

Merton Regeneration, Ravensbury

Socio-economic Analysis

On behalf of **Circle Housing**



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1 Introduction

1.1 Context

1.1.1 This document has been prepared to support the socio-economic case for regeneration of the Ravensbury, in the London Borough of Merton (LBM). It gathers relevant quantitative and qualitative information to provide an outline of:

- The strategic context in which the Ravensbury's regeneration is set; and
- The socio-economic case for regeneration.

1.2 Structure of Report

1.2.1 The report comprises of the following sections:

- Section 2 sets out the strategic context for regeneration, with reference to regional and local policy;
- Section 3 comprises of a baseline study in order to establish the nature of the local economy (outlined through a review of socio-economic conditions);
- Section 4 sets out the socio-economic benefits associated with regenerating the Ravensbury; and
- Section 5 provides a summary of Sections 2-4.

2 Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section provides a high level review of the planning policy and economic development context in which Ravensbury's regeneration is set. A detailed discussion of the planning context can be found in the policy documents that have been referred to in this section.

2.2 National Planning Policy (2012)

2.2.1 National planning policy in England is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published in March 2012. The specific policies of the NPPF that relate to socio-economic issues are set out below.

2.2.2 **Paragraph 6** confirms that *'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'*. **Paragraph 7** defines sustainable development as three-dimensional, requiring the planning system to perform a number of roles in order to balance the economic, social and environmental development goals for growth. These include contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation, and supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

2.2.3 **Paragraph 8** confirms that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Sustainable development involves seeking improvements in quality of life, including making it easier for jobs to be created and improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure (**Paragraph 9**).

2.2.4 **Paragraph 17** sets out the core principle that planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. **Paragraph 19** states that "planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system".

2.2.5 **Paragraph 49** makes clear that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. **Paragraph 50** goes on to state that local planning authorities should deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership, and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

2.2.6 To this end, **paragraph 159** underlines that local planning authorities are expected to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as older people and people with disabilities), and identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand.

2.2.7 The National Planning Policy Practice Guidance (NPPG), updated in March 2014, identifies factors that should be considered when assessing the suitability of locations for development. In the context of this report, these include:

- Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;
- Contribution to regeneration priority areas; and
- Environmental/amenity impacts experienced by would be occupiers and neighbouring areas.

2.3 The London Plan (2011) and Draft Further Alterations (2014)

- 2.3.1 The London Plan (2011) sets out the spatial development strategy for London. The core objectives of the London Plan focus on: improving health; learning and skills; community safety; jobs; accessibility; infrastructure and housing.
- 2.3.2 **Policy 2.14** of the London Plan states that Boroughs should identify areas for regeneration and set out integrated spatial policies that bring together regeneration. These plans should resist loss of housing, including affordable housing, in individual regeneration areas unless it is replaced by better quality accommodation of similar scale.
- 2.3.3 The London Plan also sets a minimum target for housing provision of 3,200 additional homes in LBM from 2011 to 2021. For new housing the London Plan highlights the Mayor's strategic target of at least 13,200 affordable homes per year across London, with a 60:40 split between social housing and intermediate housing. However, the London Plan recognises that this target should be applied flexibly, taking account of individual site costs, scheme requirements and circumstances.
- 2.3.4 More recently, evidence suggests that London's population is likely to grow more significantly than anticipated at the time of the London Plan, increasing the housing requirements. The draft Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP), published in January 2014, revised LBM's target to a minimum of 4,107 additional homes between 2015 and 2025.

2.4 Local Planning Policy

LBM Core Planning Strategy (2011)

- 2.4.1 LBM's Core Planning Strategy 2011 ('Core Strategy') is the key document in the Borough's Local Development Framework (LDF), setting out the development plan and the spatial vision for the area. The Core Strategy is in general conformity with the adopted London Plan.
- 2.4.2 A key priority of the Core Strategy is to "support local community life through education and employment opportunities, cultural and sporting assets, community services, healthcare, recreational activities and other infrastructure that meets local needs."
- 2.4.3 The Core Strategy identifies Morden and the surrounding area as a key to determining LBM's future economic growth and prosperity. It aims to provide "improved quality and quality of commercial, residential and leisure uses in an attractive urban setting...by incorporating higher density housing and commercial opportunities; exploiting Morden's excellent public transport links, while conserving and enhancing the character and distinctiveness of the adjacent suburban neighbourhoods."

LBM Sites and Policies Plan (2014)

- 2.4.4 The LBM Sites and Policies Plan was adopted in July 2014, also forms part of the LDF. This sets out detailed planning policies to help assess planning application in LBM and site allocations for development between 2014 and 2024.
- 2.4.5 The Sites and Policies Plan prepared by LBM Council following local research, detailed public consultation, giving residents, landowners, community groups and other interested parties the opportunity to comment on the councils prepared options for 20 detailed planning policies, approximately 40 sites and land designations.
- 2.4.6 The relevant policies in the Sites and Policies Plan include:
- 2.4.7 **Policy DM H2 (Housing mix)** of the Sites and Policies Plan links to Policy CS 8(Housing Choice) of the Core Strategy. This aims to create socially mixed communities (families with

children, single people, older people etc. for all sectors of the community by providing a choice of housing with respect dwelling size and type in LBM.

