access to nature, play areas, and publicly accessible open space.
- Protect and enhance existing open spaces and the natural environment, providing habitats for biodiversity to flourish and expand.

Quality

- Encourage improvements, enhancements and management that improves both the quality and access to existing green spaces.
- Use National Benchmark standards such as Green Flag, Play England, Sport England where applicable.

Accessibility

- Encourage and improve access and links to and through open spaces, particularly through the assessment of planning applications, using the technical reports to identify areas of need and priority.
- Use London Plan accessibility standards for Public Open Space hierarchy (Regional, Metropolitan, District, Local Parks and Open Spaces, Small Open Spaces).
- Use the Mayor's SPG on Children's Play and Informal Recreation accessibility standards by age range (Under 5's, 5-11, 12+).
- Use the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy Access to Nature standards (accessible SINC of metropolitan or borough importance).

Open Space Consultation Technical Report Summary

- 4.57 An informal consultation was undertaken by TEP as part of this workstream to provide an opportunity for Friends of the Parks and other community groups to communicate their aspirations and concerns on open spaces in the borough.
- 4.58 A summary **of** the conclusions is provided below.
- 4.59 The most popular type of open space was outdoor sports facilities, followed by natural and semi-natural urban greenspace and parks and gardens.

- 4.60 There were very few open spaces used beyond the borough boundary. Tooting Common, Streatham Common and King Georges Park in Wandsworth were mentioned but it was felt that there were sufficient open spaces within Merton that residents didn't need to travel to neighbouring boroughs.
- 4.61 Consultees used open spaces mostly for accessing nature, formal and informal recreation, improving health and wellbeing, socialising and for getting around the borough away from roads.
- 4.62 Consultees considered open spaces in Merton to have a high environmental and social value. Consultees valued accessibility to open spaces in the urban environment, opportunities for recreation, a sense of space and the contribution that open spaces make to air quality.
- 4.63 The gaps in provisions of facilities in open spaces were identified mainly as provisions such as litter bins and adult exercise equipment. Also open spaces such as allotments were identified as needing to be protected from development as they provide opportunities for recreation, socialising and wildlife. Consultees also wanted to see additional opportunities in open spaces for biodiversity.
- 4.64 Consultees suggested that improvements could be made in the accessibility of privately owned open spaces and footpaths and PRoWs. They also suggested that working relationships and communication between community groups, contractors and the Council will make management and maintenance of open spaces easier and of a higher standard. Improvements to nature conservation, biodiversity and "wild" areas was also highlighted.
- 4.65 Funding and support for community groups also a key concern of consultees. It was suggested that additional funding would be welcomed to allow community groups to continue the management of open spaces. Consultees also stated that Management Plans would assist in the management, maintenance and improvement of open spaces, especially for larger open spaces such as Mitcham Common.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Assessment Technical Report Summary

Purpose and Scope

- 4.66 Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) has been defined as '*a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features*' (Natural England, 2009²⁷).
- 4.67 It includes a variety of land cover types such as parks, rivers and private gardens which can be assessed for their provision of ecosystem services such as carbon storage, recreational space, and the removal of air pollutants which are beneficial to the environment, people and the economy. Given the pressures on land use, it is important that green and blue infrastructure is assessed and strategically managed to maximise the potential benefits for the borough.

²⁷ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35033>

- 4.68 The purpose of the GBI assessment was to assess the quantity (land cover) and quality (functions) of the existing provision of GBI in Merton and to assess the current provision within the context of Merton's priorities, as set out in Section 1 of this report.
- 4.69 The GBI Assessment covers all types of open space included in the Open Space Assessment, which are further broken down into components such as:
- Woodland;
 - Grassland, Heathland, Scrubland; and
 - Reservoirs and Watercourses.
- 4.70 Additional types of green infrastructure are also included which do not form part of the Open Space Assessment, these are:
- Green Roofs;
 - Street Trees;
 - Private Domestic Gardens;
 - Agricultural and Horticultural Land; and
 - Derelict and Vacant Land.

Land Cover

- 4.71 Merton has 2,496 hectares of GBI, representing 66% of the borough. Major areas of GBI include Wimbledon Common, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Mitcham Common and the River Wandle. Merton has a similar coverage of GBI to London as a whole, which has an estimated 64%^{28&29} of GBI. Note the London comparison combines published figures of 38% Open Greenspace, 24% Private Domestic Gardens, and 2% Open Water. The amount of 'green' in London is reduced to 47% in the published figures as they take into account hard-surfaced/built areas in open space and gardens.

Trees and Woodland

- 4.72 The total tree canopy, including in private gardens, covers an area of 1,040 hectares, approximately 28% of the borough. This uses an estimate from the i-Tree Tool³⁰. There are different techniques for estimating tree and woodland coverage, but of the total tree canopy: 266.1 hectares (26%) consists of woodlands contained within parks and public open spaces; 15.2 hectares (1.5%) consists of individual woodlands; 116.7 hectares (11.2%) consists of street tree (canopy); and the remainder (61.3%) is found in private gardens, cemeteries and institutional grounds.
- 4.73 The major areas of woodland are in Wimbledon and Mitcham Common, Morden Hall Park and Morden Park.

²⁸ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gitaskforcereport.hyperlink.pdf>

²⁹ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/keyfigures/>

³⁰ <https://canopy.itreetools.org/index.php>

- 4.74 London's tree coverage is estimated to be 20%³¹, and the London Environment Strategy has set a target to increase it by 10%, recommending that London-wide, 3000 hectares of new tree and woodland canopy is established by 2050, including 1000 hectares of new woodlands in the outer London boroughs³².

Rivers and Wetlands

- 4.75 Three major waterways run through the borough: the River Wandle; Beverly Brook; and Pyl Brook. Merton's section of the River Wandle is approximately 7.3km long, and flows south to north through the centre of the borough. Beverly Brook is approximately 5.3km long and runs along the western border of the Borough. Pyl Brook is approximately 3.6km long, and flows through the west of the borough. There are a number of other smaller waterbodies within open spaces in the borough.
- 4.76 The London Environment Strategy identifies rivers and wetlands as a priority for habitat creation, recommending that, London-wide, 30Ha new reedbed is created in the period to 2050.

Grassland

- 4.77 The largest areas of open grassland are in Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons, with other notable areas alongside the River Wandle. Grassland is also present in other land cover types, such as Parks and Formal Gardens or Cemeteries and Churchyards.
- 4.78 The London Environment Strategy identifies flower-rich grassland as a priority for habitat creation, recommending that, London-wide, 250Ha new flower-rich meadow is created in the period to 2050, primarily through conversion of amenity swards³³.

Private Gardens

- 4.79 Gardens cover 26% of the borough, the highest GBI typology in the borough. This is comparable with the London wide figure of 24%. They contain a range of landscape features, including trees, grassed areas and hard-surfacing.
- 4.80 Policy DM D1 Urban Design and the Public Realm in the Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014) seeks to ensure high quality design of buildings and places in the borough. The Policy states that any proposals for the conversion of front gardens for vehicle parking should not be detrimental to the character of the street or highway safety or undermine biodiversity, prevent sustainable drainage. This is something that can be reviewed and strengthened through the new Local Plan.

Green Roofs and Walls

- 4.81 Green roofs account for only 0.05% of Merton's land cover. The London Environment Strategy identifies that more green roofs and green walls are needed throughout London to help make London a greener place and to enhance biodiversity.

³¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/measuring_tree_canopy_cover_2015.pdf

³² London Environment Strategy (GLA, 2018) <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

³³ London Environment Strategy (GLA, 2018) <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

Functions/Ecosystem Services³⁴

- 4.82 GBI in Merton performs a range of functions or 'ecosystem services'. GBI was assessed for nineteen ecosystem services, as shown in Table 1. Many types of GBI are multifunctional, for example a park provides recreation, but can also provide a habitat for wildlife and water infiltration.
- 4.83 GBI in Merton which provides a high number of services includes Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Mitcham Common, Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Park and the River Wandle. Street trees and woodland provide the most ecosystem services, with an average of 10 services. Private gardens were among the lowest performing component of GBI, providing an average of 5 services.

Table 1: Green and Blue Infrastructure Functions or Ecosystem Services

GBI Function	Description
Recreation – Public	Areas that can be freely used by members of the public for recreation purposes without any restrictions to access.
Recreation – Private	Areas that can only be used for recreation by the landowner or those invited by the landowner.
Recreation – Public with Restrictions	Areas that can be used by members of the public for recreational purposes, but the access or use of the space is restricted. This could be because the space is only accessible on a membership basis, or is only open at selected times.
Green Travel Route	Areas that can act as off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
Aesthetic	Areas which improve the image of an area, which can make the area a more attractive place to live, work and visit.
Shading from Sun	Areas which protect people or surfaces from solar radiation. This can reduce surface temperatures and increase comfort levels. This function is key in the adaptation to climate change.
Evaporative Cooling	Areas where vegetation transpires water from their surfaces, which cools their immediate surroundings.
Trapping/Removal of Pollutants	Pollutants such as Ozone, Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates can be removed from the air by vegetation through their leaf stoma or through interception. Vegetation can also act as a filter to remove pollutants from water.
Noise Absorption	Areas which are able to intercept and reduce the impact of noise on the surrounding area.
Habitat for Wildlife	Areas which are able to provide a habitat, or act as a food source for local wildlife.
Corridor for Wildlife	Areas which act as routes for species to move between habitat areas.

³⁴ Drawing G7118.021 in the GBI Technical Report

GBI Function	Description
Heritage	Areas which contribute to the historic links in the landscape, such as designated monuments.
Culture	Areas used for cultural purposes, such as public art or events.
Carbon Storage	Areas which make a notable contribution to the sequestration and storage of carbon from the atmosphere. All vegetation is able to remove carbon, however trees are thought to be particularly valuable.
Food Production	Areas used for growing crops or grazing animals.
Learning	Areas which contribute to the knowledge of individuals about the environment.
Water Storage	Areas which are able to store water for use by humans.
Water Interception	Areas which are able to intercept rainfall and slow the water's flow into the ground. This can reduce the risk of flooding.
Water Infiltration	Areas which assist the movement of water or rain into the ground. This can reduce surface flow and the risk of flooding.

5.0 GBI Priorities

- 5.1 Green and blue infrastructure fulfils many life-sustaining and growth-enhancing functions. This study is concerned with creating, conserving and enhancing the GBI that is most important for Merton in the next decades.
- 5.2 The following green and blue infrastructure priorities are derived from Merton's strategic objectives³⁵, the emerging Merton Local Plan 2020³⁶, the London Plan³⁷, the Mayor's London Environment Strategy³⁸, and the All London Green Grid³⁹.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Priorities

- Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Adapting to Climate Change and the Urban Heat Island Effect
 - Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life
 - Supporting Economic Growth and Investment
 - Improving Air and Water Quality
 - Encouraging Walking and Cycling
 - Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation
 - Supporting Learning about the Environment
 - Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience
- 5.3 Given the environmental challenges facing London as a whole, and the anticipated population growth in Merton, it is vital that all the borough's GBI is managed to optimise its benefit to people and wildlife. Even so, some areas of the borough are priorities to target, in terms of human resourcing, investment and policy-making, to ensure equitable access to the benefits of GBI.
- 5.4 Detailed mapping of GBI typologies, functions, priority areas and assets is included in the Merton Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report. The report also explains the criteria for identification of GBI priority areas and shows existing GBI assets in relation to each priority. A map showing Merton's Green and Blue Infrastructure Key Assets from the Technical Report is included below as Figure 6.
- 5.5 Key assets are GBI features which meet multiple priorities. The number of priorities each GBI feature fulfils leads to a Key Asset Score, which identifies the most important GBI features within the borough. Green and blue infrastructure assets surrounding the River Wandle have a high Key Asset Score, such as Ravensbury Park and Wandle Meadow Nature Park. Many other open spaces in the borough contain assets which score highly, including Wimbledon Park, Prince George's Field, Morden Hall Park and Mitcham Common.

³⁵ Merton's Core Strategy 2011 <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan>

³⁶ London Borough of Merton Local Plan 2020 Consultation Draft 2018

³⁷ The Greater London Plan (August 2018 version with minor suggested changes for Examination in Public)

³⁸ The London Environment Strategy (Mayor of London, May 2018)

³⁹ Green Infrastructure and Open Environments: The All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance

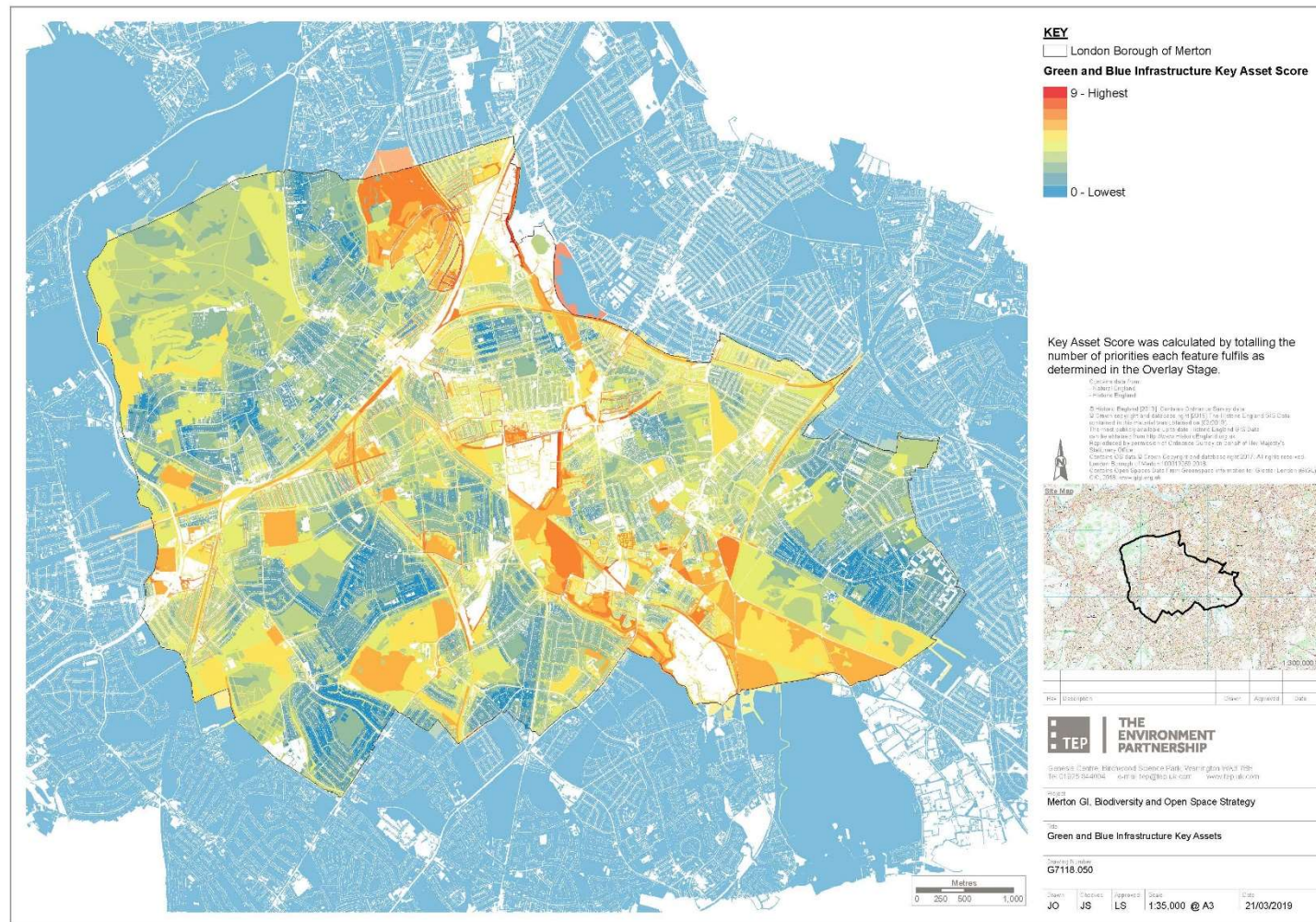


Figure 6: Merton Green and Blue Infrastructure Key Assets Map

Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing⁴⁰

- 5.6 Priority areas for using GBI to help improve physical and mental health are identified on the basis of areas of deficiency in access to nature, areas of deficiency in access to local open spaces and pocket parks, neighbourhoods where more than 15% of the population have long-term limiting illness or disability, neighbourhoods where more than 5% of the population report bad health and areas within 100m of a hospital.
- 5.7 The priority areas for physical and mental health and wellbeing are found in many parts of the borough. Large priority areas are identified in Raynes Park, Morden, Mitcham and Colliers Wood.
- 5.8 Assets are identified in the west, south and north-east of the borough. A number of assets are identified in the area surrounding the railway lines, and in many of the open spaces in the borough. A number of open spaces are identified as assets in Merton, including Mitcham Common, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park and Prince George's Playing Fields.
- 5.9 Lack of provision was found in many industrial estates in the borough, including those south of Merantun Way and west of Mitcham Common, Wier Road. Where the priority was met in these areas, the GBI largely comprises landscaping around housing and industrial estates/premises.

Adapting to Climate Change and the Urban Heat Island Effect⁴¹

- 5.10 Priority areas for using GBI to help prepare for climate change are identified on the basis of floodzones, wards with less than 21% tree canopy⁴² and areas where more than 50% of ground surfaces are sealed.
- 5.11 The Wandle Valley and associated built-up areas are priority areas, along with North Mitcham and Wimbledon. Additional priority areas are identified in the south-west of the borough in West Barnes, and along the Pyl Brook.
- 5.12 Morden Hall Park is a critical GBI asset in terms of climate change adaptation, since it provides surface water absorption and water flow attenuation along with shade from its tree canopy. Other valuable GBI assets include Wimbledon Park, Morden Park, Morden Cemetery, Mostyn Gardens, South London Crematorium and Streatham Park Cemetery.
- 5.13 Many street trees in Raynes Park, Colliers Wood and South Wimbledon also act as GBI assets for the climate change priority. Some of these assets could be examined to see if they can provide further opportunity for tree planting and creation of swales or other sustainable drainage systems.

⁴⁰ Drawings G7118.036 and G7118.041 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴¹ Drawings G7118.033 and G7118.047 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴² The London average tree canopy cover is ca 20% so areas with lower cover may benefit most from new tree

- 5.14 Nevertheless there are several priority areas which currently lack GBI provision, including the industrial estates south of Merantun Way and surrounding Wier Road; the area surrounding the Kingston Bypass and the retail park west of Church Road, along with several relatively tree-less residential areas in the floodzone of the River Wandle .

Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life⁴³

- 5.15 Priority areas for GBI to support housing growth and quality of life are identified on the basis of wards where more than 800 new houses are predicted in the forthcoming London Plan period, and areas which are amongst the 20% most deprived.
- 5.16 The priority areas are in Wimbledon Park, Colliers Wood, Morden and Mitcham. The Wandle Valley defines a centre line for this priority.
- 5.17 The priority areas are reasonably well-served with existing GBI assets, meaning that most areas are reasonably well-prepared for population increases, notwithstanding the need to ensure that new development considers the need to sustain these assets. Open spaces along the Wandle are important, notably Morden Hall Park. Mitcham Common is a strategically important asset in respect of supporting growth and helping to address some aspects of deprivation.
- 5.18 Priority areas with relative lack of current GBI provision are in Colliers Wood and west of Mitcham Common.
- 5.19 The Open Space Assessment identifies areas of current local deficiency in access to open spaces and discusses potential population growth scenarios. Major housing developments offer an opportunity to create pocket parks and public realm, and importantly, will need to consider the need to ensure that nearby GBI assets are sustained in the face of increasing population pressures.

Supporting Economic Growth and Investment⁴⁴

- 5.20 Priority areas for economic growth and investment are identified on the basis of strategic and locally significant industrial locations and shopping frontages. Priority areas are located around the town centres of Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham, and in industrial and retail estates in the north, west and south of the borough.
- 5.21 Unsurprisingly there are few GBI assets for these urbanised priority areas, other than small pockets of landscaping around housing and industrial premises.
- 5.22 Some open spaces alongside the River Wandle do contribute to this priority, including Bennett's Hole, Durnsford Road Recreation Ground and London Road Playing Fields.

⁴³ Drawings G7118.030 and G7118.045 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴⁴ Drawings G7118.040 and G7118.046 in the GBI Technical Report

- 5.23 Application of urban greening policies to these priority locations would, over time, enable an uplift in the quality of GBI as and when new developments and refurbishments take place. The quality of the public realm in shopping areas is seen as key to town centre success, so investment in town centre civic spaces is needed, funded by planning contribution, business improvement and other town centre activity.

Improving Air and Water Quality⁴⁵

- 5.24 Priority areas for GBI to address air and water quality issues are the borough's Air Quality Focus Areas, wards with less than 21% tree cover and areas within 100m of A-roads and railways.
- 5.25 One priority area for air and water quality encompasses Wimbledon Park and Mitcham Eastfields Stations. Smaller priority areas are identified in West Barnes and Morden town centre, in addition to areas along major transport routes, including the railway lines, Croydon Road, Western Road and Parkside.
- 5.26 Clusters of relevant GBI assets are identified in the north-east and south-east of the borough, and along the primary transport routes. Many open spaces already contain GBI assets which help address air and water quality issues, for example Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Park, Raynes Park, Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Mitcham Common and Figges Marsh. Many street trees within Colliers Wood and East Wimbledon are locally important assets.
- 5.27 Areas with a lack of GBI provision are found in Morden, East Mitcham and various industrial estates.

Encouraging Walking and Cycling⁴⁶

- 5.28 The priority areas for deploying GBI to encourage walking and cycling are along the major transport routes, such as Croydon Road, Streatham Road, Western Road and Merton High Street. Other priorities include the major off-road cycle routes such as along the Wandle Valley.
- 5.29 Quite a good proportion of the priority walking and cycling network is well-served by (or at least well linked-to) GBI assets such as street trees and local open spaces, but there are many gaps. A notable lack of GBI assets is found along Streatham Road, Durnsford Road, Western Road, Ernle Road and Wimbledon Hill Road. Tactics for addressing deficiency include establishing a street greening programme to be funded by development using s106 or CIL monies. Such a programme would include new street trees and green SUDS features, way marking and local diversions to enable walking and cycling into green spaces.

⁴⁵ Drawings G7118.032 and G7118.046 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴⁶ Drawings G7118.039 and G7118.044 in the GBI Technical Report

Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation⁴⁷

- 5.30 Priority areas for landscape and heritage conservation are identified on the basis of Metropolitan Open Land, Historic Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas. Unsurprisingly the priority areas for deploying GBI to safeguard landscape and heritage are in and around the borough's major open spaces, such as the River Wandle, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon Common, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park and Mitcham Common. Conservation Areas are also of local priority.
- 5.31 The priority areas are generally well-supplied with GBI assets, including district parks, street trees and smaller public open spaces. Examples include Raynes Park, Cannon Hill Common, Morden Cemetery and smaller open spaces in the Wandle Valley. Tactics for sustaining these assets for the benefit of landscape and heritage include management planning, community involvement in management and future-proofing of the tree stock through tree care and new planting.

Supporting Learning about the Environment⁴⁸

- 5.32 Priority areas for using GBI to support learning about the environment are identified on the basis of proximity to schools and areas of deficiency in access to nature.
- 5.33 The largest priority areas are in residential neighbourhoods surrounding the railway lines and Streatham Road. Other priority clusters occur throughout the borough, particularly in West Mitcham.
- 5.34 The priority areas in the west and centre of the borough are generally well-served by suitable GBI assets such as parks and open spaces and school grounds which can be managed to provide learning opportunities. However, even where an area is well-served by assets, the challenge is to continually engage young learners and encourage exploration of their local natural spaces.
- 5.35 Some priority areas for learning about the environment in the south and east of the borough have fewer suitable GBI assets. Low levels of current provision are found in various places e.g. along Stanford Way and surrounding Kingsbridge Road. In these cases, tactics to enhance environmental learning can include creation of pocket gardens in school grounds, active environmental education outreach from nearby parks to schools (such as establishing a Forest School area in a park), and improving the streetscene to include more trees and traffic-calming which will promote passive learning about the environment while walking.

Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience⁴⁹

- 5.36 Priority areas for GBI to conserve and enhance biodiversity are identified on the basis of the presence of priority habitats⁵⁰, green corridors and land within designated nature conservation sites, and a 50m buffer around the SSSI/SINC to address the London Plan requirement to safeguard and connect such sites. Floodzones 2 and 3 are also considered as a priority since they offer greater opportunities to create or restore wetland habitats.

⁴⁷ Drawings G7118.038 and G7118.043 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴⁸ Drawings G7118.037 and G7118.042 in the GBI Technical Report

⁴⁹ Drawings G7118.034 and G7118.048 in the GBI Technical Report

⁵⁰ As listed under s41 of the Natural Environments and Rural Communities Act, 2006

- 5.37 The priority area for biodiversity and ecological resilience was found to be in most of the major open spaces throughout the borough, including Mitcham Common, Morden Park, Wimbledon Common and Wimbledon Park. A corridor of need was identified surrounding the River Wandle, including Morden Hall Park.
- 5.38 Most assets for this priority are found within open spaces including: Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon Common, Raynes Park Sports Ground, Cannon Hill Common, Morden Cemetery, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Moreton Green, London Road Playing Fields and Mitcham Common. Many green corridors and street trees are also identified as assets surrounding the railways lines.
- 5.39 Many open spaces surrounding the River Wandle contain assets, however there are notable areas with a lack of provision around Plough Lane in Wimbledon and Wates Way in Mitcham.

6.0 Delivery

- 6.1 The steps to delivery for Merton's Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity Study is summarised below, linking back to the headings from the 'Vision' in Chapter 2.

Enhancing our Assets (A Greener Place)

- 6.2 Commitment should be given to current assets and existing infrastructure which ranges from renowned landscapes to locally valued spaces. Merton's spaces contribute to London as a National Park City and investment over the duration of this plan will see green and blue infrastructure enhanced and quality improved for local residents whilst contributing to a number of national and local policies. To achieve this, management and diversification of open space can create opportunities for increased provisions and multi-functionality resulting in a wide range of benefits whilst driving standards of open space across Merton.
- 6.3 Planning for 2:1 replacement ratio for all trees in parks, civic spaces and conservation areas that are likely to be comprised by climate change will help increase potential for carbon storage and make the borough greener. Replacement trees must be appropriately selected for future management and size to ensure they can effectively reach maturity. Increased green infrastructure can also help elevate some of these future issues and current issues we face such as that of the heat island effect and air pollution. Areas identified in the assessment as lacking tree cover should be supported to reach achievable targets and support greener connections with the rest of the borough. Engagement with communities and schools will also help meet these targets whilst providing educational value to the children of Merton.
- 6.4 Future major development in the borough, including the three estate regenerations in Eastfields, Ravensbury and High Path, Morden town centre, Wimbledon, Mitcham and other major schemes will provide a key opportunity to support good growth through the provision of high quality neighbourhoods and public spaces. Opportunities will arise to encourage greener spaces and enhance links to local parks.

Accessing our Spaces (A Well Connected Place)

- 6.5 Where neighbourhoods have a deficiency of access to parks and/or nature, improved engagement with developers and site owners can lead to the creation and improvement of parks and multifunctional spaces which are sensitive to community needs. Major development in town centres and along transport corridors can be utilised to uplift the quantity and quality of green infrastructure. Development proposals will need to ensure high design quality alongside the use of an Urban Greening Factor in line with the London Plan.
- 6.6 Throughout the borough, investment in the walking and cycling network will make it easier for people to enjoy outdoor exercise and result in greener travel across the borough. Residents' needs should be carefully considered to help identify any lack of provision which can then inform change and allocations requirements across the open spaces.

Wildlife & Biodiversity Value (A Place for Wildlife)

- 6.7 Merton boasts a number of significant green spaces and infrastructure which provides valuable habitat to wildlife and again contributes to London as a National Park City. Continued and improved management of a number of these spaces including Wimbledon Common SSSI is vital to ensure future wildlife can flourish. Increased planting and enhancement of existing green infrastructure through thorough management will help achieve these goals whilst assisting us to accomplish a number of other delivery objectives.
- 6.8 The Wandle Valley Regional Park is the spine of Merton's green and blue network. Development within close proximity of the river and the park should contribute through access improvements and habitat enhancements. Enhancements here will have further positive effects on adjacent and connecting habitats as green corridors and infrastructure is improved. Increased tree planting will provide further support for connections along existing travel infrastructure to provide benefits to residents and wildlife.
- 6.9 Increased opportunity for more localised change should be promoted to transform areas of species-poor grassland in parks and amenity areas into flower-rich meadows whilst encouraging residents to create positive change within their own homes, such as increased tree planting and green walls and roofs.

Healthy Spaces (A Happy Place)

- 6.10 Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 has a vision for all residents to "Start well, Live well, Age well". The Strategy highlights that green spaces are assets that are highly valued and can encourage physical exercise, improve mental health, and increase biodiversity.
- 6.11 The Strategy for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust 2016-2021 aims to create a place for healthy living, be it physical or mental health, by improving access and quantity of good public realm and greenspace.
- 6.12 Parks and greenspaces can be utilised for a variety of functions, including Forest Schools, Green Gyms and nature-based prescriptions which link people with parks and promote healthier lives to all residents.
- 6.13 Provisions and facilities will be incorporated across green spaces to ensure health and social benefits for adults and children within the borough. Opportunities for food production such as allotments and orchards should be identified and managed well to establish educational prospects to raise awareness to health and wellbeing and community initiatives.

Protecting Spaces for Future Communities (A Forward Looking Place)

- 6.14 The Council should be working towards a circular economy, which is where resources are kept in use and at their highest value for as long as possible.

- 6.15 Preservation of existing qualities is vital in ensuring Merton remains a place people want to live, work and enjoy. This is at the forefront of this study as the population increases over the coming years. A 'no net loss' approach has been identified as beneficial to ensure no loss to quality and quantity of provisions within the borough. Further protection can be achieved by utilising the popularity of existing open space such as Merton's natural greenspaces to accomplish a number of these delivery targets.
- 6.16 Protection of provisions such as play areas within the borough is vital for securing good quality, secure and stimulating spaces for children. Investment is recommended to ensure these facilities are available to all children across the whole borough ultimately devoting resource to future communities.
- 6.17 One of the key strategic aims of the Wandle Valley Regional Park is to drive economic growth, which develops a strong business case for investment in heritage and the environment. The Wandle Valley Regional Park will use the environment to encourage employment, training, apprenticeships and enterprise.

Celebrating our Environments (Celebrating our Place)

- 6.18 Merton's influential green and blue infrastructure can help the London-wide National Park City movement to celebrate the vital role of green and blue infrastructure in local and city-wide quality of life. Opportunities should be taken to publicise the role of parks, open spaces and trees in Merton life. Merton has an established network of volunteers and can rely on assistance from local businesses and communities with an affinity for the area. Local park friends groups, tree wardens, volunteer rangers and councillors are key to delivering and maintaining green and blue infrastructure. Social infrastructure provisions will be key to providing communities with opportunities of creating and establishing sustainable neighbourhoods. Innovative ways should be found to encourage residents to become active stewards of Merton's open spaces.

APPENDIX A: DELIVERY PARTNERS

Partners

Consultation has shown that Merton has an active community engaged and invested in open spaces and green infrastructure. Continued communication and engagement with these parties and stakeholders will ensure the management of these spaces are in line with the community and their needs. By working with the Mayor of London and GiGL, improvements can be made to the quality and availability of data on green and blue infrastructure. Utilising modern technology can investigate whether web mapping can be used to stimulate further resident interest in outdoor life, environmental science and biological recording to develop educational and wellbeing commitments.

Local Partners

Community Groups

Several community groups (including Friends of the Parks groups, Residents Associations, and other Community Forums) took part in the consultation for this study. This was an informal consultation exercise undertaken by sharing maps and asking questions to inform the study. Formal consultations in line with planning regulations will be undertaken on the emerging Local Plan where the council will encourage all views on open spaces as well as other planning matters.

Wandle Trust

Wandle Trust is part of the South East Rivers Trust, an environmental charity which aims to deliver healthy river ecosystems across the south east of England through education, engagement and ecosystem improvement.

London Wide Partners

London Wildlife Trust

London Wildlife Trust (LWT) is a charity dedicated solely to protecting London's wildlife and wild spaces, engaging London's diverse communities through access to London's nature reserves, campaigning, volunteering and outdoor learning. LWT manages six Local Nature Reserves and assists with the management of sites on Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons. LWT has an active group of volunteers that meet on Sunday mornings in autumn and winter and in the spring and summer there is a schedule of nature walks on the various sites.

Greenspaces for Greater London (GiGL)

GiGL is London's environmental records centre. They work with partners, recorders, clients and the general public to collate detailed data on London's natural environment. They provide access to the data via services tailored to the requirements of those who need to make informed decisions in London. The services provide access to data, information and answers. These play an essential role in decision-making at all levels, helping to raise the profile of biodiversity and geodiversity in London and beyond.

Parks for London

Parks for London is an independent charity that exists to ensure that London's green infrastructure continues to thrive now and into the future. The charity enables the people who plan, design and manage London's parks and green spaces to share knowledge and experience. Their role is also to maintain and improve quality, maximise services and benefits and get the most from limited resources.

London Rivers Restoration Group

London Rivers Restoration Group is a sub-group of the Catchment Partnerships in London (CPiL) Group. The purpose of London River Restoration Group is to promote and report on the delivery of river restoration and enhancement projects in support of the catchment-based approach to delivering Water Framework Directive objectives across London.

London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies

The London Forum represents the views and interests of amenity and civic societies in London and their members on issues that are important for the living and working environment of Londoners, particularly in the fields of Town Planning, Development Management, Heritage, Transport, Infrastructure, Waterways and Open Spaces

London Parks and Gardens Trust

London Parks & Gardens Trust (LPGT) is an independent registered charity with the aim to promote the education of the public on matters connected with the arts and sciences of historic garden land and to preserve, enhance and re-create for the education and enjoyment of the public, whatever historic garden land may exist or have existed in and around London.

National Partners

National Trust

National Trust is a nationwide charity that is responsible for the protection conservation of heritage and wildlife sites across the UK. Within Merton, the National Trust owns and runs Morden Hall Park.

Canal and River Trust

The Canal and River Trust is a charity responsible for 2,000 miles of waterways. They work with communities to transform their local canal or river, creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone.

Historic England

Historic England are the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment.

Sport England

Sport England helps people and communities across the country get a sporting habit for life. It also protects existing sports provision such as playing fields on open spaces.

Public Health England

Public Health England is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care in the United Kingdom. PHE's mission is "to protect and improve the nation's health and to address inequalities"

Trees & Design Action Group

The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) is an open collaborative forum facilitating cross-sector and cross-disciplinary dialogue and projects promoting the role of the urban forest throughout the United Kingdom.

Fields in Trust

Formerly NPFA, Fields in Trust published 'Beyond Six Acre Standard' (2016) benchmark standards for open space and sports.



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RESOURCES FOR RESILIENT RIVERS AND OCEANS

OUR ROLE OF MIND

POSITION AND OBJECTIVE REPORT

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been produced by The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd on behalf of the London Borough of Merton (LBM) to review and provide a contextual analysis on the national, regional and local planning policies relevant to the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study which will provide up to date information to inform Merton's emerging Local Plan.
- 1.2 The Mayor of London and Greater London Authority have already undertaken a wide range of work to promote and encourage green infrastructure, biodiversity and open space through the London Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 1.3 The statutory development plan for the London Borough of Merton comprises
- Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011-2026
 - Merton's Site and Policies Plan and Policies Maps 2014-2024
 - Merton's Estates Local Plan 2018 and
 - The London Plan.
- 1.4 The London Borough of Merton has adopted several plans with aims and objectives to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing (including mental health) of Merton's residents. Merton council has adopted a Health in All Policies approach which means health and wellbeing is a key factor for all borough plans and policies including open space provision as considered in this report.
- 1.5 The Policy and Context Review forms part of a set of Technical Reports which will provide an evidence base for the Merton Local Plan and inform the overall Merton Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study as shown in Figure 1.

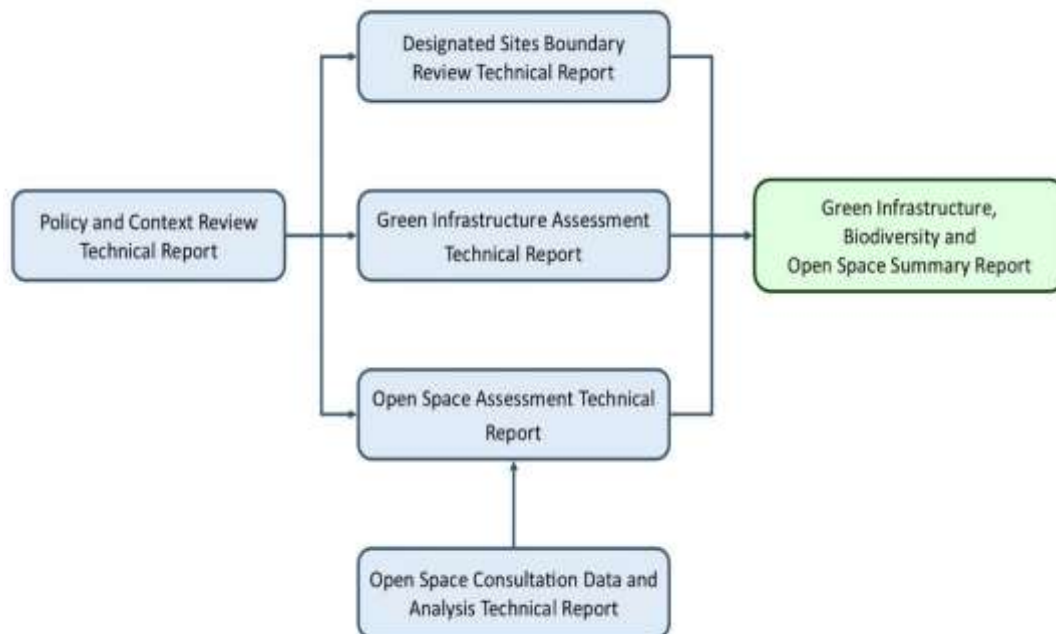


Figure 1: Report structure for Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

2.0 National Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated on 19 February 2019 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This revised Framework replaces the previous NPPF published in March 2012 and revised in July 2018. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and guides policy development in Local Plans.
- 2.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are to be applied. The NPPF requirements in relation to open space, green infrastructure and biodiversity are outlined in the following paragraphs. The previous paragraph numbers from the NPPF 2012 are also included for reference where appropriate.
- 2.3 Open space is defined in the NPPF as *"all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity"*.

Strategic Policies

- 2.4 The Strategic Policies set out an overall strategy for pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for *"conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation"* Paragraph 20 (d).

Chapter 2 Achieving Sustainable Development

- 2.5 Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives for sustainable development:
- Economic - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places
 - Social - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities through sufficient housing and accessible open spaces that reflect the current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being and
 - Environmental - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity and adapting to climate change.

Chapter 8 Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

- 2.6 Paragraph 91 (c) advises that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities and allotments.
- 2.7 Paragraph 92 (previously 70) of the NPPF advises that planning policies should plan positively including for the provision and use of shared spaces and community facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

- 2.8 Paragraph 93 states the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration which should be delivered to a high standard through local planning authority planning powers.
- 2.9 Paragraph 96 (previously 73) states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and well-being of communities and planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- 2.10 Paragraph 97 states that existing open space including sports and recreational buildings and playing fields should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space is surplus to requirements or the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable location or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision.
- 2.11 Paragraph 99 (previously 76) states that local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify green areas of particular importance to them that may warrant special protection through designation as 'Local Green Space'.

Chapter 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 2.12 Paragraph 102 states that development proposals should provide opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport. Furthermore, the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified and appropriate opportunities sought to avoid these impacts and mitigate any adverse effects and for net environmental gains.
- 2.13 Paragraph 104 (d) states that planning policies should provide for high quality walking and cycling networks. Furthermore, paragraph 110 (c) states that development proposals should create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

Chapter 11 Making Effective Use of Land

- 2.14 Chapter 11 aims to ensure that planning policies and decisions promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 2.15 Paragraph 118 (b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise that undeveloped land can perform many functions such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling, shading, carbon storage and food production.

Chapter 12 Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 2.16 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people. It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality, safe and inclusive design for all development including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes (paragraph 124 and previously 56 and 57).

- 2.17 Paragraphs 127 (e) and (f) state that planning policies should ensure developments accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development including green and other public spaces and that places should be created which are safe, inclusive and accessible which promote health and well-being.

Chapter 14 Meeting the challenges of Climate Change Flooding and Coastal Change

- 2.18 The PPF recognises the need for the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future to tackle climate change and take account for flood risk.
- 2.19 Paragraph 149 states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change taking into account the long term implications for flood risk, biodiversity and landscapes.
- 2.20 Paragraph 150 states that new development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability from climate change through implementing measures such as green infrastructure.

Chapter 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 2.21 Paragraph 170 (previously 109 and 111) of the PPF states that the planning system has a role to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Valued landscapes and ecosystems should be protected with development prevented from adversely affecting soil, air or water or from causing noise pollution and land instability.
- 2.22 Paragraph 171 states that plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
- 2.23 The PPF states in paragraph 174 (previously 113 and 114) that local planning authorities should plan to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity. This should be achieved through identifying and mapping local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them. Furthermore, plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 2.24 When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles (paragraph 175)
- if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) adequately mitigated or as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused
 - development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in

combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

2.25 Paragraph 181 of the PPF states that there are opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts of pollution through the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.26 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the PPF and must be read together with the PPF.

Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way and Local Green Space (March 2014)

2.27 Planning Practice Guidance sets out key advice on open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and the new Local Green Space designation.

2.28 Public Rights of Way (PROW) are an important part of sustainable transport links and should be protected and enhanced.

Promoting Healthy Cities (Royal Town Planning Institute)

2.29 The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) published Promoting Healthy Cities¹ a document tackling the role of planning in creating healthy cities in October 2014.

2.30 The report calls for the UK to develop more integrated strategies for healthy place making, gather greater intelligence on the social and economic determinants of health and reform and strengthen institutions to ensure integration of health policies. This process should involve a range of professions and community stakeholders.

Green Infrastructure Strategies (Natural England)

2.31 A Green Infrastructure Strategies document² was published by Natural England in October 2014 to provide guidance on

- Why we need green infrastructure
- What green infrastructure should achieve
- What green infrastructure is and

¹ <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1119674/rtpi-promoting-healthy-cities.pdf>

² <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35033>

- Green infrastructure strategies.

2.32 Natural England states that green infrastructure

"Contributes so much to the setting and quality of people's living and working environments, and its role in generating economic benefit has often been overlooked".

2.33 Natural England states that *"policies and decisions on development proposals should conserve and enhance environmental assets"*. Consideration should be made to providing off road green routes for walkers and cyclists and consider privately owned land which provides connectivity for wildlife and helps tackle climate change and flooding.

3.0 Regional Context

Current London Plan (2016)

- 3.1 The London Borough of Merton is within the Greater London Authority (GLA). The GLA and the Mayor of London have produced a spatial development strategy known as the London Plan (2016). Boroughs' local development documents have to be 'in general conformity' with the London Plan, which is also legally part of the development plan that has to be taken into account when planning decisions are taken in any part of London unless there are planning reasons why it should not.
- 3.2 The London Plan is an overall strategic plan for London setting out an integrated economic environmental transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.
- 3.3 The London Plan provides policies of a strategic importance for Greater London with a focus on three main themes.
 - Economic development and wealth creation
 - Social development and
 - Improvements of the environment.
- 3.4 The current London Plan (2016) defines open space as *"all land in London that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers a broad range of types of open space within London, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted"*. The definition of open space remains the same in the draft new London Plan (2018).

New draft London Plan (2018)

- 3.5 The new London Plan³ will run from 2020-2041 replacing the current adopted London Plan (2016). Once adopted it will replace the previous London Plan and become the spatial strategic plan for London. It will be a replacement not an alteration or update to previous London Plans.
- 3.6 In July 2017 the Mayor of London published a new draft London Plan to replace the current London Plan (2016). In December 2017 the Mayor held a 3 month public consultation on the draft plan. The current London Plan (2016) is still the Development Plan for London with the draft Plan being a material consideration in determining planning decisions.
- 3.7 In August 2018 the Mayor published a version of the draft London Plan that includes his minor suggested changes. The suggested changes are informed by a review of consultation responses consist of clarifications corrections and factual updates to the draft plan that will help inform the EiP.

³ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_showing_minor_suggested_changes_july_2018.pdf

3.8 At the time of writing this document the draft London Plan was at the Examination in Public (EiP) stage (January – May 2019). Led by an independent planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, who will consider whether or not it is ‘sound’, If found to be ‘sound’ the draft plan will be adopted and will therefore become the spatial development plan for London. London Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

London Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.9 The following section sets out relevant planning policies from the London Plan (2016) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents. It is structured to align with the London Plan chapters and policies but also includes extracts from the draft new London Plan (using the Minor Suggested Changes version August 2018) to demonstrate emerging policy. Where policies are included in tables for reference only the relevant sections of the policies have been included in some instances rather than the full policy.

London Plan Chapter 1 Context and Strategy

3.10 London Plan Policy 1.1 states that growth will be supported where the development does not encroach on the Green Belt or London’s protected open spaces and does not have an unacceptable impact on the environment. Merton has no Green Belt but does have protected open spaces.

3.11 Policy G3 (paragraph 8.3.2) of the new London Plan (2018) states "the principles of national Green Belt policy also apply to MOL. Any proposed changes to MOL boundaries which result in loss must be accompanied by thorough evidence which demonstrates that there are exception circumstances as set out in the LPPF. The principle of land swaps could be applied to MOL where the resulting MOL meets at least one of the criteria set out in part D of this policy".

Table 1: London Plan 2016 - 1.1 Delivering the Strategic Vision and Objectives

Reference	Policies
Chapter 1 Context and Strategy Policy 1.1	<p>Delivering the Strategic Vision and Objectives for London</p> <p>B. Growth will be supported and managed across all parts of London to ensure it takes place within the current boundaries of Greater London without</p> <p>a) encroaching on the Green Belt, or on London’s protected open spaces</p> <p>b) having unacceptable impacts on the environment</p>

3.12 The draft new London Plan (2018) Chapter 1 ‘Planning London’s Future’ covers six ‘Good Growth Policies’. These are

- Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities
- Policy GG2 Making the best use of land
- Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city

- Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need
- Policy GG5 Growing a good economy and
- Policy GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience.

3.13 All of these policies are broadly relatable to green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity, but in particular GG2 Making the best use of land, paragraph 1.2.6 states: *Existing green space designations will remain strong to protect the environment, and improvements to green infrastructure, biodiversity and other environmental factors, delivering more than 50 per cent green cover across London, will be important to help London become a National Park City.*

Table 2: Draft New London Plan 2018 - GG2 Making the Best Use of Land

Reference	Policies
Chapter 1 Planning London's Future Policy GG2	<p>Making the best use of land</p> <p>To create successful high-density, mixed-use places that make the best use of land, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <p>D. Protect and enhance London's open spaces, including the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, designated nature conservation sites and local spaces, and promote the creation of new green infrastructure and urban greening, including aiming to secure net biodiversity gains where possible.</p>

3.14 Also of relevance is Good Growth Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city, paragraph 1.3.3 states: *Access to green and open spaces, including waterways, can improve health, but access and quality varies widely across the city.* Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2018 promotes the use of open space to facilitate healthy lifestyles.

Table 3: Draft New London Plan 2018 - GG3 Creating a Healthy City

Reference	Policies
Chapter 1 Planning London's Future Policy GG3	<p>Creating a healthy city</p> <p>To improve Londoners' health and reduce health inequalities, those involved in planning and development must:</p> <p>E. Plan for improved access to and quality of green spaces, and the provision of new green infrastructure, and spaces for play, recreation and sports.</p>

3.15 The Merton Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will provide up to date baseline information and mapping of all open spaces, sites for biodiversity, and green infrastructure in Merton. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment and Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Reports.

London Plan Chapter 2 London's Places

- 3.16 The policies in this chapter set the overall spatial context and policy including ensuring that London is a city that becomes a world leader in improving the environment.
- 3.17 London Plan Policy 2.18 highlights the strategic opportunities to enhance the current green infrastructure opportunities of the Wandle Valley and encourage further green infrastructure and areas of nature conservation. The River Wandle and Wandle Valley Regional Park runs through Merton and provides several recreation and nature conservation opportunities including the Wandle Trail, Wandle Meadow Nature Park and Morden Hall Park.

Table 4: London Plan 2016 - 2.18 Green Infrastructure

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 2 London's Places Policy 2.18</p>	<p>Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces Strategy</p> <p>A. The Mayor will work with all relevant strategic partners to protect, promote, expand and manage the extent and quality of, and access to, London's network of green infrastructure. This multifunctional network will secure benefits including, but not limited to, biodiversity, natural and historic landscapes, culture, building a sense of place, the economy, sport, recreation, local food production, mitigating and adapting to climate change, water management, and the social benefits that promote individual and community health and well-being.</p> <p>B. The Mayor will pursue the delivery of green infrastructure by working in partnership with all relevant bodies, including across London's boundaries, as with the Green Arc Partnerships and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. The Mayor has published supplementary guidance on the All London Green Grid to set out the strategic objectives and priorities for green infrastructure across London.</p> <p>C. In areas of deficiency for regional and metropolitan parks, opportunities for the creation of green infrastructure to help address this deficiency should be identified and their implementation should be supported, such as in the Wandle Valley Regional Park (EDAW Ltd London Strategic Parks Projects, GLA, 2004).</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>D. Enhancements to London's green infrastructure should be sought from development and where a proposal falls within a regional or metropolitan park deficiency area (broadly corresponding to the areas identified as "regional park</p>

	<p>opportunities” on Map 2.8), it should contribute to addressing this need.</p> <p>E. Development proposals should</p> <p>a) incorporate appropriate elements of green infrastructure that are integrated into the wider network</p> <p>b) encourage the linkage of green infrastructure including the Blue Ribbon Network to the wider public realm to improve accessibility for all and develop new links utilising green chains street trees and other components of urban greening (Policy 5.10)</p> <p>DF Preparation</p> <p>F. Boroughs should</p> <p>a) set out a strategic approach to planning positively for the creation protection enhancement and management of networks of green infrastructure by producing green infrastructure strategies that cover all forms of green and open space and the interrelationship between these spaces. These should identify priorities for addressing deficiencies and should set out positive measures for the design and management of all forms of green and open space. Delivery of local biodiversity action plans should be linked to these strategies.</p> <p>b) ensure that in and through DPD policies green infrastructure needs are planned and managed to realise the current and potential value of these to communities and to support delivery of the widest range of linked environmental and social benefits.</p> <p>c) in London’s urban fringe support, through appropriate initiatives the vision of creating and protecting an extensive and valued recreational landscape of well-connected and accessible.</p>
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3.18 The draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G1 acknowledges that green (and blue) infrastructure meets multiple objectives including mental and physical health the heat island effect air and water quality landscape and heritage conservation learning about the environment alongside traditional functions such as space for play sports and recreation. Green infrastructure should be an integral element of development and not an add on. Economic and social value should be recognised as highlighted in the London i-Tree Assessment⁴ and Natural Capital Account for London’s Public Parks⁵.

3.19 To help make more than half of London at least 50 per cent green by 2050 the Mayor will review and update existing Supplementary Planning Guidance on the All London Green Grid (London’s strategic green infrastructure framework) to provide guidance on the strategic green infrastructure network and the preparation of green infrastructure strategies.

⁴ <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/london-itree>

⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/green-infrastructure/natural-capital-account-london> source vanityurl

Table 5: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G1 Green Infrastructure

Reference	Policy
Chapter 8 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment Policy G1	<p>Green Infrastructure</p> <p>A. London’s network of green and open spaces, and green features in the built environment such as green roofs and street trees should be protected, planned, designed and managed as integrated features of green infrastructure.</p> <p>B. Boroughs should prepare green infrastructure strategies that identify opportunities for cross-borough collaboration to ensure green infrastructure is optimised.</p> <p>C. Development Plans and Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) identify key green infrastructure assets, their function and their potential function. 2) identify opportunities for addressing environmental and social challenges through strategic green infrastructure interventions. <p>CA. Development proposals should incorporate appropriate elements of green infrastructure that are integrated into London’s network of green open spaces.</p>

3.20 The Merton Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study will review existing green infrastructure in Merton and provide recommendations to protect, promote and manage it. Recommendations will aim to increase the social, environmental and economic benefits of green infrastructure. This will form part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report.

London Plan Chapter 3 London’s People

3.21 This chapter sets policies to enable the planning system to deliver equal life chances for all Londoners by reducing health inequalities, supporting social infrastructure provision such as health, education and sports facilities and creating genuinely sustainable neighbourhoods.

3.22 London Plan Policy 3.6 states that all children and young people should have access to good quality, well designed, secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provisions. Boroughs should undertake audits of existing play and informal recreation provision to assess need in their areas and produce a strategy.

Table 6: London Plan 2016 - 3.6 Children and Young People's Play and Recreation

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 3 London's People Policy 3.6</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation Facilities</p> <p>Strategic</p> <p>A. The Mayor and appropriate organisations should ensure that all children and young people have safe access to good quality well designed secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision incorporating trees and greenery wherever possible.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>B. Development proposals that include housing should make provision for play and informal recreation based on the expected child population generated by the scheme and an assessment of future needs. The Mayor's Supplementary Planning Guidance Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation sets out guidance to assist in this process.</p> <p>LDF Preparation</p> <p>C. Boroughs should</p> <p>a) undertake audits of existing play and informal recreation provision and assessments of need in their areas considering the qualitative quantitative and accessibility elements of play and informal recreation facilities.</p> <p>b) Produce strategies on play and informal recreation supported by LDF policies to improve access safety and opportunity for all children and young people in their area.</p>

3.23 The draft new London Plan Chapter 5 Policy S4 also states that Boroughs should undertake audits of existing children and young person's play and informal recreation provisions which will be used to produce strategies to address identified need. Policy S4 also provides new policy to include integrated multifunctional and accessible play spaces in new developments.

Table 7: Draft New London Plan 2018 - S4 Play and Informal Recreation

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 5 Social Infrastructure Policy S4</p>	<p>A. Boroughs should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) undertake audits of existing children and young person’s play and informal recreation provision and opportunities and assessments of need considering the quantity, quality and accessibility of provision 2) produce strategies on play and informal recreation facilities and opportunities supported by Development Plan policies to address identified needs. <p>B. Development proposals for schemes that are likely to be used by children and young people should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) increase opportunities for play and informal recreation and enable children and young people to be independently mobile 2) for residential developments incorporate good-quality accessible play provision for all ages of at least 10 square metres per child that <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) provides a stimulating environment b) can be accessed safely from the street by children and young people independently c) forms an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood d) incorporates trees and/or other forms of greenery. 3) incorporate accessible routes for children and young people to existing play provision, schools and youth centres within the local area that enable them to play and move around their local neighbourhood safely and independently 4) for large-scale public realm developments incorporate incidental play space to make the space more playable 5) not result in the net loss of play provision unless it can be demonstrated that there is no ongoing or future demand. Where published, a borough’s play and informal recreation strategy should be used to identify ongoing or future demand for play provision.

3.24 As part of the Merton Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study there will be surveys of existing areas of play and informal recreation. The survey will assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of play and informal recreation facilities. Recommendations for improvements and gaps in provision or accessibility will be provided which will inform the emerging Local Plan. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment Technical Report.

London Plan Chapter 5 London’s Response to Climate Change

- 3.25 This chapter sets out policies to underpin London’s response to climate change. The challenge of climate change is a theme that runs through the London Plan and is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- 3.26 London Plan Policy 5.10 promotes and supports ‘urban greening’ of streets, squares and plazas to help tackle the effects of climate change. Boroughs should identify areas where urban greening and green infrastructure can make a particular contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change.

Table 8: London Plan 2016 - 5.10 Urban Greening

Reference	Policy
Chapter 5 London’s Response to Climate Change Policy 5.10	<p>Urban Greening</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>A. The Mayor will promote and support urban greening such as new planting in the public realm (including streets, squares and plazas) and multifunctional green infrastructure to contribute to the adaptation to and reduction of the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>C. Development proposals should integrate green infrastructure from the beginning of the design process to contribute to urban greening including the public realm. Elements that can contribute to this include tree planting, green roofs and walls and soft landscaping.</p> <p>DF Preparation</p> <p>D. Boroughs should identify areas where urban greening and green infrastructure can make a particular contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change such as the urban heat island.</p>

- 3.27 The draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G5 ‘Urban Greening’ builds on the policy set out in the adopted London Plan by stating that urban greening should be a fundamental element of the site and building design. Policy G5 also states that Boroughs should develop an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to identify the appropriate amount of urban greening required for new developments.

Table 9: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G5 Urban Greening

Reference	Policy
Chapter 8 Policy G5 Urban Greening	<p>A. Major development proposals should contribute to the greening of London by including urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design and by incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage.</p> <p>B. Boroughs should develop an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to identify the appropriate amount of urban greening required in new developments. The UGF should be based on the factors set out in Table 8.2 but tailored to local circumstances. In the interim, the Mayor recommends a target score of 0.4 for developments that are predominately residential and a target score of 0.3 for predominately commercial development.</p> <p>BA. Existing green cover retained on site should count towards developments meeting the interim target scores set out in (B) based on the factors set out in Table 8.2.</p>

3.28 The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will map existing areas of green infrastructure and identify opportunities to enhance and expand existing provision including recommendations to mitigate against the effects of climate change. This will form part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report.

London Plan Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places

3.29 This chapter focuses on a broad range of policies which impact directly on how people perceive and use places and spaces. Chapter 7 aims to make the most of London's wealth of green spaces, natural environment and waterways, realising its potential for improving Londoners' health, wealth and development.

3.30 London Plan Policy 7.1 states that people should have a good quality environment in an active and supportive local community based on the lifetime neighbourhood principles. Paragraph 7.4(a) states that the three principles for lifetime neighbourhoods are:

- Can get around - neighbourhoods which are well-connected and walkable
- As far as possible, can have a choice of homes, accessible infrastructure and services, places to spend time and to work, with a mix of accessible and adaptable uses, and
- Belong to a cohesive community which fosters diversity, interaction and social capital.

3.31 Paragraph 7.4 also states "*lifetime neighbourhoods promote safe, healthy, supportive and inclusive neighbourhoods where people live*" and "*residents should have safe and easy access to a network of open and green spaces that meet their recreational needs to enhance their health and wellbeing*".

3.32 The new draft London Plan (2018) does not include the lifetime neighbourhoods in the planning policy. However the new draft London Plan aims to ensure Good Growth through six good growth policies including Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities and GG3 Creating a healthy city.

Table 10: London Plan 2016 - 7.1 Lifetime Neighbourhoods

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.1</p>	<p>Lifetime Neighbourhoods</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>A. In their neighbourhoods people should have a good quality environment in an active and supportive local community based on the lifetime neighbourhoods principles.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>B. Development should be designed so that the layout, tenure and mix of uses interface with surrounding land and improve people's access to social and community infrastructure (including green spaces), the Blue Ribbon network, local shops, employment and training opportunities, commercial services and public transport.</p> <p>C. Development should enable people to live healthy, active lives, should maximise the opportunity for community diversity, inclusion and cohesion; and should contribute to people's sense of place, safety and security. Places of work and leisure, streets, neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces should be designed to meet the needs of the community at all stages of people's lives, and should meet the principles of lifetime neighbourhoods.</p> <p>D. The design of new buildings and the spaces they create should help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability and accessibility of the neighbourhood.</p> <p>E. The policies in this chapter provide the context within which the targets set out in other chapters of this Plan should be met.</p> <p>DF Preparation</p> <p>F. Boroughs should plan across services to ensure the nature and mix of existing and planned infrastructure and services are complementary and meet the needs of existing and new communities. Cross-borough and/or sub-regional working is encouraged where appropriate.</p> <p>G. Boroughs should work with and support their local communities to set goals or priorities for their neighbourhoods and strategies for achieving them through neighbourhood planning mechanisms.</p>

3.33 The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will survey the existing open space network in Merton and provide recommendations to enhance quality, safety and accessibility to open space and green infrastructure. It will also identify any surplus or deficiency in open spaces to ensure future population increases are taken into consideration. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment Technical Report and Green and Blue Infrastructure Assessment.

Table 11: London Plan 2016 - Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Reference	Policy
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.8	<p>Heritage Assets and Archaeology</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>A. London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>C. Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets where appropriate.</p> <p>D. Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.</p> <p>E. New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials.</p>

3.34 The draft new London Plan, Chapter 7, Policy HC1 states that Boroughs should develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. Paragraph 7.1.2 states that "London's diverse range of designated and non-designated heritage assets contributes to its status as a world-class city".

Table 11: Draft New London Plan 2018 - HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 7 Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth</p>	<p>A. Boroughs should in consultation with Historic England and other relevant statutory organisations develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London’s historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying understanding conserving and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets and improving access to and interpretation of the heritage assets landscapes and archaeology within their area.</p> <p>B. Development Plans and strategies should demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the effective integration of London’s heritage in regenerative change by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making 2) utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process 3) integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings with innovative and creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place 4) delivering positive benefits that sustain conserve and enhance the historic environment as well as contributing to the economic viability accessibility and environmental quality of a place and to social wellbeing.

Reference	Policy
	<p>C. Development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should seek to avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.</p> <p>D. Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.</p> <p>E. Where heritage assets have been identified as being At Risk boroughs should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use.</p>

3.35 The Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study will include auditing Merton's Historic Parks and Gardens. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment Technical Report.

Table 12: London Plan 2016 - 7.17 Metropolitan Open Land

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.17</p>	<p>Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) Strategy</p> <p>A. The Mayor strongly supports the current extent of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) its extension in appropriate circumstances and its protection from development having an adverse impact on the openness of MOL.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>B. The strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused except in very special circumstances giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL.</p> <p>LDF Preparation</p> <p>C. Any alterations to the boundary of MOL should be undertaken by Boroughs through the LDF process in consultation with the Mayor and adjoining authorities.</p> <p>D. To designate land as MOL boroughs need to establish that the land meets at least one of the following criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) it contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area b) it includes open air facilities especially for leisure recreation sport the arts and cultural activities which serve either the whole or significant parts of London c) it contains features or landscapes (historic recreational biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value d) it forms part of a Green Chain or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria

- 3.36 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) has an important role to play as part of London's multifunctional green infrastructure and the Mayor is keen to see improvements in its overall quality and accessibility. MOL is designated to protect areas of landscape recreation nature conservation and scientific interest which are strategically important.
- 3.37 London Plan Policy 7.17 states that MOL is given the strongest protection and inappropriate development should be refused. Any alterations of a MOL boundary should be undertaken by boroughs through their Local Plans .

3.38 The draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G3 continues to restrict development on MOL using the same principles as national Green Belt policy. However Policy G3 states that the overall quantum of MOL should not be reduced and the value of the land designated as MOL should be improved. There is also additional detail regarding strategic corridors, nodes and links in the green infrastructure network.

Table 13: Draft New London Plan 2018- G3 Metropolitan Open Land

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 8 Policy G3 Metropolitan Open Land</p>	<p>A. Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) should be protected from inappropriate development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) development proposals that would harm MOL should be refused 2) boroughs should work with partners to enhance the quality and range of uses of MOL. <p>AA. Boroughs should designate MOL by establishing that the land meets at least one of the following criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) it contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area 2) it includes open air facilities especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities which serve either the whole or significant parts of London 3) it contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiverse) of either national or metropolitan value 4) it forms part of a strategic corridor, node or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria. <p>B. The extension of MOL designations should be supported where appropriate.</p> <p>C. Any alterations to the boundary of MOL should be undertaken through the Local Plan process in consultation with the Mayor and adjoining boroughs ensuring that the overall quantum of MOL is not reduced and that the value of the land designated as MOL is improved having regard to all of the criteria in Part B.</p>

3.39 As part of the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study MOL will be surveyed and recommendations for any boundary changes will be made to inform Merton's emerging Local Plan. This will form part of the Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report.

Table 14: London Plan 2016 - 7.18 Protecting Open Space and Addressing Deficiency

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places</p> <p>Policy 7.18</p>	<p>Protecting Open Space and Addressing Deficiency</p> <p>Strategic</p> <p>A. The Mayor supports the creation of new open space in London to ensure satisfactory levels of local provision to address areas of deficiency.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>B. The loss of protected open spaces must be resisted unless equivalent or better quality provision is made within the local catchment area. Replacement of one type of open space with another is unacceptable unless an up to date needs assessment shows that this would be appropriate.</p> <p>LDF Preparation</p> <p>C. When assessing local open space needs LDFs should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) include appropriate designations and policies for the protection open space to address deficiencies b) identify areas of open space deficiency using the open space categorisation in Table 7.2 of the London Plan as a benchmark for all the different types of open space identified therein c) ensure that future publically accessible open space needs are planned for in areas with the potential for substantial change such as opportunity areas, regeneration areas, intensification areas and other local areas d) ensure that open space needs are planned in accordance with green infrastructure strategies to deliver multiple benefits <p>D. Boroughs should undertake audits of all forms of open space and assessments of need. These should be both qualitative and quantitative and have regard to the cross-borough nature and use of many of these open spaces</p>

Table 7.2 Public open space categorisation		
Open Space categorisation	Size Guide-line	Distances from homes
Regional Parks Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 kilometres
Metropolitan Parks Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 hectares	3.2 kilometres
District Parks Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.	20 hectares	1.2 kilometres
Local Parks and Open Spaces Providing for court games, children's play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 hectares	400 metres
Small Open Spaces Gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Pocket Parks Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	Under 0.4	Less than 400 metres
Linear Open Spaces Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways; paths, disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.	Variable	Wherever feasible

Figure 2: London Plan 2016 - Public Open Space Categorisation

3.40 London Plan Policy 7.18 states that the creation of new open space in London will be supported and loss of protected open spaces will be resisted. Boroughs should include appropriate designations and policies within their Development Plan to address identified deficiencies in their area. Draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G4 continues to highlight the need for boroughs to undertake needs assessment of local green and open spaces. Policy G4 continues to promote the creation of new publically accessible open space and resist the loss of protected open spaces.

Table 15: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G4 Open Space

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 8 Policy G4 Open Space</p>	<p>AA Development Plans should</p> <p>1A) undertake a needs assessment of local green and open space to inform policy. Assessments should identify areas of public green and open space deficiency using the categorisation set out in Table 8.1 as a benchmark for all the different types required.</p> <p>1B) Promote the creation of new publicly-accessible open space particularly green space ensuring that future open space needs are planned for in areas with the potential for substantial change.</p> <p>1C) ensure that secured open space particularly green space remains publically accessible.</p> <p>AB Development proposals should</p> <p>1) where possible create areas of publically accessible open space particularly in areas of deficiency.</p> <p>1A) resist the loss of protected green space in areas of deficiency. If losses are proposed outside of areas of deficiency equivalent or better quality provision should be made within the local catchment areas unless an up-to-date needs assessment demonstrates this is unnecessary.</p>

Table 8.1 - Public open space categorisation

Open Space categorisation	Description	Size guideline	Distance from homes
Regional Parks	These are large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly-accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. They offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	400 ha	3.2 to 8 km
Metropolitan Parks	These are large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level. They are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 ha	3.2 km
District Parks	These are large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features. They provide a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.	20 ha	1.2 km
Local Parks and Open Spaces	These provide for court games, children's play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 ha	400 m
Small Open Spaces	These include public gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	under 2 ha	less than 400 m
Pocket Parks	These are small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	under 0.4 ha	less than 400 m
Linear Open Spaces	These are open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways, paths, disused railways, nature conservation areas and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. They are often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.		

Figure 3: New London Plan (2018) - Public Open Space categorisation

3.41 The Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study will include a survey of all open space provision in Merton. Open space will be assessed for quantity, quality and accessibility. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment Technical Report.

Table 16: London Plan 2016 - 7.19 Biodiversity and Access to Nature

Reference	Policy
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places	<p>Biodiversity and Access to Nature Strategy</p> <p>A. The Mayor will work with all relevant partners to ensure a proactive approach to the protection, enhancement, creation, promotion and management of biodiversity in support of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy. This means planning for nature from the beginning of the development process and taking opportunities for positive gains for nature through the layout, design and materials of development proposals and appropriate biodiversity action plans.</p> <p>B. Any proposals promoted or brought forward by the London Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site of nature conservation importance (to include special areas of conservation (SACs), special protection areas (SPAs), Ramsar, proposed and candidate sites) either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.</p>
Policy 7.19	<p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>C. Development Proposals should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement, creation and management of biodiversity b) prioritise assisting in achieving targets in biodiversity action plans (BAPs) and/or improving access to nature in areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites c) not adversely affect the integrity of European sites and be resisted where they have significant adverse impact on European or nationally designated sites or on the population or conservation status of a protected species or a priority species or habitat identified in a UK, London or appropriate regional BAP or borough BAP.

Reference	Policy
	<p>D. On Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation development proposals should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) give the highest protection to sites with existing or proposed international designations (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites) and national designations (SSSIs, RNs) in line with the relevant EU and UK guidance and regulations b) give strong protection to sites of metropolitan importance for nature conservation (SMIs). These are sites jointly identified by the Mayor and boroughs as having strategic nature conservation importance c) give sites of borough and local importance for nature conservation the level of protection commensurate with their importance. <p>E. When considering proposals that would affect directly, indirectly or cumulatively a site of recognised nature conservation interest, the following hierarchy will apply</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. avoid adverse impact to the biodiversity interest 2. minimise impact and seek mitigation 3. only in exceptional cases where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the biodiversity impacts, seek appropriate compensation.
	<p>LD Preparation</p> <p>F. In their LDFs, Boroughs should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) use the procedures in the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy to identify and secure the appropriate management of sites of borough and local importance for nature conservation in consultation with the London Wildlife Sites Board. b) identify areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites and seek opportunities to address them c) include policies and proposals for the protection of protected priority species and habitats and the enhancement of their populations and their extent via appropriate BAP targets d) ensure sites of European or National Nature Conservation Importance are clearly identified e) identify and protect and enhance corridors of movement, such as green corridors, that are of strategic importance in enabling species to colonise, re-colonise and move between sites.

3.42 London Plan Policy 7.19 states that there should be a proactive approach to the protection, enhancement, creation, promotion and management of biodiversity in line with the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy (2002). Furthermore boroughs should identify, protect and enhance corridors of movement, such as green corridors.

3.43 The draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G6 continues to provide protection to sites designated for biodiversity. However Policy G6 provides additional protection to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and provides more information for boroughs on Development Plan policies for example identifying areas of deficiency to nature (1km walking distance).

Table 17: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G6 Biodiversity and Access to Nature

Reference	Points
Chapter 8 Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature	A. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) should be protected. B. In developing Development Plan policies boroughs should <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) use up-to-date information about the natural environment and the relevant procedures to identify SINCs and ecological corridors to identify coherent ecological networks. 2) identify areas of deficiency in access to nature (i.e. areas that are more than 1km walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC) and seek opportunities to address them. 3) support the protection and conservation of priority species and habitats that sit outside of the SINC network and promote opportunities for enhancing them using Biodiversity Action Plans. 4) opportunities to create other habitats or features such as artificial nest sites that are of particular relevance and benefit in an urban context. 5) ensure designated sites of European or national nature conservation importance are clearly identified and impacts assessed in accordance with legislative requirements.

Reference	Policy
	<p>BA. Where harm to a European Site is unavoidable a proposal must demonstrate that there are no alternatives and that there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI).</p> <p>C Where harm to a SIC is unavoidable and where the benefits of the development proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on biodiversity the following mitigation hierarchy should be applied to minimise development impacts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) avoid damaging to the significant ecological features of the site. 2) minimise the overall spatial impact and mitigate it by improving the quality or management of the rest of the site 3) seek appropriate compensation off-site based on biodiversity offsets or other appropriate metric <p>D. Development proposals should aim to secure net biodiversity gain and be informed by the best available ecological information which should be considered from the start of the development process.</p> <p>E. Proposals which reduce deficiencies in access to wildlife sites should be considered positively.</p>

3.44 SICs within Merton will be surveyed as part of the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study. This will form part of the Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report.

3.45 London Plan Policy 7.21 sets out policy for the protection, maintenance and enhancement of trees and woodlands in London.

Table 18: London Plan 2016 - 7.21 Trees and Woodland

Reference	Policy
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.21	<p>Trees and Woodland</p> <p>Strategic</p> <p>A. Trees and woodlands should be protected, maintained and enhanced following the guidance of the London Tree and Woodland Framework (or any successor strategy). In collaboration with the Forestry Commission the Mayor has produced supplementary guidance on Tree Strategies to guide each borough's production of a Tree Strategy covering the audit, protection, planting and management of trees and woodland. This should be linked to a green infrastructure strategy.</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>B. Existing trees of value should be retained and any loss as the result of development should be replaced following the principle of 'right place, right tree'. Wherever appropriate, the planting of additional trees should be included in new developments, particularly large-canopied species.</p> <p>DF Preparation</p> <p>C. Boroughs should follow the advice of paragraph 118 of the NPPF to protect 'veteran' trees and ancient woodland where these are not already part of a protected site.</p> <p>D. Boroughs should develop appropriate policies to implement their borough tree strategy</p>

3.46 The draft new London Plan Chapter 19 G7 builds on the aims of the current London Plan Policy 7.21 by encouraging the creation of canopies of trees and urban forests which are multifunctional.

