

Morden Sub Area Neighbourhoods



DRAFT

16 St. Helier

St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Origins and General Character

The St. Helier Estate is bounded to the north by the river Wandle and Central Road, to the east and south by the boundary of the London Borough of Sutton and the west by the Wimbledon to Sutton railway line.

According to the Tithe map of Morden in 1838 most of the land which the St. Helier Estate now stands on was owned by Charles Hallowell Carew, heir of Carew Manor and estate in Beddington, who gambled himself into bankruptcy and died penniless at 43 years of age. The Carews descended from the Carews of Carew castle in Pembrokeshire and dominated Beddington for four centuries. Most of the land was either grass or arable with a few rural cottages and farm houses. Central Road, Bishopsford Road, Green Lane, Wrythe Lane and Green Wrythe Lane were already apparent and open agricultural land had started to be developed. By 1914 the Sutton bypass (St. Helier's Avenue) was planned due to the rapid development in the Sutton area, it was completed in 1926 and would bisect the estate.

When the London County Council gained powers to compulsorily acquire land for a large garden-city style development for working class citizens

south of the Thames to alleviate overcrowded areas of inner London boroughs in 1925, sixty eight lots totalling 825 acres were purchased from various owners, fifty six plots of which were located in Morden. Between 1926 and 1929 all the land required was purchased. 95 of the 825 acres were purchased from Gilliat Hatfield of Morden Hall who attempted to fight the purchase and came to resent the encroaching developments gradually hemming in his estate. The rest of the plots were owned by various landlords with some large houses and many cottages being demolished to make way for the new estate.

The Northern line extension was due to open in Morden in 1926/7 with the extension of the Wimbledon line from South Merton, mainline station St. Helier opened in 1930.

Following the successful development of Merton Park by John Innes in the late 19th century and the later Sutton Garden Suburb based on Ebenezer Howard's Garden City tradition, St. Helier was designed with the same principals in mind but for the working classes. The whole estate fell within three urban district councils, namely Surrey County Council, Carshalton Urban District Council and Merton and Morden Urban District Council and was owned by the London County Council,

this made it difficult to administer cohesively.

Plans and elevations of the estate buildings were drawn up under the supervision of G. Topham Forrest who had experience designing previous cottage estates and care was taken to preserve as many of the existing trees as possible along with other natural features.

The estate was developed in sections and the first brick was laid in 1929. An exceptional feature of the estate is that it included about 130 acres of open space, creating a large area for recreation and enhancing the environmental quality of the area. Roads were designed with the provision of grass verges on either side of the arterial roads along with footpaths, culs-de-sac and greens. The new road names were named alphabetically after Abbeys of England and Wales in recognition of the monastic connections of the area. The estate was intended to be self-contained with its own schools, churches, shops and public houses. St Helier Hospital in the Borough of Sutton was opened in 1942 with the growing population and its health requirements.