- 2.4.8 The Sites and Policies **Policy DM C2** states that large development sites which will result in a “substantial increased need” for school places (children over 5) will need to incorporate provision for a new school on the proposal site.
- 2.4.9 **Paragraph 3.18 and 3.19** states that “Where large development proposals are likely to generate a substantial increase in the need for additional school places, the proposals will be expected to incorporate an appropriately sited and sized area for the provision of a new school, or demonstrate why the site cannot accommodate a new school.

2.5 Merton Regeneration Project

- 2.5.1 The management of Ravensbury was transferred from LBM Council to Circle Housing Merton Priority Homes (CHMP), as part of the transfer of LBM’s entire housing stock in March 2010.
- 2.5.2 As part of the process of assessing the housing stock in Merton for investment in improvements to meet and exceed the Decent Homes Standards, CHMP identified High Path, Eastfields, and Ravensbury (collectively referred to as the “Merton Regeneration Project”) as having a potentially limited life, justifying larger scale regeneration to ensure long-term sustainability.
- 2.5.3 LBM Council Cabinet members received a report in November 2013 which provided an update to on-going discussions between LBM Planning Officers and CHMP on the development of their regeneration plans for, High Path, Eastfields and Ravensbury.
- 2.5.4 In July 2014, in response to proposals from CHMP, LBM Council resolved to start preparing an Estates Plan DPD. LBM Planning Officers and CHMP explored a number of matters including identifying occupants for decant and housing nominations; the masterplanning outline and process; and devising of an agreed baseline position aimed at achieving deliverable schemes.
- 2.5.5 The proposed Merton Regeneration Project is one of the largest regeneration programmes underway in the UK. Circle Housing is working with LBM and other stakeholders including the Greater London Authority (GLA) to deliver this project and improve its financial viability.
- 2.5.6 A consultation exercise with local residents is currently underway to see whether a detailed regeneration solution can be found, as a means of delivering longer term sustainable decent homes standards; having regard to the state and condition of the existing properties.
- 2.5.7 There are also wider benefits beyond the sites in supporting regeneration and growth. This is aligned with LBM’s Core Planning Strategy (2011) which seeks to improve the quality of the built environment; create more sustainable communities; and focus regeneration and housing growth broadly in South Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham adjacent to transport hubs.
- 2.5.8 Should regeneration go ahead, there is potential to secure approximately a quarter of the LBM Council’s ten year housing target of 4,107 homes, as set out in the FALP.

2.5.9 The Merton Regeneration Project shows a clear commitment to delivering high quality homes across the Borough, through:

- Increasing the supply of housing and the quality of existing homes to meet acceptable current standards;
- Improving access and the quality of the local environment through improvements to the public realm; promoting low energy consumption; and environmental efficiencies; and
- Promoting mixed and sustainable communities which provide a high quality of life for people of all ages, backgrounds, in safe, cohesive and healthy neighbourhoods, supported by high quality and excellent community buildings.

2.5.10 The next section provides a profile of the socio-economic conditions of Ravensbury in the context of the rest of the Borough and surrounding areas.

3 Socio-economic Conditions

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 A baseline study was prepared to establish the profile of the local economy, labour force, journey to work patterns, housing availability and the quality and the effect on labour supply using the following data and published documents:

- Preliminary results from the UK Census (2011);
- Annual Population Survey (2013), Office for National Statistics, (APS, 2013);
- Nomis/Labour Market Statistics (Nomis, 2014);
- Greater London Authority population and household projections, (GLA, 2013);
- End Poverty Child Poverty Statistics (End Poverty);
- Department of Communities and Local Government Deprivation Map (CLG);
- Department for Education School Capacity Statistics (DfE); and
- Experian Micromarketer Generation3(Experian MMG3, 2013).

3.1.2 The socio-economic characteristics of LBM are summarised and compared with local area statistics as at the following spatial levels, where available:

- Local level information is outlined at ward level (i.e. the ward of Ravensbury) as shown in Figure 3.1
- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level (i.e. LSOA 022D) as shown in Figure 3.2; and
- Estate specific level data for Ravensbury ('Ravensbury' or 'the site'), as provided by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion Community Insight (OSCI Community Insight, 2014). This is largely based on Census information. This provides a distinct profile of Ravensbury in the context of the wider area to inform the regeneration case.

