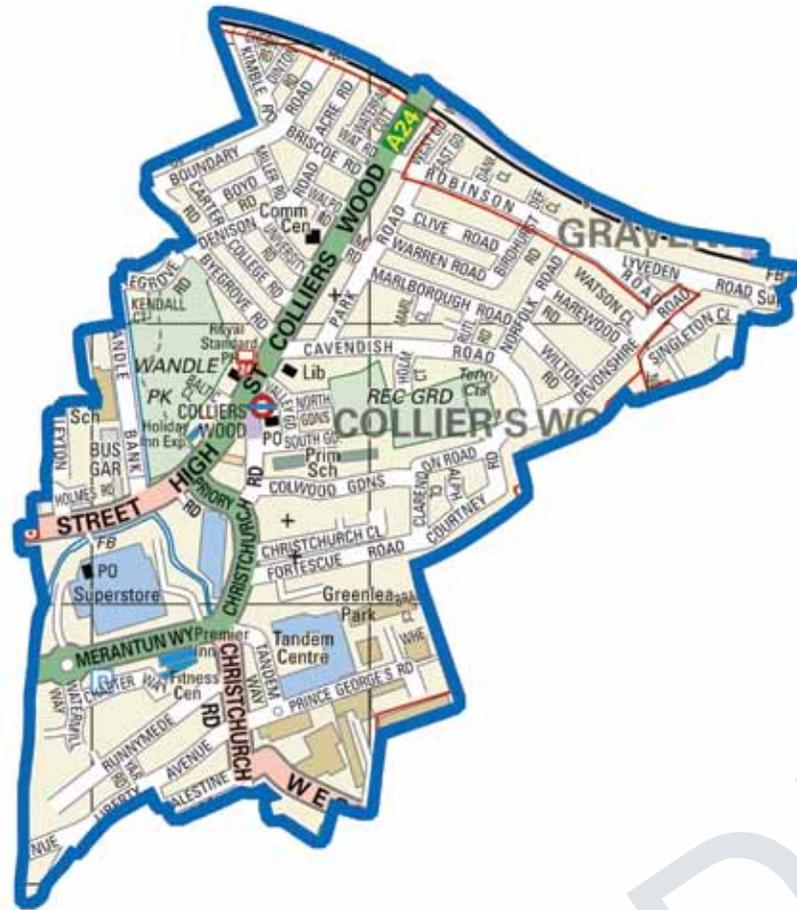


Colliers Wood Sub Area Neighbourhoods



DRAFT

1

1 Colliers Wood

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Origins and General Character

Colliers Wood is characterised by its fragmented grain and the absence of a clear town centre core. It is defined by the presence of large retail stores which take up large areas of land and bear little relation to their surroundings. The Tandem Centre contains high street stores but in an 'out-of-town' retail format with single storey retail development surrounding a large surface car park. The Priory Retail Park includes retail warehouse stores surrounding car parking. This is located on an island site and all uses are inward looking, blank facades facing onto surrounding roads. The largest retail development: the Sainsbury's and M&S store is of a much larger scale than surrounding residential development, which is of a much finer grain. These uses give Colliers Wood the feel of an 'out-of-town' centre despite its 'in-town' location. These retail destinations are poorly related to each other and to the surrounding communities, with large roads, complex junctions and servicing arrangements fracturing the quality of the urban fabric. A line of pylons running through the neighbourhood detracts from views into the area as they create visual clutter. The development beyond the

retail parks is mostly residential, split down the middle by a busy high street. The River Wandle and Merton Abbey Mills are unique local features and assets, though neither is easily accessible and both are poorly integrated with the wider area.

Previous archaeological investigation suggests that the area around the River Wandle and its floodplain was occupied in the later prehistoric period. The impact of the Roman period is also evident in that the line of the Roman Road 'Stane Street' follows the line of the current High Street Colliers Wood in south westerly direction to the vicinity of Colliers Wood Tube. At this point it would have crossed the site of the later Merton Priory towards Morden. The area has a rich history ranging from the settlement of Augustinian order at Merton Abbey and the calico printers along the River Wandle. Merton Priory was established in 1117 excavated remains of part of the chapter house can now be seen near the Savacentre superstore. They are under Merantun way which was raised during construction to preserve the site. The priory was surrendered to the crown in 1538 on the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. Industry particularly bleaching developed along the Wandle. Merton

Abbey Mills were established by Huguenot silk throwers in the early 18th century. This industry further intensified in the area which became home to two of the country's major influences in textile design, William Morris and Arthur Liberty utilised adjacent factory complexes on the banks of the Wandle at Merton Abbey. The site of the Morris works lies beneath the now Savacentre and to the west of the river under Trellis House just outside the boundary of this character area.