Evesham Road



Moreton Green from Llanthony Road

St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

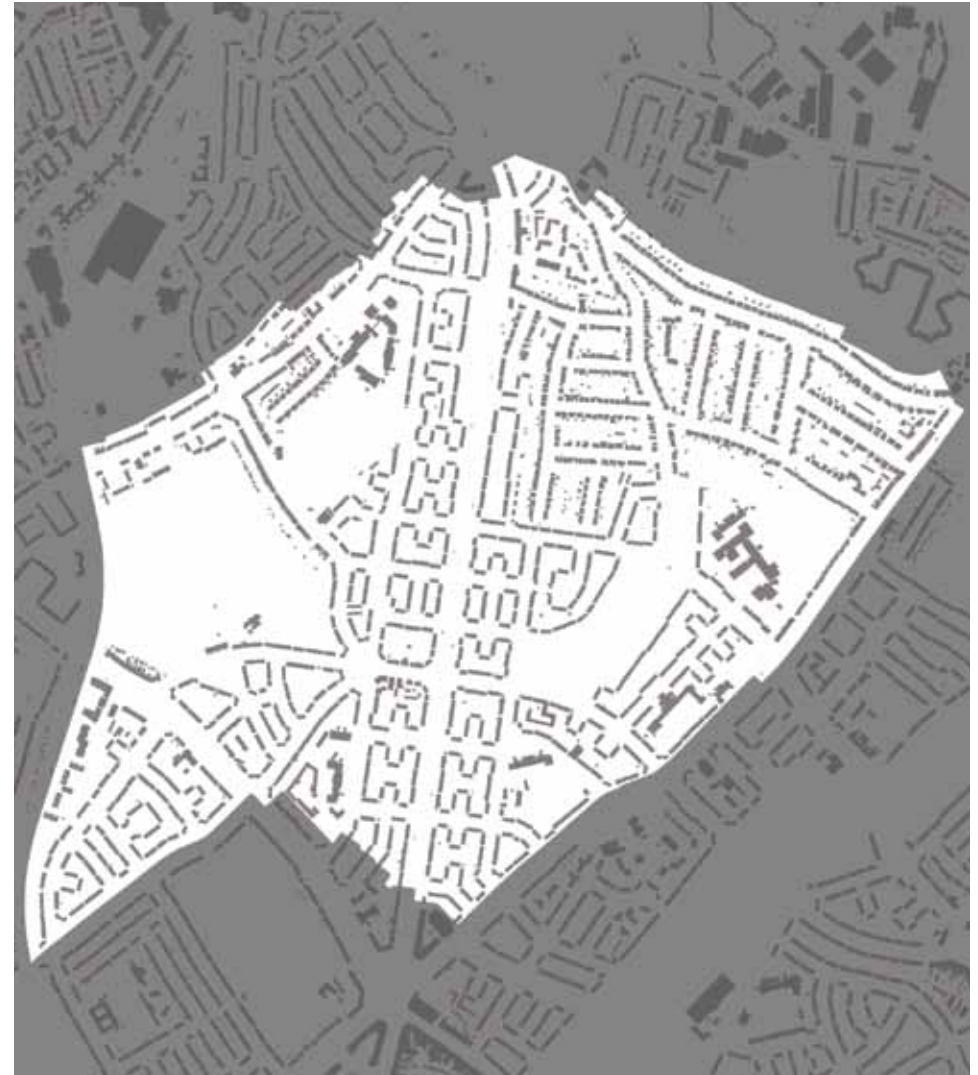
Built Form

There is a definite template for the those buildings built as part of the original estate, five colours of brick were used in stretcher bond and four colours of roof tiles in either pantiles or slates. The general form is medium-density two-storey red brick terraces with a low pitched roof. Roof pitches do vary but the overall pitch is low, only allowing room for loft conversions in the steeper pitched roofs. The windows have Georgian proportions and were casement windows on the first floor with exposed box sash windows on the ground floor, these have mostly been replaced with UPVC windows, some having glazing bars that follow the lines of the original windows keeping the rhythm of the design. Some houses have projecting bay windows and others have bow shape bay windows with red clay tiles hung between the ground and first floor windows.

There are various porch forms and a number of front door canopy styles, the main form being a thin classical curved bracket style. Some original doors still exist in a cottage style with small panes of glass, two rows over three, and boarded. These have been extensively replaced by modern doors. The estate was planned after the Sutton Bypass (St Helier Avenue) was built and it bisects the estate into

two parts. It was designed in such a way that there are many culs de sac with terraces surrounding little round or square greens and with green areas on most corner plots. The dual carriageway of St. Helier Avenue is exceptionally green on either side and Green Lane is unique in being a dual carriageway with divided by a large park-like green central reservation. Privet hedges would have dominated the whole estate softening the quality of the built form, these still exist in some places, although many have been replaced by harder boundaries and in some cases completely removed and the front laid to hard standing.

There are pockets of later development namely Willows Avenue and Wandle Road, which is later 1930's semi-detached and terraced houses with a variety of materials. Red brick with pebbledashing, oriel windows, projecting gabled dormers with red clay tiles, Tudorised with bay windows and hipped roofs all with leaded wooden casement windows with curved arch over top of transom. Canopies with arched bracket details exist within the design of some of the houses. Most of the boundary treatments are hard within these roads with much hard standing due to parking restrictions.