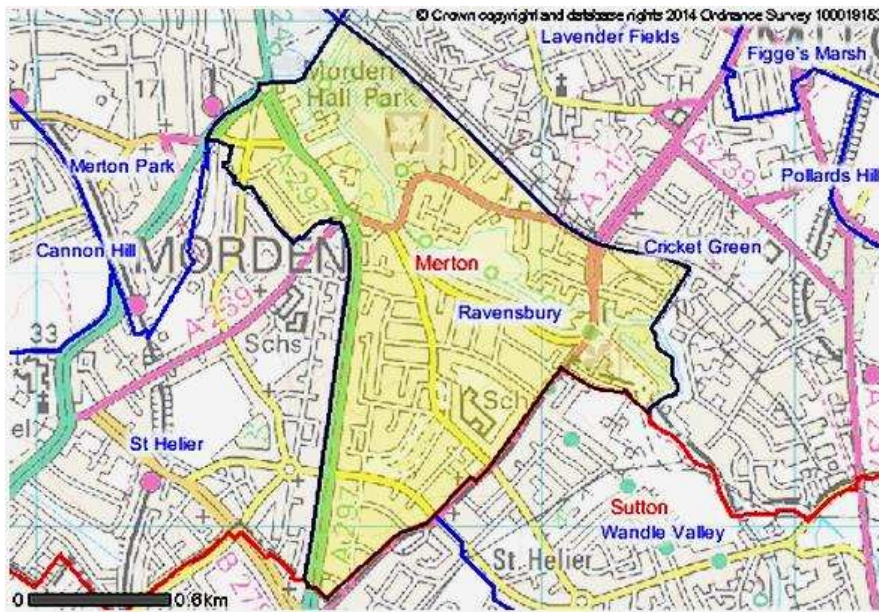


Figure 3.1: Ravensbury Ward
Source: Ordnance Survey, 2014

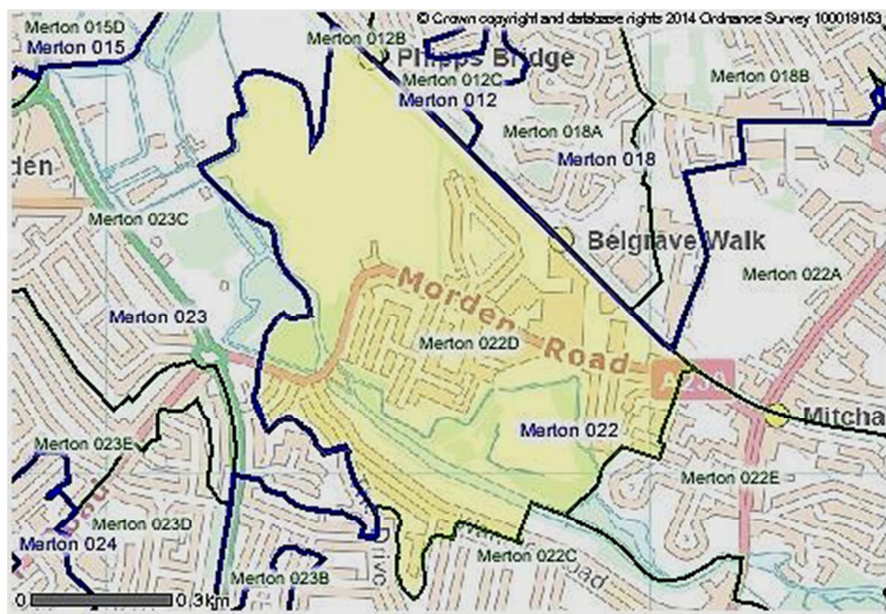


Figure 3.2: LSOA 022D
Source: Ordnance Survey 2014

3.1.3 The baseline analysis also considers social infrastructure close to Ravensbury, informed by desk research and published information from the above sources on: school infrastructure; retail facilities; leisure facilities; community facilities; and healthcare. This establishes the current provision of local facilities and the social infrastructure needs of the area.

3.2 Economic Conditions

Population

- 3.2.1 According to GLA estimates (GLA, 2013) the population of LBM was reported to be around 205,400 people, making it one of the least densely populated Boroughs in London as illustrated in Figure 3.3.
- 3.2.2 In terms of age structure, LBM's population is largely in line with the London average. An estimated 20% of the population are children aged 0-15. This is the same as the Greater London average and slightly above the national average of 19%.

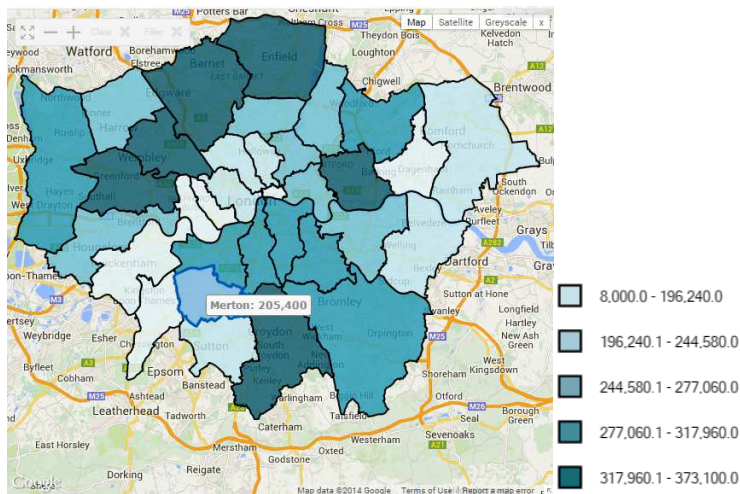


Figure 3.3: Borough Level Population Estimates

Source: GLA, 2013

- 3.2.3 LBM's population is largely in the top two approximated social grades. These grades are AB (Higher and intermediate managerial and professional occupations) and C1 (Supervisory, junior managerial and administrative). This represents about 67% of the resident population which is in line with the London average but below more affluent neighbouring Boroughs such as the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) (75%). Detailed information on social grades is not available at local area level.
- 3.2.4 At LSOA level, in the immediate area of Ravensbury has a population is some 1,879 people, of which 1,182 (or 63%) are of the usual working age (i.e. 16-64). This is below the LBM percentage of 68%.
- 3.2.5 The OSCI estimates that Ravensbury has a higher proportion of children aged 0-15 compared to the national average of 19%. Some 203 (or 20%) of the population are in this age group, which is slightly above the national percentage of 19%.