Ordnance survey maps from 1865 show the area as predominantly rural in character with South Coast railway and Southern Iron railway running along the northern and southern boundary of the area. However the tracks of the Surrey Iron railway were taken up in the 1970s. The farmland was interspersed with substantial houses such as Colliers Wood House, Wandlebank House and Byegrove House. There was a cluster of development around Singlegate turnpike. The village of Colliers wood or 'Singlegate' was concentrated either side of Merton Road between turnpike gate and Merton bridge. It comprised of a terrace of small cottages, a Mission Hall and several shops.



Brown & Root Tower on High Street Colliers Wood

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Up until the late 19th century Colliers Wood remained a small riverside hamlet, with weatherboard cottages, inns and some water powered industry such as copper mills. Between 1870 and 1874 semi-detached stucco fronted houses appeared along Swains Lane which is today known as Robinson Road. Larger houses were laid out on the former grounds of Colliers Wood House. In 1877 Cavendish, Devonshire, Harewood, Lyriden, Marlborough, Norfolk, Park, Robinson, Rutland & Wilton Roads were marked out with house plots on plans which were prepared for auctioneers, the whole estate was conceived as a pleasant residential area. An economic depression slowed down development of the estate however this staggered progress created diversity in the houses which were built as lower class Victorian-Edwardian homes. The houses are mostly pebbledash or mock Tudor and are characterised by modest architectural embellishment. The growth of Colliers Wood estate proceeded in a piecemeal manner. There was further industrial development such as the Tandem works to the south of the Tooting, Merton & Wimbledon Line. By 1914 Colliers Wood was densely developed as estates to the east of the high street

such as Miller Road and Denison Road appeared. The former turnpike building became the site of Colliers Wood underground station, the timber cottages were replaced by simple stock brick houses with slate roofs. During the 1930s further infill appeared in Colwood, Valley, North & South Gardens and Boundary Road, these were typically modest 2 storey terraces.

The 1960s saw the creation of a gyratory system involving Priory road and the creation of a landmark building, the Brown & root tower (formerly Lyon Tower) which is a stark building that is negatively perceived by the local community. During the 1980s and 1990s there has been a proliferation of big box retail parks whereby former industrial sites were developed such as the Priory Retail Park and the Tandem Centre. The former William Morris print works site was developed into the Savacentre which is a large retail unit housing a Sainsbury Supermarket and M & S store. These developments have resulted in large buildings that relate poorly to their surroundings and in many cases turn their backs on surrounding streets. Behind the Savacentre along Merantun Way a large hotel, fitness, centre, fast food

outlets and apartments blocks were developed. Wandlebank House was demolished in 1962, the site was later developed into an informal park which is accessible from the High Street and Byegrove Road. Part of former Merton Abbey Mills have been preserved for use as an alternative market whereby buildings have been converted for use as shops or restaurants and temporary stalls are erected on market days.



Merton Abbey Mills



Sainsburys Savacentre

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Built Form

There is variety in the built form within this area which includes Victorian / Edwardian terraces, big box development / out of town retail park and buildings of industrial heritage. The scale of development in the area is primarily in the order of 2-3 storeys, with some taller buildings lining the main road corridors. The tallest building in the neighbourhood is the Brown & Root Tower which has a poor local image and perception. As the figure ground adjacent illustrates the built form to the north of the area is predominantly terraces laid out in a grid like formal pattern. These houses are two storey late Victorian / Edwardian terraces although there are pockets of later infill. The built form is punctuated by two open spaces Wandle Park to the west and Colliers Wood Recreation Ground to the east. To the south the area transitions into a fractured urban grain with isolated large blocks such as the Sainsbury store, Premier Inn, Priory Retail Park and bus depot to the west. There are clusters of large rectangular blocks to the east such as the Tandem centre and commercial / industrial units to the rear which are inward facing developments. There is an informal cluster of medium size blocks to the south east namely Merton Abbey Mills.

The retail uses in the area are based on an 'out-of-town' format, each large store of retail park having its own car park. Outside of the cluster of retail parks the quality changes further along the High Street towards Tooting and South Wimbledon street frontages are relatively well defined and residential areas follow a typical block structure.

Land Use

Colliers Wood has a good mix of land uses, including retail, commercial, parks, civic and community facilities. Residential is to the north and south west of the character area. A line of retail/commercial units occupy the ground floor level of buildings which run along the route of High Street Colliers Wood. Towards the south retail use intensifies in sites such as the Savacentre, Priory Retail Park and Tandem Centre with adjacent car parks. Beyond the Tandem Centre along Prince George's Road there is a concentration of industrial / commercial units. There is open space in Wandle Park and Colliers Wood Recreation Ground. There is also a primary school, nurse school, community centre and a number of churches located in the neighbourhood.



Figure ground of Colliers Wood

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Movement

The area is divided by the road network where High Street Colliers Wood (A24) runs into Merton High Street (A238), this route is part of the strategic road network and connects the area to South Wimbledon to the south and Tooting to the north. The cycle superhighway (CS7) is a continuous bicycle link which begins at Southwark Bridge and terminates on High Street Colliers Wood. The A24 feeds onto Priory Road, Christchurch and Merantun Way which in turn are busy traffic corridors. There are a number of bus routes with stops on these roads. Colliers Wood underground station is located on Merton High Street which provides links to central London and beyond. Colliers Wood is an important bus interchange area, linking bus services from Mitcham to the Northern Line. A small bus interchange exists directly adjacent to the station and a bus garage is located just to the west.

The centre is difficult to move through due to a combination of main roads, large junctions and other barriers comprising the river corridor and employment uses to the south east mean that the centre is 'cut off' from surrounding residential areas. The road network dominates and routes

between the different retail uses and other attractions are either difficult to make or are non-existent. There are no direct links between the Tandem Centre, Priory Retail Park or the Sainsbury's / M&S store. Routes from the tube station are poorly defined and Merton Abbey Mills is highly isolated. The highway network also represents a confusing system of routes for vehicular traffic. While the interchange between bus services and the station is good, this tends to dominate the public realm. There are some pedestrian paths across Wandle Park which link to Wandle Meadows Park.

Open Space

Colliers Wood is home to two parks, including a recreation ground and the Wandle Park which has informal design consisting of grass, a linear path with trees generally beside the river and wetland features. The park is on the Nelson Trail and the Wandle Trail. The Wandle Valley is a green corridor running through the neighbourhood. Wandle Park is identified as a Local Park for local passive recreation. However the park is disconnected from the centre of Colliers Wood by the road and river barriers and its quality is undermined by a combination of overhead power lines and surrounding development

which does not address the space. Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is off High Street Colliers Wood and accessible from the surrounding residential areas, the recreation ground has ornamental gardens, a paddling pool, children's playground, one football pitch and two tennis courts.



High Street Colliers Wood



Wandle Park

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood Analysis



General Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Major movement corridor
- Minor movement corridor
- Movement corridor needing enhancement
- Major Gateway
- Strategic landmark
- Local landmark
- Topography gradient
- Waterspace

Positive Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Glimpsed views to open space
- Key view to open space
- Green open space

Negative Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Neighbourhood node needing enhancement
- Major barrier
- Open space in need of improvement
- CW Public realm enhancement needed

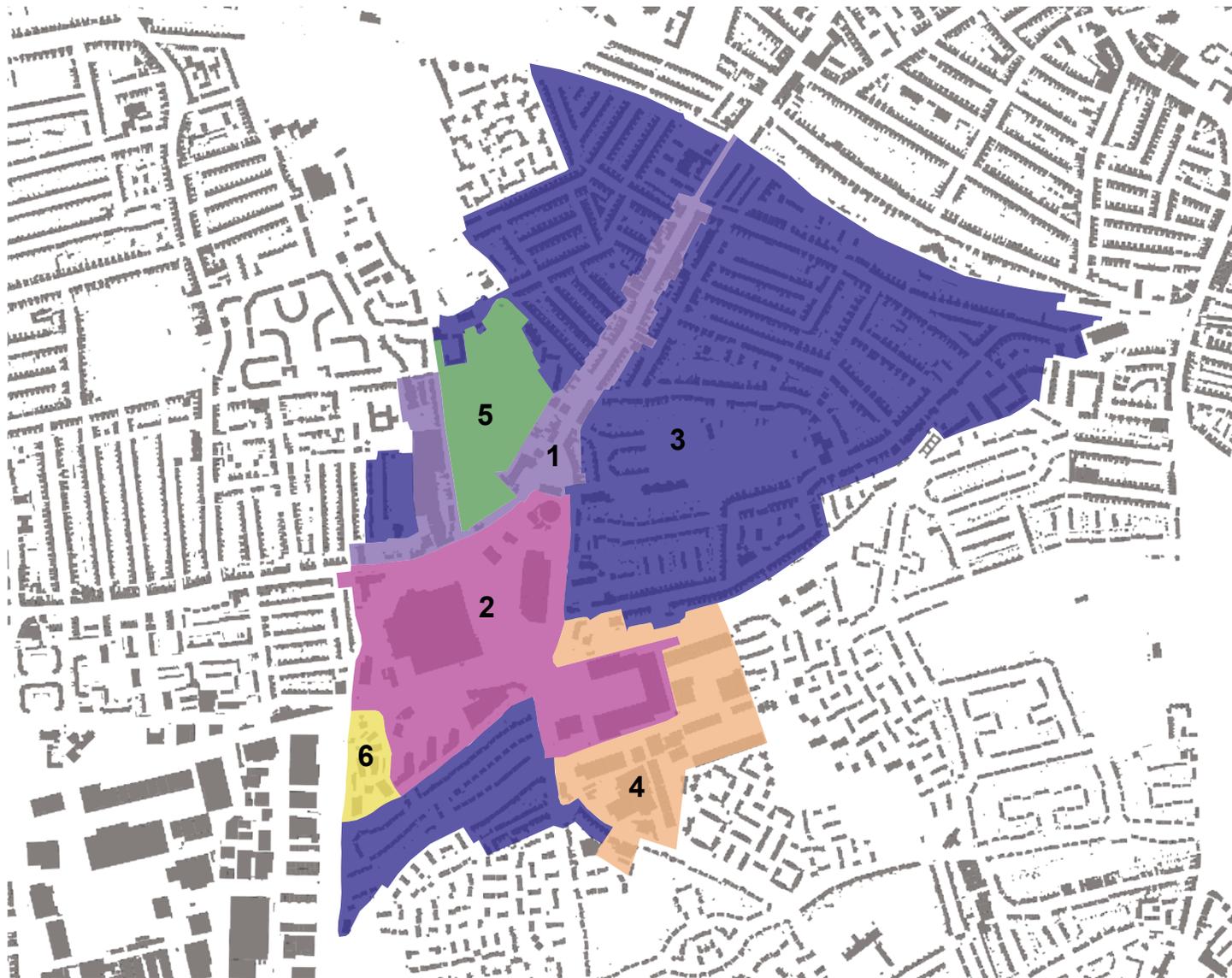
Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Heritage Assets

Heritage map to be added at later stage

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

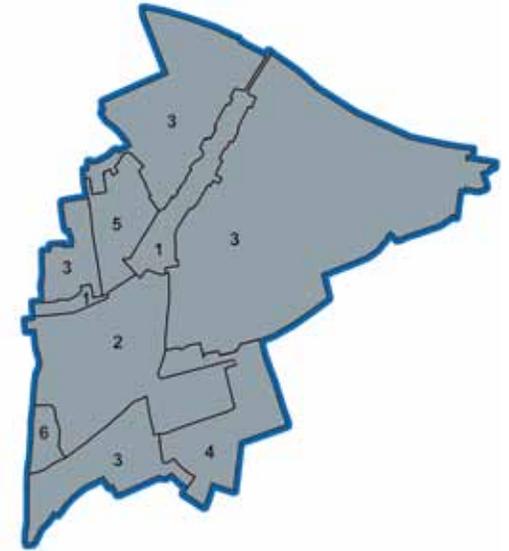
Character Areas



- 1 High Street Colliers Wood
- 2 Christchurch
- 3 Robinson / Boundary Road
- 4 Prince Georges Road
- 5 Wandle Park
- 6 Merton Abbey Mills

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Character Areas Assessment, Issues and Guidance



1 High Street Colliers Wood Character Area

Assessment

The main thoroughfare, the A24 comprising Merton and Colliers Wood High Streets provides the focus for this particular character area which is the historic commercial core of the neighbourhood. Part of this area is located in the Wandle Valley conservation area. The character is quite fragmented due to infill development however there are pockets of specifically terraces which in terms of built form and scale have an architectural rhythm. This area consists of mixed use mainly retail and residential development. The built form is primarily late Victorian / Edwardian terrace blocks fronting onto the A24 which are punctuated by side roads leading into residential development. The terraces range from 2-3 storeys generally with shops / commercial premises on ground floor and living accommodation above. There are a number of existing and former public houses scattered along the route of the A24. This area is dominated by the volume of traffic which flows through it; at the centre is the confluence of several main roads. The streetscape is marred by visual clutter created by guard rails and signage. The main orientation space is the area outside the tube station which is a Grade II listed building with a corner entrance which has a heavy

cubic form typical of the 1920s tube station design. The station parade adjacent consists of modest low rise 2 storey red brick block structure commercial development built during the 1930s. In parts of the area there is little architectural rhythm due variety in the scale and plot size of blocks, in some terraces buildings vary in height, roof articulation and materials. There are a range of finishes including red brick, London stock, painted brickwork and render. Recurring motifs in the area are sash windows, render decorations around windows, exposed stone lintels and red brick decorative courses. There are some original shop front surround and pilasters still visible on shop fronts however many are missing or in bad repair.

The late Victorian / Edwardian character of the area is punctuated with later development from the 1920s, 1930s, 1960s and contemporary infill. Most notably central to the area is the Brown & Root tower built in 1967 which is a stark dark grey landmark, at 19 storeys high the building dwarfs the surrounding houses and shops. Opposite the tube station there is a pocket of retail which are remnants from the old hamlet built in a humble Georgian style.

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



28 High Street Colliers Wood

1 High Street Colliers Wood Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Colliers Wood Underground Station



2 storey terrace with shops at ground floor



Station Parade



Signage on High Street Colliers Wood



Brown & Root tower High Street Colliers Wood

Issues

Public Realm:

- Pedestrian environment cluttered with guard railings, street signs and traffic lights.
- Pedestrian environment adversely affected by heavy traffic. Lack of quality pedestrian facilities and public realm treatment.
- Green space adjacent to Brown & Root tower is neglected.
- Lack of tree planting.

Built Form:

- Changes to original materials such as windows and painting over brickwork eroding character of original properties.
- Loss of original shop front features such as pilasters. The variety and condition of shop front treatments detracts from street.
- Brown & Root tower is an unattractive landmark which overshadows the area.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Rationalise street furniture and improve public realm surface treatments.
- Introduce street planting where possible.

Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Retain original shopfront details if present. Shop front alterations should be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- New developments should be creatively designed to be sympathetic in terms of massing, materials and details to the older properties in the area.
- Developments should make a positive contribution to the streetscene by creating an active frontage onto the high street.
- Alterations to facade on Brown & Root tower would enhance building and contribute to wider area.

Enhancement Project

CW1: Rationalise street furniture, improve public realm and introduce street planting.

CW2: Potential to create plaza around tube station entrance.

CW3: Improve facade of Brown & Root Tower.

2 Christchurch Character Area Assessment

Much of this character area is defined by the presence of large retail stores which take up sizable areas of land and bear little relation to their surroundings. The area is characterised by substantial free standing rectangular retail units clad in metal with standardised facades and signage.

The Tandem Centre contains high street stores but in an 'out-of-town' retail format with single storey retail development surrounding a large surface car park. It is a mixed use development with retail units in perimeter block form around car park and flats which front onto Christchurch Road. There is an internal pedestrian walkway with high level wave canopy above. The Priory Retail Park includes retail warehouse stores surrounding car parking. This is located on an island site and all uses are inward looking, blank facades facing onto surrounding roads. The largest retail development: the Sainsbury's and M&S store is of a much larger scale than surrounding residential development, which is of a much finer grain. The remains of the chapter house of Merton Priory Church lie beneath a road bridge adjacent to Sainsbury's however its existence is hidden from most visitors. Along

Merantun Way there is the Premier Inn a large contemporary hotel, flats and gym, behind which are aligned 3 blocks of flats off Chapter Way. The flats have simple 7 storey elevations with the top storey set back and internal parking at ground floor level. There are red brick with metal balconies and simple glazing. Adjacent to the flats there is a large expanse of car parking with drive thru' fast food outlets and a large pylon. These elements combine to create a disjointed public realm which relates poorly to surrounding development such as Merton Abbey Mills.

Overall these uses give the area the feel of an 'out-of-town' centre despite its 'in-town' location. The retail destinations are poorly related to each other and to the surrounding communities, with large roads, complex junctions and servicing arrangements fracturing the quality of the urban fabric.

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: **45**

Area type:

Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



Tandem Centre

2 Christchurch Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Sainsburys Savacentre



Priority Retail Park



Tandem Centre car park



Tandem Centre apartments on Christchurch Road



View into Priority Retail Park from High Street Colliers Wood

Enhancement Project

CW4: Enhance pedestrian route treatments and improve visibility of routes and river.

CW5: Highlight & celebrate location of Merton Abbey Chapter House remains.

CW6: Removal of pylons.

Issues

Public Realm:

- Public pathways along old railway line (adjacent Tandem Centre) and paths adjacent to Sainsburys (along both The Pickle and The Wandle) are littered or require maintenance. Views of paths are obscured, particularly path by Tandem Centre by billboards on Merantun Way.
- Overhead lines and pylons detract from the wider area.
- Pedestrian environment is poor as development is car dominated.
- Lack of tree planting.

Built Form:

- Concentration of big box retail units which are inward facing.
- Proliferation of signage on building frontages.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Improve pedestrian footpath treatments and enhance visibility of pedestrian routes.
- Removal of large pylons would enhance wider area.
- Strengthen tree planting.

Built Form:

- Advertising signage on buildings should be carefully rationalised and limited to necessary only.
- New development should be creatively designed to be sympathetic in terms of massing, materials and details to the older properties in the wider area.
- Developments should make a positive contribution to the streetscene by creating an active frontage onto the street.

3 Robinson / Boundary Road Character Area

Assessment

This character area covers the residential streets on either side of High Street Colliers Wood bounded to the north by the railway line and stretching south towards Merantun Way. Residential streets to the east of High Street Colliers Wood were first developed in the late Victorian period as estates were parcelled off. Development intensified in the early 1900s when streets appeared on the western side. Growth was staggered therefore some streets do not have a uniform appearance. Later infill from the 1930s is also evident. There are also pockets from the 1970s generally in small cul de sacs or arranged in 4 storey flat blocks set back from the street. Many houses appear to have 2 front entrances which indicates subdivision into flats. Central to the eastern side of development is the Colliers Wood recreation ground which houses along Cavendish Road back onto.

There is a mix of architectural motifs visible in the area and many which recur throughout. Most streets have retained the architectural character of the buildings however there are some where the variety in finish erodes this. Houses are primarily arranged in terraces however on some streets there are semi-detached examples. The predominant building type is a 2

storey late Victorian / Edwardian red brick terraces with restrained architectural embellishment such as simple stucco decoration. These terraces have pitched red tiled roofs with raised parapets at gable end, front gable projection and timber weatherboard. Houses have recessed porches, buildings set back from the street with small front gardens and generally brick front boundary wall. Variations in other streets include yellow stock and red brick decorative courses, coloured render finish, timber beam decoration and or pebbledash render. Some of the larger houses in the area display more elaborate render decoration and embellishments such as decorative roof ridges. There are also more simple stock brick 2 storey dwellings interspersed throughout the area. Generally yellow brick with red brick decorative courses and half / full bay windows.

The properties from the 1930s era are generally 2 storey with ground floor projection which forms a red tile canopy over carved timber frame porch with white / cream render finish and front gable detail some with bay windows on 1st floor. There are variations on this style with some having timber beam decoration particularly around front gable.

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



Boundary Road

3 Robinson / Boundary Road Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Cavendish Road



Courtney Road



Fortescue Road



Carter Road

Enhancement Project

CW7: Enhance pedestrian environment through maintenance of footpaths and tree planting.

CW8: Improve traffic calming schemes on Devonshire Road and Valley Gardens.

CW9: Improve green space adjacent Leyton Road.

Issues

Public Realm:

- Lack of tree planting in some streets.
- Variety in front boundary treatment degrades the cohesion of street scene.
- Paving; tarmac and paving slabs, fragmented finish in places.
- Visual appearance of traffic calming schemes on Devonshire Road and Valley Gardens creates unpleasant streetscene.
- Green space adjacent Leyton Road in need of improvement.

Built Form:

- Infilling of porches or entrance canopies and painting of brickwork destroys architectural rhythm.
- Changes to original materials such as roof tiles eroding character of original properties.
- Changes to front elevation of roofs such as dormer windows and roof lights.
- Proliferation of satellite dishes on houses in some streets which creates visual clutter along the front elevation.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Retain existing front boundaries and landscape.
- Maintenance of footpaths required.
- Strengthen tree planting.

Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Retain original doors and windows if present.
- Roof alterations should be subservient to the main roof and not disrupt the principal elevation.

4 Prince Georges Road Character Area

Assessment

This area is straddled behind the Tandem centre off Christchurch Road; it includes a mix of warehouse and distribution space as well as general industrial buildings and warehouses. Buildings are set back from road behind railings in cul de sac development which is disconnected from the surrounding area. It is a vehicle dominated area with poor pedestrian environment and links. The buildings are large rectangular units, office units are generally finished in red brick with glazing whilst industrial units are clad in metal and have loading bays. Buildings have car parking to the rear or a central car park of hard standing. A former railway line runs through this area which is currently used as a pedestrian path however it is hidden from view.

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: **30**

Area type:

Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



4 Prince Georges Road Character Area

Issues & Guidance



Office unit



Industrial unit



Commercial / Industrial units



Office units



Commercial / Industrial units

Enhancement Project

CW10: Introduce tree planting to soften the appearance of industrial buildings.

CW11: Enhance pedestrian environment through maintenance of footpaths.

Issues

Public Realm:

- Pedestrian environment is adversely affected by narrow footpaths and fragmented finish of tarmac footpath.
- Lack of tree planting.
- Employment area is impermeable to pedestrians. Pedestrian links through the area are not clearly visible or subject to natural surveillance due to building layout.

Built Form:

- Buildings do not contribute to the streetscene as they are set back from the street behind railings and are generally inward facing.
- There is variety in the quality of finish and materials of the industrial units which creates a disjointed and cluttered appearance to the overall area.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Maintenance of footpaths and introduction of tree planting would improve pedestrian environment.

Built Form:

- Developments should make a positive contribution to the streetscene by creating an active frontage onto the street.
- Industrial / commercial buildings should be creatively designed to be of a high quality and sympathetic in terms of massing, materials and details to the wider area.

5 Wandle Park Character Area

Assessment

Wandle Park lies alongside the river Wandle, the site is bounded by Byegrove Road, Merton High Street and the River Wandle. The park occupies approximately 11 acres and is situated on the site of a former millpond. Public access is via Millars Mead Court, Baltic Close, behind flats along Byegrove Road and across the footbridge along the River Wandle. The main vehicle access is by the old lodge.

The park has an informal design consisting of grass, an informal network of path and wooden footbridges. There are individual and clusters of trees scattered around the park particularly beside the river. There are also a number of wetland features forming the river bank. Along Merton High Street the park is enclosed by boundary railings and piers. Along Byegrove Road the park is bounded by a brick wall which prevents views into the park at street level. There are views at the northern end of Byegrove through railings however these are obscured by a large pylon. An additional pylon at the southern end of the park also detracts from the space. There is a Grade II listed stone drinking fountain at the southern end of the park and another stone drinking fountain close to the footbridge linking

the park Wandle Bank. At the northern end of the park there is play equipment enclosed behind low metal railings.

Wandle Park is the main green open space in Colliers Wood but is disconnected from the centre by road and river barriers and its quality is undermined by a combination of overhead power lines. The park is a quiet oasis away from the busy high street however it is isolated from the surrounding area and the adjacent buildings do not address this pleasant green open space.

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



View of footbridge in Wandle Park

5 Wandle Park Character Area

Issues & Guidance



View of houses & flats on Byegrove Road



Boundary wall to Byegrove Road



Pathway and footbridge over stream



Playground area



View of Brown and Root tower from the park



Park entrance at Baltic Close

Issues

Public Realm:

- Wandle Park is visually disconnected from the surrounding area.
- Fragmented gravel / tarmac finish around park entrance off High Street.
- Wandle River is cut off from the park by railings.

Built Form:

- Surrounding development does not address the park.
- Large pylons degrade the quality of the green space.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Improve visibility of park through enhancements to boundary and park entrances.
- Integrate the River Wandle into the park setting.

Built Form:

- Surrounding development should be integrated into the park setting.

Enhancement Project

CW12: Improve visual links to park by enhancing park entrance and boundary treatment.

CW13: Intergration of the River Wandle into park setting.

6 Merton Abbey Mills Character Area

Assessment

Merton Abbey Mills is a small enclave of former textile factory buildings, which lie to the south west of this neighbourhood. It is the site of the former Liberty silk printing works situated along the banks of the River Wandle. The print work buildings date from the 18th and 19th century and serve as reminders of the area's industrial past.

Today the site is used as a riverside craft village, which sits alongside industrial heritage such the restored waterwheel. Pretty shops, a riverside pub, teahouse and pizza restaurant are dotted throughout the craft village which is a pedestrianised area. There are also temporary stalls erected on market days. Merton Abbey Mills is disconnected from the surrounding area and it is not easily accessible due to barriers such as Merantun Way and the River Wandle. However the seclusion of site and the setting of the buildings create a pleasant pedestrian environment which is at a human scale.

The Colour House which is currently a theatre was formerly used for the dyeing process and is of historic interest. It is Grade II listed building and is the oldest building on site dating from the 18th century. It is built

of brick, flint and re-used stone with a pantiled roof. The Wheelhouse is a Grade II listed building from the 19th century, it is a small pantile roofed and brick built wheelhouse. An undershot waterwheel is housed in the weatherboard extension to the main building. Other buildings include Coles Shop brick built workshop which dates from 1890. It is a typical Victorian industrial building with attractive cast iron pillars supporting the upper floor. The Apprentice Shop is an attractive slate roofed, two storied building with metal framed windows. It faces the central area of the site and the river. The 1929 Shop which is central to the site is a rectangular brick industrial building. The Long Shop which houses small commercial units has a large roof with full length skylights. Arched ends are supported by elegant steel lattice trusses and the windows and doors are finely detailed. Across from the Long Shop there are some semi permanent restaurant / commercial units with tented roof structure.

Included in this character area is the Bennets Courtyard development completed in 2005 which relates well to Merton Abbey Mills. It comprises of 52 apartments, commercial space and communal roof garden in 2 long blocks built in yellow brick.

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
- Landscapes
- 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



The Wheelhouse and waterwheel

6 Merton Abbey Mills Character Area

Issues & Guidance



View of the Apprentice Shop & Coles Shop



The Apprentice Shop



View of the River Wandle & adjacent public house



Bennets Courtyard



The Colour House & Coles shop buildings

Issues

Public Realm:

- Paving; tarmac and paving slabs, fragmented finish.
- Temporary planters at entrance are neglected.
- Wayfinding signage is shabby and not clearly visible.
- Riverside landscaping and seating is in need of improvement to enhance river setting.
- Views into Merton Abbey Mills are obscured by advertising signage at entrance.

Built Form:

- Temporary / semi permanent structures are of poor quality and detract from the area.
- Signage on buildings appears temporary and is of poor quality.

Guidance

Public Realm:

- Improvements to public realm treatments to create a pleasant pedestrian environment.
- Implement landscape strategy throughout site and along riverside to enhance setting.
- Introduce consistent high quality wayfinding signage.

Built Form:

- Signage on buildings should be of high quality and limited to necessary only.
- Temporary / semi permanent structures should be of high quality using materials which complement the existing buildings.

Enhancement Project

CW14: Improve public realm treatments, landscaping, seating, wayfinding signage, shop signage & semi permanent structures.

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

1 Colliers Wood High Street 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			
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria Score	30	30	
Character Area Total Score	60		

2 Christchurch 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			
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria Score	20	25	
Character Area Total Score	45		

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

3 Robinson / Boundary Road 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			
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria Score	30	35	
Character Area Total Score	65		

4 Prince Georges Road 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			
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			
Public Realm: High quality public realm and or generally consistent boundary treatments			
Trees: Significant trees or shrubs that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Landscape: Green open spaces or riverside areas that make a positive contribution to the identity of the area			
Features: Topography, significant views or landmarks that contribute to the experience of being within the area			
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character			
Criteria Score	20	10	
Character Area Total Score	30		

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

5 Wandle Park Character Area

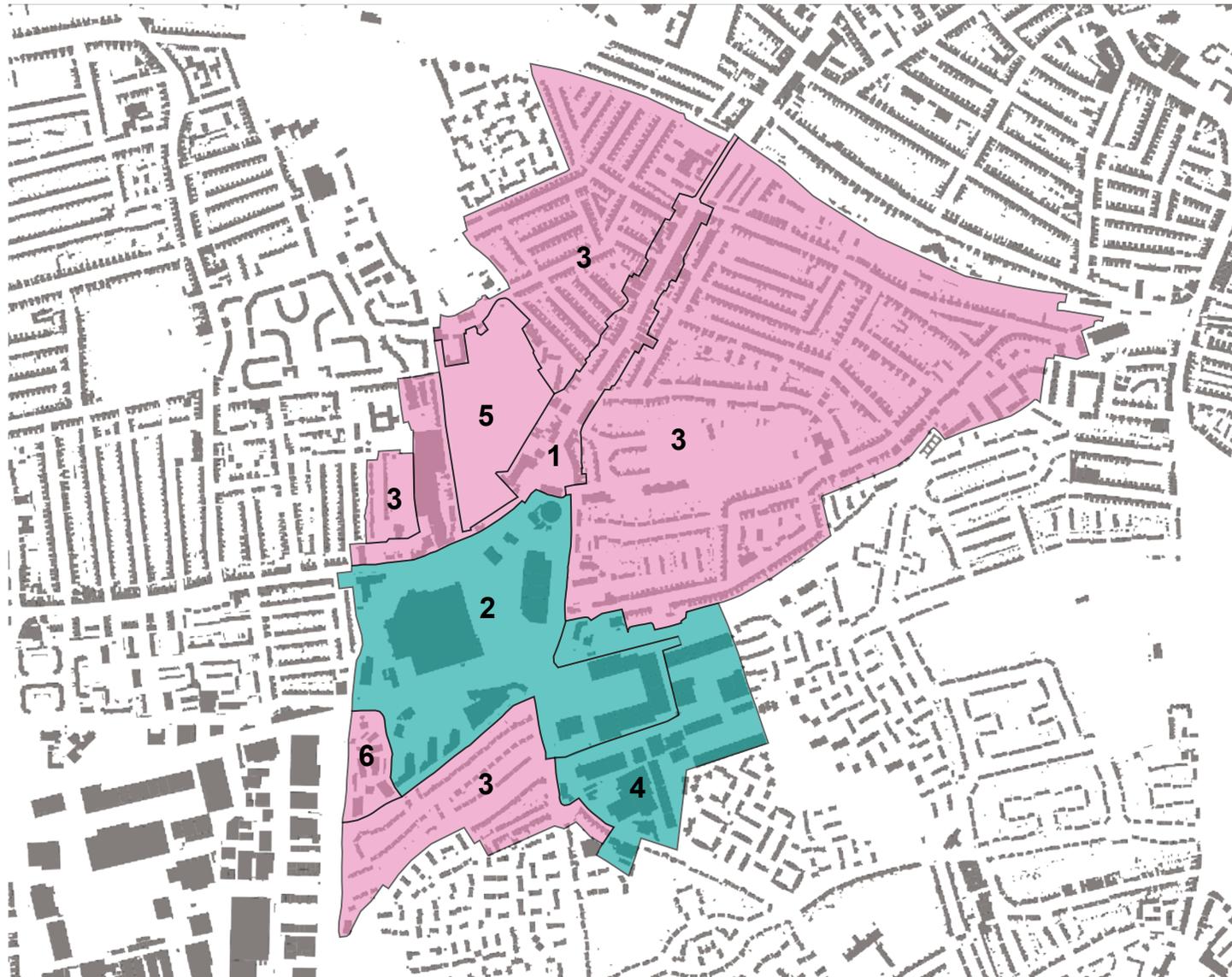
Character Area Assessment Criteria	Good: Makes a significant contribution (Value of 10)	Moderate: Makes some direct contribution (Value of 5)	Poor: Does not contribute (Value of 0)
Identity: Clearly identifiable edges that distinguish the area from the surrounding development	Good		
Urban Layout: Strong street pattern or road layout with well defined public spaces			Poor
Movement: Building and street layout that is easy to find your way around with good connections to the surrounding streets			Poor
Architectural Interest: Area containing buildings of architectural or historic interest			Poor
Built form: Buildings with cohesive scale, massing and details			Poor
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	Good		
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	Good		
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character	Good		
Criteria Score	60		
Character Area Total Score	60		

6 Merton Abbey Mills 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		Moderate	
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	Good		
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	Good		
Economic Vitality: Area with few vacant or underused sites which affect the character		Moderate	
Criteria Score	50	20	
Character Area Total Score	70		

Colliers Wood Local Neighbourhood

Character Area Assessment



- 1 High Street Colliers Wood
- 2 Christchurch
- 3 Robinson / Boundary Road
- 4 Princes Georges Road
- 5 Wandle Park
- 6 Merton Abbey Mills
-  Area of established high quality
-  Area with scope to reinforce existing character
-  Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity