

WANDLE VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA



THE PARKS: MORDEN HALL & RAVENSBURY

SUB-AREA 5: CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Amended Draft, revised following public consultation.

New text shown underlined and deleted text shown struck through.

All photographs of Morden Hall Park are included with the permission of the National Trust the owners and managers of the Park.

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of conservation areas is a legislative duty of local authorities. These areas comprise "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Local authorities also have a duty to from time to time to review whether any further designations are needed. The Wandle Valley Conservation Area was originally designated by the Council in November 1990 and was extended in April 2000.

BACKGROUND

The Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG 15) advises local authorities to periodically review existing conservation areas and their boundaries. PPG 15 also advises local authorities to define and record, as clearly as possible, the special architectural or historic interest that justifies each conservation area's designation, through an assessment of the elements that contribute to an area's character.

Character assessments are useful tools that not only set out the specific characteristics for which an area has been designated as a conservation area, but also help the Council to assess the impact of development proposals on the character or appearance of a conservation area. They also provide a useful framework within which property owners and developers can work when designing new development or planning alterations to buildings, within conservation areas, by setting out and

describing the special context to which any new development will need to relate.

This Character Assessment for the Wandle Valley Conservation Area has been prepared by the Council's Design and Conservation Team in accordance with Guidelines issued by English Heritage and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.

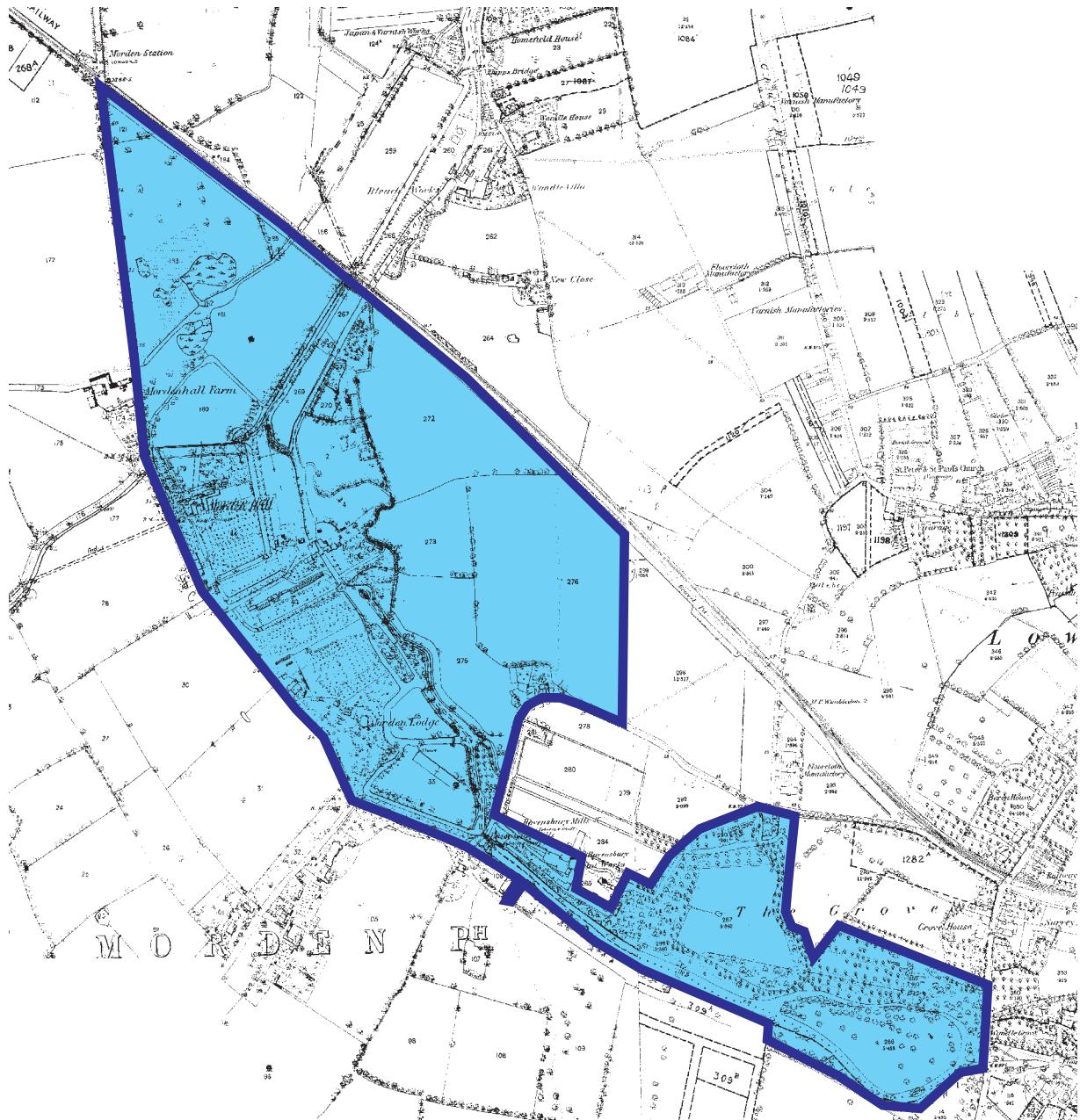
STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

Because of its size and linear nature the Wandle Valley conservation area, whilst having a unifying theme linked to its history, development and links to the River Wandle, does vary in character along its length. The area has, therefore been sub-divided into a series of smaller discernible sub areas which have their own special identities and which form recognisable zones or groups of buildings within the area as a whole and that have their own specific historical background and/or defining features.