St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Land use

The St. Helier neighbourhood is mostly residential use. There are some blocks of flats along Green Lane and off Central Road in the new Willows development. There are also flats above shopping parades, namely in Green Lane, Central Road and the north end of St. Helier Avenue. Schools/Colleges occupying large sites are Merton College Playing Fields, Malmesbury School, St. Teresas Primary School and The Harris Academy Merton.

Open Space

This neighbourhood has a fair proportion of open space, the largest of which is Morden Recreation Ground which offers a variety of sporting activities including a bowling green, children's playground, three rugby pitches, three football pitches, tennis courts/multi-sports pitch and changing rooms. Merton Rugby Football Club has its own clubhouse on Morden Recreation Ground. What remains of Risley Sports Ground, most of which was developed into an educational facility, is now a neglected parcel of land accessed from the lane behind the row of shops on Green Lane. Moreton Green, which is a local park of 4.6 hectares, has woodland and a play area. Specifically throughout the St.

Merton borough character study: [16 St Helier Local Neighbourhood](#)

Helier estate there are little round and square green spaces which together with some substantial grass verges act as a collective feature to create a sense of openness which enhances the overall area.

Movement

The major movement corridors are Bishopsford Road with the neighbourhood being bisected by St. Helier Avenue which is a dual carriageway transporting a large volume of traffic between the Rosehill Roundabout and the A24 London/Morden Road. The minor movement route of Green Lane crosses the south west part of the neighbourhood with Central Road bounding the north-west of the neighbourhood. Bus routes follow most of these roads.

The Wimbledon to Sutton railway line bounds the south-western part of the neighbourhood with St. Helier station just within its boundaries.



Moreton Green from Marham Gardens

St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood Analysis



St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Heritage Assets

Heritage map to be added at later stage

St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Character Areas

- 1 St. Helier
- 2 Willows Avenue
- 3 The Drive



1 St. Helier Character Area

Assessment

The St. Helier estate was designed to incorporate as much greenery in its environment as possible. This included grass verges which have been lost in many roads, trees and privet hedges to soften the built environment and open spaces.

The houses show various porch forms and a number of front door canopy styles, the main form being a thin classical curved bracket. Some original doors still exist in a cottage style with small panes of glass, two rows over three, and boarded. These have been extensively replaced by modern doors. The windows have Georgian proportions and were casement windows on the first floor with exposed box sash windows on the ground floor, these have mostly been replaced with UPVC windows, some having glazing bars that follow the lines of the original windows keeping the rhythm of the design.

Morden recreation ground is only accessible from four points off Central Road, Farm Road, Faversham Road and Middleton Road and this large open space is surrounded and concealed behind terraces of houses. What remains of Risley Sports Ground, most of which was developed into an educational facility, is now a neglected parcel of land accessed from the lane behind the row of shops on Green

Lane.

The Willows is a brand new development currently being built between Willows Avenue and Bristol Road on the former grounds of Merton College. This is similarly designed to the development in Green Lane next to St. Helier rail station, with red brick and rendered mini turrets topped with red clay hipped roofs.

These more modern developments reflect the style of building in the 1930s blocks of flats along Green Lane and Glastonbury Road and Central Road. There are pockets of more recent developments namely in Goldcliff Close, an 1980s townhouse style development and Pilgrim Close, built in the last couple of decades.

The Chaucer Centre and Malmesbury Primary School are two of the original schools opened in 1930 and were designed singularly by Surrey County Council. They show a cohesive style with Georgian details, tall sash windows, red gauged brickwork around the windows and moulded brickwork.

Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

Identity
Urban Layout
Movement
Architectural Interest
Built Form
Public Realm
Trees
Landscape
Features
Economic Vitality

Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **70**

Area type:

Area with scope to reinforce the existing character



St. Helier Avenue

1 St. Helier Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Original porches in St. Helier Avenue



Morden recreation ground



Green Lane shopping parade



New development in Green Lane



Satellite dishes and boundary treatments in Merevale Crescent

Enhancement Project

SH1: Risley sports ground - investigate future options. Improve access.

SH2: North-west corner plot in crossing of Central Road and Farm Road requires landscaping/maintenance.

Issues

Public Realm:

- Loss of grassy verges.
- Loss of boundaries/replacement of privet hedges with hard boundaries.
- Laying of front garden to hard standing for low maintenance/car parking.
- Shopping parade in Green Lane opposite St. Helier station in need of improvement.
- Placement of satellite dishes on front façades.

Built Form:

- Infilled/storm porches disrupting the lines of terraces.
- Replacement UPVC windows lacking the original design elements eroding character of houses.
- Replacement doors inappropriate to the style of the houses.
- Loss or replacement of door canopies.
- Use of skylights on front facades disrupting the rooflines.
- Use of stone cladding/painting/pebbledashing/Tudorisation to alter façades.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Reinstatement of grass verges.
- Retain existing front boundaries and landscape.
- The existing round or square green spaces, green areas on corner plots, tree lined grass verges and privet hedges should be protected as intrinsic landscape features of this neighbourhood.

Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Retain existing features where they exist and follow original glazing patterns when replacing windows.
- Place rooflights, satellite dishes and solar panels on rear elevation.

2 Willows Avenue Character Area

Assessment

The Willows Avenue Character area is comprised of two small areas divided by St. Helier Avenue and is defined by semi-detached two storey 1930s medium density houses in varying materials.

Willows Avenue contains 1930s semi-detached houses, with combinations of pebledashing and red brickwork, Tudorised gables, casement windows with leaded lights, with a low brick wall for boundary treatment with a hedge above and a wooden gate.

There are no trees or verges to soften the streetscape in this whole area so it is important that greenery/hedges are retained in front gardens and forecourts are not fully laid to hard standing as this further hardens the environment.

Part of Central Road is in this area and includes more diversity from Edwardian to 1980s properties. A couple of Edwardian terraces exist with differing details in domestic cottage style and Arts and Crafts style.

A small row of shops is opposite these terraces which has 1930s details, one of the buildings shows a large Dutch gable in red brick, casement windows with a mansard roof with curved hips. Some 1930s detached bungalows exist in Wandle Road, with the general form being 1930s two storey semi-detached in varying materials, with a

few examples of semi-detached and detached Edwardian properties with jettied details.

Merton College playing fields is included in the Willows Avenue character area and an entrance providing access to Ravensbury Park can be found off Wandle Road offering valuable open views over greenery, waterspace and trees.

Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

Identity
Urban Layout
Movement
Architectural Interest
Built Form
Public Realm
Trees
Landscape
Features
Economic Vitality

Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **60**

Area type:

Area with scope to reinforce the existing character



Willows Avenue

2 Willows Avenue Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Merton College playing fields



Central Road



Alterations in Wandle Road



Wandle Road



Bungalows in Wandle Road



Entrance to Ravensbury Park from Wandle Road

Issues

Public Realm:

- Loss of boundaries/replacement of privet hedges/picket fences with hard boundaries.
- Laying of front garden to hard standing for car parking.
- Placement of satellite dishes on front façades.

Built Form:

- Replacement UPVC windows lacking the original design elements eroding character of houses.
- Replacement doors inappropriate to the style of the houses.
- Use of skylights/solar panels on front facades disrupting the rooflines.
- Large loft conversions with disproportionately large dormer windows.
- Garage extensions that allude to being part of the original design and filling spaces between semi-detached houses.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Retention/reinstatement of appropriate softer boundaries and landscaping in front garden to soften the hard streetscape.
- Placement of satellite dishes on less prominent site on buildings.

Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Retain existing features where they exist and follow original glazing patterns when replacing windows.
- Place rooflights and solar panels on rear elevation.
- Extensions sympathetic, but clearly defined as a new element of development respecting the open grain between semis.