Table 19: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G7 Trees and Woodland

Reference	Policy
<p>Chapter 19 Policy G7 Trees and woodland</p>	<p>A. London’s urban forest and woodlands should be protected, and maintained and new trees and woodlands should be planted in appropriate locations in order to increase the extent of London’s urban forest – the area of London under the canopy of trees.</p> <p>B In their Development Plans boroughs should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) protect ‘veteran’ trees and ancient woodland where these are not already part of a protected site 2) identify opportunities for tree planting in strategic locations. <p>C Development proposals should ensure that wherever possible existing trees of value are retained. If planning permission is granted that necessitates the removal of trees there should be adequate replacement based on the existing value of the benefits of the trees removed determined by for example tree or CAVAT or other appropriate valuation system. The planting of additional trees should generally be included in new developments – particularly large-canopied species which provide a wider range of benefits because of the larger surface area of their canopy.</p>

- 3.47 Trees and woodland have a key role in open spaces, green infrastructure and biodiversity. Trees and woodland also have a crucial role in the resilience to climate change and flooding.
- 3.48 Woodland and trees form an important part of biodiversity network and green infrastructure in Merton. The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will not survey the quality or status of trees within open spaces but they will form part of the assessment of the overall quality of open spaces and their provision to support biodiversity. When looking at recommendations for improving and enhancing opportunities for open spaces and green infrastructure, tree planting is a consideration.

Table 20: London Plan 2016 - 7.22 Land for Food

Reference	Policies
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.22	<p>Land for Food</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>A The Mayor will seek to encourage and support thriving farming and land-based sectors in London particularly in the Green Belt.</p> <p>B Use of land for growing food will be encouraged nearer to urban communities via such mechanisms as 'Capital Growth'.</p> <p>DF Preparation</p> <p>C Boroughs should protect existing allotments. They should identify other potential spaces that could be used for commercial food production or for community gardening including for allotments and orchards.</p>

- 3.49 London Plan Policy 7.22 seeks to encourage and support farming and boroughs should protect existing allotments and identify potential sites for food production and community gardens.
- 3.50 Allotments provide a valuable outdoor leisure opportunity for residents living in an urban environment. London Plan paragraph 7.66 states that food growing "promotes more active lifestyles, better diets, food security and social benefits".
- 3.51 The draft new London Plan Chapter 8 Policy G8 continues to protect the provision of allotments and areas for community gardens through Development Plans however it also encourages the use of vacant or underutilised sites for food growing. Paragraph 8.8.1 highlights some of the key benefits of food growing at a local level which includes active lifestyles, better diet, social integration, community cohesion and improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Table 21: Draft New London Plan 2018 - G8 Food Growing

Reference	Policies
Chapter 8 Policy G8 Food Growing	<p>Food Provision</p> <p>A In Development Plans boroughs should</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) protect existing allotments and encourage provision of space for community gardening including for food growing within new developments or as a meanwhile use on vacant or under-utilised sites 2) identify potential sites that could be used for commercial food production.

- 3.52 All allotments, city farms, community gardens and orchards form part of the quantity, quality and accessibility assessment. This will form part of the Open Space Assessment Technical Report.
- 3.53 London Plan Policy 7.24, 7.28 and 7.30 states that the Blue Ribbon network is London's strategic network of waterspaces covering the River Thames, canals, tributary rivers, lakes, reservoirs and docks. The Blue Ribbon network should be restored and enhanced and where development is proposed along the Blue Ribbon network the local character and accessibility should be taken into consideration.

Table 22: London Plan 2016 - 7.24 Blue Ribbon Network

Reference	Policy
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.24	<p>Blue Ribbon Network</p> <p>Strategic</p> <p>A. The Blue Ribbon network is a strategically important series of linked spaces. It should contribute to the overall quality and sustainability of London by prioritising uses of the waterspace and land alongside it safely for water related purposes, in particular for passenger and freight transport. Regard should be paid to the Thames River Basin Management Plan and the emerging marine planning regime and the Marine Policy Statement.</p>

Table 23: London Plan 2016 - 7.28 Restoration of the Blue Ribbon Network

Reference	Policies
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.28	<p>Restoration of the Blue Ribbon Network</p> <p>Planning decisions</p> <p>A. Development proposals should restore and enhance the Blue Ribbon Network by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a taking opportunities to open culverts and naturalise river channels b increasing habitat value. Development which reduces biodiversity should be refused c preventing development and structures into the water space unless it serves a water related purpose (see paragraph 7.84). d protecting the value of the foreshore of the Thames and tidal rivers e resisting the impounding of rivers f protecting the open character of the Blue Ribbon Network. <p>LDF preparation</p> <p>B. Within LDFs boroughs should identify any parts of the Blue Ribbon Network where particular biodiversity improvements will be sought having reference to the London River Restoration Action Plan (see London Plan paragraph 7.86).</p>

Table 24: London Plan 2016 - 7.30 Canals and Other Rivers and Waterspaces

Reference	Policies
Chapter 7 London's Living Spaces and Places Policy 7.30	<p>London's Canals and Other Rivers and Waterspaces</p> <p>Planning Decisions</p> <p>A. Development proposals along London's canal network and other rivers and waterspace (such as reservoirs, lakes and ponds) should respect their local character and contribute to their accessibility and active water related uses in particular transport uses where these are possible.</p> <p>LDF Preparation</p> <p>C. Within LDFs boroughs should identify any local opportunities for increasing the local distinctiveness and use of their parts of the Blue Ribbon Network</p>

- 3.54 The draft new London Plan Chapter 9 Policy SI14 will replace Blue Ribbon Network policy in the adopted London Plan. Paragraph 9.14.1 states that *"the term 'waterways' does not only refer to the River Thames, its tributary rivers and canals, but also to other water spaces including docks, lakes and reservoirs. This network of linked waterways - also known as the Blue Ribbon Network - is of strategic importance for London. Every London borough contains some waterways"*.
- 3.55 Furthermore the draft new London Plan paragraph 9.14.2 states that *"London's waterways are multifunctional assets. They provide transport and recreation corridors; green infrastructure; a series of diverse and important habitats; a unique backdrop for important heritage sites, landscapes, views, cultural and community activities; and as well as drainage, flood and water management and urban cooling functions. As such, they provide environmental, economic and health and wellbeing benefits for Londoners"*.

Table 25: Draft New London Plan 2018 - SI14 Waterways

Reference	Policies
Chapter 9 Policy SI14 Waterways - strategic role	<p>A To ensure coordination and alignment at the interface between terrestrial and marine planning Development Plans and development proposals should take account of the emerging Marine Spatial Plans prepared by the Marine Management Organisation.</p> <p>B To reflect the distinctiveness of areas that specifically relate to the River Thames relevant Development Plans should designate and ensure the maintenance of Thames Policy Areas. Boroughs are encouraged to work together on policies and to develop and update Joint Thames Strategies that should support individual Development Plans.</p> <p>BA Development Plans and development proposals should seek to maximise the multifunctional benefits waterways provide.</p>

- 3.56 Blue infrastructure and waterways form part of the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study. This will form part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report.

Mayor of London Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- 3.57 SPGs provide further details on certain policies found in the London Plan.

All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2012)

- 3.58 The Mayor's All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance⁶ (SPG) provides guidance for designing and managing green and open spaces to encourage boroughs, developers and communities to increase the delivery of green infrastructure for London.
- 3.59 The All London Green Grid SPG aims to
- Provide guidance on the implementation of relevant policies in the London Plan
 - Sets out a vision and spatial framework for London-wide strategic green infrastructure
 - Promotes cross boundary working with the 11 Green Grid Areas and
 - Identifies strategic green infrastructure opportunities.
- 3.60 Paragraph 2.3 states that purpose of the All London Green Grid is to be productive, responsive, attractive and connected. Productive spaces includes providing food, enhancing biodiversity and supporting natural processes. Responsive spaces are able to adopt to changing conditions and a changing climate. Attractive spaces make a significant contribution to the identity of neighbourhoods and connected spaces encourage healthy lives through safe walking and cycling routes.
- 3.61 The functions of green infrastructure as states in the London Plan are
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity including mitigation of new development
 - Making a positive contribution to tackling climate change by adapting to and mitigating its impact
 - Improving the management of water resources, flood mitigation and reduced flood risk through sustainable urban drainage systems
 - Increasing recreational opportunities, access to and enjoyment of open space and the Blue Ribbon network to promote healthy living
 - Creating a sense of place and opportunities for greater appreciation of the landscape and cultural heritage
 - Promoting walking and cycling
 - As a place for outdoor education and children's play; and
 - As a place for local food production.
- 3.62 Green Grid Area (GGA) 8 Wandle Valley runs through five London Boroughs, one of which is Merton. The Wandle Valley Regional Park initiative sets out a vision for the creation and improvement of a linked network of open spaces along the river corridor. This is the only Green Grid Area in Merton and proposed as an area for potential green infrastructure improvement through Merton Core Planning Strategy 2011.
- 3.63 The All London Green Grid SPG states that the strategic green infrastructure opportunities for the Wandle Valley are

⁶ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/algg_spg_mar2012.pdf

- Continue work to create a new regional park as a vehicle to improve the quality, management, funding and identity of open space within the Wandle Valley.
- Improve the ecological and environmental value of the River Wandle through restoration projects (such as deculverting the river in Wandle Park), habitat enhancement and species re-introduction, and projects which seek to mitigate flood risk.
- Create a 200 hectare country park at Beddington Farmlands through the restoration of land used for gravel extraction and landfill tipping, linking Beddington Park (London Borough of Sutton) with Mitcham Common (London Borough of Merton).
- Create improved cycle and pedestrian connections to the Wandle Valley and Wandle Trail from the surrounding areas – through significant open spaces such as the proposed district park, and a suite of projects connecting the River Wandle to Croydon Town Centre.

Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Guidance (September 2012)

- 3.64 The Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Guidance⁷ (SPG) promotes a child-friendly city, where children have access to play and recreation opportunities. It also promotes play and recreational facilities, which are inclusive, accessible and safe.
- 3.65 The SPG aims to:
- Work with boroughs and other partners to ensure that all children have safe access to good quality, well-designed, secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision
 - Ensure housing developments make adequate provision for play and informal recreation, based on the development's expected child population and an assessment of future needs

London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2012)

- 3.66 The London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance⁸ (SPG). The SPG seeks to designate, protect and manage twenty-seven views of London and some of its major landmarks.
- 3.67 The London Borough of Merton is not within a viewing corridor or within a wider consultation setting of a view corridor.
- 3.68 Designated views are concentrated around the River Thames and North London. This is due to the historic landmarks located around the River Thames and the higher topography in North London, which creates views towards the River Thames.

⁷ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/planning-guidance-and-practice-notes/play-and-informal>

⁸ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/planning-guidance-and-practice-notes/london-view-management>

Other Relevant Strategies

Natural Capital Accounts for public green space in London (October 2017)⁹

- 3.69 This report highlights the economic value and benefits provided by public parks and green spaces. It provides an evidence base for maintaining or even increasing investment in London's public green spaces.
- 3.70 The main findings of the report are set out in Section 1.2
- **London's public parks are a gross asset in excess of £10 billion** - The value of parks reflects their general amenity benefit to health and opportunity for exercise and the value of recreation. Individuals, public services and businesses all benefit from public parks across the city.
 - **For every £1 spent on parks and their partners on public parks Londoners enjoy a £1.5 benefit in value** - This demonstrates value for money from the network of public parks for London and Londoners and therefore encourages the investment in existing parks.
 - **Londoners avoid £580 million per year in health costs due to public parks** - Public parks create opportunities for people to exercise so to ease relax and enjoy part of their work and life - The total cost is made up of £580 million per year by being in better physical health and £370 million per year by being in a better mental health. The health benefits of London's public parks amount to 20 per cent of their total economic value.
 - **The value of recreational activities is estimated to be £1.5 billion per year** - London's public parks provide many opportunities for recreational activities that people enjoy including sporting activities and enjoyment of natural and cultural heritage.
 - **People enjoy the benefits of the services provided by public parks and this is reflected in the additional value of proximity to parks** - It is estimated that for the average household in London the value of proximity to parks is over £900 per year.
 - **Public parks support other services too such as temperature reduction and carbon storage** - Green spaces in urban areas counter higher temperatures in summer months that can lead to ill health and carbon storage is provided by the soil and trees.
 - **One fifth of the area of Greater London is designated as public access parks** - Public parks are defined as areas in Greater London that are free to enter and use. This includes local and regional parks, woodlands, sports fields and children's play areas. Other green areas, such as private gardens, farmland and private sports fields and golf courses are not included in the study.
 - **These estimates are based on a number of assumptions about the effects that parks have on Londoners and their preferences** - Further work is required to understand the number of people who use parks and activities they engage in.

⁹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/11015viv_natural_capital_account_for_london_v7_full_vis.pdf

- **The term ‘economic value’ refers to some of the benefits that people enjoy** - These benefits when represented in monetary terms give policy makers and the public a better understanding for making decisions about park management and funding

London Environment Strategy (May 2018)

- 3.71 The London Environment Strategy¹⁰ sets out a vision for improving London’s environment. This includes air quality, new green spaces and tackling environmental challenges.
- 3.72 Environmental challenges identified in the London Environment Strategy are:
- Air Quality – London’s air is dangerously and illegally poor. These high levels can harm human health and stop children’s development
 - Green space – Development encroaches on green spaces and private gardens are being paved over. There has been a gradual loss in green spaces across London and half of Londoners have poor access to parks and Local Authorities have less funding to spend on maintenance so quality has declined.
 - Biodiversity – Areas of green space has been lost and reduced in quality therefore the range of plants and animals in London have decreased.
 - Flood Risk – The loss in green space and expansion of impermeable surfaces has increased flood risk in several areas of London.
- 3.73 Taking into consideration the identified environmental challenges the aims of the London Environment Strategy up to 2050 state that
- London will be the world’s first ‘National Park City’ where more than half of it’s area is green, where the natural environment is protected and where the network of green infrastructure is managed to benefit all Londoner’s.*
- All Londoners should be able to enjoy the very best parks, trees and wildlife. Creating a greener city is good for everyone – it will improve people’s health and quality of life, support the success of businesses and attract more visitors to London.*
- 3.74 Chapter 3 Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital Accounting states that London’s green infrastructure can reduce the impacts of climate change, improve air and water quality and promote healthier lives. It can also provide ecological and economic benefits.
- 3.75 Chapter 3 also provides details on the Transport for London Healthy Streets Approach which provides a framework for promote human health as a priority for planning.

¹⁰ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

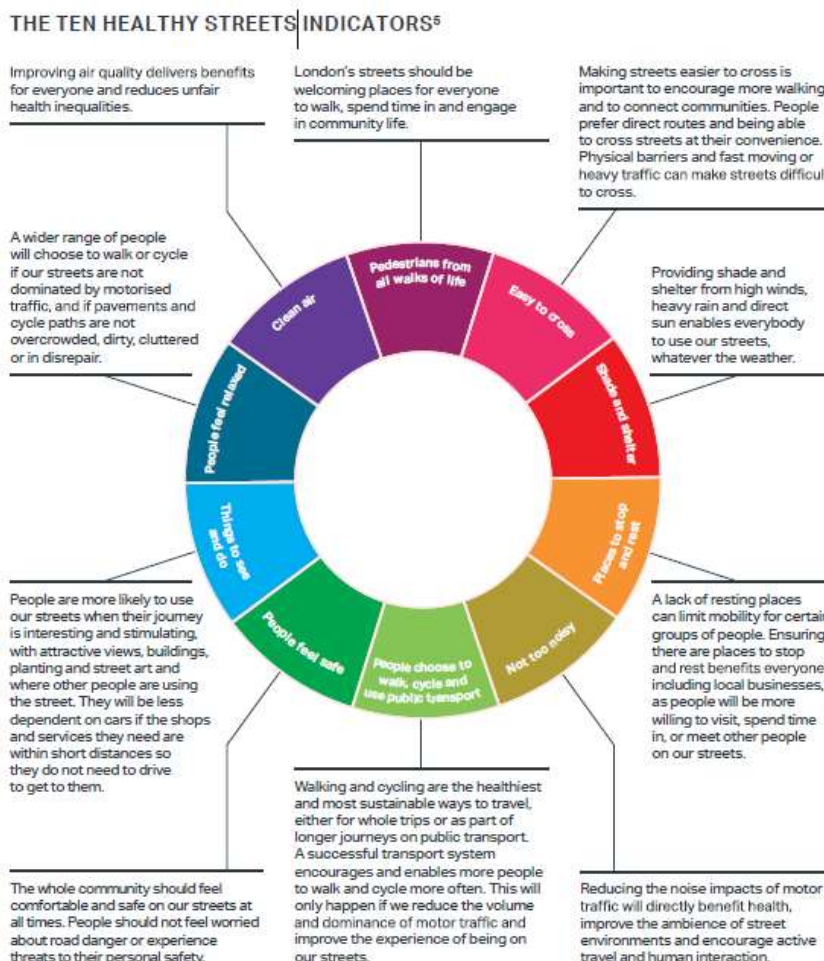


Figure 4: The Ten Healthy Streets Indicators

3.76 Chapter 5 Green Infrastructure aims to green half of London's area by 2050 by promoting enhancing and increasing green areas in the city as well as conserving and enhancing wildlife.

3.77 Chapter 5 also highlights the value of London's natural capital and states that it should be promoted as an economic asset. There should also be greater support and investment in green infrastructure.

Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (July 2002)

3.78 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy¹¹ aims to protect and enhance the natural habitats of London together with their variety of species.

3.79 The Strategy's objectives for biodiversity are

- *Biodiversity for people:* to ensure all Londoners have ready access to wildlife and natural green spaces.

¹¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/biodiversity_strategy.pdf

- *Nature for its own sake*: to conserve London's plants, animals, and their habitats.
- *Economic benefits*: to ensure the economic benefits of natural greenspace and greening are fully realised.
- *Functional benefits*: to ensure London enjoys the functional benefits that biodiversity can bring.
- *Sustainable development*: to recognise biodiversity conservation as an essential element of sustainable development.

3.80 Merton has Metropolitan Borough (Grade I) Borough (Grade II) and Local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy states that

"SINC or equivalent includes any site protected for nature conservation. Green Corridor includes similar designations such as Wildlife Corridor, but not Green Chain, which is recorded separately. Other protected open space includes a wide range of designations, including Public Open Space, Urban Green Space, Local Open Land and Private Open Space; specify the designation which applies."

3.81 Appendix 4.5 of the Mayor's Strategy provides a sample survey form which is still used to survey SINCs. The sample survey has been used as part of the survey work for the Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report (the sample survey has been included in the Technical Report).

Strategy for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust 2016-2021¹²

3.82 The Wandle Valley Regional Park is a vibrant but fragmented network of over 40 green spaces and 12 nature reserves linked by the riverside Wandle Trail covering some 900 hectares. The Wandle Valley Regional Park runs through four boroughs (Croydon, Sutton, Wandsworth and Merton). In Merton, the regional park follows the River Wandle from Wimbledon through Colliers Wood and ends in Mitcham Common. Mitcham Common.

3.83 The vision for the Wandle Valley is to *"be a coherent and vital part of London's green space network, creating a place, rich in heritage, where people are proud to live, work and play, that contributes to the economic vibrancy of South London"*.

3.84 The strategic aims are

- *Landscape* - The Wandle Valley is a clean, safe, sustainable and attractive natural environment. Its river valley character is protected and enhanced and its biodiversity, heritage and archaeology are celebrated.
- *Heritage and culture* - The Wandle Valley's rich heritage and culture (current as well as past and future) is celebrated, preserved and developed, making it accessible to the diverse local community and

¹² <http://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/WVRPT-Strategy-Bringing-the-Park-to-Life-2016-2021.pdf>

attractive to visitors. The Living Wandle Partnership's heritage legacy is enhanced.

- *Health and wellbeing* - The Wandle Valley is a place for healthy living. It enhances physical and mental health by improving access and quantity of good public realm and greenspace.
- *Natural Systems and Resilience* - The natural capital of the Wandle Valley and the River Wandle with its network of green and blue spaces is maintained and enhanced and its resilience to climate change increased.
- *People and communication* - Diverse communities along the Wandle Valley feel a shared ownership of the park and are actively engaged in its development, management and enjoyment. Local communities, partners, stakeholders, businesses & visitors recognise the regional park and support it through advocacy, volunteering, fundraising & partnership working.
- *Economic Growth* - The Wandle Valley and the Regional Park becomes a driver of economic growth and a strong business case develops for investment in heritage and the environment. A collaborative economy develops in the Wandle Valley that uses the environment to encourage employment, training, apprenticeships and enterprise.

London National Park City

- 3.85 The London National Park City is supported in planning policy through the London Environment Strategy (May 2018) and the draft New London Plan (2018). The London National Park City Charter is currently being prepared for the launch in May 2019. The Charter will set out the London National Park City Partnership's vision, aims, values and an action plan.
- 3.86 The London National Park City Foundation are currently agreeing a definition and typology for a National Park City – the current working definition is *"a large urban area that is managed and semi-protected through both formal and informal means to enhance the natural capital of its living landscape. A defining feature is the widespread and significant commitment of residents, visitors and decision-makers to allow natural processes to provide a foundation for a better quality of life"* (2015).
- 3.87 The London National City Park will work with residents, visitors and partners to
- Enjoy London's great outdoors more
 - Make the city greener, healthier and wilder and
 - Promote London's identity as a National Park City.
- 3.88 The London National Park City help tackle some of the challenges London faces including air and water quality, threats to protected green spaces, fewer children having access to outdoor play and learning, growing childhood obesity and poor adult mental and physical health, inequality and isolation and poor community cohesion.

4.0 Local Context

- 4.1 This chapter includes the statutory development plan and relevant supporting documents currently adopted by the London Borough of Merton.
- 4.2 The Local Plan sets out local planning policies, identifies how land is used and determines what will be built where. The development plan documents which have been reviewed for the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study comprise:
- Merton’s Core Planning Strategy (2011)
 - Merton’s Site and Policies Plan and Policy Map (2014) and
 - Merton’s Estates Local Plan (2018)
 - South London Waste Plan (2012-2021)
- 4.3 The information in this section focuses on green infrastructure, biodiversity and open space planning policies. It also considers supplementary planning guidance documents which have been adopted to provide additional information and guidance on planning policies.

Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011-2026¹³

Table 26: Merton's Core Planning Strategy - Strategic Objective 5

Reference	Policies
Strategic Objective 5	<p>To make Merton a healthier and safer place for people to live and work in our streets</p> <p>We will achieve this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improving public health and well-being including working in partnership to deliver health facilities and promote healthy lifestyles d. Improving access to nature and leisure facilities including opportunities for sport, play and relaxation f. Creating safe, attractive and accessible places.

- 4.4 Access to quality open space and play provisions is known to improve health and wellbeing. Merton has a range of open spaces, sports facilities and areas of play for children and young people.

¹³ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/2011-07-13/merton-core-strategy-adopted.pdf>

- 4.5 The Index of Multiple Deprivation commonly known as the IMD is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. In the 2015 IMD Merton was ranked 39 out of 152 upper tier authorities for the Living Environment Deprivation Domain which is measured by the indoor living environment through the quality of housing and the outdoors living environment through air quality and road traffic accidents¹⁴. However Merton was ranked 132 out of 152 in the IMD for Health Deprivation and Disability Domain. The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. High quality accessible open spaces are proven to increase mental wellbeing and increase opportunities for exercise walking and cycling.
- 4.6 The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will assess the quantity, quality and access to each open space. Surplus and deficiency information will be gathered and recommendations will be made to improve the existing green infrastructure, biodiversity and open space provisions in Merton. Recommendations will be consistent with the objectives and aspirations of the health and wellbeing strategies set out in Section 5.

Table 27: Merton's Core Planning Strategy - Strategic Objective 6

Reference	Policies
Strategic Objective 6	<p>To make Merton an exemplar borough in planning and adapting to climate change and to achieve a more attractive and green place</p> <p>We will achieve this by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mitigating and adapting to the local, regional, national and global challenges of climate change as they affect Merton and encouraging development to achieve the lowest possible impact c. Enhancing existing open spaces and the natural environment providing adequate habitats for biodiversity to flourish and expand d. Providing the local community with a new regional park in the Wandle Valley.

- 4.7 Enhancing existing open spaces and the natural environment in Merton will support Core Planning Strategy Objective 6 and help Merton withstand climate change. Strategic Objective 6 also aims to support the development of a new regional park in the Wandle Valley which is also promoted through the London Plan (2016) and the Strategy for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust 2016-2021

¹⁴ <https://data.merton.gov.uk/deprivation>

4.8 Surveys will be undertaken on all open spaces within Merton including the Wandle Valley areas. The survey work will inform the assessment of open space for quantity, quality and accessibility. Recommendations will be made for enhancement and improvement to access and quality which in turn will enable a proactive approach to climate change.

Table 28: Merton's Core Planning Strategy - Policy CS5 Wandle Valley

Reference	Policy
Policy CS 5	<p>Wandle Valley</p> <p>The Wandle Valley will act as a strategic fulcrum in bringing together initiatives that will contribute towards bridging the gap between the east and the west of Merton.</p> <p>Our objectives to deliver this vision are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the overall environment of Mitcham District Centre and surrounds by supporting businesses and enterprise, enhancing the public realm and a more sustainable mix of new homes including family housing. Regenerate Morden District Centre to provide improved quality and quantity of commercial, residential and leisure uses in an attractive suburban setting. Create a thriving, attractive and coherent District Centre at Colliers Wood, addressing flood risk comprehensively and facilitating an improved range of town centre uses. Maximise business and employment opportunities within the Wandle Valley including for environmental technologies, creative industries and innovative businesses, optimising the performance of industrial areas. Support the creation of the Wandle Valley Regional Park, achieving a high quality, linked green infrastructure network, protecting biodiversity and providing opportunities for formal and informal recreation. Protect and enhance the river Wandle including its green chains, biodiversity and wildlife corridors and recreational attributes. Conserve and enhance archaeological sites and protect conservation areas in the Wandle Valley and raise awareness of this heritage including Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills. Work with the Environment Agency, GLA, landowners and developers to explore viable and appropriate measures that contribute to minimising flood risk. Seek improvements to the transport accessibility to and within the area.

- 4.9 The Wandle Valley is a vibrant but fragmented network of over 40 green spaces and 12 nature reserves linked by the riverside Wandle Trail covering approximately 900 hectares. The section of the Wandle Valley cuts through the centre of Merton from Wimbledon and Tooting in the north to Croydon in the south.
- 4.10 The Wandle Valley is a strategic green infrastructure opportunity on a regional and local level as per the All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance (Green Grid Area 8 Wandle Valley).
- 4.11 As part of the surveys for the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study the Wandle Valley (within Merton) will be assessed and recommendation will be made to assist in achieving the aims and objectives set out in the Merton's Core Planning Strategy and the All London Green Grid SPG. A comprehensive map will also be compiled to show the different typologies within the Wandle Valley which will demonstrate the variety of potential opportunities.

Table 29: Merton's Core Planning Strategy - Policy CS11 Infrastructure

Reference	Policy
Policy CS 11	<p>Infrastructure</p> <p>We will support the provision and improvement of infrastructure of the borough for those living, working and visiting Merton and to accommodate population growth by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Supporting multi use of social, educational, cultural and recreational facilities f. Resisting the net loss of social and community facilities particularly where a need has been identified

Table 30: Merton's Core Planning Strategy - Policy CS13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure & Culture

Reference	Policy
Policy CS 13	<p>Open space, nature conservation, leisure and culture</p> <p>We will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Protect and enhance the borough's public and private open space network including Metropolitan Open Land, parks and other open spaces b. Improve access to open space and nature conservation by public transport, cycle mobility vehicles and on foot c. Expect development to incorporate and maintain appropriate elements of open space, play areas and landscape features such as trees which makes a positive contribution to the wider network of open spaces. Where this is not feasible, planning contributions will be sought to do so d. Work with partners to develop and implement proposals for the Wandle Valley Regional Park f. Safeguard our existing allotments and encourage the use of land for growing food. g. Nature Conservation <p>To improve opportunities for our residents and visitors to experience nature we will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Encourage new green links, green corridors and islands to seek to reduce areas of deficiency in nature conservation and to create safe species movement and havens for nature 5. Protect street trees and use Tree Preservation Orders to safeguard significant trees 6. Improve public access to and enhance our waterways, including the River Wandle and its banks, for leisure and recreational use while protecting its biodiversity value 7. Expect new development within the area of the Wandle Valley Regional Park, where appropriate, to incorporate physical, visual and landscape connections that will encourage pedestrian and cycle accessibility and enhance the attractiveness of the park h. Leisure and culture

Reference	Policy
	<p>Based on assessment of need and capacity opportunities in culture sport recreation and play will be promoted by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Refurbishing and replacing culture sport recreation and play facilities in our parks and open spaces 3. Promoting healthy lifestyles to encourage physical education and well-being through the use of our leisure centres schools open spaces playing pitches recreation space and engagement in the arts through the use of our schools and colleges open spaces theatres and libraries. We will also encourage exercise in daily routines such as when travelling to work or school 4. Working with partners to facilitate and enable them to deliver culture sport recreation play facilities and events for community benefit. To encourage shared use of sites and space through joint funding initiatives and commissioning external funding including public and private sources 5. Safeguarding existing and seeking to provide enhanced play facilities along with formal and informal play spaces where these are needed

- 4.12 Policy CS13 sets out the aims and objectives for open space nature conservation leisure and culture for Merton. Merton has a range of open spaces including MOL parks play facilities allotments and areas of nature conservation.
- 4.13 The Merton's Core Planning Strategy provides justification for each policy. The justification for Policy CS 13 is based on an emphasis to protect existing green and open spaces rather than creating new green and open space. This is because Merton is made up of 18% green space which is above the London average of 10%. Paragraph 21.4 states that people use open space for exercise play socialising and relaxing. It also states that visual accessibility is equally important as physical access.
- 4.14 Paragraphs 21.5 and 21.6 highlight the value of front and back gardens in terms of biodiversity climate change and flood mitigation. It states that although the Merton's Core Planning Strategy encourages front gardens to be covered in a permeable surface any works to an area less than 5m² can be undertaken under General Permitted Development Order (GDPO 2008) and therefore does not require planning permission.
- 4.15 Allotments are recognised in paragraph 21.7 for their contribution to enabling health and sustainable lives. They offer recreational value as well as health and social benefits and therefore should be protected.
- 4.16 The Wandle Valley Regional Park is identified as a key green infrastructure opportunity through the London Plan and All London Green Grid SPG. The Wandle Valley Regional Park will provide a key cultural and recreational asset for the borough and protect the biodiversity value.

- 4.17 Paragraph 21.15 states that parks, play areas and leisure/cultural facilities encourages healthier, more active lifestyles and helps to improve mental well-being and social interaction. Furthermore, paragraph 21.17 states that children's play areas encourages happiness, social cohesion and development.
- 4.18 The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will provide an assessment of all the open space typologies in Merton. This will then be mapped to demonstrate surplus and deficiency in the quantity, quality or deficiency of open spaces. Recommendations and strategies will be made to encourage new green links, improve access and nature conservation opportunities in the Wandale Valley and safeguard and recommend quality improvements to play facilities.

Sites and Policies Plan 2014-2024

- 4.19 The Site and Policies Plan¹⁵ and Policies Map was adopted in 2014 and includes detailed planning policies which guide planning applications for development Merton, as well as implementing strategic principles set out in the Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and London Plan.
- 4.20 The Site and Policies Plan and Policies Map includes a full list of open spaces, nature conservation sites and historic gardens. The planning policies relevant to the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study are identified in the tables below.

Table 31: Sites and Policies Plan - Policy DM01 Open Space

Reference	Policies
Policy DM01	<p>Open space</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>To protect and enhance open space and to improve access to open space.</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>a) The council will continue to protect Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and designated open spaces from inappropriate development in accordance with the London Plan and government guidance.</p> <p>b) In accordance with the PPF, existing designated open space should not be built on unless</p> <p>i. an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements or</p> <p>ii. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location or</p> <p>iii. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.</p>

¹⁵ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/merton/sites-and-policies/part1/policies/0114.pdf>

Reference	Policies
	<p>c) Development proposals within designated open spaces which have met the conditions set in part b) above will be required to meet all the following criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the proposals are of a high quality design and do not harm the character, appearance or function of the open space ii. the proposals retain and/or improve public access between existing public areas and open spaces through the creation of new and more direct footpath and cycle path links and iii. the character and function of leisure walks and green chains are preserved or enhanced. <p>d) The council supports the creation of new open spaces as part of major development proposals where suitable and viable.</p> <p>e) Development in proximity to and likely to be conspicuous from MOL or designated open space will only be acceptable if the visual amenities of the MOL or designated open space will not be harmed by reason of siting, materials or design.</p>

- 4.21 Policy DM 01 aims to protect and enhance open space and improve access to open space. Merton has many open space assets which include MOL open space for sports and recreation and green infrastructure which links to foot and cycle path links
- 4.22 Merton has pressures from development to reach key housing, employment and infrastructure targets. However it is also important to protect and enhance open spaces which provide social, economic and environmental benefits for residents and visitors to Merton.
- 4.23 The Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study will survey and map the existing open spaces in Merton. The surveys will be based on the most up to date information from Merton, GiGL and Fields in Trust best practice guidance.
- 4.24 As part of the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study process recommendations will be made to improve and enhance existing open spaces and improve quality and accessibility where possible.

Table 32: Sites and Policies Plan - Policy DM02 Nature Conservation, Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features

Reference	Policy
Policy DM02	<p>Nature Conservation, Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>To protect and enhance biodiversity particularly on sites of recognised nature conservation interest. To protect trees, hedges and other landscape features of amenity value and to secure suitable replacements in instances where their loss is justified.</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>a) The council will protect all sites of recognised nature conservation interest and the green corridors linking them against inappropriate development in accordance with the measures set out in Merton's Core Planning Strategy Policy CS 13 part g and wherever possible secure measures that enhance their nature conservation value. Development which may destroy or impair the integrity of green corridors will not be permitted and proposals in and adjacent to these corridors will be expected to enhance their nature conservation value.</p> <p>b) A development proposal will be expected to retain and where possible enhance hedges, trees and other landscape features of amenity value.</p> <p>c) Development will only be permitted if it will not damage or destroy any tree which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. is protected by a tree preservation order ii. is within a conservation area or iii. has significant amenity value. <p>d) However development may be permitted when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the removal of the tree is necessary in the interest of good arboricultural practice or ii. the benefits of the development outweighs the tree's amenity value. <p>e) In granting permission for a proposal that leads to the loss of a tree, hedge or landscape feature of amenity value replacement planting or landscape enhancement of a similar or greater value to that which has been lost will be secured through the use of conditions or planning obligations.</p> <p>f) Proposals for new and replacement trees, hedges and landscape features should consist of appropriate native species to the UK.</p>

- 4.25 Merton has a wide variety of Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. These are categorised as:
- Sites of Local Importance
 - Site of Borough Importance Grade I
 - Sites of Borough Importance Grade II and
 - Sites of Metropolitan Importance.

4.26 Policy DM 01 recognises the importance of trees, hedgerows and green links which provide important habitats and connections for wildlife through Merton. They also have an important amenity value and reduces the effects of climate change.

4.27 As part of the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study all existing SICs will be surveyed by a suitably qualified ecologist and any enhancement opportunities will be identified. The survey will also provide information on the existing boundaries of SICs and identify any boundary changes which could lead to the expansion or reduction of a site.

Estates Local Plan (2018)

4.28 Merton's Estates Local Plan adopted in 2018 contains detailed planning policies which guide development on three estates in Merton: Eastfields (Mitcham), High Path (South Wimbledon) and Ravensbury (Mitcham/Morden). Development proposals for the estates will be assessed against policies in this plan as well as policies in Merton's Local Plan.

4.29 The Estates Local Plan will assist in the shaping and management of the redevelopment process of Eastfields, High Path and Ravensbury to create new, well designed, high quality neighbourhoods aimed at fundamentally improving the quality of life for existing and future residents.

4.30 The key drivers for the plan include providing opportunities to improve parks and landscaped areas within the identified areas to create sustainable neighbourhoods.

4.31 Policy OEP 1 Vision states that *"Development proposals for Eastfields (Mitcham), High Path (South Wimbledon) and Ravensbury (Mitcham/ Morden) must create sustainable, well-designed, safe neighbourhoods with good quality new homes that maintain and enhance a healthy local community, improve living standards and create safe environments"*.

4.32 Policy OEP 1 particularly emphasis Ravensbury for the creation of a new neighbourhood that relates to the wider parkland and protects local heritage, landscape quality and biodiversity.

4.33 Policy OEP 3 Urban Design Principles states developments should provide high quality, usable and communal space as well as promoting biodiversity and opportunities for health and active lifestyle choices.

- 4.34 Paragraph 2.18 (Landscaping) states that all public amenity space must be of a high quality design, attractive, useable, fit for purpose and addresses any identified shortfalls. Furthermore paragraph 2.20 states that development proposals should incorporate and promote biodiversity through open space, street trees, green chains and Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDs).

Eastfields

- 4.35 The Eastfields Estate has a large, pleasant green space at its centre, which is cut-off from its surroundings, both for people and biodiversity.
- 4.36 Policy EP E4 (Land Use) states that the land use for the estate will remain predominantly residential with associated landscaping provision and with provision of no fewer than the existing area of designated open space.
- 4.37 Policy EP E5 (Open Space) shows designated open space along the south and south eastern boundaries of the Eastfields estate, adjacent to the Streatham Park Cemetery and illustrative new open space and retained trees in the centre of the estate. The policy states that *"there must be equivalent or better re-provisions of the area of designated open space at the boundary with the [Streatham Park] cemetery in terms of quantity and quality landscaping and recreational use"*. Furthermore development proposals must provide public open space and address any deficiencies in access to Local Open Space. There should also be suitably designed play areas.
- 4.38 Policy EP E7 (Landscape) states that street tree planning should be a key feature in landscape strategies and they should form green links between open spaces and the public realm. Tree species must mitigate against pollution and noise.

High Path

- 4.39 The High Path estate has a lot of incidental open green space but lacks significant high quality landscape, particularly trees.
- 4.40 Policy EP H5 (Open Space) shows the indicative locations of medium and larger sized open spaces. The policy states that development proposals must provide public open space to address the identified deficiency in accessible Local Open Spaces.
- 4.41 Policy EP H7 (Landscape) aims to provide new open spaces and a network of biodiversity enhancing green corridors across the estate, which will assist with air and noise pollutions and the urban heat island effect. The policy states that where possible existing mature tree groups and street trees should be retained.

Ravensbury

- 4.42 The surrounding mature trees of Morden Hall Park and Ravensbury Park and the riparian landscape of the River Wandle define the landscape of the estate. This gives the estate its secluded feel and is an essential part of its character.
- 4.43 Policy EP R5 (Open Space) shows indicative open space including an existing communal garden to be enhanced in the western section of the estate and opportunities to improve accessibility the surrounding open space. The policy states that development proposals should have consideration of suitably designed play spaces.

- 4.44 Policy EP R6 (Environmental Protection) states that proposals should seek to create mini corridors which enhance biodiversity of the estate and create a link between the estate and the surrounding parkland and river corridor habitats. There is also a river bank buffer zone around the River Wandle which is managed for the enhancement of biodiversity and management of the water course.
- 4.45 Policy EP R7 (Landscape) states that landscaping must be a prominent feature within the public realm to create strong links to the surrounding parkland context. Proposals should also retain and enhance the existing communal gardens on Hengelo Gardens and Ravensbury Grove.

Other Relevant Local Strategies

Merton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2018

- 4.46 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy¹⁶ has a vision of "a fair share of opportunities for health and wellbeing for all Merton residents".
- 4.47 There are five key themes for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Key theme 5 A good natural and built environment states that

"There is now strong evidence that the built environment shapes outcomes. A well-designed public realm with high quality green open space will encourage physical exercise, improve mental health, and increase biodiversity"

Merton's Public Health team are currently producing a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy (pending 2019-24). The new strategy will have four themes - Start Well, Live Well and Age Well in a Healthy Place.

Community Plan 2009-19

- 4.48 The vision set out in the Community Plan 2009-2019¹⁷ is for "Merton to be a great place to live and call home, where citizens take responsibility for their own lives, their neighbours and the environment".
- 4.49 The vision for green spaces and biodiversity by 2019 are for
- Merton's assets will be managed in a sustainable way
 - The tree canopy will have been increased through the Tree Planting Programme
 - Trees and plants will be planted as part of the sustainable urban drainage system developed to address flood risk
 - Design improvements will have resulted in better access and improve health benefits
 - More drought resistant planting will have been planted rather than water intensive planting and
 - Green corridors will have been set up throughout the borough to encourage the movement of species and help conserve biodiversity as the climate changes and contribute to the green infrastructure of the borough.

¹⁶ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/merton-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-web.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/merton-community-plan-single-pages.pdf>

4.50 Merton Council is currently producing a new Community Plan which will update the 2009 current plan.

Population and Housing Growth

4.51 On average 450-500 homes are built in Merton every year depending on the decade chosen. The year with the highest level of construction was 2005-06 when 791 homes were built this was at the end of a considerable period of national economic growth a long-term buoyant property development and housing market and was also the year where three major government-funded sites were built out. Details are available in Merton's Authority Monitoring Reports¹⁸ which can be found on the website. <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan>

4.52 Merton has met its share of London's housing target every year for the last 14 years bar one. The London Plan housing targets for Merton have ranged from 430 new homes per year (in 2004) to 320 new homes (in 2010) and is currently 411 new homes per year as set in the London Plan 2016.

4.53 Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014) includes the site allocations for redevelopment and the land use for each site over the plan period. Merton Council are currently updating their Local Plan and as part of this process new identified sites will be allocated for development.

4.54 The Open Space Assessment uses current (baseline) and future population data to assess existing and future needs for open space provision. 2018 is used as the baseline year, and 2035 is used for the future, in line with Merton's Local Plan.

4.55 For the current and future population figures the Open Space Assessment uses the Population and Household Projections by the Greater London Authority (GLA¹⁹). This provides figures at borough and ward level.

4.56 Population projections from the Merton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (Draft Report October 2018²⁰) are also used to assess future provision at the borough level (not available at ward level) to demonstrate future need for open space based on differing population projections. There are two population projections taken from the SHMA report based on 'low' (823 dwellings per annum) and 'high' (1328 dwellings per annum) growth scenarios. The SHMA uses 2017 as the baseline year.

4.57 Table 33 compares the GLA projection with the Merton SHMA projections.

Table 33: Merton Population Projections

Population Projection	Current Population	Current Population	Future Population	Change
GLA Population Projection	-	209,419	236,671	13%

¹⁸ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/AMR/202017-18.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/projections>

²⁰ Demographic projections (Merton Strategic Housing Need Assessment Draft Report October 2018)

Population Projection	Current Population	Current Population	Future Population	Increase
Merton SHMA - 823-dpa	206,052	-	226,629	10%
Merton SHMA - 1,328-dpa	206,052	-	249,689	21%

Local Context

- 4.58 Merton is one of the smallest London boroughs with an area of 37 square kilometres; it contains several distinct districts including Colliers Wood, Mitcham, Morden and Wimbledon, and popular open spaces including Mitcham and Wimbledon Commons. There are also a number of smaller local centres scattered across the borough at Arthur Road, Motspur Park, Wimbledon Chase, North Mitcham, Raynes Park and Wimbledon Village that each have their own distinct character.
- 4.59 The northern parts of the borough are characterised by tightly packed streets of late Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing around North Mitcham, Colliers Wood, South Wimbledon and Wimbledon Park. Large parts of south and east Merton are characterised by lower density housing and short terraces with gardens, tree lined roads with wide grass verges.
- 4.60 Merton's historic environment contributes to the character, cultural heritage and identity of Merton. Merton has four parks registered as Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest:
- Wimbledon Park (Grade II)
 - Cannizaro Park (Grade II)
 - Morden Hall Park (Grade II) and
 - South Park Gardens (Grade II).
- 4.61 Safeguarding Merton's open spaces including parks, play areas, leisure and cultural facilities encourages healthier, more active lifestyles and helps to improve mental well-being and social interaction.
- 4.62 A significant part of the borough's open space provision corresponds to Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons, which are extremely valuable for the borough in terms of nature conservation and are a popular leisure attraction for residents and visitors from outside the borough.

- 4.63 The Wandle Valley runs through south London from Croydon to the mouth of the Wandle at the Thames in Wandsworth. The Wandle River and the Wandle Trail acts as a green corridor for Wildlife and offers walking, cycling and other recreational opportunities. The Merton Core Planning Strategy (2011), current London Plan (2016) and the New Draft London Plan (2018) support the Wandle Valley Regional Park which creates linkages to existing open space and provides key cultural and recreational assets.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 This report has been produced by The Environment Partnership (TEP) Limited on behalf of Merton Council to review national, regional and local planning policies relevant to the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study, which will provide up to date information to inform the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.2 This report provides an overarching strategic view of national, regional and local planning policy, which provides a context for the next stage of the Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study.



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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO THE OPERATION OF THE SPONSORSHIP

OF THE OPERATIONS OF MERRON

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

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- 14 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children between 5 and 12 Years Old (Ref. G7118.059)
- 15 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children under 5 Years Old (Ref. G7118.060)

1.0 Context

- 1.1 Open space is important due to its valuable contribution to quality of life, health and the local economy. Furthermore, open spaces provide green infrastructure benefits such as mitigating climate change, flood alleviation and ecosystem services.
- 1.2 The provision of these facilities in our cities, towns and villages is of high importance to a sustainable future and is embedded in national planning policy.
- 1.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in February 2019, recognises the opportunities that appropriately located and well-designed open spaces can provide. Paragraph 96 states:

Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

- 1.4 Open space provision crosses many aspects of the NPPF including:
 - Promoting Healthy Communities
 - Delivering Sustainable Development
 - Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy
 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
 - Requiring Good Design
 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment
 - Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change

- 1.5 The London Plan (2016), Policy 7.18 states that:

Boroughs should undertake audits of all forms of open space and assessments of need. These should be both qualitative and quantitative, and have regard to the cross-borough nature and use of many of these open spaces.

- 1.6 A full planning policy review can be found in the Policy and Context Review Technical Report for Merton's Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study.

Purpose and Scope

- 1.7 The purpose of the Open Space Assessment is to assess the Quantity, Quality and Accessibility of the existing provision of open space in Merton. It builds on and updates existing studies, assesses future needs and deficiencies and makes recommendations for locally derived standards.
- 1.8 The Open Space Assessment forms part of a set of Technical Reports which will provide an evidence base for the Merton Local Plan and inform the overall Merton Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study as shown in Figure 1.

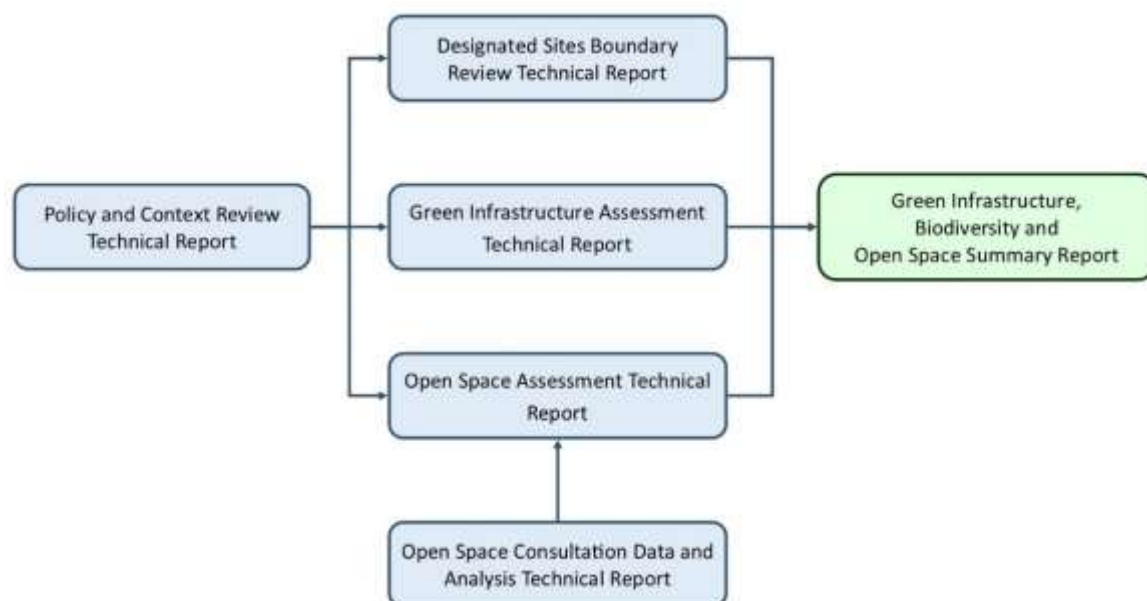


Figure 1: Structure for Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

1.9 The following types of open space form part of this assessment

- Parks and Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspaces
- Green Corridors
- Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Amenity Greenspace and Education
- Play Space for Children and Teenagers
- Allotments/Community Gardens and City Farms
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Other Urban Fringe
- Civic Spaces¹ and
- Other² (e.g. vacant land).

1.10 Outdoor Sports Facilities sites are included in this Open Space Assessment as a type of open space. However the full assessment for Outdoor Sports can be found in Merton’s Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) (2019) which has been produced in accordance with Sport England’s Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (October 2013).

Open Space vs Public Open Space

1.11 The Open Space Assessment covers both Open Space and Public Open Space.

1.12 Definitions used by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) explain the difference.

¹ Note There are no Civic Spaces in the Merton open space data (GiGL data or Merton Council data)

² Note Excluding Highways Land

Open Space is defined as undeveloped land which has an amenity value, or has potential for an amenity value. The value could be visual, derive from a site's historical or cultural interest or from the enjoyment of facilities which it provides. It includes both public and private spaces, but excludes private gardens.

Public Open Space is a designation applied to sites that are publicly accessible and perform a role in the local community. GiGL manage a dataset of sites designated as Public open Space.

- 1.13 All Open Space is included in the Quantity Assessment. Regardless of whether a site is accessible to the public it provides an open space function and therefore contributes to open space provision.
- 1.14 Public Open Space is included in the Quality and Accessibility Assessment by virtue of the fact that it is accessible.

Analysis Areas

- 1.15 The Open Space Assessment evaluates open space provision in Merton at borough, sub-area and ward level. Ward level is useful for the quantity assessment as it allows existing and future population data to be applied to show open space provision spatially across the borough. Merton's wards are shown in Figure 2.
- 1.16 However, as wards are administrative boundaries they often don't represent what is 'on the ground' and therefore sub-areas are a better way to represent an area geographically. Merton's new draft Local Plan identifies 5 sub-areas as shown in Figure 3. The sub-areas will be used in the Open Space Assessment when describing provision for quantity, quality and accessibility spatially.



Figure 2: Merton Ward Map



Figure 3: Merton Sub-Area Map

Population and Housing

- 1.17 The Open Space Assessment uses current (baseline) and future population data to assess existing and future needs for open space provision. 2018 is used as the baseline year, and 2035 is used for the future, in line with Merton’s Local Plan.
- 1.18 For the current and future population figures the Open Space Assessment uses the Population and Household Projections by the Greater London Authority (GLA³). This provides figures at borough and ward level.
- 1.19 Population projections from the Merton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (Draft Report October 2018⁴) were also used to assess future provision at the borough level (not available at ward level) to demonstrate future need for open space based on differing population projections. There are two population projections taken from the SHMA report based on ‘low’ (823 dwellings per annum) and ‘high’ (1328 dwellings per annum) growth scenarios. The SHMA uses 2017 as the baseline year.
- 1.20 Table 1 compares the GLA projection with the Merton SHMA projections.

Table 1: Merton Population Projections

Population Projection	Current Population	Current Population	Future Population	Increase
GLA Population Projection	-	209,419	236,671	13%
Merton SHMA - 823-dpa	206,052	-	226,629	10%
Merton SHMA - 1,328-dpa	206,052	-	249,689	21%

³ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/projections>

⁴ Demographic projections (Merton Strategic Housing Need Assessment Draft Report October 2018)

2.0 Methodology

Best Practice

- 2.1 This Open Space Assessment is in line with the NPPF (2019) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for Open Space which have replaced Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation (2002) and its Companion Guide Assessing Needs and Opportunities A companion guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17 (2002).
- 2.2 Whilst the Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) has been superseded it is acknowledged that the principles and approach within the guidance have not been replaced and it is still relevant to apply the methodology to assess needs for open space provision.

Site Identification

- 2.3 Open spaces and their boundaries need to be mapped spatially in a Geographic Information System (GIS) in order to assess the quantity, quality and accessibility and to record data about the sites.
- 2.4 The primary data source used for the Open Space Assessment is from GiGL⁵. Merton Council has a Service Level Agreement with GiGL to share data. Open space data was also provided by Merton Council from Merton's Local Plan Policies Map (2014) and both datasets have been compared to ensure all open space sites are captured in the Open Space Assessment. A map has been produced comparing the two sets of data (Drawing 1 - Open Space Comparison Ref.G7118.008).
- 2.5 A dataset of play areas was also provided by Merton Council. This detailed the locations and type of play areas and included play facilities located within other open space sites (such as within parks).
- 2.6 Data generated as part of this Open Space Assessment is provided back to GiGL as part of the Service Level Agreement.
- 2.7 GiGL Open Space Categories⁶ are used to define different types/typologies of open space sites (Drawing 2 - Open Space Typology Ref.G7118.016). They are classified using the previous PPG17 categories and sub-categories (Table 2).

⁵ Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL) is the capital's environmental records centre. They mobilise, curate and share data that underpins our knowledge of London's natural environment.

⁶ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/open-space-categories>

Table 2: Description of Site Categories

Category	Description
Parks and Gardens	Includes parks and formal gardens that provide accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community use. Often more multi-functional than other open spaces these areas can be laid out formally for leisure and recreation have well-defined boundaries with high quality horticulture and usually include a mixture of hard and soft landscaping and facilities.
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	Includes Commons public and private woodlands and nature reserves including areas of wildlife conservation biodiversity and environmental education awareness.
Green Corridors	Includes rivers railway cuttings and embankments road verges pedestrian and cycling routes providing opportunities for wildlife migration in addition to walking cycling and horse riding whether for leisure or travel.
Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities	Includes recreation grounds playing fields golf courses and sites that provide other sports such as bowls or tennis. Playing field sites usually have playing pitches with pavilions and changing room facilities. Recreation grounds include areas of mown grass used for informal activities such as dog walking.
Amenity Greenspace and Education	Includes amenity greenspace and for health and education (such as hospitals schools and colleges) communal landscaping around premises and housing estates and reservoirs not located within a park. These areas provide for informal recreation with few facilities.
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	Includes defined areas set aside for children and young people in supervised or unsupervised environments. These areas usually provide play equipment such as swings and slides or skateboard parks outdoor basketball areas and other informal space for social interaction.
Allotments Community Gardens and City Farms	Areas that are managed by the local population for gardening or to grow their own produce usually restricted by access.
Cemeteries and Churchyards	Areas associated with places of worship and burial grounds.
Other Urban Fringe	Includes agricultural and horticultural land and equestrian centres but does not include commercial retail nurseries.

Category	Description
Other	Includes vacant land with no formal use, sewage and water works and land that has recently been decontaminated but not developed.

Quantity Assessment

- 2.8 The quantity assessment is a desk based assessment and is carried out using open space data mapped in a GIS. This allows the total area of open space and the percentage land cover in a defined area (e.g. borough) to be calculated.
- 2.9 The area of open space is assessed against population data to give provision in 'hectares per 1000 population'. The population data at borough and ward level is used to calculate provision of open space and show distribution of provision across the borough. Future population projections are also applied.
- 2.10 The total area for each category/type of site is also calculated and compared against the population. For example total area and hectare per 1000 population of Parks and Gardens or Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspaces.
- 2.11 This is useful to compare against national or other benchmark standards for different types of provision for example Fields in Trust (formerly National Playing Fields Associate – NPFA) in their guidance 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard (2015)'⁷.

Quality Assessment

- 2.12 The quality assessment is a site based assessment.
- 2.13 The open space quality assessment method is aligned to the Green Flag Award assessment. The Green Flag Award is widely recognised as a quality benchmark for parks and green spaces and is advocated by Fields in Trust and used by many other local authorities as part of their Open Space Assessments. A separate play area quality assessment was also undertaken following a Play England assessment method.
- 2.14 Some of the larger or more complex open space sites (such as Mitcham or Wimbledon Common) are often classified and split across multiple open space categories/types (such as Amenity, Outdoor Sports, Natural and Semi-Natural). To avoid multiple quality assessments for the same site a single audit was undertaken incorporating all components of the site.
- 2.15 Not all open space sites were audited and the following criteria were applied to exclude sites from the quality assessment (Table 3).
- 2.16 A map showing all open spaces selected for a quality audit can be found as Drawing 3 - Open Space Quality Assessment - Sites Audited Ref. G7118.014.

⁷ <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance>

Table 3: Criteria to Exclude Sites from Quality Survey

Criteria	Explanation
Sites smaller than 0.1 hectare.	Site has limited functionality.
Site category was Outdoor Sports Facilities unless it was sub-category Recreation Ground (typically informal recreation).	Sites assessed as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy.
Site category was Green Corridor unless sub-category Walking or Cycling Route.	Sites not typically 'public open space' and therefore not accessible.
Site category was Other or Other Urban Fringe.	
Site category was Amenity sub category Landscaping around Premises.	

Open Space Audit

- 2.17 The open space audit method is described in Table 4 and uses some of the Green Flag Award⁸ 'Raising the Standard' criteria that can be applied to all types of open space.
- 2.18 It should be noted that the quality assessment does not attempt to judge all sites as to whether they would pass or fail the Green Flag Award. This would not be appropriate to do as part of an Open Space Assessment due to the types and nature of the sites, the proportionate amount of time needed to spend assessing each site in full and the information available to undertake the assessment. The full Green Flag Award process involves reviewing a management plan for each site and undertaking a site visit with the site managers, key stakeholders and the local community.

Table 4: Open Space Quality Assessment Audit Criteria

Criteria	Description
Welcoming Place	Signage - Is signage at the entrances appropriate to the scale of the site and is it in good condition? Is there a notice board with info, events, contact information, out-of-hours problem reporting?
	Entrances - Are entrances well presented?

⁸ <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk>

Guidance Criteria	Description
	Safe Access - Is access to the site safe e.g. road crossings where appropriate. Is vehicle movement within the site appropriate and managed?
	Access for All Abilities - Are pedestrian routes logical and suitable for the wide range of visitors (such as cyclists, pedestrians, prams, wheelchairs etc) to use together? Are surfaces even?
	Boundaries - Are boundaries well defined and maintained?
	Car parking/Cycling Provision - Is there appropriate car parking on or near to the site including disabled provision. Is there any provision for cycle parking?
Healthy, Safe and Secure	Facilities and Activities - Are facilities incl. sports and play equipment fit for purpose, safe and appropriate to the site?
	Clear Sightlines - Are sightlines clear? Is vegetation managed to reduce seclusion and to enable views in and out of the site? Is there natural surveillance from surroundings?
	Shelter - Does the site have opportunities to shelter from the weather (e.g. shade cover and rain cover)? Could be structures or vegetation e.g. tree canopy.
	Lighting - Is there an appropriate level of lighting within the site? Or adjacent to site entrances from road lighting.
Well Maintained and Clean	Bins/Dog Bins and Recycling - Are there an appropriate number of bins and dog bins on site? Are they overflowing?
	Overall Site Cleanliness - Is there evidence of litter and dog fouling?

Criteria	Description
	Hard Landscape Features - Do hard landscape features appear to be well maintained? Does it look tired?
	Buildings - Do buildings appear well cared for and clear of graffiti? flyposting?
	Soft Landscape Features - Do soft landscape features appear to be well maintained? Does it look tired?
	Site Furniture - Does site furniture? equipment? structures? appear to be well maintained? Does it look tired?

2.19 Each of the criteria was scored on a scale from 0-10 and a total percentage score derived. The scores were banded according to the Green Flag grade for open spaces (Table 5).

Table 5: Open Space Quality Scores Thresholds

Open Space Quality Score	Open Space Quality Grade
90 – 100	Excellent
80 – 89	Very Good
70 – 79	Good
50 – 69	Fair
0 – 49	Poor

Play Area Audit

2.20 The play audit is based on Play England’s ‘Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool’⁹. The quality assessment method for the play area audits for three scales or types of play area (Table 6) uses Play England criteria (described in Table 7). Play area types were assigned from the source datasets and verified during the surveys.

2.21 A map showing all play areas audited can be found as Drawing 4 - Play Area Quality Audit Survey - Sites Audited Ref. G7118.015.

⁹ <http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/211694/quality-assessment-tool.pdf>

Table 6: Types of Play Areas

Type	Description
Type A - Door-step space or facility	A small space within sight of home where children especially young children can play within view of known adults.
Type B - Local spaces and facilities	A larger space which can be reached safely by children beginning to travel independently and with friends without accompanying adults and for adults with young children to walk with ease.
Type C - Neighbourhood spaces and facilities	A larger space or facility for informal recreation which children and young people used to travelling longer distances independently can get to safely and spend time in play and informal recreation with their peers and have a wider range of play experiences.

Table 7: Play Area Quality Audit Criteria

Plan and Criteria	Description
Location	Informal oversight
	Well used by children
	Getting there
	Personal safety lighting and security
	Accessibility in getting there
	Meeting other children
	Designed for the site
Play Value	Enticing children to play
	Inclusion of disabled children
	Play needs of different ages (B and C only)
	Movement

Play Area and Criteria	Description
	Imaginative play ages (B and C only)
	Ball games
	Loose parts
	Access to the natural environment
	Places for children to sit
	Play opportunities for disabled children
	Added play value
Care and Maintenance	Well maintained
	Health and safety
	Seating for adults
	Litter bins
	Dog free zones
	Presence of supervisory adults (B and C only)
	Toilets/changing facilities (B and C only)

2.22 Each of the criteria was scored on a scale from 0-5 and a total percentage score derived. The scores were banded according to the Play England's grades for Play Spaces (Table 8).

Table 8: Play Area Quality Scores Thresholds

Play Area Quality Score	Play Area Quality Description
80 - 100	Excellent
60 - 79	Good
40 - 59	Average - Needs Some Improvement
20 - 39	Weaknesses - Improvements needed
0 - 19	Serious Weaknesses - Improvements needed

Accessibility Assessment

- 2.23 The Accessibility Assessment is a desk based assessment using GIS to run analysis on access to Nature Public Open Space and Play Areas. The assessment identifies Areas of Deficiency (AoD) in access to open spaces.
- 2.24 AoDs for Public Open Space and Nature are calculated by GiGL using their AoD data model. It involves the integration of access points to an open space (which were provided by GiGL and verified during the site surveys by TEP) with Ordnance Survey's Integrated Transport Network dataset to better predict the accessibility of open spaces in comparison to linear 'as the crow flies' measurements.
- 2.25 The AoDs were generated by GiGL using data which was considered accurate at the time however it may not account for local knowledge about site access.

Access to Nature

- 2.26 The AoD for access to nature is defined in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy and cited by GiGL¹⁰ as 'Areas where people have to walk more than one kilometre to reach an accessible wildlife site of metropolitan or borough importance', the 'accessible wildlife sites' being Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

Access to Public Open Space

- 2.27 Public Open Space categories (Table 9) as defined in The London Plan (2016¹¹ and draft 2018¹²) provide a benchmark for the provision of publicly accessible open space across the capital categorising spaces according to their size, facilities and local importance.

Table 9: Public Open Space Hierarchy

Open Space Category	Number of Sites	Distance from Road	Description
Regional Parks	400	3.2 – 8	Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publically accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.

¹⁰ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/designated-sites/areas-of-deficiency-in-access-to-nature/>

¹¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan>

¹² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan>

Open Space Category	Percentage of Area	Distance from Core	Description
Metropolitan Parks	60	3.2	Large area of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.
District Parks	20	1.2	Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing a wide range of activities including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.
Local Parks and Open Spaces	2	0.4	Providing for court games, children's play sitting out areas and nature conservation areas.
Small Open Spaces	2	0.4	Gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature including nature conservation areas.
Pocket Parks	0.4	0.4	Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	Wherever feasible	Open spaces and towpaths alongside canals and other waterways paths disused railways nature conservation areas and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.

Access to Play Areas

- 2.28 Accessibility standards¹³ as defined by the Mayor’s SPG on Children’s Play and Informal Recreation (2012¹³) provide a benchmark for the provision of play areas across the capital¹³ categorising spaces according to the age range of the play area (Table 10). These distance buffers were applied to formal play areas locations in the open space accessibility assessment.
- 2.29 The buffers were also applied to parks and gardens or outdoor sports facilities which had no restrictions to access¹³ as these can provide a source of informal play for children of all ages.

Table 10: Accessibility distances to Play Areas

Age Group	Accessibility Distance
Under 5s	100m
5-11 year olds	400m
12+ year olds	800m

¹³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/planning-guidance-and-practice-notes/play-and-informal>

3.0 Results

Quantity Assessment

Open Space Land Cover Borough Wide

- 3.1 The total area of open space within Merton is approximately 1,329 hectares (13.2 km²) which accounts for 35% of the borough. 793 hectares (21% of the borough) is publically accessible open space (Table 11).
- 3.2 Outdoor Sports Facilities and Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspaces account for the highest amounts. Provision for Children and Teenagers is among the lowest however this does not include play areas within other category sites (as this would 'double count' in land use terms), and play areas do not typically cover large open areas.

Table 11: Open Space Quantity Summary

Category	No. of Sites	Area (ha)	Proportion of Total Open Space (%)	Proportion of Borough Open Space (%)	Proportion of Borough Publicly Accessible Open Space (%)
Parks and Gardens	27	190.8	14.4	5.1	5.0
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	31	380.8	28.7	10.1	9.6
Green Corridors	51	99.7	7.5	2.7	0.7
Recreation & Outdoor Sports Facilities	74	405.1	30.5	10.8	5.2
Amenity Greenspace & Education	126	125.0	9.4	3.3	0.4
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	7	5.1	0.4	0.1	0.1

Category	No. of Sites	Area (ha)	Proportion of Total Open Space (%)	Proportion of Total Open Space (ha)	Proportion of Total Open Space (ha)
Allotments Community Gardens and City Farms	21	31.8	2.4	0.8	0.0
Cemeteries and Churchyards	14	82.5	6.2	2.2	0.01
Other Urban Fringe	3	7.8	0.6	0.2	0.1
Other Open Space	5	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.0
Total	43	122.1	100	31.8	0.01

Open Space Land Cover by Ward

- 3.3 The total area of open space in each ward can be found below (Table 12). In the table the wards are grouped by sub-area (for details of sub-areas see Analysis Areas in Chapter 1.0) although it should be noted that the ward and sub-area boundaries do not directly align so the groupings are by 'best fit'.
- 3.4 Village ward in the Wimbledon sub-area has the highest amount of open space (384.5 ha – just under a third of all open space in Merton – and covering 10% of the borough's total open space) owing to Wimbledon Common, whilst neighbouring Hillside contained the least amount of open space (5.8 ha). Cricket Green and Pollards Hill wards in the Mitcham sub-area have the second and third highest amounts of open space owing to Mitcham Common.
- 3.5 Further breakdown of the types/categories of open spaces in each ward can be found in Appendix A.

Table 12: Open Space Quantity by Ward

Ward	Area (ha)	Proportion of Total Open Space (%)	Proportion of Borough Open Space (%)
Colliers Wood Sub Area			
Abbey	18.7	1.4	0.5
Colliers Wood	15.4	1.2	0.4
Trinity	17.1	1.3	0.5
Mitcham Sub Area			
Cricket Green	145.6	11.0	3.9
Figges Marsh	25.1	1.9	0.7
Graveney	11.0	0.8	0.3
Lavender Fields	21.0	1.6	0.6
Longthornton	50.7	3.8	1.3
Pollards Hill	110.9	8.4	3.0
Morden Sub Area			
Cannon Hill	94.8	7.1	2.5
Lower Morden	61.2	4.6	1.6
Merton Park	34.2	2.6	0.9
Ravensbury	67.2	5.1	1.8
St Helier	73.3	5.5	1.9
Raynes Park Sub Area			
Raynes Park	45.7	3.4	1.2
West Barnes	62.6	4.7	1.7
Wimbledon Sub Area			
Dundonald	18.2	1.4	0.5
Hillside	5.8	0.4	0.2
Village	384.5	28.9	10.2

Ward	Area (ha)	Proportion of Total Open Space (%)	Proportion of Borough Open Space (%)
Wimbledon Park	65.6	4.9	1.7
Total	1344.0	100.0	100.0

Open Space Provision by Population (Hectare per 1000) Borough Wide

- 3.6 The population projections for the borough have been applied to show the current (2018) and future (2035) provision in Hectares per 1000 Population (Table 13). The future provision calculation assumes no change to the total area of open space in the borough therefore only demonstrates the change in provision due to population growth and not due to changes in the amount of open space.
- 3.7 Current provision is 6.3 Hectares per 1000 Population and future provision is 5.6 Hectares per 1000 based on GLA population projections.
- 3.8 Future provision ranges from 5.3 to 5.9 Hectares per 1000 Population when applying the Merton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) population projections.

Table 13: Open Space Provision by Population

Population Projection	Current Population (2018)	Current Population Provision (ha/1000)	Future Population (2035)	Future Population Provision (ha/1000)
GLA Population Projection	209,419	6.3	236,671	5.6
Merton SHMA - 823-dpa	-	-	226,629	5.9
Merton SHMA - 1,328-dpa	-	-	249,689	5.3

Open Space Provision by Population (Hectare per 1000) by Ward

- 3.9 The GLA population projections are available at ward level therefore they have been applied for current (2018) and future (2035) population projections (Table 14). In the table the wards are grouped by sub-area (for details of sub-areas see Analysis Areas in Chapter 1.0) although it should be noted that the ward and sub-area boundaries do not directly align so the groupings are by best fit.

- 3.10 When viewed on a map of the borough (Drawing 5 - Open Space Quantity Provision by Ward Ref. G7118.019) the wards with the lowest provision are concentrated in the Colliers Wood and Mitcham sub-areas. The wards with the highest provision are in the Wimbledon sub-area including Village ward and in the Mitcham sub-area including Pollards Hill ward and Cricket Green ward and Cannon Hill ward which crosses Morden and Raynes Park sub-areas.
- 3.11 The figures in the table also show the percentage change (increase or decrease) in open space provision by ward indicating the pattern of population change across the borough. In some wards this indicates a decrease in population and therefore an increase in hectare per 1000 population of open space provision.
- 3.12 The wards which already have the lowest provision *and* are showing the biggest percentage of decrease in open space provision are
- Abbey and Colliers Wood wards in the Colliers Wood sub-area
 - Figges Marsh and Lavender Fields wards in the Mitcham sub-area
 - Merton Park in the Merton sub-area
 - Dundonald ward in the Wimbledon sub-area
- 3.13 Bold text in the table show those wards with
- Current provision above the borough wide 6.3 hectare per 1000
 - Future provision above the borough wide 5.6 hectare per 1000
 - Future change in provision which goes up rather than down or stays the same.

Table 14: Open Space Provision by Ward Population

Ward	Current Population Provision (ha/1000)	Future Population Provision (ha/1000)	Percentage Change in Open Space Provision
Colliers Wood Sub Area			
Abbey	1.7	1.4	-20
Colliers Wood	1.4	1.2	-10
Trinity	1.7	1.6	-5
Mitcham Sub Area			
Cricket Green	6.3	5.1	-20
Figges Marsh	2.1	1.8	-14
Graveney	1.1	1.0	-8
Lavender Fields	1.9	1.6	-16

Ward	Current Population Provision (ha/1000)	Future Population Provision (ha/1000)	Change in Open Space Provision (p or down)
Longthornton	4.7	4.7	
Pollards Hill			
Morden Sub Area			
Cannon Hill			-7
Lower Morden			
Merton Park	3.6	2.5	-31
Ravensbury		4.8	-28
St Helier			-12
Raynes Park Sub Area			
Raynes Park	4.5	4.3	-4
West Barnes	5.8	5.4	-6
Wimbledon Sub Area			
Dundonald	1.9	1.7	-10
Hillside	0.6	0.6	-4
Village			
Wimbledon Park	5.5	4.5	-19

Open Space Provision by Population (Hectare per 1000) by Typology

3.14 The GLA population projections for current (2018) and future (2035) populations were also applied to the open space categories (Table 15).

Table 15: Open Space Provision by Typology

Category	Current Population Provision (ha/1000)	Future Population Provision (ha/1000)
Parks and Gardens	0.91	0.81
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	1.82	1.61

Category	Current Provision (ha)	Future Provision (ha)
Green Corridors	0.48	0.42
Recreation & Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.93	1.71
Amenity Greenspace & Education	0.60	0.53
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	0.02	0.02
Allotments/Community Gardens and City Farms	0.15	0.13
Cemeteries and Churchyards	0.39	0.35
Other Urban Fringe	0.04	0.03
Other Open Space	0.01	0.01
Total	3.62	3.57

Quality Assessment

3.15 A total of 153 sites were selected for an open space quality assessment based on the criteria identified in the open space audit method. 106 sites were audited in the survey, the 47 sites which were not audited were not accessible at the time of survey. Many of the sites which were not accessible were open spaces associated with educational grounds. Table 16 shows a comparison of typologies which were surveyed and the quality score.

Table 16: Open Space Quality Audit Results

Category	Very Good (1-5)	Good (6-10)	Fair (11-15)	Poor (16-20)	Total
Parks and Gardens	4	2	7	6	19
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace		1	7	10	18
Green Corridors		1		3	4

	Very Good 100 - 100%	Good 80 - 100%	Fair 60 - 80%	Poor 40 - 60%	Total
Recreation & Outdoor Sports Facilities		4	8	7	19
Amenity Greenspace & Education	1	1	8	13	23
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	1		3	1	5
Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	2		4	2	8
Cemeteries and Churchyards	3	3	3	1	10
Total	10	10	30	25	75
Proportion of Open Space Sites	13%	13%	40%	33%	100%

3.16 The quality score ranges between 10.6 (Poor) (Open Space Attached to Gypsy and Traveller Site TEP12) and 86.9 (Very Good) (Wimbledon Park M067) with an average score of 54.8 (Fair). Further detail on each open space typology is detailed below (also see Drawing 6 - Open Space Quality Assessment - Survey Results Ref. G7118.017).

Parks and Gardens

3.17 19 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 60.6 (Fair). They were found to be clustered around the River Wandle in the centre of the borough but few sites were identified in East Mitcham. Land adjacent to the River Wandle (M064) was found to be the lowest scoring site with 38.8 (Poor) and Wimbledon Park was found to be the highest scoring with 86.9 (Very Good).

Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace

- 3.18 18 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 48.8 (Poor). They were distributed across the borough but Wimbledon Common and Mitcham Common are notable sites in this typology in the Wimbledon and Mitcham sub-areas respectively. Cherrywood Open Space (M015) and Joseph Hood Memorial Woodland and Meadow (M005) were the lowest scoring sites with 28.1 (Poor) and Wimbledon Common (M072) received the highest quality score with 75.6 (Good).

Green Corridors

- 3.19 4 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 45.5 (Poor). Pyl Brook Nature Reserve (R061) was the lowest scoring site with 13.8 (Poor) and Northern End of Green Lane and Footpath to South (C004) scored the highest with 79.3 (Good).

Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities

- 3.20 19 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 56.4 (Fair). They are primarily clustered in the Colliers Wood and Mitcham sub-areas with few sites audited in Wimbledon. The lowest scoring site was Lyndhurst Recreation Ground (R019) with a score of 37.5 (Poor) but Colliers Wood Recreation Ground (R049) was found to be the highest scoring with 78.1 (Good).

Amenity Greenspace and Education

- 3.21 23 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 45.4 (Poor). The sites are primarily clustered in South Mitcham and Morden. Open space attached to Gypsy and Traveller site (TEP12) was the lowest scoring site with 10.6 (Poor) and Beecholme Primary School (R025) was the highest scoring site with 80.6 (Very Good).

Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms

- 3.22 8 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 60.8 (Fair). They are primarily clustered in Colliers Wood and North Mitcham but there are additional sites located in South Mitcham. No sites were identified to the Wimbledon sub-area. Eastfield Road Allotments (A001) was the lowest scoring site with a score of 35 (Poor) and Arthur Road Allotments (C006) was the highest scoring site with a score of 86.2 (Very Good).

Cemeteries and Churchyards

- 3.23 10 sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 70.1 (Good). The sites were located across the borough apart from in Wimbledon and Raynes Park. St Mary the Virgin Churchyard (M059) scored the lowest in the borough with 32.5 (Poor). Morden Cemetery (C006) and South London Crematorium and Streatham Park Cemetery (C003) both scored the highest with 86.2 (Very Good).

Play Space for Children and Teenagers

Open Space/Green Flag Audit

- 3.24 5 open space sites were surveyed across the borough with an average score of 60.1 (Fair). The sites were clustered in Mitcham and Colliers Wood. Lewis Road Recreation Ground (R010) was found to be the lowest scoring site with 43.8 (Poor) but Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground (M006) was found to have the highest score of 86.3 (Very Good).

Play Area/Play England Audit

- 3.25 83 play areas were selected for survey however Lonesome Road Intergenerational Centre Adventure Playground (37) was not accessible at the time of survey. 61 of play areas received a score of 'Average, Needs Some Improvement' (Table 17).
- 3.26 An evaluation of the scores by type of play area found that neighbourhood spaces and facilities scored the highest (Table 18). The play areas are primarily located in Mitcham, many of which received a 'Weaknesses, Needs Improvement' quality score (Drawing 7 - Play Area Quality Audit Survey - Survey Results Ref. G7118.018). Fewer play areas are located in the Wimbledon but they received a 'Good' quality score.

Table 17: Play Area Quality Audit Results

Play Area Category	Number of Play Areas Scored	Proportion of Play Areas (%)
Excellent (80 – 100)	1	1.2
Good (60 – 79)	14	17.1
Average/Needs Some Improvement (40 – 59)	50	61.0
Weaknesses/Improvements Needed (20 – 39)	17	20.7
Serious Weaknesses/Improvements Needed (0 – 19)	0	0
Total	82	100

Table 18: Play Area Type Summary

Type of Play Area	Number of Play Areas Scored	Proportion of Play Areas (%)	Average Score
A - Door-step space or facility	21	25.6	43.7 (Average)

Type of Planning Area	Number of Planning Areas Scored	Proportion of Planning Areas	Average Score
B - Local spaces and facility	56	68.3	48.6 (Average)
C - Neighbourhood spaces and facility	5	6.1	77.5 (Good)
Total	61	74.4	63.1 (Average)

Accessibility Assessment

Access to Nature

- 3.27 The accessibility analysis found that over 84% of the borough is within an accessible distance (1km) of a publicly accessible SINC. Accessibility is highest around Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons and along the Wandle Valley (Drawing 8 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature Ref. G7118.053).
- 3.28 Areas of deficiency are identified along the railway line running through Wimbledon and Raynes Park and in the north east of the borough.

Regional Parks

- 3.29 The accessibility analysis found that over 98% of the borough is within an accessible distance (8km) of a publicly accessible Regional Park. Wimbledon Common is the only Regional Park in Merton. Areas of deficiency are identified in the very east of the borough (Drawing 9 - G7118.054 Areas of Deficiency in Access to Regional Parks Ref. G7118.054).

Metropolitan Parks

- 3.30 The accessibility analysis found that over 99% of the borough is within an accessible distance (3.2km) of a publicly accessible Metropolitan Park. Open spaces included within this analysis are Wimbledon Common, Mitcham Common and Morden Park. The only small area of deficiency is identified in the north of the borough east of Wimbledon Park station and the A218 Durnsford Road (Drawing 10 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Metropolitan Parks Ref. G7118.055).

District Parks

- 3.31 The accessibility analysis found that over 77% of the borough is within an accessible distance (1.2km) of a publicly accessible District Park. Open spaces within the analysis include Morden Hall Park, Wimbledon Park and Cannon Hill Common. The area of deficiency runs from the west of the borough around Raynes Park up to the north and east through Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Mitcham (Drawing 11 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to District Parks Ref. G7118.056).

Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks

- 3.32 The accessibility analysis found that over 72% of the borough is within an accessible distance (400m) of a publicly accessible Local Park or Small Open Space. 108 open spaces in Merton are included within this analysis. Areas of deficiency are identified in several parts of the borough – the largest of which is in the west – in the Raynes Park and Wimbledon areas (Drawing 12 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks Ref. G7118.057).

Play Areas for Children Over 12 Years Old

- 3.33 The accessibility analysis found that over 95% of the borough is within an accessible distance (800m) of a Play Area or an open space which could be used for informal recreation. Play areas are identified in the centre and east of the borough – primarily in Morden – Colliers Wood and Mitcham. There is a lack of formal play areas in the west of the borough where most of the play provision is delivered by open spaces for informal recreation. Areas of deficiency identified in the south east and north west of the borough fall within Mitcham and Wimbledon Commons (Drawing 13 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Over 12 Years Old Ref. G7118.058).

Play Areas for Children between 5 and 11 Years Old

- 3.34 The accessibility analysis found that over 76% of the borough is within an accessible distance (400m) of a Play Area or an open space which could be used for informal recreation. Play areas are identified in the south west and east of the borough – in Mitcham – Colliers Wood and Raynes Park. Much of the provision of play in Morden and Wimbledon is delivered by open spaces for informal recreation. Areas of deficiency identified are around Wimbledon Common, Mitcham Common and Raynes Park (Drawing 14 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children between 5 and 12 Years Old Ref. G7118.059).

Play Areas for Children under 5 Years Old

- 3.35 The accessibility analysis found that over 27% of the borough is within an accessible distance (100m) of a Play Area or an open space which could be used for informal recreation. Play areas are primarily clustered in the centre and north east of the borough – with additional provision in the south in the areas surrounding Morden Park. Areas of deficiency are identified in several parts of the borough (Drawing 15 - Areas of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children under 5 Years Old Ref. G7118.060).

4.0 Benchmark Standards

London Benchmarks for Quantity: Land Cover

- 4.1 At 35% Merton's Open Space land cover is below the London wide figure of 42%¹⁴ although Merton has 21% Public Open Space¹⁵ compared with 18% London wide (Table 19).

Table 19: Open Space & Public Open Space Land Cover London Benchmark

Definition	Merton Land Cover	London Wide
Open Space	35%	42%
Public Open Space	21%	18%

- 4.2 As a comparison with other London Boroughs a selection of inner and outer neighbouring or nearby boroughs are shown in Table 20¹⁶. Merton's Open Space land cover is similar to neighbouring outer boroughs Kingston and Sutton.

Table 20: Open Space Land Cover London Boroughs Benchmark

Borough	Inner Borough	Outer Borough
Lambeth	21%	
Lewisham	22%	
Southwark	24%	
Wandsworth	32%	
Croydon		32%
Sutton		34%
Merton		35%
Kingston		37%
Bromley		57%
Richmond upon Thames		57%

¹⁴ "Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2019" from <https://www.gigl.org.uk/keyfigures/>

¹⁵ Proportion of Open Space which is Public Open Space therefore publicly accessible

¹⁶ "Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2019" from <https://www.gigl.org.uk/planning-for-nature/boroughstats/>

- 4.3 In terms of the main types of Open Space Merton has less Parks and Gardens, Green Corridors and Amenity Space than London wide, but more Natural and Semi-Natural, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Cemeteries and Churchyards (Table 21).
- 4.4 Merton has a similar level of provision as London for Provision for Children and Teenagers and Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms.

Table 21: Land Cover Benchmark by Category

Category	Merton Area (ha)	Proportion of Merton (%)	Proportion of London (%)
Parks and Gardens	190.8	5.1	5.83
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	380.8	10.1	5.62
Green Corridors	99.7	2.7	3.58
Recreation & Outdoor Sports Facilities	405.1	10.8	6.76
Amenity Greenspace & Education	125.0	3.3	4.07
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	5.1	0.1	0.05
Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	31.8	0.8	0.64
Cemeteries and Churchyards	82.5	2.2	0.86
Other Urban Fringe	7.8	0.2	8.05
Civic Spaces	0.0	0.0	0.06
Other Open Space	0.01	0.01	1.93

Category	Merton Provision	Proportion of Merton	Proportion of London
Unclassified by GiGL	-	-	4.91
Total	100000	1000	1000

London Benchmarks for Quantity: Hectare per 1000 Population

- 4.5 Based on the total amount of Open Space London wide (67541 hectares¹⁷) and the population projection for London of 8.95 million¹⁸ the overall Quantity is 7.5 Hectares per 1000 Population.

National Benchmarks for Quantity: Hectare per 1000 Population

- 4.6 National Benchmark Standards are from Fields in Trust's (FiT) Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard (2015) which replaces FiT's 2008 guidance Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play. This latest guidance has been informed by a survey commissioned by FiT in 2014¹⁹ resulting in a response from 119 local authorities in England and Wales representing a total response rate of 33%.
- 4.7 Beyond the Six Acre Standard guidance reflects the Localism Act and the phased introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The guidance introduces quantity benchmarking for informal open space (e.g. Parks and Gardens, Amenity Greenspace and Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace) alongside formal open space such as sports pitches and play areas.
- 4.8 When quantity provision of open space in Merton is compared with the FIT national benchmark standards (Table 22) the provision in Merton is very similar across all categories. Not all categories have a national benchmark standard due to the type of provision for example Green Corridors are often associated with natural water courses or linear transport infrastructure and their function is to connect other open spaces and Churchyards and Cemeteries are associated with provision of burial ground therefore not primarily for recreation (although their contribution to this open space functions is valuable).
- 4.9 The one exception in the comparison is for Play Space for Children and Teenagers which shows that Merton's provision is below the national benchmark. In this instance it is important to note that the figure for Merton's Play Space provision excludes provision in other categories (such as Parks and Gardens and Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities) therefore should be considered alongside the Accessibility Assessment (which does include other categories) for a truer picture of provision and subsequent deficiencies.

¹⁷ "Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2019" from <https://www.gigl.org.uk/keyfigures/>

¹⁸ <https://www.ukpopulation.org/london-population>

¹⁹ Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play 2015 Review Phase 2 Survey Findings for England and Wales http://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/File/Survey_20findings.pdf

Table 22: Hectare per 1000 Population Benchmark by Category

Category	Merion Current Population Provision (ha/1000)	Merion Future Population Provision (ha/1000)	Fields in Use National Benchmark
Parks and Gardens	0.91	0.81	0.8
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	1.82	1.61	1.8
Green Corridors	0.48	0.42	-
Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.93	1.71	1.6
Amenity Greenspace and Education	0.60	0.53	0.6
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	0.02	0.02	0.25
Allotments Community Gardens and City Farms	0.15	0.13	0.3 ²⁰
Cemeteries and Churchyards	0.39	0.35	-
Other Urban Fringe	0.04	0.03	-
Civic Spaces	0.0	0.0	-
Other Open Space	0.01	0.01	-
Total	10.0	10.0	10.0

²⁰ This figure is from the FIT survey findings - see Additional Information on Allotment Standards

Additional Information on Allotment Standards

- 4.10 There is no legal national minimum quantity provision standard for allotments²¹.
- 4.11 The 1969 Thorpe Report recommended a minimum provision equivalent to 15 plots per 1000 households²² which equates to 6.5 plots²³ per 1000 population or 0.16 ha per 1000 population.
- 4.12 The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) recommends a minimum level of provision of 20 allotment plots per 1000 households which equates to 8.7 plots per 1000 population or 0.21 ha per 1000 population. NSALG advises that the standard plot size is 250 sq. metres.
- 4.13 A Review of Allotment Provision for Cambridge City Council²⁴ stated that there is difficulty in considering a standard of provision based on household given the trend of falling household size since the 1950s. The report referenced the Survey of Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms carried out by the University of Derby on behalf of Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in 2006 which showed that the national average provision was 7 plots per 1000 population which equates to 0.175 ha per 1000 population.
- 4.14 In the Fit Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play Review, Phase 2 Survey Findings for England and Wales (2014) the median level of provision for allotments, community gardens and urban farms was 0.3 ha per 1000 population.
- 4.15 A summary of national benchmark standard for allotments is provided in the Table 23. Merton's provision of Allotments and Community Gardens falls below the range of benchmark standards, most notably the most recent Fit survey findings of 0.3 hectares per 1000.

Table 23: Hectare per 1000 Population Benchmark for Allotments

	1000 of households	1000 of plots per household	Population based on 1000 of size of plots	1000 are based on plots of size of plots
Thorpe Report 1969	1000	15	2300	0.375
		6.5	1000	1000
NSALG	1000	20	2300	0.5
	-	8.7	1000	1000
University of Derby 2006	-	7	1000	1000

²¹ <http://www.allotmoreallotments.org.uk/legislation.htm>

²² Average Household size in England & Wales is 2.4 (2017 Census)

²³ Based on a standard plot of 250m²

²⁴ Review of Allotment Provision for Cambridge City Council (Ashley Godfrey Associates, January 2010)

	Number of ha	Number of posts per ha	Population based on ha	Percentage based on posts of
FiT Survey 2014	-	-		

National Benchmarks for Quality

- 4.16 The National Benchmark standard for open space quality is the Green Flag Award criteria which was used to complete the quality audits in Merton.
- 4.17 National Benchmark Standards from the FiT Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard (2015) and the Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool (Play England 2009) were also applied during the Merton quality audits as shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Quality Benchmark by Category

Category	National Benchmark Standard
Parks and Gardens	Parks to be of Green Flag status.
Natural and Semi-Natural	Appropriately landscaped. Positive management.
Amenity Greenspace and Education	Provision of footpaths. Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime.
Green Corridor	No standard in the guidance but it can be assumed the same standards as above apply to other types of green space.
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	Quality appropriate to the intended level of performance designed to appropriate technical standards. Located where they are of most value to the community to be served. Local authorities can set their own quality benchmark standards for play areas using the Children's Play Council's Quality Assessment Tool.

Category	National Park Standard
Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities	<p>Sufficiently diverse recreational use for the whole community.</p> <p>Appropriately landscaped.</p> <p>Maintained safely and to the highest possible condition with available finance.</p> <p>Positively managed taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time as necessary.</p> <p>Provision of appropriate ancillary facilities and equipment.</p> <p>Provision of footpaths.</p> <p>Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime.</p> <p>Local authorities can set their own quality benchmark standards for playing pitches taking into account the level of play topography necessary safety margins and optimal orientation.</p>

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Key Findings from Quantity, Quality and Accessibility Assessment

Quantity

- 5.1 Merton's population is set to increase by up to 21% in the next 15 years²⁵ and based on providing no additional open space this will result in the overall quantity provision of open space falling from 6.3 hectares per 1000 in 2018 to 5.3 hectares per 1000 population by 2035. If the lower level population projections (an increase of 10%) prove to be more accurate this still results in a fall in quantity provision to 5.9 hectares per 1000 by 2035.
- 5.2 When looked at in land cover terms 35% of Merton is Open Space compared to 42% London wide²⁶. Merton's Open Space land cover is similar to neighbouring outer boroughs Kingston (37%) and Sutton (34%).
- 5.3 Whilst the quantity of provision is not the only factor and the benefits of accessibility to good quality open spaces are widely known quantity should remain a consideration and could include the following
- Retaining existing open space in situ (e.g. no loss of existing open space)
 - Retaining the existing amount of open space overall (e.g. no net loss of open space)
 - New open spaces in areas of deficiency
 - New types of open space to replace existing open spaces in areas of deficiency and
 - Greater diversity of types of open spaces using existing open spaces (e.g. increasing the multi-functionality of open space).
- 5.4 Retaining all existing open space can be restrictive. In some cases restrictions on loss of open space are entirely appropriate (for example protecting a designated landscape) but in other cases there may be justification for loss of open space where improvements to the provision of open space can be made in other ways (for example through the regeneration of housing estates). Therefore retaining the amount of open space through a 'no net loss' approach is a more pragmatic approach.
- 5.5 In areas of deficiency there may be opportunities for new open spaces associated with new development (e.g. through the Urban Greening Factor) but where this is not possible looking to diversify existing open spaces provides an opportunity to increase provision without increasing the overall amount of open space. This could include adding play facilities to existing open spaces or increasing the biodiversity value of open spaces. The Merton Green Infrastructure Technical Report assesses the multi-functionality of open spaces and the areas where enhancement would be most beneficial.

²⁵ Demographic projections (Merton Strategic Housing Need Assessment Draft Report October 2018)

²⁶ "Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2019" from <https://www.gigl.org.uk/keyfigures>

Quality

- 5.6 The open space audits (based on Green Flag criteria) show opportunities for improvements across all types of open spaces. Overall 60% of open spaces fall into the Fair-Good-Very Good bandings whilst 40% fall into the Poor banding. The average scores for Parks and Gardens-Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities-Allotments-Community Gardens and City Farms-and Cemeteries and Churchyards all fall into the Fair-Good banding whilst the average score for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace-Green Corridors-and Amenity Greenspace and Education fall into the Poor banding. This shows a general trend for the less formal types of open space to be lower quality.
- 5.7 Each type of open space is audited on its own merits and not on whether it does or doesn't provide certain facilities so the lower scores for informal/natural open spaces does not mean they should all be upgraded to more formal provision. However improvements should be focused on ensuring the sites are Welcoming-Healthy-Safe & Secure-and Well Maintained and Clean in line with the Green Flag Award benchmarking criteria which can include improvements such as
- Better signage at entrances (this can be as simple as the name of the site and contact details and for more formal sites information on facilities and events)
 - Improvements to access into and around the site (including gates-barriers-footpath improvements)
 - Improvements to access to the site from surrounding roads/footpaths such as road crossings
 - Appropriate levels of vegetation management (not all sites should be pristine but a balance of amenity and nature conservation should be sought)
 - High levels of maintenance of site furniture (e.g. signs-seats-bins-lighting)equipment (e.g. play equipment)and infrastructure (e.g. paths-car parking).
- 5.8 The play area audits (based on Play England criteria) also shows opportunities for improvements across all types of play area with 61% of play areas falling into the Average-needs Some Improvement banding. The Neighbourhood play areas (with an average score in the Good banding) tended to score better than the Local and Door-Step play areas (both with average scores in the Average banding).
- 5.9 Improvements should be focused on Location-Play Value and Care and Maintenance in line with the Play England benchmarking criteria. It is acknowledged that not all criteria are applicable to the Door-Step play areas (such as play for different ages-and toilets-changing facilities).

Accessibility

- 5.10 Merton has high accessibility to Regional Parks (98%) and Metropolitan Parks (99%). There is also a good level of accessibility to District (77%) and Local (72%) Parks. There is a notable gap in access to District Parks a continuous band of deficiency from west to north east through Raynes Park, Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Mitcham. Open spaces are evident within the area of deficiency to District Parks but these spaces either do not meet the criteria for a District Park or are not publically accessible.
- 5.11 The best reflection of deficiency in access to open space is to the Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks. In these areas of deficiency (which appear as pockets of deficiency fairly evenly spread across the borough) the lack of open spaces is more evident although there is some evidence of existing open space which is not publically accessible. There are some areas (particularly noticeable around Raynes Park) where there are gaps in access to both District and Local Parks therefore these areas should be targeted for improvements in accessibility.
- 5.12 There is good accessibility (84%) to nature (publically accessible Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation - SINCs). As for District and Local Open Spaces the most notable gap is running through the borough from west to north through Raynes Park and Wimbledon. There are some existing open spaces in the areas of deficiency so there may be opportunities for enhancement depending on their current use. This is also linked to The Merton Green Infrastructure Assessment and the multi-functionality of open spaces.
- 5.13 Access to Play varies greatly depending on the age range with over 12 years having 95% accessibility between 5 and 11 years having 76% accessibility and under 5 just 27% accessibility. Whilst access to play provision includes both formal equipped play areas and informal play in open spaces there is a notable lack of equipped play areas in the north west of the borough.

Feedback from Open Space Consultation

- 5.14 A separate Open Space Consultation Technical Report provides details of the informal consultation with community groups that was undertaken for the Merton Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study.
- 5.15 The consultation provided an opportunity for Friends of the Parks and other community groups to communicate their aspirations and concerns regarding open space in Merton and provide research for to feed into the Study. A summary from the conclusions section of the report is provided below.
- 5.16 The most popular type of open space was outdoor sports facilities followed by natural and semi-natural urban greenspace and parks and gardens.
- 5.17 There were very few open spaces used beyond the borough boundary. Tooting Common, Streatham Common and King Georges Park in Wandsworth were mentioned but it was felt that there were sufficient open spaces within Merton that residents didn't need to travel to neighbouring boroughs.

- 5.18 Consultees used open spaces mostly for accessing nature, formal and informal recreation, improving health and wellbeing, socialising and for getting around the borough away from roads.
- 5.19 Consultees considered open spaces in Merton to have a high environmental and social value. Consultees valued accessibility to open spaces in the urban environment, opportunities for recreation, a sense of space and the contribution that open spaces make to air quality.
- 5.20 The gaps in provisions of facilities in open spaces were identified mainly as provisions such as litter bins and adult exercise equipment. Also open spaces such as allotments need to be protected from development as they provide opportunities for recreation, socialising and wildlife. Consultees also wanted to see additional opportunities in open spaces for biodiversity.
- 5.21 Consultees suggested that improvements could be made in the accessibility of privately owned open spaces and footpaths and PRowS. They also suggested that working relationships and communication between community groups, contractors and the Council will make management and maintenance of open spaces easier and of a higher standard. Improvements to nature conservation, biodiversity and "wild" areas was also highlighted.
- 5.22 Funding and support for community groups also a key concern of consultees. It was suggested that additional funding could be made available or additional charges through planning be considered to ensure the management of open spaces. Consultees also stated that Management Plans would assist in the management, maintenance and improvement of open spaces, especially larger open spaces such as Mitcham Common.

Standards and Policy Comparison with Neighbouring Boroughs

- 5.23 The following table provides information from the Local Plan and the Open Space Study Strategy for the neighbouring boroughs as follows:
- Lambeth
 - Wandsworth
 - Croydon
 - Sutton and
 - Kingston.

Table 25: Standards Comparison with Neighbouring Boroughs

	Local Plan	Lambeth	Other Boroughs
Lambeth ²⁷	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Strategic Objective</i></p> <p>There is a need for more open space in the borough to serve the growing population but there is no land available to deliver a major new park. This need will therefore be met principally by safeguarding existing open space and improving its quality and access as well as linkages between open spaces. Limited additional increases in quantity will be pursued on major development sites as opportunities arise.</p> <p><i>Housing</i></p> <p>Various housing estates in the borough are set in areas of open land which are not well arranged and are no longer attractive safe or pleasant to use. In such cases where the land is of poor quality and has no value as open space there is benefit in supporting the reorganisation of open space as part of housing regeneration proposals.</p> <p>Also see <i>Policy EN1 Open Space and Biodiversity & H5 Housing Standards</i>.</p>		

²⁷ Lambeth Local Plan 2015 <https://lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pl-lambeth-local-plan-2015-web.pdf>

	Plan	Area	Assessment
Lambeth ²⁸	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Local Plan Policy EN1 Open Space and Biodiversity</i></p> <p>(c) Development proposals should wherever possible protect, enhance, create or manage nature conservation and biodiversity interest in accordance with the borough’s Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy.</p> <p>(d) Increasing the quantity of open space in the borough through proposals such as the Vauxhall Square initiative, the extension of Jubilee Gardens and by linking existing spaces through green chains, the Greenway and Thames Path National Walking trail initiatives, but also through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The provision of open space in new developments appropriate to their scale, the uses involved and the location of the development. (ii) Requiring major development in areas of open space deficiency or access to nature deficiency to provide appropriate on-site provision of open space or, where this is not feasible and where this would address needs more effectively, make financial contributions to enable the provision of new open space or improvements to the accessibility and quality of existing public open space, including their nature conservation and biodiversity value. <p>(e) Improving the quality of, and access to, existing open space, including the range of facilities available and its biodiversity and nature conservation value and heritage value, through various means including the implementation of the Lambeth Open Spaces Strategy.</p>		

²⁸ Lambeth Local Plan 2015 <https://lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pl-lambeth-local-plan-2015-web.pdf>

	Plan	Area	Access
Lambeth ²⁹	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Local Plan Policy H5 Housing Standards</i></p> <p><i>(b) The council will require at least the following level of external amenity space for all residential units.</i></p> <p><i>(i) For new houses, 30m2 private amenity space per house should be provided.</i></p> <p><i>(ii) For new flatted developments, communal amenity space of at least 50m2 per scheme should be provided, plus a further 10m2 per flat provided either as a balcony/ terrace/private garden or consolidated with the communal amenity space.</i></p> <p><i>(iii) Houses, ground-floor flats, and family sized units should preferably have direct access to a private garden.</i></p> <p><i>c) Communal amenity space should:</i></p> <p><i>(v) incorporate sustainable landscape principles and practices, including effective water management, efficient energy use, use of sustainable materials, and promotion of biodiversity and, where appropriate, food growing;</i></p>		
Lambeth ³⁰	<p><u>Open Space Strategy</u></p> <p>Council's target of 10 Net Loss of Open Space Hectare per 1000 has reduced due to population increase but overall amount of open space has remained constant.</p>	<p><u>Open Space Strategy</u></p> <p>Section 12 Conclusions and Recommendations provides a description of quality improvement requirements. There is also a table showing required features and desirable features with regards to open space categories.</p>	<p><u>Open Space Strategy</u></p> <p>There are no accessibility standards however the Council may choose to use the London Plan standards.</p>

²⁹ Lambeth Local Plan 2015 <https://lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pl-lambeth-local-plan-2015-web.pdf>

³⁰ Lambeth Open Space Strategy 2013 <https://lambeth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-evidence-base>

	Plan	Policy	Policy
Wandsworth ³¹	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Core Strategy, Policy LP 4: Open Space and the natural environment</i></p> <p>(c) The Council will require the provision of open space and/or secure public access to private facilities in appropriate developments and as a priority in areas identified as deficient in open space play space or sport and recreation facilities and/or to meet priorities.</p>	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Core Strategy, Policy LP 4: Open Space and the natural environment</i></p> <p>(a) The Council will protect and improve public and private open space and Green Infrastructure in the borough as identified in the Open Space Study and Play Strategy.</p>	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p>Development Management Policies Document <i>Policy DMO 2: Playing fields and pitches, sport, play and informal recreation</i></p> <p>(e) Public access to open space and sports and recreation facilities on private land is encouraged particularly in open space deficiency areas.</p>
Wandsworth ³²	<p><u>Open Space Study</u></p> <p>Hectares per 1,000 standards for public parks (2.15ha) children's play (0.021ha) natural green space (1ha of SIC) allotments (0.077ha)</p>	<p><u>Open Space Study</u></p> <p>Public parks should meet Green Flag good quality standards children's play to meet PFA 6 acre Standard (2001) natural greenspace should be adequate for to support local biodiversity and allotments should be adequate to support the needs of the local community.</p>	<p><u>Open Space Study</u></p> <p>London Plan accessibility standards for metropolitan and regional parks district parks and pocket parks formal and informal play for children and teenagers.</p> <p>SIC or SBI (within 500m from home) and allotments (within 800m from home)</p>

³¹ Wandsworth Local Plan <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan/>

³² Wandsworth open Space Study 2007 <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence/local-plan-environment-and-social/open-space-study/>

	Plan	Policy	Access
Croydon ³³	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Policy SP7 Green Grid</i></p> <p>(a) Seek the provision and creation of new green spaces. With particular focus for areas deficient in access to nature play areas and publicly accessible recreational open space.</p>	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Policy SP7 Green Grid</i></p> <p>(c) Maintain and improve the quality, function and offer of open spaces.</p>	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Policy SP7 Green Grid</i></p> <p>(b) Improve access and links to and through green spaces.</p>
Croydon ³⁴	<p><u>Open Space Needs Assessment Standards</u></p> <p>Standards are by Ward and by Open Space Typology based on need to address areas of deficiency in each ward.</p>	<p><u>Open Space Needs Assessment Standards</u></p> <p>Pass rates based on Green Flag National Benchmark standard.</p>	<p><u>Open Space Needs Assessment Standards</u></p> <p>London Plan accessibility standards for Public Open Space hierarchy.</p>
Sutton ³⁵	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Policy 25 Open Spaces</i></p> <p>(A) The Council will seek to retain the existing level of open space in the borough.</p>	<p><u>Local Plan</u></p> <p><i>Policy 25 Open Spaces</i></p> <p>(iii) Supporting improvements, enhancements and management that improves both quality and access to existing green spaces.</p>	

³³ Croydon Local Plan 2018 <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Croydon%20Local%20Plan%202018.pdf>

³⁴ Croydon Open Space Assessment & Standards Assessment 2009 <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework/evidence/nature>

³⁵ Sutton Local Plan 2018 <https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200464/planning/policy/1521/local-plan-adopted-2018>

	Plan	Policy	Assessment
Sutton ³⁶	<u>Open Space Study</u> Amount of open space per 1000 is 2.88ha	<u>Open Space Study</u> PA - Ongoing review and enhancement of the quality of open spaces.	<u>Open Space Study</u> Address any deficiencies identified in the Open Space Study update (Feb 2016)
Kingston ^{37 38}	<u>Core Strategy & Open Space Assessment</u> Hectare per 1000 standards for Public Parks (1.11ha) Play (0.8ha) Natural and Semi-Natural (1ha) Allotments (0.35ha). Additional open space is required to meet these standards.	<u>Core Strategy</u> <i>Vision for Kingston in 2027 (extract)</i> Open spaces and parks will have been improved and their biodiversity protected. Opportunities for sport and recreation will be enhanced and increased local food grown with more allotments provided. The health of the Borough will be improved as health deprivation and inequalities are tackled.	<u>Core Strategy & Open Space Assessment</u> London Plan accessibility standards for Public Open Space hierarchy.

³⁶ Sutton Open Space Evidence Base including Open Space Study Update 2016 https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200464/planning_policy/1660/evidence_base_by_topic

³⁷ Kingston Core Strategy 2012 https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/download/37/core_strategy

³⁸ Kingston Open Space Assessment 2006 <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/file/758/kingston-open-space-assessment-report>

Setting Merton's Open Space Policies and Standards

5.24 The following policy and standards approached are recommended for Merton.

Table 26: Recommended Standards for Merton

Plan	Policy	Standards
<p>No net loss of open space – retain land cover of 35%.</p> <p>Acceptance that the borough wide hectare per 1000 provision will reduce as the population increases.</p> <p>Provision of additional and/or increase functionality of existing open space through major developments with a particular focus on areas deficient in access to nature, play areas and publicly accessible open space.</p> <p>Protect and enhance existing open spaces and the natural environment – providing habitats for biodiversity to flourish and expand.</p>	<p>Supporting improvements, enhancements and management that improves both quality and access to existing green spaces.</p> <p>National Benchmark standards such as Green Flag, Play England, Sport England.</p>	<p>London Plan accessibility standards for Public Open Space hierarchy (Regional, Metropolitan, District, Local Parks and Open Spaces, Small Open Spaces).</p> <p>Mayor's SPG on Children's Play and Informal Recreation accessibility standards by age range (Under 5s, 5-11, 12+).</p> <p>Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy Access to Nature standards (accessible SIC of metropolitan or borough importance).</p> <p>Improve access and links to and through open spaces.</p>



APPENDIX A Planning Provision Standard and Schedule

Ward	Parks and Gardens	Public and Private Open Space	Green Corridors	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Open Space	Children and Teenagers	Open Space and Parks	Green Spaces and Gardens	Other Urban Fringe	Other	Total
Abbey	0.4	4.9	1.6	7.9	1.8		1.7	0.4			18.7
Cannon Hill	32.0	20.6	1.7	31.2	2.2		7.1				94.8
Colliers Wood	4.5	2.1	5.6	2.9	0.3			0.01			15.4
Cricket Green	10.9	59.7	10.7	47.3	11.7	0.7	2.0	2.7		0.01	145.6
Dundonald			8.6	5.8	3.8						18.2
Figges Marsh	10.2		1.8		12.0	0.01	1.0	0.01			25.1
Graveney	0.01		6.4		1.1	0.6	2.8				11.0
Hillside			2.1	1.6	2.0			0.1			5.8
Lavender Fields	0.4	0.5	0.4	3.7	3.6	1.3	5.2	5.9			21.0

Ward	Parks and Gardens	Play Areas and Sports Facilities	Green Corridors	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Open Space	Children and Teenagers	Open Space and Parks	Green Spaces and Parks	Other Urban Fringe	Other	Total
Longthornton	2.5	0.01	1.6	19.1	4.6	2.3		20.5			50.7
Lower Morden	6.2		2.4	8.6	5.2			38.8	0.01		61.2
Merton Park	18.0	0.3	4.7	5.4	4.3			1.6			34.2
Pollards Hill	0.01	96.0	0.5	4.2	9.2	0.01	0.9	0.01			110.9
Ravensbury	36.6	4.5	7.9	10.1	8.2						67.2
Raynes Park	1.5	0.6	10.7	23.0	7.0		2.9				45.7
St. Helier	31.7	0.3	7.9	12.0	18.3		2.4	0.7			73.3
Trinity	2.4	4.2	3.5	5.0	1.7	0.2	0.1	0.01			17.1
Village	12.8	182.5	2.9	165.5	10.9		2.1	2.8	5.1		384.5



Ward	Parks and Gardens	Green and Seaside Areas	Green Corridors	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Open Space	Children and Teenagers	Open Space Parks and Fields	Green Spaces and Gardens	Other Urban Fringe	Other	Total
West Barnes		4.7	4.7	33.6	15.7		0.6	0.5	2.8	0.01	62.6
Wimbledon Park	20.9		13.9	18.2	1.4		2.9	8.4			65.6
Total											



APPENDIX A: GIS Open Space Maps



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Mulgrave Terrace
Gateshead
E8 1A

Tel 0191 605 3340
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SOUTH

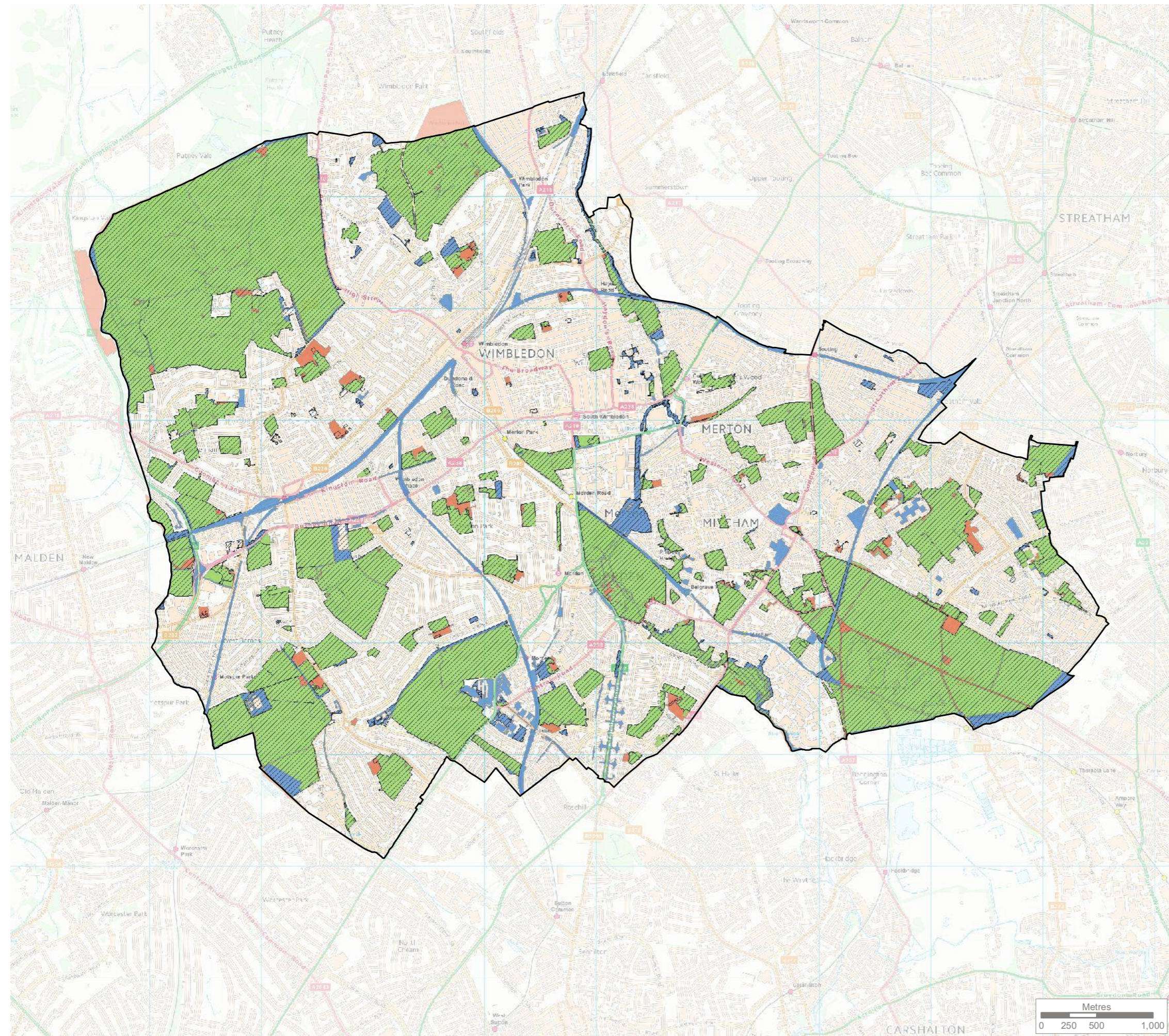
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London
SE1 1DB

Tel 020 3096 6050
E-mail london@tep.uk.com






REGIONAL OFFICE

4 Park Row
Churchover
Cury
Helston
Cornwall
TR12 7BW

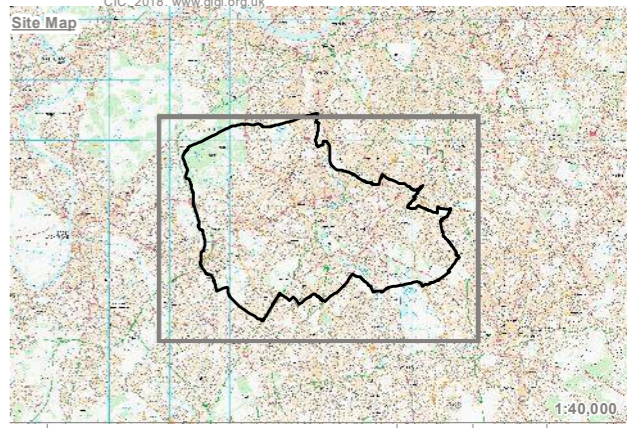
Tel 01326 240081
E-mail cornwall@tep.uk.com



KEY

-  London Borough of Merton
-  Open Space Policy Designation
-  Open Space Only Within GiGL Dataset
-  Open Space Only Within Merton Dataset
-  Open Space Within Both Datasets

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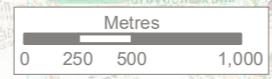
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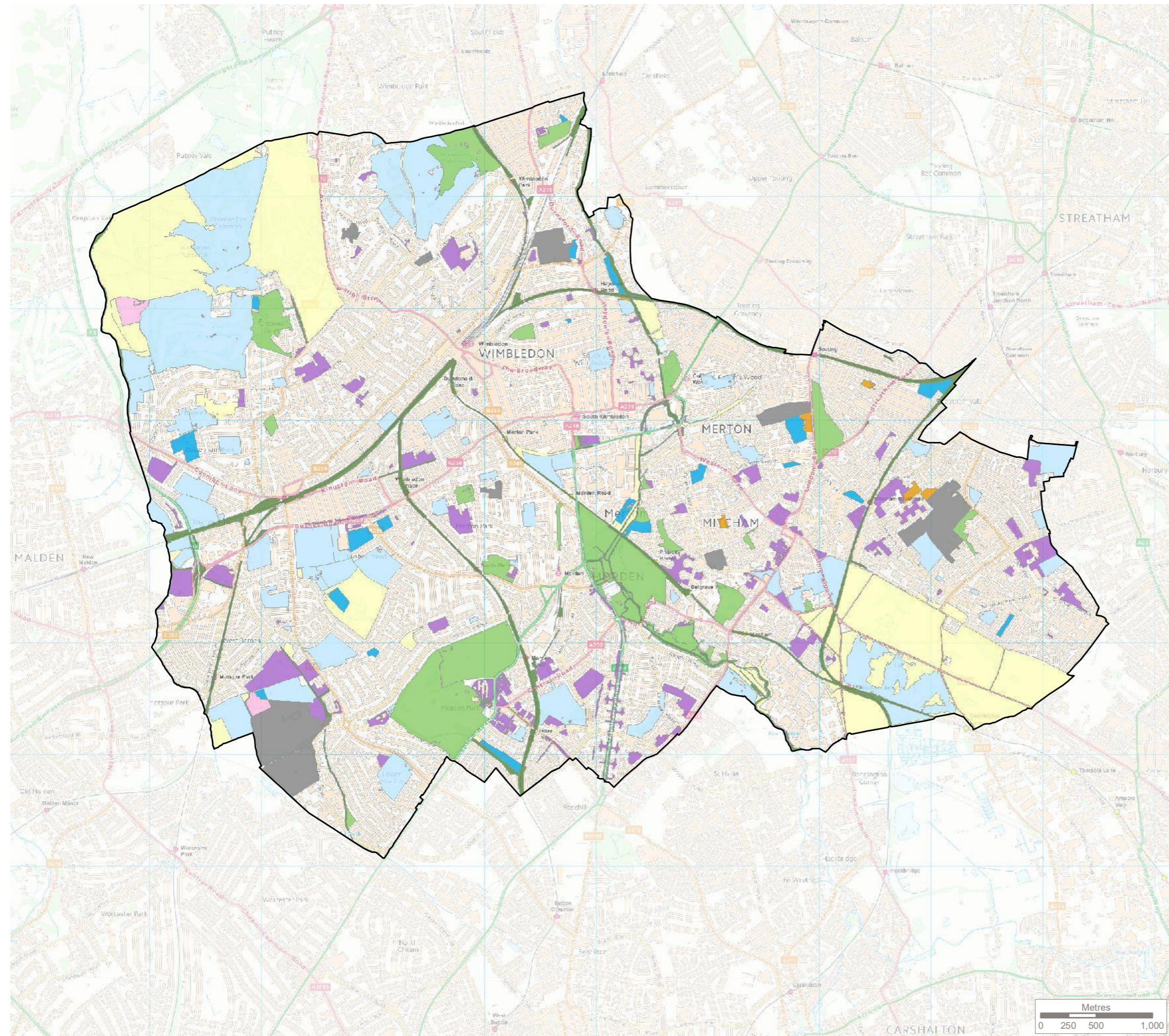
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Open Space Designation Comparison

Drawing Number
G7118.008.1 Sheet 1 of 4

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
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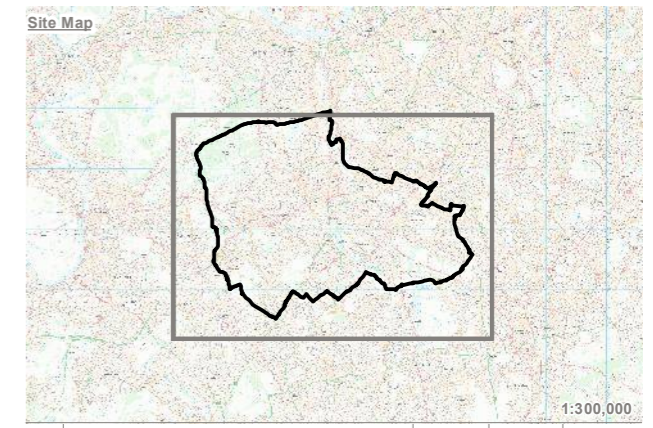




KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms
- Amenity Space
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Provision for Children and Teenagers
- Green Corridors
- Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace
- Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Parks and Gardens
- Other Urban Fringe
- Other Open Space

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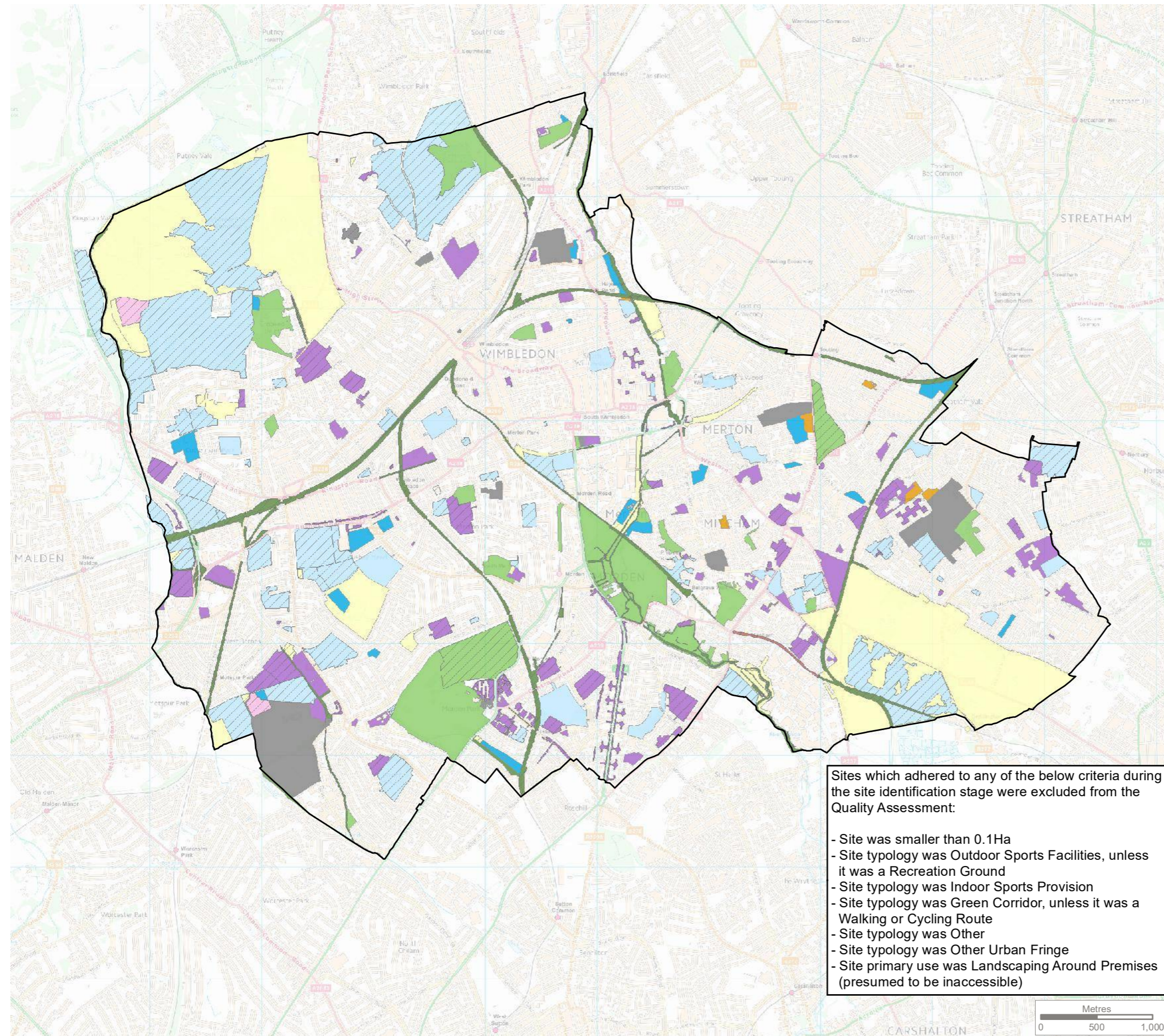
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Open Space Typology Map

Drawing Number
G7118.016.1 Sheet 1 of 4

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	19/03/2019





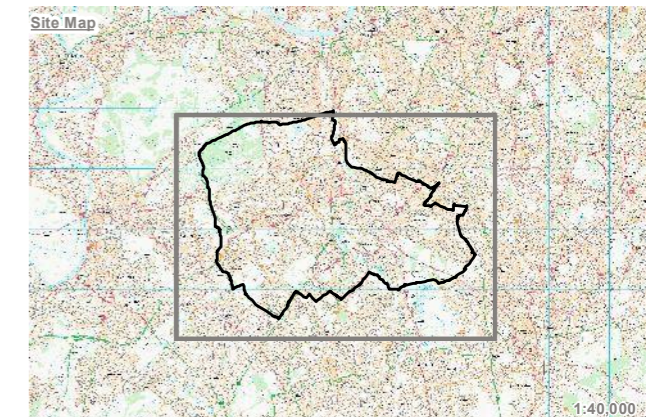
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Site Excluded from Open Space Quality Assessment

PPG17 Open Space Typology

- Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms
- Amenity Space
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Provision for Children and Teenagers
- Green Corridors
- Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace
- Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Parks and Gardens

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Sites which adhered to any of the below criteria during the site identification stage were excluded from the Quality Assessment:

- Site was smaller than 0.1Ha
- Site typology was Outdoor Sports Facilities, unless it was a Recreation Ground
- Site typology was Indoor Sports Provision
- Site typology was Green Corridor, unless it was a Walking or Cycling Route
- Site typology was Other
- Site typology was Other Urban Fringe
- Site primary use was Landscaping Around Premises (presumed to be inaccessible)



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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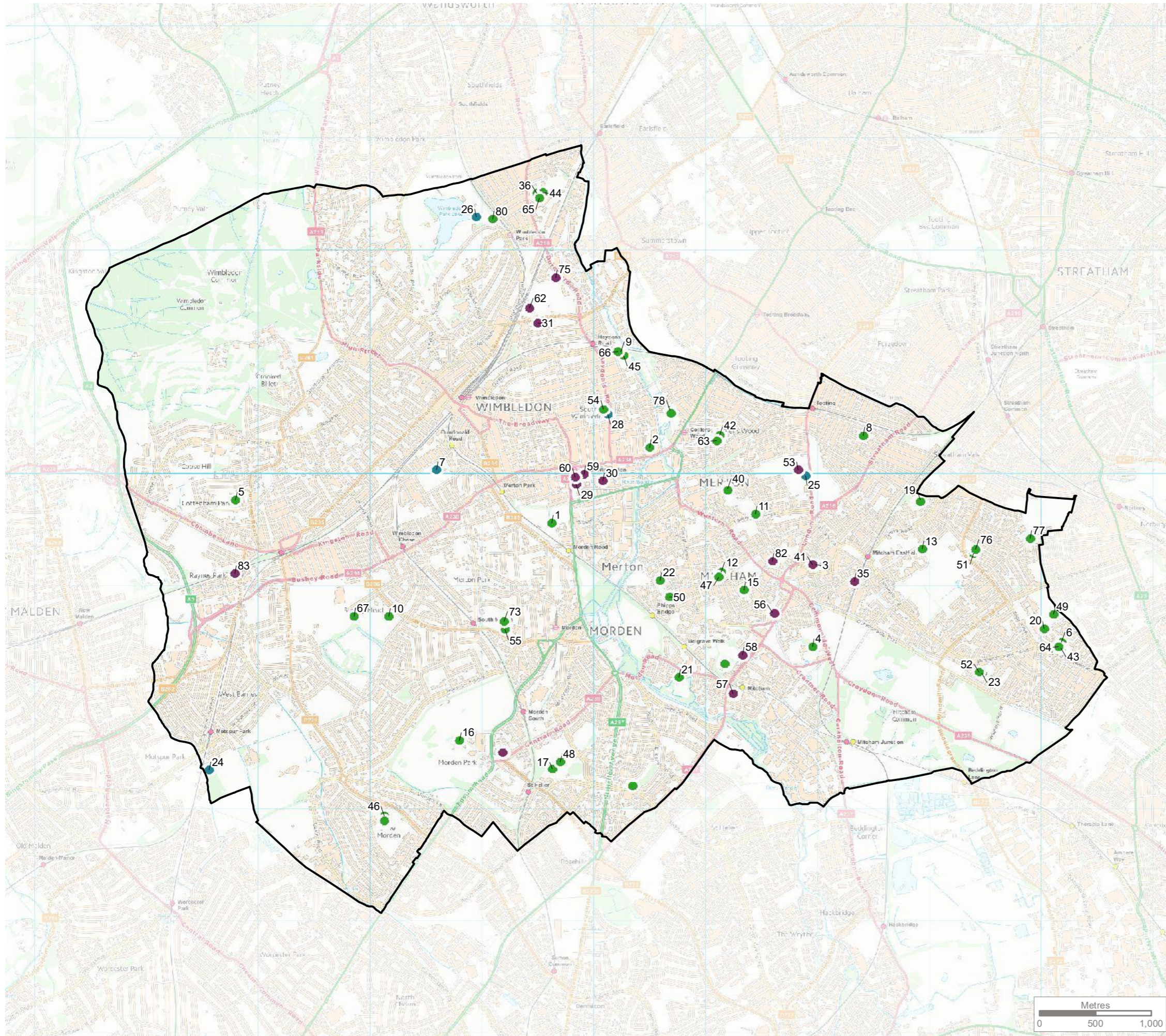
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Project
 Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
 Open Space Quality Assessment - Sites Audited

Drawing Number
 G7118.014.1 Sheet 1 of 4

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	19/03/2019



KEY

London Borough of Merton

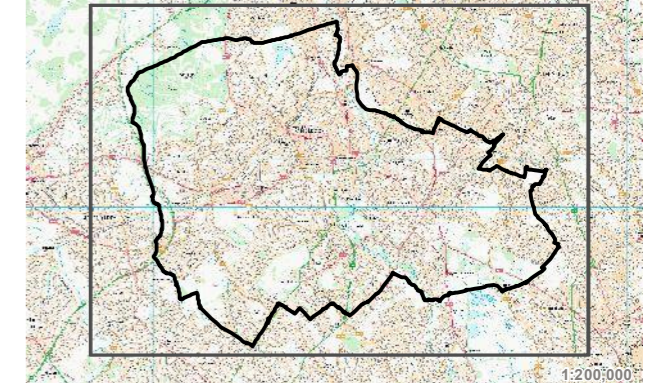
Play Area Types

- A - Doorstep Playable Spaces
- B - Local Playable Space or Facility
- C - Neighbourhood Playable Space or Facility



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Site Map



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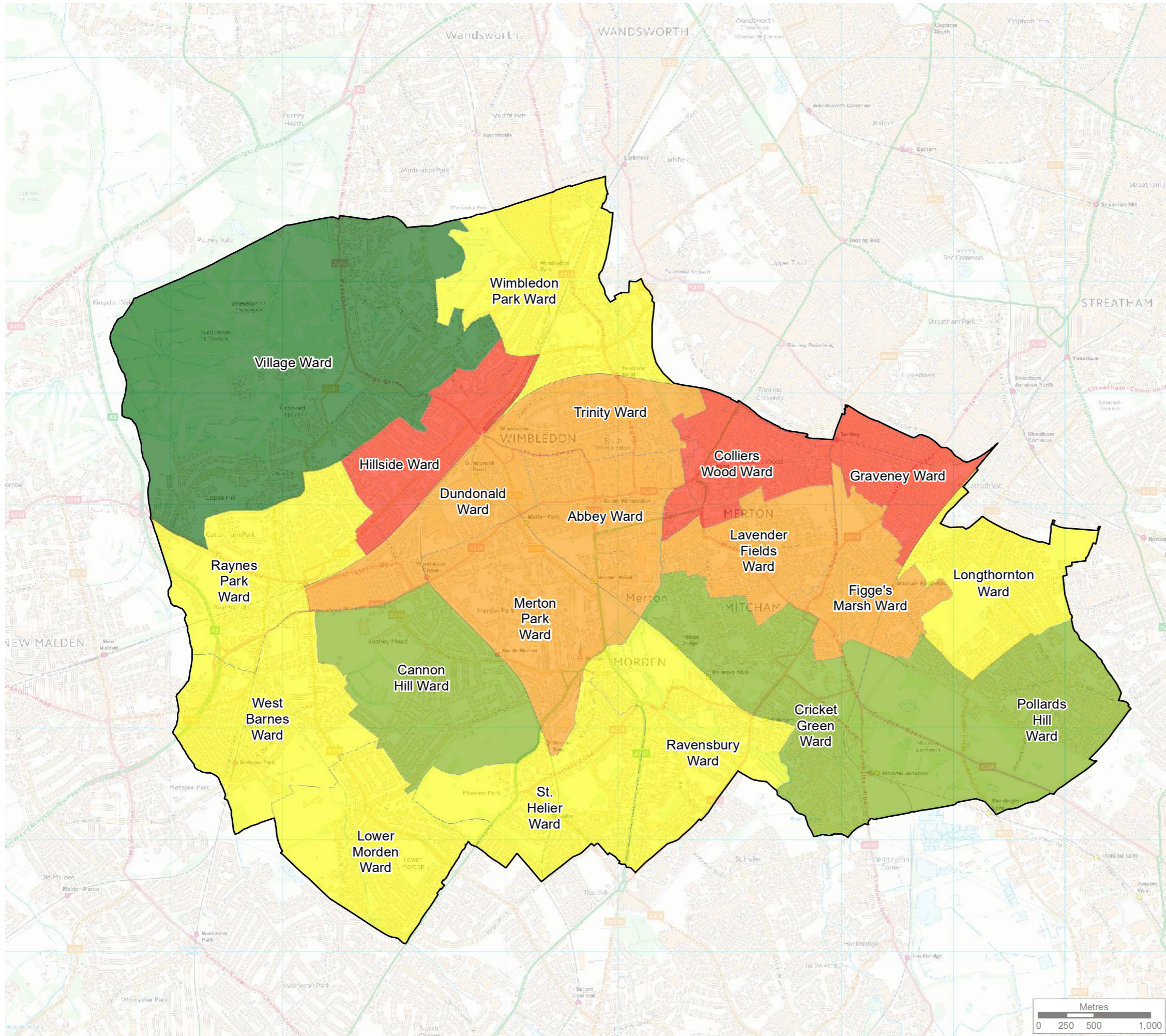
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Play Area Quality Audit Survey - Sites Audited







Drawing Number
G7118.015

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	19/12/2018



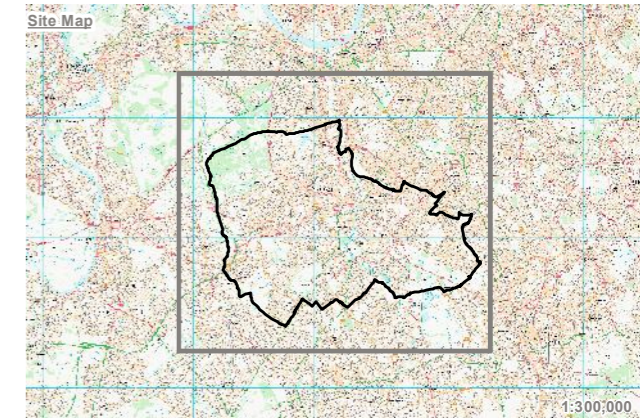


KEY

-  London Borough of Merton
- Open Space Provision by Ha Per 1000**
-  Most Provision
- 
- 
- 
-  Least Provision

The 'Ward Population Projection' Dataset (GLA, 2017) was used to estimate ward populations.

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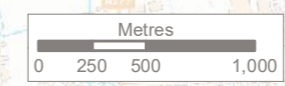
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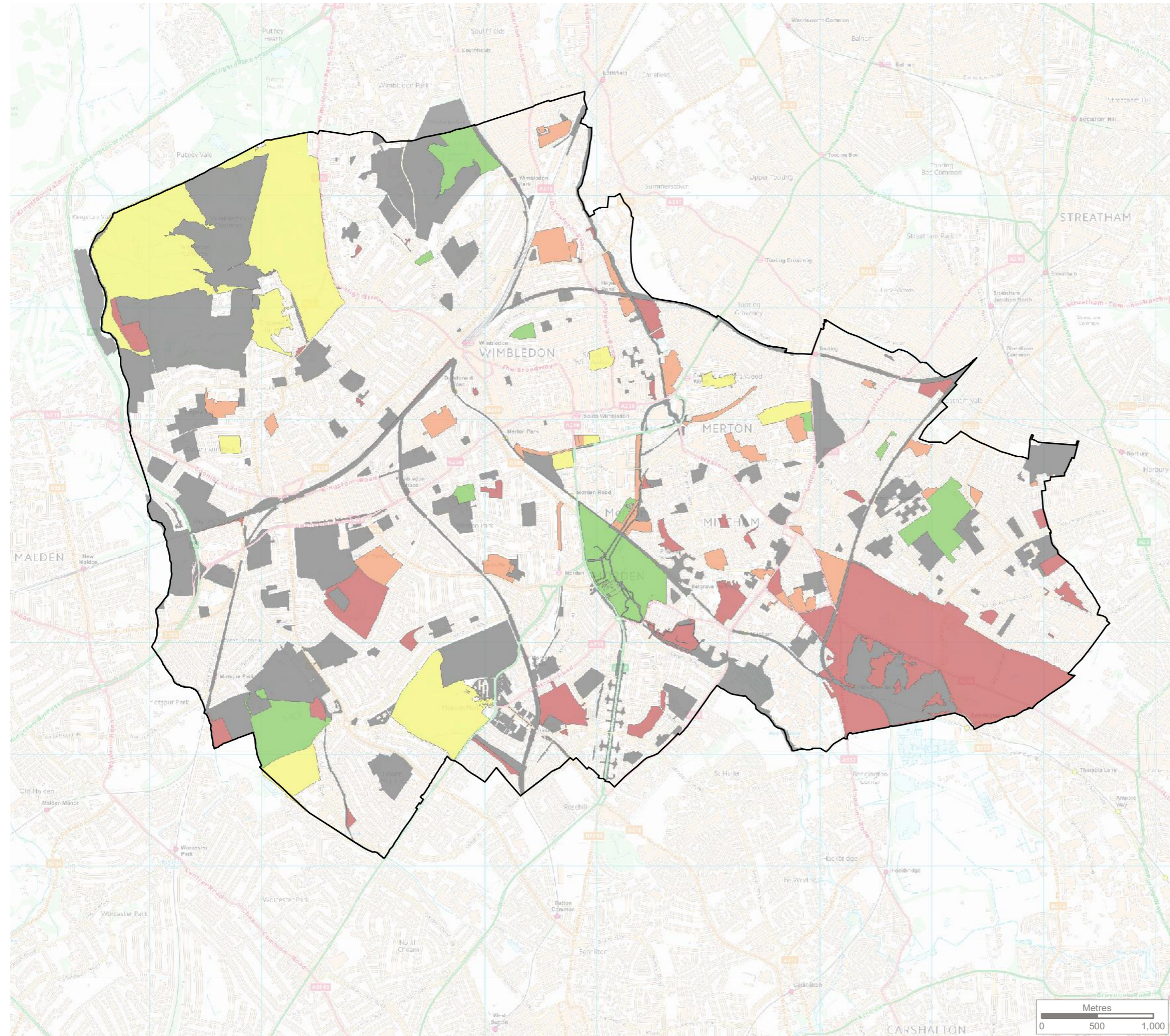
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Open Space Quantity Provision - 2018 Population

Drawing Number
G7118.019

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	19/03/2019





KEY

London Borough of Merton

Open Space Quality Assessment Score

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Site Inaccessible for Survey

Quality scores were based on the Green Flag grades:

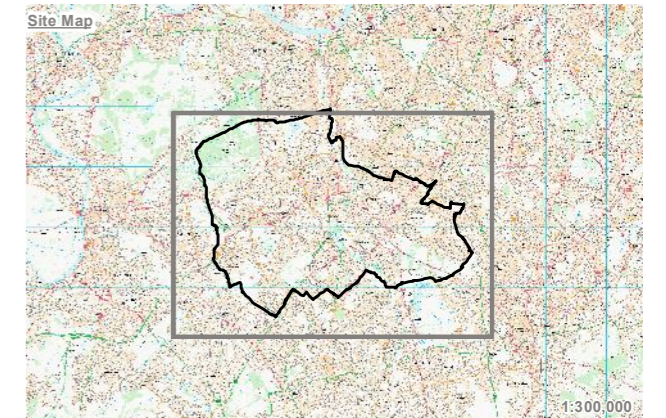
- 90 - 100% Excellent
- 80 - 89% Very Good
- 70 - 79% Good
- 50 - 69% Fair
- 0 - 49% Poor

Open Spaces were assessed on the following criteria based on Green Flag Award:

- Is it a welcoming place?
- Is it a healthy, safe and secure place?
- Is it a well maintained and clean place?



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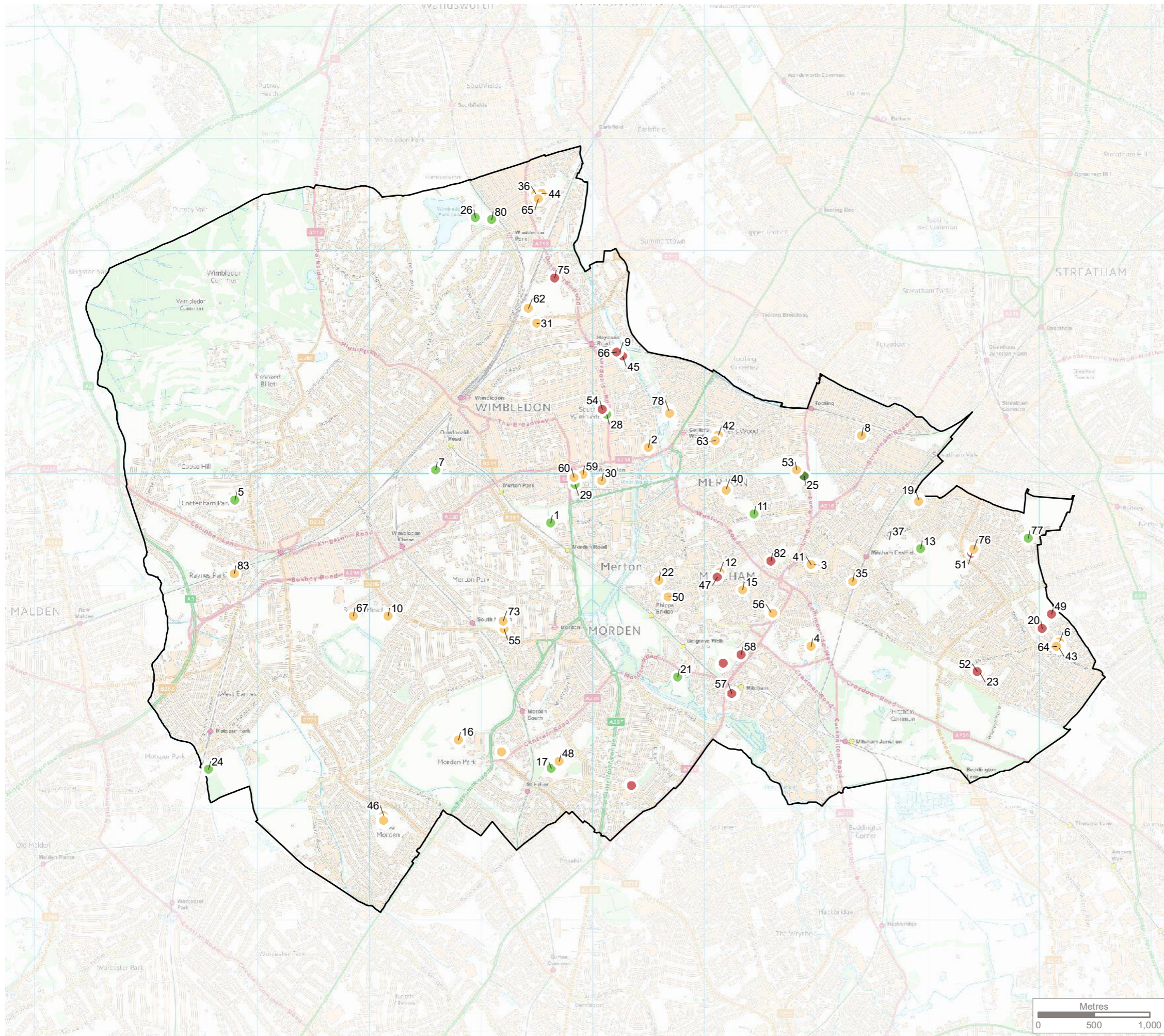
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Open Space Quality Assessment - Survey Results

Drawing Number
G7118.017.1 Sheet 1 of 4

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	19/03/2019





KEY

London Borough of Merton

Play Area Scores

- Excellent
- Good
- Average - Needs Some Improvement
- Weaknesses - Improvements Needed

Quality scores were based on the Play England grades:

- 80 - 100% Excellent
- 60 - 79% Good
- 40 - 59% Average, Needs Some Improvement
- 20 - 39% Weaknesses, Improvements Needed
- 0 - 19% Serious Weaknesses, Improvements Needed

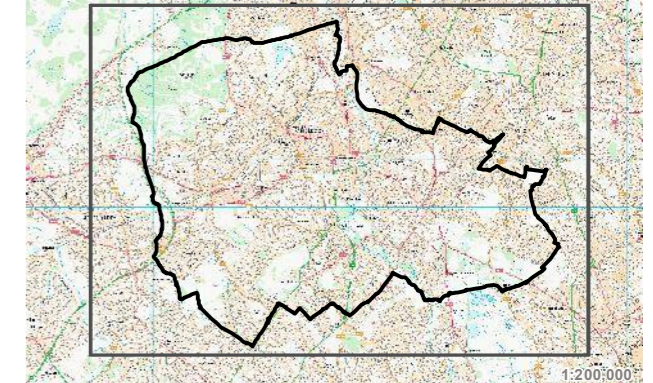
Play Areas were assessed on the following criteria:

- Location
- Play Value
- Care and Maintenance



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Site Map



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



THE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

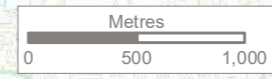
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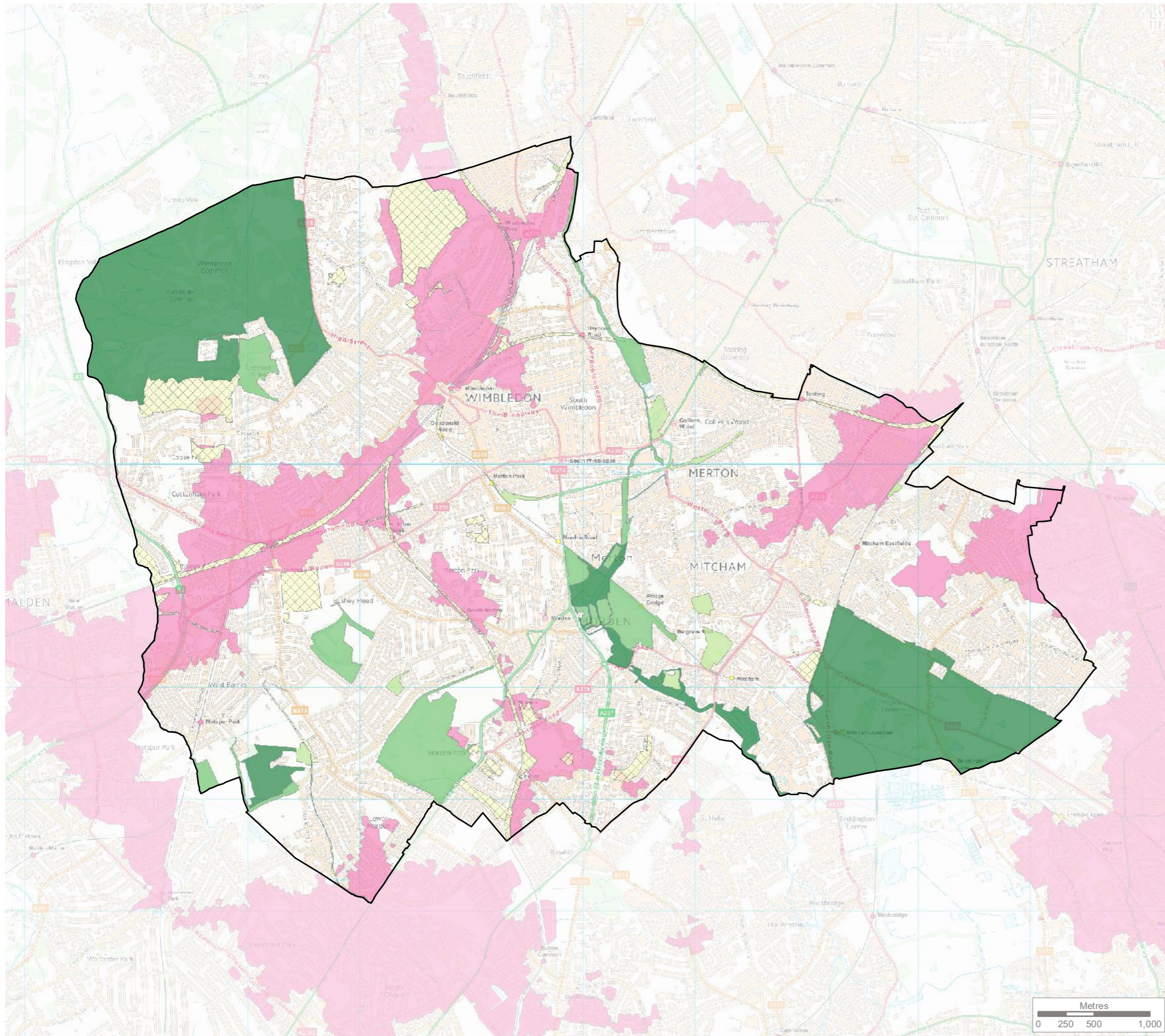
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Play Area Quality Audit Survey - Survey Results

Drawing Number
G7118.018

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
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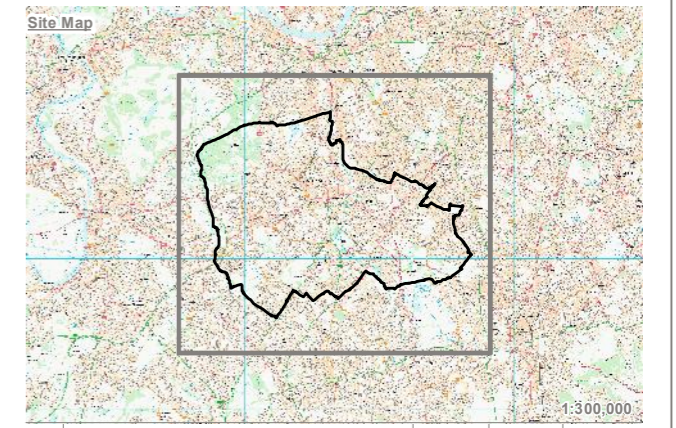
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Nature
- Publicly Accessible Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)**
- Metropolitan
- Borough - Grade 1
- Borough - Grade 2
- SINC Excluded from Area of Deficiency Analysis

The Area of Deficiency is defined as built-up areas which are more than 1km actual walking distance from the entrances of publicly accessible SINCs of Metropolitan and Borough Importance.