The character assessment for the Wandle Valley Conservation Area has therefore been structured to comprise a general appraisal document covering the whole of the conservation area supported by a series of more detailed appraisals of each of the individual sub-areas.

This appraisal covers Sub Area 5: Morden Hall and Ravensbury Parks and should be read in conjunction with the whole area character appraisal. The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

LOCATION AND EXTENT OF THE SUB-AREA

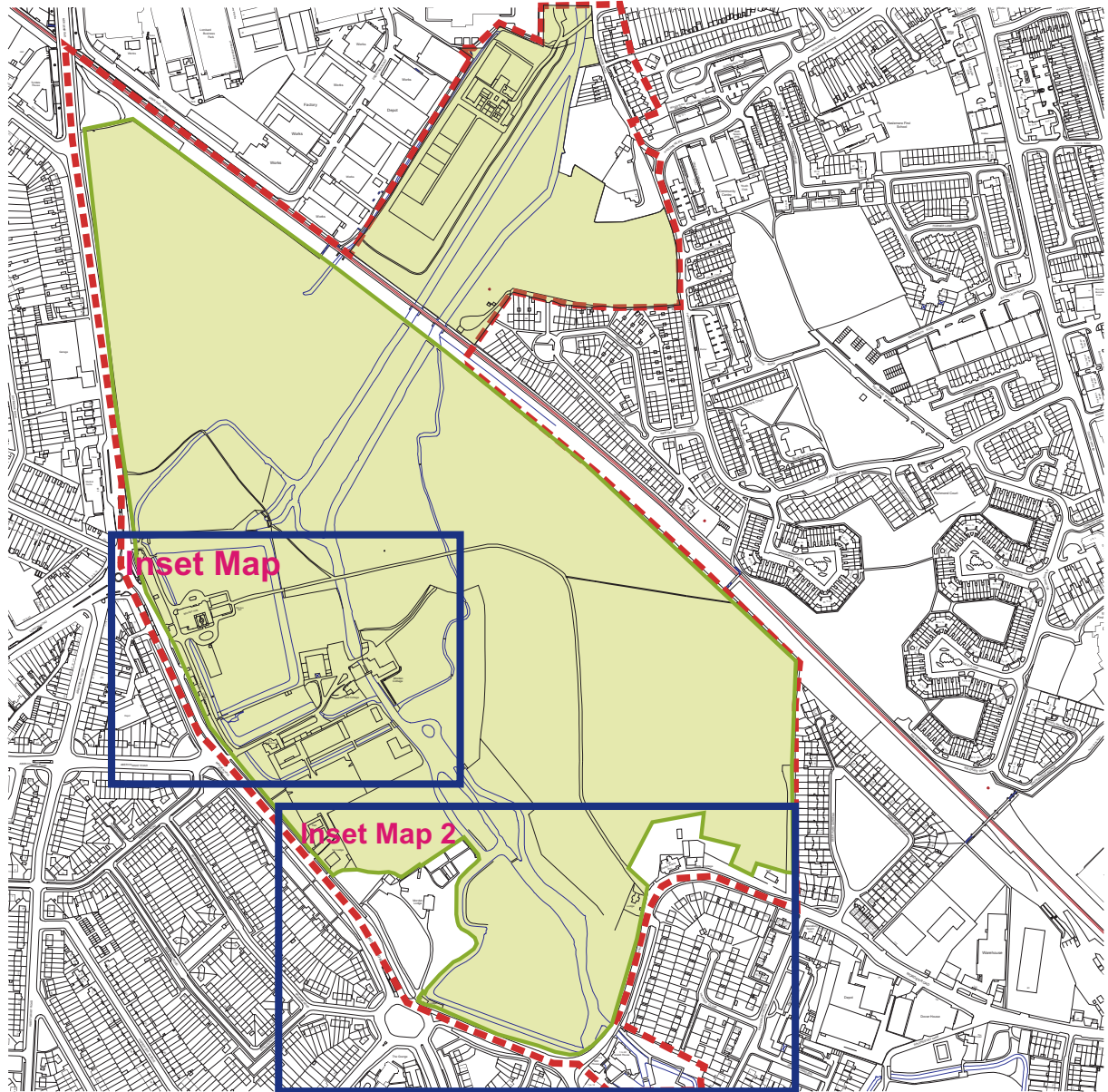


This area extends over areas of parkland along the course of the Wandle between Phipps Bridge and Mitcham. These represent surviving parts of the former estates of large houses that once occupied areas close to the River Wandle comprising Morden Hall and

Ravensbury Parks and also the Watermeads Housing Estate which was built within the former grounds of Mitcham Grove. The sub-area includes Morden Hall the only one of these former houses to survive, although there are remains of Ravensbury House visible

Sub Area 5: The Parks - Age of Buildings Maps

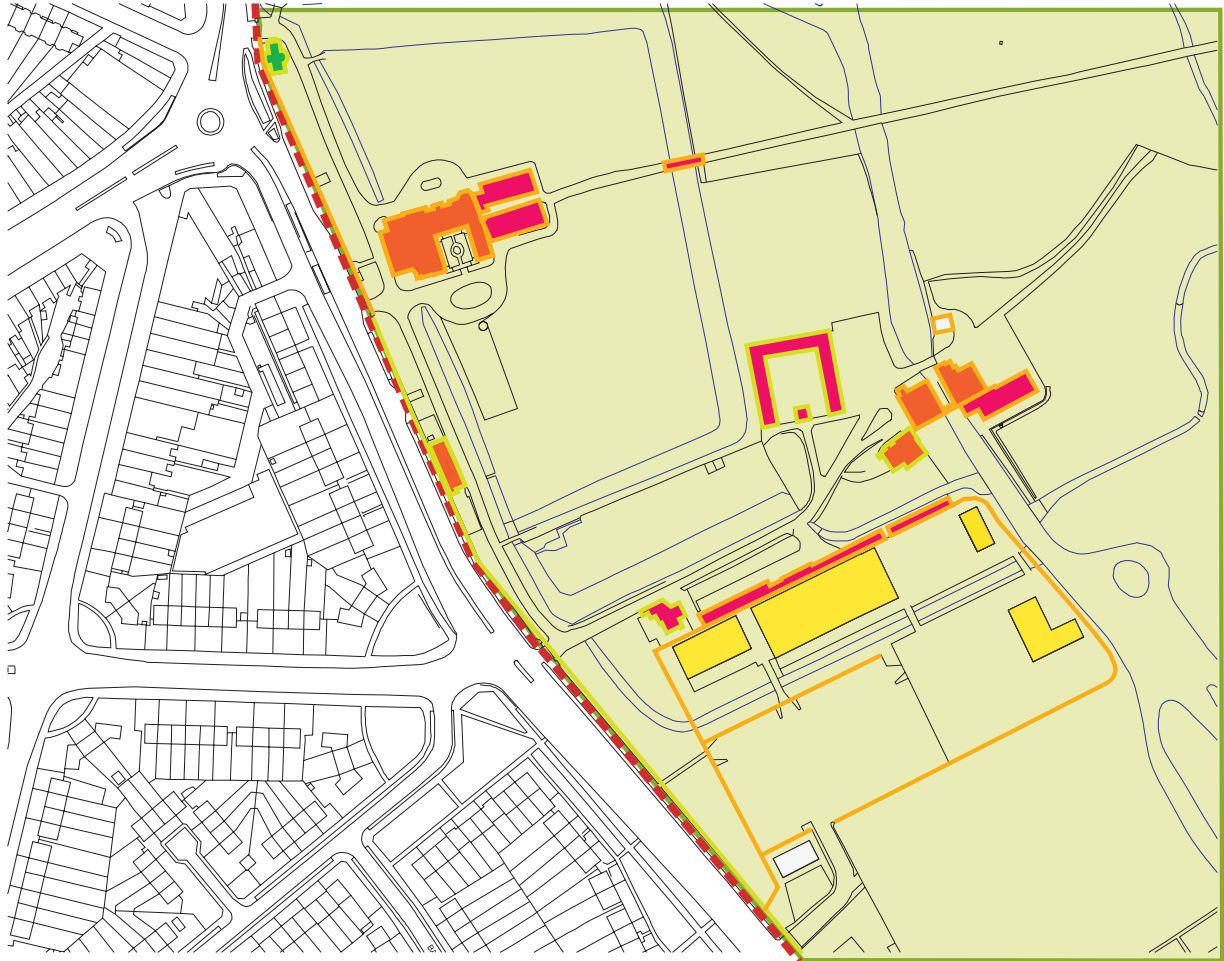
Morden Hall Park - Key Plan














Conservation Area Boundary 

Historic Park 

Morden Hall Park -Inset Map 1














Key:

Conservation Area Boundary		Statutory List		Local List	
Medieval		Pre-1700		1700-1749	
1750-1799		1800-1849		1850-1899	
1900-1949		1950-2000			

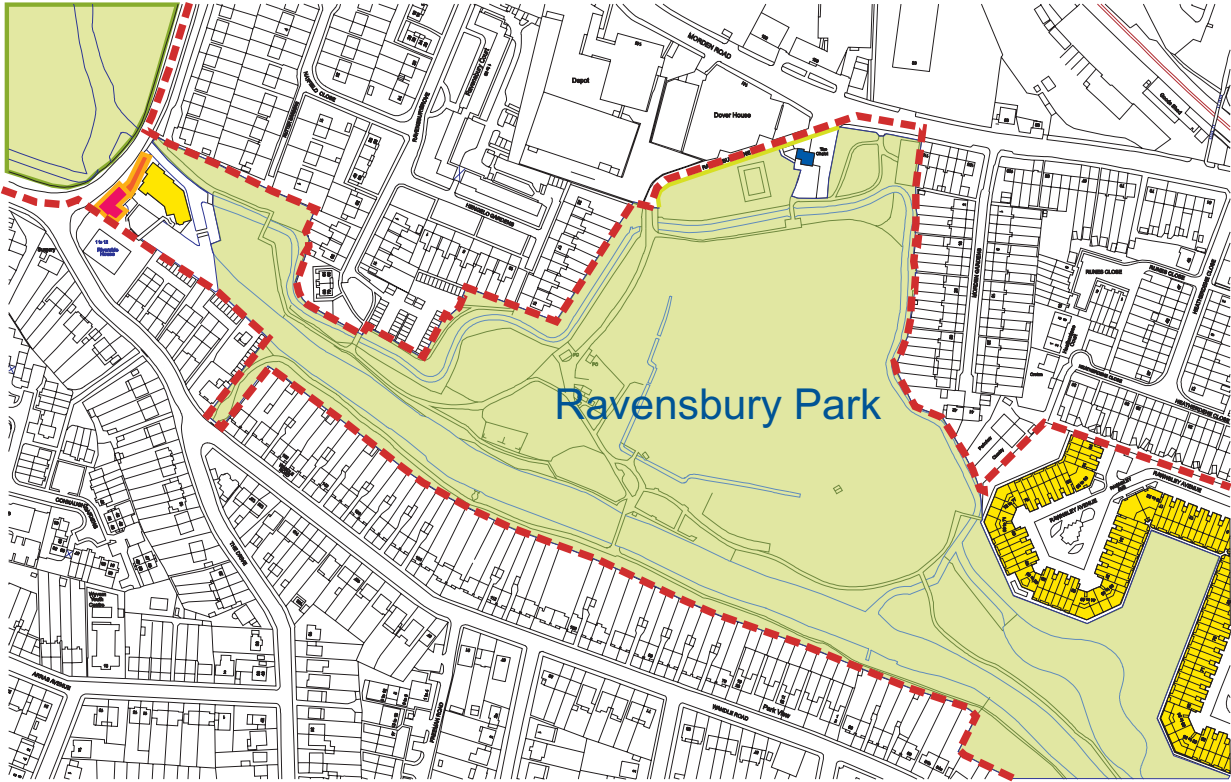
Morden Hall Park -Inset Map 2



Key:

Conservation Area Boundary		Statutory List		Local List	
Medieval		Pre-1700		1700-1749	
1750-1799		1800-1849		1850-1899	
1900-1949		1950-2000			

Ravensbury Park



Key:

Conservation Area Boundary		Statutory List		Local List	
Medieval		Pre-1700		1700-1749	
1800-1849		1850-1899		1900-1949	
				1950-2000	

within Ravensbury Park and a surviving former stable block located on the south side of Wandle Road to the south of Ravensbury Park just beyond the conservation area boundary. The sub-area also embraces the sites of three surviving water mills, Ravensbury Mill and two former Snuff Mills within Morden Hall Park and there is evidence of water milling in the area from the mid 13th Century onwards and past industrial activities included tobacco and snuff manufacture, calico bleaching and printing. The site of Ravensbury printworks is immediately adjacent to the conservation area to the north of Ravensbury Mill.

HISTORY

Morden Hall and Ravensbury Parks were both once part of the former estates of Morden Hall and Ravensbury House respectively.

Morden Hall

Morden Hall was built in 1770 by Richard Garth on land formerly owned by Westminster Abbey. The ownership of the Hall and the Morden Estate passed to Gilliatt Hatfeild's son, also Gilliatt, in 1872. Gilliatt Hatfeild jnr actually lived in Morden Cottage, within the grounds of Morden Park, as it was apparently better suited to his Bachelor existence than the Hall. He was a keen huntsman and fisherman and he converted and adapted many of the estate buildings to suit these interests and the grounds were used as a deer park. The Hall has seen a variety of uses from a family home to a boarding school for young gentlemen and a military hospital during the First World War, Council Offices and most recently it was fully restored and converted into a public house and restaurant.

The Estate was bequeathed by Gilliat Hatfeild to the National Trust in 1941 in order to secure it intact for future generations and it, therefore, survives as open parkland. The estate includes a number of other historic buildings including Morden Hall, Morden Cottage, Mill Cottage, Morden Snuff Mill and the Stables. The park extending over some 124 acres represents an oasis of tranquility amidst the busy London suburbs.

Morden Hall Park contains many of the other historic estate buildings, including two 18th-century cottages, a stable block, gathered around the two water mills, which until 1922 were used for grinding snuff. One of the mills buildings, the Snuff Mill eastern block, has recently been converted into an Environmental Educational Centre by the National Trust providing a study centre for children and groups from the local area.

Morden Lodge

The present Morden Lodge occupies the site of an earlier house, also called Morden Lodge. This was the home of financier and philanthropist Abraham Goldsmid. The son of a Dutch merchant who settled in this country around 1763 and who set up business with his brother Benjamin as bill brokers in London. Both were noted for their public and private generosity, and he had a part in founding the German and Dutch Jews Hospital in Mile End. The Goldsmid brothers were on very intimate terms with the Royal Dukes, the sons of George III, who visited Morden Lodge on a number of occasions. The Prince of Wales came to the house's opening party in 1806, and on another occasion the Duke of Sussex drove back from Morden in the same carriage as Hyman, a famous pastry-

cook, “disguised for the journey as a distinguished foreigner”. Abraham Goldsmid was also a close friend of Admiral Nelson and Lady Emma Hamilton and supported Emma Hamilton after Nelson’s death from whom he eventually purchased Merton Place.

Emma rewarded his friendship with a gift of a round tortoiseshell box made from wood from HMS Victory and with a crystal intaglio of Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson (1758-1805) set in the lid, this is currently held by the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.

Goldsmid was, however, forced into bankruptcy due to losses in connection with a Government loan he jointly made with Barings Bank and he committed suicide in 1810. It seems that shortly after this the Lodge was demolished and the present smaller Regency building constructed. Another occupier of Morden Lodge was George Matthew Hoare, the son of Henry Hoare who built Mitcham Grove.

Ravensbury Park

Ravensbury Park was once part of the Ravensbury Manor an Estate dating back to the 13th Century and on which the 18th Century Ravensbury Manor House stood.

In the 17th and 18th centuries the Ravensbury Park area was an important industrial area. Ravensbury Mill was located on the banks of the Wandle at the western end of the site and a calico factory was established to the north, just outside the current park boundary. At this time the site formed part of the Ravensbury Park Estate of Ravensbury Manor. The Manor House stood on the northern bank of the Wandle, immediately to the south of the present

day staff yard. The foundations of the manor house can still be seen amongst dense young woodland and ivy.

The original alignment of Morden Road used to pass through the Park, following the route of the present day Ravensbury Lane. It passed directly in front of the Manor House and crossed the Wandle on a small bridge. In the mid-18th century the then owner of the estate, John Arbuthnott, applied successfully for the road to be diverted further west, along its present route. Mr Arbuthnott also set about laying out the gardens of the Manor and developed walks along the banks of the river. A circular walk ran around Ravensbury Meadow, the open grassland area in the centre of the Park, which may have been used for calico bleaching and drying or as a hay meadow. Diversions to the river, to supply water to the calico factory, were also made around this time.

By the late 19th century the Manor house had fallen into ruin and a substantial mixed conifer and broadleaf woodland had developed around the house and along the banks of the Wandle. In the early 20th century the former Ravensbury Park Estate was partitioned and sold for residential development. Faced with increasing development pressure and recognising the recreational potential of the area, the Urban District Councils of Mitcham, and of Merton and Morden jointly purchased the remaining grounds of Ravensbury Manor in 1929 to set aside as a public park. The park was formally opened on 10th May 1930.

The surrounding area became increasingly urbanised in the years following the establishment of the Park. Changes in the Park itself have been more gradual and most of the Park

remains substantially as it was when first opened although there will be some encroachment following the approval of a medical centre development in the area currently occupied by the paddling pool and former café off Ravensbury Lane. The lake in the eastern part of the Park was originally created for drainage purposes in the 1970's as part of the landscaping around the Watermeads housing development and at this time the riverside walk was extended eastwards as far as Bishopsford Road. The area around Ravensbury Mill has also been modified, with a new weir and by-pass channel to the Mill added and filling and simplification of other watercourses. Significant tree loss, including some very large London plane trees, occurred during the Great Storm of October 1987.

To the north west of Ravensbury Mill there was a house set back from the current Morden Road was an old cottage possibly dating from the late 18th or early 19th Century this fell into disrepair and which was eventually demolished in the 1980s.



Mitcham Grove

The eastern part of the park comprises remnants of the grounds of an Elizabethan Manor House, Mitcham Grove, once one of Mitcham's finest houses. Between 1774 and 1784 the house was owned by Alexander

Wedderburn, King's Counsel, later Lord Loughborough who defended Clive of India against the charge of impeachment in 1773. Mitcham Grove was acquired in 1784 by Henry Hoare a senior Partner in the well-known family banking firm and also a shareholder in the Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Iron Railway. His Great Uncle Henry Hoare built Stourhead in Wiltshire, to designs of the Architect, Colen Campbell.

Following Henry Hoare's death in 1828 the house was purchased by Sir John Lubbock, head of the banking firm of Lubbock & Co, who moved there from High Elms in Down, near Bromley and who stayed there until his death in 1840. After Sir John's death his only son John William Ruddock the renowned astronomer and mathematician demolished and rebuilt the former family home at High Elms and moved there in 1842, however, Mitcham Grove remained in the family's ownership until 1865, the year of John William's death. It appears that they let the house to George Parker Bidder, another well known Mitcham resident and his family who were the last occupiers of the house and who stayed there until 1864 when they moved into their new home, Ravensbury Park House, off Bishopsford Road. Bidder was a well known Engineer of his day, ranking with Rennie, Brunel and the Stephensons and became a close friend and Partner of Robert Stephenson.

It seems that Mitcham Grove was demolished shortly afterwards. Part of the former grounds were acquired jointly by the Urban District Councils of Mitcham and of Merton and Morden in 1930.

Ravensbury Manor House

The remains of the 18th Century Ravensbury House survive within the park on what is believed to have been the site of the earlier medieval manor house of Ravensbury.

The Wandle riverside was famed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the market gardening of medicinal herbs, watercress and other crops. It was also important in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for calico bleaching and printing; the area to the south of the park close to Morden Road was formerly occupied by calico bleaching beds.

Ravensbury Mill

Ravensbury Mill was once a tobacco and snuff mill dating from the early 19th Century. The northern single storey extension is a remnant of an earlier 18th Century mill building. George Parker Bidder had a lease on the building in the latter part of 19th Century. It is believed to have been the last working waterwheel on the Wandle having been used up until the 1960s to provide power for lighting of the mill. The building, which is Grade II Listed, was converted into residential use during the 1990s, save for the older north wing and the surviving mill wheels which are hoped to eventually provide a home for the Wandle Industrial Museum.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Historic maps suggest that the earliest development within this sub area were the two mills at Ravensbury and within the Snuff Mills within the modern Morden Hall Park and the scattered settlement of early Morden to the south

and west of the Wandle. There is evidence of a development to the south-east of Ravensbury Mill off a road roughly following the alignment of Ravensbury Lane crossing the River to the east of Ravensbury Mill. Otherwise, the area was predominantly agricultural at this time, with the area divided up into fields.



Rocque's Map, 1741 - 5

During the early 18th Century maps show the development of Morden Hall and The Grove in Mitcham and their associated grounds along with further industrial development to north of the Wandle at Ravensbury Printworks and also the Mitcham Linoleum and Floor Cloth Works to the South of Morden Road. Morden Road is shown in the current alignment with the river crossing immediately in front of Ravensbury Mill to its west. Maps also show Ravensbury Farm located on the south bank of the Wandle immediately to the east of Ravensbury Mill at this time. To the

North of the conservation area and Morden Road is also evidence of an old gravel pit. Much of Morden Hall Park and areas beyond were used as a Deer Park during this time and Ravensbury Park formed part of the grounds of Grove House, later named Mitcham Grove House.



Ordnance Survey 1896

The 1896 and later maps indicate the site of the remains of a “Manor House” close to the north bank of the Wandle immediately to the south-east of Ravensbury Printworks, although little evidence exists of the appearance of this house, it appears that it could be in a similar location to one of the buildings



Ordnance Survey 1916

shown on Rocque’s 1741-5 Map in the vicinity of Ravensbury Mill and some brickwork footings are still visible within the Park in this area.

Towards the end of the 19th Century Ravensbury Park House was developed on a site now occupied by Watermeads High School with extensive grounds to the south of the Wandle which included an observatory.

By the early 20th Century Ravensbury Park House was converted into a convalescent home and much of its ground parceled up for residential development it was demolished by the mid 19th Century.

In the early 20th Century another house, Ravensbury Manor, was developed immediately to the south of the river on a site now occupied by 1-20 Park View in Wandle Road with an associated stable block immediately opposite on the south side of Wandle Road. This house was also demolished by the mid 20th Century, however the stable block survives and is included on the Council’s local list of buildings of architectural or historic significance.



Ordnance Survey 1953

Mitcham Grove House also shown to have survived until the early 20th Century, but part of its grounds survived to form Ravensbury Park. Part of the site of Mitcham Grove House was also developed for commercial use in the form of the Locomotors coach works and an associated sports ground which eventually provided the site for the construction of the Watermeads Estate. The last survival of Mitcham Grove House appears to have been a small lodge building that stood on the corner of the modern London Road and Rawsley Avenue on a site now occupied by an Electricity sub-

station. It too was demolished in the later part of the 20th Century. The areas



Aerial Photograph - 1988



around the Wandle remained primarily agricultural until well into the 20th Century and it wasn't until the inter-war period that rapid suburbanisation occurred largely spurred by the growth of the railways. The Parks remained largely undeveloped until the 1970s

Aerial Photograph - 1971

when the Watermeads Estate was built on the site of the former sports grounds this was the last encroachment into the parkland which is now protected by its Metropolitan Open Land designation.

ARCHAEOLOGY

The sub area is of great significance archaeologically largely due to its proximity to Mitcham Common and the evidence of Saxon burials excavated to the north of the Wandle between the River and the modern Morden Road, details of which are provided in the main appraisal document.

Archaeological investigations were also carried out at Ravensbury Mill in 1992 in connection with the housing development on the Mill site. This revealed a series of post-medieval timber structures or revetments in the north-east part of the site that may have been associated with activity along the north bank of the River Wandle. Brick-lined, vaulted channels were found in the north-west part of the site dating from the mid-late 18th century. Their purpose was probably to control water flow under an earlier building which was possibly a predecessor of the present mill which is situated to the south-east of the structures. On the south-west side of the river, a shallow stream channel and its flood plain were recorded running north-west to south-east across the site; this had been leveled up in post-medieval times.

LAND USE

Historically land use within this sub-area combined small pockets of industrial activity focused on the two water mills set with a much more rural setting of the

estates of former large country houses. The decline in milling along the Wandle resulted in much reduced commercial activity, although pockets of commercial activities do survive to the north of the conservation area based on Morden Road. Following periods of under use and in the case of Ravensbury Mill near dereliction new uses have been found for the historic mill buildings, residential and community in the case of Ravensbury and office and community in the case of the snuff mills in Morden Hall Park. This part of the conservation area does however remain largely as parkland with only one major area of residential development based on the Watermeads estate. Morden Hall Park is currently owned and maintained by the National Trust along with the many historic building within it and as a result they have been preserved in uses associated with the park its activities and management. Morden Cottage also within Morden Hall Park has been converted into offices and is used by a local environmental trust. The area is, therefore, now almost entirely in recreational and educational uses associated with the river and surrounding parks with some residential areas. The parks and the River itself form part of a Green Corridor linking Colliers Wood to Mitcham and Sutton beyond. The ~~natural~~ landscaping and ecological diversity of the area combine to make an important passive recreational resource within the Borough of Merton.

BUILDINGS

The main buildings of significance to this part of the conservation area comprise Morden Hall and the surviving buildings of the Estate within Morden Hall Park and the two surviving water mills. Most of the buildings within this sub-area, apart from the newer residential developments at Watermeads and to the east of Ravensbury Mill, are either Statutory or locally listed.

Within Morden Hall Park are a number of former estate buildings.

- Morden Hall is a late 18th, early 19th Century building, originally the Manor House of Morden and the seat of the Garth Family, it is Listed Grade II. It was rendered externally in the mid 19th Century and also extended. Its styling is classically Georgian with tall sliding sash windows and a shallow pitched slate roof, set behind a parapet. It has a classical porticoed entrance with Doric columns accessed through an open half courtyard.



- Morden Cottage, also Listed Grade II is an early 19th Century building combining traditional weatherboarding with a stuccoed

wing with more Gothic styling linking it to the adjacent Snuff Mill building (Eastern Block). The building has a shallow pitched, slate hipped roof to eaves. The entrance itself is slightly projecting in the form of a crenellated porch with a slightly pointed arched doorway. The windows are vertical sliding sashes with narrow glazing bars to the ground floor and French casements with wrought iron balconies above. The stuccoed wing has a crenellated parapet with traceried pinnacles and the windows have drip mould details.



- Former Snuff Mills comprising two late 18th, early 19th Century blocks located on either side of the mill race. Built of stock brick with weatherboarding to the upper floor of the eastern block with steeply pitched slate roofs, gable to the eastern block and hipped to the western block. The windows have segmental arches over and comprise a combination of casements, and horizontal sliding sash windows to the ground floor of the western block. There is a cast iron wheel, without paddles, affixed to the west face of the eastern block. The eastern block has a projecting

single storey tobacco drying oven with segmental brick barrel-vaulted roof. Other significant features include the double height timber doors with double doors at ground and first floor levels.



a double-height arched covered entrance with a hipped slate roof supporting a clock tower with an open bell stage surmounted by a tall pinnacle.

- The Mill Cottage an early 19th Century two storey brick with timber boarding to the upper floor. The roof is covered in slate and hipped to eaves. The windows are Georgian style double-hung, vertical sliding sash windows with slender glazing bars. It has a simple timber door without a porch.



Other buildings within the Park include: -

- The stable block comprising stables and storage buildings arranged around a walled open courtyard with



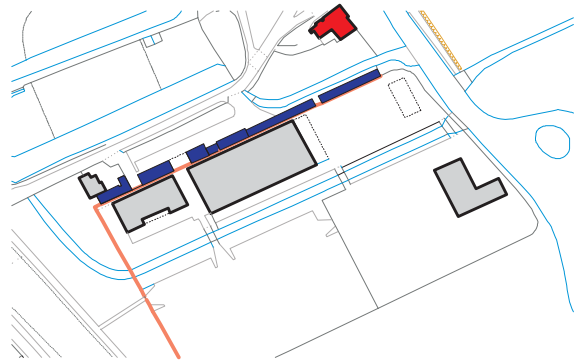
- The Bothy, a humble single storey cottage probably dating from mid to late 18th Century. Timber framed with painted timber weatherboarding and a prominent projecting brick chimney stack next to the main entrance. It has a prominent hipped roof with plain red clay tiled to eaves. The roof continues down over the front door to form an open porch supported on slender timber columns one of which is supported by the chimney projection. The windows are simple small cottage style casements.
- Morden Lodge, a two storey Regency Villa, with basement,

occupies the site of a larger Georgian House, Built of brick finished with stucco the building has a shallow pitched hipped slate roof with deep bracketed eaves and a simple porch supported on Doric columns. Ground floor windows are large vertical sliding sash windows divided into small panes with narrow glazing bars. The upper floors comprise French windows set



behind decorative metal guard rails set into the reveals of the openings.

- The Gardens, A late 18th/early 19th century building with a later 19th Century addition. The early section is built of warm red brick and the later of yellow stock bricks with red brick string courses. The brickwork to the early section appears to have been painted at some time which has been removed but the bricks have been discoloured by pale residue. The early section backs onto the wall of the former kitchen garden, now occupied by the Garden Centre, shop/café and car park and forms



part of a linear group of former estate buildings also built into the enclosing wall which are a distinctive feature of this part of the Park. The relationship of buildings to the high brick walls is a particular feature of Morden Hall Park.



Morden Hall Park is also characterised by ~~four~~ three early 19th century Lodge buildings located around its perimeter. Built of a pale gault brick, with a sooty



patina from pollution, with shallow pitched gabled roofs roofs with prominent barge boards, Morden Lodge has been rendered externally and Ivy Lodge has been much altered.

Built into the wall fronting Morden Hall Road are Sadler's End and Red Cottage, built of red brick with slate pitched roof, the front elevation actually forms part of the wall enclosing the Park with openings punched through to for the windows and doors.



To the east of the River Wandle is the Morden Hall Garden Centre set within the former walled garden to Morden Hall. Much of the area of the former walled garden is presently occupied by the garden centre, Café/Shop and car park, but a number of significant features survive including the original perimeter walls and the clair-voyee of cast iron railings along the southern boundary



which have a distinctive Greek "key" pattern.



~~Not forming part of Morden Hall Park but backing onto it are a group of buildings~~ Located on the north-west side of Morden Road is a group of buildings comprising the most westerly Lodge, White Cottage, the Surrey Arms Public House and the Morden Hall Scout HQ, all of which, apart from the public house,



form part of Morden Hall Park. Historic maps suggest that White Cottage was once one of a semi-detached pair of cottages with a similar pair immediately to the west. The buildings within this group are varied in date, style and character ranging from the local vernacular of which White Cottage, dating from the late 18th Century, is a rare survival. This is a timber framed building with timber weather-boarding painted white and with a double pitched plain tiled London style roof. The Surrey Arms public house was built in the 1930s in the "Jacobethan" style with a lofty tiled roof and leaded light windows both of which contrast with the more utilitarian and functional design of the 1960s Scout HQ building. To the east of the Surrey Arms historic maps indicate that there was originally another detached house which was demolished in the 1980s.

Across the road is Ravensbury Mill a former snuff and tobacco mill converted into residential use with an area set aside for a local industrial museum. The main two-storey block dates from circa 1880 with an earlier single storey wing to the north-east. Constructed of yellow stock brick with cambered, red-brick arches over large industrial window openings and the main entrance range which originally comprising a pair of hoist doors with a iron-crane hoist over above

the main boarded timber doors to the entrance which have now been adapted for the residential conversion. The building has a shallow pitched, hipped slate roof. Windows are cast-iron casements divided into small panes. The mill is significant for the retention of two 15ft diameter iron undershot water wheels, dated I.C.R./1884, and of the "Poncelot" type (after invention by J.C.Poncelot, 1824): each have curved sheet-iron buckets and cast or wrought-iron draft; wooden pit wheel to left, probably re-used and of earlier date.

The site of the mill complex was developed as part of the residential conversion with a pair of 3 storey blocks of flats set on either side of the mill pond linked with a new bridge. The new buildings reflect the scale and styling of the traditional industrial architecture characteristic of the mill itself and this approach reflects the character of the area. The buildings themselves have been designed to replicate some of the detailing of the existing building in many respects, particularly in terms of materials used and the shallow pitched roof forms. However the domestic style timber window forms and the relatively crude soldier course arches over the door and window openings do not reflect the quality of the historic building.



Within Ravensbury Park is the former Café adjacent to the paddling pool to the south of Morden Road and Ravensbury Lane. The site is defined along its northern boundary by a section of high brick wall which is a surviving structure from the grounds of Mitcham Grove - Ravensbury lane probably aligns with the original route of the main road before it was diverted to its present alignment via Ravensbury Mill. Permission was granted in 2006 for redevelopment of the Café site and childrens play area for a multi-use health centre, nursery and new café which whilst mainly providing for the retention of the historic wall, will require some demolition of the locally listed structure.

Watermeads housing estate is described (and illustrated) in Pevsner's - London South as one of the most attractive housing developments of the 1970s. This comprises a development of houses and flats arranged in a meandering three-storey ribbon set within landscaped grounds that once formed part of Mitcham Grove grounds. Distinctively different in terms of design from other buildings in the area the development has a strong horizontal emphasis with continuous bands of timber framed windows separated by



~~horizontal bands of cladding panels~~ and with a flat roof set behind a parapet set behind the upper band of cladding panels. Whilst the quality of the development has been diminished by a lack of consistent fenestration and boundary treatments, the relationship of the built development to the surrounding landscaping and adjacent Ravensbury Park contributes to the character of the conservation area.



Other buildings include the Morden Hall Garden Centre main building and associated sheds and storage/office buildings. Mainly steel framed glasshouse construction these buildings reflect the character of garden buildings and whilst not particularly significant architecturally do fit into their parkland setting.

Also within the area of the former Kitchen Garden is the National Trust



café, a traditionally detailed brick building with a wide porch and shallow pitched roof and does not detract from the over character and appearance of the conservation area.

PLOT WIDTHS AND HEIGHTS

This sub area is mainly characterised by the informal arrangement of buildings set within parkland or within informal, mainly spacious plots. The relationship between buildings and high walls enclosing and within the Parks is also a significant contributing characteristic. The way the river watercourses wind their way through the area linking the larger Mill buildings also contributes significantly to the area's character.

Buildings within and adjacent to Morden Hall Park and at the western end of Ravensbury Park are predominantly two or single storey, the tallest building being the White House which is three storeys. To the east is the Watermeads development which in contrast comprises an articulated continuous three-storey block comprising narrow terraces of flats and houses that winds through a wider unified landscape of the former grounds of Mitcham Grove rather than within individual plots. This reflects the characteristic relationship between built form and open space



which is a feature of this sub-area particularly within the parks.

The Mill buildings which are also two storey, have a prominence within the area due to their larger scale as compared with the more domestic proportions of the of the estate buildings which is emphasised by the larger storey heights and more industrial scale of the buildings themselves.



DISTINCTIVE AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS AND LOCAL DETAILS



By far the most prevalent building material is a traditional clay stock brick work from which the majority of buildings and associated structures such as the walls enclosing and sub-dividing the parks are built. A number of the Lodge buildings are constructed from white Gault brick, which weather in a distinctive way. A

number of buildings, including Morden Hall and Ivy Lodge (below) have been rendered and painted mainly white.



There are also a significant number of timber framed buildings with weatherboarded exteriors, usually in combination with some brickwork, usually in the form of a plinth.



Windows are predominantly timber sashes, casements and French

windows to the domestic buildings with steel "Crittall" windows to the main block of Ravensbury Mill.



The main roofing materials is Welsh slate with some plain clay tiling with some pantiles to the small workshop buildings with Morden Hall Park. Roofs are generally pitched, either hipped or with gables, often with prominent bargeboards. The Watermeads housing development, however, has flat roofs.



Significant local details include the tall decorative chimney stacks to the Morden Hall Park lodge buildings. These have decorative corbelled faience cornice capping details and moulded banding and projecting plaques between each chimney pot also in pale cream faience.



The detailing of the chimney stack and adjoining porch of the Bothy is also distinctive.



Other details include: -

- the crenellated parapets to Morden Cottage; and



- the clock tower marking the entrance to the stable courtyards.



Many of the historic buildings retain internal features such as stable divides and troughs which are of historic importance.