Economic Activity

- 3.2.6 The economic activity rate measures the proportion of people of working age (16-64) who are either in employment or unemployed but seeking work.
- 3.2.7 Economic activity rates in LBM are higher than Greater London and national averages. According to the Annual Population Survey (APS), in 2013 an estimated 81% of LBM's working age population were either in employment or seeking work, which is above the national average of around 77%.

- 3.2.8 The OSCI data estimates that only 68% of adults of working age in Ravensbury are economically active. This is lower than the economic activity rate of Ravensbury ward as a whole, which is 74%. It is also lower than the national and LBM percentages.

Earnings

- 3.2.9 The net weekly household income (after housing expenses) in Ravensbury is around £410, according to OSCI estimates. This is below the national average of about £423.

Qualifications

- 3.2.10 According to the Census an estimated 23% of the working age population in the LSOA hold no qualifications. This is well above the LBM average of 6% but it is line with the LSOAs adjacent to the Ravensbury area, indicating a particular concentration of low skilled people in the local area.

Child Poverty

- 3.2.11 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) data shows that LBM has one of the lowest rates of income support claimants within the population of usual working age. The Borough also performs well in terms of the percentage of children living in out-of-work families. Only 16% of children in LBM fall under this category which is below the Greater London average of 22%.
- 3.2.12 Figures from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) show that in February 2014, the proportion of children in the Ravensbury ward that are living in poverty¹ (after housing costs) is estimated at 27% (or some 710 children). This is above the average in LBM of 25%.
- 3.2.13 Child Poverty is also heightened in the LSOA with a third of children (or 135 children) living in poverty.

Deprivation

- 3.2.14 According to CLG Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), LBM is one of the least deprived Boroughs in London and nationally. The IMD data shows that the Borough ranks at 208 out of the 326 Local Authorities in England. In London it is within the top five least deprived Boroughs.
- 3.2.15 At LSOA level, Ravensbury ranks as within the top 20% most deprived output areas nationally in terms of the quality of living environment, as shown in Figure 3.4. The LSOAs to the west of Ravensbury rank within the top 10% most deprived living environments according to these criteria.

¹Defined as the proportion of children living in families in the receipt of out of work benefits or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent of median income.

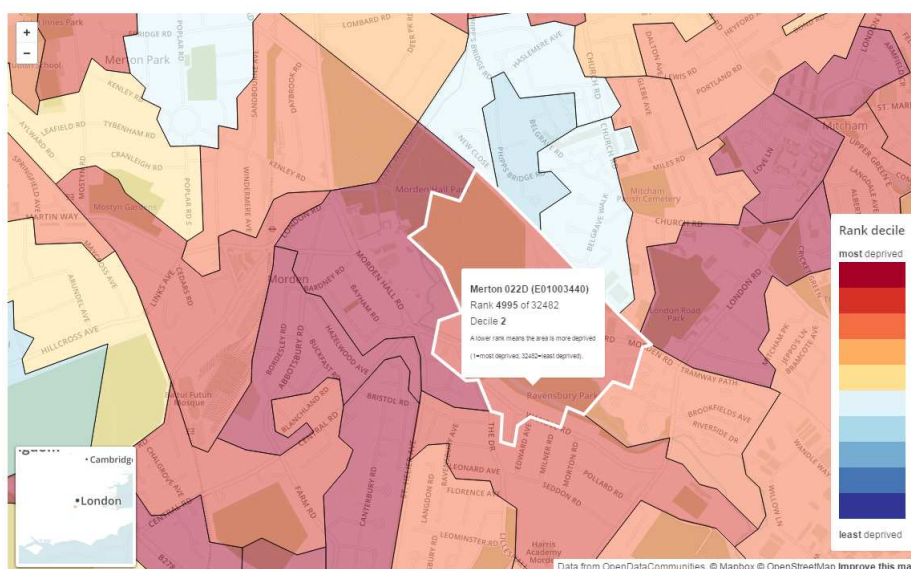


Figure 3.4: Deprivation in the Living Environment

Source: Deprivation Mapper, CLG, 2014

Housing Stock and Market

- 3.2.16 Land Registry data shows that in July 2014 the median house price in LBM was £322,000, which is in line with the average for Greater London, but 11% higher than that the LSOA of Ravensbury (£287,000).
- 3.2.17 Although the LSOA has relatively lower house prices in comparison to other parts of the Borough, Ravensbury it is one of the least affordable areas. A lack of supply of housing limits the opportunities for low income groups and young people who wish to remain in the area.
- 3.2.18 According to Census information, the LSOA is characterised by a high percentage of social housing (25%), well above the national average (18%).
- 3.2.19 At site level, a high percentage of households on Ravensbury were also identified as 'overcrowded'. An estimated 19% of houses (or 74 houses) have at least one room fewer than needed for their household's requirement. The national average is 9%.

Housing Quality

- 3.2.20 LBM Council's analysis of the neighbourhood profile of local area² identified a number of areas of improvement and enhancement required for Ravensbury and the immediate surroundings. This included a need to refurbish some of the existing homes to meet the requirements of older residents and disabled users; improvements to the public realm such as a safer pedestrian crossings over London Road; and a better use of neglected amenity buildings in Ravensbury Park.

Transport and Accessibility

- 3.2.21 The site is bounded by A239 Morden Road to the west and north, which provides access to the A297 Helier Avenue to the west and A217 London Road to the east.

² Merton Borough Character Study: Wandle Sub Area Neighbourhoods, LBM Council
http://www.merton.gov.uk/9_wandle.pdf

3.2.22 There are currently two points of vehicle access to the site, both from A239 Morden Road. The main vehicle access is located along the site's northern boundary via Ravensbury Grove. A secondary junction, providing access to parking associated with the properties fronting the west boundary of the site, is located towards the north-east corner.

3.2.23 WYG Group were commissioned by Circle Housing to provide traffic, transport and highways advice³ in connection with emerging masterplan proposals for Ravensbury. It was noted that:

- The local area has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL)⁴ rating of '1b' in the south-east corner of the site and '3' across the majority of Ravensbury which are 'a very poor to moderate' levels of transport accessibility;
- A239 Morden Road is served by Bus Route 201, which runs between Morden Station and Dulwich Road with a frequency of four buses per hour in either direction. Other bus services accessible within the PTAL threshold of 640m from the Site include Routes 118, 80, 470, 164 and 157;
- Belgrave Walk Tramlink Stop is located approximately 750m north-east of the site is served by the Tramlink 3 service that runs between Wimbledon Station to the west and New Addington to the East. Mitcham rail station can be accessed in 2 minutes using Tramlink 3 from Belgrave Walk;
- All streets surrounding the site are generally well lit with good quality footways. Ravensbury and the immediate area is also served well by a variety of on-road/off-road cycle routes. National Cycle Route (NCR) 20 runs past the southern boundary of the site, parallel to the northern side of the River Wandle.

3.2.24 As part of the WYG report, parking surveys were carried out on-site and off-site (i.e. in the immediate surrounding streets of Ravensbury) during different times of the day in early November 2014. The parking surveys showed:

- Mid to very high level of on-site parking stress⁵. This peaked on Saturdays with a stress level of 65% for the resident bays in Morden Road were recorded, 100% stress levels at Hengelo Gardens, and 82% for Ravensbury Grove, with less severe levels during weekdays.
- Heavily parked off-site areas, such as Deer Park Gardens, which recorded almost 100% parking stress levels on weekdays and Saturdays, while for the A235 (Morden Road) stress levels were around 60% during the weekdays.

3.2.25 It is also noted that the site is not located in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and as such parking on-street is unrestricted.

3.3 Social Infrastructure

Schools

3.3.1 LBM is served by a number of education facilities including nurseries, primary and secondary schools and colleges. These are shown in the Figure 3.5 alongside the facilities in neighbouring LBW.

³ Merton Regeneration – Ravensbury: Baseline Conditions and On-site Parking, WYG, December 2014.

⁴ PTALs are a theoretical measure of the accessibility of a given point to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability.

⁵ The significance of parking pressure on an area or street is known as 'parking stress' and is measured as the percentage of vehicles parking against the capacity identified in the study area. It is generally perceived within the highway industry that when a parking study area has a parking stress of 90% or above it is deemed to be 'heavily parked'.

- 3.3.2 According to a report by the Department for Education (DfE), the average class size for LBM's state-funded primary schools was about 28.5 pupils per teacher which is in line with the national average, and slightly below the London average. For secondary schools this ratio of 24 pupils per teacher is largely in line with the London and national average.
- 3.3.3 The DfE⁶ also reported that six of the 43 state funded primary schools in LBM are operating above capacity, while six of the seven secondary schools have one or more unfilled places.

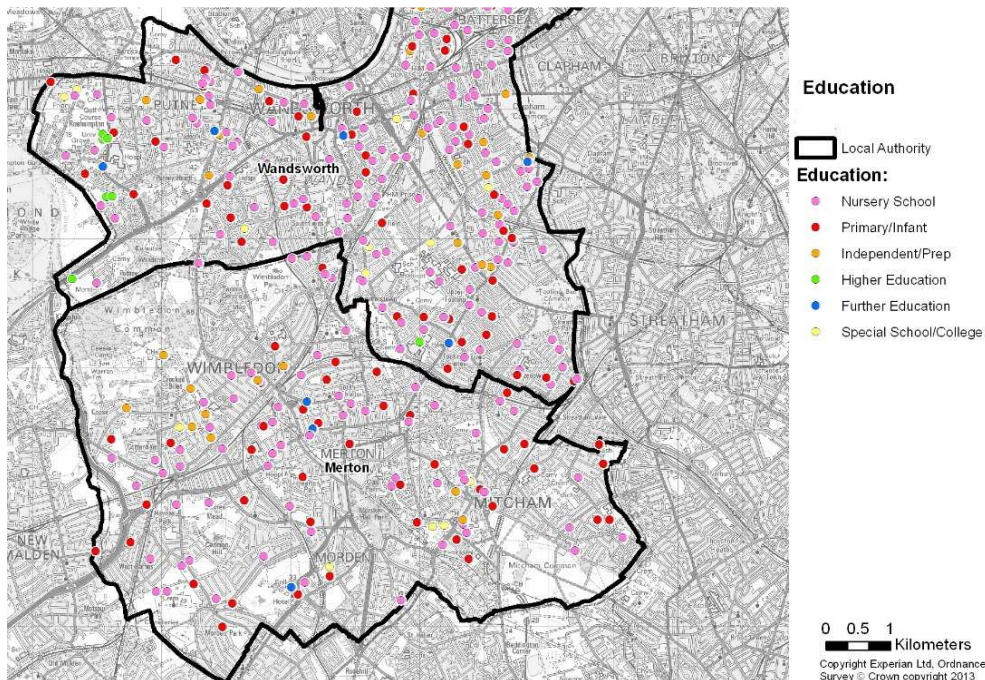


Figure 3.5: School Infrastructure in LBM and LBW

Source: Experian MMG3, 2013

- 3.3.4 The nearest education facilities, by age group, to the Ravensbury site are:
- Mini Treasures Nursery, ages 0–5, (0.8 km, west);
 - Benedict Primary School, ages 5-11, (0.6 km, west); and
 - Cricket Green School, ages 4-19, (1.1 km, east)
- 3.3.5 According to information from Ofsted, the overall quality of the Early Years education provision at Mini Treasures is 'Good'. In particular the report highlighted a very welcoming child-centred environment; and stimulating activities ensuring that children are engaged.
- 3.3.6 Benedict Primary School is considered 'satisfactory'. The Ofsted report found that the school needed to "improve the standard of writing and the quality of teaching". Cricket Green School achieved an overall rating of 'outstanding', with particular strengths in teaching quality and leadership; the behaviour and attainment of pupils; and a well-grounded curriculum.
- 3.3.7 In accordance with LBM Sites and Policies, policy DM C2 (described in section 1), Circle Housing commissioned Savills to assess⁷ the impact of on child yield (and school places)

⁶School Capacity statistics (2012-2013)

⁷ High Path, Eastfields and Ravensbury site Regeneration Proposals – School Places, Savills, 2014

arising from the masterplan options for Ravensbury based on the proposed accommodation schedule and the GLA's Supplementary Planning Guidance's (SPG) Child Yield Calculator⁸.

3.3.8 Based on the existing accommodation schedule at Ravensbury there are some 194 primary school children and 252 secondary school children at the site. Savills considered two alternative accommodation schedules based on masterplan proposals. The results from the Child Yield Calculator show that these will result in an uplift of some 10-19 primary school children, and uplift of three secondary school children.

3.3.9 The calculations undertaken confirm that the options for the Ravensbury will not generate "substantial increased need for school places" to require a new school in accordance with Policy DM C2.

Retail

3.3.10 The retail centres LBM and LBW are shown in Figure 3.6. The nearest retail centres to Ravensbury are Morden (1.5km, west) and Mitcham (2km, north-east).

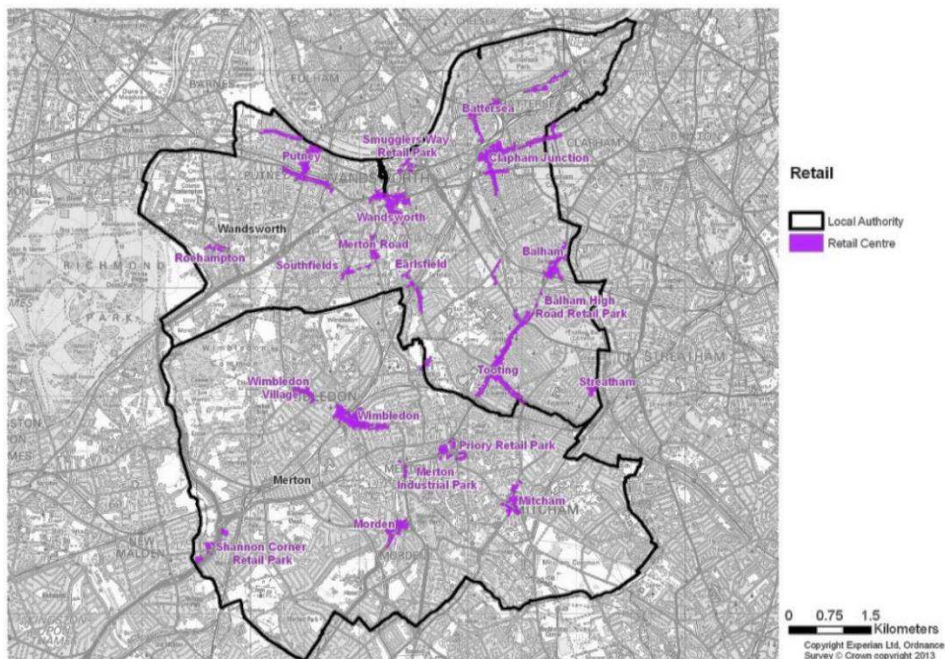


Figure 3.6: Retail Centres in LBM and LBW

Source: Experian MMG3, 2013

3.3.11 Considering the retail facilities in LBM as a whole, Morden is ranked at one of the lowest centres in terms of comparison goods shopping. Morden is focussed on lower order goods bought day to day such as pharmaceutical goods. The market share of comparison goods shops in Morden is low compared to other locations in the Borough such as Wimbledon.

3.3.12 Occupiers of retail facilities in Morden reported challenging trading conditions in the recent LBM Retail and Town Centre Capacity Study⁹. They highlighted declining trade over the

⁸ The SPG provides updated child yield figures for boroughs and developers to assess child occupancy and play space requirements (<https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/publications/shaping-neighbourhoods-play-and-informal-recreation-spg>)

previous twelve months. Vacancy rates in Mitcham are above than the national average, suggesting that the centre is in relative decline.

3.3.13 The results from the business occupier survey were more mixed. Morden scored well in terms of public transport, and overall personal safety and food supermarkets. However there concerns over the quality facilities such as public toilets; entertainment and leisure; and town centre events.

Leisure and Community Facilities

3.3.14 LBM is also served by numerous leisure facilities and community facilities as shown in Figures 3.7 and 3.8

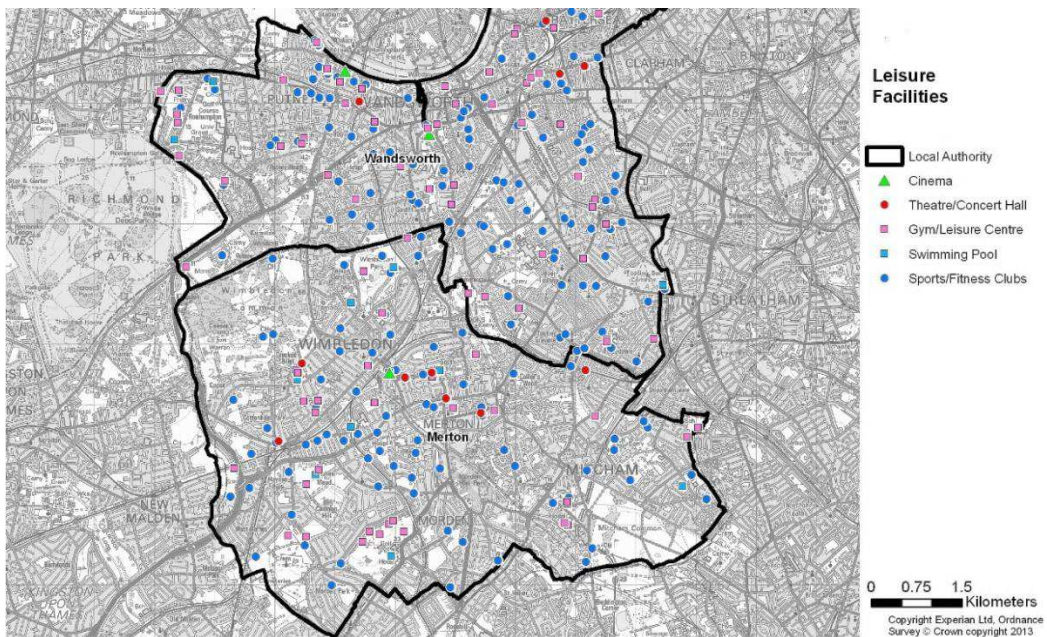


Figure 3.7: Leisure Facilities in LBM and LBW

Source: Experian MMG3, 2013

⁹ Retail and Town Capacity Study, Merton Council, 2011

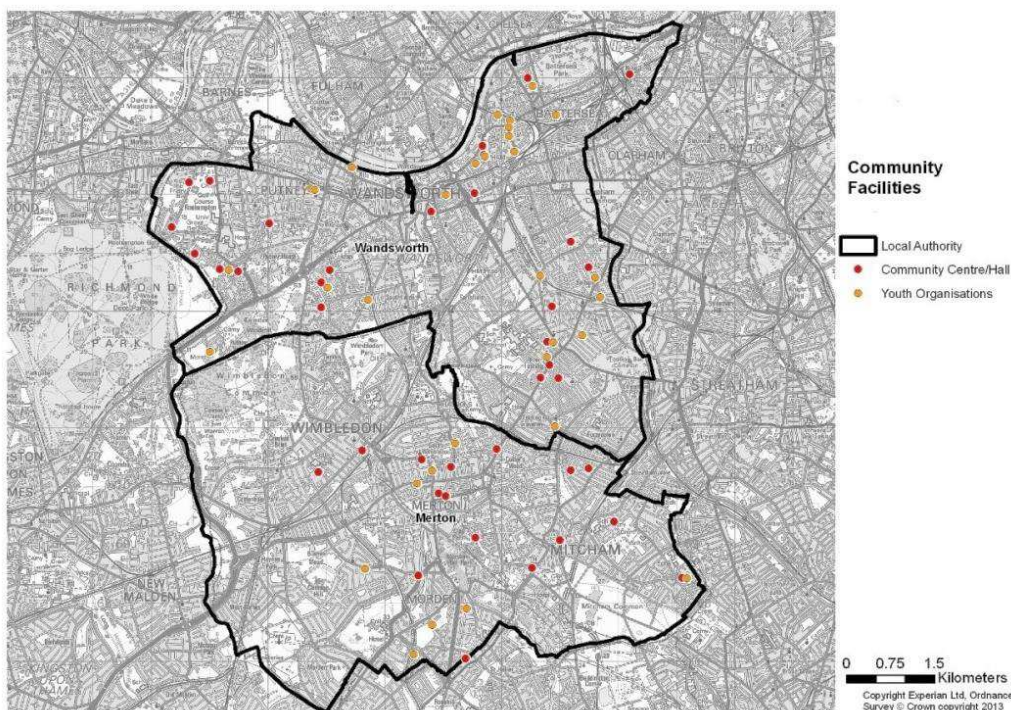


Figure 3.8: Community Facilities in LBM and LBW

Source: Experian, MMG3, 2013

3.3.15 The leisure and community facilities with 2km of Ravensbury comprise of:

- Two gyms and fitness centres;
- Two swimming pools;
- Four games courts;
- One youth centre; and
- Eight community centres.

3.3.16 There are also eight National Health Service General Practitioner (NHS GP) surgeries within two km of the site. The majority are currently accepting new patients. The area is also served by 15 dental surgeries. There are three hospitals and health clinics. These offer a variety of services for patients and people with special needs, such as mental health.

3.3.17 In the wider area, Ravensbury is surrounded by significant areas of public open space such as the Morden Recreation Ground; Morden Hall Park; Ravensbury Park; Morden Park; and associated leisure facilities.

3.3.18 LBM is committed to protecting green spaces in the Borough and upgrading facilities in need of renewal. LBM is currently undergoing plans to replace the swimming pool at Morden Park as part of a new, modern, family focused leisure centre, in consultation with Sport England.

4 The Case for Regeneration

- 4.1.1 Regeneration of Ravensbury is likely to help address the social-economic inequalities of the area compared to other parts of LBM – a key objective of the Core Strategy and overall vision of the Borough. The Core Strategy also identified the area around Morden as a particular concentration of deprivation.
- 4.1.2 The draft proposals include the refurbishment and replacement of homes for existing residents and the addition of new dwellings that meet Decent Homes Standards. This will improve the quality of the living environment easing concerns over child poverty and deprivation.
- 4.1.3 The proposals crucially create housing opportunities needed to support a diverse population such as young people, as well as older and vulnerable groups who wish to remain in the community. This is an important social benefit and also ensures that Ravensbury maintains its unique character within LBM, promoting social cohesion and a balanced community.
- 4.1.4 The proposed diverse housing mix and type, which includes traditional design such as pitched roof houses, terraced streets and shared courtyards, is likely to help attract a more economically active population to the area.
- 4.1.5 It will also assist with rehousing existing residents in more appropriately sized accommodation to support the changing needs of individuals and families through their lives (referred to as 'Lifetime Homes Standards'). This is important for a sustainable community and vibrant local service economy as it creates an attractive living environment, encouraging people to remain in the area. This ensures that social infrastructure, local facilities and the village feel of Ravensbury are maintained.
- 4.1.6 This increase in population in Ravensbury may also enable an enhancement in the range of local facilities and amenities in the area. For instance, increasing the population above the thresholds necessary to trigger demand for such amenities. Existing cafes, restaurants and other leisure facilities near the site are likely to benefit from a larger customer base, and increased consumer expenditure.
- 4.1.7 The proposals include improving every home in Ravensbury Court with a balcony or garden, new doors and windows, improved entrances, more insulation and new energy efficient boilers. This will benefit the health and well-being of residents, particularly the most vulnerable groups such as elderly residents and low income households, currently living in poorly heated homes. The provision of better insulated and more energy efficient housing will help alleviate fuel poverty and reduce the associated risks of winter mortality.
- 4.1.8 Other potential benefits include:
- Employment during the construction phase, positively impacting a variety of residents in the local area (for instance, apprenticeships for young people; managerial and supervisory construction jobs for more experienced members of the workforce).
 - New Homes Bonus, enabling LBM to retain a greater proportion of the council tax revenue to be made available to spend in borough.
 - Section 106 (S106), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other off-site contributions which will also be available for LBM to fund new facilities or enhance existing social infrastructure in the area.

5 Summary

5.1 Socio-economic Conditions

5.1.1 Overall, LBM ranks highly in London in terms of economic activity, education and employment prospects compared to London and the wider region. The Borough generally has a good provision of social infrastructure. It has a number of retail and leisure facilities with good accessibility to social amenities, schools and health facilities.

5.1.2 Locally the immediate area of Ravensbury has a distinct socio-economic profile compared to LBM as a whole. In particular the baseline analysis identified:

- Relatively low rates of economic activity;
- A low qualifications and skills profile;
- A high rate of child poverty, particularly in families with no adult in employment;
- A lack of affordable housing opportunities;
- High levels of deprivation in the living environment; and
- A low value retail offering compared to other parts of the Borough (such as Wimbledon).

5.2 Implications for Ravensbury

5.2.1 If current trends continue then there are particular implications:

- The projected increase in population of children, the low earnings profile, and poor quality living environment is likely to heighten concerns over child poverty;
- A lack of housing opportunities and affordable housing is likely to mean that young people who have grown up in the area are likely to have difficulty in remaining in the area. Affordability issues also raise further concerns over poverty; and
- The limited retail offering and challenging trading conditions in local retail centres such as Morden is likely to also affect the viability of existing facilities and local service economy/ For instance, through a diversion of trade and displacement of employment opportunities to more attractive retail centres in the Borough.

5.3 The Case for Regeneration

5.3.1 The regeneration of Ravensbury is likely to result in the following socio-economic changes:

- Reduce the social-economic inequalities of the area compared to other parts of LBM;
- Improve the quality of the living environment to ease concerns over child poverty and deprivation;
- Create housing opportunities for a wide mix of individuals and families. For instance, opportunities to support young people who wish to remain in the community, housing suitable for families, older residents and individuals with special needs.

- The diverse housing mix and type is also likely to help attract a more economically active population, and contribute to more a balanced community to the area and sustainable local service economy;
- The potential for catalytic impacts such as unlocking further developments in Morden by making these financially viable. For instance, through the spending of new residents in the local area. The S106, CIL and other developer contributions could also be used by LBM to enhancement local facilities to improve the attractiveness of the area. This will increase the incentives for businesses to invest in the area.
- Health and well-being benefits arising from a safer living environment through better insulated and more energy efficient housing, which will help to mitigate fuel poverty.