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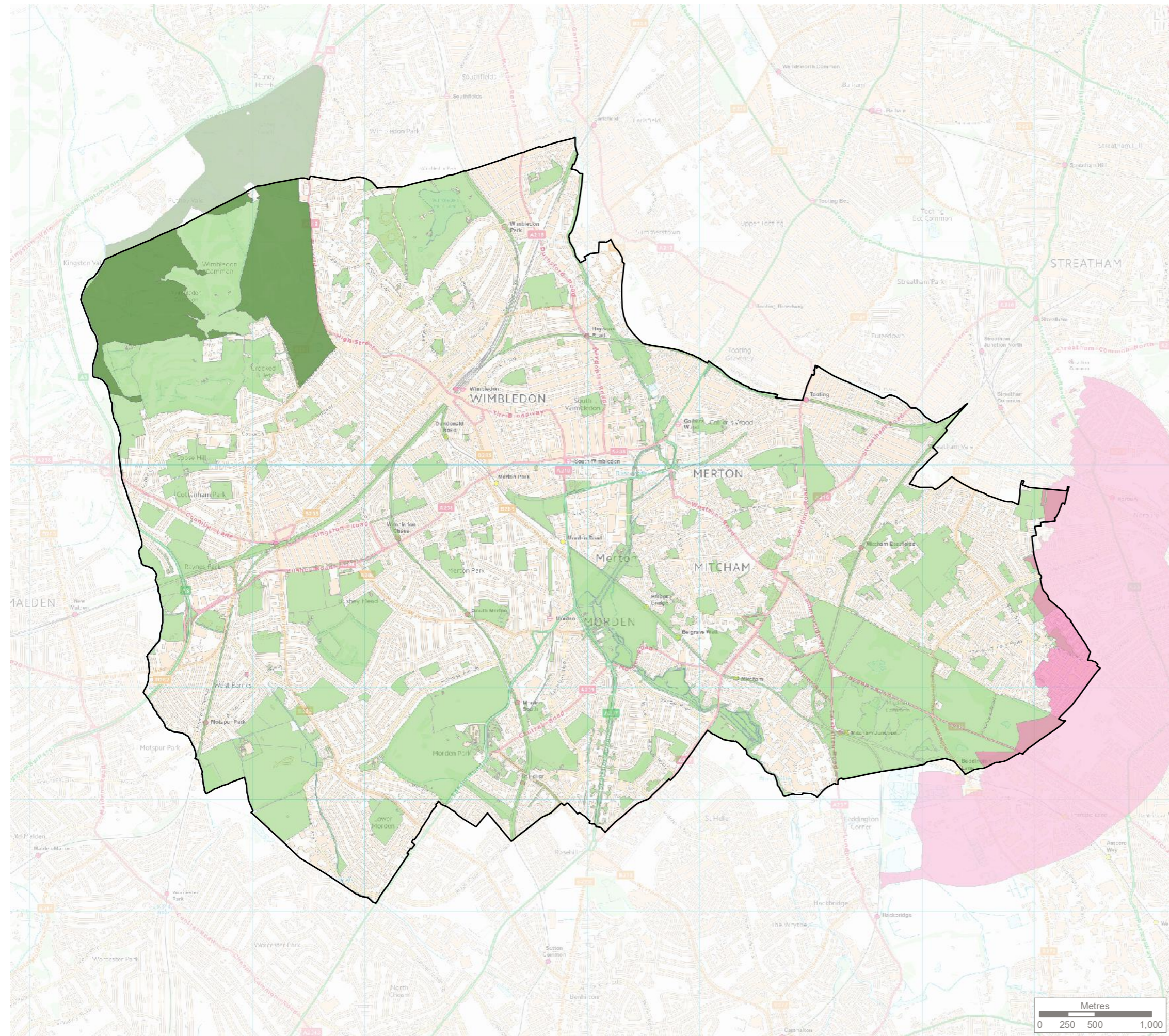
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 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

Drawing Number
G7118.053

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KEY

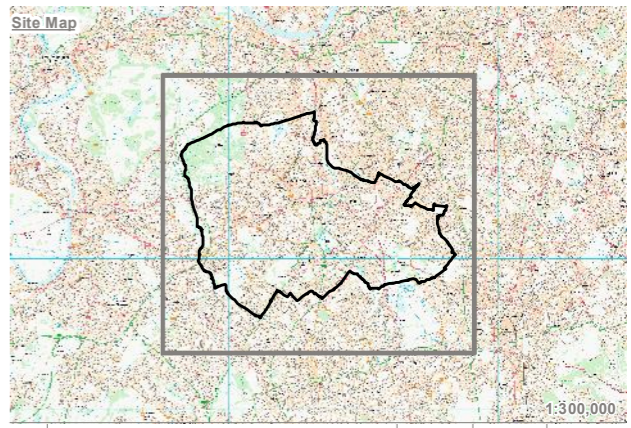
- London Borough of Merton
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Regional Parks
- Publicly Accessible Regional Parks
- Other Open Space Not Included in Area of Deficiency Calculations

Regional Parks are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. They offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards."

The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 8km actual walking distance from the entrances of publicly accessible Regional Parks. The Area of Deficiency does take into account Regional Parks in neighbouring boroughs.

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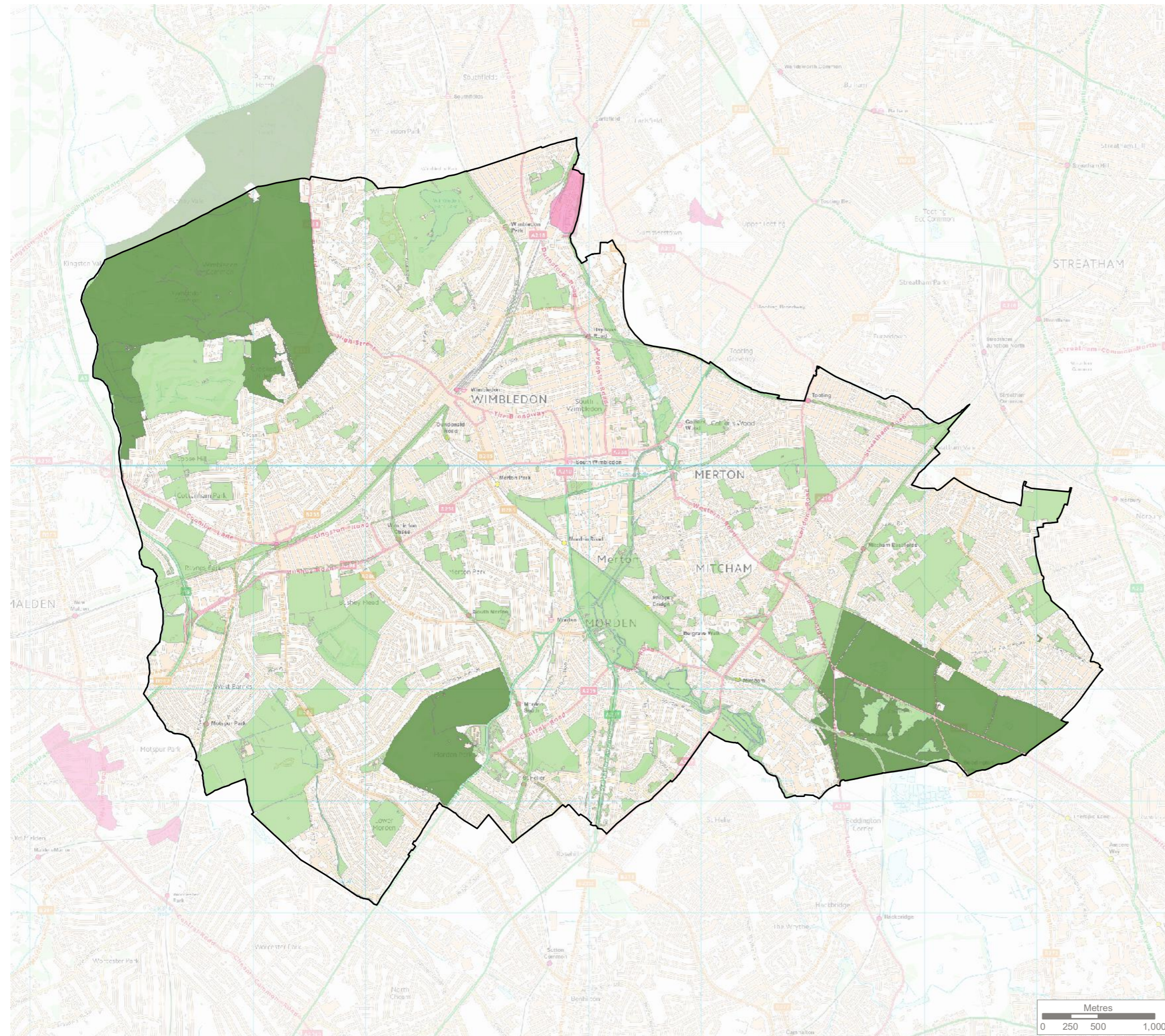
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Project
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Title
Areas of Deficiency in Access to Regional Parks

Drawing Number
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KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Metropolitan Parks
- Publicly Accessible Metropolitan Parks
- Other Open Space Not Included in Area of Deficiency Calculations

Metropolitan Parks are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards."

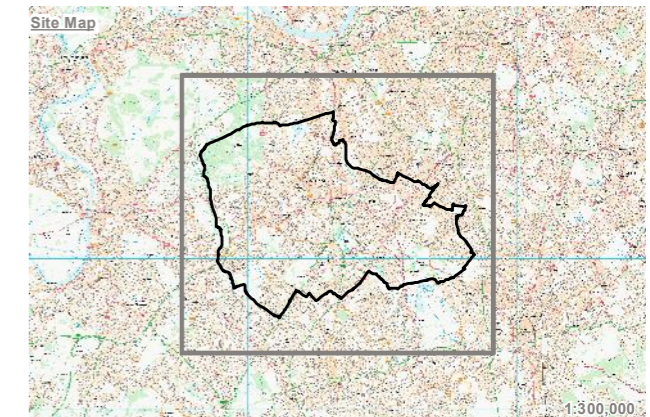
The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 3.2km actual walking distance from the entrances of publicly accessible Metropolitan Parks. The Area of Deficiency does take into account Metropolitan Parks in neighbouring boroughs. Regional Parks are also classed as Metropolitan Parks.

The Area of Deficiency was generated by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL).



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Site Map



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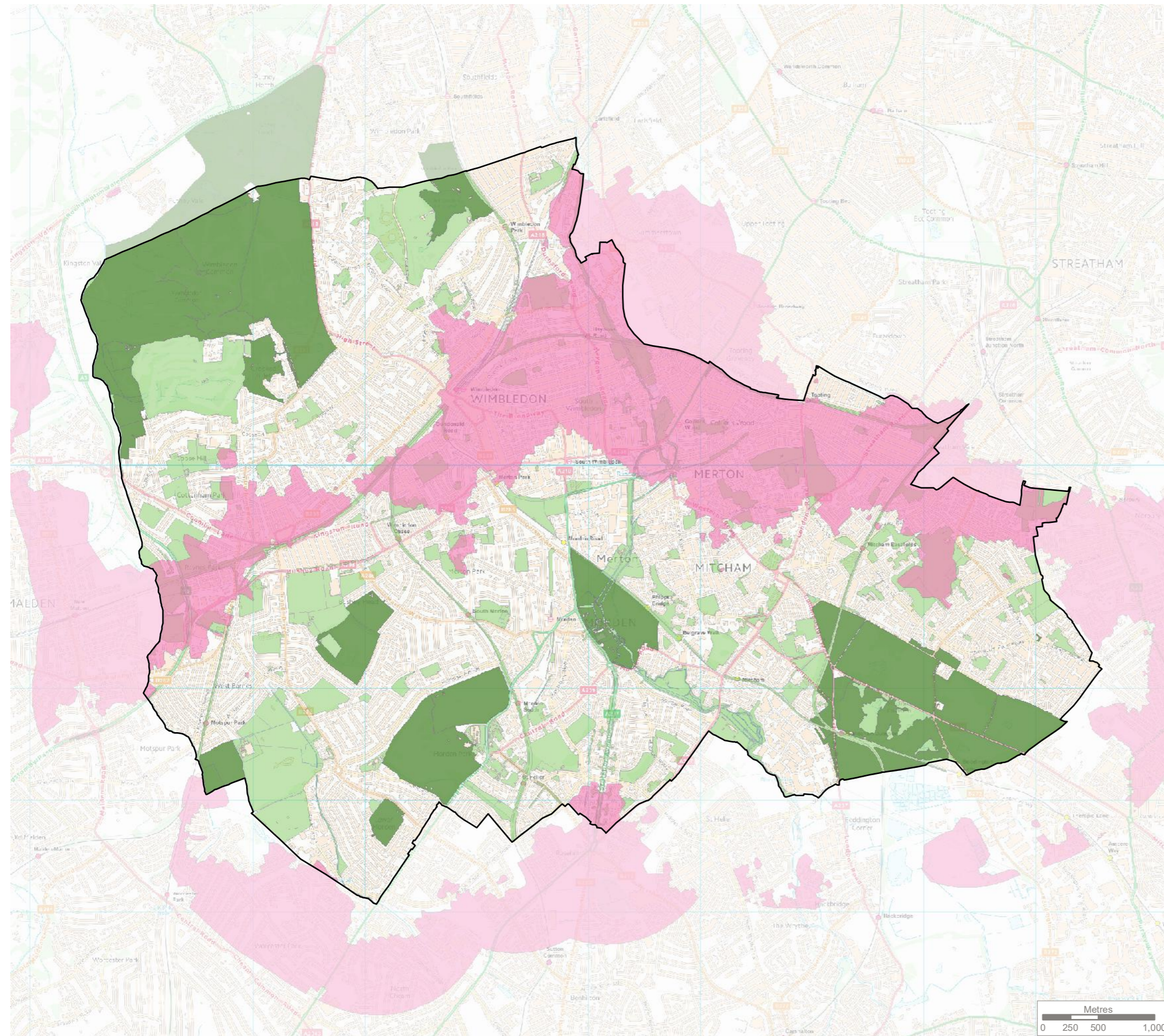
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Project
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Title
Areas of Deficiency in Access to Metropolitan Parks

Drawing Number
G7118.055

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KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Area of Deficiency in Access to District Parks
- Publicly Accessible District Parks
- Other Open Space Not Included in Area of Deficiency Calculations

District Parks are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits."

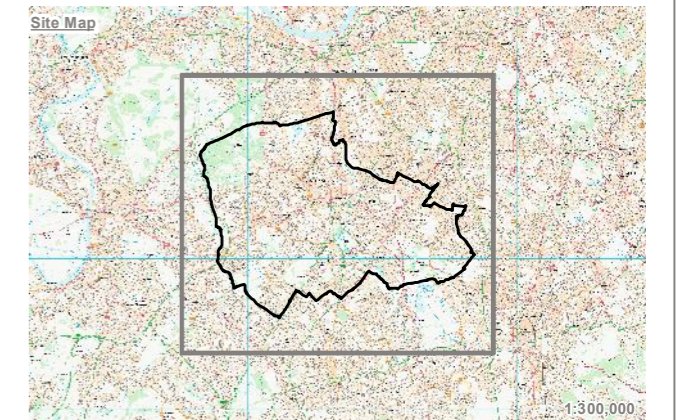
The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 1.2km actual walking distance from the entrances of publicly accessible District Parks. Regional and Metropolitan Parks are also classed as District Parks. The Area of Deficiency does take into account District Parks in neighbouring boroughs.

The Area of Deficiency was generated by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL).



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Site Map



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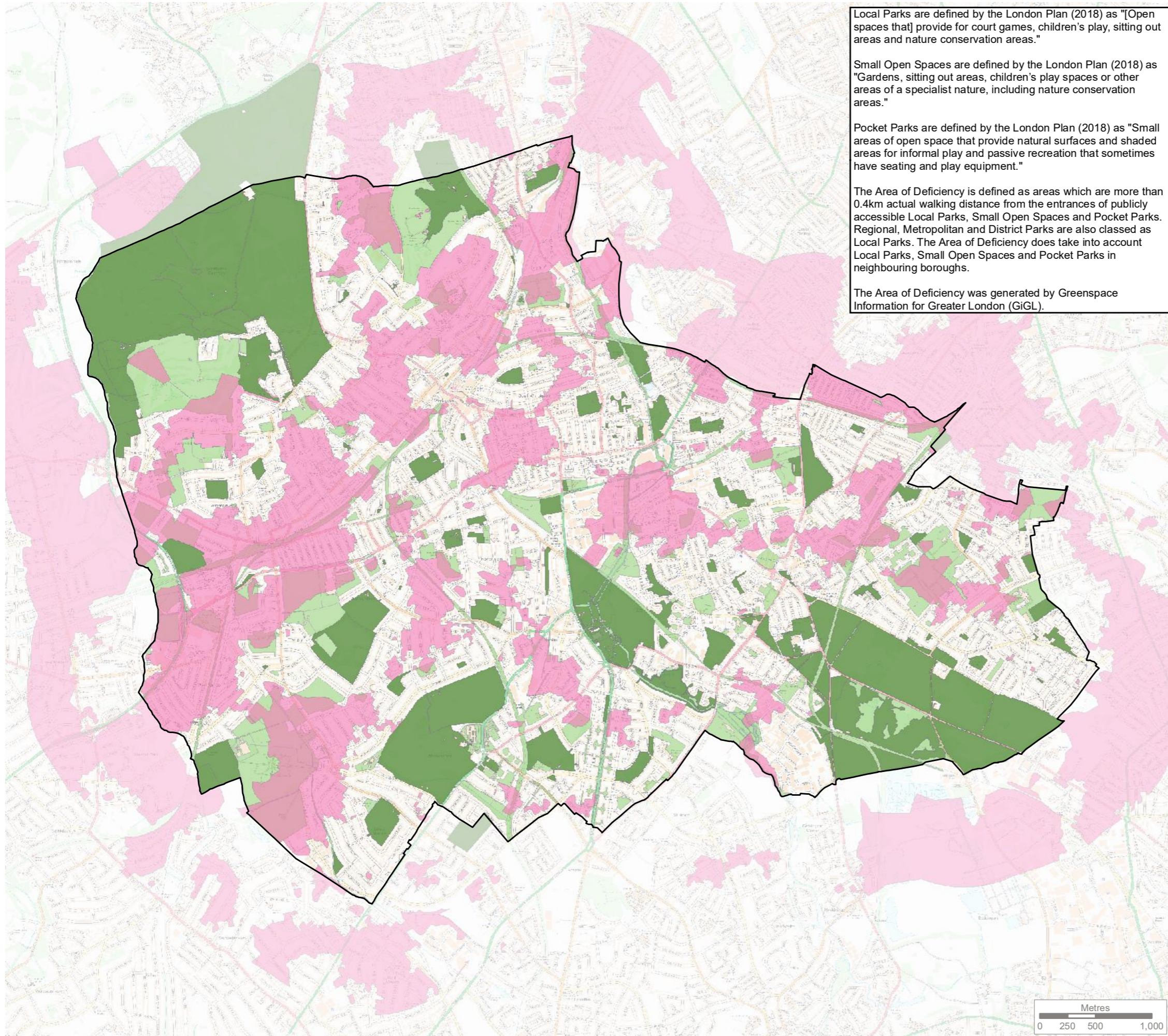
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Project
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Title
Areas of Deficiency in Access to District Parks

Drawing Number
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
Local Parks are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "[Open spaces that] provide for court games, children's play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas."

Small Open Spaces are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "Gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas."

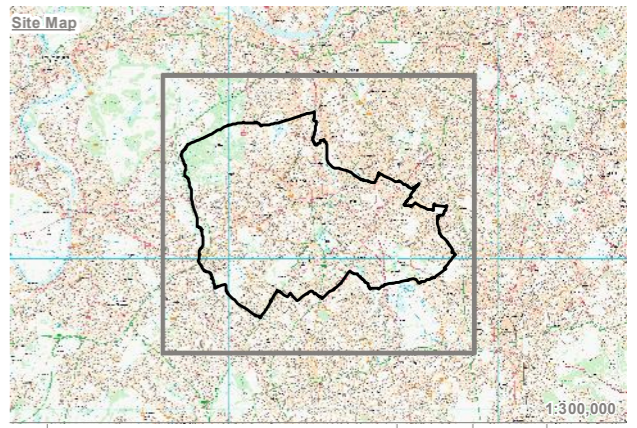
Pocket Parks are defined by the London Plan (2018) as "Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment."

The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 0.4km actual walking distance from the entrances of publicly accessible Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks. Regional, Metropolitan and District Parks are also classed as Local Parks. The Area of Deficiency does take into account Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks in neighbouring boroughs.

The Area of Deficiency was generated by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL).

- KEY**
-  London Borough of Merton
 -  Area of Deficiency for Access to Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks
 -  Publicly Accessible Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks
 -  Other Open Space Not Included in Area of Deficiency Calculations

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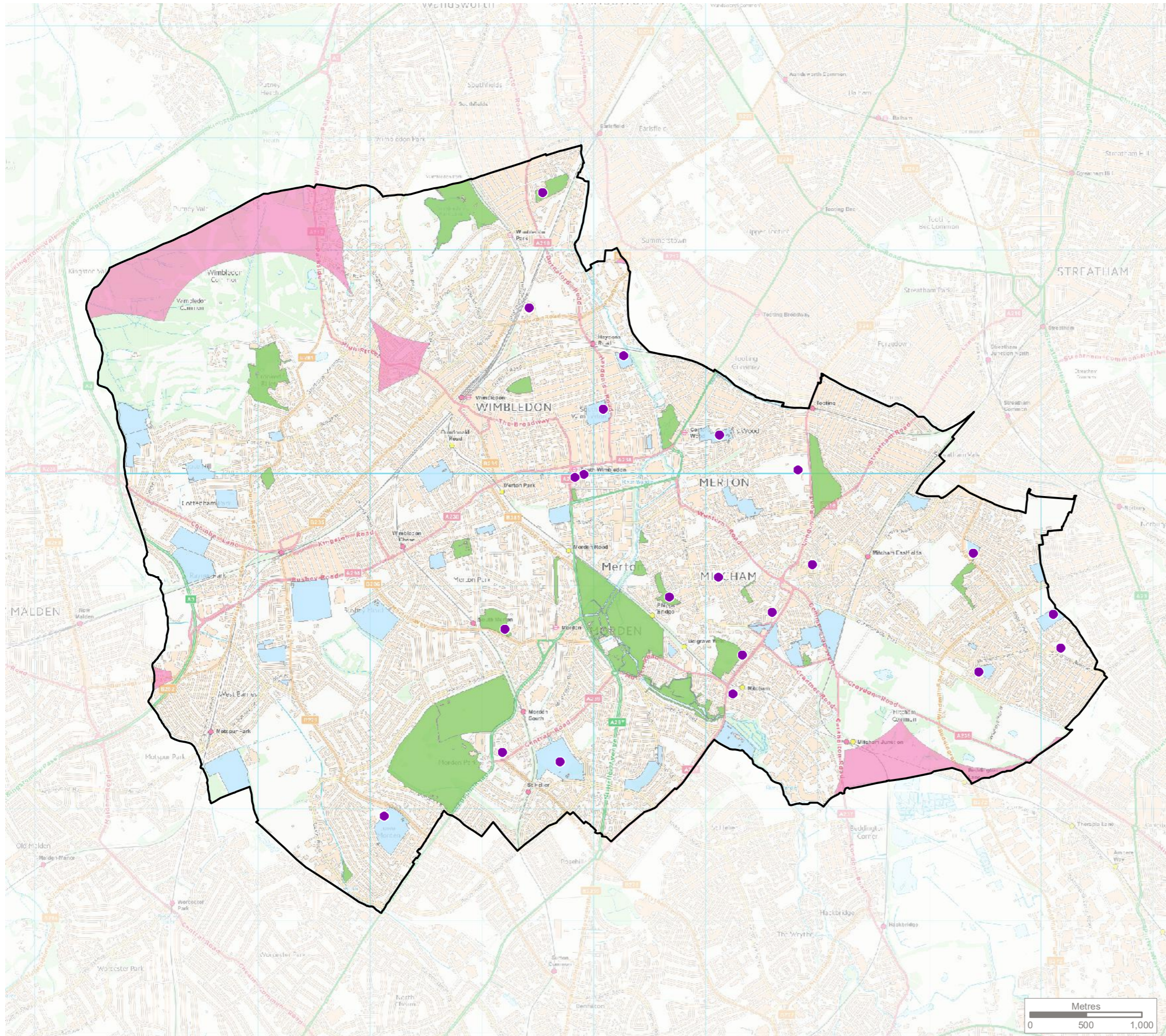
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Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Areas of Deficiency in Access to Local Parks, Small Open Spaces and Pocket Parks

Drawing Number
G7118.057

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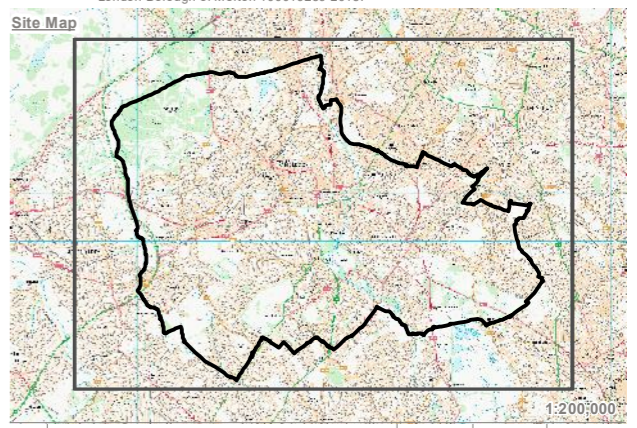
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Play Areas for Children Over 12 Years Old
- Play Areas for Other Age Groups
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Over 12 Years Old
- Outdoor Sports Facilities without Access Restrictions
- Parks and Gardens without Access Restrictions

The London Plan SPG (2012) defines what is considered as a play area for children over 12 years old as 'Adventure Playgrounds, Sport or recreation space that is open access, Skatepark, bike park or other wheeled facility, Fitness trails or other age appropriate equipped areas, Outdoor stage, Youth shelters'.

The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 800m actual walking distance away from play areas for children over 12 years old

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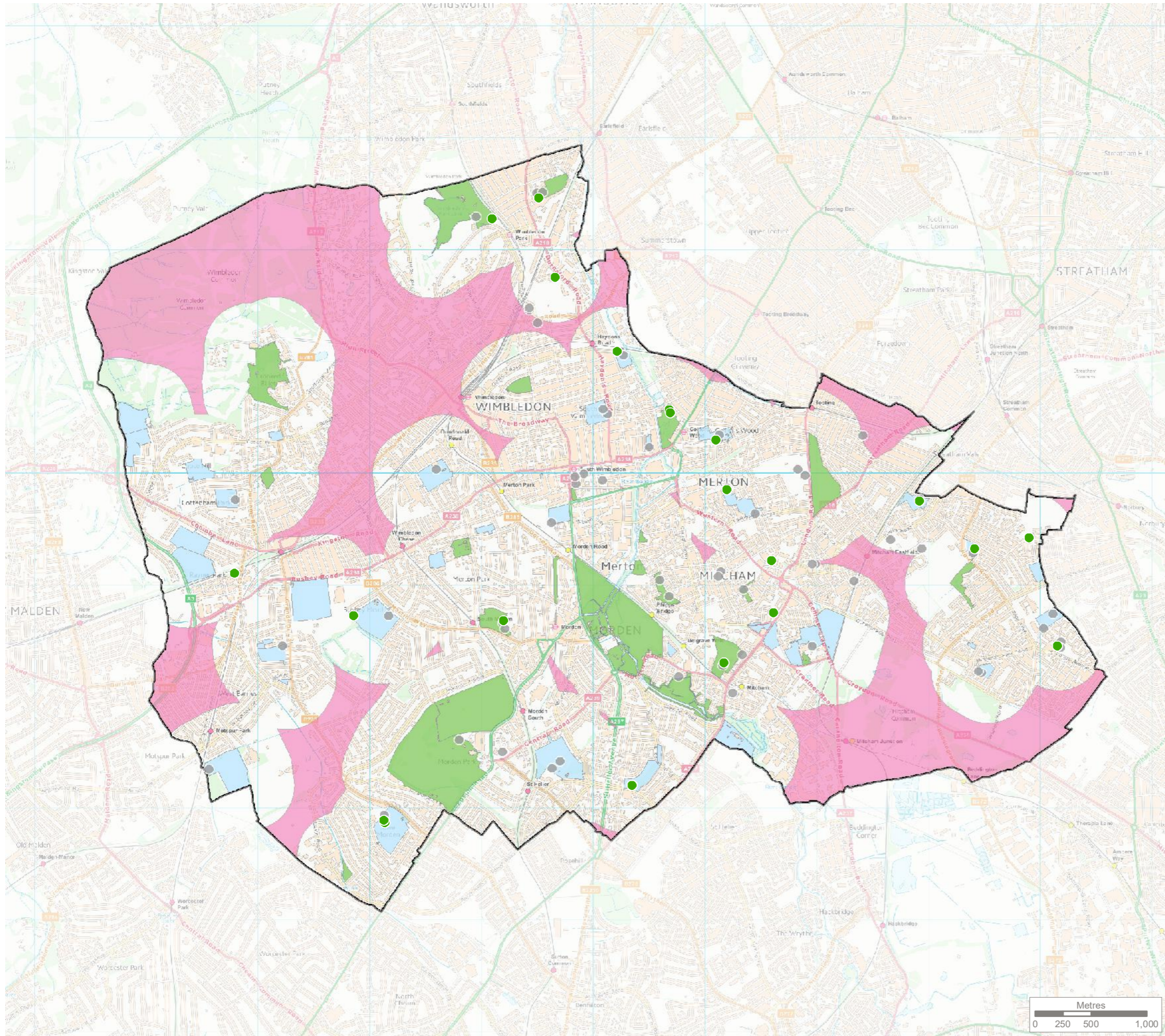
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Project
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Title
Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Over 12 Years Old

Drawing Number
G7118.058

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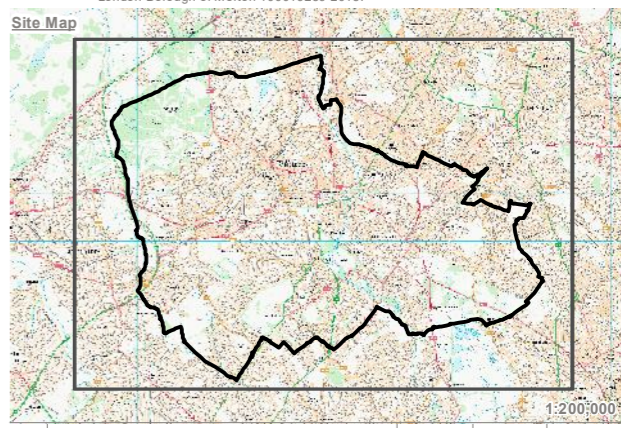
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Play Areas for Children 5 - 12 Years Old
- Play Areas for Other Age Groups
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Between 5 and 12 Years Old
- Outdoor Sports Facilities without Access Restrictions
- Parks and Gardens without Access Restrictions

The London Plan SPG (2012) defines what is considered as a play area for children between 5 and 12 years old as "Equipped age appropriate play area, Public open spaces with potential for informal play, Kickabout areas, Adventure playgrounds, Skatepark, bike park or other wheeled facility."

The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 400m actual walking distance away from play areas for children between 5 and 12 years old.

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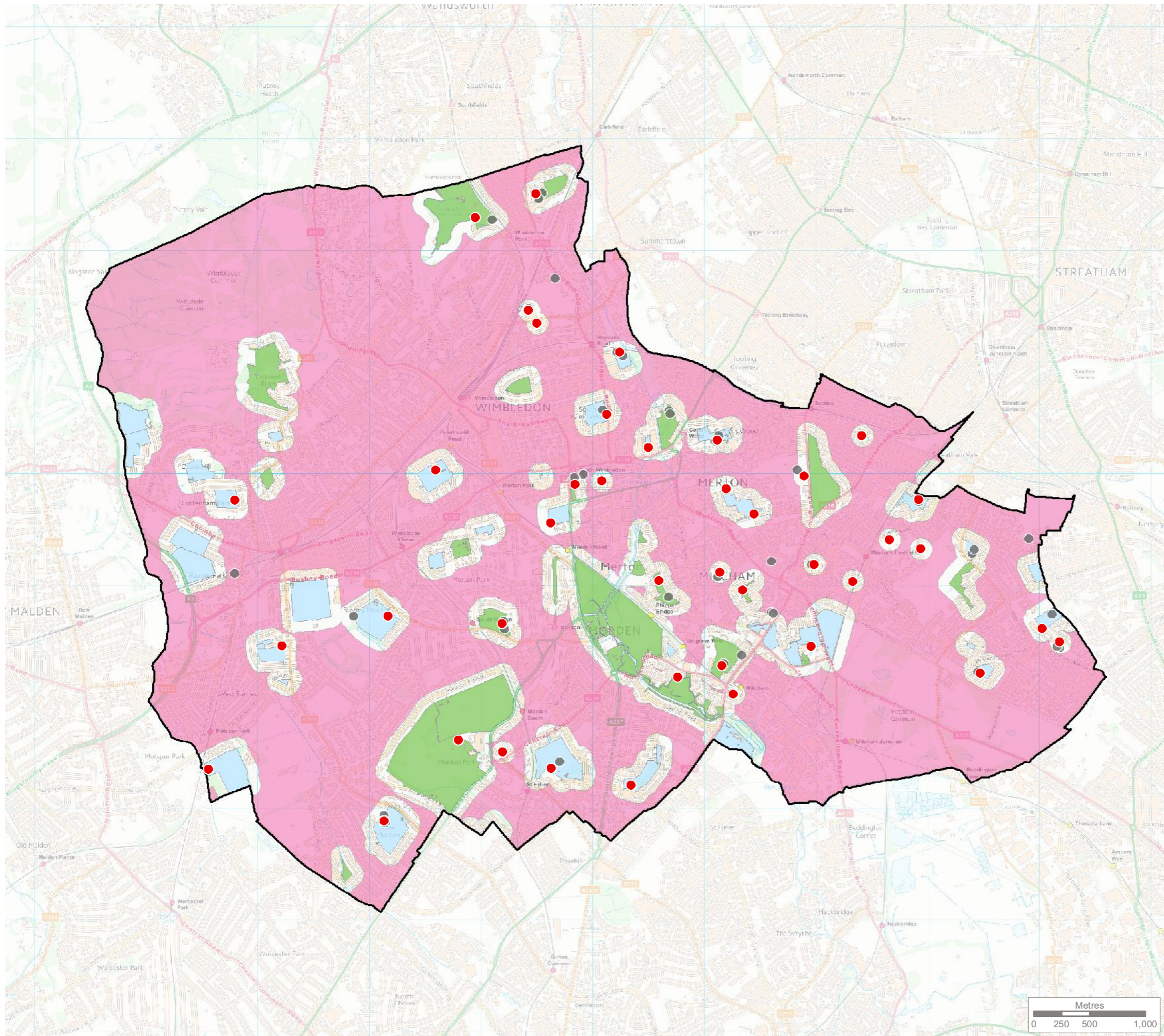
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Title
Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Between 5 and 12 Years Old

Drawing Number
G7118.059

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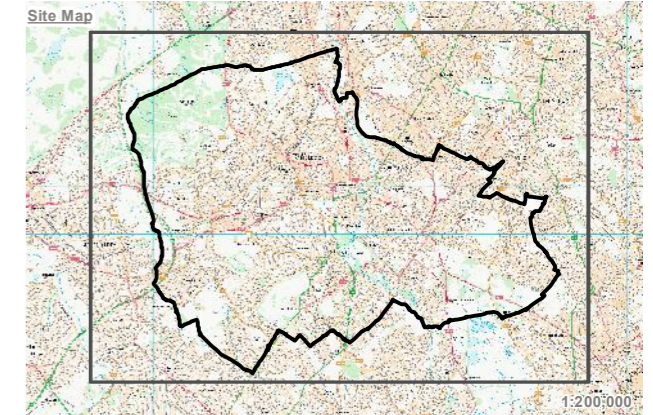
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Play Areas for Children Under 5 Years Old
- Play Areas for Other Age Groups
- Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Under 5 Years Old
- Outdoor Sports Facilities without Access Restrictions
- Parks and Gardens without Access Restrictions

The London Plan SPG (2012) defines what is considered as a play area for children under 5 years old as "Small age appropriate equipped play area, Public open spaces with potential for informal play."

The Area of Deficiency is defined as areas which are more than 100m actual walking distance away from play areas for children under 5 years old

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Project
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Title
Area of Deficiency in Access to Play Areas for Children Under 5 Years Old

Drawing Number
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ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

OUR COMMUNITIES OF MERTON

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL REPORT

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Offices in Warrington | Market Harborough | Gateshead | London and Cornwall

Document Title	Open Space Consultation Technical Report
Prepared for	London Borough of Merton
Prepared by	TEP - Warrington
Document Ref	7118.021

Author	Valerie Jennings
Date	June 2019
Checked	Laura Schofield
Approved	Laura Schofield

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2.0	18/06/19	VJ	LS	Updated following client comments	Draft
3.0	30/06/19	LS	LS	Updated following client comments	Final



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Consultation Covering Letter, Site List and Map
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This technical report has been produced by The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd on behalf of the London Borough of Merton (LBM) to provide details of the informal consultation with community groups that was undertaken for the Merton Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study.
- 1.2 The purpose of this informal consultation was to provide an opportunity for Friends of the Parks and other community groups to communicate their aspirations and concerns regarding open space in Merton and provide research for TEP to feed into the Study.
- 1.3 This report explains how the consultation was undertaken and provides details of the feedback and how this feedback has influenced the Study.
- 1.4 The Open Space Consultation Technical Report forms part of a set of Technical Reports which will provide an evidence base for the Merton Local Plan and inform the overall Merton Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study as shown in Figure 1.

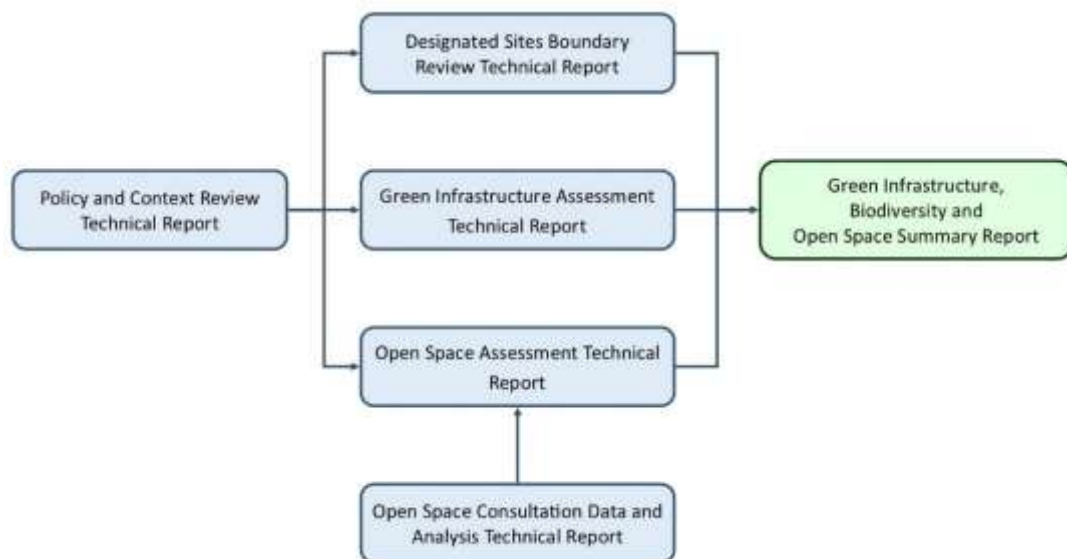


Figure 1: Report structure for Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

2.0 Planning Context

- 2.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). As part of the SCI Local Planning Authorities are requested to encourage participation from local community groups. The London Borough of Merton (LBM) SCI was adopted in July 2006.

Planning and Compulsory Act 2004

- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 does not require Local Authorities to carry out consultation before Regulation 18 (Issues and Options) stage of the Local Plan preparation which includes the preparation of background documents including the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study.
- 2.3 However to ensure meaningful consultation is undertaken with the stakeholders from an early stage of the Local Plan process LBM have decided to consult with stakeholders as early as possible. This approach is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework National Planning Policy Guidance and the LBM SCI (July 2006).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development and in doing so this should be a collective enterprise including people and communities.
- 2.5 NPPF Paragraph 16(c) states that Plans should *"be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers, operators and statutory consultees"*.

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 2.6 The Government's online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was launched on 6th March 2014. The PPG supports the NPPF and provides guidance on all aspects of the Planning System including process and expectations on pre-application discussions. Positive pre-application engagement can be achieved by

"Local planning authorities will need to identify and engage at an early stage with all those that may be interested in the development or content of the Local Plan, including those groups who may be affected by its proposals but who do not play an active part in most consultations."

London Borough of Merton Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.7 The LBM Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in July 2006 in accordance with provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and takes into account planning legislation which allows for the use of more effective communication and consultation methods.
- 2.8 The 2006 SCI states that

"Different people like to be contacted in different ways. Some prefer letters, e-mail or the Internet; others would rather attend a meeting or see an exhibition. The Council uses different methods to inform local communities, depending on what's being discussed, and people can contact the Council with their views in several different ways"

2.9 The 2006 SCI states that no consultation is required at Stage 1 (Pre-Production stage) of the Local Plan process under the regulations. This is the stage where information is gathered to inform the upcoming Local Plan such as the work undertaken for the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study. Despite this LBM considers that it is important to contact the local community early on so that it

- Has an early understanding of what the Local Plan is about and how it will affect the local area.
- Increases people's understanding of what the Local Plan contains and how it is being produced.
- Exposes any potential conflicts so that they can be resolved early in the Local Plan production process.
- Regularly updates Merton's SCI consultation database.

2.10 Since 2006 there have been a number of changes to planning legislation planning guidance and technological advances such as social media which have changed the way that public consultations are carried out. As a result LBM will be updating the SCI in 2019.

3.0 Consultation Method

Background

3.1 The consultation objectives were to

- Provide key stakeholder groups across LBM with information about the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study
- Allow an opportunity for local community groups who have been identified by LBM to consider and comment on designated open spaces within Merton and
- Consider feedback received as a result of the consultation process and demonstrate how TEP and LBM have responded to it through the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study.

Consultation Method

3.2 TEP and LBM identified key stakeholder groups across Merton to include in the consultation process. TEP contacted the following community groups who had previously indicated they were interested in taking part in some detailed consultation on open spaces

- Friends of the Parks Groups
- Residents associations and
- Other open space related community groups.

3.3 TEP sent a covering letter which provided background information on the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study and seven questions on open space in the borough along with an open spaces map and site list to a total of 27 community groups (20 Friends of Groups 2 Residents Associations and 5 other community forums). The letter provided a phone number email address and postal address for TEP and the Future Merton team at LBM.

3.4 All groups were initially contacted by email on 21 December 2018 and were asked to respond in writing by 18 January 2019.

3.5 It should be noted that some of the groups passed the consultation letter on to other community groups who then also provided responses. All community groups responses were considered as part of the consultation as they have good knowledge of their local area and represent local residents.

3.6 Individual residents were not consulted at this time and any such responses received have not been considered in this report. This was primarily a research task on green spaces within Merton and it was considered that Friends of the Parks Groups provide a good representation of the use and value of specific green spaces across Merton and would be able to provide information on improvements and funding requirements.

3.7 Formal consultations in line with planning regulations will be undertaken on the draft Local Plan at a later stage where LBM will encourage all views on open spaces as well as other planning matters.

Consultation Responses

- 3.8 TEP included seven questions within the letter to ensure specific information on open and green spaces was considered. The questions were:
- Which open space(s) do you use in Merton?
 - Do you use open spaces in neighbouring boroughs?
 - How do you use open space(s) in Merton?
 - What do you value about the open spaces in Merton?
 - What do you consider the benefits of Merton's open space are?
 - Do you feel there are any gaps in provision of open space and if so where?
 - What improvements to the quality of the open space do you think are needed and who needs to be involved in the funding and implementation?
- 3.9 TEP received a total of 17 responses (9 Friends of Groups, 3 Residents Associations and 5 other community forums).
- 3.10 All comments received from community groups have been taken into consideration and the information has been summarised in Section 4 Results.

London Borough of Merton's Resident Satisfaction Survey (2017)

- 3.11 The Residents Satisfaction Survey (2017) was undertaken between February and March 2017 on a sample of 1,020 residents aged 18 and over in order to provide fresh data to inform Council decision making.
- 3.12 The results of this survey have also been taken into consideration in Section 4 below.

4.0 Results

Response to Resident's Satisfaction Survey (2017)¹

- 4.1 The vast majority of Merton residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (92%) which is 12% higher than the national benchmark of 80% (LGA polling February 2017). 94% of young people and 92% of adults were satisfied.
- 4.2 The Wimbledon constituency had the highest satisfaction levels with 96% of residents satisfied with where they live. Mitcham and Morden constituency also had high resident's satisfaction with 89%. However only 16% of residents in Lavender Fields, Pollard Hill and Figgess Marsh, 15% of residents in Ravensbury, St. Helier and Cricket Green and 13% in Colliers Wood, Graveney and Longthornton were very satisfied with their area.
- 4.3 Table 1 shows that the Ravensbury and Cannon Hill areas have the highest satisfaction for parks, playgrounds and open spaces but the Lavender Fields and Colliers Wood areas have the lowest satisfaction. Overall all constituencies and areas were above 69%.

Table 1: Rating for parks, playgrounds and open spaces as very good/good

	Constituency		Area					
Total	Mitcham & Morden	Wimbledon	Village	Dundonald	Cannon Hill	Lavender Fields	Ravensbury	Colliers Wood
79%	79%	78%	77%	80%	83%	69%	89%	68%

Source: Merton Resident's Satisfaction Survey 2017

- 4.4 Responses relating to primary and nursery education, parks and playgrounds and open spaces was deemed to be particularly positive. Parks, playgrounds and open spaces scored 75% very good/good across all responses. However, responses were least positive in relation to street cleaning, parking and road and pavement repair.
- 4.5 The survey results state that families (i.e. residents with children aged under 16) are significantly more likely to use parks, playgrounds and open spaces compared to the average. Families rated parks, playgrounds and open spaces as 86% very good/good.
- 4.6 Young people (11-17 year olds) rated parks, playgrounds and open spaces as 56% very good/good.
- 4.7 On measures of personal wellbeing (feeling satisfied with life, feeling that the things you do in life are worthwhile, feelings of happiness and anxiety). Merton residents give more positive responses compared to both London and UK benchmarks.

¹ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/residents/survey/research/report/2017.pdf>

4.8 The consultation responses received from the TEP consultation (2019) were similar to the Residents Satisfaction Survey (2017). Overall consultees were positive about the quality and quantity of open spaces in Merton. However, there were concerns raised regarding the lack of litter collection, which affects the enjoyment of open spaces and the environment. Also footpaths and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) through open spaces are often waterlogged and difficult to use in the winter. Details of the consultation responses are provided below.

Response to Consultation Questions

4.9 The consultation letter included seven key questions and the results from the consultation responses have been summarised below.

Question 1: Which open space(s) do you use in Merton?

4.10 There was a total of 65 open spaces mentioned during the consultation. Table 2 below shows the open spaces which are used and the number of groups who used the spaces.

Table 2: Sites listed by Friends of Groups and residents

Ward	Site Ref	Open Space	Number of Groups
Abbey Ward	ME0001	Abbey Recreation Ground	1
Abbey Ward	ME0128	Land Adjacent River Wandle – Merton Abbey Mills	1
Abbey Ward	ME0133	Merton Park Green Walk	2
Abbey Ward	ME0165	Nursery Road Playing Fields	1
Abbey Ward	ME0275	Priory Wall Open Space Walk	1
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0030	Cannon Hill Common (Canons Piece)	2
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0035	Cherrywood Open Space	1
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0098	Joseph Hood Recreation Ground	1
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0151	Morden Park and surrounds	2
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0155	Morden Park East	1
Cannon Hill Ward	ME0181	Prince George's Fields	1
Colliers Wood Ward	ME0039	Colliers Wood Recreation Ground	1
Colliers Wood Ward	ME0248	Wandle Park (Merton)	1

Ward	Site Ref	Open Space	Number of Pitches
Cricket Green Ward	ME0139	Mitcham Common	2
Cricket Green Ward	ME0141	Cricket Green	1
Cricket Green Ward	ME0191	Embankment	1
Cricket Green Ward	ME0242	Three Kings Piece Open Space	1
Cricket Green Ward	ME0251	Watermeads	1
Cricket Green Ward	ME0319	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Wandle Trail	2
Dundonald Ward	ME0237	The Chase	1
Figges Marsh Ward	ME0067	Figges Marsh	2
Figges Marsh Ward	ME0142	Upper Green (also known as Fair Green)	1
Graveney Ward	ME0060	Edenvale Playspace	1
Graveney Ward	ME0214	Vectis Gardens	1
Hillside Ward	ME0192	Railway Path	1
Lavender Fields Ward	ME0107	Tamworth Recreation Ground including tennis courts	1
Lavender Fields Ward	ME0108	Lavender Park	1
Lavender Fields Ward	ME0114	London Road Allotments	1
Lavender Fields Ward	ME0159	Myrna Close Nature Reserve	1
Lower Morden Ward	ME0130	Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery	1
Lower Morden Ward	ME0216	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields	2
Merton Park Ward	ME0037	Church Lane Playing Fields	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0044	Cranleigh Lawn Tennis and Social Club	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0095	John Innes Park	1

Ward	Site Ref	Open Space	Number of Pitches
Merton Park Ward	ME0096	John Innes Recreation Ground	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0100	Kendor Gardens	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0157	Mostyn Gardens (Merton)	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0170	Old Rutishians Cricket Ground	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0180	Poplar Primary School Field and Wildlife Area	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0210	Rutlish School Playing Fields	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0224	St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard (Merton)	1
Merton Park Ward	ME0227	St. Mary Glebelands	1
Ravensbury Ward	ME0149	Morden Hall Park	3
Ravensbury Ward	ME0195	Ravensbury Park	2
Ravensbury Ward	ME0323	Morden Hall Garden	2
Raynes Park Ward	ME0028	Bushey Court Park	1
Raynes Park Ward	ME0093	Holland Gardens	2
Trinity Ward	ME0218	South Park Gardens	1
Village Ward	ME0004	Ackinson Morley's Hospital Fields	1
Village Ward	ME0008	Canniāro Allotments	1
Village Ward	ME0013	Barham Road Playing Fields	1
Village Ward	ME0017	Wimbledon Park	3
Village Ward	ME0023	Wimbledon Common	4
Village Ward	ME0029	Canniāro Park	2
Village Ward	MB0041	Beverly Brook south of Richmond Park	1
Village Ward	MB0043	Wimbledon Park Golf Club	1

Ward	Site Ref	Open Space	Number of Sites
Village Ward	ME0226	St. Mary's Churchyard (Merton)	1
Village Ward	ME0270	Fish Ponds Wood and Beverley Mead Local Nature Reserve	1
West Barnes Ward	ME0111	Lessa 119 Grand Drive	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	ME0052	District Line	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	ME0057	Durnsford Road Recreation Ground	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	ME0298	Home Park Road	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	ME0300	Gap Road Pocket Park	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	ME0306	Wimbledon Park Primary school	1

Site references can be found in the site list (Appendix A).

- 4.11 According to the consultation responses Wimbledon Common (Village Ward) is the most used open space with Morden Hall Park and Wimbledon Park also mentioned by three groups. Wimbledon Common is protected for the preservation of nature conservation and informal recreation. Wimbledon and Putney Common makes up the largest expanse of heathland in the London area and therefore is a popular "wild" space.
- 4.12 Table 3 shows a breakdown of the open spaces mentions during the consultation by Ward.

Table 3: Number of open spaces per Ward

Ward	Number
Abbey Ward	5
Cannon Hill Ward	6
Colliers Wood Ward	2
Cricket Green Ward	6
Dundonald Ward	1

Ward	Number
Figge's Marsh Ward	2
Graveney Ward	2
Hillside Ward	1
Lavender Fields Ward	4
Lower Morden Ward	2
Merton Park Ward	11
Ravensbury Ward	3
Raynes Park Ward	2
Trinity Ward	1
Village Ward	10
West Barnes Ward	1
Wimbledon Park Ward	5

- 4.13 Table 3 shows that the consultation responses indicate Merton Park Ward and Village Ward have the most open space used in Merton. The Village Ward has Wimbledon Common and Wimbledon Park which are two of the most popular open spaces mentioned in the consultation (see Table 2).
- 4.14 No open spaces were identified through the consultation responses as being used in the Longthornton Ward, Pollards Hill Ward and St. Helier Ward.
- 4.15 PPG17 open space classification guidance was used during the consultation to group open spaces. Table 4 shows the types of open space used by consultees.

Table 4: Type of open space used by PPG17 Classification

Category	Number
Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farm	2
Amenity Greenspace & Education	3
Cemeteries and Churchyards	3
Play Space for Children and Teenagers	1

Category	Number
Green Corridors	8
Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace	13
Other (Vacant Land)	2
Recreation & Outdoor Sports Facilities	18
Parks and Gardens	11
Unclassified (Amenity Greenspace)	2

4.16 Table 4 shows that the most popular open space was outdoor sports facilities followed by natural and semi-natural urban greenspace and parks and gardens. However green corridors were also popular especially as commuting routes away from traffic.

Question 2 Do you use open spaces in neighbouring boroughs

4.17 This question received the least responses from consultees. Friends of Wimbledon Park and Capability Brown Society stated that they use the northern section of Wimbledon Park which is in Wandsworth. They also said that they have an appreciation for the Wandle Valley Regional Park which runs through Merton, Wandsworth, Sutton and Croydon.

4.18 The Friends of Holland Park stated that they visit Richmond Park and The Friends of Figgess Marsh stated they visited Tooting Common, Streatham Common and King Georges Park, Wandsworth.

4.19 The Friends of Cherrywood Nature Reserve and the Willmore Residents Association stated that they rarely travelled outside Merton to use open spaces.

Question 3 How do you use open space(s) in Merton

Access to Nature

4.20 Merton is a metropolitan borough and therefore not all residents have access to a private garden, the ability to travel outside London or the ability to travel to other boroughs to access open spaces. Therefore many residents use Merton's open spaces to access and connect with nature on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

4.21 Open spaces were also used to appreciate wildlife and nature conservation. It was considered that open spaces can provide opportunities for education to residents especially children about nature and wildlife. Several groups thought nature conservation and biodiversity could be enhanced and improved with support from the Local Authority.

Recreational Activities

- 4.22 The most popular use of open spaces was formal and informal recreational activities. Open space provides an outdoor space for exercise, play and pursuing hobbies. Having a space to pursue these activities was also identified as an important benefit of open spaces.
- 4.23 Almost all groups used open spaces for walking and dog walking, which was often on a daily basis. Open spaces were also used for other informal exercise such as jogging, Sunday kick about and children's informal play.
- 4.24 Open spaces were also used for more formal sports including tennis, fishing and football. Friends of Cannon Hill highlighted that the Mitcham Common fishing lake was popular due to the accessibility for disabled residents and visitors.
- 4.25 Several consultees also stated that open spaces provide opportunities for children to play using children's playgrounds or informal grassed areas. Several groups highlighted the key importance of having green space for children to access open space, play and socialise.
- 4.26 The Willmore Residents Association, Friends of Cannon Hill and Friends of Holland Garden identified a general concern over childhood obesity. These groups identified access to open spaces for children to exercise and play as a key way to tackle this trend.
- 4.27 Many groups also used the space for pursuing hobbies such as painting, sketching, gardening, allotments and bee keeping. There is a specific opportunity to learn more about horticulture and gardening at Cannizaro Park where you can view the plant collection.

Socialising

- 4.28 Socialising and community events were identified as a popular use of open spaces for residents. Morden Hall Park has a cafe and garden centre which is a popular meeting space for friends and family. Events are also held in Morden Hall Park and Wimbledon Common, such as community events, fayres and open air theatre productions which is popular in the summer.
- 4.29 Open spaces also provide volunteering opportunities where people can meet other local residents and manage a local green space. The Friends of Wimbledon Park and Capability Brown Society highlighted the opportunity to study the Capability Brown history and landscape at Wimbledon Park.

Health and Wellbeing

- 4.30 Most consultees stated that open spaces were used to improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. Friends of Cannizaro Park stated that open spaces provide residents with a "breath of fresh air" and a peaceful space to relax, away from traffic and the urban environment.

Commuting/Movement

- 4.31 Commuting and moving around the borough on routes away from roads and traffic was seen as an important use of green space by most consultees. Eight green corridors were mentioned during the consultation and were actively used by residents for commuting to work and on the school run.

Question 4: What do you value about the open space in Merton?

Accessibility and Travel

- 4.32 Several consultees valued the amount and range of open spaces in Merton from neighbourhood pocket parks to larger open spaces such as Wimbledon Common because this means there is better accessibility for residents. Willmore End Association said they value *"accessible open space in an urban environment"*.
- 4.33 The Friends of Figgis Marsh stated that they valued green corridors and walking opportunities away from traffic and road – especially for children.

Recreational Activities

- 4.34 Several consultees identified recreational opportunities as a benefit – however the Wimbledon Society also stated that they valued open spaces for providing recreational opportunities.
- 4.35 Friends of Holland Garden also stated that residents valued the *"opportunities in outdoor activities and enhance people's wellbeing"*.

Sense of Space

- 4.36 Several consultees valued the sense of space that open spaces provide. Friends of Cannon Hill stated that *"even open spaces you can't access provide a sense of space in an urban environment"*. Furthermore, the John Innes Society stated that open space creates *"an oasis of calm set in a busy urban environment"*.

Environment

- 4.37 The Wimbledon Society valued the *"air quality"* and *"air cleaning"* potential that open spaces provide.

Question 5: What do you consider the benefits of Merton's open space are?

Accessibility

- 4.38 The Friends of Figgis Marsh stated that open spaces *"provide a vital opportunity for communities to come together and for people to meet each other"*. The John Innes Society said that open spaces were particularly beneficial to older and elderly people who live in assisted living or sheltered accommodation, because they often don't have access to open spaces.
- 4.39 The Friends of Cannizaro Park said that Merton benefits from a range of open space provisions within neighbourhoods – which mean that open space is accessible to all residents.

- 4.40 High quality open spaces often attracts people into the area and people remain in the area because it is a pleasant place to live. The open spaces provide a place for nurseries, schools and parents can bring children to parks and green spaces to learn and socialise.

Recreation

- 4.41 Several consultees stated that an important benefit of open space is the provision for formal and informal recreation. Open space encourages residents to walk and cycle and provides a safe space for children to learn to cycle.
- 4.42 Open space also provides opportunities for residents to take part in sports such as football, tennis, fishing and jogging. Playing pitches provide opportunities for team sports for all ages.

Health and Wellbeing

- 4.43 Physical and mental health and wellbeing improvement was also highlighted as a key benefit of open spaces. Groups thought that open space brought residents closer to nature and created a better quality of life for residents.
- 4.44 The Willmore End Residents Association stated that an important benefit of open space is providing opportunities for children to get exercise which will lead to a reduction in childhood obesity. Friends of Holland Garden also stated that access to playing fields for all schools and access to sports facilities helps fight childhood obesity.

Environmental

- 4.45 Several consultees identified the benefits of open space and tackling air pollution and climate change. The Willmore End Residents Association stated that open spaces were an important tool in tackling air pollution which can lead to poor health in children and adults. Friends of Figgess Marsh believe that open space provided better air quality and areas to "breathe" away from pollution.
- 4.46 Friends of Holland Park also highlighted the benefit of open space and the potential to tackle air pollution. They stated that trees are highly beneficial as they absorb carbon dioxide which "assist in fighting pollution".

Question 6: Do you feel there are any gaps in provision of open space and if so where?

- 4.47 There was a varied response to this question. Friends of Holland Garden and Friends of Canniaro Park said there was no gaps in provisions but felt they could only comment on their own areas.

Provision of public facilities in Open Spaces

- 4.48 The Friends of Cherry Wood Nature Reserve stated that there were not enough litter bins provided in open spaces. Friends of Figgess Marsh also supported this view by stating that litter can ruin the experience of open spaces and has wider effects on the environment and wildlife.

- 4.49 The Friends of Durnsford Recreation Ground identified a requirement to increase adult exercise equipment in open spaces. Friends of Durnsford Recreation Ground have previously requested adult exercise provisions but had been refused by LBM. They believe this would provide exercise opportunities for adults especially in the north east of the borough where there are currently no facilities.

Protection and increase in amount of Open Spaces

- 4.50 The Friends of Figges Marsh highlighted the need to protect allotments in particular from development because they are a key community asset for socialising exercise and wildlife. They also said that some open spaces within the borough fail to evolve over time.
- 4.51 The Wimbledon Society felt that there should be an increase in pocket parks in the more urbanised town centres. They also raised concerns that there are no "wild areas" within a 5-10 minute walk of the Raynes Park Ward due to recent development. They acknowledged that Wimbledon Common is within a reasonable walking distance however it would be too far and impractical for some residents to walk to.

Environment and Biodiversity

- 4.52 Trees were seen as one of the key benefits of open space as they mitigate the effects of climate change and provide important biodiversity opportunities. However the Friends of Cherry Wood Nature Reserve Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage and Wimbledon Society wanted to see more tree planting undertaken in open spaces. The Tree Warden Group identified the importance of producing a Tree Strategy for the borough to help identify more areas for tree planting and protect trees from being removed as part of development.
- 4.53 Biodiversity and encouraging wildlife was also a key benefit identified by consultees. The Wimbledon Society felt that there is an opportunity to increase biodiversity further in open spaces.

Question 7 What improvements to the quality of the open space do you think are needed and who needs to be involved in the funding and implementation

Improvements to Accessibility

- 4.54 Several consultees identified that there needed to be better accessibility to open spaces. The Friends of Figges Marsh said that many of the open spaces included in the site map and site list provided were not accessible to the public. All open spaces have been included in the consultation even if they are not accessible to the public because they still have an important function in the overall green infrastructure network. From data provided by GiGL and verified through site surveys undertaken by TEP an Accessibility Assessment has been completed by GiGL. The Accessibility Assessment will identify gaps in accessibility to open spaces and the results will be considered in the Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Study.

- 4.55 The Friends of Figges Marsh and Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage suggested that there could be better communication with private open space landowners to make private spaces more accessible for example the Friends of Figges Marsh stated that Vectis Gardens (in Graveney Ward) were a lovely open space but not accessible and the Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage suggested that there were opportunities to improve non-vehicle access to some open spaces.
- 4.56 Access and Quality of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) were also highlighted as a concern during the consultation. The Friends of Cannon Hill said that PRoWs were often poorly maintained and should be managed to ensure accessibility for all residents this would in turn encourage more walking and less dependency on car use. The Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage also said that there needs to be better protection of PRoW and improvements to the Wandle Trail which is part of the Wandle Valley Regional Park.
- 4.57 The Willmore End Residents Association also suggested improvements to publically accessible paths. They suggested that the Merton Park Green Walk required resurfacing because it has become eroded and becomes easily water logged which means some residents cannot use the paths easily.

Physical and Mental Wellbeing

- 4.58 Physical and mental health and wellbeing was identified as one of the key benefits of open spaces. The John Innes Society highlighted the opportunities of working with mental health groups for financial and physical support. Friends of Kendor Gardens (who did not respond to this consultation) were assisted financially with the maintenance of Kendor Gardens through the John Innes Society and the Mental Health Therapy Group.
- 4.59 Furthermore the Friends of Cannon Hill suggested that there should be co-operation between the London Borough of Merton contractors developers and private landowners to provide free access to sports facilities for children to tackle childhood obesity.
- 4.60 The Battles Area Residents Association also stated that there is work currently underway at Haydons Road Recreation Ground to create a multi-use games area (MUGA) which aims to encourage more children to take part in sport and exercise. They also said that the Battles Area of the borough is mostly terrace housing with limited outdoor space if any which means that access to reasonably priced sports and exercise opportunities is even more important than other areas of the borough. An assessment of indoor and outdoor playing pitches has been undertaken in a separate report which will identify any existing or future need.
- 4.61 The Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage also suggested that open space should incorporate well designed sports and recreation opportunities which should be supported through planning policy.

Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

- 4.62 Nature conservation and biodiversity was identified as a key benefit and important value of open spaces. Willmore End Residents Association suggested that there should be ecological improvements to encourage more biodiversity. Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage specifically mentioned the importance of ponds in open space. They suggested that more support and protection should be given for ponds such as The Canons Pond, Cranmer Green Pond and the ponds in Mitcham Common.
- 4.63 The Friends of Cannon Hill suggested that activities such as car boot sales should be stopped on open spaces to allow for improvements in biodiversity. Furthermore the Friends of Figges Marsh suggested re-wilding railway embankments would encourage biodiversity and tackle climate change.
- 4.64 Several consultees suggested that tree planting should be encouraged. The Wimbledon Society and Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage suggest that new trees should be planted at every opportunity. The Tree Warden Group advised that the importance of a Tree Strategy was highlighted in the currently adopted Local Development Plan however there was never any allocation of funds or staff to implement this. They believe that a Tree Strategy would make open spaces more resilient to climate change.
- 4.65 The Friends of Durnsford Recreation Ground also suggested that additional tree planting and shrubs would be beneficial for open spaces because it would not only assist in reducing air pollution but provide screening for example the Gap Road Pocket Part is on a busy intersection and therefore additional trees would provide screening from the traffic and mitigate pollution.

Management and Maintenance

- 4.66 Several consultees commented on the current management and maintenance of open spaces in the borough. This was in regards to funding, communication and support from the Council for community groups.
- 4.67 The Friends of Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage stated that Mitcham Common is the second largest park in Merton and is adjacent to the Wandle Valley Regional Park therefore a management plan for Mitcham Common would be beneficial. Friends of Figges Marsh also stated that Mitcham Common should be promoted more as it has all the benefits of Wimbledon Common but is less well known. To increase opportunities and improvement for Cannonaro Park the Friends of Cannonaro Park have drawn up their own maintenance and improvement plan. The Tree Warden Group stated the importance of a Tree Strategy. The Tree Warden Group believe that the lack of funding means *"there are no up to date management or maintenance plans for the majority of green spaces, which has led to a fall in standards and loss in knowledgeable staff"*.

- 4.68 Friends of Holland Park and the Wimbledon Society both expressed concerns over budget cuts which have led to short term decisions about maintenance of parks and gardens. Friends of Holland Park stated that these decisions have led to *"outsourcing maintenance to contractors who undertake a low service level"* furthermore they stated that *"open spaces are irreplaceable and of significant local value to residents and their maintenance should be set at a level that means there is no degradation of these facilities"* and *"well maintained areas instil a sense of pride in an area"*.
- 4.69 Friends of Cannon Hill specifically stated that contractors need to empty bins more frequently. Friends of Figges Marsh also supported this by stating that litter ruins the experience of open spaces and has negative effects on the environment and wildlife.
- 4.70 Friends of Figges Marsh state that they have concerns about the use of parks for commercial gains. They acknowledge that events in parks are *"fun in some ways"* and attract people to the area they also have concerns over the damage events do to parks. Litter picking teams struggle to deal with the amount of litter left over after events and they stated that this was especially the case after an event on Figges Marsh where the Friends of Figges Marsh could see the damage caused from the event for six months afterwards (specific event not provided). While not completely opposed to events in parks they do believe more support should be provided after the events.

Funding and Implementation

- 4.71 The Friends of Canniāro Park suggested a local pool of funds should be set up using money raised through planning. These funds could be used to support Friends of Groups with the maintenance and improvements to parks. The Friends of Holland Park suggested that if the Government can provide funding for parks then the Council should bring in open space levy for example the Wimbledon Common Conservators Levy (which is now not in operation).
- 4.72 The Friends of Figges Marsh supported this by saying that there is *"more pressure on community groups to take a leadership role in initiating improvements, financing them, and executing them"*. While they acknowledged that Friends of Groups played an important role they were concerned about the increasing responsibility. They also highlighted that this pressure may either deter new Friends of Groups or lead to them failing to survive even though there is a lot of community interest in improving parks.
- 4.73 Furthermore Friends of Cannon Hill stated that funding for play spaces needs to be maintained and there should be funding made available for maintenance of formal play equipment. They also said funding needs to be made available for the eradication of the processionary moth.
- 4.74 However the Willmore End Residents Associations stated that they have managed to raise almost £400k in the last 11 years through Lottery funding London Marathon Fund and other funding pools. They have planted trees wildflower constructed a pond and raised funds for tennis courts and changing rooms. However they stated that there were still improvements required for popular green spaces such as Morden Hall Park. This includes resurfacing footpaths providing better signage and increasing biodiversity opportunities such as ponds.

- 4.75 The John Innes Society also provide financial and physical support to many community groups and projects associated with the John Innes Park. The John Innes Society paid for new fruit trees and railing and gate painting at Church Lane Playing Fields. The Johns Innes Society and Mental Health Therapy Group assisted the Friends of Kendor Gardens Group with the management of the gardens. The Johns Innes Society also provided financial and management support to local church volunteers to plant trees and put up bird boxes.

Ongoing Engagement

- 4.76 All responses received from Friends of Groups/Residents Associations and other community groups and forums have been considered during the preparation of the Green Infrastructure/Biodiversity and Open Space Study. Responses that are specific to management/maintenance and other issues will be passed onto the relevant teams within the council for consideration. All consultees will have a further opportunity to be involved with and comment on the draft Local Plan as part of the formal Local Plan consultation .

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Informal consultation was undertaken with a variety of interested community groups to understand the use and value of Merton's open spaces.
- 5.2 27 community groups were consulted including 20 Friends of the Parks Groups, 2 Residents Associations and 5 other community groups. There was a total of 17 responses received from 9 Friends of the Parks Groups, 3 Residents Associations and 5 other community groups.
- 5.3 65 open spaces were mentioned in the responses across 17 Wards. Wimbledon Common in the Village Ward was most used, followed by Morden Hall Park and Wimbledon Park. The Merton Park Ward and Village Wards had the most used open spaces. However, no responses were received on open spaces used in Longthornton Ward, Pollards Hill Ward and St. Helier Ward.
- 5.4 The most popular type of open space was outdoor sports facilities, followed by natural and semi-natural urban greenspace and parks and gardens.
- 5.5 There were very few open spaces used beyond Merton. Tooting Common, Streatham Common and King Georges Park in Wandsworth were mentioned but it was felt that there were sufficient open spaces within Merton that residents didn't need to travel to neighbouring boroughs.
- 5.6 Consultees used open spaces mostly for accessing nature, formal and informal recreation, improving health and wellbeing, socialising and for getting around the borough away from roads.
- 5.7 Consultees considered open spaces in Merton to have a high environmental and social value. Consultees valued accessibility to open spaces in the urban environment, opportunities for recreation, a sense of space and the contribution that open spaces make to air quality.
- 5.8 All consultees believed there were several benefits of Merton's open spaces. Consultees stated that Merton benefits from a wide range of accessible open spaces, which indicates that all residents can access open spaces close to their homes. Furthermore, open spaces benefit the community by providing space for recreational activities and opportunities to improve health and wellbeing. Open spaces also provide an environmental benefit by improving air quality and reducing pollution.
- 5.9 The gaps in provisions of facilities in open spaces were identified mainly as provisions such as litter bins and adult exercise equipment. Also open spaces such as allotments need to be protected from development as they provide opportunities for recreation, socialising and wildlife. Consultees also wanted to see additional opportunities in open spaces for biodiversity.
- 5.10 Consultees suggested that improvements could be made in the accessibility of privately owned open spaces and footpaths and PRowS. They also suggested that working relationships and communication between community groups, contractors and the Council will make management and maintenance of open spaces easier and of a higher standard. Improvements to nature conservation, biodiversity and "wild" areas was also highlighted.

- 5.11 Funding and support for community groups also a key concern of consultees. It was suggested that additional funding could be made available or additional charges through planning be considered to ensure the management of open spaces. Consultees also stated that Management Plans would assist in the management, maintenance and improvement of open spaces, especially larger open spaces such as Mitcham Common.



APPENDIX A Provision Assessment Sites and Map

21st December 2018

Our Ref Merton Open Spaces

Laura Schofield is dealing with this matter
Direct Dial
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BY EMAIL

Partnership | Design | Environment

Dear Stakeholder

OPEN SPACES FOR OUR DOORS OF MERTON – OPEN SPACES

The Environment Partnership (TEP) has been commissioned by the London Borough of Merton to undertake a Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy to provide an up to date and robust evidence base for the new Merton Local Plan.

The Green Infrastructure Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy will not only support the new Local Plan (2020) but will also inform the Infrastructure Needs Assessment support the Council’s health and wellbeing priorities, and provide updates for Merton’s Greenspaces and Leisure Team.

Open space provides opportunities for people to meet, interact, play, relax or get involved in community activities. High quality open space also has a positive impact on people’s mental and physical health by providing safe and accessible opportunities to be physically active and access nature.

The London Borough of Merton has a diverse range of open spaces including parks, sports provision, play spaces, natural and semi-natural greenspace, allotments and green corridors.

As one of the “Friends of the Parks” groups within Merton, you have previously indicated that you would like to take part in consultation on open spaces in the borough. We are now seeking your views, your response will help to inform the assessment as part of the production of the strategy.

How to respond

We have enclosed a map and list of open spaces in Merton for your reference. Please use the site references and site names in your answers so we can easily relate them to the assessment.

Please consider some or all of the following questions in your response

- Which open space(s) do you use in Merton
- Do you use open spaces in neighbouring boroughs
- How do you use open space(s) in Merton



- What do you value about the open spaces in Merton?
- What do you consider the benefits of Merton's open space are?
- Do you feel there are any gaps in provision of open space and if so where?
- What improvements to the quality of the open space do you think are needed and who needs to be involved in the funding and implementation?

Please send your response in writing to us by **Friday** **10th** **January** to lauraschofield@tep.uk.com or by post to TEP, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington, WA3 7BH.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me or the Future Merton team (future.merton.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully



Laura Schofield
Associate Director
The Environment Partnership (TEP)

Enc Merton Open Spaces Map and List of Sites
Copy Future Merton Team

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Abbey Ward	Me 0001	Abbey Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Abbey Ward	Me 0006	All Saints Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Abbey Ward	Me 0050	Deen City Farm (Bunce's Meadow)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	City farm
Abbey Ward	Me 0099	Jubilee Way Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Abbey Ward	Me 0128	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Merton Abbey Mills	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Abbey Ward	Me 0129	Merton Abbey Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Abbey Ward	Me 0133	Merton Park Green Walk	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Abbey Ward	Me 0160	Nelson Gardens Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Park
Abbey Ward	Me 0165	Nursery Road Playing Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Abbey Ward	Me 0225	St Mary's Church (Merton)	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Abbey Ward	Me 0228	St Mary's RC Primary School Nature Area	Amenity	Educational
Abbey Ward	Me 0275	Priory Wall Open Space Walk	Green Corridors	River
Abbey Ward	Me 0278	Leylon Road Early Years and Family Resources Centre	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Abbey Ward	Me 0279	All Saints C Of E Primary School Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Abbey Ward	Me 0302	Hamilton Gardens Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Abbey Ward	Me 0303	Trafalgar Garden	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Abbey Ward	Me 0308	Hardy Gardens Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0027	Bushey Road Green Areas	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0030	Cannon Hill Common (Canons Piece)	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Common
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0031	Cannon Hill Common Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0035	Cherrywood Open Space	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0040	Central Ward Residents Club Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0049	David Lloyds Racquet and Fitness Centre	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0091	Hillcross Primary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0098	Joseph Hood Rereation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0125	Martin Way Leisure Garden	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Community garden
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0126	Martin Way Leisure Garden Site West	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0135	Merton Mansions Gardens (Bushey Road Green Areas)	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0136	Messines Playing Field (Prince George's Playing Field South)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0151	Morden Park and surrounds	Parks and Gardens	Park
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0155	Mordon Park East	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0181	Prince George's Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0182	Prince George's Playing Field South	Other	Vacant land
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0194	Railway Wimbledon to London Road	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0198	Raynes Park FC and Rough Grassland to South (Prince George's Playing Field South)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0200	Raynes Park Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0239	The Paddock Allotments (Cannon Hill Common)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0288	Botsford Road Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Cannon Hill Ward	Me 0289	Haynt Walk Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0036	Christchurch Road Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0039	Colliers Wood Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0176	Planting around industrial estate/Retail Park	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0189	Railsides Tooting to A24 road bridge	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0212	Sainsbury's Border	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0248	Wandle Park (Merton)	Parks and Gardens	Park
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0312	laen by industrial buildings	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0320	verge by Merton High Street and Priory Road	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Colliers Wood Ward	Me 0321	land around Eddie Catz warehouse	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	MB 0016	River Wandle	Green Corridors	River
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0016	Benedict Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0020	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Brangwyn Crescent	Parks and Gardens	Park

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0023	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Brooklands Park Housing Development	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0025	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Bunce's Meadow	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0032	The Canons	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0045	Cranmer Green	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0046	Cranmer Primary School Tree Belt	Amenity	Educational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0047	Cricket Green School	Amenity	Educational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0077	Glebe Square	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0079	Grammer Primary School Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0080	Grebe Court	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0086	Hasslemere Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0105	Caesars Walk Open Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0106	Land between Linden Place and Baron Grove	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0112	Lewis Road recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0116	London Road Playing Fields	Parks and Gardens	Park
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0137	Miles Road Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Park
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0139	Mitcham Common	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Common
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0140	Mitcham Common (Golf Course)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Golf course
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0141	Cricket Green	Amenity	Village green
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0143	Mitcham Garden Village	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Community garden
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0144	Vestry Hall Green (also known as Lower Green)	Amenity	Amenity green space
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0146	Mitcham Sports Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0174	Cherry Tree Estate Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0175	Phipps Bridge Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0191	Railway Lines through Mitchem Common	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0207	Rock Terrace Recreation Ground	Parks and Gardens	Park
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0229	St Peter and St Paul Churchyard	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0235	Sycamore Woodland Block	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Private woodland
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0240	The Wilson	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0242	Three Kings Piece Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0244	Tramway Morden Road - Mitcham Junction	Other	Other
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0245	Tramway South of Belgrave Walk	Other	Other
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0251	Watermeads	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0272	Police Green Cricket Green	Amenity	Village green
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0309	woods in Mitcham Common Golf Course	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Private woodland
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0310	traffic island near Mitcham Common	Unclassified	Road island/verge
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0314	Bennett's Hole	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0315	wasteland between warehouses and the River Wandle	Other	Vacant land
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0316	National Trust land in Merton Hall Park - private gardens	Parks and Gardens	Formal garden
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0317	Land Adjacent River Wandle - fragment	Unclassified	Private woodland
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0318	grassy verge beside bridge over Wandle	Other	Vacant land
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0319	Land Adjacent River Wandle - Wandle Trail	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0324	Richmond Court park	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Cricket Green Ward	Me 0325	landscaping outside Richmond Court	Unclassified	Road island/verge
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0015	Beddington Corner Landfill	Other	Land reclamation
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0021	Beddington Sewage Farm	Other	Sewage/water works
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0139	Land North of Goat Road	Other	Vacant land
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0162	Mill Green	Amenity	Village green
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0167	Mitcham Common Tramway	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Cricket Green Ward	Su 0212	Railway Line Beddington	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Dundonald Ward	Me 0053	Dundonald Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Dundonald Ward	Me 0090	Herbert Road Park	Amenity	Amenity green space
Dundonald Ward	Me 0120	Lower Downs Road Bowling Green and Car Park	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Dundonald Ward	Me 0237	The Chase	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Dundonald Ward	Me 0243	Tramlink Wimbledon - Dondonald Road	Other	Other
Dundonald Ward	Me 0258	Wilton Tennis Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Dundonald Ward	Me 0260	Wimbledon Chase Primary School Field	Amenity	Educational
Dundonald Ward	Me 0290	Dennis Park Crescent Open Space	Unclassified	Road island/verge
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0015	Beecholme Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0018	Bond Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0021	Brenley Park	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0038	Clay Avenue/Acacia Road Housing Green	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0059	Eastfield Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0067	Figge's Marsh	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0083	Grounds of Renshaw Corner	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0104	Laburnum Road Housing Estate	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0117	Lonesome Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0142	Upper Green (also known as Fair Green)	Amenity	Village green
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0169	Old Mitcham Vale School Acacia Road Site	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0217	South London Crematorium and Streatham Park Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0236	Thameslink Railway between Streatham-Mitcham Common	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0255	Western Road Estate	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0284	Three Kings Piece Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0285	Lawn outside Veronica House	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Figge's Marsh Ward	Me 0311	scrubby road verge near Mitcham Common	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Graveney Ward	Me 0060	Edenvale Play Area	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Graveney Ward	Me 0092	Hill Road Allotments, North Mitcham	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Graveney Ward	Me 0145	Mitcham Industrial Estate verge adjacent to Streatham Road.	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Graveney Ward	Me 0188	Railsides between Tooting and Streatham on Sutton line	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Graveney Ward	Me 0214	Vectis Gardens Open Space	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Graveney Ward	Me 0234	Streatham Vale Railway Embankment	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Hillside Ward	Me 0164	Nursary Road Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Hillside Ward	Me 0187	Queen Alexander's Court	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Community garden
Hillside Ward	Me 0192	Railway Path	Green Corridors	Walking/cycling route
Hillside Ward	Me 0211	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Hillside Ward	Me 0261	Wimbledon College Loyola Centre	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Hillside Ward	Me 0291	Edge Hill Court North	Amenity	Amenity green space
Hillside Ward	Me 0292	Edge Hill Court South	Amenity	Amenity green space
Hillside Ward	Me 0301	Galustian Gardens Open Space	Unclassified	Landscaping around premises
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0064	Eveline Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0107	Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground	Children and Teenagers	Play space
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0108	Lavender Park	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0113	Liberty Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0114	London Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0115	London Road Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0159	Myrna Close Open Space	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0249	Wandle Tributary/Branch	Green Corridors	River
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0250	Wasteland/abandoned allotments north of London Road allotments	Other	Other
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0254	Western Road Allotments (Merton)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Lavender Fields Ward	Me 0276	River Wandle Tributary by Bennets Court	Green Corridors	River
Longthornton Ward	Me 0048	Crossways Sports Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Longthornton Ward	Me 0061	Elmwood Tennis Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Longthornton Ward	Me 0062	Eltandia Hall Care Centre	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Longthornton Ward	Me 0118	Long Bolstead Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Longthornton Ward	Me 0121	Lower League, Norbury	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Longthornton Ward	Me 0147	Rowan Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Longthornton Ward	Me 0163	Lyndhurst Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Longthornton Ward	Me 0166	Oakleigh Way Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Longthornton Ward	Me 0208	Rowen Road Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Longthornton Ward	Me 0232	Stanford Community Woodland	Amenity	Educational
Longthornton Ward	Me 0246	Vacant Land west of Chilmark Road	Other	Vacant land
Longthornton Ward	Me 0271	Stanford Road Play Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Lower Morden Ward	MB 0012	Pyl Brook	Green Corridors	River
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0009	Aragon Primary School (King George's Playing Fields)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0019	Bow Lane Scout Centre	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0041	Coniston Close Housing Green	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0054	Dornan Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0088	Hatfield Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0101	King Georges Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0130	Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0148	Morden Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0185	Pyl Brook Open Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0213	Lynmouth Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Park
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0216	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Lower Morden Ward	Me 0222	St John Fisher Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Lower Morden Ward	Su 0171	Northern end of Green Lane and footpath to south	Green Corridors	Walking/cycling route
Lower Morden Ward	Su 0194	Pasture Fields North of Morden Cemetery	Other Urban Fringe	Agriculture
Lower Morden Ward	Su 0520	Unknown62Sutton	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Merton Park Ward	Me 0037	Church Lane Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Merton Park Ward	Me 0044	Cranleigh Lawn Tennis and Social Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Merton Park Ward	Me 0095	John Innes Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Merton Park Ward	Me 0096	John Innes Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Merton Park Ward	Me 0100	Kendor Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Park
Merton Park Ward	Me 0157	Mostyn Gardens (Merton)	Parks and Gardens	Park
Merton Park Ward	Me 0161	Nelson Hospital	Other	Other
Merton Park Ward	Me 0170	Old Rutishians Cricket Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Merton Park Ward	Me 0179	Poplar Primary School Field	Amenity	Educational
Merton Park Ward	Me 0180	Poplar Primary School Wildlife Area	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Merton Park Ward	Me 0210	Rutlish School Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Merton Park Ward	Me 0224	St Mary the Virgin Churchyard (Merton)	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Merton Park Ward	Me 0227	St Mary Gleblands	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Merton Park Ward	Me 0322	verge beside Morden Hall Park	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0070	Garden Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0085	Harris Academy Merton	Amenity	Educational
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0124	Marlowe Square Open Space	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0162	New Barnes Avenue Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0177	Donnelly Green Open Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0202	Pollards Hill O/S	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0206	Robinhood Close Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0215	Sherwood Park Road Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0257	William Morris Primary School Field (Recreation Lane Open Land)	Amenity	Educational
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0304	Recreation Way Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Road island/verge
Pollards Hill Ward	Me 0305	Hertford Way Open Space	Amenity	Road island/verge
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0017	Bishopsford Community School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0051	Deer Park Gardens	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0122	Malmesbury Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0149	Morden Hall Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0150	Morden Hall Road Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0156	Moreton Green	Amenity	Amenity green space
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0195	Ravensbury Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0230	St Teresas Primary School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0238	The Hub	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0273	Water Meads Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Park
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0307	Moreton Green	Amenity	Amenity green space
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0313	section of Wandle walk	Unclassified	Walking/cycling route
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0323	Morden Hall Garden Centre	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Ravensbury Ward	Me 0326	Ravensbury Park Medical Centre grounds	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Ravensbury Ward	Su 0201	Poulter Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Ravensbury Ward	Su 0228	Roadside Verges	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Raynes Park Ward	MB 0010	Malden Golf Course	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Golf course
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0003	Aboyne Drive	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0028	Bushey Court Park	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0043	Cottenham Park	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0078	Goals Soccer Centres	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields

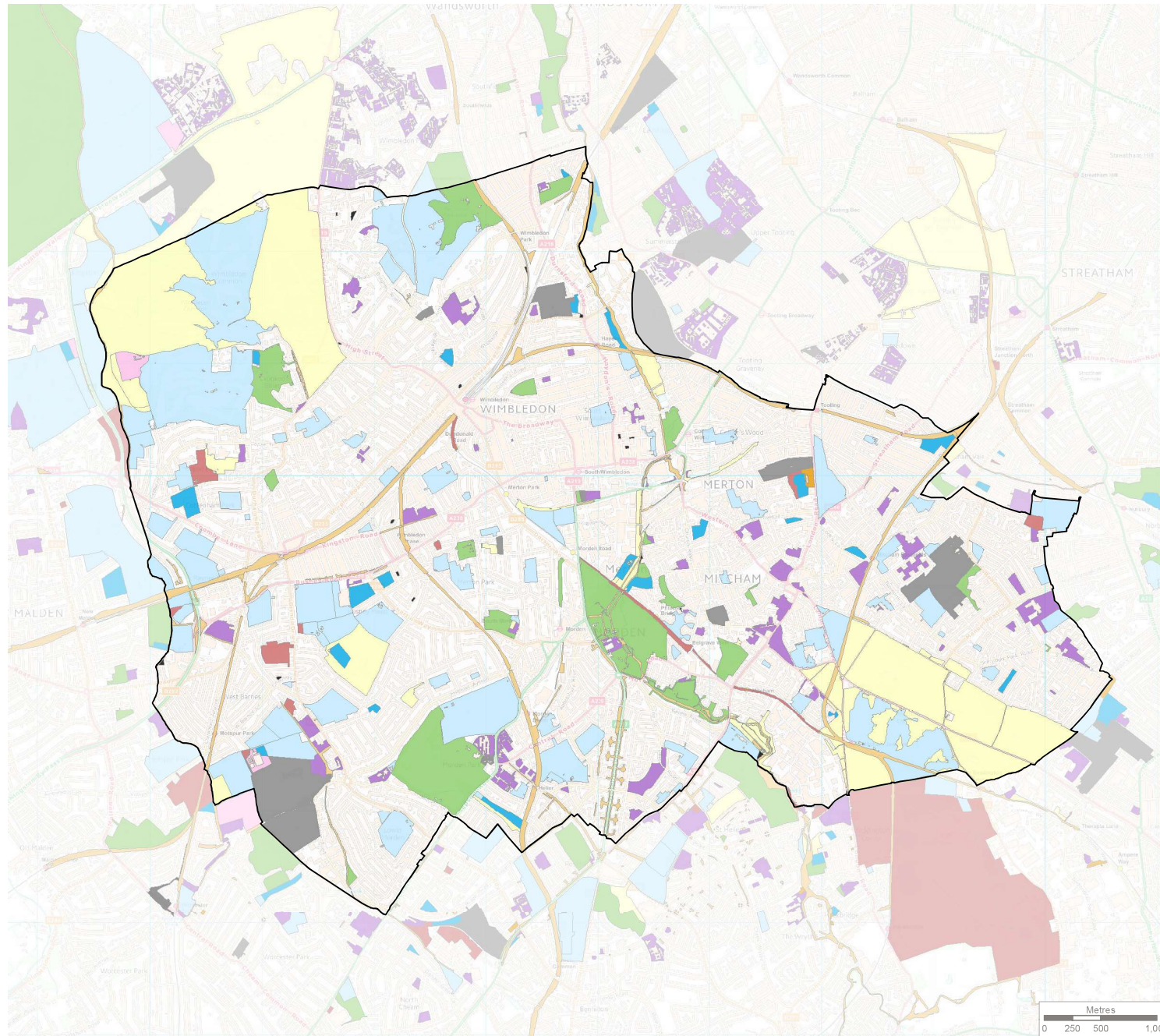
Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0093	Holland Gardens Open Space	Parks and Gardens	Park
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0171	Old Wimbledonians Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0190	Railway Borough Boundary West Wimbledon Satation	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0196	Raynes Park - Bushey Road Railway Cutting	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0197	Raynes Park Bowling Club (Raynes Park Sports Ground)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0201	Raynes Park Sports Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0233	Stourhead Gardens Green	Green Corridors	Walking/cycling route
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0253	West Wimbledon Bowling Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0262	Wimbledon College Playing Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0269	World of Golf at Beverley Park	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Raynes Park Ward	Me 0274	Beverley Brook - Wet Triangle	Other	Vacant land
St. Helier Ward	MB 0046	Love Lane Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0002	Abbotsbury School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
St. Helier Ward	Me 0033	Canterbury Road Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0034	St Anns Secondary School Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
St. Helier Ward	Me 0055	Douglas Square	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0063	Epsom Road Estate	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0065	Eversham Green	Amenity	Amenity green space
St. Helier Ward	Me 0073	George Hill Allotments East (Pylbrook Allotments and Nature Reserve)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
St. Helier Ward	Me 0074	George Hill Allotments West (Pylbrook Allotments and Nature Reserve)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
St. Helier Ward	Me 0075	George Hill Open Space (Pylbrook Allotments and Nature Reserve)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
St. Helier Ward	Me 0076	Glastonbury Road Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0081	Green Lane Central Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0082	Green Lane Verge South	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0087	Hatfield Mead Estate	Amenity	Landscaping around premises

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
St. Helier Ward	Me 0109	Lawrence Weaver Close	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0110	Legion Court	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0131	Merton College	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0132	Merton College Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
St. Helier Ward	Me 0152	Morden Primary School	Amenity	Educational
St. Helier Ward	Me 0153	Morden Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
St. Helier Ward	Me 0154	Morden Sidings	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
St. Helier Ward	Me 0186	Pyl Brook Nature Reserve	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
St. Helier Ward	Me 0193	Railway South of South Merton and Adjoining Land	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
St. Helier Ward	Me 0203	Trenchard Court Haig Homes Open Space	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
St. Helier Ward	Me 0219	St Helier Avenue Verge South	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0220	St Helier Avenue Verge Section One	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0221	St Helier Avenue Open Space	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
St. Helier Ward	Me 0231	St. Lawrence Churchyard and adjoining land	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
St. Helier Ward	Me 0281	The Precincts Haig Homes Open Space	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Me 0282	Fragment near Epsom Road Estate	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
St. Helier Ward	Su 0444	Sutton Common Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Trinity Ward	Me 0007	All Saints Road Open Space	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Trinity Ward	Me 0071	Garfield Road Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Trinity Ward	Me 0072	Garfield School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Trinity Ward	Me 0084	Haydons Road Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation ground
Trinity Ward	Me 0094	Holy Trinity C of E School	Amenity	Educational
Trinity Ward	Me 0183	Priory C of E Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Trinity Ward	Me 0218	South Park Gardens	Parks and Gardens	Park
Trinity Ward	Me 0247	Wandle Meadow Nature Park	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Trinity Ward	Me 0280	Land Adjacent River Wandle	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Village Ward	MB 0017	Wimbledon Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Village Ward	MB 0023	Wimbledon Common	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Common
Village Ward	MB 0041	Beverley Brook south of Richmond Park	Green Corridors	River
Village Ward	MB 0043	Wimbledon Park Golf Course (Wimbledon Park)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Golf course
Village Ward	Me 0004	Ackinson Morley's Hospital Fields	Other	Vacant land
Village Ward	Me 0005	Aitkinson Morley's Hospital Woodland	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Private woodland
Village Ward	Me 0008	Allotments (Cannizaro Park)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Village Ward	Me 0013	Barham Road Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Village Ward	Me 0024	Buddhapadipa Temple London	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Village Ward	Me 0029	Cannizaro Park	Parks and Gardens	Park
Village Ward	Me 0042	Cottenham Park Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Village Ward	Me 0056	Drax playing fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Village Ward	Me 0103	Kings College School Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Village Ward	Me 0123	Margin Drive Green Open Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Village Ward	Me 0167	Oberon Playing Field	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
Village Ward	Me 0172	Oldfield Estate Housing Green	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Village Ward	Me 0173	Park House Middle School Conservation Area	Amenity	Educational
Village Ward	Me 0184	Prospect Place (Merton)	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Village Ward	Me 0204	Ricards Lodge High School Grounds	Amenity	Educational
Village Ward	Me 0209	Royal Wimbledon Golf Course (Wimbledon Common)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Golf course
Village Ward	Me 0226	St Mary's Churchyard (Merton)	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Village Ward	Me 0252	West Side Lawn Tennis Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
Village Ward	Me 0256	Westside Common Verge	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Village Ward	Me 0264	Wimbledon Common (Golf course)	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Golf course
Village Ward	Me 0268	Wimbledon Tennis Club	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Other recreational
Village Ward	Me 0270	Fish Ponds Wood and Beverley Meads Local Nature Reserve	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
Village Ward	Me 0277	Warren Farm (Merton)	Other Urban Fringe	Equestrian centre
Village Ward	Me 0293	Crooked Billet Open Space	Amenity	Amenity green space
Village Ward	Me 0294	Wimbledon War Memorial	Unclassified	Road island/verge
Village Ward	Me 0295	Welford Park and Path	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
Village Ward	Me 0296	Alfreton Close Corner Park	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Village Ward	Me 0297	Seymour Road Park	Unclassified	Private woodland
West Barnes Ward	MB 0001	Beverley Brook	Green Corridors	River
West Barnes Ward	Me 0010	Archbishop Tenison's School Sports Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
West Barnes Ward	Me 0011	Arthur Road Allotments (Thompsons Nursery and Allotments)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
West Barnes Ward	Me 0012	Arthur Road Vacant Land	Other	Vacant land
West Barnes Ward	Me 0026	Bushey Road Flyover	Green Corridors	Road island/verge
West Barnes Ward	Me 0066	Fairway Playing Fields	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
West Barnes Ward	Me 0097	Joseph Hood Memorial Woodland and Meadow	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Nature reserve
West Barnes Ward	Me 0102	Kings College School	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
West Barnes Ward	Me 0111	Lessa 119 Grand Drive	Other	Vacant land
West Barnes Ward	Me 0127	Meadowsweet Close Grassland	Other	Vacant land
West Barnes Ward	Me 0134	Merton Hall Bowling Green	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
West Barnes Ward	Me 0158	Motspur Park to Raynes Park Railway Cutting	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
West Barnes Ward	Me 0168	Old Emanuel School Sports Ground	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing fields
West Barnes Ward	Me 0199	Raynes Park High School	Amenity	Educational
West Barnes Ward	Me 0223	St John Fisher RC School Field	Amenity	Educational

Ward	Site Reference	Site Name	PPG17 Classification	Primary Use
West Barnes Ward	Me 0241	Thompsons Nursery (Thompsons Nursery and Allotments)	Other Urban Fringe	Nursery/horticulture
West Barnes Ward	Me 0286	Rookwood Open Space	Unclassified	Vacant land
West Barnes Ward	Me 0287	Crossway Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0022	Brookland Avenue Allotments (Durnsford Recreation Ground)	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0052	District Line	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0057	Durnsford Road Recreation Ground	Parks and Gardens	Park
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0058	Durnsford Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0068	Gap Road Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0069	Gap Road Railway Land	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0089	Havelock Road Allotments	Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotments
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0178	Poplar Court Open Space	Amenity	Landscaping around premises
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0259	Wimbledon - Wandle Thameslink	Green Corridors	Railway cutting
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0267	Wimbledon Sidings	Green Corridors	Railway embankment
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0298	Home Park Road Open Space	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0299	Open Space attached to Gipsy site	Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace	Amenity green space
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0300	Gap Road Park	Unclassified	Amenity green space
Wimbledon Park Ward	Me 0306	Wimbledon Park Primary School	Amenity	Educational
Wimbledon Park Ward	Wa 0109	Lambeth Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemetery/churchyard



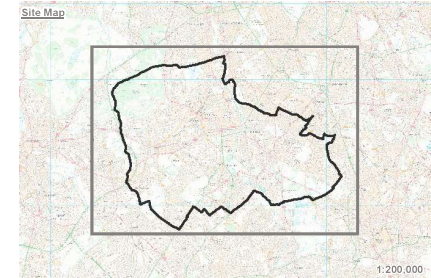
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- PPG17 Open Space Typology Classified by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL)**
- Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms
- Amenity Space
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Provision for Children and Teenagers
- Green Corridors
- Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Greenspace
- Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Parks and Gardens
- Other Urban Fringe
- Other Open Space
- Not Classified by GiGL

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Site Map



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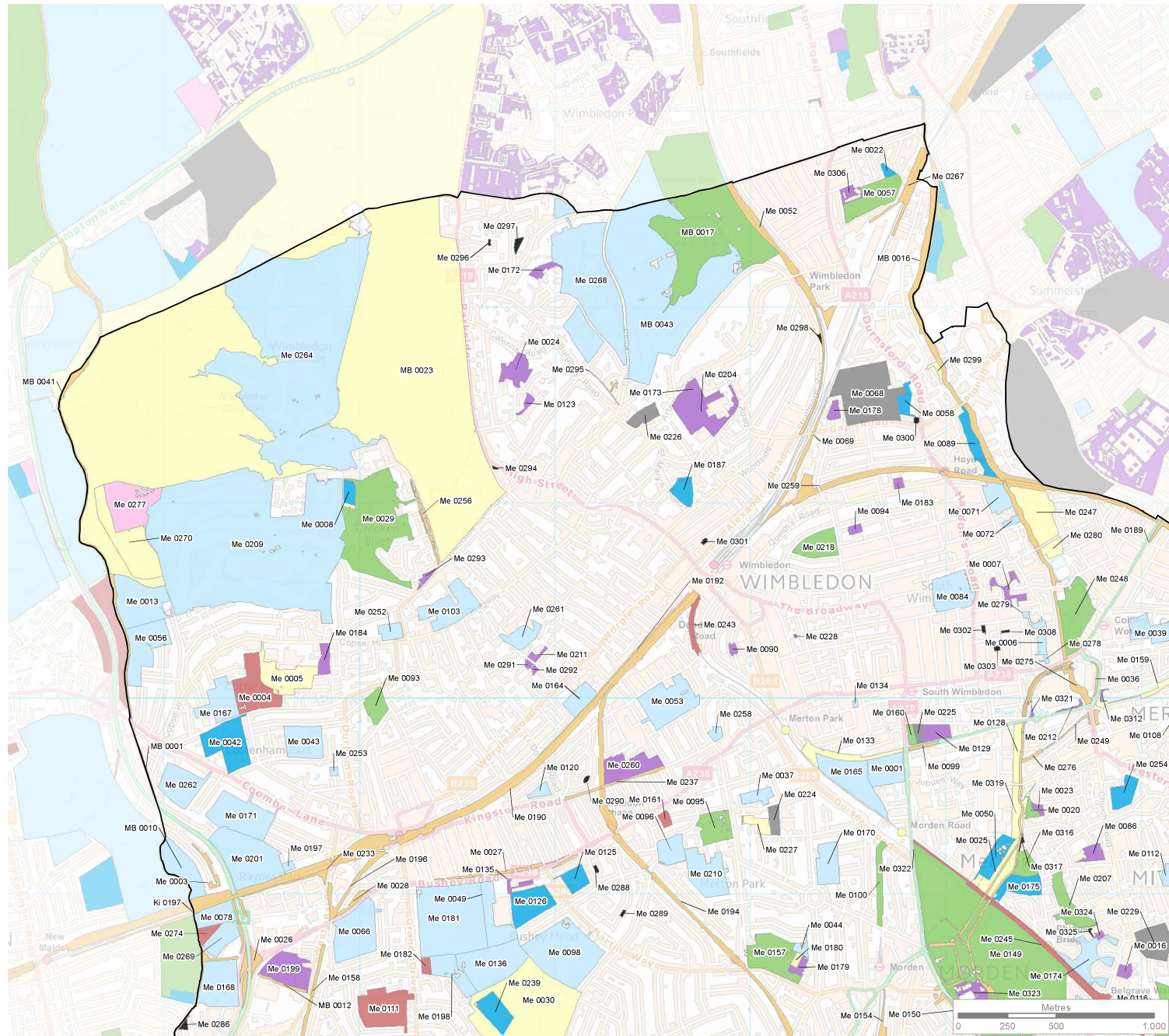
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Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Open Space Consultation - Typology

Drawing Number
G7118_035.1 Sheet 1 of 4

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
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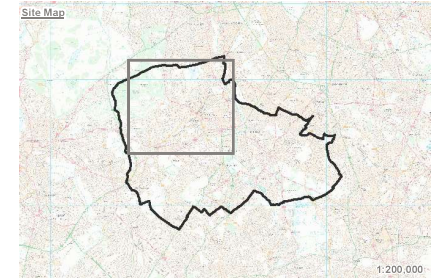
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Site Map



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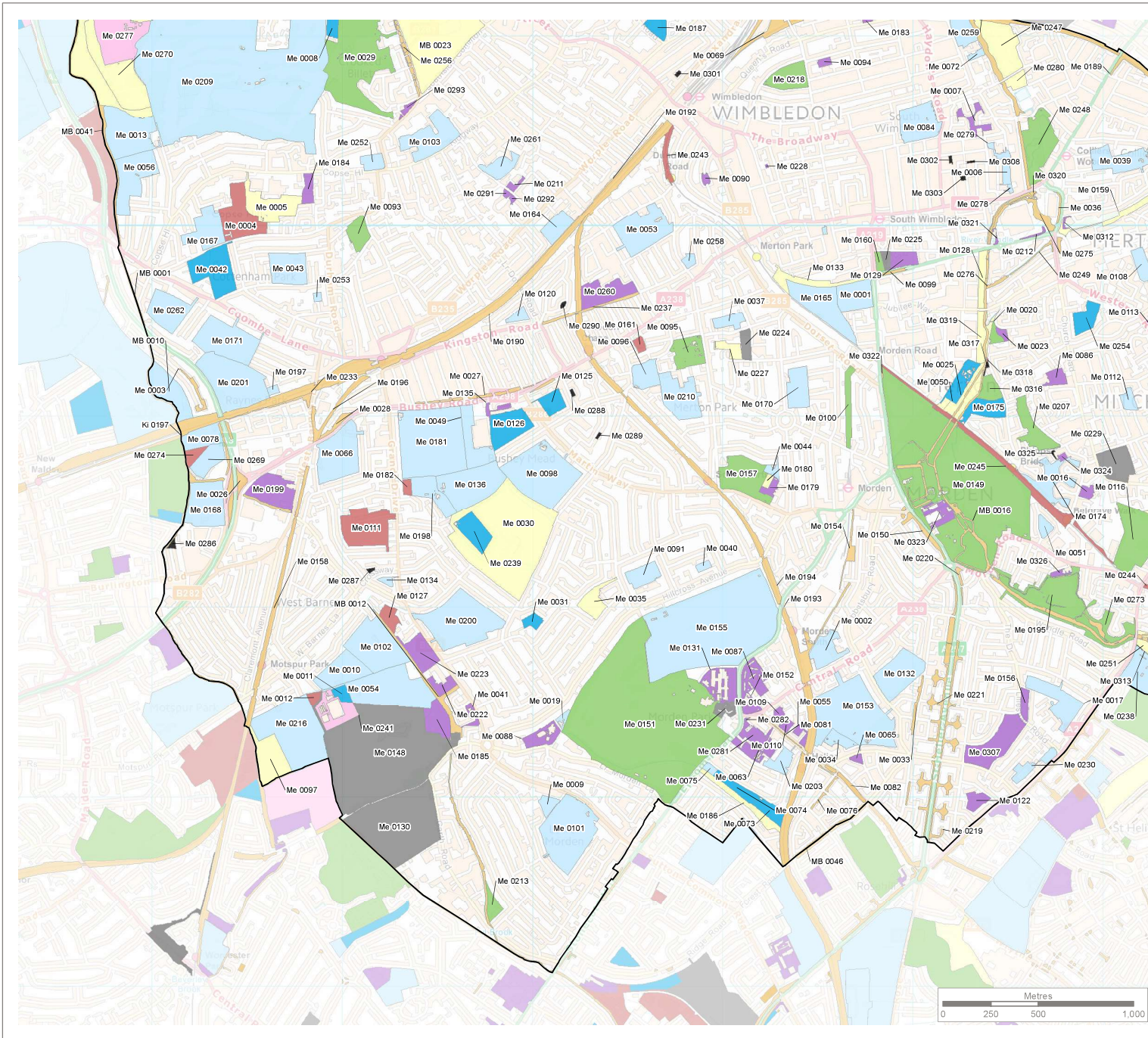
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Project
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Title
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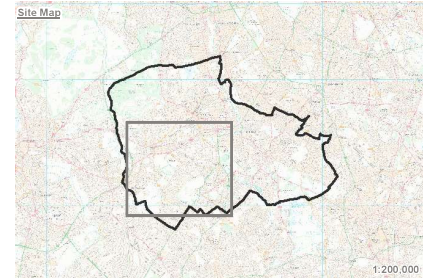
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- KEY**
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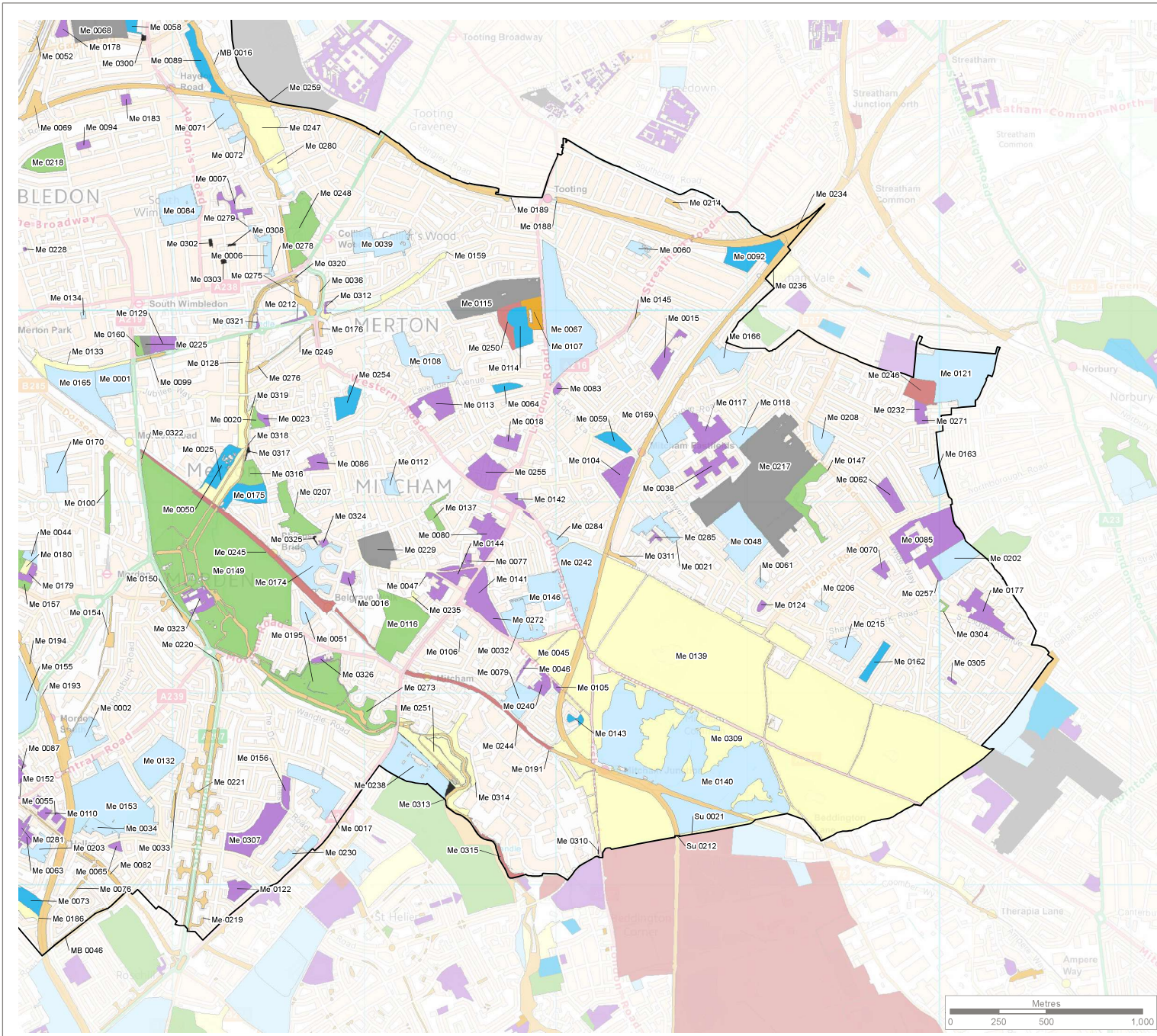
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Title
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Drawing Number G7118_035_3	Sheet 3 of 4
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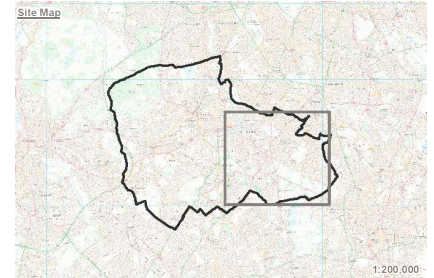
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Title
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G7118,035,4 Sheet 4 of 4

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Document Title	Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report
Prepared for	London Borough of Merton
Prepared by	TEP - Warrington
Document Ref	7118.025

Author	Joe O'Reilly
Date	June 2019
Checked	Laura Schofield
Approved	Laura Schofield

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3.0	18/06/19	JO	LS	Updated following client comments	Final Draft
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APPENDICES

- APPENDIX A Green and Blue Infrastructure Glossary
- APPENDIX B GIS Green and Blue Infrastructure Maps

1.0 Context

- 1.1 Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) provides a number of ecosystem services for Merton such as carbon storage, recreational space and the removal of air pollutants which are beneficial to humans, the economy and the environment.
- 1.2 GBI has been defined as 'a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features' (Natural England, 2009¹). It includes a variety of land cover types such as parks, rivers and private gardens which can be assessed for their provision of ecosystem services.
- 1.3 Given the pressures on land use, it is important that GBI is assessed as part of the Merton Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study and strategically managed to maximise the potential benefits for the borough.

Purpose and Scope

- 1.4 The purpose of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report is to assess the quantity and quality of the existing provision of GBI in Merton and to assess the current provision within the context of Merton's priorities.
- 1.5 The Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report forms part of a set of Technical Reports which will provide for the Merton Local Plan and inform the overall Merton Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study as shown in Figure 1.
- 1.6 This Technical Report utilises the environmental designations within Merton's Local Plan within the assessment of GBI, but does not make any recommendations to change any designations as this is covered in a separate Technical Report.

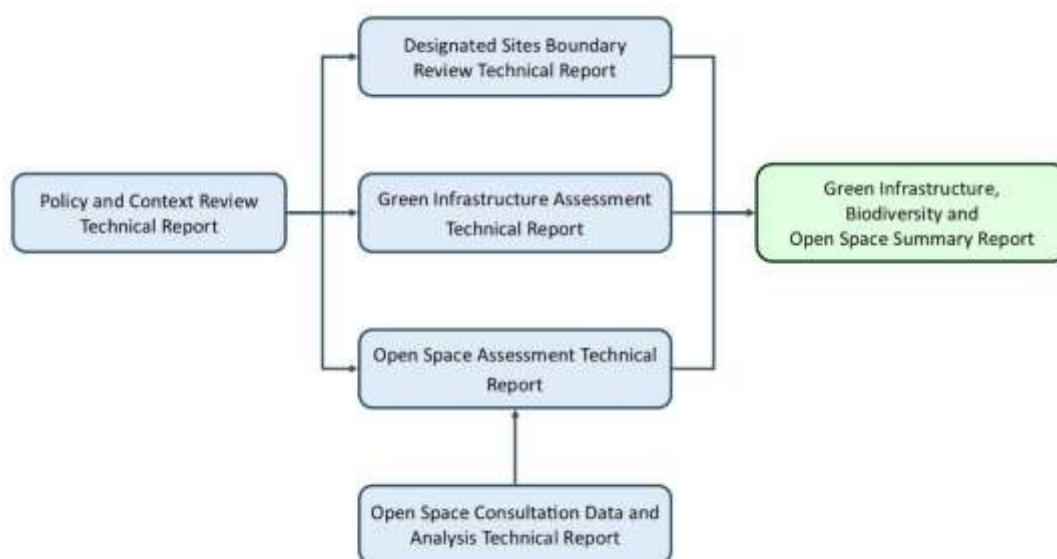


Figure 1: Structure for Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

¹ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35033>

2.0 Methodology

2.1 The following methodology was used to assess the London borough of Merton's Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI).

Typology Mapping

2.2 Typology mapping identifies the land cover of Merton as GBI land cover categories (Typologies). Descriptions of the typologies can be found in Appendix A. This is done to provide a baseline estimate of the quantity of GBI in Merton and its distribution across the borough. This stage is necessary for the subsequent stages of the GBI assessment.

2.3 Figure 2 is an extract from the typology mapping. All maps can be found in Appendix B.

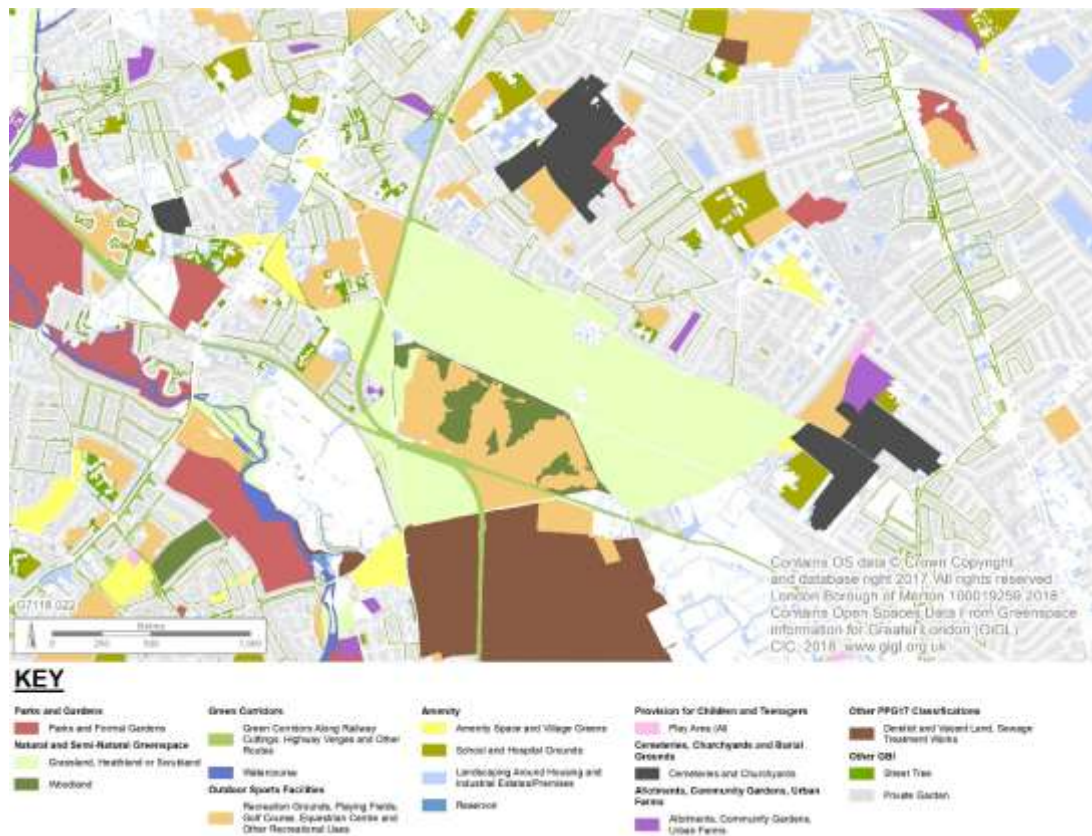


Figure 2: Typology Mapping Extract

- 2.4 All of the land within the London borough of Merton (LBM) was identified as one of 19 GBI Typologies. To identify potential opportunities for collaboration all features within 2km of the LBM were assigned a typology and assessed on its functionality. The typologies were primarily derived from Planning Policy Guidance 17² (PPG17² 2002) and Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) open space typologies³ (Table 1). Additional typologies were added to identify additional elements of GBI which are not open space such as green roofs.
- 2.5 Although the PPG17 has been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019⁴) an updated list of open space typologies has not yet been released and those identified in PPG17 is regarded as the best categorisation of open space.
- 2.6 The open space typologies proposed by GiGL were used because they are also based upon the PPG17 and supply a greater level of detail regarding the use of the open spaces.
- 2.7 Additional typologies were added because LBM has components of GBI which are not incorporated into the PPG17 or GiGL classifications and it is important that these typologies are quantified and assessed.

Table 1: Green and Blue Infrastructure Typologies

Open Space Category (PPG17)	GBI Typology
Parks and Gardens	Parks and Formal Gardens
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	Woodland
	Grassland Heathland and Scrubland
Green Corridors	Watercourse
	Green Corridors Along Railways Highways and Other Routes
Recreation and Outdoor Sports Facilities	Playing Fields Golf Courses Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Grounds
Amenity Green Space and Education	Amenity Green Spaces and Village Greens
	School and Hospital Grounds
	Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates Premises

²<https://web.archive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120920042539/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/ppg17.pdf>

³<https://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/open-space-categories/>

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb2019_web.pdf

Open Space Category (PPG17)	GBI Typology
	Reservoir
Play Space Provision for Children and Teenagers	Play Area (All Types)
Allotments, Community Gardens and City Farms	Allotment, Community Garden or Urban Farm
Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemeteries and Churchyards
Urban Fringe	Agricultural Land and Horticulture
Other	Derelict and Vacant Land, Sewage Treatment Works
Non-PPG17 Classifications	Green Roof
	Street Trees
	Private Domestic Garden
	Not Green and Blue Infrastructure

Note: No civic spaces were identified within LBM.

2.8 GBI Typologies were assigned to Ordnance Survey Topography MasterMap features. Features within a site in the GiGL Open Spaces Dataset were assigned a GBI typology based on the site's 'Primary Use' (details can be found in the below Table 2). Additional datasets were used to identify other GBI typologies:

- Ordnance Survey Topography MasterMap⁵
- GiGL Urban Greening⁶
- GiGL Private Gardens
- GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees⁷

2.9 A visual inspection of the typology mapping was also completed to identify any anomalous typologies.

2.10 The following methods were used to assign typologies:

Table 2: Green and Blue Infrastructure Typology Method & Data

GBI Typology	Source Dataset	Method
Parks and Formal Gardens	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use - Park, Formal Garden

⁵ <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-and-government/products/topography-layer.html>

⁶ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/urban-greening/>

⁷ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/local-authority-maintained-trees>

GBI Typology	Source Dataset	Method
Woodland	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Private Public Woodland
Grassland Heathland or Scrubland	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Nature reserve Common
Watercourse	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use River
Green Corridors Along Railways Highways and Other Routes	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Railway Cutting and Railway Embankment Disused Railway Trackbed Road Island Verge Walking cycling route
Playing Fields Golf Courses Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Grounds	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Playing Field Golf Course Recreation Ground Other Recreational Equestrian Centre.
Amenity Green Spaces and Village Greens	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Amenity Green Space Village Green
School and Hospital Grounds	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary use Educational Hospital
Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates Premises	GiGL OpenSpace Sites OS Topography Mastermap	GiGL Primary use Landscaping around Premises OS Legend = '0000 Natural surface'
Reservoir	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Reservoir
Play Area (All Types)	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Play space Adventure Playground Youth Area
Allotment Community Garden or Urban Farm	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Allotments Community Garden City Farm
Cemeteries and Churchyards	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Cemetery Churchyards
Agricultural Land and Horticulture	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Agriculture Nursery Horticulture

GBI Typology	Source Dataset	Method
Derelict and Vacant Land Sewage Treatment Works	GiGL OpenSpace Sites	Primary Use Vacant Land Land Reclamation Sewage Water works
Green Roof	GiGL Urban Greening Point OS Topography Mastermap	Points (adjusted for accuracy) used to select feature from OS Topography Mastermap
Street Trees	London street trees gl 20180214 OS Topography Mastermap	Points used to select feature from OS Topography Mastermap
Private Domestic Gardens	GiGL – OSMMGardens region OS Topography Mastermap	Taken from source dataset OS Legend = '0000 Multiple surface (garden)'
Not Green and Blue Infrastructure		Everything remaining following GBI typology identification

Functionality Mapping

- 2.11 Functionality mapping uses the results of the typology mapping to provide a baseline estimate of the quality of GBI across the borough.
- 2.12 Figure 3 shows an extract of the functionality mapping.

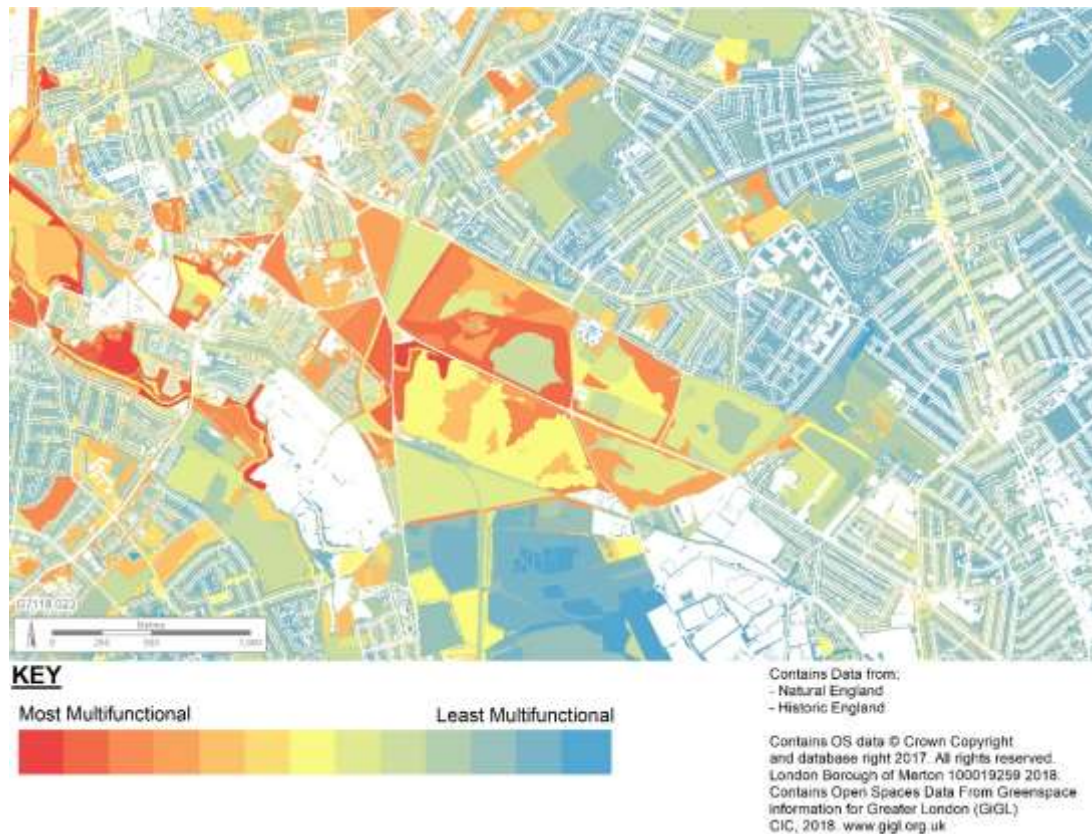


Figure 3: Functionality Mapping Extract

2.13 A Typology Vs Function Matrix was used to determine what GBI functions each of the typologies performs (Figure 4). Within the matrix there was unconditional functionality when typology performs a function regardless of the situation for example school grounds will always contribute to learning. There was also conditional functionality as the provision of a function was dependent on its location for example GBI may only perform the education function if it is near to a school. Many typologies were multifunctional for example a park may provide a source of recreation but can also provide a habitat for wildlife and water infiltration (descriptions of each function can be found in Table 3). This is represented in the maps with a higher functionality score.

Table 3: Green and Blue Infrastructure Functions

GBI Function	Description
Recreation – Public	Areas that can be freely used by members of the public for recreation purposes without any restrictions to access.
Recreation – Private	Areas that can only be used for recreation by the landowner or those invited by the landowner.
Recreation – Public with Restrictions	Areas that can be used by members of the public for recreational purposes but the access or use of the space is restricted. This could be because the space is only accessible on a membership basis or is only open at selected times.
Green Travel Route	Areas that can act as off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
Aesthetic	Areas which improve the image of an area which can make the area a more attractive place to live, work and visit.
Shading from Sun	Areas which protect people or surfaces from solar radiation. This can reduce surface temperatures and increase comfort levels. This function is key in the adaptation to climate change.
Evaporative Cooling	Areas where vegetation transpires water from their surfaces which cools their immediate surroundings.
Trapping/Removal of Pollutants	Pollutants such as Ozone, Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates can be removed from the air by vegetation through their leaf stoma or through interception. Vegetation can also act as a filter to remove pollutants from water.
Noise Absorption	Areas which are able to intercept and reduce the impact of noise on the surrounding area.
Habitat for Wildlife	Areas which are able to provide a habitat or act as a food source for local wildlife.
Corridor for Wildlife	Areas which act as routes for species to move between habitat areas.
Heritage	Areas which contribute to the historic links in the landscape such as designated monuments.
Culture	Areas used for cultural purposes such as public art or events.

GBI Function	Description
Carbon Storage	Areas which make a notable contribution to the sequestration and storage of carbon from the atmosphere. All vegetation is able to remove carbon – however trees are thought to be particularly valuable.
Food Production	Areas used for growing crops or grazing animals.
Learning	Areas which contribute to the knowledge of individuals about the environment.
Water Storage	Areas which are able to store water for use by humans.
Water Interception	Areas which are able to intercept rainfall and slow the water’s flow into the ground. This can reduce the risk of flooding.
Water Infiltration	Areas which assist the movement of water or rain into the ground. This can reduce surface flow and the risk of flooding.

		Green & Blue Infrastructure Typology																	
		Perks and Formal Gardens	Woodland	Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland	Watercourse	Green Corridors Along Railways, Highways and Other Routes	Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses	Amenity Spaces and Village Greens	School and Hospital Grounds	Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises	Reservoir	Play Area (All Types)	Allotment, Community Garden or Urban Farm	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Agricultural Land and Horticulture	Derelict and Vacant Land, Sewage Treatment Works	Green Roof	Street Trees	Private Domestic Gardens
Green & Blue Infrastructure Function	Aesthetic	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always
	Recreation - Private																		Always
	Recreation - Public						Always				Always			Always					
	Recreation - Public (Restricted)												Always						
	Green Travel Route																	Always	
	Carbon Storage		Always															Always	Always
	Heritage																	Always	Always
	Learning								Always			Always						Always	
	Cultural Asset	Always												Always					
	Food Production												Always		Always				
	Habitat for Wildlife	Always	Always								Always			Always		Always	Always	Always	Always
	Connectivity For Wildlife																	Always	Always
	Noise Absorption			Always														Always	Always
	Evaporative Cooling	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always		Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always
	Shading from the Sun		Always										Always					Always	
	Trapping/Removal of Pollutants		Always													Always		Always	Always
	Water Infiltration	Always	Always	Always		Always	Always	Always	Always	Always			Always	Always	Always	Always		Always	Always
Water Interception	Always	Always	Always		Always	Always	Always	Always	Always			Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	Always	
Water Storage				Always						Always									

Always
 Conditional
 Never/Unlikely

Figure 4: Typology vs Functionality Matrix

2.14 The following datasets and rules were used to determine conditional functionality (Table 4).

Table 4: Green and Blue Infrastructure Functions Method & Data

GBI Function	Method/Rule	Datasets used
Recreation – Public	If there are no restrictions on access	GiGL Open Spaces Dataset (Access – Free or De facto)
Recreation - Public Restricted	If there are some restrictions on access	GiGL Open Spaces Dataset (Access – Restricted)
Green Travel Route	If within 20m of Public Right of Way (PRoW) or Cycle Network	LBM PRoW and Existing Cycle Ways
Carbon Storage	If it contains tree cover	OS Topology MasterMap (stated as coniferous/nonconiferous trees) GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees (within 2m of point)
Heritage	If within area of historical importance	Historic England Designations (Scheduled Ancient Monument, Registered Park and Garden within 50m of listed building) LBM Policy (Conservation Areas, Local Historic Parks and Gardens)
Learning	If within 500m of an education centre	LBM Education Centres
Habitat For Wildlife	If it intersects a Core Biodiversity Area (SSSI, SPA, SAC, SIC) or Priority Habitat	Natural England Designations (SSSIs, SACs, SPAs, Priority Habitats) LBM Policy (SICs)
Connectivity for Wildlife	If within 50m of Habitat Functionality	GBI dataset produced for this study

GBI Function	Method/Rule	Datasets used
Noise Absorption	If within 250m of A Roads/Motorways or Railways	OS Open Data - Vector Map District (Class = 'A Road' or 'Motorway')
Shading from the Sun	If it contains tree cover	OS Topology MasterMap (stated as coniferous/nonconiferous trees) GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees (within 2m of point)
Trapping/Removal of Pollutants	If it contains tree cover	OS Topology MasterMap (stated as coniferous/nonconiferous trees) GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees (within 2m of point)
Water Interception	If it contains tree cover	OS Topology MasterMap (stated as coniferous/nonconiferous trees) GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees (within 2m of point)

Priority Assessment

- 2.15 GBI benefits should be provided wherever possible however the Priority Assessment identified areas which are most in need for each of the priorities identified.
- 2.16 Figure 5 below shows an extract from the priority mapping.

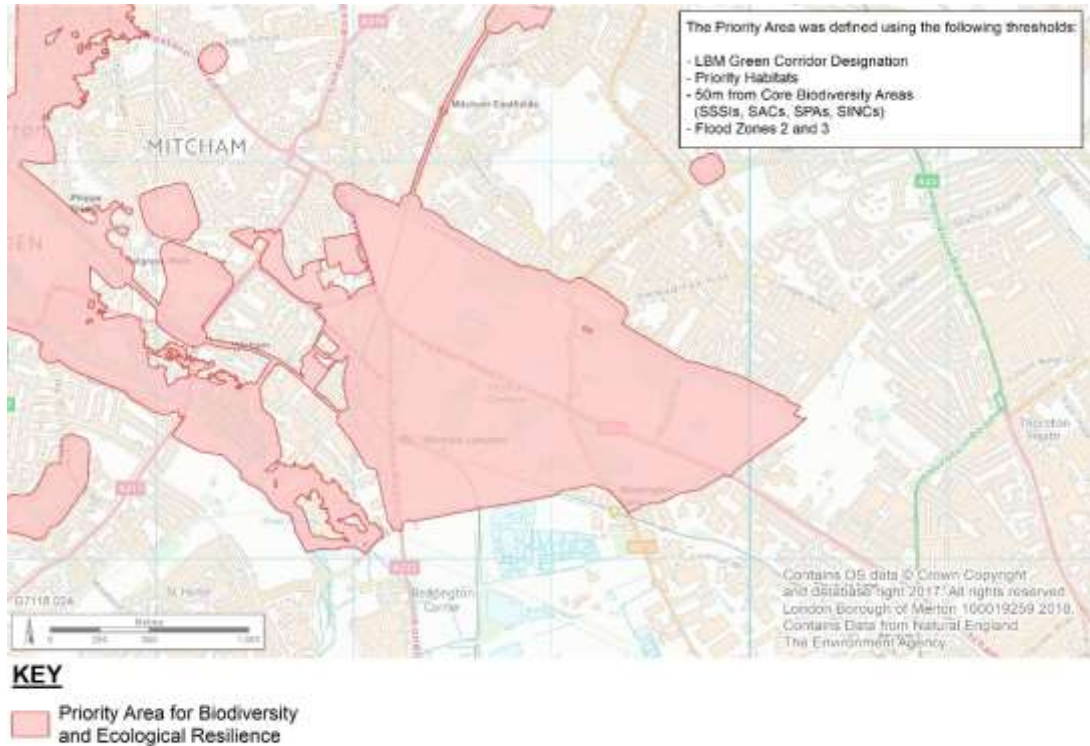


Figure 5: Priority Mapping Extract

- 2.17 Priorities were identified from the London Plan (2018⁸) the London Environment Strategy (LES 2018⁹) the All London Green Grid (ALGG 2012¹⁰) and consultation with LBM. The priorities were located spatially through the selection of thresholds of socioeconomic or environmental data (Table 5).

⁸ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_showing_minor_suggested_changes_july_2018.pdf

⁹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/algg_spg_mar2012.pdf

Table 5: Green and Blue Infrastructure Priorities Method & Data

Priority	Objectives of the London Plan / LES or ALGG	Threshold	Datasets / Methods
Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing	London Plan / Promote Mental and Physical Health and Wellbeing Play / Sport and Recreation LES / Promote Healthy Living ALGG / Promote Healthy Living Increase Access to Nature Access to Open Space / Urban Fringe	Poor Health	ONS 2015 2011 Census / 15 / LSOA has Long-term health problem or disability or 5 / LSOA has Bad or Very Bad Health
		100m from Hospitals	LBM Hospitals
		Access to Nature	GiGL Areas of Deficiency for access to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation
		Open Space Deficiency	GiGL Areas of Deficiency for access to Open Spaces Data Required
Supporting Learning about the Environment	London Plan / Learn about the Environment	100m from Education Centres	LBM Education Centres / Adult Education Centres Children Centres Primary Schools Secondary Schools Sixth Form Centres Youth Centres Special Needs Centres Pupil Referral Units
		Access to Nature	GiGL Areas of Deficiency for access to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Priority	Objectives of the London Plan / LES or ALGG	Threshold	Datasets / Methods
Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation	London Plan Support of Heritage Conservation ALGG Conserve and Enhance Heritage Features	Conservation Areas	Merton Core Planning Strategy (2011) and Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014) <i>Conservation Areas, Local Historic Parks and Gardens</i> Historic England Designations <i>Scheduled Monuments, Registered Park and Gardens</i>
		Metropolitan Open Land	London Plan Metropolitan Open Land Policy
Encouraging Walking and Cycling	London Plan Encourage Walking and Cycling LES Encourage Walking and Cycling ALGG Improve Sustainable Travel Connections Access to Urban Fringe	10m from PROW	LBM Public Right of Way
		10m from Existing and Proposed Cycle Routes	LBM Policy Existing Cycle Routes Cycle Routes 22T
Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life	London Plan Recognise Economic and Social Value	Wards with Major Housing Growth	LBM Housing Trajectory and SHLAA (2017) Wards with over 800 additional homes between 2017-2041
		Areas of High Deprivation	OCS (2015) LSOAs with Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) rank in lowest 20% in London

Priority	Objectives of the London Plan, LES or ALGG	Threshold	Datasets/Methods
Supporting Economic Growth and Investment	London Plan Recognise Economic and Social Value	Areas within 50m of Economically Valuable Areas	Merton Core Planning Strategy (2011) and Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014) Strategic Industrial Location Locally Significant Industrial Area Wimbledon Central Shopping Frontage Core Shopping Frontages Secondary Shopping Frontages
Improving Air and Water Quality	London Plan Improve Air and Water Quality	100m from A Roads Motorways Railways	OS Open Data - Vector Map District
	LES Improve Air and Water Quality	Wards with Tree Canopy Cover >21%	Calculated using the i-Tree Canopy Coverage Tool ¹¹ .
	ALGG Improve Air Quality and Soundscapes	Air Quality Focus Areas	GLA London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory 2013 Air Quality Focus Areas
Adapting to Climate Change and the Urban Heat Island Effect	London Plan Adapt to Climate Change and the Urban Heat-Island Effect	Flood Zones 2 and 3	Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 and 3
		Sealed Surface Coverage for LSOA >50%	Typology mapping results to calculate the percentage of non-GBI

¹¹ <https://canopy.itreetools.org/>

Priority	Objectives of the London Plan, LES or ALGG	Threshold	Datasets/Methods
	Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience LES Lessen the Impacts of Climate Change Store Carbon Improve Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience	Wards with Tree Canopy Cover >21%	Calculated using the i-Tree Canopy Coverage Tool ¹² .
Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience	London Plan Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience LES Improve Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience	Green Corridors	Merton Core Planning Strategy (2011) and Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014) Green Corridor
		Priority Habitats	Natural England Designations
		50m from Core Biodiversity Areas (SSSIs, SACs, SPAs, SICs)	Natural England Designations
		Flood Zones 2 and 3	Environment Agency

¹² <https://canopy.itreetools.org/>

Overlay Stage

2.18 This stage compared the results of the Functionality Mapping with the Priority Assessment to assess if GBI benefits are provided in the areas where they are needed the most.

2.19 Figure 6 shows an extract from the overlay stage.

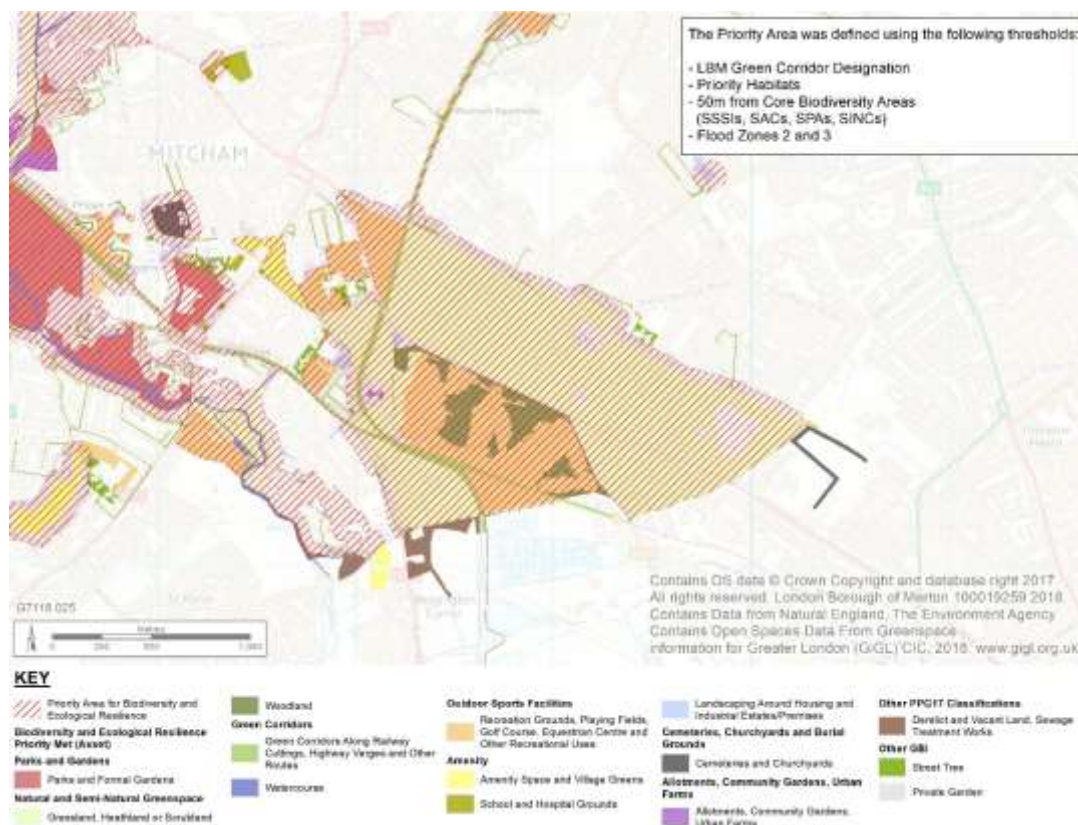


Figure 6: Overlay Stage Extract

2.20 This stage identified Assets - features which performed a relevant function in a Priority Area such as the removal of pollutants in the Air and Water Quality Priority Area. The Functions Vs Priorities Matrix (Figure 7) was used to identify which functions contributed to each of the priorities. The Overlay Stage identified

- Features which provided a function within the Priority Area – Assets
- Features which provided a function outside the Priority Area
- Locations within the Priority Area which have no provision of functions

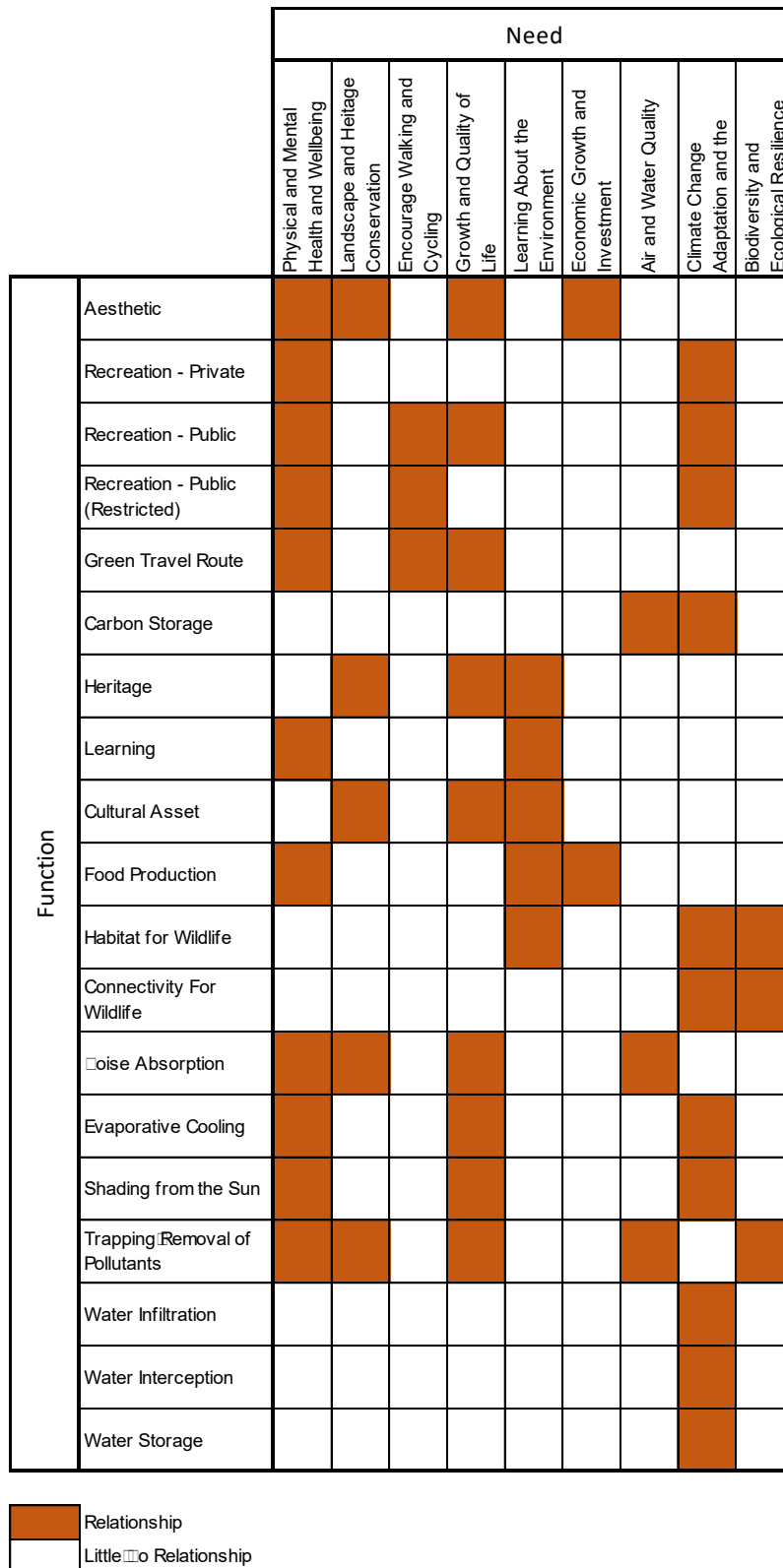


Figure 7: Functionality vs Priority Matrix

Key Asset Identification

- 2.21 Key Asset Identification summarises the results of the Overlay Stage to identify areas of GBI which provide the most benefit to Merton and also those areas where GBI may need to be enhanced or created.
- 2.22 Figure 8 shows an extract of key asset identification.

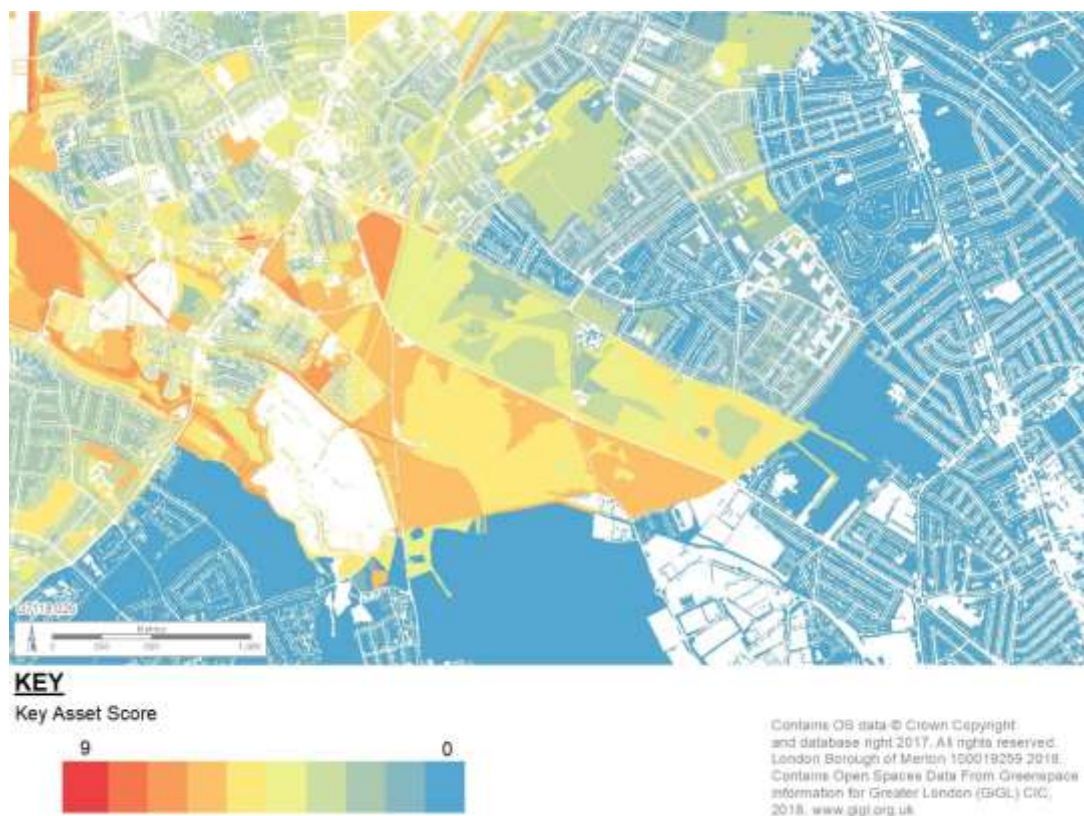


Figure 8: Key Asset Identification Extract

- 2.23 Key assets are features which act as assets for multiple priorities. Following the overlay stage the number of priorities each feature fulfils was totalled to give to give a Key Asset Score. This score was used to identify the most important GBI features within the borough as the higher the score the more priorities the feature contributes to. For example in Figure 8 elements with a higher Key Asset Score (i.e. closer to 9) are among the most important features of GBI in the borough.

Data Limitations

- 2.24 The accuracy and value of this study is dependent on the source datasets used. Limitations of the GBI dataset are identified below which are a result of the source datasets used.

GLA Local Authority Maintained Trees

- 2.25 This dataset was created by the GLA in 2015 and updated in March 2018 however it was derived from surveys earlier than 2015. The age of the dataset will have had an impact on the identification of street trees which are currently found in the borough.

Tree Canopy Coverage

- 2.26 The i-Tree Canopy tool¹³ was used to calculate tree canopy coverage for each ward however the accuracy of this tool relies upon the aerial imagery provided and the number of points measured. The Curio Canopy dataset (2018) was considered as an alternative however it was not used due to licence restrictions.

Ordnance Survey Topography MasterMap

- 2.27 The OS MasterMap was used as a source dataset for the study and represented the LBM at the finest detail possible. Unfortunately the scale of data capture was not able to distinguish between the components of private gardens such as the vegetated and non-vegetated areas.
- 2.28 This finer level of detail may also result in minor different area measurements for open spaces in the borough as the source datasets used to locate open spaces were captured at a larger scale than the OS MasterMap.

¹³ <https://canopy.itreetools.org/>

3.0 Results

3.1 GIS maps referred to in the report as (G7118) can be found in Appendix B to this report.

Typology Mapping (G7118.020)

Table 6: Green and Blue Infrastructure Land Cover by Typology

GBI Typology	Area (Ha)	Proportion of borough (%)	Proportion of GBI (%)
Private Domestic Garden	969.25	25.76	38.82
Playing Fields/Golf Courses/Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Grounds	416.46	11.07	16.68
Grassland/Heathland and Scrubland	362.72	9.64	14.53
Parks and Formal Gardens	190.91	5.07	7.65
Street Tree	121.11	3.22	4.85
Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises	93.54	2.49	3.75
School and Hospital Grounds	82.86	2.20	3.32
Cemeteries and Churchyards	81.68	2.17	3.27
Green Corridors Along Railways/Highways and Other Routes	72.31	1.92	2.90
Allotment/Community Garden or Urban Farm	31.85	0.85	1.28
Watercourse	25.08	0.67	1.00

GBI Typology	Area (Ha)	Proportion of borough (%)	Proportion of GBI (%)
Amenity Green Spaces and Village Greens	23.39	0.62	0.94
Woodland	15.82	0.42	0.63
Play Area (All Types)	4.98	0.13	0.20
Agricultural Land and Horticulture	2.91	0.08	0.12
Green Roof	1.71	0.05	0.07
Derelict and Vacant Land Sewage Treatment Works	0.02	0.001	0.001
Not GI	1265.87	33.64	
Total	3762.47	100.00	100.00

3.2 The most prominent typology of GBI in LBM was found to be private domestic gardens which accounted for over 25% of the borough (Table 6). When private gardens are excluded, the most prominent GBI typology was found to be outdoor sports facilities and grassland, heathland or scrubland, which together account for over 20% of the borough.

3.3 Wimbledon Common, Morden Hall Park, Morden Park and Mitcham Common are prominent features within the borough, and a range of other typologies were also identified within close proximity to the River Wandle. A network of street trees and green corridors was also found throughout the borough. The following paragraphs describe the distributions of the GBI Typologies.

Parks and Formal Gardens

3.4 Parks and formal gardens were found throughout the borough. Morden Hall Park, Morden Park and Wimbledon Park were prominent Parks within the borough. Other smaller parks were identified in Colliers Wood and Mitcham. Holland Gardens was the only park identified in Raynes Park.

Woodland

- 3.5 Fourteen major woodlands were identified in LBM including Mitcham Common Golf Course, Sycamore Woodland Block (Cricket Green), Seymour Road Park (Wimbledon Park), Atkinson Morley's Hospital Woodland and the woodland surrounding the River Wandle. There may have been woodland areas within other typologies such as cemeteries, however these woodlands represent open space sites which are predominantly woodland with few other uses.

Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland

- 3.6 The typology mapping found grassland, heathland and scrubland dispersed across the borough, the largest of which located on Wimbledon Common and Mitcham Common. Other areas were located on Cannon Hill Common and surrounding the River Wandle.

Watercourse

- 3.7 Three major watercourses were identified in LBM, the River Wandle, Beverley Brook and Pyl Brook. The River Wandle runs north-south in the centre of the borough, and Pyl Brook runs in a south-west direction to join Beverley Brook and flow north along the western boundary of the borough.

Green Corridors Along Railways, Highways and Other Routes

- 3.8 Green corridors were identified along most major railways through the borough. Notable green corridors were also identified in the area surrounding the Kingston Bypass. Many major roads in LBM did not have surrounding green corridors, including the A236, Merton High Street and London Road.

Playing Fields, Golf Courses, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Grounds

- 3.9 This typology was found dispersed throughout the borough. The golf courses in Mitcham Common, Wimbledon Common and Wimbledon Park are prominent features, and there are notable recreation grounds in Morden and Raynes Park.

Amenity Green Spaces and Village Greens

- 3.10 Amenity green spaces were identified throughout the borough. The most notable spaces include St Helier Avenue, Cherry Tree Estate Open Space, Donnelly Green, Pyl Brook Open Space and Brenley Park.

School and Hospital Grounds

- 3.11 The distribution of this typology was associated with the distribution of education and medical centres within LBM.

Landscaping Around Housing Estates and Industrial Estates/Premises

- 3.12 Clusters of larger landscaped sites were identified in Morden, surrounding Epsom Road and in Mitcham, north-west of Mitcham Common. A number of additional smaller parcels were identified throughout the borough which were mainly road verges or small landscaped areas associated with industrial units.

Reservoir

- 3.13 No reservoirs were identified within LBM. One reservoir was identified to the south of the borough adjacent to the River Wandle (Watermead Lane Covered Reservoir).

Play Area (All Types)

- 3.14 Six play areas were identified in the borough which were clustered in the area north of Mitcham Common. Other play areas may be identified within other typologies such as within Morden Park however these sites were identified as open spaces which are used primarily as a play area.

Allotment, Community Garden or Urban Farm

- 3.15 Allotments, community gardens and urban farms were found throughout the borough. Clusters of sites were identified in the East of the borough north of Morden Hall Park and in the West of the borough surrounding Cannon Hill Common. Allotments were also identified in the north of the borough in the area surrounding the River Wandle.

Cemeteries and Churchyards

- 3.16 The most prominent cemeteries are located towards the periphery of the borough Gap Road Cemetery (Wimbledon), London Road Cemetery (Mitcham), Streatham Park and Rowan Road Cemeteries (Mitcham) and Merton and Sutton Cemetery and Morden Cemetery (Morden). Additional smaller cemeteries are located in the inner area of the borough. There are also a number of other cemeteries in neighbouring boroughs.

Agricultural Land and Horticulture

- 3.17 Thompsons Nursery (Motspur Park) was the only site which was identified as agricultural land and horticulture in the borough.

Derelict and Vacant Land, Sewage Treatment Works

- 3.18 A small amount of this typology was identified in Merton located along the southern boundary. The areas were largely associated with sites in the neighbouring borough.

Green Roofs

- 3.19 Green roofs were identified in Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Raynes Park primarily in the area surrounding Wimbledon Common and Wimbledon Park. The roofs were primarily associated with domestic dwellings however the largest of which was located on the retail unit on the B282. No green roofs were identified in Morden or Mitcham.

Street Trees

3.20 A network of street trees can be located in the borough. However, there was an absence of street trees in the industrial estate surrounding Jubilee Way (Colliers Wood) in Wimbledon, east of Wimbledon Common, in Mitcham surrounding Lavender Park, east of Mitcham Common and in the Willow Lane Industrial Estate.

Private Domestic Gardens

3.21 This typology is the dominant GBI typology and can be found throughout LBM.

Functionality Mapping (G7118.021)

3.22 A total of 19 functions were assessed in this study (Table 3 and Figure 3) and the number of functions in LBM was found to vary between 15 and 3, with an average of 6.

3.23 Areas of GBI with the highest multi-functionality were found within Morden Park, Mitcham Common, Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Park and the areas surrounding the River Wandle (Table 7). The high multi-functionality of these areas was probably caused by the presence of trees and woodland in these open spaces, which perform a number of GBI functions.

Table 7: Functions provided with the highest multi-functional features in open spaces

Function	Morden Park	Mitcham Common	Wimbledon Common	River Wandle, Morden Hall Park and surrounding area
Aesthetic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recreation - Private				
Recreation - Public	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recreation - Public (Restricted)		✓	✓	
Green Travel Route	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carbon Storage	✓	✓	✓	✓
Heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓

Function	Morden Park	Mitcham Common	Wimbledon Common	River Wandle Morden Hall Park and surrounding area
Culture	✓			✓
Food Production				
Habitat for Wildlife	✓	✓	✓	✓
Connectivity for Wildlife	✓	✓	✓	✓
Noise Absorption	✓	✓		✓
Evaporative Cooling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shading from the Sun	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trapping/Removal of Pollutants	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Infiltration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Interception	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Storage				
Total Number of Functions	15	15	14	15

3.24 Street trees and woodlands were found to perform a number of GBI functions including the removal of pollutants, shading from the sun and carbon storage. Multi-functionality within these typologies was found to vary between 15 and 9, with an average of 10, which suggests that areas which contain trees are among the most multifunctional components of GBI.

3.25 Private domestic gardens were found to perform between 12 and 4 functions, however the average functionality was found to be 5, which suggests they are among the least multifunctional typologies.

Priority Mapping and Overlay Stage

3.26 The results from the priority mapping and overlay stage are discussed together below.

Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing (G7118.036 & G7118.041)

- 3.27 The priority area for physical and mental health and wellbeing was found in many parts of the Borough. Large areas of need were identified in Raynes Park, Morden and Mitcham. Additional need was identified in Colliers Wood.
- 3.28 Assets were identified in the West, South and North-East of the Borough. A number of assets were identified in the area surrounding the railway lines and in many of the open spaces in the Borough.
- 3.29 A number of open spaces were identified as assets in Merton including Mitcham Common, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park and Prince George's Playing Fields.
- 3.30 Lack of provision was found in many industrial estates in the Borough including those South of Merantun Way and West of Mitcham Common, Wier Road. Where the priority was met in these areas, the GBI was largely composed of the landscaping around housing and industrial estates premises typology.

Supporting Learning about the Environment (G7118.037 & G7118.042)

- 3.31 The priority area for learning about the environment was found to be in locations surrounding the railway lines and Streatham Road. Other clusters of need surrounding education centres were also identified throughout the borough, in particular in West Mitcham.
- 3.32 Assets were identified in the South, East and North-West of the borough. A considerable number of assets were identified in the area surrounding the railway lines throughout the borough and Streatham Road. Many typologies, including street trees and school grounds, were identified as assets surrounding education centres in the borough.
- 3.33 A number of open spaces were also identified as assets, including Morden Park, Morden Recreation Ground, Wimbledon Park and Royal Wimbledon Golf Course.
- 3.34 Some of the priority areas for learning about the environment did not have any provision of the relevant functions. Lack of provision was found in the East of Mitcham, surrounding Stanford Way, in the South Morden, surrounding Kingsbridge Road, and in the North of Wimbledon, surrounding Vineyard Hill Road and Wier Road.

Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation (G7118.038 & G7118.043)

- 3.35 The main priority areas for landscape and heritage conservation were found to be in the surroundings of the major open spaces of the borough. This includes the areas surrounding the River Wandle, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon Common, Morden Park and Mitcham Common. No need was identified in the north or east of Mitcham.
- 3.36 Assets were identified in the South and West of LBM. A number of open spaces were identified as assets for this priority, Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Park, Raynes Park, Cannon Hill Common, Morden Cemetery, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park and Mitcham Common. Many assets were also identified in the area surrounding the River Wandle.

3.37 A notable proportion of the priority area within Wimbledon was found to contain only private domestic garden assets surrounding Ridgeway and Calonne Road. Few assets were found in the industrial park adjacent to Merantun Way in Colliers Wood.

Encouraging Walking and Cycling (G7118.039 & G7118.044)

3.38 The priority areas for walking and cycling were identified along the major transport routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists in the borough. This included Croydon Road Mitcham, Streatham Road Mitcham, Western Road Mitcham and Merton High Street. Need was also identified along other smaller roads and within open spaces such as Wimbledon Common, Morden Park and Mitcham Common. No areas were identified in the East of Mitcham and in some areas of Lower Morden and Wimbledon Park.

3.39 Assets were identified along most primary transport routes throughout the borough including Merton High Street, Kingston Road and Croydon Road. Assets were also identified in Mitcham Common, Wimbledon Common, Morden Park and Morden Hall Park.

3.40 A small number of assets were found along Streatham Road, Durnsford Road, Western Road, Ernle Road and Wimbledon Hill Road.

Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life (G7118.030 & G7118.045)

3.41 The priority area for housing growth and quality of life was identified in the North, South and centre of the borough, largely in the periphery of the River Wandle. Additional need was also identified in the centre of the borough, to the East of Wimbledon Chase Railway Station and in the South of Mitcham. No need was identified in the East or the West of the borough.

3.42 Assets within this priority area included open spaces such as Wimbledon Park, Morden Hall Park and Mitcham Common.

3.43 The industrial estates south of Merantun Way and west of Mitcham Common were both found to have a small number of assets.

Supporting Economic Growth and Investment (G7118.040 & G7118.046)

3.44 The priority area for economic growth and investment was identified in clusters across the borough. Areas of need are located around the town centres of the borough within Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham. This priority is also located in the industrial and retail estates in the North, West and South of the borough.

3.45 Assets for this priority were identified in the North, South and centre of the borough. Open spaces surrounding the River Wandle were found to contribute to this priority, including Bennett's Hole, Durnsford Road Recreation Ground and London Road Playing Fields.

- 3.46 A lack of provision was found in many industrial estates in the borough including those South of Merantun Way, West of Mitcham Common, Weir Road and South of Streatham Road. Where the priority was met in these areas, the GBI was largely composed of the landscaping around housing and industrial estates, premises typology.

Improving Air and Water Quality (G7118.032 & G7118.047)

- 3.47 The largest priority area for air and water quality was identified in the North and North-East of the borough encompassing Wimbledon Park and Mitcham Eastfields Stations. Smaller areas of need were also identified in West Barnes and Morden town centre. The priority area was also identified along the major transport routes through the borough including the railway lines, Croydon Road, Western Road and Parkside.
- 3.48 Clusters of assets were identified in the North-East and South-East of the borough and they were also identified along the primary transport routes. Many open spaces were found to contain assets which contribute to this priority including Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Park, Raynes Park, Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Mitcham Common and Figgie's Marsh. Many street trees within Colliers Wood and East Wimbledon were also identified as assets.
- 3.49 Areas with a lack of provision were identified in many of the industrial estates throughout the borough in the South of Raynes Park and in the East of Mitcham.

Adapting to Climate Change and the Urban Heat Island Effect (G7118.033 & G7118.048)

- 3.50 The largest priority area for climate change and the urban heat island effect was identified in the north and North-East of the borough from Wimbledon Park through Wimbledon and Colliers Wood through to north Mitcham. Additional areas of need were identified in the South-West of the borough in West Barnes and in the periphery of the River Wandle and Pyl Brook. Little need was identified in the North-West of the borough.
- 3.51 Assets were identified in the South-West and North-East of the borough. Assets were identified in many open spaces in the borough including Wimbledon Park, Morden Park, Morden Cemetery, Mostyn Gardens, Morden Hall Park, South London Crematorium and Streatham Park Cemetery. Many street trees in Raynes Park, Colliers Wood and South Wimbledon were identified as assets for this priority.
- 3.52 There were some areas which lacked provision including the industrial and retail estates surrounding of Merantun Way, surrounding Weir Road and surrounding the Kingston Bypass.

Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience (G7118.034 & G7118.049)

- 3.53 The priority area for biodiversity and ecological resilience was found to be in most of the major open spaces throughout the borough including Mitcham Common, Morden Park, Wimbledon Common and Wimbledon Park. A corridor of need was also identified along the railway corridors and along the River Wandle including Morden Hall Park.
- 3.54 Most assets for this priority were found to be within the open spaces of the ward. The open spaces included Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon Common, Raynes Park Sports Ground, Cannon Hill Common, Morden Cemetery, Morden Park, Morden Hall Park, Morton Green, London Road Playing Fields and Mitcham Common. Many green corridors and street trees were also identified as assets surrounding the railway lines.
- 3.55 Many open spaces surrounding the River Wandle were found to contain assets, however there were notable areas with a lack of provision around Plough Lane in Wimbledon and Wates Way in Mitcham.

Summary

- 3.56 The Priority Mapping and Overlay Stage identified areas which require GBI benefits and assess the provision of the relevant functions in those areas.
- 3.57 Many of the open spaces contribute to Merton's priorities including Morden Hall Park, the River Wandle and Wimbledon Common.
- 3.58 Street trees throughout the borough were also found to contribute to many of Merton's priorities.
- 3.59 The retail and industrial estates throughout the borough were frequently identified as priority areas and many times there was also found to be a lack of GBI functions.

Key Asset Identification (G7118.050)

- 3.60 The Key Asset Identification summarises the results of the Overlay Stage to identify the most important assets in Merton.
- 3.61 The Key Asset Score varied across the borough, the highest of which were located in Wimbledon Park, Morden Hall Park, Morden Park and Mitcham Common and the lowest scores located in Pollards Hill, Cannon Hill, Lower Morden, Raynes Park and Wimbledon Village. The Key Asset Score was found to range between zero and nine with an average score of 2.4.
- 3.62 The features which fulfilled all nine priorities were found in the north of the borough adjacent to the River Wandle to the West of Weir Road. Other areas surrounding the River Wandle were also found to have a high Key Asset Score such as Ravensbury Park and Wandle Meadow Nature Park. Many open spaces in the borough were found to contain features which had a high score including Wimbledon Park, Prince George's Field, Morden Hall Park and Mitcham Common.

- 3.63 Clusters of features were identified with a score of zero. These were located in Cannon Hill in Pollards Hill and some areas surrounding Wimbledon Common. This score implies that these features do not fulfil the necessary GBI functions to contribute to the priorities for the borough or are not within a priority area.
- 3.64 Parks and Formal Gardens, Woodlands and Watercourses were the typologies found to have the highest Key Asset Scores which were all found to have average scores of over 4. By contrast, the lowest scoring typologies were found to be Private Domestic Gardens and Outdoor Sports Facilities which were found to have average scores of 2.

Summary

- 3.65 The Key Asset Analysis assessed the current provision of GBI to identify areas which should be protected and areas in which GBI can be enhanced.
- 3.66 The River Wandle, Ravensbury Park and Wandle Valley Nature Reserve were identified as the most important GBI assets to Merton. Many open spaces were also addressed multiple priorities for Merton.

APPENDIX Green and Blue Infrastructure Glossary

Asset

A GBI Asset is identified where there is a need for GBI being met by a Type/Typology of GBI.

Benefits

Whereas GBI functions refer to the specific use of land, benefits refer to the wider, potentially less tangible contributions to people and nature arising out of GBI. The graphic opposite demonstrates the link between specific GBI functions and the wider benefits. For example, the green travel route function can deliver a number of wider benefits, such as health and wellbeing for people who choose to walk or cycle, recreation benefits and a reduction in motorised traffic leading to less emissions into the atmosphere and reduced climate change risk.

Ecosystem Services

Humankind benefits from a multitude of natural resources and processes that are sustained by ecosystems. These 'ecosystems services' include the provision of food, clean water, resources for energy and industry, flood alleviation, crop pollination and recreation opportunities. Ecosystem services are grouped into four broad categories, provisioning, such as the production of food and water, regulating, such as managing the climate, supporting, such as nutrient cycles and crop pollination, cultural, such as recreational benefits.

Functions

One of the principal drivers of GBI planning is to manage land in a more sustainable way. While most GBI assets will have a primary purpose or function it is also possible for functions to co-exist, leading to multifunctional GBI and the ability to use land more effectively and efficiently. For example street trees add aesthetic quality to an urban area but can also support wildlife and improve environmental health by reducing airborne pollution and provide shade for people and wildlife. The functions used in this framework are defined below.

Aesthetic

GBI can improve the image of an area and this can make the surrounding area a more attractive place to live, work and visit, and also result in higher property values.

Carbon Storage

Carbon storage (or sequestration) is the removal of carbon from the atmosphere and the storage in plants, trees and soils. Trees and peat soils are particularly important for the storage of carbon. Different types of GBI will sequester carbon at different rates depending on the growth speed of vegetation.

Coastal Flood Protection

GBI can protect infrastructure and agriculture close to the shore. It can protect against winds and sea spray through the reduction of the speed of the waves and the impact of tidal surges.

Connectivity for Wildlife

Areas that wildlife can disperse through between habitat spaces. This function will become more important in the future, as species' ranges increase northwards with the climate changes. Different types of GBI provide connectivity for a variety of species. However the range of species is also dependent on other factors such as climate or disturbance.

Culture

Space used for cultural purposes—the hosting of public art—events and festivals provide the function of culture.

Evaporative Cooling

Evaporative cooling is the process by which plants transpire water which is evaporated from their surfaces cooling their immediate locality. All types of vegetation can provide this function—including open water. Plants with a larger leaf area are likely to be better than those with a smaller leaf area.

During periods of drought—irrigation is likely to be necessary to maximise this function in plants—whilst open water will continue to be valuable in its own right.

Food Production

Land used for growing crops or the grazing of animals.

Green Travel Route

Green travel routes are off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists (for recreational purposes as well as moving between places) through greenery and includes the area surrounding the green travel route. These include PRoWs.

Habitat for Wildlife

The provision of a place for wildlife to live—including a source of food. The variety of types of GBI will provide habitats for a range of species. However the range of species is also dependent on other factors such as climate or disturbance.

Heritage

Historic links in the landscape (including ancient woodlands—canals—designated sites and monuments). Heritage is defined as that which is inherited.

Learning

GBI can provide a backdrop for outdoor classrooms and learning outside of the indoor school environment. It can also be used as a setting for learning new skills which may help adults develop skills for the workplace.

Noise Absorption

Screening of noise—especially from major transport routes can improve quality of environment. However this requires GBI elements that are tall enough to intercept and absorb sound waves. This function is usually associated with urban areas—especially close to travel routes.

Private Recreation

Land which is used for recreation but only by the landowners or those invited by the landowners to use. This primarily consists of private domestic gardens.

Public Recreation

Areas that can be freely used for recreational purposes (formal/informal and active/passive) without any restrictions to access (such as payment or membership). This can include areas closed at night/on specific days or seasonally but this was assessed on an individual basis.

Restricted Public Recreation

Areas that can be used by the public for recreational purposes (formal/informal and active/passive) but is restricted (usually via payment or membership). This usually includes outdoor sports facilities and formal parks and gardens.

Shading from the Sun

Shading of people and surfaces from solar radiation can reduce temperatures and increase comfort levels and is usually provided by trees and taller plants. Shading from the sun is also important to protect agricultural land and other species from solar radiation. This function will become more critical when adapting to climate change.

Trapping Air Pollutants

Removal of pollutants including ozone, nitrogen dioxide and particles from the air through uptake via leaf stomata and deposition on leaf surfaces. Once inside the leaf, gases diffuse into intercellular spaces and may be absorbed by water films to form acids or react with inner leaf surfaces. This function is usually associated with urban areas especially close to travel routes.

Water Infiltration

Vegetation and roots can aid the movement of water into the ground. Includes both surface infiltration and deep infiltration which can reduce the risk of flooding.

Water Interception

The interception of rainwater before it reaches the ground by the leaves of trees and plants will slow the flow of water to the ground. This can reduce the risk of flooding. All vegetated types of GBI will intercept water in some way although this varies with leaf area.

Water Storage

Water storage in ponds, lakes, rivers and some wetlands. This water is accessible for human use and for irrigation if it is required.

Wind Shelter

GBI can provide shelter from winds by slowing or diverting currents.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

GIS is a system designed to capture, analyse, manage and present all types of geographical data. In the context of the Blackpool GBI Framework, GIS is used to map all GBI assets and

identify the existing functions of those assets. GIS also provides the analysis for the needs assessment.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

This is a measure of relative deprivation for Lower Super Output Areas. It is made up of 37 indicators reflecting different aspects of deprivation experience by those living in an area.

Lower Super Output Area

The Lower Super Output Area is a geographic area used by the Office for National Statistics for many of its statistical outputs.

Natural Capital Accounting

Natural capital is *'the stock of our physical natural assets (such as soil, forests, water and biodiversity) which provide flows of services that benefit people (such as pollinating crops, natural hazard protection, climate regulation or the mental health benefits of a walk in the park). Natural capital is valuable to our economy. Some marketable products such as timber have a financial value that has been known for centuries. In other cases (e.g. the role of bees in pollinating crops), we are only just beginning to understand their financial value.'*¹⁴

Natural capital accounting is the process of calculating the stocks and flows described above and attributing them a financial value.

Needs

The essence of sustainable development is providing for people's and nature's needs, now and in the future. So it is important to take people and nature as the starting point for GBI planning in the context of the built and natural environment. People and wildlife have many needs—for example people have needs to use greenspace for recreation and leisure and health and wellbeing—wildlife species have needs to move across land to find sources of food and places to shelter.

Typologies

This is the primary use or description of GBI. The typologies used within this technical report are outlined below:

Agricultural Land and Horticulture

Agricultural land used for crop production and grazing.

Allotment, Community Garden or Urban Farm

These are open spaces primarily utilised by members of the public for the cultivation of fruit, vegetables and flowers. They usually consist of cultivation beds and boundary vegetation and access can sometimes be restricted.

Amenity Green Spaces and Village Greens

This typology includes sites which are primarily for public recreation and consist of grassed surface and associated vegetation. They are usually publically owned and managed.

¹⁴ Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2011. p.11.

Cemeteries and Churchyards

These are areas which are associated with churchyards or burial grounds. They primarily consist of grass with occasional shrubs or trees.

Derelict and Vacant Land, Sewage Treatment Works

Derelict and vacant land is land which has no formal use. It can include 'urban commons' which are used for informal recreation and brownfield land which has not yet been redeveloped. Sewage treatment works are large areas of private land which contain sludge drying areas, filter beds and other features associated with sewage treatment.

Grassland, Heathland and Scrubland

This typology includes sites which consist primarily of grassland and scrubland which are not agriculturally improved, but are also not part of a formal recreation space such as a village green.

Green Corridors along Railways, Highways and Other Routes

These are linear open spaces associated with transport routes such as cycle paths, roads and railways. They can consist of a mixture of grass, shrubs and trees.

Green Roof

The roofs of buildings which have been covered in vegetation with the intention to reduce water surface runoff. A variety of vegetation can be present, including mosses, sedges and other low level vegetation.

Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises

These are areas which are associated with housing and industrial estates or premises. The areas usually consist of amenity grass, shrubs and trees.

Parks and Formal Gardens

This typology includes parks and formal gardens designed for public use and contain a variety of landscape and horticulture elements. Extraneous facilities such as a toilet block or visitor centre may also be present on site.

Play Area (All Types)

This typology includes open spaces designated for use by young people for recreation. It typically consists of grassed areas, trees and shrubs with additional play equipment.

Playing Fields, Golf Courses, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Grounds

This typology includes sites designated for sports recreation. They typically include vegetated sports surface and associated vegetation. The sites can be publically or privately owned.

Private Domestic Garden

These areas are privately owned open space within the curtilage of individual dwellings and are generally inaccessible to members of the public. They can include a variety of hard and soft landscape features.

Reservoir

This typology consists of sites which are primarily large expanse of open water which do not form part of another open space site (such as a park). As stated in the data limitations it was not possible to identify smaller waterbodies such as ponds from the source datasets.

School and Hospital Grounds

These are open spaces associated with the grounds of educational and health facilities and typically includes grassland with scattered trees, hedgerows and shrubs.

Street Trees

Street trees are composed of a row or collection of individual trees along the side of a road in tree pits or on grass verges.

Watercourse

This includes large areas of running water such as rivers and canals. As stated in the data limitations it was not possible to identify smaller watercourses such as streams or brooks from the source datasets.

Woodland

This typology includes sites which are identified as woodland by the GiGL open spaces dataset. The woodland can include both deciduous and coniferous trees and can be privately owned or publically accessible. Woodland within other open space typologies such as parks and formal gardens may not be included within this typology.

APPENDIX A: Green and Blue Infrastructure Maps

Index of Maps

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- Map 02 (G7118.021) Green and Blue Infrastructure Functionality
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- Map 03b (G7118.041) Promoting Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing - Priority Areas
- Map 04a (G7118.037) Supporting Learning about the Environment
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- Map 05a (G7118.038) Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation
- Map 05b (G7118.043) Supporting Landscape and Heritage Conservation - Priority Areas
- Map 06a (G7118.039) Encouraging Walking and Cycling
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- Map 07a (G7118.030) Supporting Housing Growth and Quality of Life
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- Map 08a (G7118.040) Supporting Economic Growth and Investment
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- Map 12 (G7118.050) Green and Blue Infrastructure Key Assets



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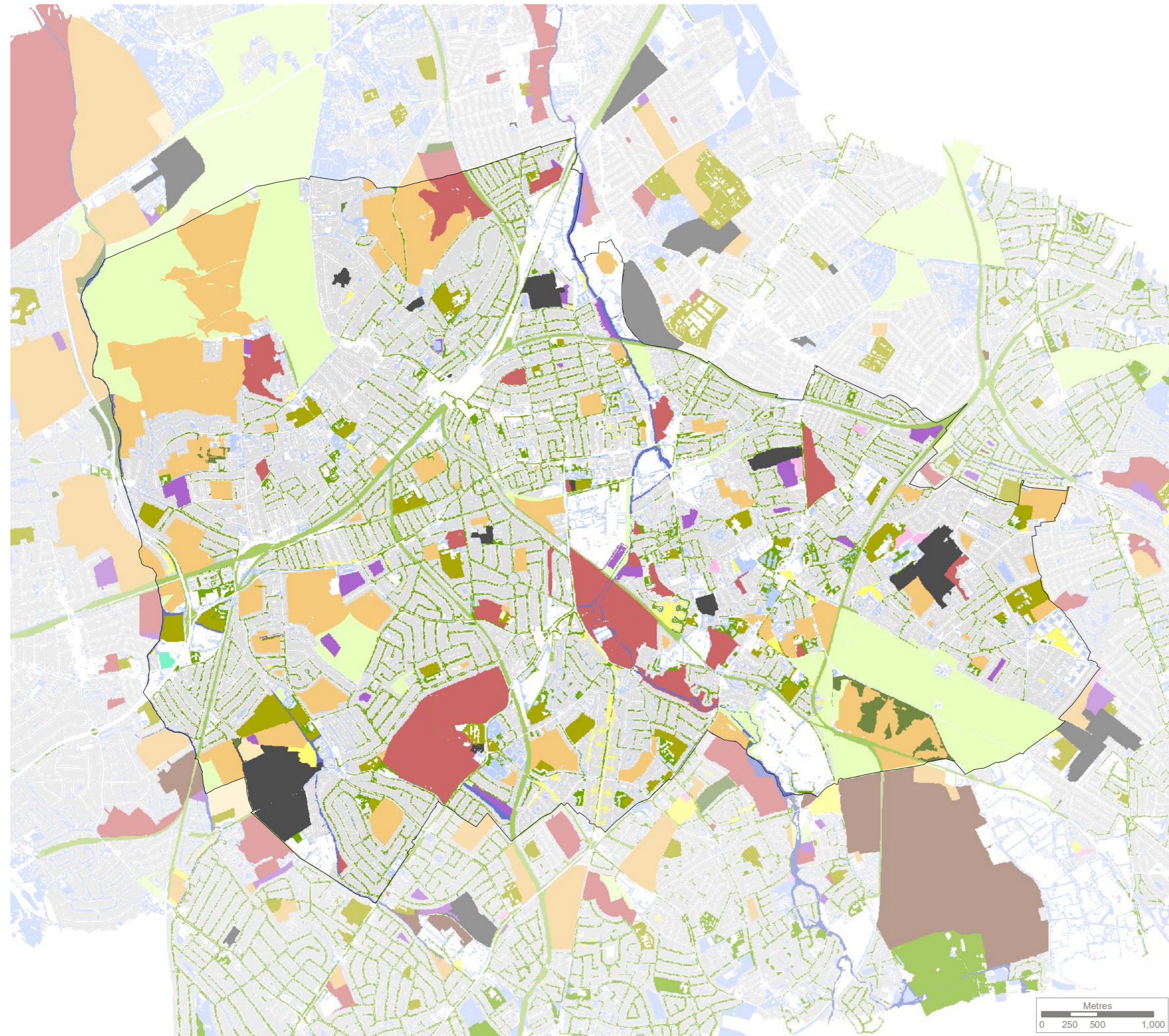
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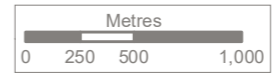
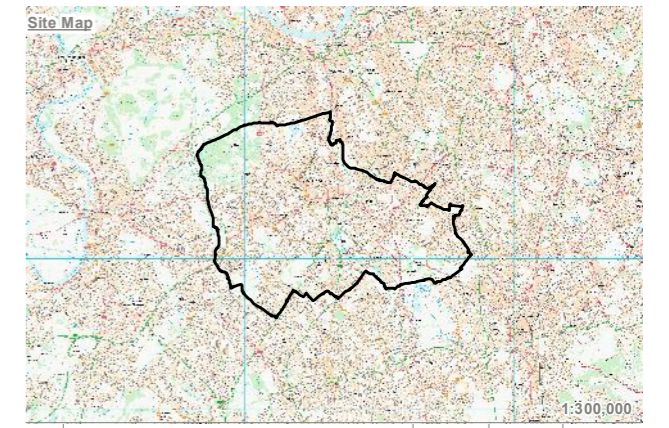
KEY

London Borough of Merton

Green and Blue Infrastructure Typology

- Parks and Gardens**
- Parks and Formal Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
- Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
- Woodland
- Green Corridors**
- Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
- Watercourse
- Outdoor Sports Facilities**
- Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
- Amenity**
- Amenity Space and Village Greens
- School and Hospital Grounds
- Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
- Reservoir
- Provision for Children and Teenagers**
- Play Areas
- Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
- Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
- Agriculture and Horticulture**
- Agricultural Land and Horticulture
- Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
- Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
- Other PPG17 Classifications**
- Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works
- Other GBI**
- Green Roof
- Street Tree
- Private Garden

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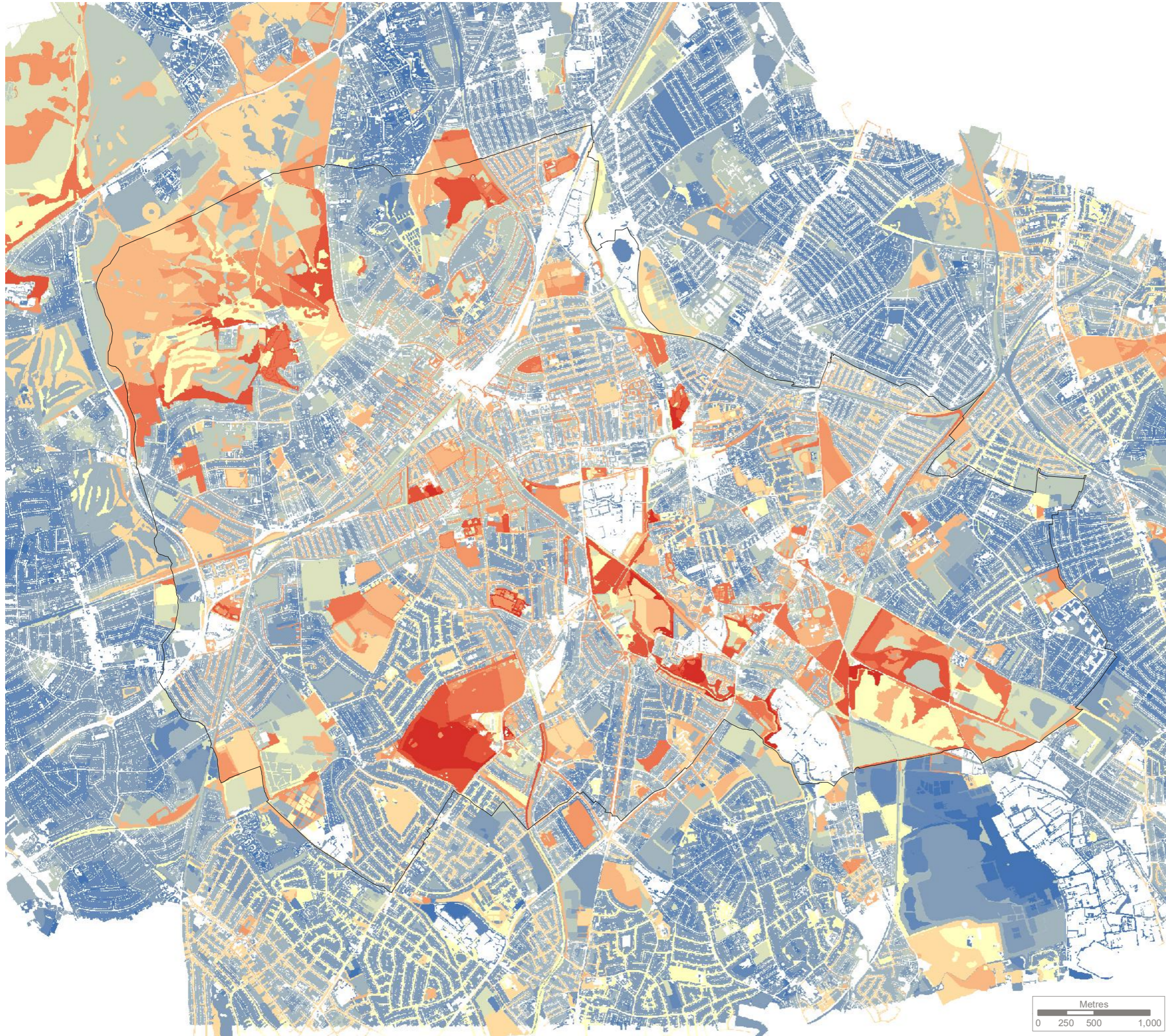
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Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Green and Blue Infrastructure Typology

Drawing Number
G7118.020

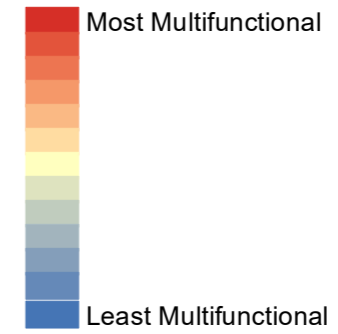
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London Borough of Merton

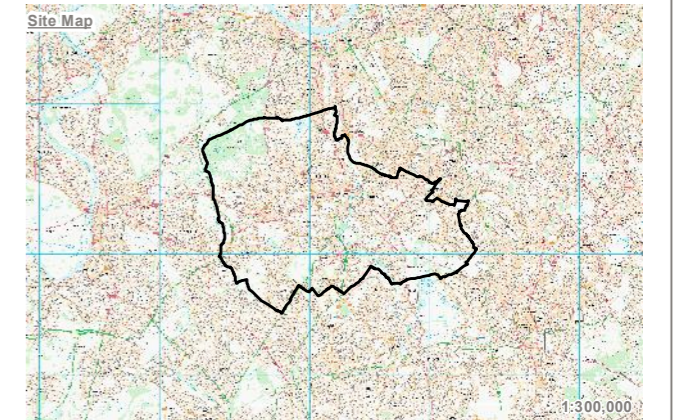
Green and Blue Infrastructure Multifunctionality



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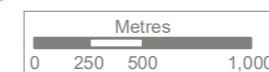


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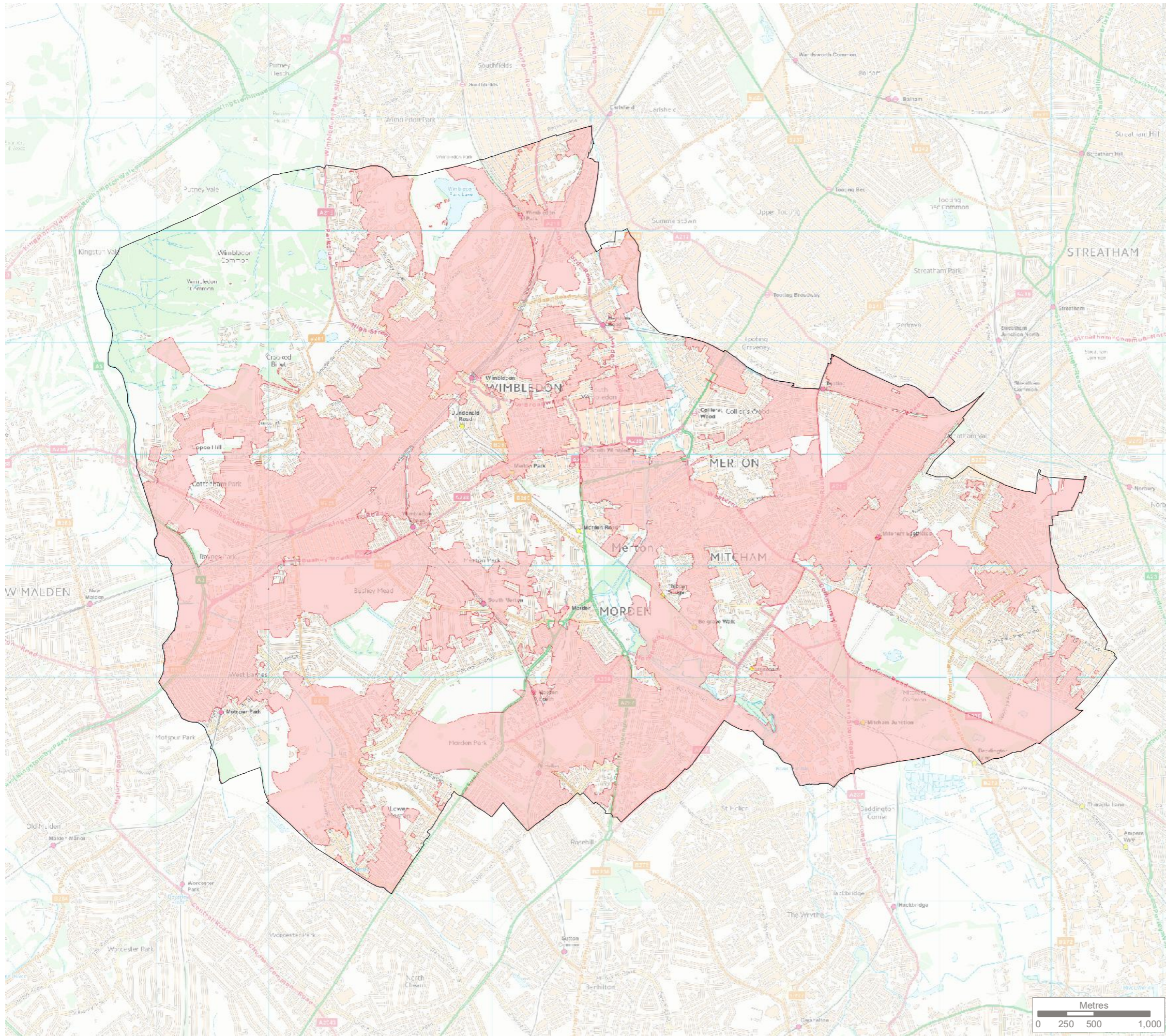
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Title
Green and Blue Infrastructure Functionality

Drawing Number
G7118.021



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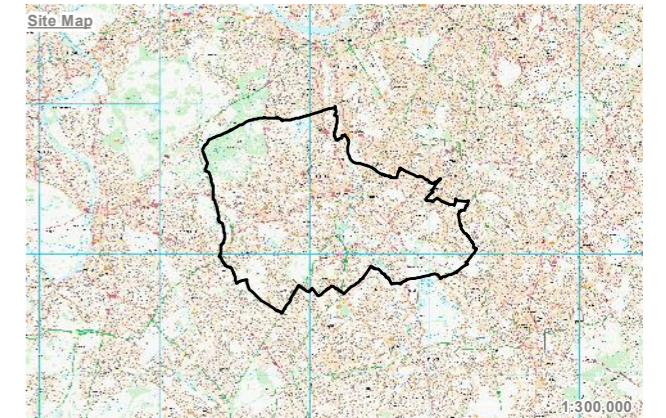
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Lower Super Output Area with >15% population with long term limiting illness or disability
- Lower Super Output Area with >5% population with bad health
- 100m from hospitals
- Area of deficiency in access to nature
- Area of deficiency in access to local parks, small open spaces and pocket parks

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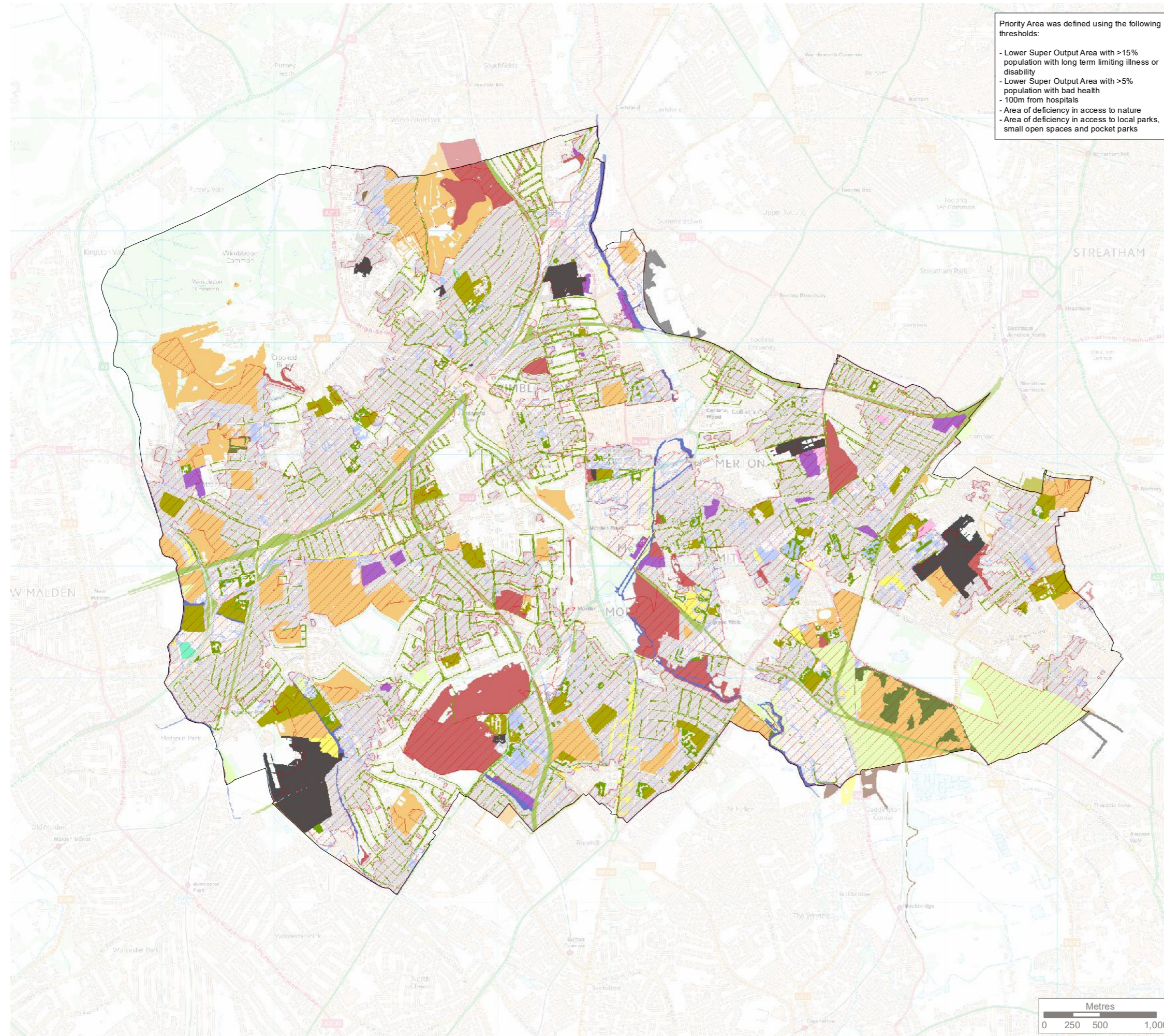
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Project
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Title
Priority Assessment - Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Drawing Number
G7118.036

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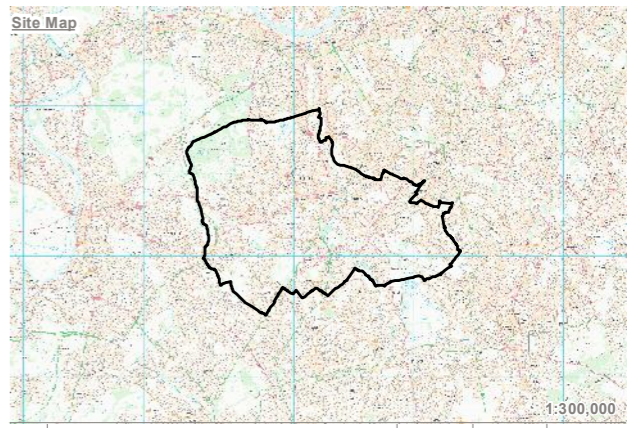
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Lower Super Output Area with >15% population with long term limiting illness or disability
- Lower Super Output Area with >5% population with bad health
- 100m from hospitals
- Area of deficiency in access to nature
- Area of deficiency in access to local parks, small open spaces and pocket parks

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing**
- Parks and Gardens**
 - Parks and Formal Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
 - Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
 - Woodland
- Green Corridors**
 - Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
 - Watercourse
- Outdoor Sports Facilities**
 - Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
- Amenity**
 - Amenity Space and Village Greens
 - School and Hospital Grounds
 - Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
- Provision for Children and Teenagers**
 - Play Areas
- Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
 - Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
- Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
 - Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
- Other PPG17 Classifications**
 - Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works
- Other GBI**
 - Green Roof
 - Street Tree
 - Private Garden

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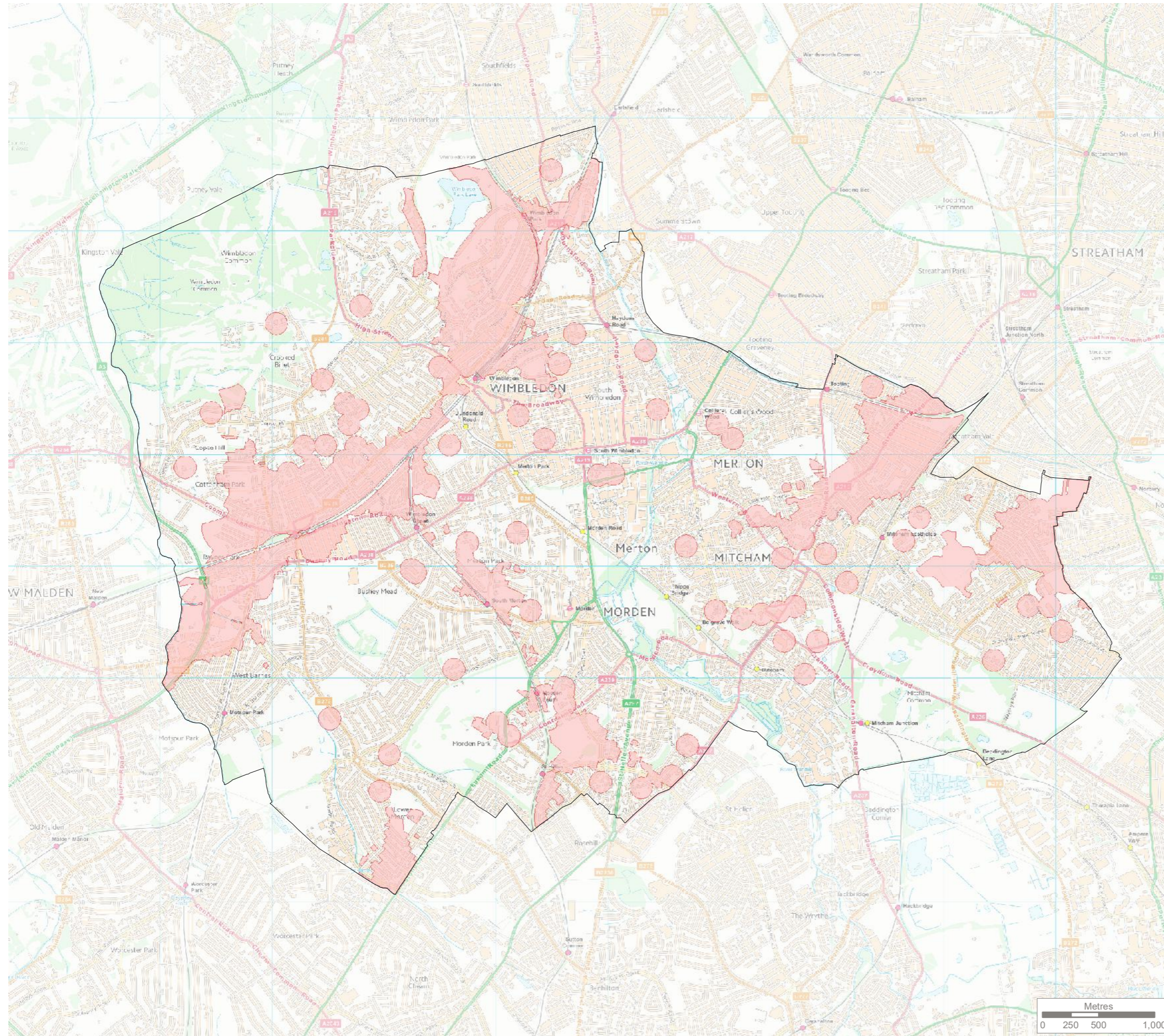
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Title
Overlay Stage - Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Drawing Number
G7118.041

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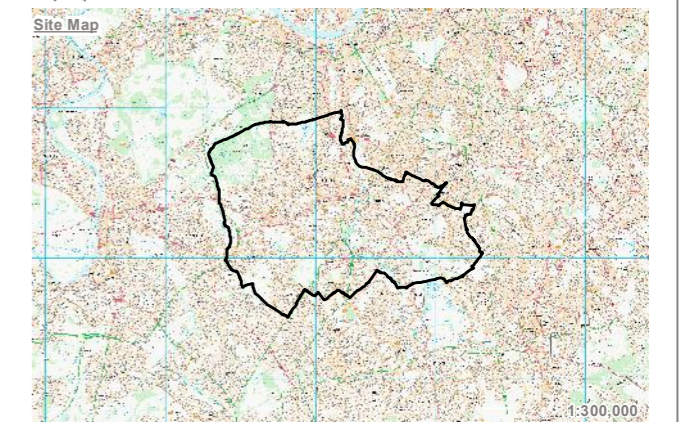
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Learning about the Environment

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- 100m from Education Centres
- Areas of Deficiency for Access to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

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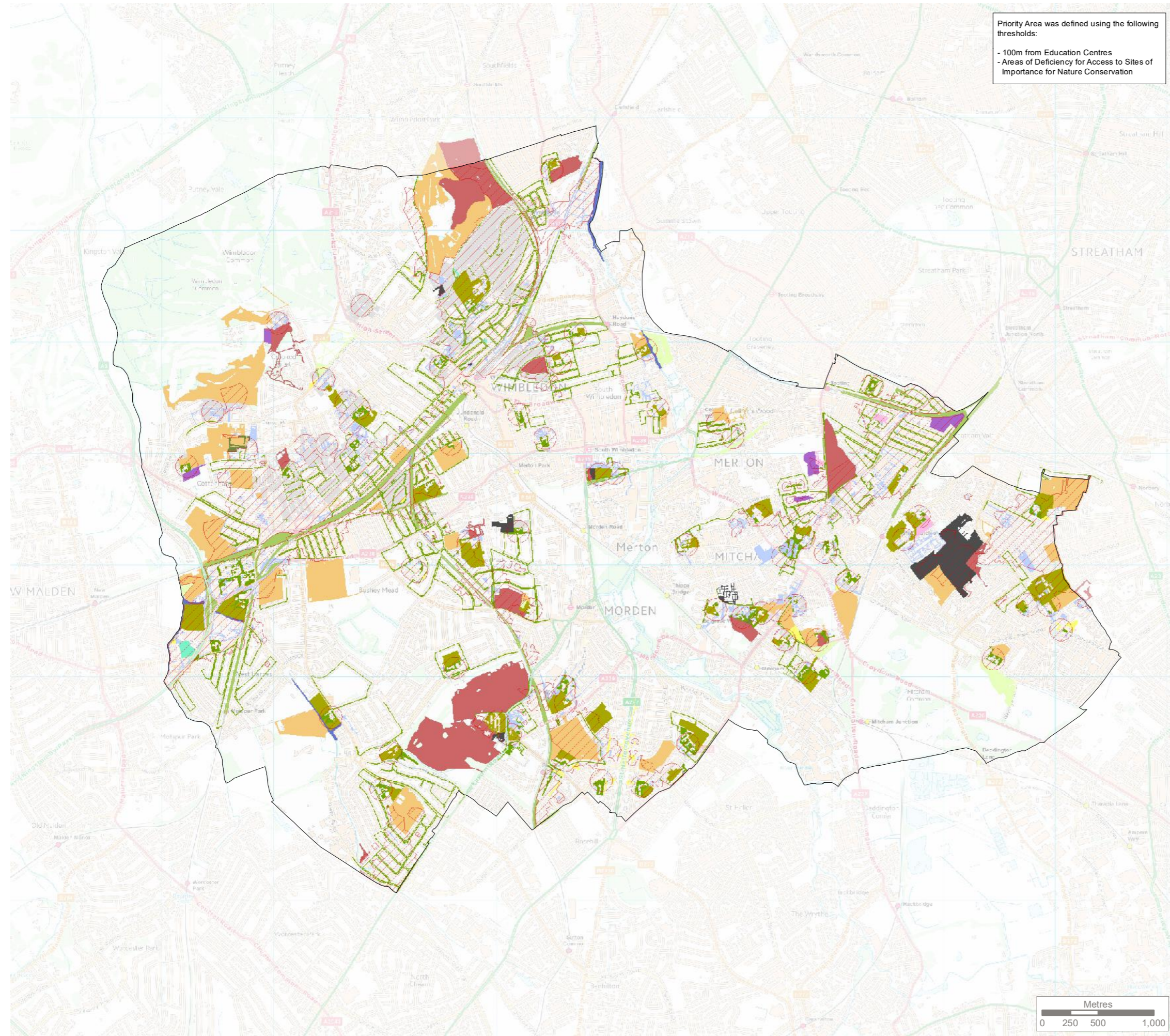
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Title
Priority Assessment - Learning about the Environment

Drawing Number
G7118.037

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Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:
 - 100m from Education Centres
 - Areas of Deficiency for Access to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

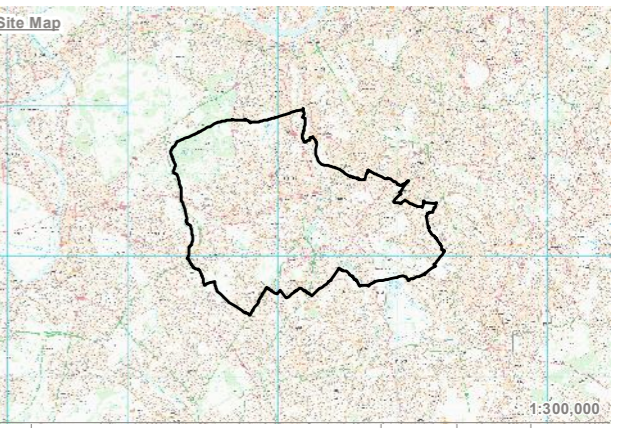
KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Learning about the Environment

Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Learning About the Environment

- Parks and Gardens**
 - Parks and Formal Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
 - Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
 - Woodland
- Green Corridors**
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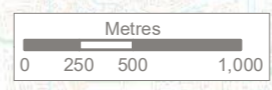
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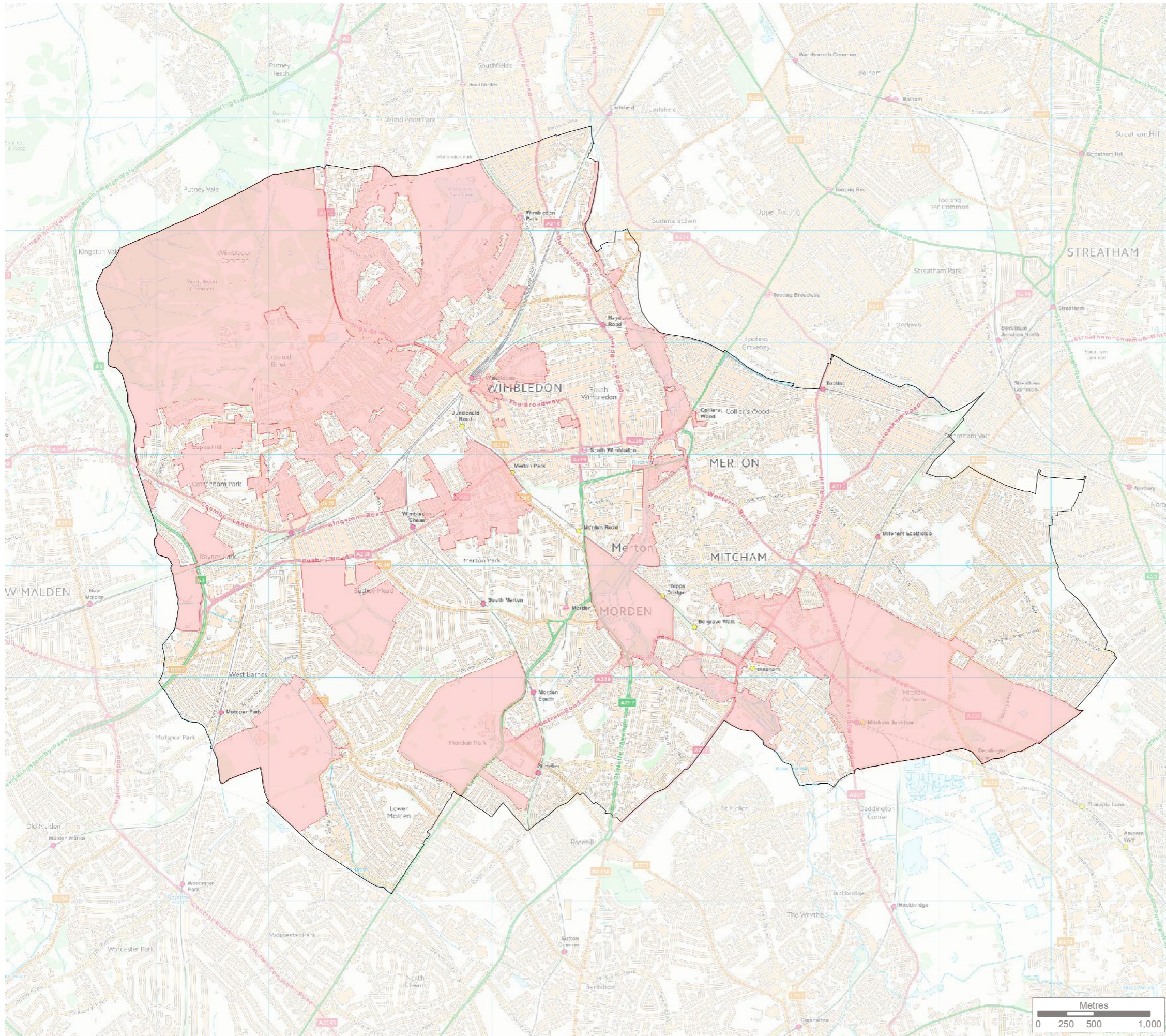
Project
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Title
Priority Assessment - Learning about the Environment

Drawing Number
G7118.042

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
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KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Landscape and Heritage Conservation

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

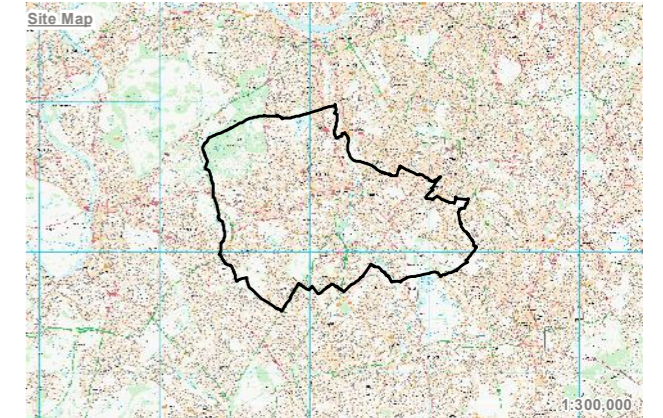
- London Borough of Merton Conservation Areas
- London Borough of Merton Local Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Metropolitan Open Land

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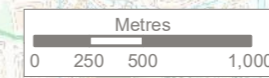
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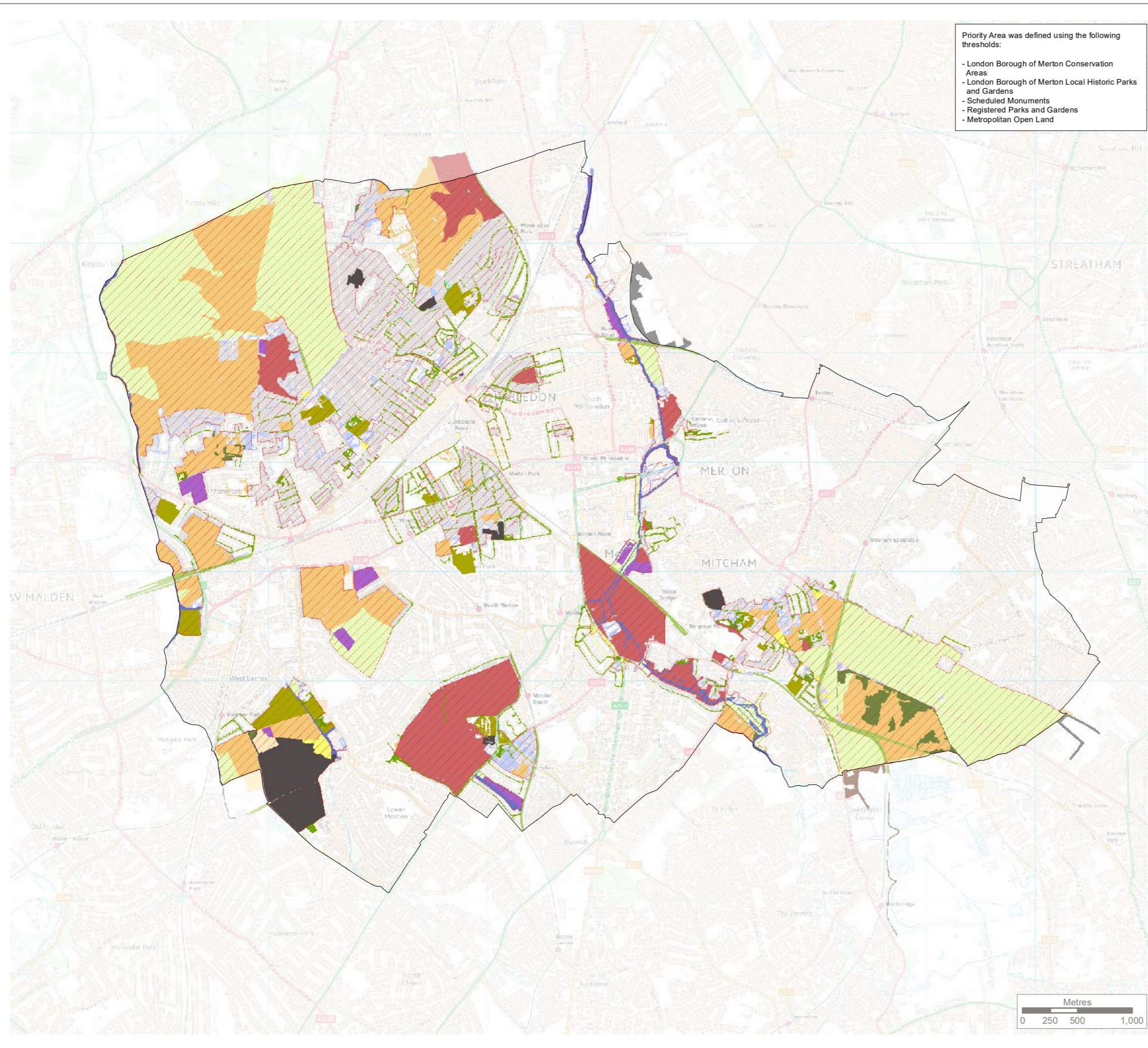
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Title
Priority Assessment - Landscape and Heritage Conservation

Drawing Number
G7118.038

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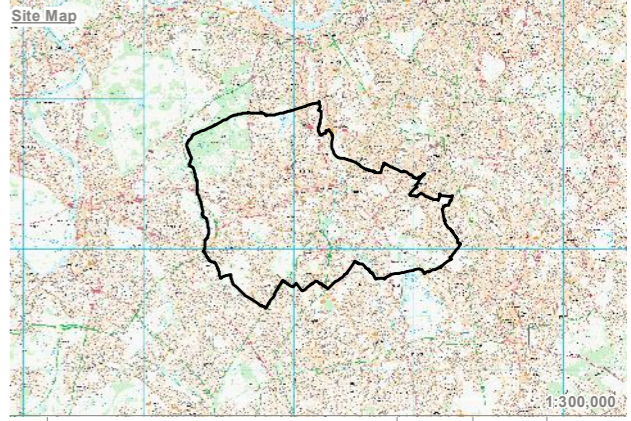
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- London Borough of Merton Conservation Areas
- London Borough of Merton Local Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Metropolitan Open Land

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Landscape and Heritage Conservation
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Landscape and Heritage Conservation Parks and Gardens**
 - Parks and Formal Gardens
 - Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds
 - Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
 - Agriculture and Horticulture
 - Woodland
 - Agriculture and Horticulture
 - Green Corridors**
 - Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
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 - Outdoor Sports Facilities**
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 - Other GBI**
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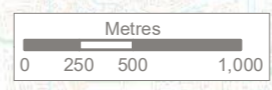
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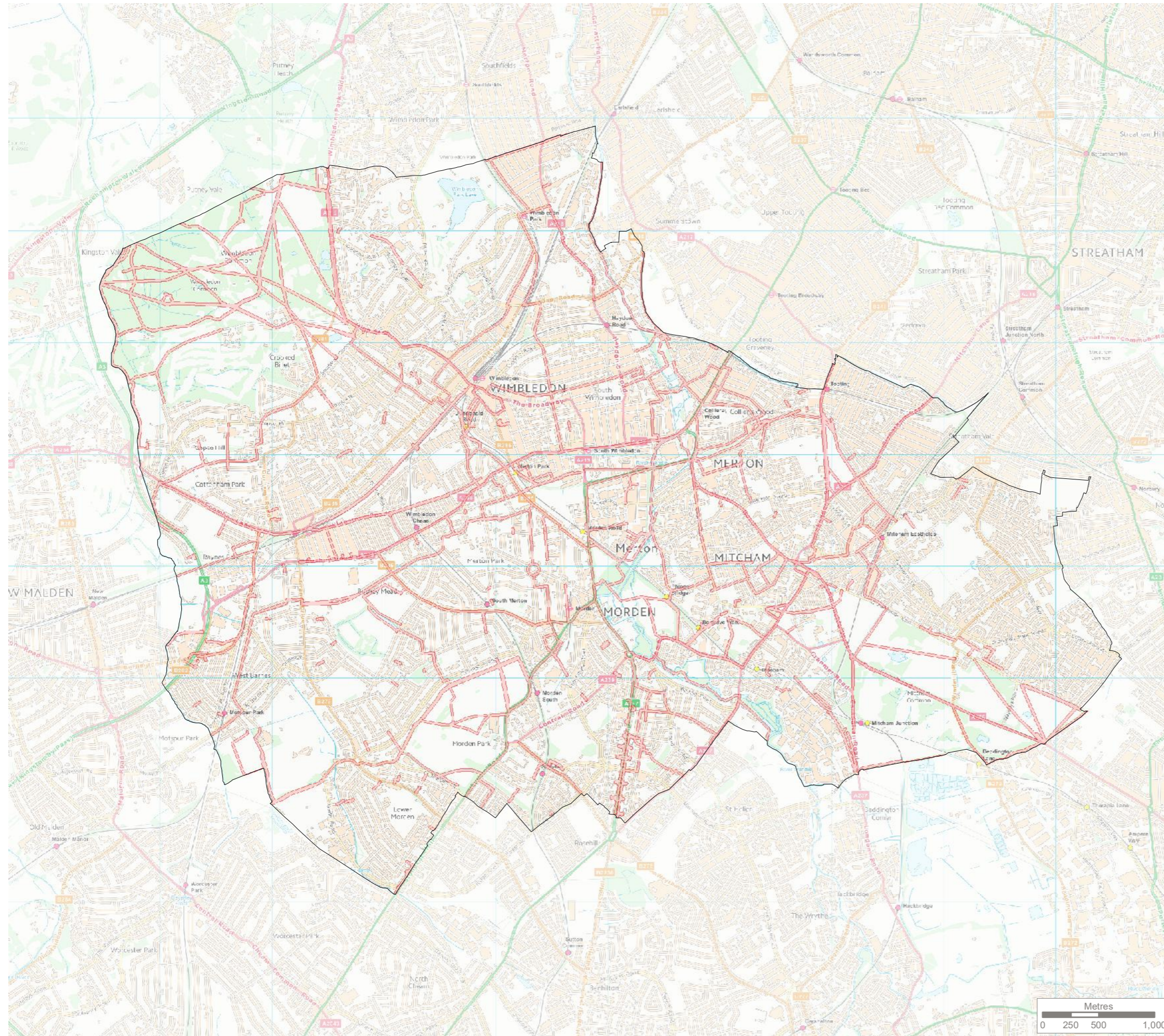
Project
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Title
Overlay Stage - Landscape and Heritage Conservation

Drawing Number
G7118.043

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JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019





KEY

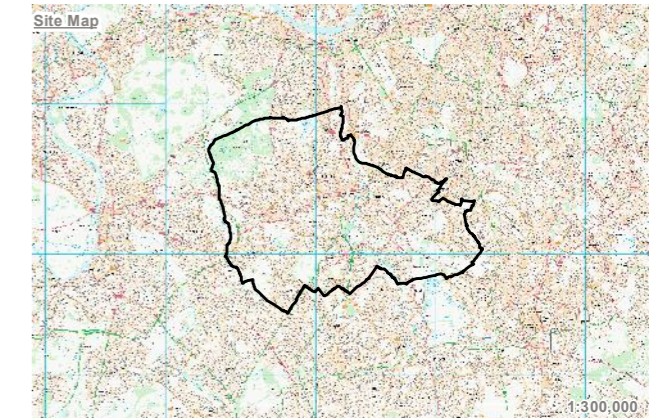
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Walking and Cycling

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- 10m from Public Rights of Way
- 10m from London Borough of Merton Existing Cycle Routes
- 10m from London Borough of Merton Cycle Routes 22TN



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



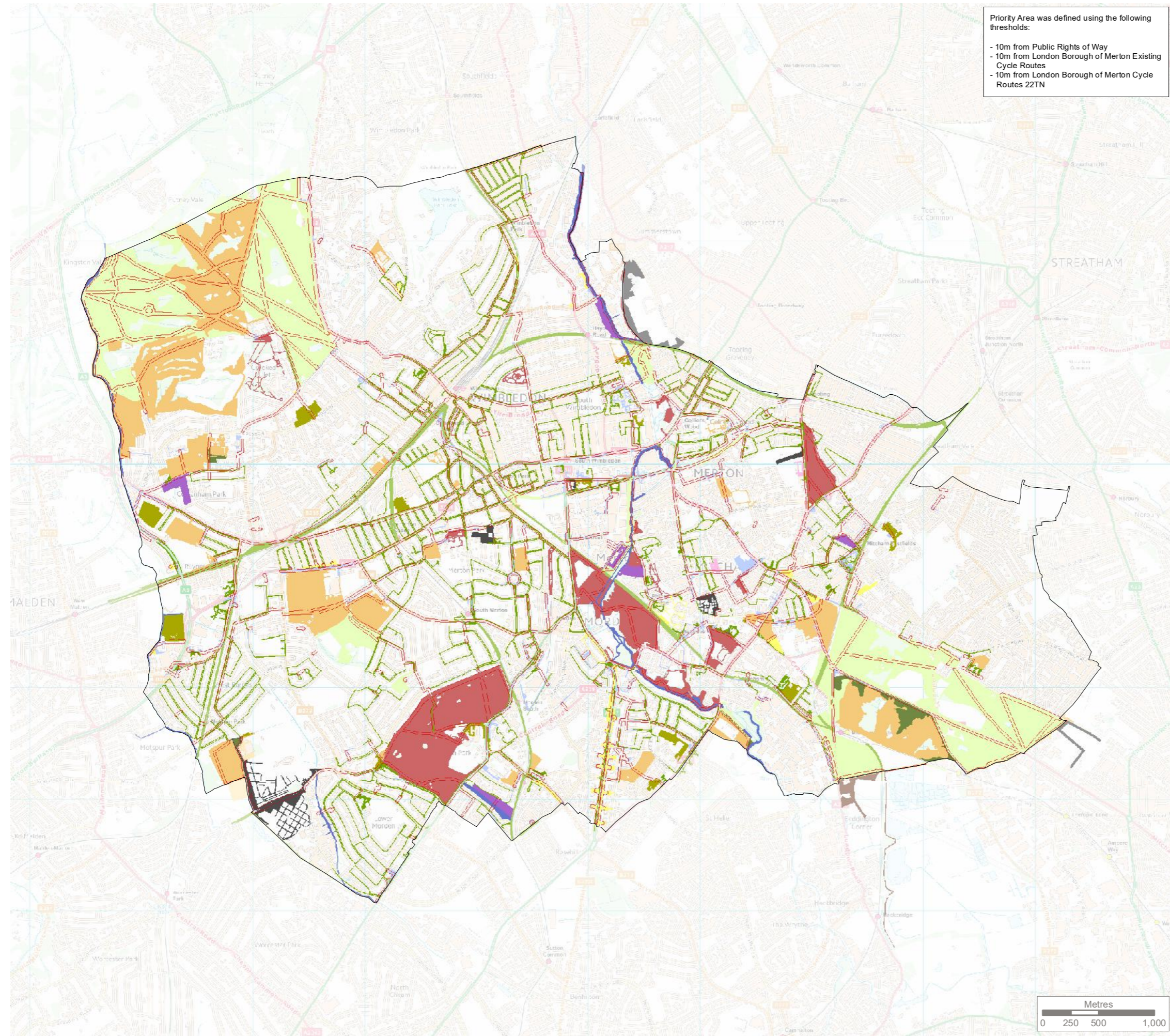
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Walking and Cycling

Drawing Number
G7118.039

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	23/01/2019



Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

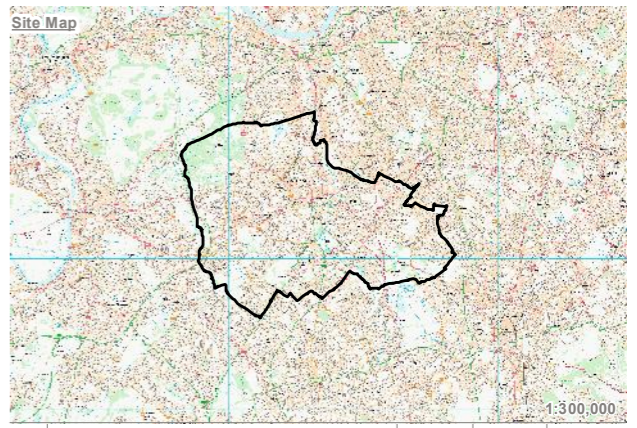
- 10m from Public Rights of Way
- 10m from London Borough of Merton Existing Cycle Routes
- 10m from London Borough of Merton Cycle Routes 22TN

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
 - Priority Area for Walking and Cycling
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Walking and Cycling**
- | | |
|--|---|
| Parks and Formal Gardens | Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds |
| Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland | Agriculture and Horticulture |
| Woodland | Agricultural Land and Horticulture |
| Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes | Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms |
| Watercourse | Other PPG17 Classifications |
| Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses | Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works |
| Amenity Space and Village Greens | Other GBI |
| School and Hospital Grounds | Street Tree |
| Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises | |
| Play Areas | |



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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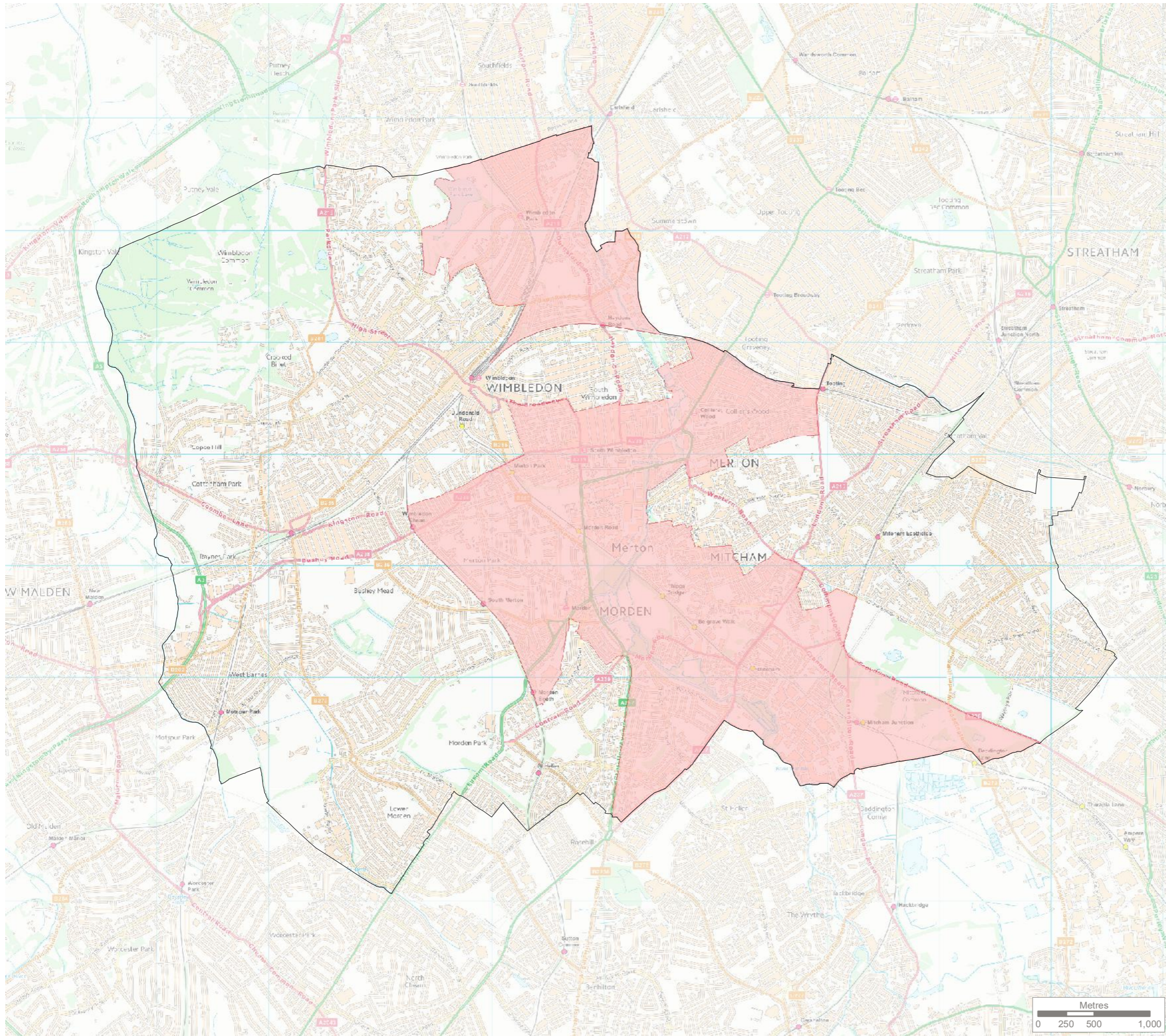
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Walking and Cycling

Drawing Number
G7118.044

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019



KEY

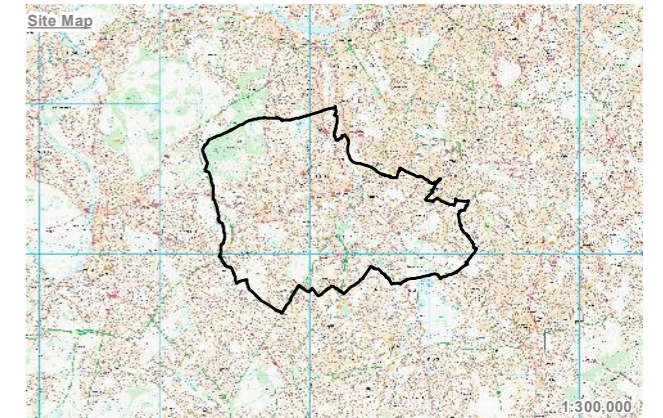
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Growth and Quality of Life

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Wards with over 800 extra houses between 2017-2041
- 20% most deprived LSOAs in London according to IMD (2015)



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



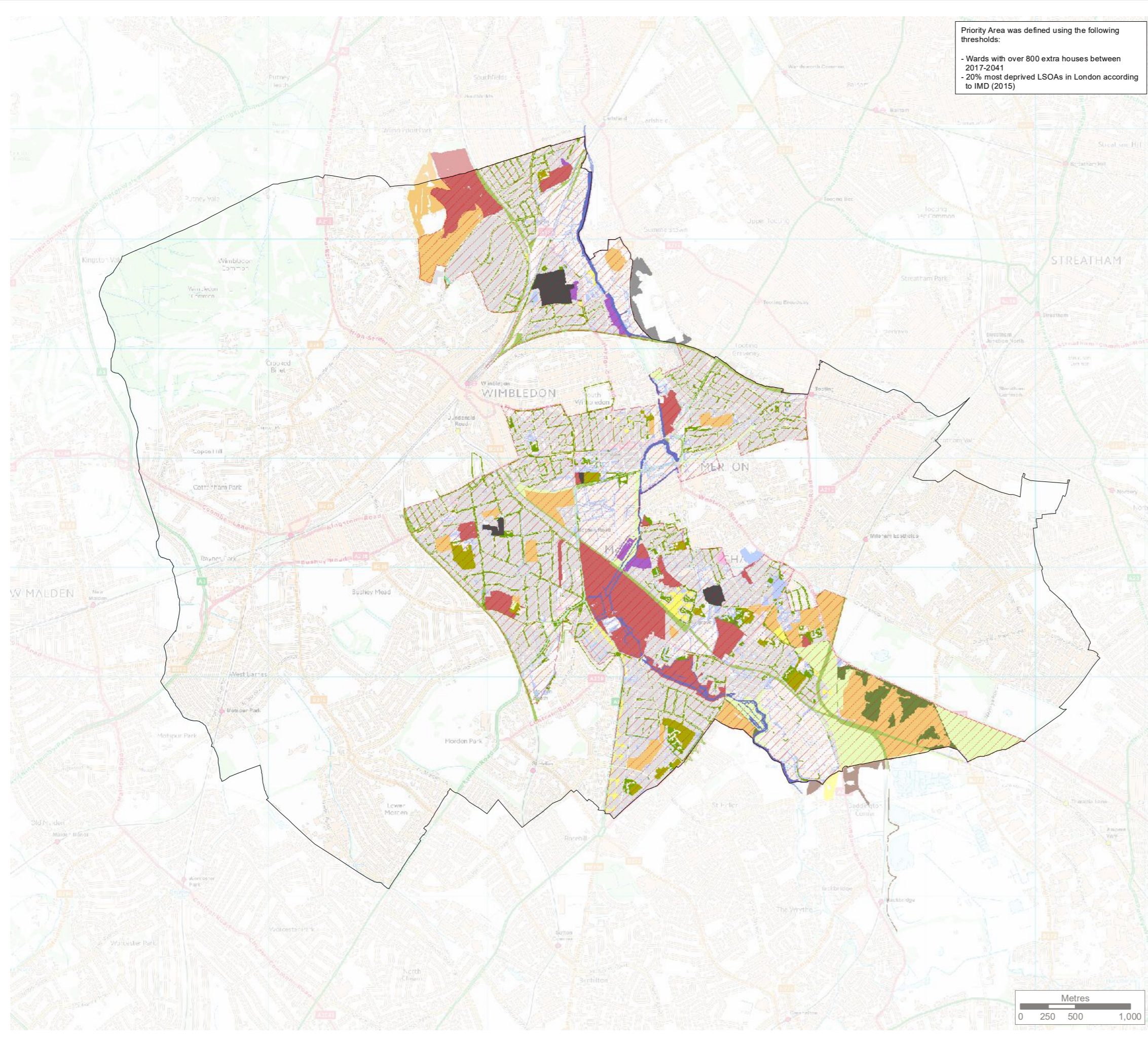
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Growth and Quality of Life

Drawing Number
G7118.030

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	20/02/2020



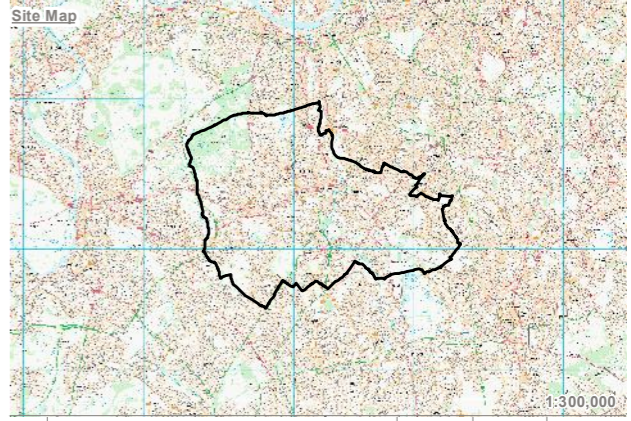
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Wards with over 800 extra houses between 2017-2041
- 20% most deprived LSOAs in London according to IMD (2015)

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Growth and Quality of Life
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Growth and Quality of Life**
- Parks and Formal Gardens
- Woodland
- Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
- Watercourse
- Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
- Amenity Space and Village Greens
- School and Hospital Grounds
- Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
- Play Areas
- Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
- Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
- Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
- Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
- Other PPG17 Classifications**
- Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works
- Other GBI**
- Green Roof
- Street Tree
- Private Garden

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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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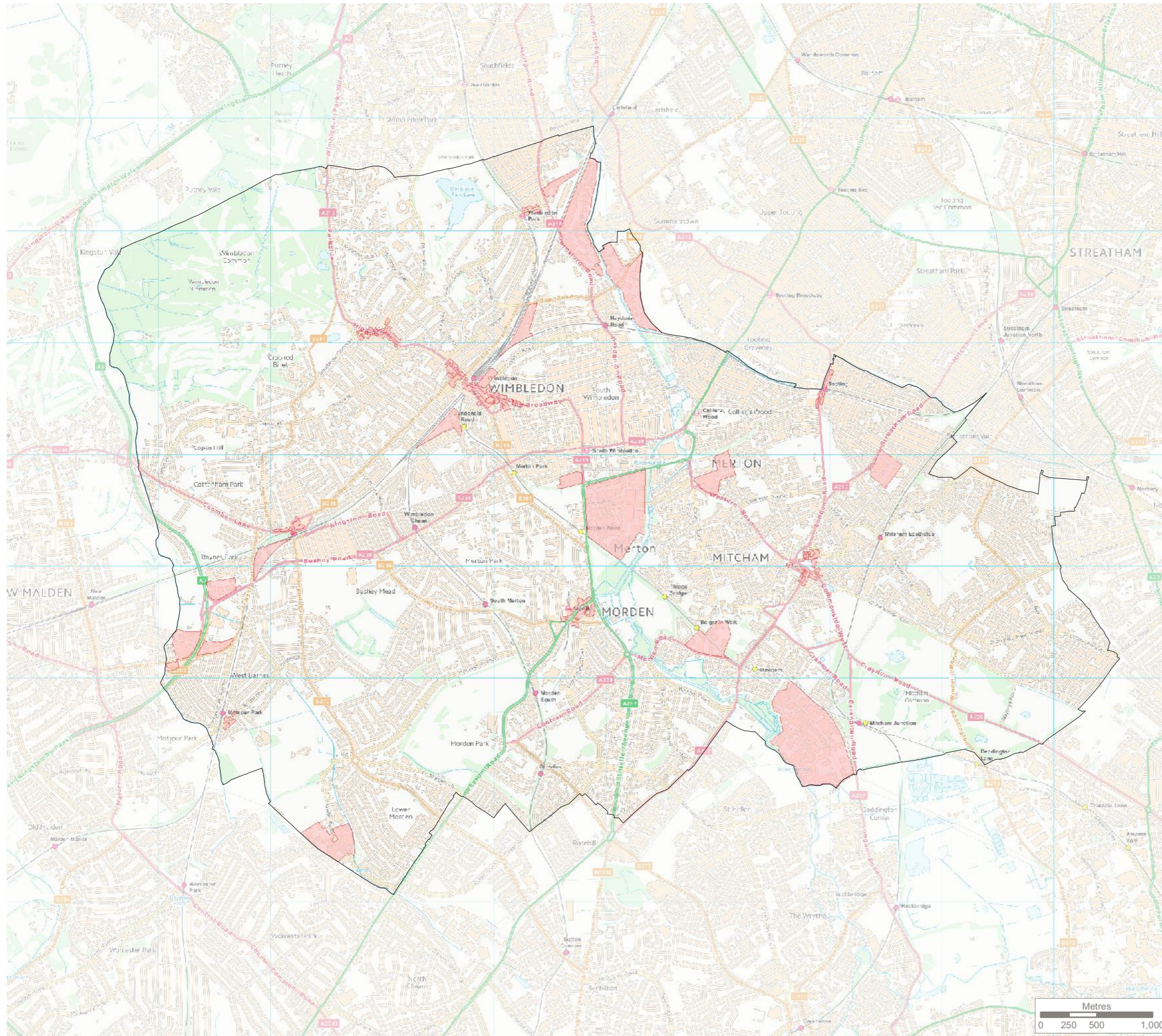
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Growth and Quality of Life

Drawing Number
G7118.045

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019



KEY

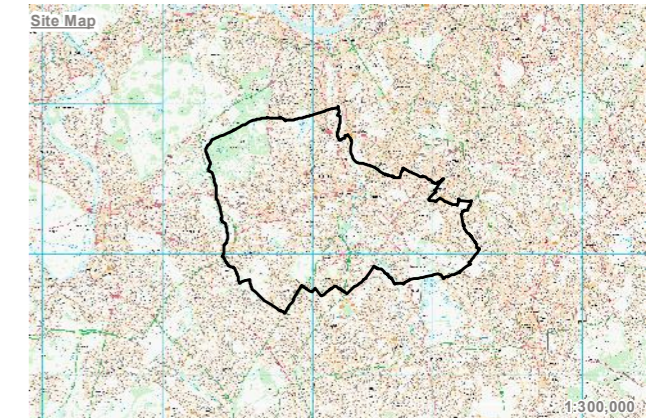
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Economic Growth and Investment

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- London Borough of Merton (LBM) Strategic Industrial Locations
- LBM Locally Significant Industrial Areas
- LBM Wimbledon Central Shopping Frontage
- LBM Core Shopping Frontages
- LBM Secondary Shopping Frontages



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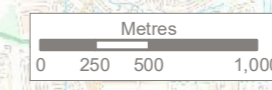
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

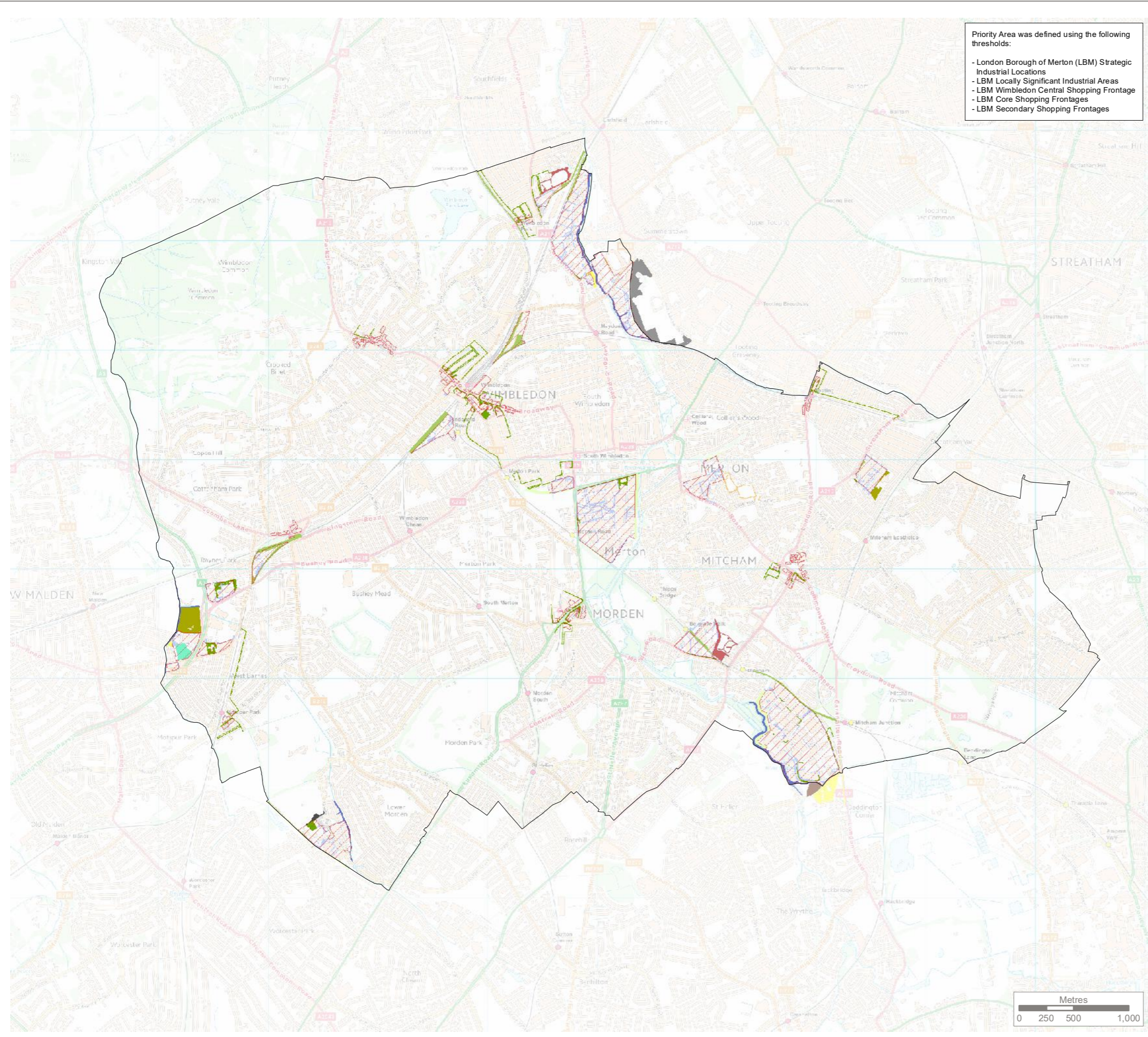
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Economic Growth and Investment

Drawing Number
G7118.040

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	14/01/2019





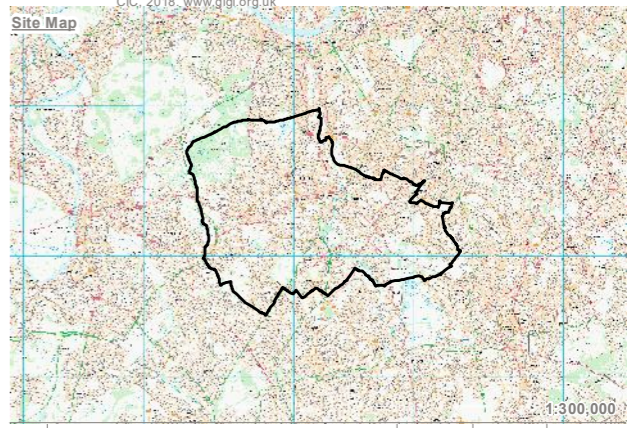
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- London Borough of Merton (LBM) Strategic Industrial Locations
- LBM Locally Significant Industrial Areas
- LBM Wimbledon Central Shopping Frontage
- LBM Core Shopping Frontages
- LBM Secondary Shopping Frontages

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
 - Priority Area for Economic Growth and Investment
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Economic Growth and Investment**
- | | |
|--|---|
| Parks and Gardens | Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms |
| Parks and Formal Gardens | Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms |
| Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace | Other PPG17 Classifications |
| Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland | Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works |
| Green Corridors | Other GBI |
| Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes | Green Roof |
| Watercourse | Street Tree |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities | Private Garden |
| Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses | |
| Amenity | |
| Amenity Space and Village Greens | |
| School and Hospital Grounds | |
| Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises | |
| Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds | |
| Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds | |

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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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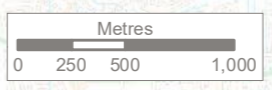
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

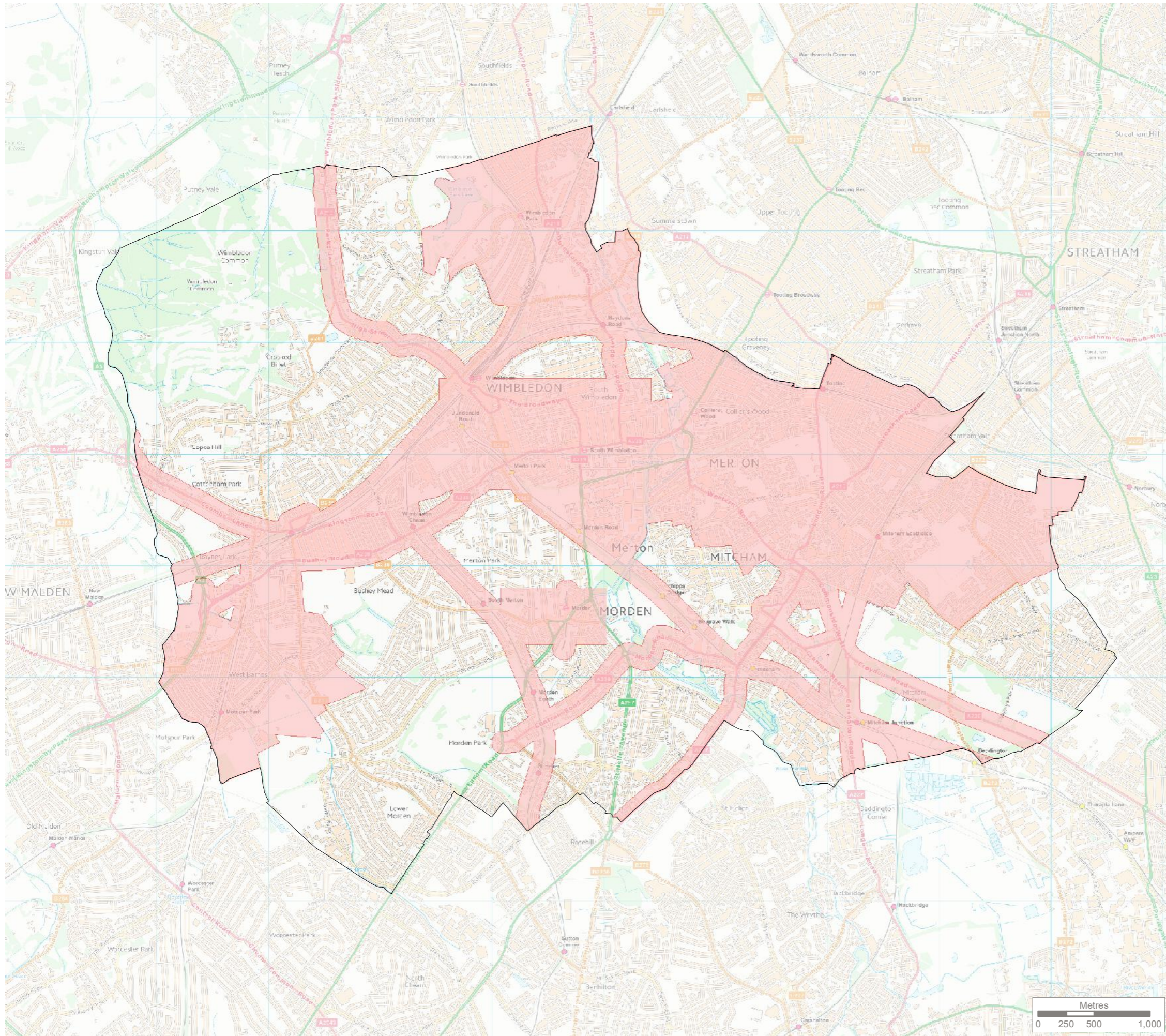
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Economic Growth and Investment

Drawing Number
G7118.046

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019





KEY

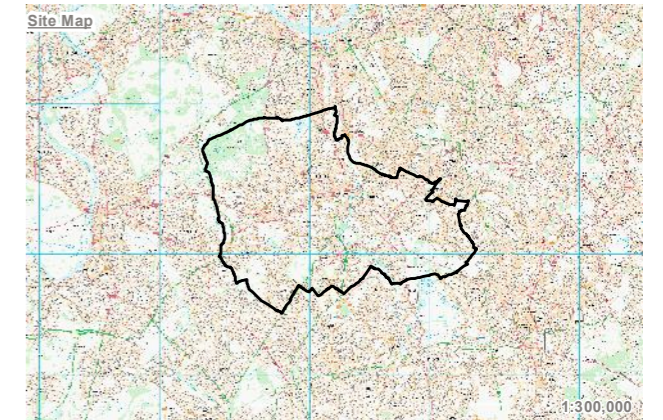
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Air and Water Quality

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- 100m from A Roads, Motorways and Railways
- Wards with Tree Canopy Cover <21%
- Air Quality Focus Areas



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



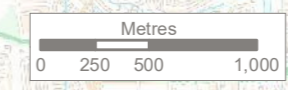
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

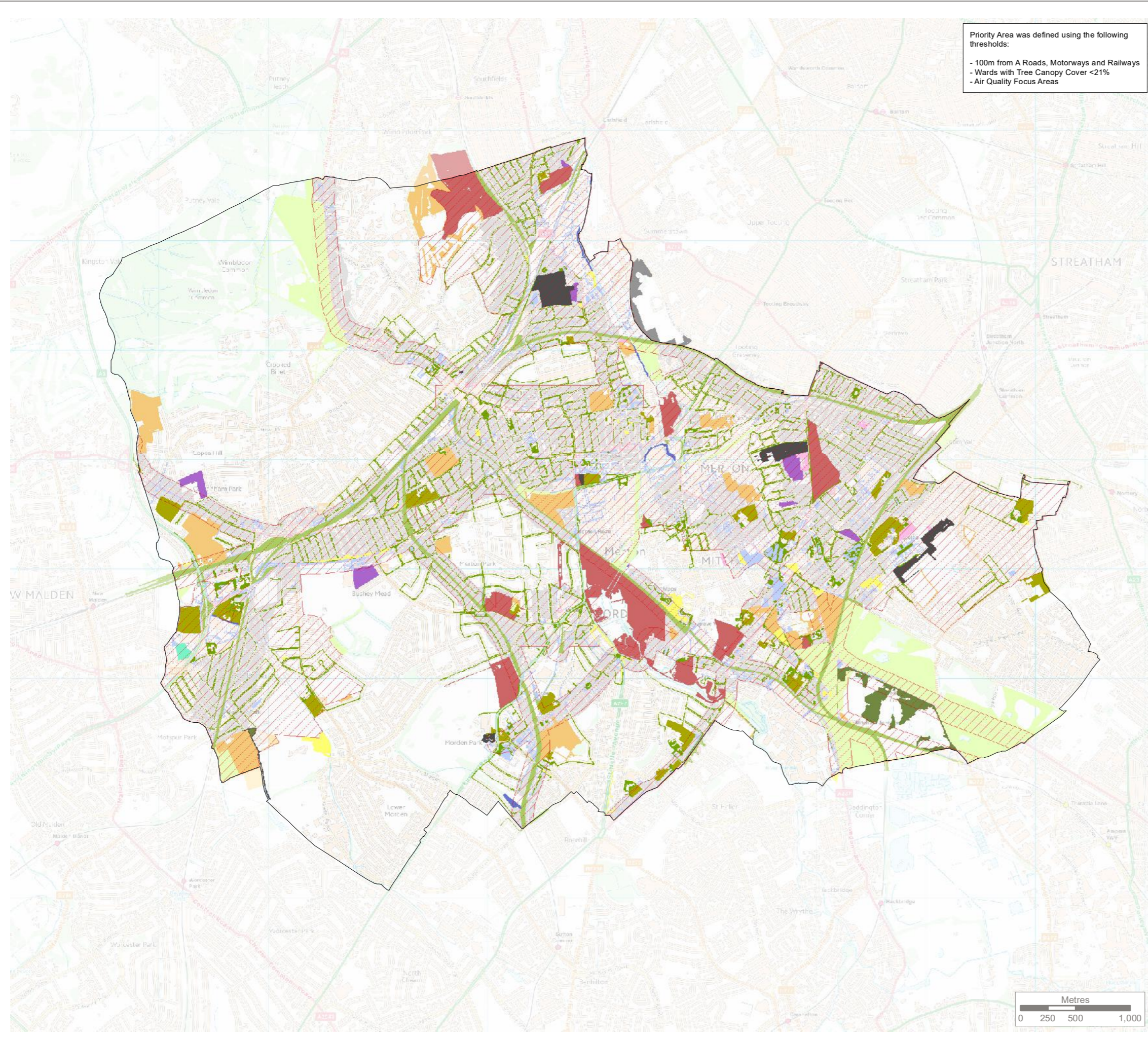
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Air and Water Quality

Drawing Number
G7118.032

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	20/02/2020





Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:
 - 100m from A Roads, Motorways and Railways
 - Wards with Tree Canopy Cover <21%
 - Air Quality Focus Areas

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Air and Water Quality

Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Air and Water Quality

- Parks and Gardens**
 - Parks and Formal Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
 - Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
 - Woodland
- Green Corridors**
 - Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
 - Watercourse
- Outdoor Sports Facilities**
 - Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
- Amenity**
 - Amenity Space and Village Greens
 - School and Hospital Grounds
 - Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
- Provision for Children and Teenagers**
 - Play Areas
- Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
 - Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
- Agriculture and Horticulture**
 - Agricultural Land and Horticulture
- Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
 - Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
- Other GBI**
 - Green Roof
 - Street Tree
 - Private Garden



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



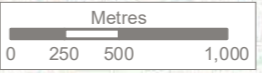
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

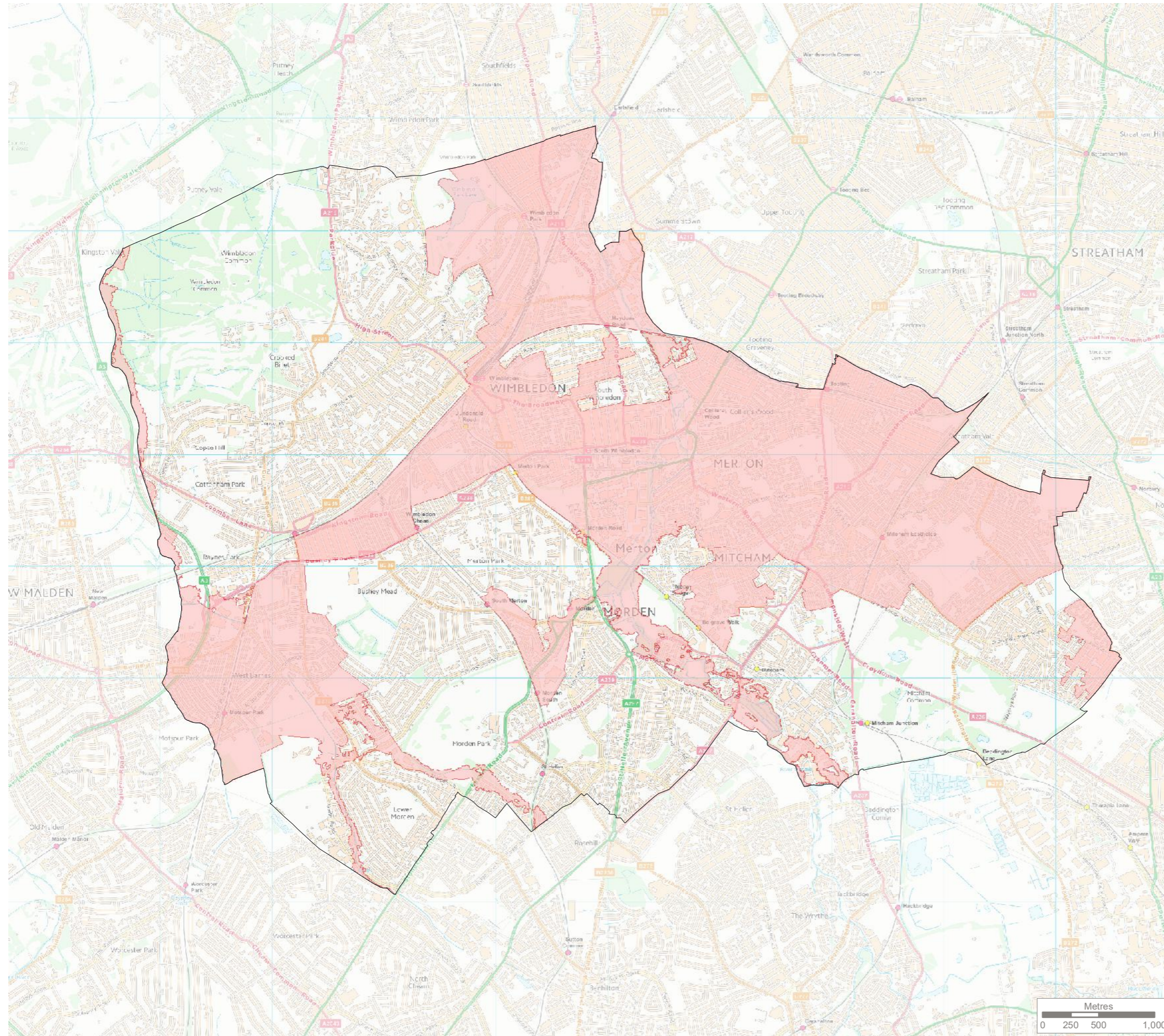
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Air and Water Quality

Drawing Number
G7118.047

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019





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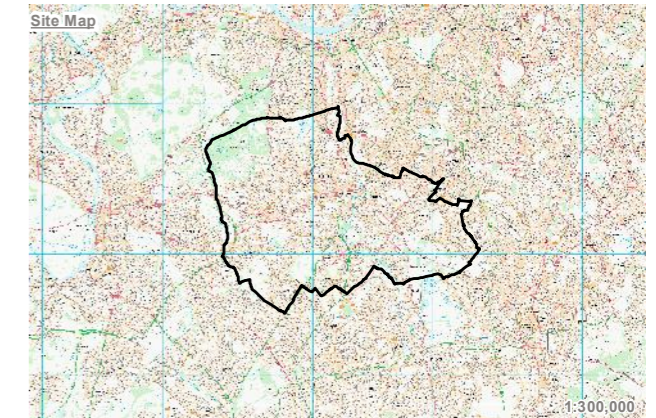
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Climate Change Adaptation and the Urban Heat Island Effect

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Sealed Surface Coverage for LSOA >50%
- Wards with Tree Canopy Coverage <21%



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



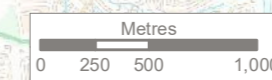
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

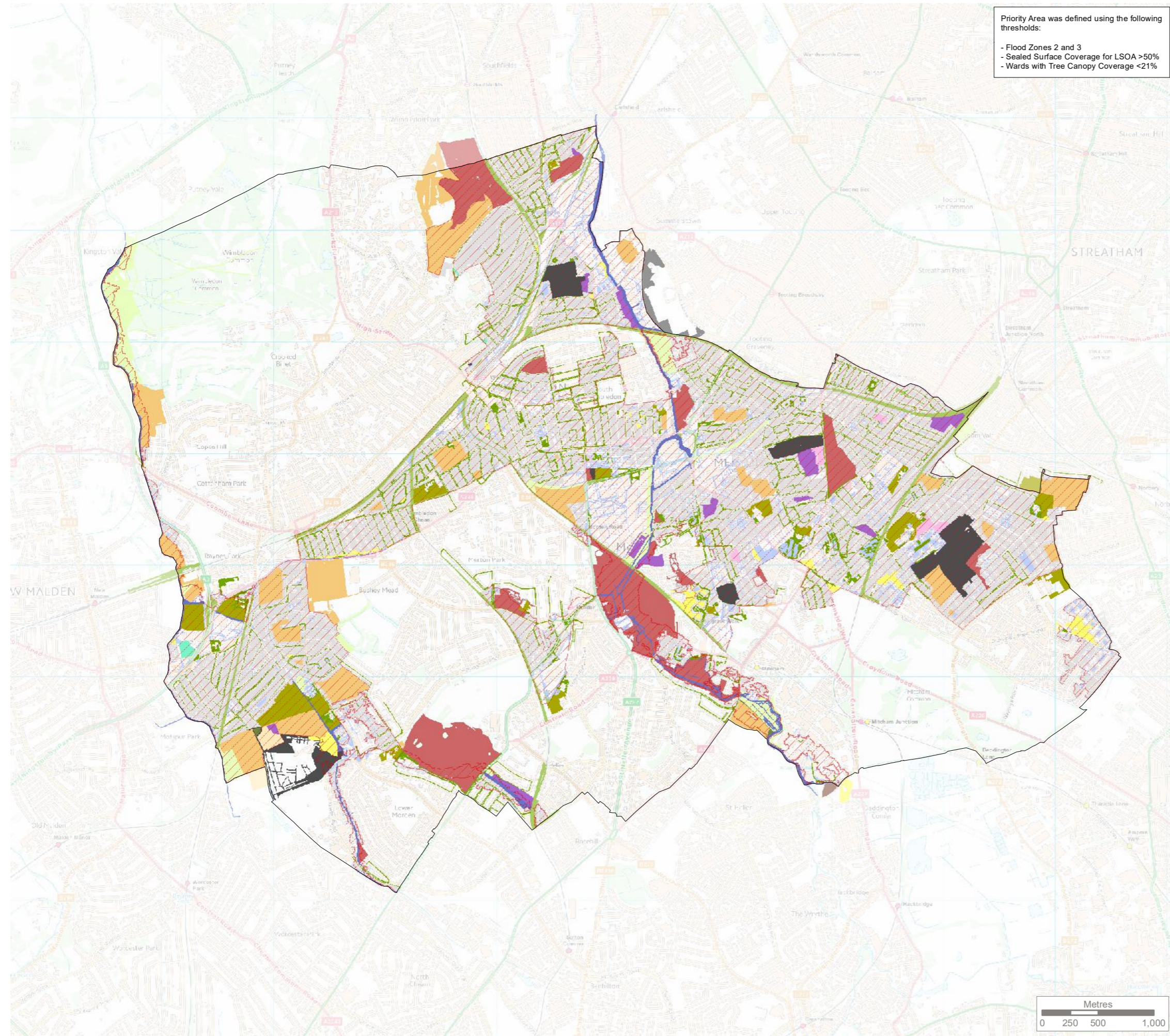
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Climate Change Adaptation and the Urban Heat Island Effect

Drawing Number
G7118.033

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	20/02/2020





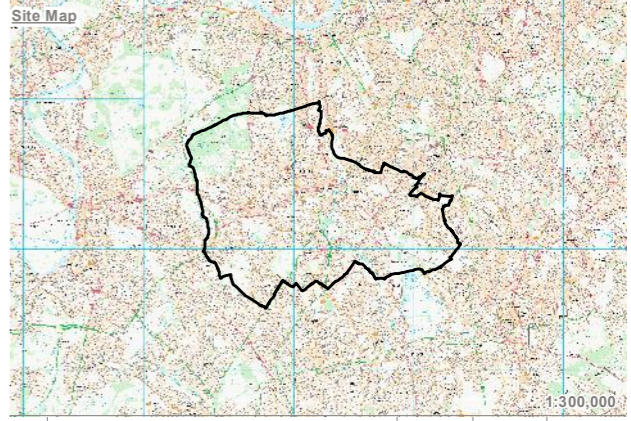
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Sealed Surface Coverage for LSOA >50%
- Wards with Tree Canopy Coverage <21%

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Climate Change Adaptation and the Urban Heat Island Effect
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Climate Change and Adaptation**
- Parks and Gardens**
- Parks and Formal Gardens
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
- Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
- Woodland
- Green Corridors**
- Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
- Watercourse
- Outdoor Sports Facilities**
- Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
- Amenity**
- Amenity Space and Village Greens
- School and Hospital Grounds
- Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
- Provision for Children and Teenagers**
- Play Areas
- Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
- Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
- Agriculture and Horticulture**
- Agricultural Land and Horticulture
- Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
- Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
- Other PPG17 Classifications**
- Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works
- Other GBI**
- Green Roof
- Street Tree
- Private Garden

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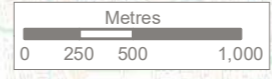
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

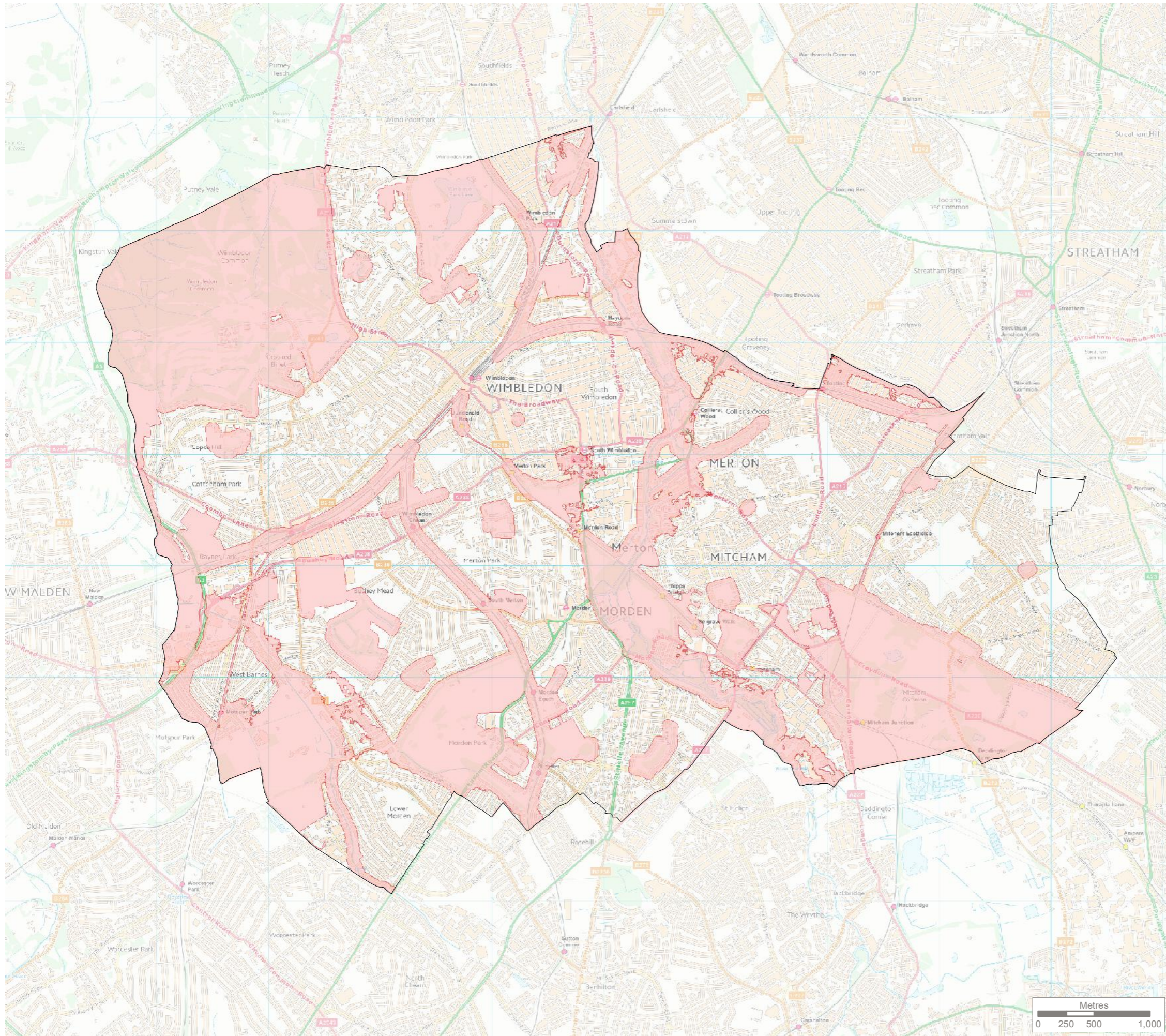
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Climate Change Adaptation and the Urban Heat Island Effect

Drawing Number
G7118.048

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019





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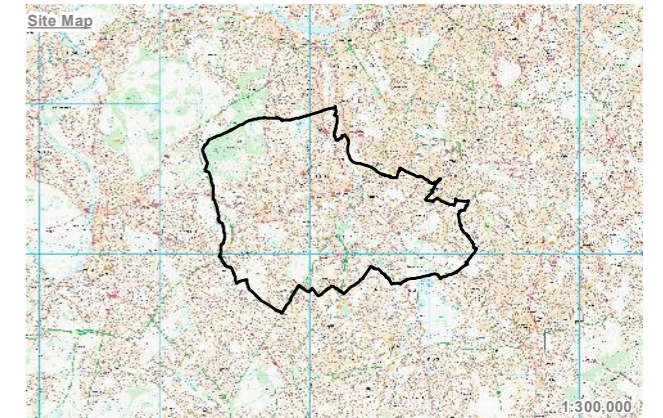
- London Borough of Merton
- Priority Area for Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience

Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- LBM Green Corridor Designation
- Priority Habitats
- 50m from Core Biodiversity Areas (SSSIs, SACs, SPAs, SINCs)
- Flood Zones 2 and 3



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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



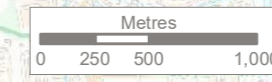
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 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

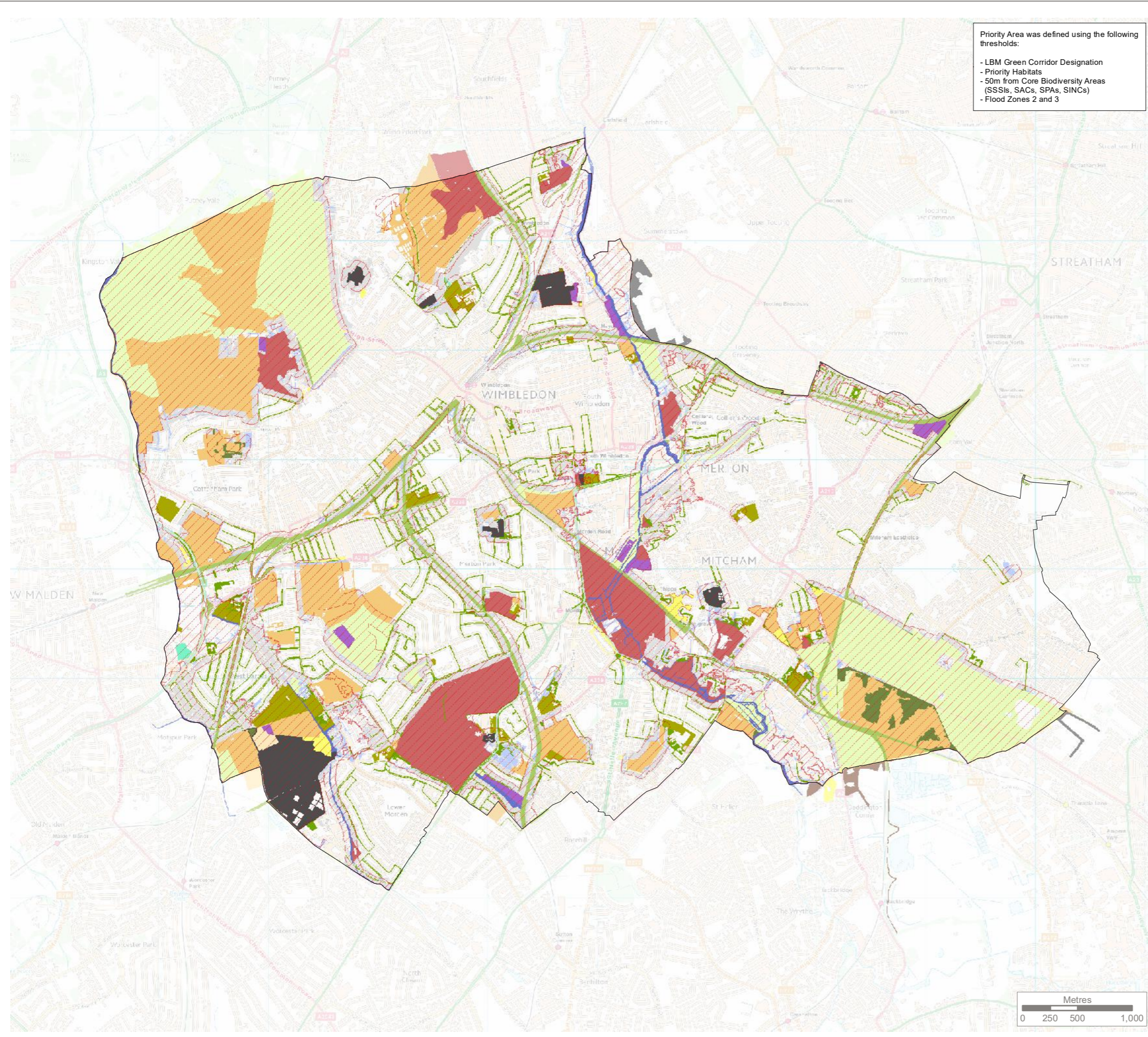
Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Priority Assessment - Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience

Drawing Number
G7118.034

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	15/01/2019





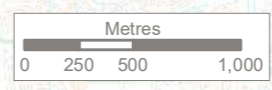
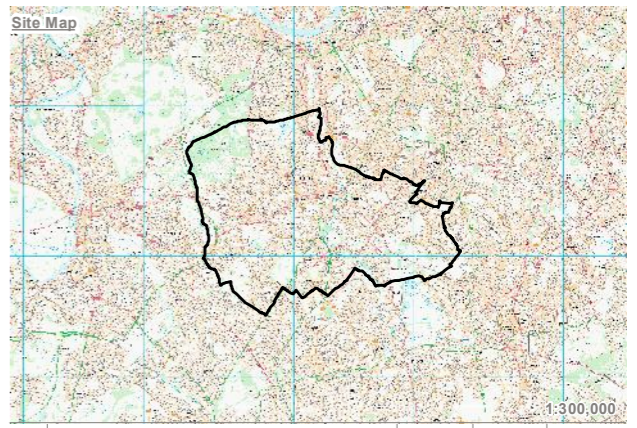
Priority Area was defined using the following thresholds:

- LBM Green Corridor Designation
- Priority Habitats
- 50m from Core Biodiversity Areas (SSSIs, SACs, SPAs, SINCs)
- Flood Zones 2 and 3

KEY

- London Borough of Merton
 - Priority Area for Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets for Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience**
- Parks and Gardens**
 - Parks and Formal Gardens
 - Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace**
 - Grassland, Heathland or Scrubland
 - Woodland
 - Green Corridors**
 - Railway Cuttings, Highway Verges and Other Routes
 - Watercourse
 - Outdoor Sports Facilities**
 - Recreation Grounds, Playing Fields, Golf Course, Equestrian Centre and Other Recreational Uses
 - Amenity**
 - Amenity Space and Village Greens
 - School and Hospital Grounds
 - Landscaping Around Housing and Industrial Estates/Premises
 - Provision for Children and Teenagers**
 - Play Areas
 - Cemeteries, Churchyards and Burial Grounds**
 - Cemeteries Churchyards and Burial Grounds
 - Agriculture and Horticulture**
 - Agricultural Land and Horticulture
 - Allotments, Community Gardens, Urban Farms**
 - Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms
 - Other PPG17 Classifications**
 - Derelict and Vacant Land and Sewage Treatment Works
 - Other GBI**
 - Green Roof
 - Street Tree
 - Private Garden

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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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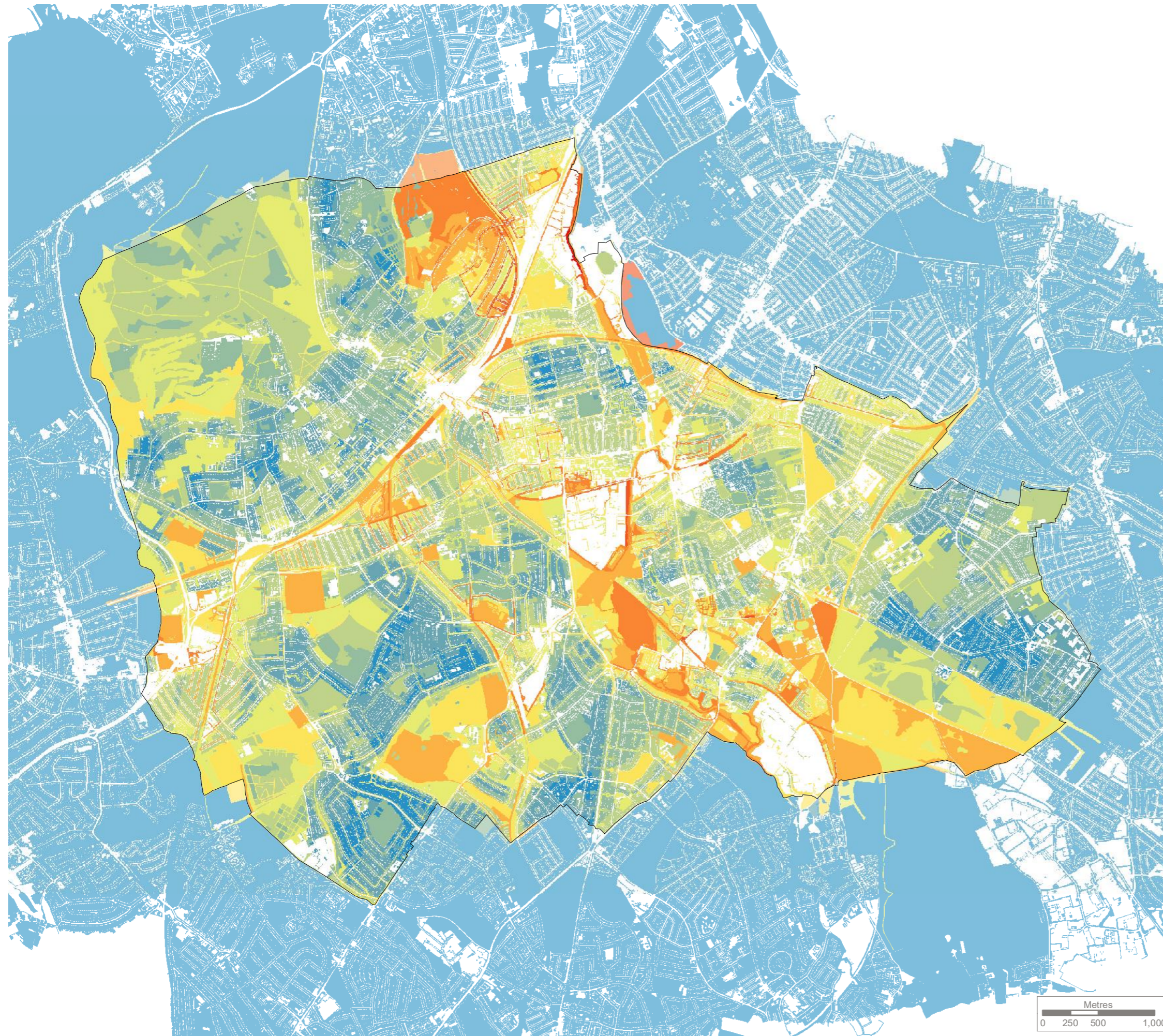
Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 7BH
 Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Overlay Stage - Biodiversity and Ecological Resilience

Drawing Number
G7118.049

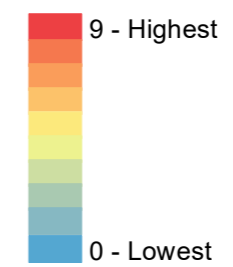
Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LS	1:35,000 @ A3	21/03/2019



KEY

London Borough of Merton

Green and Blue Infrastructure Key Asset Score



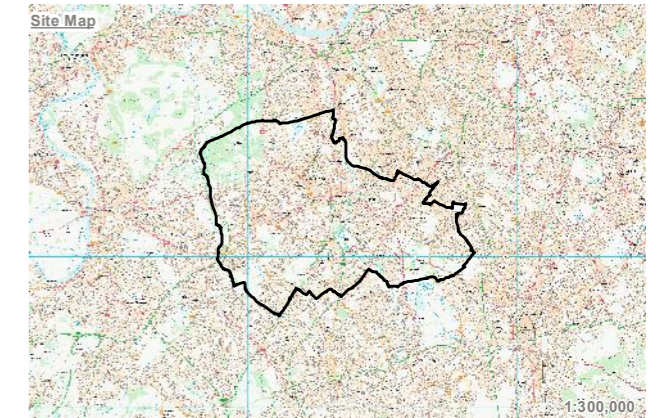
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Site Map



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



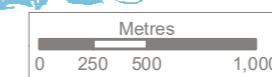
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Project
Merton GI, Biodiversity and Open Space Strategy

Title
Green and Blue Infrastructure Key Assets

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Document Title	Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report
Prepared for	London Borough of Merton
Prepared by	TEP - Warrington
Document Ref	7118.014

Author	James Cooper; Kate Morley
Date	March 2020
Checked	Laura Schofield
Approved	Francis Hesketh

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Version	Date	Modified by	Check <input type="checkbox"/> Approved by	Reason(s) issue	Status
1.0	21/11/18	KM/C	LS/FH	For client review	Draft
2.0	16/01/19	LS	FH/IG	For client approval	Final Draft
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4.0	20/02/20	LS	LS	Updates to sites and maps added	Final Draft
5.0	09/03/20	LS	LS	Sites reviewed by London Borough of Merton incorporated into report.	Final Draft
6.0	30/04/20	V	AK	Comments from client	Final

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- G7118.064 Open Space Boundary Review
- G7118.062 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) Boundary Review
- G7118.065 Green Corridor Boundary Review
- G7118.066 All Designations Review by Site Survey Point

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This technical report has been produced by The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd on behalf of the London Borough of Merton (LBM) to provide details of the designation boundary reviews for both open space and biodiversity sites within the Borough.
- 1.2 Boundary reviews of land currently designated in the Merton Core Strategy (2011) and Sites and Policies Plan (2014) as Open Space/Metropolitan Open Land/Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Green Corridors were undertaken borough wide. Many of these land parcels were identified as a result of planning applications and decisions which have impacted or may impact the designation boundaries.
- 1.3 The method and criteria for the open space and biodiversity boundary reviews are provided in Chapter 2 of this report and cover the following:

Open Space Sites

- Open Space (OS)
- Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

Biodiversity Sites

- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINON)
- Green Corridor (GC)

- 1.4 The outcomes of the boundary reviews are provided in Chapter 3.
- 1.5 Survey Points are shown on the following GIS maps in Appendix B:
 - G7118.063 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) Boundary Review
 - G7118.064 Open Space Boundary Review
 - G7118.062 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINON) Boundary Review
 - G7118.065 Green Corridor Boundary Review

Purpose and Scope

- 1.6 The Designated Sites Boundary Review Technical Report forms part of a set of Technical Reports which will provide an evidence base for the Merton Local Plan and inform the overall Merton Green Infrastructure/Biodiversity and Open Space Study as shown in Figure 1.

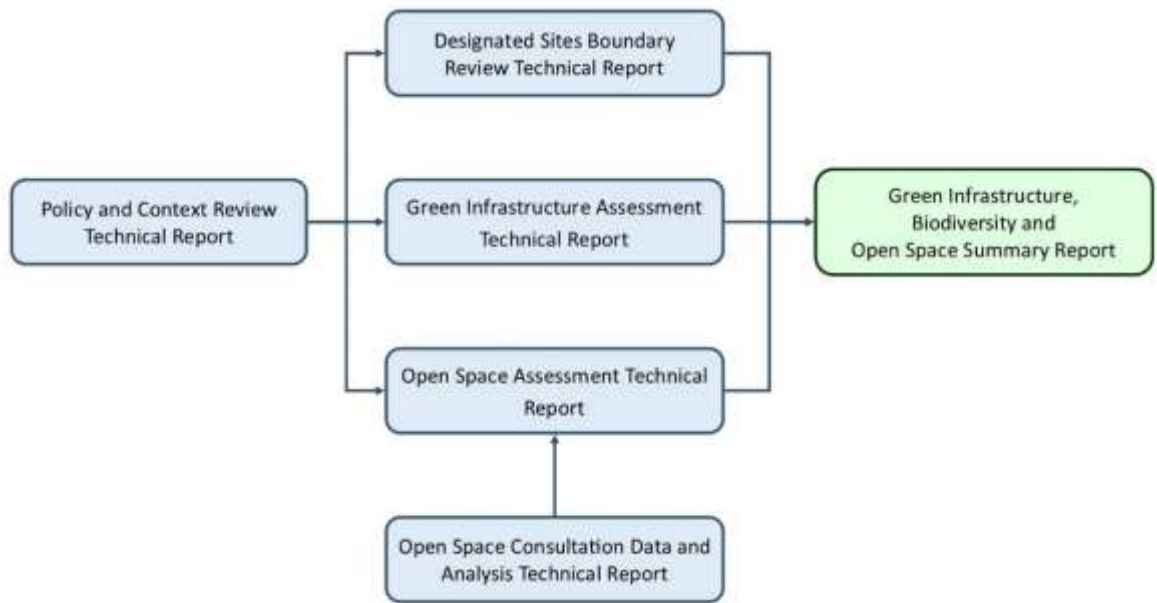


Figure 1: Report Structure for Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Open Space Study

2.0 Method

Open Space

Definitions

- 2.1 The definition of Open Space below is taken from National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019¹)

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

- 2.2 The London Plan (2016²) definition is

All land in London that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers a broad range of types of open space within London, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted.

- 2.3 The draft new London Plan (2018³) definition remains the same as the London Plan (2016).

- 2.4 Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL⁴) manages a London-wide database of open spaces. This includes GIS files of open space sites and facilities as well as information such as ownership, whether the site is publicly accessible and details of designations that apply to the site. GiGL defines open space as follows

Open space is defined as undeveloped land which has an amenity value, or has potential for an amenity value. The value could be visual, derive from a site's historical or cultural interest or from the enjoyment of facilities which it provides. It includes both public and private spaces, but excludes private gardens.

- 2.5 Merton's current adopted Sites and Policies Plan (2014⁵) defines Open Space as

All the land that is predominantly undeveloped, other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use, and bodies of water that are indicated as open space on Merton's Policies Map. The definition covers a broad range of types of open space within Merton, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan>

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/download-draft-london-plan-0>

⁴ <http://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/>

⁵ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/localplan/sitesandpoliciesplan.htm>

2.6 The Part 1 Sites and Policies Plan is supplemented by Part 2 Index of Sites and Maps. These underwent Stage 3 consultation between January and February 2013⁶. The criteria used to apply the Open Space designation including Inclusions and Exclusions has been reviewed and is listed below for information. The definitions used in the Sites and Policies Plan were taken from the NPPF (2012⁷) and London Plan (2011⁸) but are the same as those above for the NPPF (2019) and London Plan (2016).

2.7 Inclusions

- Inclusion 1 - All open spaces within the borough such as parks, commons, play grounds, sports fields (including MUGAs and bowling greens), allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, urban farms and woods that are not specifically excluded below.
- Inclusion 2 - Buildings within open spaces that are ancillary to the use of the open space (e.g. changing rooms).
- Inclusion 3 - Large soft landscaped open spaces within school grounds (e.g. playing fields) and (hard) demarcated playing pitches (e.g. netball courts) including ancillary school buildings or hard standing (e.g. car parks) not in the immediate vicinity of the main school building.

2.8 Exclusions

- Exclusion 1- Main school buildings. (These parts of the site are predominantly developed and the school use is not ancillary to open space.)
- Exclusion 2 - The hard standing and ancillary buildings surrounding the main school buildings. (These areas form part of the site which is predominantly developed where the non-ancillary use is most intense.)
- Exclusion 3 - Private residential gardens. (The primary use of these properties is residential and they would therefore not conform to the London Plan definition. Furthermore due to the extensive amount of development that is allowed on residential gardens without the requirement for planning permission, draft policy DM O1 Open Space will not be deliverable in these areas. It is also worth noting that residential back gardens are explicitly removed from the definition of 'Previously Developed Land' in the NPPF (2012) and in accordance with paragraph 53 of the NPPF (2012) Core Strategy Policy CS 13(e) resists development on them⁹).
- Exclusion 4 - Soft landscaped areas associated with blocks of flats or housing estates which have a sense of enclosure and privacy. (These sites are usually predominantly developed with various areas of soft

⁶ https://www2.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/localplan/sitesandpoliciesplan/sites_policies/Stage3.htm

⁷ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180608213715/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

⁸ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/past-versions-and-alterations-london-plan/london-plan-2011>

⁹ The Court of Appeal decision of *Dartford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities And Local Government & Anor* [2017] EWCA Civ 141 found that the term 'previously developed land' as defined by the glossary forming part of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes private residential gardens in an area that is not built-up. The London Borough of Merton is assumed to comprise built-up areas and so this change is not relevant.

landscaped amenity space to serve the occupants. These areas of soft landscaping would not conform to the London Plan definition.)

- Exclusion 5 - Public and private highways as listed on the Streets Register (which usually include the pavements) and open areas that are part of or essential to the prevailing character of the area (such as parcels of land within St Helier Estate). (Most works in or adjacent to a highway do not require planning permission and therefore draft policy DM O1 Open Space will not be deliverable in these areas. In some neighbourhoods there are small open spaces that are integral to the design of the original townscape layout and although they might appear to be part of the highway they are not on the Streets Register. These open spaces are protected from development by means of the design policies and do not warrant safeguarding by means of designation on the Policies Map.)
- Exclusion 6 - Land along operational rail reserves (with restricted public accessibility or limited visual amenity value). (These areas are usually predominantly developed with narrow strips of vegetation on either side and would therefore not conform to the London Plan definition. Although they might provide some “visual amenity”, due to the restricted access they would not “offer important opportunities for sport and recreation”. The majority of these areas are however protected for their nature conservation value as Green Corridors.)
- Exclusion 7 - Very small areas (typically less than a quarter of an acre/0.1ha) of green open space which as a result of a qualitative assessment are considered to have too restrictive access or are of a size or shape which result in them having a very limited functional use as open space and therefore do not warrant safeguarding by means of designation on the Policies Map. (Although these areas might provide some “visual amenity”, they would not also “offer important opportunities for sport and recreation”. Officers have judged these open spaces to have limited public value and they therefore do not warrant safeguarding by means of designation on the Policies Map.)
- Exclusion 8 - Buildings and their adjoining land on the edge of open space of which the primary use is not ancillary to the use of open space. (These sites would not conform to the London Plan definition).

2.9 The Merton definition and each of the existing Inclusions and Exclusions criteria is discussed below and has been reviewed and updated in line with the LPPF (2019), London Plan (2016), draft new London Plan (2018) and GiGL definitions.

Review of Merton’s Open Space Definition in Light of LPPF (2019)

2.10 There are differences between the definitions of open space in planning documents as set out at the start of this Chapter. The LPPF definition of open space has some ambiguity as to whether the criterion that open space needs to “offer important opportunities for sport and recreation” or whether that applies to areas of water only. However Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹⁰ gives further clarification on open space.

¹⁰ Paragraph 001 Reference ID 37-001-20140306 Accessed 10/01/19

- 2.11 It states that open space includes all open space of public value. That is helpful as it does not refer to the need for open space to *'offer important opportunities for sport and recreation'*. This interpretation is reinforced by PPG explaining that open space can take many forms—from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development—linear corridors and country parks. It is clear that not all of these examples—such as open areas within a development and linear corridors—will offer important opportunities for sport and recreation.
- 2.12 PPG confirms that open space can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby—have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development—and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development. These are not criteria which must apply but can be read as examples of how public value may be provided by open space.
- 2.13 PPG on open space refers to PPF paragraph 96—headed *'Open space and recreation'*—which states that *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.'* It also refers to PPF paragraph 171 under the heading *'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'*. Paragraph 171 explains that plans should—amongst other things—*'take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure'*.
- 2.14 The guidance on open space also refers to PPF paragraphs 7-9 which set out the basis of sustainable development including the economic—social and environmental objectives. This strongly indicates that open space has a role in each of these objectives—rather than a narrowly prescribed function (such as solely sport and recreation).
- 2.15 PPG on open space sets out three further references to related policy in the PPF in addition to those discussed above. The first is to PPF paragraph 92 under the heading *'Promoting healthy and safe communities'* and advises
- 'To provide the social recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*
- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;'*
- 2.16 Further sub-paragraphs of PPF paragraph 92 refer to guarding against loss of valued facilities—ensuring facilities are able to develop and modernise and are retained for community benefit—and ensuing an integrated approach to the location of housing—economic uses and community facilities.

- 2.17 PPG also references PPF paragraphs 20-23 which are under the heading *Strategic policies*. This aspect of guidance refers to the need for strategic policies that are clearly identified, set out the pattern, scale and quality of development and anticipate long-term requirements over a minimum period of 15 years. The paragraphs refer to land use designations identified on a policies map and paragraph 20 refers at subparagraph d) to making sufficient provision for *amongst other things conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation*.
- 2.18 The third additional aspect of policy related to open space which is flagged in PPG is PPF paragraph 26 regarding *Maintaining effective cooperation*. Paragraph 26 notes that cooperation is integral to good strategy and joint working should help determine where infrastructure is needed and where development needs can be met. This advice is not directly relevant to characteristics of open space but can be applied to various policy aspects.
- 2.19 Taking the PPF definition of open space read in conjunction with advice in PPG it is clear that open space is taken to be open land (or water) which has public value and that value may be derived from characteristics or contributions it makes other than important opportunities for sport and recreation.
- 2.20 Merton's definition of open space is qualified by the phrase that it applies to land or bodies of water indicated as open space on the Policies Map. The discussion below considers the criteria used to identify open space designations described below and whether they are consistent with the aspects of public value described in the PPF as clarified by PPG.
- 2.21 The second sentence of the Merton definition of open space identifies that land or water which may be designated as open space may be in public or private ownership and may have unrestricted, limited or restricted public access. PPF and PPG does not set out that open space should be in any particular form of ownership or tenure or that any particular form of public access applies. The clarification that open space may be in different forms of tenure and with different access is helpful in clarifying that the designation is not solely related to land in public ownership and with public access.

Review of Merton's Inclusions

Inclusion 1 - Types of Open Space

- 2.22 This point provides more detail on the *'broad range of types of open space within Merton'*. It includes some of the previous PPG17¹¹ categories and London Survey Method sub-categories (as cited on GiGL's Open Space Categories page¹²).

¹¹

<https://web.archive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120920011634/http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicyguidance17>

¹² <https://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/open-space-categories/>

- 2.23 The types of land use listed are those which would be anticipated to have public value as advised in the PPF and PPG. A challenge could be made that including each of these land uses as a matter of course without evaluating public value risks inclusion of land which should not be designated open space although it is difficult to envisage that any of the land uses would not contribute some public value such as habitat or visual amenity.

Inclusion 2 - Ancillary Buildings

- 2.24 This point reiterates that open space designation includes 'land that is predominantly undeveloped, other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use' from the Merton definition and mirrors the London Plan definition.

- 2.25 This is useful clarification and there are no suggested changes to the inclusion text.

Inclusion 3 - Large Soft Landscaped Open Spaces within School Grounds

- 2.26 School grounds are classified as open space by the previous PPG17 categories and London Survey Method sub-categories (as cited on GiGL's Open Space Categories page). The GiGL 'Educational' subcategory falls under the 'Amenity' category and is described as 'school or college ground and field study centres where school education is the primary function'.

- 2.27 It is recommended that this inclusion remains with the additional point that 'ancillary school buildings or hard standing (e.g. car parks) not in the immediate vicinity of the main school building' should only include land on which the buildings or hardstanding are ancillary to the open space use (e.g. changing rooms, car parking for users of the playing fields) to be consistent with the Merton and London Plan open space definition.

- 2.28 Further information from Sport England's 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance'¹³ and Government guidance on 'School land and property: protection, transfer and disposal'¹⁴ which references the non-statutory advice document 'Disposal or change of use of playing field and school land' (DfE, May 2015) has been provided to the Future Merton team as supporting information.

- 2.29 Open space comprising land used as recreational space by a school often has wider public benefits including visual amenity and habitat value and it may form part of a linear corridor and green infrastructure.

¹³ <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/playing-fields-policy>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-land-and-property-protection-transfer-and-disposal>

- 2.30 A query was raised during the study as to whether the definition of open space should be amended to assist development management decisions where there is a need to provide school places to meet local educational needs assessment and school expansion onto adjacent land is the most appropriate option. Addressing this issue is a matter of ensuring relevant policy and its application addresses the planning balance in such instances. There is not a need to specifically identify open space which comprises land used by a school in the definition as a 'sub-category' as this is readily discerned and the facts that lead to its identification may change over time. The application of policy in these instances is not a matter that can be assisted by the changes to the definition of open space.

Review of Merton's Exclusions

Exclusion 1 - Main School Buildings

- 2.31 School buildings cannot be classed as undeveloped land and are not ancillary to the open space use and should continue to be excluded.

Exclusion 2 - School Ancillary Buildings

- 2.32 School ancillary buildings and hard standing (unless ancillary to the open space use e.g. changing rooms or hard standing for sports use e.g. netball courts which are covered by the Inclusion 2) cannot be classed as undeveloped land and should continue to be excluded.

Exclusion 3 - Private Residential Gardens

- 2.33 The Merton Site and Policies Plan highlights the value gardens have for biodiversity and amenity. In the draft new London Plan (2018) the definition for Green Corridor includes 'extensive areas of private gardens'. These points demonstrate that there is some public value represented by private residential gardens.
- 2.34 The exclusion states that private residential gardens do not comply with the 2011 London Plan definition which remains unchanged in the 2016 and 2018 versions. However the London Plan definition does not state that private residential gardens are excluded this is stated in the GiGL definition. Although it can be anticipated that the majority of private residential gardens are less than 0.1ha (see Exclusion 7) and also that many do not contribute public value the Merton definition explains that tenure and access are not criteria for designation.
- 2.35 The exclusion also refers to residential back gardens in built-up areas being excluded from the definition of 'Previously Developed Land' in the LPPF (2012). This is consistent with LPPF (2018). (Footnote 9 explains that gardens outside of built-up areas comprise Previously Developed Land.) It is not clear that this is relevant to definition of open space or of the exclusion.
- 2.36 Adopted policy DM 01 aims to protect and enhance open space and the notes on the exclusion of private gardens set out that permitted development rights allow some forms of development in gardens (unless the rights have been removed for example the property is listed or in a Conservation Area or an Article 4 Direction applies).

- 2.37 Given the relatively low public access from private residential gardens, the autonomy of each individual garden owner and the permitted development rights that apply within the curtilage of a dwelling house, it seems proportionate to exclude private residential gardens from the definition of designated open space. When adopted, the equivalent policy to DM01 Open Space in new Merton Local Plan should be referenced in the notes on the exclusion.

Exclusion 4 - Blocks of Flats and Housing Estates

- 2.38 This states that soft landscape areas associated with blocks of flats or housing estates, which have a sense of enclosure and privacy do not comply with the London Plan definition. The discussion of this exclusion refers to the 2011 London Plan definition, which remains unchanged in the 2016 and 2018 versions. However the London Plan definition does not state that these areas are excluded and the Merton definition of open space explains that land which has limited or restricted access is not excluded solely due to these attributes. As for private gardens, there will be many areas of land which are too small to be designated or which may not contribute an aspect of public value, particularly because of their enclosure although they may be valuable for the residents.
- 2.39 This exclusion effectively offers an explanation that where land associated with blocks of flats or in housing estates offers little public value because of its enclosure (although they may be valuable for local residents), it will be excluded from being designated as open space. That is a useful clarification and the exclusion can remain.
- 2.40 In discussions during this study, the role of open space and its protection during redevelopment of housing estates was raised with a query if the definition of open space should acknowledge redevelopment where part of planned regeneration is acceptable. This is similar to the query raised regarding possible development of schools on open space comprising school land (see above). Merton Council's adopted Estates Local Plan (2018) covers three existing housing estates within Merton, Eastfields, High Path, and Ravensbury. The Estates Plan is a tool to shape and manage the redevelopment process of these three estates, and includes more detailed policies on the provision of open space in terms of losses and gains.
- 2.41 As for school land which is open space, there is not a need to specifically identify open space which comprises land in a housing estate in the definition as a sub-category, as this is readily discerned and the facts that lead to its identification may change over time. The application of policy in these instances is not a matter that can be assisted by the changes to the definition of open space.

Exclusion 5 - Public and Private Highways

- 2.42 Verges and roadside planting may be included in the highway and can give public value and also form important components of green infrastructure. However there are extensive permitted development rights that apply to highways and which could be used irrespective of protection of open spaces by planning policy.

- 2.43 Public and Private Highways as listed on the Streets Register should continue to be excluded. When adopted the equivalent policy to DM01 Open Space in new Merton Local Plan should be referenced in the exclusion.

Exclusion 6 - Operational Rail Reserves

- 2.44 This point states that land along operational rail reserves does not comply with the London Plan definition. As with previous statements this appears incorrect as the 2011 London Plan definition which remains unchanged in the 2016 and 2018 versions does not state that these areas are excluded. The Merton definition of open space confirms that tenure and access to land are not relevant when considering if it is open space and the notes on this Exclusion acknowledge that in fact open space which has restricted access is included. The reference to providing some “visual amenity”, but due to the restricted access they would not “offer important opportunities for sport and recreation” is compliant with the PPF definition and therefore justifies their continued exclusion.

Exclusion 7 - Very Small Areas

- 2.45 This exclusion is an acknowledgement that there needs to be proportionality in the application of designations of open space. Areas of land of less than 0.1ha may contribute to public value notably in the street scene and where visible from public areas. Consideration of adverse effects from development in such instances will be addressed in relevant planning policy such as taking account of local character and townscape. This exclusion is appropriate.

Exclusion 8 - Edge of Open Space/Non-Ancillary Use Buildings

- 2.46 Buildings and their adjoining land on the edge of open space cannot be classed as undeveloped land and are not ancillary to the open space use. They should continue to be excluded.

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

- 2.47 The London Plan (2016) definition of Metropolitan Open Land is

Strategic open land within the urban area that contributes to the structure of London.

- 2.48 Policy 7.17 of the London Plan (2016) states

To designate land as MOL, boroughs need to establish that the land meets at least one of the following criteria:

It contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area;

It includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London;

It contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value;

It forms part of a Green Chain or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria.

2.49 The definition for Green Chain in the London Plan (2016) is

These are areas of linked but separate open spaces and the footpaths between them. They are accessible to the public and provide way-marked paths and other pedestrian and cycle routes.

2.50 The draft new London Plan (2018) definition of MOL is

Extensive areas of land bounded by urban development around London that fulfils a similar function to Green Belt and is protected from inappropriate development by land-use planning policies.

2.51 Policy G3 of the draft new London Plan (2018) states

'Boroughs should designate MOL by establishing that the land meets at least one of the following criteria:

It contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area;

It includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London;

It contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value;

It forms part of a strategic corridor, node or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria.'

2.52 In the draft new London Plan the fourth criterion removes 'Green Chain' (there is no mention or definition elsewhere in the Plan either) and replaces with 'strategic corridor' for which no definition is provided. 'network of green infrastructure' is consistent across both London Plan criteria.

2.53 The draft new London Plan (2018) definition of Green infrastructure is

Comprises the network of parks, rivers, water spaces and green spaces, plus the green elements of the built environment, such as street trees, green roofs and sustainable drainage systems, all of which provide a wide range of benefits and services.

2.54 Both the adopted London Plan (2016) criteria (including reference to 'Green Chains') and the emerging draft new London Plan criteria have been considered for the designated sites boundary review exercise.

2.55 The assessment of MOL sites within the borough considers the relative extent to which the site fulfils the purposes of MOL as set out in the London Plan and draft new London Plan.

- 2.56 The assessment has been used alongside general commentary of each site to summarise the extent to which each parcel of land fulfils the MOL purpose. The assessments are based on professional judgement of the overall contribution and are not scored or weighted. The assessment criteria is set out in Appendix A.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

- 2.57 The London Plan (2016) does not have a definition of SINC but the draft new London Plan (2018) definition of SINC is

Areas of land chosen to represent the best wildlife habitats in London and areas of land where people can experience nature close to where they live and work. Sites are classified into Sites of Metropolitan, Borough and Local Importance depending on their relative value. Unlike SSSIs, SINC are not legally protected, but their value must be considered in any land use planning decision. Procedures for the identification of SINC are set out in Appendix 5 of the Mayor's London Environment Strategy.

- 2.58 The Advice Note Process for selecting and confirming Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in Greater London (LWSB updated March 2013¹⁵) is referenced in Appendix 5 of the Mayor's London Environment Strategy (2018¹⁶). This states that 'It is the responsibility of London Boroughs to obtain and maintain up to date data on all land of nature conservation interest that is located within the administrative borough boundary, irrespective of land ownership'.
- 2.59 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (A 1.2.13) defines Areas of Deficiency (AoD) as built-up areas more than one kilometre actual walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). SINC are graded in four tiers Sites of Metropolitan Importance Sites of Borough Importance (Borough Grade 1 and Borough Grade 2) and Sites of Local Importance. One kilometre distance is measured along actual walking routes via roads bridges and paths from modelled SINC access points.
- 2.60 Appendix 1 of Process for selecting and confirming Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in Greater London is the process used in the previous assessment of SINC throughout the borough of Merton and is still considered as the most relevant way to select and assess SINC. Reference to the application of criteria can be found in Stage 3 (Part 2) consultation on Potential Sites and Draft Policies Maps between January and February 2013¹⁷. SINC are criteria based designations. Some criteria are assessed using desk-based techniques and some are assessed on the basis of field survey.

¹⁵ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sinc_selection_process_update_march_2013.pdf

¹⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

¹⁷

- 2.61 The boundary review exercise undertaken by TEP is on the basis of sites meeting field survey criteria as listed under the Survey Method heading below. Desk based assessments of criteria including site species data and geodiversity have not been updated as part of the boundary reviews.
- 2.62 There are three tiers of SINC which are chosen on the basis of their importance to a particular defined geographic area. This use of defined areas is an attempt not only to protect the best sites in London but also to provide each part of London with a nearby site so that people are able to have access to open nature.
- 2.63 **Sites of Metropolitan Importance** - Those sites which contain the best examples of London's habitats, sites which contain particularly rare species, rare assemblages of species or important populations of species or sites which are of particular significance within otherwise heavily built-up areas of London.
- 2.64 **Sites of Borough Importance** - These are sites which are important on a borough perspective in the same way as the Metropolitan sites are important to the whole of London. Although sites of similar quality may be found elsewhere in London damage to these sites would mean a significant loss to the borough. As with Metropolitan sites while protection is important management of borough sites should usually allow and encourage their enjoyment by people and their use for education.
- 2.65 **Sites of Local Importance** - A Site of Local Importance is one which is or may be of particular value to people nearby (such as residents or schools). These sites may already be used for nature study or be run by management committees mainly composed of local people. Where a Site of Metropolitan or Borough Importance may be so enjoyed it acts as a Local site but further sites are given this designation in recognition of their role. This local importance means that these sites also deserve protection in planning.
- 2.66 **Other Wildlife Areas** - If an area of wildlife habitat is not designated as being of Metropolitan Borough or Local Importance this does not imply that it has little or no value. The needs of wildlife and the value of natural vegetation should be considered throughout the planning process. It is particularly important that opportunities be taken to preserve enhance or create areas of natural water and vegetation within heavily built-up areas and to provide access locally.

Survey Method

- 2.67 GiGL is the official custodian of information on London's more than 1,500 sites of importance for nature conservation (SINCs) – their citations and boundary information¹⁸.
- 2.68 The SINC Citations have been used to understand the site specific designation information associated with each SINC site boundary being reviewed and to inform any recommendations for necessary boundary changes.
- 2.69 The following criteria were used during the field study carried out by TEP in August 2018.

¹⁸ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/designated-sites/non-statutory-sincs>

- **Richness** - Protecting a site with a rich selection of habitat types not only conserves those habitats but also the wide range of organisms that live within them and the species that require more than one habitat type for their survival. Rich sites also afford more opportunities for enjoyment and educational use.
- **Historical** - Some sites have valuable ecological characteristics derived from long periods of traditional management or even a continuity in time to the woodlands and wetlands which occupied the London area before agriculture. Ancient woodlands, old parkland trees and traditionally managed grasslands tend to have typical species that are rare elsewhere. These habitats deserve protection also because of the ease with which they are damaged by changes in management, ploughing, fertiliser and herbicide treatment.
- **Urban** - Features such as canals, abandoned wharves, walls, bridges, tombstones and railway sidings colonised by nature often have a juxtaposition of artificial and wild features. Some of these habitats are particularly rich in species and have rare species and communities of species. Their substrates may have a particular physical and chemical nature which allows species to thrive that are rare elsewhere. They may also have particular visual qualities. Such areas are often useful for the study of colonisation and ecological succession.
- **Rural or Suburban** - Sites such as historic gardens with semi-wild areas, garden suburbs, churchyards and Victorian cemeteries which have reverted to the wild may have a unique blend of cultural and natural history.
- **Use** - The importance of a site can include its established usage (eg for education, research or quiet enjoyment of nature).
- **Potential** - Where a site can be enhanced given modest changes in management practices this gives it value. Opportunity exists where a site is likely to become available for nature conservation use or where there is considerable local enthusiasm about it or where a voluntary group is willing to use and manage it. Potential in this context can be for habitat enhancement through management for educational or nature conservation amenity use. Where such potential could remedy a deficiency or is readily capitalised it is considered important.
- **Desire Appeal** - This factor is the most difficult to measure but it includes such factors which contribute to the enjoyment of the experience of visiting a site, as seclusion, views, variety of landscape and habitat structure, colour and natural sounds and scents.

Green Corridors

2.70 The London Plan (2016) definition of Green Corridors is:

This refers to relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may be linked and may not be publicly accessible. They may allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

2.71 The draft new London Plan (2018) definition of Green Corridors is

Relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may link to each other and to the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land. They often consist of rivers, railway embankments and cuttings, roadside verges, canals, parks, playing fields and extensive areas of private gardens. They may allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

2.72 Green Corridors in London (London Ecology Unit Advice Note 6 guidance from Dr. Dave Dawson 1991¹⁹) and the Merton Potential Sites and Draft Policies Maps (2013) identify the detailed criteria (see below) for sites which can be classified as making up a Green Corridor.

2.73 The essential tests are habitat composition and near continuity. The minimum habitat requirement is a natural surface (water or vegetation) and continuity is that the corridor network connects to the countryside (Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land). Small discontinuities (such as division by a road) are allowed but larger gaps are fatal. Most blocks of back garden land are isolated from the network but sometimes they adjoin it or the gap is small enough for them to be included. Corridor elements are not required to be any particular shape to link sites or link together into any particular geometry.

2.74 The detailed criteria are set out below

- **Location** – corridors are required to lead from the countryside into the suburban and urban fabric. The size of gap between individual (terrestrial) sites forming a green corridor should be no more than the width of a tarmac road provided that the ends of the corridor are more than a few metres wide.
- **Quality and Composition** – the corridor should have a natural surface of vegetation. All forms of terrestrial habitat are allowed even close mown grass.
- **Shape** – there is no specific requirement for green corridors to be a particular shape.
- **Geometry** – Green corridors do not need to conform to any particular geometry habitat composition and continuity are sufficient for their purpose. Neither do corridors need to link sites – a corridor which leads away from a main site into ‘nothing’ as it thins out is still able to support vegetation and animals.
- **Change** – sites change over time (abandoned land reverts to nature landscaping is carried out or open land is developed) so sites are continually being added to and removed from the network of green corridors.

¹⁹ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/sp2.48/green/corridors-dawson1991.pdf>

2.75 Green Corridor sites throughout the borough were reviewed by TEP to assess whether the boundaries and land cover met the criteria. Recommendations for changes to the Green Corridor boundaries are made in Section 3.

3.0 Boundary Reviews

3.1 Table 1 shows the sites that have been reviewed including the relevant designation and where a boundary change is proposed by indicating a Yes or No. Further information is then provided on the review of each site in line with the criteria set out in this chapter including information on relevant planning applications. Appendix B provides the maps showing all of the designation boundary review changes.

Table 1: Boundary Review Sites & Designations by TEP

Site Point	Site Address	MO	OS	SI	DD
1	Clockhouse Close Parkside, Wimbledon SW19	-	-	-	GC22 Yes
2	Roads and dwellings off Camp Road, Wimbledon SW19	12 Wimbledon Common No	-	-	GC22 No
3	All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club Church Road Wimbledon SW19 5AE & Somerset Road, Wimbledon SW19 5H	2 Wimbledon Park Yes	P035 Yes	-	GC23 Yes
4	Former Wolfson Hospital and Atkinson Morley Hospital Copse Hill, Wimbledon SW20	5 Copse Hill Yes	P018 Yes	MeBI09 Yes	-
5	8A The Drive West Wimbledon SW20 8TG	-	S050 Yes	-	-
6	Land adjacent to 111 Coombe Lane, Wimbledon SW20 0QY	4 Beverley Brook Yes	P020 Yes	-	GC16 No
7	Land between Copper Mill Lane and Plough Lane Wimbledon SW17 0B	18 Wandle Valley No	W003 No	MeBI04 No	CG19 No
8	Haydon's Road Train Station Haydons Road SW19 8SL 1 Caxton Road	-	-	MeBI01A Yes	GC19 Yes

Site Point	Site Address	MO	OS	SI	GC
9	Wandle Valley Sewerage Disposal Works 100 Byegrove Rd Colliers Wood SW19 2B	18 Wandle Valley Yes	- Yes	MeBI04 No	GC19 Yes
10	Pelham Primary School Southey Road Wimbledon London SW19 1U	-	S062 Yes	-	-
11	Merton Hall Bowling Green Manor Club Institute 76 Kingston Road Wimbledon SW19 1LA	-	P016 Yes	-	-
12	River Wandle Priory Retail Park Colliers Wood SW19 1DD	18 Wandle Valley Yes	W002 Yes	MeBI04 No	GC19 Yes
13	Dwellings at the end of Rutlish Road South Wimbledon SW19 3AL	-	-	MeBII12 Yes	GC24 Yes
14	Eveline Day Nursery School Meadowsweet Close Grand Drive Raynes Park SW20 9A	3 Lower Morden Yes	P036 No	-	GC09 Yes
15	Morden Park Leisure Centre Morden SM4 5HE	16 Morden Park Yes	M050 Yes	MeBI11 Yes	GC10 Yes
16	Mostyn Park Scooter Park Public Convenience Mostyn Gardens Open Space Mostyn Road London SM4 5AQ	-	M051 No	-	GC12 No
17 & 18	Haig Housing Estate Hill Top & Rhodes Moorhouse Court Green Lane Morden SM4 5S	-	M099 Yes M100 No	MeL22 Yes	-
19	Perseid Upper School Middleton Road Morden SM4 6RU	-	S055 Yes	MeBII01F Yes	GC10 Yes
20	Morden Recreation Ground Spinney	-	-	MeL08 No	GC10 No

Point	Site Address	MO	OS	SI	GC
21	64-70 Ravensbury Grove Ravensbury Garages and Ad Land Mitcham Surrey CR4 4DL	18 Wandle Valley No	M053 Yes	M091 No	GC14 No
22	Tooting and Mitcham Hub – Imperial Fields Sports Ground Bishopsford Road Morden SM4 6BF	18 Wandle Valley No	P028 No	-	GC14 Yes
23	Cricket Green School Lower Green West Mitcham CR4 3AF	-	S014 Yes	-	-
24 (OS & GC) 25 (MOL)	The Wilson Hospital Cranmer Rd Mitcham CR4 4LD	14 Mitcham Common No	S006 No	-	GC05 Yes
26	The Ravensbury Arms 260 Croydon Road Mitcham CR4 4A	14 Mitcham Common No	M056 Yes	M093 Yes	GC05 Yes
26a	Miller & Carter Steakhouse 1 Windmill Rd Mitcham CR4 1HT	14 Mitcham Common No	M056 Yes	M093 Yes	GC05 Yes
27	Former Westminster City Sports Ground Mitcham CR4 1DQ	-	P030 No	-	-
28	Allotments behind 13 – 45 Hill Road Mitcham CR4 2HS <i>*Unless there is a landownership issue</i>	-	A009 No*	-	GC19 No
29	Harris Academy Merton (Tamworth Manor High School) Wide Way Mitcham Surrey CR4 1BP	-	S032 Yes	-	-
30	Former Watwest sports ground Turle Road Streatham SW16 5Q	-	P001a No	-	-
31	Pollards Hill Estate Mitcham	-	M014 Yes	-	-

Site Point	Site Address	MO	OS	SI	CC
32	Hollymount School Cambridge Road Raynes Park	-	S051 Yes	-	-
33	Former Lessa Sports Ground Meadowview Road Raynes Park	-	P006 No	-	-
34	Cannon Hill Lane Raynes Park	-	P002 Yes	-	-
35	Stanford Primary School Streatham	-	S020 Yes	-	-
36	St. Mary's Primary School Wimbledon	-	S065 Yes	-	-
37	Ursuline High School Crescent Road Wimbledon	-	S052 Yes	-	-
38	Raynes Park High School Bushey Road Raynes Park	-	S008 Yes	-	-
39	Mary Tate Almshouses Mitcham	-	New Yes	-	-
40	Part of Ravensbury Park Ravensbury Estate Mitcham	-	M053 Yes	-	-
41	Links Primary School Tooting	-	S059 Yes	-	-

Site 1: Clockhouse Close, Parkside, Wimbledon

Green Corridor (GC22)

- 3.2 The area in question is predominantly residential, approximately 1.7ha in size. The area is dominated by buildings, including large residential properties and one commercial building, with associated hardstanding, amenity grassland, introduced scrub and scattered trees.
- 3.3 The front gardens of the properties comprise hardstanding and ornamental shrub. A small patch of closely mown amenity grassland with limited species diversity is present off Clockhouse Close. One semi-mature elm tree and one semi-mature willow tree are also present off Clockhouse Close. All other trees off Clockhouse Close are young. The back gardens of properties could not be accessed, but viewing over fences indicated no mature trees.

- 3.4 TEP recommends that Clockhouse Close including all buildings associated hardstanding front and back gardens and amenity grassland and scattered trees off Clockhouse Close are removed from the Green Corridor boundary as this area does not provide the necessary quality or continuity.

Site 2: Roads and dwellings off Camp Road, Wimbledon

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 12 Wimbledon Common)

- 3.5 The area in question is a gated residential development approximately 3.5ha in area. The development comprises large houses off Kinsella Gardens, Eversley Park and Cedar Park Gardens. It is within Wimbledon Common beside the golf course and nestled within woodland.
- 3.6 The development is of a considerable size which would warrant removal from the MOL designation should it not meet the MOL criteria. However due to the setting and extent of semi-mature and mature trees (see review for Green Corridor GC22) the development is distinguishable from the built up areas surrounding the Common and appears to form part of the surrounding MOL. In addition the green infrastructure network remains largely uninterrupted. TEP recommends no boundary change to the MOL.

Green Corridor (GC22)

- 3.7 The residential community is gated so could not be accessed for assessment. Review has therefore been made through observations walking around the perimeter of the development and through analysis of aerial imagery.
- 3.8 Review of aerial imagery and observations indicates that a number of semi-mature and mature trees remain within the site along the roads which all run north to south and between the residential properties. These include mature Cedar trees and semi-mature oak, poplar species and birch species. Mature trees are also present around the periphery of the development.
- 3.9 There are sufficient semi-mature and mature trees for the area to still function as a Green Corridor. The trees provide potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats and potential nesting and foraging habitat for birds.
- 3.10 TEP recommends no amendment to the Green Corridor boundary.

Site 3: All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club (AELTCC), Wimbledon

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 2 Wimbledon Park)

- 3.11 The definition of MOL in the draft London Plan 2018 set out at paragraph 2.50 explains that it should apply to extensive tracts of land bound by urban development that fulfils a similar function to Green Belt and be protected by land use policies protecting it from inappropriate development. While the AELTCC site comprises a large area of land it is not bound by urban development because its eastern boundary abuts Wimbledon Park's golf course. It is clear that much of this site comprises built form that is required to fulfil the sporting needs of the Wimbledon Championships.
- 3.12 The present MOL designation on this site includes the practice tennis courts in the north of the AELTCC site north of the large Court 1 stadium and the open space landscaping to the west of Court 1 and the open space used as temporary car parking. This part of the site together with Wimbledon Park Golf Course and Wimbledon Park Lake comprises a significant area of land that is distinguishable from the built up area. This part of the site includes open air facilities for sport and recreation purposes that serve the people of London and are directly associated with the internationally recognised Wimbledon Championships. The northern part of this site is also designated as a Green Corridor providing a link in the green infrastructure network.
- 3.13 TEP recommends that the present MOL designation applying to the AELTCC's northernmost portion is amended to remove the buildings but retain the practice tennis courts and open space areas.

Open Space (P035)

- 3.14 The site is complex and contains an array of differing features and types of space. The great majority of the area contained within the present Open Space boundary is built form and hard standing with tennis courts as a very small proportion of the land area. For the large part it cannot be described as 'open' even when the tennis courts are considered and it is inappropriate to apply the designation of Open Space to the full extent of the land.
- 3.15 There are pockets of land which are lawns gardens or general open space and most of these are just within the north-western boundary. They are sufficient in size to consider meeting the Open Space boundary criteria as they are undeveloped and have public value. Access to these areas is restricted for the majority of the year but they offer a significant amenity value to the public when tournaments are being hosted at the venue as spaces to gather in and enjoy e.g. Murray Mound (known by the AELTCC as Aorangi Terrace).
- 3.16 TEP recommends a boundary change to remove all parts of the site which are developed including buildings and car parks and to retain only the lawns gardens and general open space in the northwest of the site (west of Court 1) in the Open Space designation.

Green Corridor (GC23)

- 3.17 The current Green Corridor boundary is along the north and north-west of the site. The area in question comprises a sports club building, hardstanding footpaths and access roads, lawn tennis courts, closely mown amenity grassland, hedgerow, ornamental and native shrub and scattered trees. Trees and shrubs are planted along the lengths of the access roads and amongst areas of amenity grassland.
- 3.18 The amenity grassland, trees and shrubs within the site allow the area to function as a Green Corridor. The trees and shrubs provide potential foraging and nesting habitat for birds and potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats.
- 3.19 TEP recommends an amendment to the Green Corridor boundary to remove the buildings as these no longer form part of the open space corridor on the site.

Possible Specific AELTCC Policy

- 3.20 The AELTCC is a bespoke land use with an international profile and reputation. The value of the practice courts as part of a larger tract of land is described above. The public value of the other undeveloped areas of land comprising open space relate solely to the present use of the site as the AELTCC. The extent, locations and dispositions of the current open space may need to change if other development is required to maintain the overall function of the AELTCC. If the AELTCC site is to be subject of a bespoke policy addressing its form and function and how changes are managed, there would be little merit in identifying the current designations for protection in its present locations under an open space policy.

Site 4: Former Wolfson Hospital and Atkinson Morley Hospital, Wimbledon

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 5 Copse Hill) & Open Space (P018)

- 3.21 There has been substantial development of the site which has impacted on parts of the Open Space and MOL boundaries. Planning application 11/P0346 was approved for the demolition of existing hospital outbuildings and residential accommodation. The demolition works will enable the provision of a 79 residential unit development, gym and car parking along with the resurfacing of existing 27 car parking spaces. Also approved under the planning application is the remodelling of the existing sports pitches, the refurbishment and extension of the existing scout hut, the replacement of the existing sports pavilion with a new changing room facility, the rebuilding and re-siting of the existing cottage, with landscaping, drainage and other associated works.
- 3.22 Planning application 16/P4853 was also approved for the erection of 75 residential units with associated arrangements including basement car parking and the provision of public and private landscaped spaces.
- 3.23 TEP recommends boundary amendments to Open Space and MOL as approved through the relevant planning applications on this site.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SI/C MeBI09)

- 3.24 The area in question comprises an area of woodland approximately 1.15ha in area.
- 3.25 The woodland is located to north east of the recreational grassland associated with the 19th Wimbledon Scout Group and to the west of the public footpath that connects Chambers Park Hill to Cottenham Park Road. The woodland comprises semi-natural broadleaved woodland and contains a number of mature and semi-mature trees. The woodland is dominated by oak, Sycamore, birch species, ash, wych elm and *Acer* species are also present. The scrub layer is dominated by bramble and ivy. Other species include holly, ash and sycamore saplings, hawthorn, hedge bindweed and common nettle.
- 3.26 A number of trees support potential bat roost features including dense ivy growing up stems and branches, stag ends and broken branches. The woodland provides habitat for nesting and foraging birds, potential roost sites for bats, foraging habitat for bats and potential habitat for badger sett creation.
- 3.27 TEP recommends the woodland should be retained within the SI/C. It contributes to the Borough's ecology, provides opportunity to enjoy nature, is of value to local people, has mature trees, aesthetic appeal and is not easily re-creatable.
- 3.28 TEP recommends no amendment is made for the woodland SI/C.
- 3.29 A field is present adjacent to the western boundary of the SI/C boundary. This comprises a modified neutral grassland field which supports a diverse range of species including birds-foot trefoil. A pond is present which was dry at the time of survey. Rows of semi-mature trees including oak, willow species, cherry species, hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, ash and *Acer* species delineate the field boundaries. Tree rows along the northern and southern site boundaries connect the field to the SI/C. Common blue butterfly and large white butterfly were observed.
- 3.30 TEP recommends an amendment to the SI/C boundary to include the modified neutral grassland field. The semi-mature trees, diverse grassland sward and pond contribute to the ecology of the area and the site provides an opportunity for the enjoyment of nature. The field was assessed as being of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation.

Site 5: 8A The Drive West, Wimbledon

Open Space (S050 Blossom House School Playing Fields)

- 3.31 The site consists mainly of development taking place in the wider area whereby works are in progress to demolish a school and erect 13 houses and the development boundary occupies most of the Open Space boundary (approved through planning application 15/P1750). The Open Space boundary also extends towards the rear gardens of residential properties on Durrington Park Road and contains a number of mature trees which will be retained as part of the development. The area of open space remaining will total less than 0.09 ha of land so will no longer meet the criteria of minimum 0.1 ha.

- 3.32 TEP recommends an amendment to the Open Space boundary to remove it in its entirety as a result of the approved planning application.

Site 6: Land adjacent to 111 Coombe Lane, Wimbledon

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 4 Beverley Brook A3) & Open Space (P020)

- 3.33 The section of land in question has been subject to a planning application for the demolition of a garage and the erection of a 4 bedroom house (14P2600). Both the application and subsequent appeal have been refused. The land remains dominated by scrub and mature trees (some of which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
- 3.34 The Planning Inspectorate Report (Appeal Ref APP/T5720/W15/3006352) dated 06/10/2015 provides evidence to dismiss the appeal based on (amongst other reasons) the impact on the MOL. The report also explicitly comments that
- "Whether either this part of the site being included within the MOL is an anomaly or the boundary of the MOL should be altered are not matters for me to determine as part of this appeal".*
- 3.35 Through a review of this site it is considered that this portion of land is not in keeping with the rest of the MOL site and does not meet any of the MOL criteria set out in the London Plan.
- 3.36 The area of MOL affected by the planning application boundary is owned privately by the applicant (owner of both 111 and 113 Coombe Lane). It does not offer sporting and leisure use (heritage value) and health benefits through encouraging walking, running and other physical activity (given its sylvan appearance).
- 3.37 The site also fails to meet the criteria for Open Space designation as it offers no sporting (visual or amenity) value.
- 3.38 TEP recommends both the MOL and Open Space boundaries are amended to remove the MOL and Open Space designations for this site.

Green Corridor (GC16)

- 3.39 The area in question comprises a strip of scrub (approximately 7m wide) with semi-mature trees adjacent to 111 Coombe Lane. The area is enclosed by fencing. The scrub is dominated by bramble (with elm saplings, ash saplings, cow parsley and wood avens. Trees comprise one semi-mature elm and 6 semi-mature ash trees. Trees are up to 12m in height and many have ivy growing up the stems.
- 3.40 Adjacent to the fenced off strip is a footpath (adjacent to which are young to semi-mature trees (including holly, rowan, cherry and black poplar) and scrub including ivy, buddleia and cherry species.
- 3.41 The strip of vegetation provides a link from tree lines along Coombe Lane to the playing fields which comprises much of the Green Corridor.

- 3.42 TEP recommend no amendment to the Green Corridor boundary. The strip meets the criteria and potentially provides habitat for wildlife in the surrounding area.

Site 7: Land between Copper Mill Lane and Plough Lane, Wimbledon

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 18 Wandle Valley) & Open Space (W003)

- 3.43 This section of land forms part of the River Wandle footpath network and consists of amenity grass with a mature hedge network running alongside the river Wandle. The eastern boundary of the MOL designation is the edge of the river and the boundary of a car showroom.
- 3.44 The site meets the criteria for MOL as it forms part of a link in the network of green infrastructure and contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area. It also provides opportunities for leisure via the walking route.
- 3.45 The site meets the criteria for Open Space in its entirety as it is undeveloped open to the public and has amenity value.
- 3.46 Additional open space to the west of the designated area forms part of the residential development therefore is semi-private and although accessible via a through route is largely separated from the Wandle Valley footpath by fencing.
- 3.47 TEP recommends no boundary changes to the MOL and Open Space.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC MeBI04) & Green Corridor (GC19)

- 3.48 The area comprises the River Wandle and banks. Species along the banks include crack willow, elder, bramble, pendulous sedge, nettle, blackthorn, Himalayan balsam, sycamore, hogweed, grey poplar, turkey oak, hawthorn, white poplar and ash. Commercial development is situated on the eastern side of the river although this does not encroach into the corridor.
- 3.49 There are no gaps in connectivity along the river. TEP recommends no amendment for either SINC or Green Corridor.

Site 8: Haydon's Road Train Station, Caxton Road

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC MeBI01A) & Green Corridor (GC19)

- 3.50 The area in question comprises a block of flats and car park which were built in the SINC and Green Corridor (Planning application 10/P2827).
- 3.51 The northern boundary of the car park is delineated by a wall. Behind the wall is a 1m strip of bramble scrub. The scrub is separated by a fence from a 2m wide strip of amenity grassland on the platform.

- 3.52 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove the building and car park footprint from the SIC and Green Corridor as there is no longer vegetation present to contribute to these designations.

Site 9: Wandle Valley Sewerage Disposal Works, Colliers Wood

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 18 Wandle Valley)

- 3.53 The section of the MOL is located off Byegrove Road and comprises Wandle Valley Sewerage Works a private residential property (Wandle Valley Cottage) on Byegrove Road and the River Wandle corridor and footpath network.
- 3.54 The River Wandle corridor is part of the wider Wandle Valley network and should remain part of the designation as it meets all MOL designation criteria.
- 3.55 Wandle Valley Cottage is part of the site that is distinct from the built up area it is a single detached property set amongst mature trees which also provide a link in the network of green infrastructure.
- 3.56 The sewerage works are also distinct from the built up area and the tanks in particular provide a link in the network of green infrastructure.
- 3.57 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to extend the MOL boundary to include the eastern part of the site which is clearly distinguishable from the adjoining built up area and allows for continuity of the Wandle Valley. While this part of the site contains some built form it is directly associated with the other parts of the site.

Open Space

- 3.58 There is a potential to designate a stretch of the River Wandle corridor and footpath network as Open Space. This would align to the site being a green corridor in the open space assessment categorisation (it is also a designated Green Corridor). This would be consistent with other sections of the Wandle Valley which are also categorised as green corridors and also designated as Open Space.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC MeBI04) & Green Corridor (GC19)

- 3.59 A stream is located off the River Wandle accessed via Byegrove Road. The stream is currently designated as SIC but not as Green Corridor.
- 3.60 The stream comprises the same habitat as the River Wandle although is a narrower channel. No aquatic vegetation was observed. Bankside vegetation includes young and semi-mature sycamore and alder privet snowberry cypress sedge pendulous sedge ivy harts tongue fern and buddleia. The stream was surveyed from a distance so a full species list could not be compiled.
- 3.61 The stream flows around a building and then goes underground under Byegrove Road. It is not obvious where the stream then emerges.

- 3.62 The stream should remain in the SIC. As the stream runs around the building and goes underground a habitat link is also formed through the mature trees that run along the south of the site and towards Byegrove Road.
- 3.63 TEP recommends no amendment to the SIC corridor but recommends that the Green Corridor boundary be extended to account for the habitat link through the mature trees that run above the stream and across Byegrove Road to connect with Wandle Park to the south.
- 3.64 TEP also recommend an omission to the Green Corridor boundary where it currently crosses Byegrove Road as the exiting link is severed by a building and the road at this point.

Site 10: Pelham Primary School, Wimbledon

Open Space (S062)

- 3.65 The site currently consists primarily of buildings associated with the school and hardstanding areas for outdoor play. There are no natural greenspaces on site apart from a small number of semi-mature trees. A planning application (13/P2659) was approved to develop the school to erect an extension to existing school buildings which will reduce some existing areas for outdoor play. There was no evidence on site that development has taken place to date.
- 3.66 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove this site from Open Space designation as it does not meet the criteria because the site is almost entirely buildings.

Site 11: Merton Hall Bowling Green, Wimbledon

Open Space (P016)

- 3.67 The site consists of a disused bowling green at the rear of a large building formerly known as the Manor Club. As a bowling green the site met the Open Space criteria for sports field. The bowls green does not appear to have been used for some time and was classified in the Merton Playing Pitch Strategy (2019) as disused and no longer required for bowls. The site is privately owned and has been recently cleared with no green space available for use. Development is currently underway directly to the north of the site boundary but appears to have no impact on the boundary itself.
- A planning application has been submitted (19/P2120) for this site and the adjacent site to restore the Manor Club building and build a six storey residential block to provide 26 residential units. The application does not propose to build on the open space. At the time of writing the application has not yet been decided.
- 3.68 TEP recommends that the Open Space designation is removed as it no longer meets the open space criteria.

Site 12: River Wandle, Priory Retail Park, Colliers Wood

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 18 Wandle Valley) & Open Space (W002)

- 3.69 The site comprises the River Wandle and associated land along the river consisting of a network of footpaths and footbridges and remains of historic structures associated with the former use of the area as a priory (the priory wall is part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument). Despite being in a built up area adjacent to a large retail park the river and footpaths are distinguishable from the built up area and provide an alternative walking route to adjacent roads. The site links to the Wandle Valley Regional Park network to the north and south providing recreation and leisure opportunities serving the wider area. The watercourse and paths forms part an important link in the network of green infrastructure. The Open Space is categorised²⁰ as a Green Corridor. The site is also designated as a Green Corridor and a SIC (Borough Grade 1).
- 3.70 TEP recommends a minor boundary amendment to the MOL to remove the retail properties which back onto Wandle Park on the northern side of Merton High Street.
- 3.71 TEP recommends a minor addition to the Open Space boundary to include the footpath which clearly forms part of the open space and appears to be an anomaly on the previous designation.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SIC MeBI04) & Green Corridor (GC19)

- 3.72 The area comprises the River Wandle and banks which flows around the retail park. The banks are vegetation with amenity grassland scrub vegetation and semi-mature trees. Species include broadleaved dock butterfly bush common nettle hazel willow and bramble. A hardstanding footpath runs adjacent to the river corridor.
- 3.73 There are no gaps in connectivity along the river. TEP recommends no amendment for the SIC. A minor amendment to the Green Corridor boundary should be made to remove the retail properties which back onto Wandle Park on the northern side of Merton High Street and align the Green Corridor with the SIC and MOL.

Site 13: Dwellings at the end of Rutlish Road

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SIC MeBI12) & Green Corridor (GC24)

- 3.74 The area in question is a collection of residential properties hardstanding car park and a footpath built immediately east of a tram line. A vegetated area and footpath is present adjacent to the tram stop to the north of the residential development. The vegetation includes bramble scrub closely mown amenity grassland a sycamore tree snowberry and privet hedge.

²⁰ <https://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/open-space-categories>

- 3.75 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove the vegetated area and footpath adjacent to the tram stop from the SIC. The area is of low ecological value and does not contribute to the borough ecology or provide opportunity for enjoyment of nature.
- 3.76 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove the footprint of the residential properties, hardstanding car park and footpath from the Green Corridor.

Site 14: Eveline Day Nursery School

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 3 Lower Morden) & Open Space (P036)

- 3.77 Meadowsweet Close leads off Grand Drive leading into the MOL boundary with the majority of the MOL designation appearing to the south of Meadowsweet Close. There is a grass verge to the north of Meadowsweet Close. The land to the south is comprised mainly of scrub, unmanaged grassland and self-set trees. There are some examples of semi-mature trees running along a ditch across the site. Some sections of the day nursery buildings and associated hardstanding are within the MOL designation area.
- 3.78 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove any buildings and associated hardstanding which form part of the Nursery School from the MOL designation as they are not distinguishable from the built up area.
- 3.79 The Open Space boundary does not include the Nursery School therefore no boundary change is required.

Green Corridor (GC09)

- 3.80 The area in question comprises a children's play area associated with nursery buildings. The play area is dominated by hardstanding play surfaces with closely mown amenity grassland and wooden sheds. There are no trees or shrubs within the area.
- 3.81 TEP recommends boundary amendment to remove the children's play area from Green Corridor. The hardstanding which dominates the area is not a natural surface so does not meet Green Corridor criteria. The closely mown amenity grassland is small in area and provides limited function for species foraging or ranging with no trees or shrubs to provide connectivity.

Site 15: Morden Park Leisure Centre

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 16 Morden Park) & Open Space (M050)

- 3.82 At the time of the site visit the new leisure centre and associated parking and provisions were being developed with the new footprint visible. The development is built in MOL however the former leisure centre will be newly designated as MOL and Open Space as a land swap agreed through the approved planning application (16P0882). There will be a net gain of 749sqm of MOL.

- 3.83 TEP recommends a boundary amendment for both Open Space and MOL to accommodate the new location of the leisure centre footprint and subsequent loss and gain of Open Space and MOL. The associated carpark, Morden Park playground and Merton Registry Office should also be designated as MOL and Open Space as a slight extension to the MOL boundary.
- 3.84 The Open Space identified as Merton Technical College (S057) has been built over and forms part of the Merton College buildings and should be removed as an Open Space designation.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC MeBI11) & Green Corridor (GC10)

- 3.85 The SINC boundary cuts through half of the neutral grassland field, so that a pond is included within the SINC. To the east of the pond the neutral grassland field continues and is bordered by trees and hedgerow. This is the same grassland habitat as within the western portion of the field.
- 3.86 TEP recommends the SINC boundary be amended to include the eastern portion of the neutral grassland field.
- 3.87 The new leisure centre building extends in to a neutral grassland field. The neutral grassland field is within the Green Corridor but not within the SINC. The footprint of the building should be removed from the Green Corridor.
- 3.88 A complex of building and hardstanding is also present within the north west of the Green Corridor. This area is not in the SINC. This area should also be removed from the Green Corridor.

Site 16: Mostyn Park Scooter Park

Open Space (M051)

- 3.89 The Open Space boundary in its entirety includes the vast majority of Mostyn Gardens, which contains the community scooter park. The gardens have a wide range of features, both natural (specimen trees, lawns, playing fields) and man-made (outdoor gym, bowling greens, outdoor play). The community scooter park itself is a structure which is ancillary to the context of its surroundings i.e. an open space for public use and can be considered as forming part of the wider Mostyn Gardens.
- 3.90 TEP recommends no amendment to the Open Space boundary as there is no change to the use of the site as Open Space.

Green Corridor (GC12)

- 3.91 The area comprises a scooter park which has been built in the Green Corridor. The scooter park comprises a tarmac scooter track, amenity grassland, shrubs and semi-mature and mature trees.

- 3.92 Vegetation dominates the area. Shrubs include field rose, hawthorn, snowberry, ivy, elder, butterfly bush and bryony. Semi-mature to mature trees include alder, turkey oak, birch, purple sycamore, ash, yew, purple beech, hawthorn, large leaved lime, cherry and sycamore.
- 3.93 The tarmac scooter track is maximum 2m wide and does not disrupt connectivity between patches of amenity grassland and semi-mature trees. The semi-mature to mature trees provide connectivity for birds and bats from the scooter park to the wider area of Mostyn Gardens Park.
- 3.94 TEP recommends no amendment to the Green Corridor boundary.

Site 17 & 18: Haig Housing Estate Hill Top & Rhodes Moorhouse Court, Morden

Open Space (M099 & M100)

- 3.95 Both sites are contained within a private, gated residential housing estate. The housing estate itself caters for ex-service personnel and appears to be a former barracks. Site reference M100 (point 17) consists of amenity grass with mature trees located around the boundaries and represents an area of open space for the housing estate.
- 3.96 Site reference M099 (point 18) is being developed via the demolition of garages and erection of 68 residential units off Rhodes Moorhouse Court (planning application 16/P1696). The development is underway and has resulted in the loss of Open Space (M099) through the approved planning application, but M100 is unaffected.
- 3.97 TEP recommends that Open Space M099 be removed from Open Space designation, given that the new development will be built on this area it will no longer meet the open space criteria. Open Space M100 still meets the criteria for Open Space designation.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC MeL22)

- 3.98 The estate comprises veteran housing, hardstanding roads and car parking, amenity grassland and mature trees, including oak, ash and yew.
- 3.99 Within the south west corner of the site, behind the car park, is an area of closely mown amenity grassland, ornamental shrub, scrub and young to semi-mature trees. Tree species include turkey oak, Lawson cypress, weeping willow, elm and eucalyptus. This area does not meet the criteria for the SINC, which was designated for its mature trees giving it the feel of an arboretum.
- 3.100 TEP recommend a boundary amendment to remove the amenity grass and ornamental shrubs area from the SINC.
- 3.101 Tennis courts are present surrounded by mature trees. TEP recommends an amendment of the SINC boundary to remove the tennis court footprint from SINC.

Site 19: Perseid Upper School, Morden

Open Space (S055)

- 3.102 The site consists of the outdoor sports provision and play associated with the school including a multi-use surface for tennis and football along with a generic playing field for students to use. The site is inaccessible for the public.
- 3.103 Planning application no. 17/P0148 has been granted subject to conditions. It will impact on the Open Space boundary at this site. The application is for the erection of a single storey north-west extension a two storey rear central extension and two single storey south east extensions. The footprint of the development will result in the loss of a small area of land currently designated as Open Space.
- 3.104 TEP recommends a minor boundary change to accommodate the development footprint in line with the open space criteria.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SI/C MeBII01F) & Green Corridor (GC10)

- 3.105 The site comprises land occupied by Perseid Upper School including school buildings and associated hardstanding amenity grassland hedgerow and shrub planting woodland tree rows and scattered trees.
- 3.106 Extensions to the school including new school buildings and hardstanding extend in to the Sutton Line South of Wimbledon SI/C and Green Corridor.
- 3.107 TEP recommends boundary changes to the SI/C and Green Corridor to reflect the extensions to the school. The new school buildings and hardstanding should be removed from the Green Corridor as the area is now a man-made surface which does not meet the Green Corridor criteria of vegetation surface and connectivity. The buildings and hardstanding should also be removed from the SI/C as the habitats are not of ecological value.

Site 20: Morden Recreation Ground Spinney

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SI/C MeL08) & Green Corridor (GC10)

- 3.108 The spinney comprises semi-natural broadleaved woodland with young semi-mature and mature trees. Tree species include English oak ash English elm sycamore elder hawthorn horse chestnut hazel field maple London plane Norway maple and holly. The scrub layer comprises hawthorn bramble ivy snowberry wood avens butchers broom cow parsley and nettle.
- 3.109 The spinney provides opportunities for local people to enjoy nature is easily accessible and is not easily re-creatable. Change in management e.g. being taken over by a local wildlife group will enhance the woodland.
- 3.110 TEP recommends no amendment for either the SI/C or Green Corridor.

Site 21: 64-70 Ravensbury Grove, Ravensbury Garages

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 18 Wandle Valley) & Open Space (M053)

- 3.111 The approved planning application (16/P1968) is to demolish existing garages and flats and redevelop the footprint into 21 residential units. The development includes the provision of 592.03sqm of open space but will result in an overall net loss of designated Open Space. The planning decision was granted on the basis that new open space provision will be designated as Open Space at the next Local Plan review.
- 3.112 The proposed development does not encroach into the MOL boundary.
- 3.113 TEP recommends no amendment to the MOL boundary and the Open Space boundary should be amended in accordance with the approved planning application development footprint and the provision of new open space which should be included as designated Open Space.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC M091) & Green Corridor (GC14)

- 3.114 The area in question comprises a channelled stream which feeds in to the river Wandle (one of the finest chalk streams in London) in the north-west section of Ravensbury Park.
- 3.115 The channelled stream flows around the northern boundary of Ravensbury Park linking to the River Wandle at two points. The stream has no aquatic flora. Semi-mature trees grow on the banks including hawthorn, sycamore, ash, crack willow and poplar species. Many trees have ivy growing up them. The scrub layer and ground flora consists of bramble, sycamore, ivy, broadleaved dock, ash, cow parsley, brome species, nettle, elder, cherry, horse chestnut and dogwood. Ivy covers much of the ground.
- 3.116 The tributary flows in to a chalk stream, has bridges across it giving it urban character, is easily accessible to the public and provides opportunity for enjoyment of nature and is of value to local people.
- 3.117 TEP recommends no amendment for either the SINC or Green Corridor.

Site 22: Tooting and Mitcham Hub, Morden

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 18 Wandle Valley) & Open Space (P028)

- 3.118 The site comprises a sports stadium, artificial and grass football pitches, training facilities, access road, car parking and other associated buildings. Additionally, there is an area to the south of the stadium which consists of rough grassland and scattered scrub.
- 3.119 Both the Open Space and MOL boundary include all parts of the site.

- 3.120 TEP recommends that the stadium pitches and associated facilities are retained as MOL. Despite the high density of built facilities the purpose of the site is for leisure recreation and sport and as a hub with a range of facilities it serves a wide area. It also forms part of a link in the network of green infrastructure.
- 3.121 The grassland field to the south of the sports hub is distinguishable from the adjoining built up area (and the built facilities of the sports hub) and forms part of a link in the network of green infrastructure. It also forms part of a Green Corridor and contains features of nature conservation value and habitat interest (see GC14 below). TEP recommends that this area is retained as part of the MOL designation.
- 3.122 The whole site meets Open Space criteria as it is outdoor sports provision with ancillary buildings. The grassland is accessible from the sports facilities but does not form part of the sports use. TEP recommends that the stadium pitches and associated facilities are retained as Open Space.

Green Corridor (GC14)

- 3.123 The area in question comprises the sports club building access road car park and artificial sports pitches which were built in the Green Corridor.
- 3.124 To the south of the building complex is a modified neutral grassland field bounded by scrub and scattered trees. Scrub and trees comprise bramble field maple ash weeping willow nettle broadleaved willowherb hedge bindweed hornbeam hawthorn dogwood and elm.
- 3.125 A strip of trees and modified neutral grassland approximately 8m wide is present to the north west of the sports complex. Trees include sycamore ash cherry species English oak elm field maple and silver birch.
- 3.126 TEP recommends an amendment to remove the footprint of the stadium car park artificial sports pitches and access road from the Green Corridor because they no longer meet the Green Corridor criteria of vegetation surface and connectivity. The surrounding habitats comprising modified neutral grassland scrub and trees should be retained.

Site 23: Cricket Green School, Mitcham

Open Space (S014)

- 3.127 The site consists of Open Space associated with the Cricket Green School including woodland and sports pitch provision. Planning application 18/P0086 approved a proposal to construct a new two storey building and demolish the existing temporary modular building as well as the construction of new hard play area and associated soft landscaping. The proposal also includes the erection of single storey extension on two blocks of the school. The development will negatively impact the amount of Open Space currently available as there will be a loss of two of the main areas of woodland within the site to either building extension or car parking with proposed new areas of open space to be provided.

- 3.128 TEP recommends an amendment of the Open Space boundary to reflect the approved development footprint only as the remaining land currently designated as Open Space will continue to meet the criteria.

Site 24 & 25: The Wilson Hospital

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 14 Mitcham Common - site 25)

- 3.129 The Wilson Hospital site including all buildings and associated hard standing are not within the MOL designation and are located just south of the boundary which runs along the north of the A239 Cranmer Road. The site itself consists mainly of Hospital buildings and car parking with occasional pockets of amenity green space. Any future development of the buildings is unlikely to extend into the MOL designation.
- 3.130 TEP recommends no amendment to the MOL boundary.

Open Space (S006 - site 24)

- 3.131 The site in question is the Cranmer Primary School and could not be audited due to access being restricted/unavailable. However the Open Space boundary appears to only include the large soft landscaped open spaces within school grounds which does meet the criteria for Open Space.
- 3.132 TEP recommends no amendment to the Open Space boundary.

Green Corridor (GC05)

- 3.133 The areas in question are immediately to the north-west, south west and south east of the hospital building and car park.
- 3.134 To the north west of the car park is a row of semi-mature to mature trees comprising white poplar, sycamore, field maple, elder, horse chestnut, birch species, English oak and large leaved lime.
- 3.135 To the south east of the car park is closely mown amenity grassland, a building, semi-mature to mature scattered trees with ivy growing up the trunks and modified neutral grassland. Tree species include sycamore, English oak, birch and horse chestnut.
- 3.136 To the south west of the car park the area comprises closely mown amenity grassland and tree rows including ash, white poplar, silver birch, poplar species, ivy, rose species, bramble and elder.
- 3.137 TEP recommends an amendment of the Green Corridor boundary to remove the building footprint from the Green Corridor designation with the other habitats retained.

Site 26 and 26a: The Ravensbury Arms and Miller & Carter Steakhouse, Mitcham

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL 14 Mitcham Common)

- 3.138 Both of these pubs/restaurants including outdoor seating areas and car parks are situated within a larger MOL area and contribute to the provision of open air facilities especially for leisure which serve the whole or significant parts of London. The wider MOL area also provides a significant amount of land which forms part a significant link in the network of green infrastructure. The Mill House Ecology Centre is also located adjacent to the Miller & Carter Steakhouse.
- 3.139 TEP recommends no amendment to the MOL boundary for either of these sites as the buildings and car parks do not detract from the wider area designated as MOL.

Open Space (M056)

- 3.140 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove the footprint of the restaurant buildings car parks beer garden and fenced off courtyards from the Open Space boundary as they are not ancillary to the open space use.
- 3.141 The Mill House Ecology Centre and associated car park are used by the Mitcham Common Conservators. As this is an ancillary use to the wider Mitcham Common it is recommended that this part of the site remains designated as Open Space.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC M093) & Green Corridor (GC05)

- 3.142 The area in question comprises the Ravensbury Arms pub Miller & Carter Steakhouse and the Mill House Ecology Centre which were built within the SINC Green Corridor.
- 3.143 These sites comprise pub restaurant buildings an ecology centre building hardstanding car parks beer gardens and courtyards.
- 3.144 The hardstanding car park has 1 mature horse chestnut tree and 2 mature London plane trees in the centre. The beer garden comprises closely mown amenity grassland and ornamental shrubs. A row of mature London plane trees is present between the car park and the beer garden.
- 3.145 The fenced off courtyards comprise hardstanding with ephemeral short perennial vegetation. One courtyard has a single story brick building one has a storage tanker.
- 3.146 TEP recommends a boundary amendment to remove the footprint of the buildings car parks beer gardens and fenced off courtyards from the SINC and Green Corridor as they do not meet the habitat or continuity criteria.

Site 27: Former Westminster City Sports Ground, Mitcham

Open Space (P030)

- 3.147 The site is a former sports pitch which has fallen out of use and is now unmanaged. The boundaries are formed by a tree belt and apart from one small road off Tamworth Lane there is no access to the site. The site currently meets the criteria for Open Space because despite being out of use as a sports pitch it remains predominantly undeveloped and continues to have the potential to offer public value as an amenity area.
- 3.148 In planning terms should an application be submitted for an extension of the cemetery or the site be brought back into use as a playing pitch it would not result in the requirement for an amendment to the Open Space boundary.
- 3.149 Considering all aspects of the site at the current time TEP recommends no amendment to the Open Space boundary.

Site 28: Allotments behind 13 – 45 Hill Road, Mitcham

Open Space (A009)

- 3.150 TEP recommends no amendment to the Open Space boundary as the area continues to offer amenity value to the public as an allotment.
- 3.151 There is potentially an encroachment issue if the land which appears to be allotments to the rear of the properties at 13-29 Hill Road is actually an encroachment of adjacent properties or there needs to be a change of designation boundary if the land is privately owned by the adjacent properties. This will require land registry search or direct contact with these land owners to ascertain this.

Green Corridor (GC19)

- 3.152 The area in question comprises allotments including vegetable patches amenity grassland bare ground paths scattered trees shrubs and wooden sheds.
- 3.153 The allotments were observed from the gate which was padlocked. Species observed include ash hazel hawthorn ivy privet annual meadow grass broadleaved dock cow parsley bramble knotgrass cherry species sycamore and apple trees. Large white butterfly was also seen.
- 3.154 TEP recommends no amendment to the Green Corridor boundary. The area provides a habitat link for bats birds insects and mammals.

Site 29: Harris Academy Merton (Tamworth Manor High School), Mitcham

Open Space (S032)

- 3.155 The site consists of a school including associated buildings and outdoor sports and play provision (artificial surface hard standing and grass). The north and east boundaries of the site are shared with the rear gardens of houses and the south boundary backs onto a park. The west boundary is shared with the B272 Wide Way.
- 3.156 Planning application no 16/P1487 has been granted subject to conditions for the construction of a new two storey classroom block comprising 6no. general teaching classrooms, 2no. ICT suites, staff room, offices and other auxiliary spaces to existing secondary school.
- 3.157 The new classroom block has been constructed and has impacted on the Open Space boundary creating a loss of grass playing field.
- 3.158 TEP recommends the boundary be changed to reflect the approved planning application including the building footprint and other ancillary uses.

Site 30: Former Natwest Sports Ground, Streatham

Open Space (P001a)

- 3.159 The site comprises a former sports ground which is now used by the Hope Ministries London. The site is currently managed as rough grassland with occasional pockets of scrub and individual mature trees along the east and north boundaries. The site does not appear to have an active use for the public and access is restricted.
- 3.160 The site continues to meet the open space criteria. Although it doesn't appear to be in use as a sports facility there has been no formal change of use of the site. The grassland remains open and the car park and buildings are ancillary to the open space.
- 3.161 TEP recommends no amendment to the Open Space boundary.

Site 31: Donnelly Green, Pollards Hill Estate, Mitcham

Open Space (M014)

- 3.162 The area in question is being redeveloped following planning application ref.15/P4305 being granted for the erection of 90 residential units involving the demolition of 24 existing residential units and the construction of new estate access road with associated parking courts and car/cycle spaces. Pre-development the area was already a housing estate with a high proportion of green space the vast majority of which is designated as Open Space. New landscaping and waste storage facilities are also included in the development to complement green spaces already existing within the housing estate.

- 3.163 Redevelopment will impact on Donnelly's Green (Open Space within the development footprint) with the loss of 1.2ha of designated Open Space. However, development does include the provision of a grass pitch and an area of nature play elements and there is no adverse impact on protected species and/or biodiversity. The planning committee reports states the proposals provide an opportunity overall to enhance tree planting.
- 3.164 TEP recommends an amendment to the Open Space boundary to designate the configuration of open space on site as approved and developed through the planning application.

Site 32: Hollymount School, Cambridge Road, Raynes Park

Open Space (S051)

- 3.165 This site contains predominantly school buildings and hard standing areas, some of which contain dedicated play spaces. The western part of the site contains some soft landscaping areas. As these do not meet the criteria for Open Space, the current designation should be removed in its entirety.

Site 33: Former Lessa Sports Ground, Meadowview Road, Raynes Park

Open Space (P006)

- 3.166 The boundaries of this site are formed by residential terrace houses on three sides, residential units to the north separated by a hardstanding access way, with some mature trees and shrubs around the edges.
- 3.167 The site comprises three parts. The majority of the site is rough grassland, which appears to be maintained and is fenced off, with no public access and no active use. There is also a securely gated play space which is accessible only to the residents of the Meadowview Road development. To the north of the site, there is a public footpath which connects Grand Drive to Westway and 5 tennis courts which are managed by the Raynes Park Residents Lawn Tennis Club, in addition to an area of amenity space.
- 3.168 The southern area of the site has previously been identified as a sports pitch and is currently referred to in the Merton Playing Pitch Strategy (2019). As such, the site continues to meet the open space criteria as it remains predominantly undeveloped and continues to have the potential to offer public value as an amenity area. Although it is not currently in use as a sports facility, there has been no formal change of use of the site. The tennis courts and ancillary buildings to the north of the site continue to meet the Open Space criteria, as does the playground.
- 3.169 No amendments are recommended to the Open Space boundary.

Site 34: 274-312 Cannon Hill Lane, Raynes Park

Open Space (P002)

- 3.170 This site is located at the rear of six residential properties along Cannon Hill Lane. It is privately owned and is accessible only via a shared and gated driveway in between 320 and 322 Cannon Hill Lane. The All England Community Sports Ground lies directly adjacent to the north and the land to the west is currently unused (formerly a Scout Hall). The site is approximately 0.2 hectares in size and contains overgrown vegetation and some larger trees.
- 3.171 The site does not form part of the adjacent site known as Raynes Park Playing Fields however it has been given the same designation. Given that it is landlocked the site does not offer any public accessibility or visual amenity and is not designated as a Green Corridor or SIC.
- 3.172 It is recommended that the Open Space designation be removed for this parcel of land as it does not meet the Open Space criteria.

Site 35: Stanford Primary School, Streatham

Open Space (S020)

- 3.173 This site contains predominantly school buildings and hard standing areas some of which contain dedicated play spaces. The south western part of the site contains soft landscaping areas. As these do not meet the criteria for Open Space the current designation should be removed.

Site 36: St. Mary's Primary School, Wimbledon

Open Space (S065)

- 3.174 This site contains school buildings and hard standing areas some of which contain dedicated play spaces. There are some trees to the east of the site however these form a very small area in size. The Open Space designation should be removed as it does not meet the criteria because the site is almost entirely buildings and hard standing areas.

Site 37: Ursuline High School, Crescent Road, Wimbledon

Open Space (S052)

- 3.175 This site contains school buildings and hard standing areas some of which contain dedicated play spaces. The Open Space designation should be removed as it does not meet the criteria because the site is almost entirely buildings and hard standing areas.

Site 38: Raynes Park High School, Bushey Road, Raynes Park

Open Space (S008)

- 3.176 This is an anomaly that is being rectified through this open space review. While Open Space S008 will remain designated for the school the sliver of land shown on the map should be removed as it does not form part of the school land.

Site 39: Mary Tate Almshouses, Mitcham

- 3.177 This site forms the rear of the Mary Tates Cottages. The site is not publically accessible is 0.11 hectares in size and is currently utilised as allotments offering an amenity value through community gardening which should be protected.
- 3.178 It is recommended that this area be designated as new Open Space under the Allotments Community Gardens and City Farms Open Space category subject to a site visit to confirm the current use.

Site 40: Part of Ravensbury Park, Ravensbury Estate, Mitcham

Open Space (M053)

- 3.179 This parcel of land was identified through the Estates Local Plan process for de-designation. It is simply being identified here to ensure that its removal is included in the updated Local Plan maps.

Site 41: Links Primary School, Tooting

Open Space (S059)

- 3.180 This site contains school buildings and hard standing areas some of which contain dedicated play spaces. The Open Space designation should be removed as it does not meet the criteria because the site is almost entirely buildings and hard standing areas.



APPENDIX A: Merton Area

METROPOLITAN OPEN LAND – ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

In accordance with London Plan Policy 7.17 (and emerging policy G3), boroughs should designate MOL by establishing that the land meets at least one of the following criteria.

London Plan MOL Purpose (Policy 7.17 and draft policy G3)	Rating and Criteria Assessment		
	High	Medium	Low
Does the land contribute to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area?	The land is clearly distinguishable from the adjoining built up area and makes a significant contribution to the physical structure of London.	The land is moderately distinguishable from the adjoining built up area and makes a contribution to the physical structure of London.	The land is not clearly distinguishable from the adjoining built up area and does not make a contribution to the physical structure of London.
Does the land include open air facilities for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities which serve either the whole or significant parts of London?	The land includes open air facilities of a London importance.	The land includes open air facilities of a local importance.	The land does not include any open air facilities.
Does the land contain features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiverse) of either national or metropolitan value?	The land contains features or landscapes of national or metropolitan value.	The land contains features or landscape of a local value.	The land does not contain any features or landscapes.
Does the land form part of a strategic corridor, node or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria?	The land forms part of a strategic corridor, node or link in the green infrastructure network and meets one of the criteria above.	The land forms part of a strategic corridor, node or link in the green infrastructure network but does not meet any of the criteria above.	The land does not form part of a strategic corridor, node or link in the green infrastructure network and does not meet any of the criteria above.

Type of Contribution	Description
High	The site makes a clear and significant contribution to a MOL purpose.
Medium	The site makes a moderate contribution to a MOL purpose, but may have been compromised by development.
Low	The site makes limited or no contribution to a MOL purpose, it does not have a clear role and/or has been compromised by development.



APPENDIX A – Designation Maps



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