3 The Drive Character Area

Assessment

The Drive is a minor route through the St. Helier neighbourhood and this Character Area is bounded to the north by Wandle Road, to the east by Bishopsford Road, to the south by the St. Helier estate and the west by St. Helier Avenue.

There is far more variety in the grain, building style and materials than in the Willows Avenue Character Area. This suggests a more ad-hoc style in building development in this area.

The general style is 1930s two-storey and bungalow detached houses, some semi-detached houses, with some Edwardian detached houses in Pollard Road with more modern infill between the 1930s and Edwardian developments.

Victory Avenue, Leonard Avenue and Florence Avenue are characterised by verges and small to medium sized trees.

Edward Avenue, Milner Road, Morton Road and Seddon Road have medium sized trees with no verges, wide avenues and small pavements.

The large Edwardian houses in Pollard Road are characterised by Tudorised gables, red brickwork/rendering/pebledashing, ornate porches, bay windows, red hanging tiles with red clay roof tiles with a steep hipped roof with ornate ridge tiles and pinacles to the roof front.

The rest of the area is made up of a variety of styles of 1930s bungalows and two storey houses, some semi-detached in a variety of materials. There is much loss of original features with some unusual and interesting designs such as in Florence Avenue such as the two storey split gable detached house pictured right. Williams Lane was developed by one developer with Tudorised 1930s semi-detached houses.

Freeman Road is a 1980s development in a cul de sac with two-storey brick terraces on a narrow site with red clay hanging tiles and concrete roof tiles and UPVC doors and windows. There are hedges and landscaping to soften the parking area. Gavina Close is also a cul de sac with 1980s/90s development with brick two storey townhouses on either side of the street with integral projecting garages, concrete roof tiles, UPVC windows and plastic weatherboarding. Planting could be reinforced in Gavina Close as there is a lack of verges/trees and a priority for parking outside garages.

Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

Identity
Urban Layout
Movement
Architectural Interest
Built Form
Public Realm
Trees
Landscape Features

Economic Vitality
Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **65**

Area type:

Area with scope to reinforce the existing character



Edward Avenue

3 The Drive Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Florence Avenue



Florence Avenue



Morton Road



Pollard Road



Ravensbury Avenue



Williams Lane

Issues

Public Realm:

- Replacement of privet hedges/picket fences with hard boundaries.
- Laying of front garden to hard standing for low maintenance.

Built Form:

- Replacement UPVC windows lacking the original design elements eroding character of houses.
- Replacement doors inappropriate to the style of the houses.
- Garage extensions obtrusive beside bungalows.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Retention/reinstatement of appropriate softer boundaries and landscaping in front garden to soften the streetscape.

Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Retain existing features where they exist and follow original glazing patterns when replacing windows.
- Garage extensions to be placed further back from bungalow façades to maintain the space between plots.

St. Helier Local Neighbourhoods

1 St. Helier Character Area			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Identity: Clearly identifiable edges that distinguish the area from the surrounding development	Good		
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces	Good		
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets		Moderate	
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest		Moderate	
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details	Good		
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments		Moderate	
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area	Good		
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area		Moderate	
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area		Moderate	
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character		Moderate	
Criteria Score	40	30	
Character Area Total Score	70		

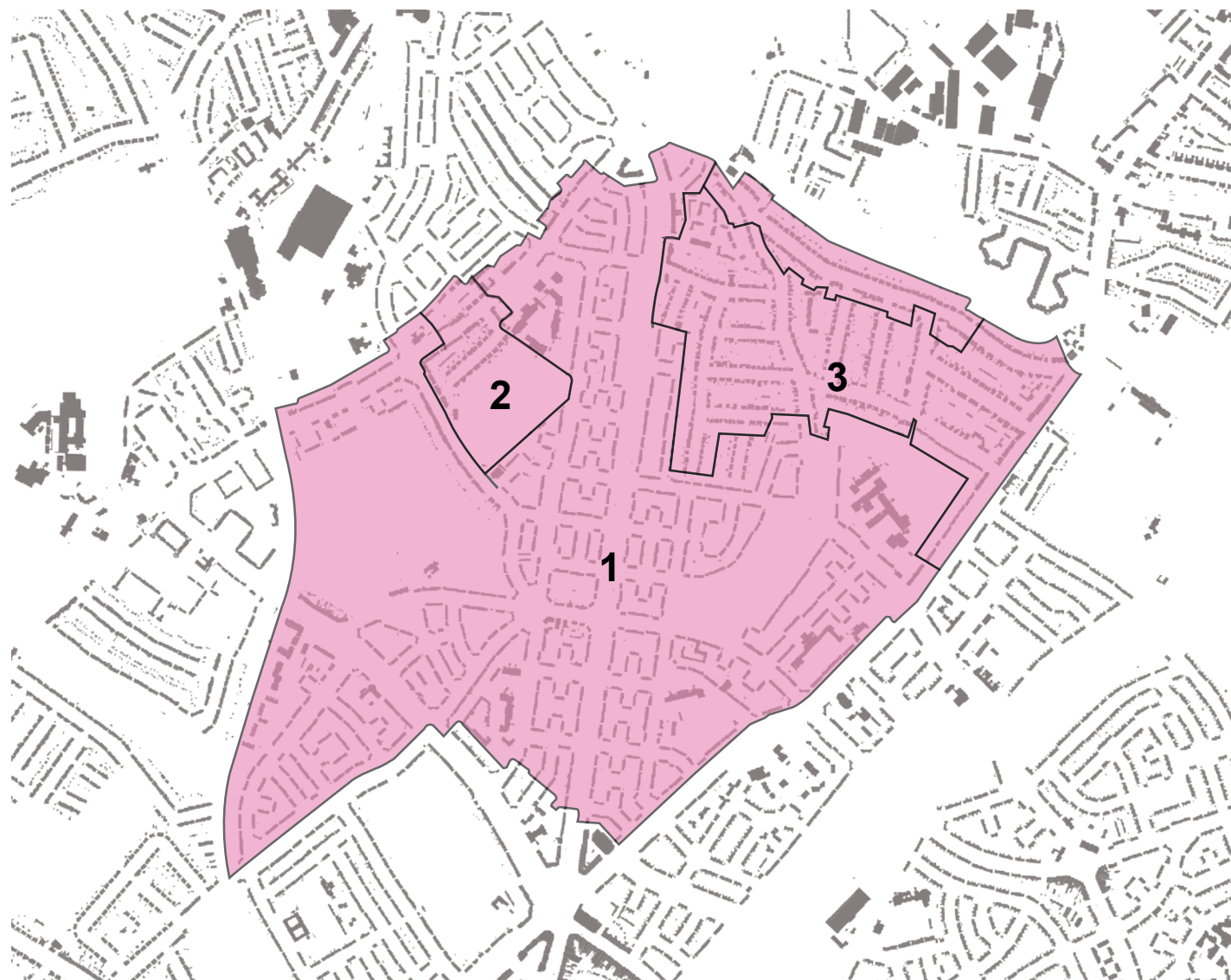
2 Willows Avenue Character Area			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Identity: Clearly identifiable edges that distinguish the area from the surrounding development		Moderate	
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces		Moderate	
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets	Good		
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest	Good		
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details		Moderate	
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			Poor
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area		Moderate	
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area	Good		
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			Poor
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character	Good		
Criteria Score	40	20	
Character Area Total Score	60		




St. Helier Local Neighbourhoods

3 The Drive Character Area			
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant Contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Identity: Clearly identifiable edges that distinguish the area from the surrounding development	Good		
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces	Good		
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets		Moderate	
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest	Good		
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details		Moderate	
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments	Good		
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area		Moderate	
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			Poor
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			Poor
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character	Good		
Criteria Score	50	15	
Character Area Total Score	65		

St. Helier Local Neighbourhood

Character Area Assessment



- 1 St. Helier
- 2 Willows Avenue
- 3 The Drive
-  Area of established high quality
-  Area with scope to reinforce existing character
-  Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity