

# Merton Regeneration, High Path

## Socio-economic Analysis

On behalf of **Circle Housing**



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## Document Control Sheet

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Context

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

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

## 1.2 Structure of Report

1.2.1 The report comprises of the following sections:

- Section 2 sets out the strategic context for regeneration, with reference to regional and local policy;
- Section 3 comprises of a baseline study in order to establish the nature of the local economy (outlined through a review of socio-economic conditions); and
- Section 4 summarises the key conclusions from the baseline analysis and presents the case for regeneration of High Path: and
- Section 5 provides a summary of Section 2-4.

## 2 Strategic Context

### 2.1 Introduction

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

### 2.2 National Planning Policy (2012)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;
- Contribution to regeneration priority areas; and

- Environmental/amenity impacts experienced by would be occupiers and neighbouring areas.

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

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

## 2.4 Local Planning Policy

### LBM Core Planning Strategy (2011)

- 2.4.1 LBM's Core Planning Strategy 2011 ('Core Strategy') is the key document in the Borough's Local Development Framework (LDF), setting out the development plan and the spatial vision for the area. The Core Strategy is in general conformity with the adopted London Plan.
- 2.4.2 A key priority, as outlined in the Core Strategy, is to "support local community life through education and employment opportunities, cultural and sporting assets, community services, healthcare, recreational activities and other infrastructure that meets local needs."
- 2.4.3 **Strategic Objective 2** (To promote social cohesion and tackle deprivation and inequalities), identifies the need to regenerate the South Wimbledon sub area. It is noted that South Wimbledon's residential stock is "gridiron terraced properties and the remainder is post war housing sites."
- 2.4.4 The Core Strategy also identifies South Wimbledon as a key area in determining LBM's future economic growth and prosperity. **Policy CS1** aims to create a "thriving and attractive District Centre" at Colliers Wood and revitalising surrounding areas, including South Wimbledon through:
- Supporting development which helps improve the quality of local housing, traffic flow and the public realm; and
  - Supporting improvements in the transport infrastructure and reducing congestion.

## LBM Sites and Policies Plan (2014)

- 2.4.5 The LBM Sites and Policies Plan was adopted in July 2014, also forms part of the LDF. This sets out detailed planning policies to help assess planning application in LBM and site allocations for development between 2014 and 2024.
- 2.4.6 The Sites and Policies Plan prepared by LBM Council following local research, detailed public consultation, giving residents, landowners, community groups and other interested parties the opportunity to comment on the councils prepared options for 20 detailed planning policies, approximately 40 sites and land designations.
- 2.4.7 The relevant policies in the Sites and Policies Plan include:
- 2.4.8 **Policy DM H2 (Housing mix)** of the Sites and Policies Plan links to Policy CS 8(Housing Choice) of the Core Strategy. This aims to create socially mixed communities (families with children, single people, older people etc. for all sectors of the community by providing a choice of housing with respect dwelling size and type in LBM.
- 2.4.9 The Sites and Policies **Policy DM C2** states that large development sites which will result in a “substantial increased need” for school places (children over 5) will need to incorporate provision for a new school on the proposal site.
- 2.4.10 **Paragraph 3.18 and 3.19** states that “Where large development proposals are likely to generate a substantial increase in the need for additional school places, the proposals will be expected to incorporate an appropriately sited and sized area for the provision of a new school, or demonstrate why the site cannot accommodate a new school.

## 2.5 Merton Regeneration Project

- 2.5.1 The management of High Path was transferred from LBM Council to Circle Housing Merton Priority Homes (CHMP), as part of the transfer of LBM’s entire housing stock in March 2010.
- 2.5.2 As part of the process of assessing the housing stock in Merton for investment in improvements to meet and exceed the Decent Homes Standards, CHMP identified High Path, Eastfields, and Ravensbury (collectively referred to as the “Merton Regeneration Project”) as having a potentially limited life, justifying larger scale regeneration to ensure long-term sustainability.
- 2.5.3 LBM Council Cabinet members received a report in November 2013 which provided an update to on-going discussions between LBM Planning Officers and CHMP on the development of their regeneration plans for, High Path, Eastfields and Ravensbury.
- 2.5.4 In July 2014, in response to proposals from CHMP, LBM Council resolved to start preparing an Estates Plan DPD. LBM Planning Officers and CHMP explored a number of matters including identifying occupants for decant and housing nominations; the masterplanning outline and process; and devising of an agreed baseline position aimed at achieving deliverable schemes.
- 2.5.5 The proposed Merton Regeneration Project is one of the largest regeneration programmes underway in the UK. Circle Housing is working with LBM and other stakeholders including the Greater London Authority (GLA) to deliver this project and improve its financial viability.
- 2.5.6 A consultation exercise with local residents is currently underway to see whether a detailed regeneration solution can be found, as a means of delivering longer term sustainable decent homes standards; having regard to the state and condition of the existing properties.



- 2.5.7 There are also wider benefits beyond the sites in supporting regeneration and growth. This is aligned with LBM's Core Planning Strategy (2011) which seeks to improve the quality of the built environment; create more sustainable communities; and focus regeneration and housing growth broadly in South Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham adjacent to transport hubs.
- 2.5.8 Should regeneration go ahead, there is potential to secure approximately a quarter of the LBM Council's ten year housing target of 4,107 homes, as set out in the FALP.
- 2.5.9 The Merton Regeneration Project shows a clear commitment to delivering high quality homes across the Borough, through:
- Increasing the supply of housing and the quality of existing homes to meet acceptable current standards;
  - Improving access and the quality of the local environment through improvements to the public realm; promoting low energy consumption; and environmental efficiencies; and
  - Promoting mixed and sustainable communities which provide a high quality of life for people of all ages, backgrounds, in safe, cohesive and healthy neighbourhoods, supported by high quality and excellent community buildings.
- 2.5.10 The next section provides a profile of the socio-economic conditions of High Path in the context of the rest of the Borough and surrounding areas.

## 3 Socio-economic Conditions

### 3.1 Introduction

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

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

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

- Local level information is outlined at ward level (i.e. the ward of Abbey) as shown in Figure 3.1;
- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level (i.e. LSOA 012A) as shown in Figure 3.2; and
- Estate level data ('High Path' or 'the site'), as provided by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion Community Insight (OSCI Community Insight, 2014). This largely based on Census information. This provides a distinct profile of High Path in the context of the wider area to inform the regeneration case.

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



Figure 3.1: Abbey Ward  
Source: Ordnance Survey, 2014

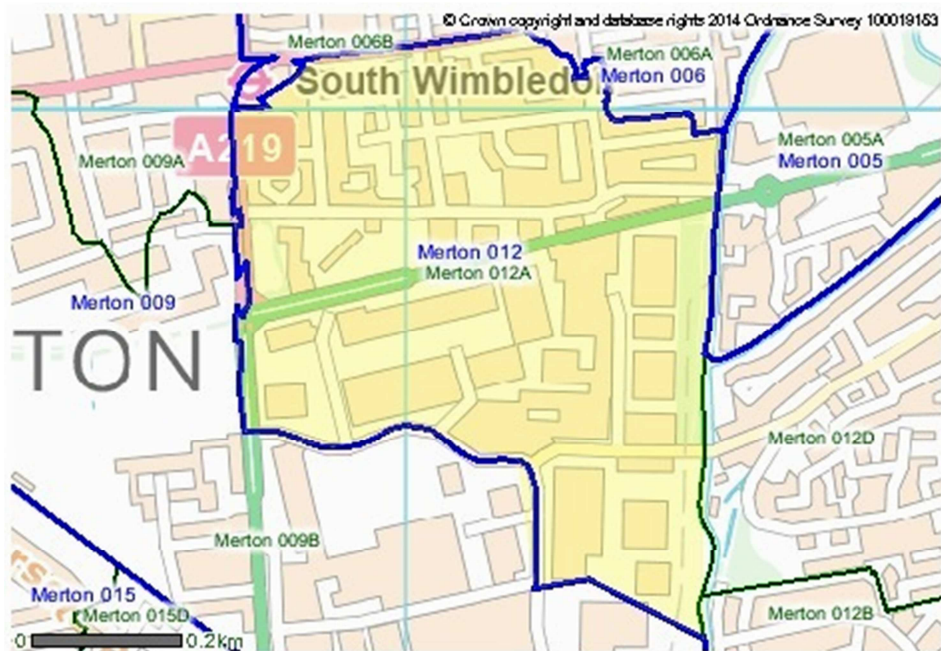
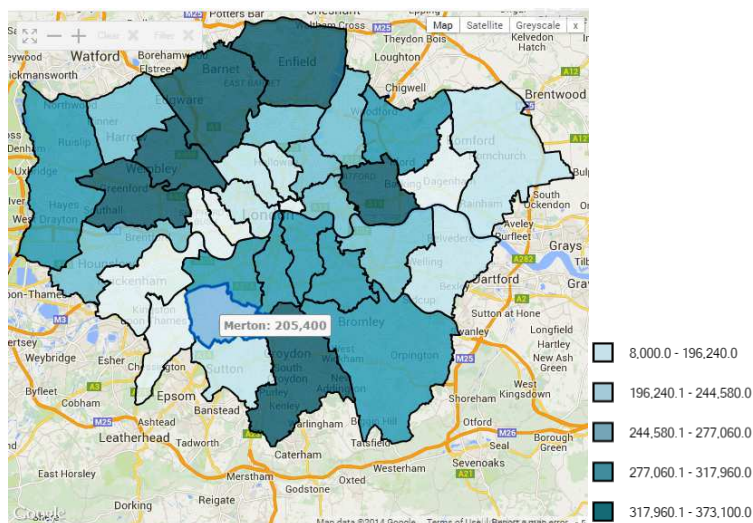


Figure 3.2: Lower Super Output Area (LSOA 12A)  
Source: Ordnance Survey, 2014

## 3.2 Economic Conditions

### Population

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



**Figure 3.3: Borough Level Population Estimates**

Source: GLA, 2013

- 3.2.3 LBM's population is largely in the top two approximated social grades. These grades are AB (Higher and intermediate managerial and professional occupations) and C1 (Supervisory, junior managerial and administrative). This represents about 67% of the resident population which is in line with the London average but below more affluent neighbouring Boroughs such as the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW)(75%). Detailed information on social grades is not available at local area level.
- 3.2.4 The Abbey ward has a relatively high number of children aged 0 to 4 years old compared to other wards in LBM. According to GLA population estimates, in 2012, there were 882 children aged 0 to 4 years old in Abbey ward, which is just over 5% of all children in this age group in the LBM as a whole.
- 3.2.5 In the immediate area of High Path, i.e. Lower Super Output Area 012A (LSOA 012A) the population is some 1,700 people, of which 1,300 are of working age.

### Economic Activity

- 3.2.6 The economic activity rate measures the proportion of people of working age (16-64) who are either in employment or unemployed but seeking work.
- 3.2.7 Economic activity rates in LBM are higher than Greater London and national averages. According to the Annual Population Survey (APS), in 2013 an estimated 81.2% of LBM's working age population were either in employment or seeking work, which is above the national average of around 77%.

3.2.8 At a local level, OSCI data estimates that High Path has an economic activity rate of 73%, which is below the percentage for Abbey as a whole of 82%, slightly below the national average.

### Earnings

3.2.9 There are significant variations in income within the output areas in the High Path area compared to the Borough and national averages. Net weekly household income (after housing expenses) is estimated at around £390 in the High Path area, which is below the national average.

3.2.10 In the output areas immediately around High Path, net weekly income after housing costs range from around £490 to £1,200, This highlights High Path as a particular pocket of income deprivation in LBM as shown in Figure 3.4 below.



Figure 3.4: Net weekly household income estimate after housing costs

Source: OSCI Community Insight, 2014

### Qualifications

3.2.11 At LSOA level (LSOA 012A) the High Path area is characterised by a relatively high proportion of residents aged 16 or over with no qualifications. This makes up 18% of the population which is above the Borough average of 6%. As shown in Figure 3.5, the LSOAs adjacent to LSOA 012A, have much smaller percentages of residents with no qualifications.

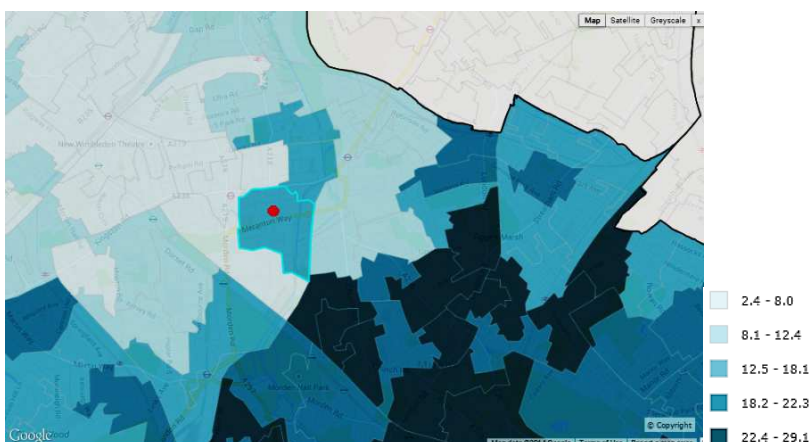


Figure 3.5: Percentage of Residents with No Qualifications by LSOA

Source: GLA, 2013

## Unemployment

- 3.2.12 Overall LBM has a relatively low percentage working age population that claim benefits. NOMIS shows this amounted to 7% of the resident population which is below the national average of around 10%.
- 3.2.13 According to the APS, the proportion of economically active residents aged 16+ that are unemployed in LBM is just under 6%. This is below the percentage for Greater London as a whole and the national rate (of 8% and 7% respectively).
- 3.2.14 At LSOA level the proportion of economically active residents that are unemployed is just under 8%, which is similar to the Greater London and national rate.
- 3.2.15 Youth unemployment is defined as the proportion of people aged 18-24 years old that are claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), expressed as a percentage of all 18-24 year olds.
- 3.2.16 Figure 3.6 below shows the youth unemployment in High Path and the surrounding area. An estimated 6% of the youth on High Path are unemployed, compared to 4% of 18-24 year olds at the national level.

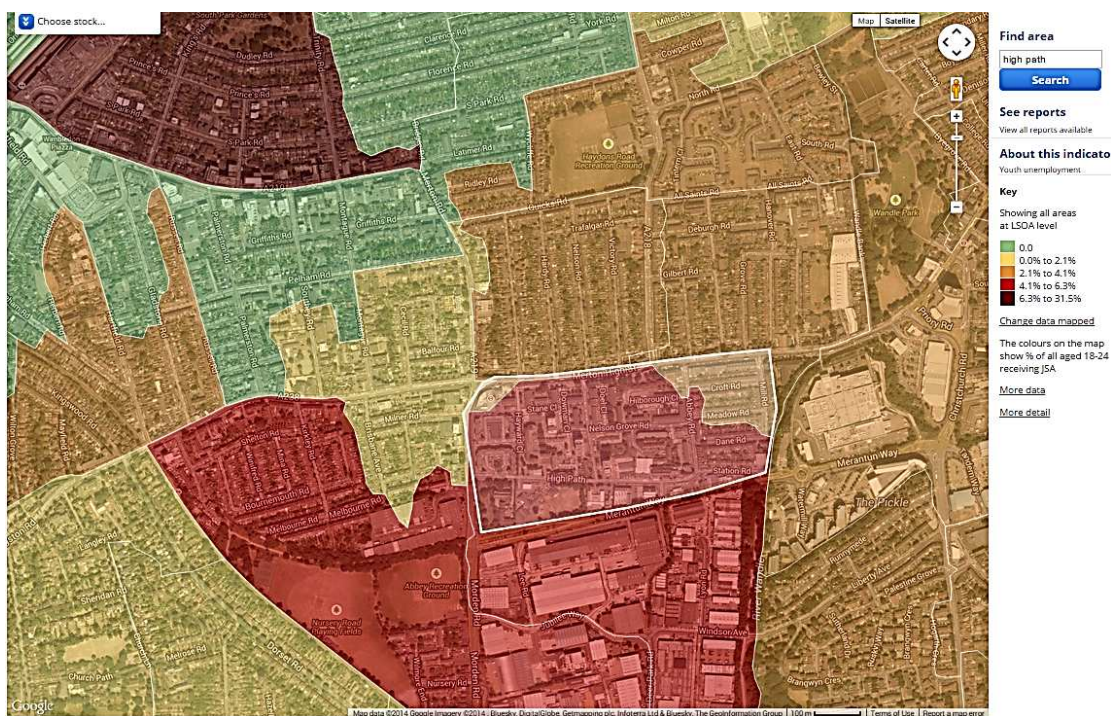


Figure 3.6: Youth Unemployment in the High Path site

Source: OSCI Community Insight, 2014

## Deprivation

- 3.2.17 According to the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), LBM is one of the least deprived Boroughs in London and nationally. The IMD data shows that the Borough ranks at 208 out of the most deprived 326 Local Authorities in England. In London it is within the top five least deprived Boroughs.
- 3.2.18 At LSOA level the immediate area of High Path, ranks as one of the most deprived parts of the Borough. Figure 3.7 shows that there are differences in the level of deprivation in the LSOAs around High Path. Compared nationally this area is within the top 30% most deprived LSOAs

according to the IMD. In particular the LSOA of High Path has relatively high levels of deprivation in terms on income and the living environment, which are discussed below.

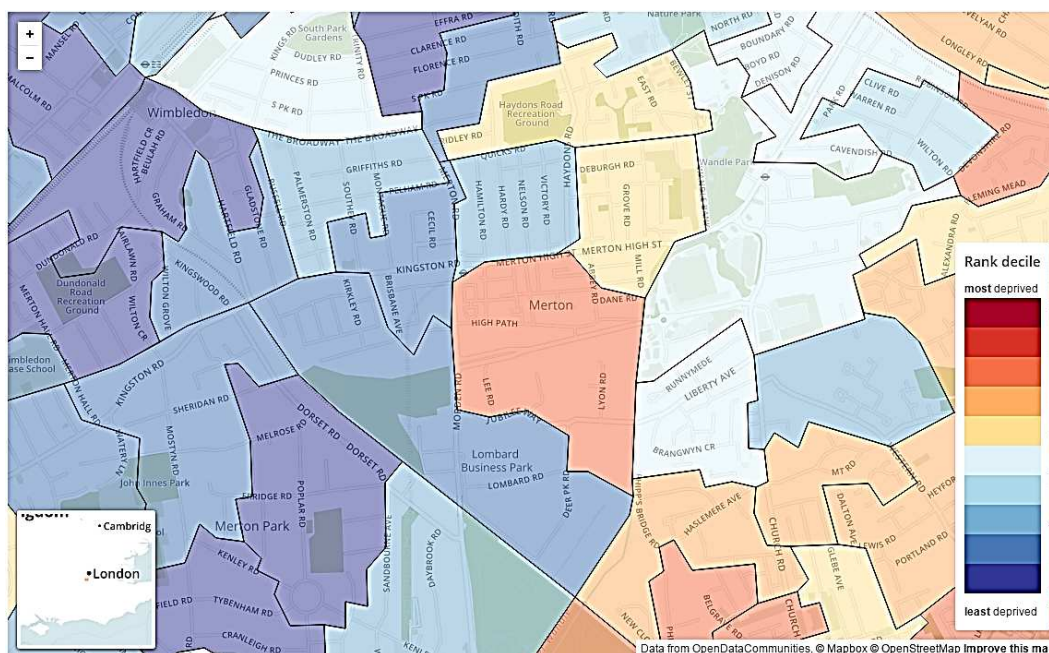


Figure 3.7: Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), High Path

Source: CLG Deprivation Mapper, 2014

### Families and Children

3.2.19 An estimated 37% of households on High Path have dependent children, which is above the Borough average of 29%. Approximately 37% of these are lone parent households, compared to the Borough average of 6%. Of these lone parent households, 69% were not in employment, compared to the Borough average of 51%.

### Pensioners

3.2.20 High Path has a significantly higher percentage of pensioners living in poverty. According to the Office for National Statistics, an estimated 45% of pensioners on High Path are in receipt of Pension Credit. This is above the national average of around 22%. This further indicates low levels of income and spending power in the local area.

### Housing Stock and Market

3.2.21 Land Registry data shows that that median house prices in LBM and Greater London were 7% higher than those in the LSOA of High Path in July 2014. The median house price in the LSOA of High Path is £300,000, which is below the figure for LBM and Greater London as a whole of around £322,000.

3.2.22 While this is relatively affordable compared to Greater London, the High Path area is one of the least affordable parts of LBM. The OSCI estimate that the median house price on High Path is approximately £318,000.

### Housing Quality

- 3.2.23 High Path comprises of multi-storey residential blocks arranged around areas open space. At the centre of the area are three high rise towers and adjacent to Merton High Street the scale gradually decreases down to three storey blocks and low terraces.
- 3.2.24 LBM Council's analysis of the neighbourhood profile of the Colliers Wood sub-area<sup>1</sup> identified a number of issues with the build form and public realm at High Path that provide scope for enhancement of the site. These include, paving and surface materials in need of revitalisation; little landscape and amenity space; obstructions to pedestrian movement and restricted access to green space; and disparities in the visual appearance of low rise blocks and high rise residential towers. The analysis also identified issues with poorly conceived public spaces and accessibility in the area.
- 3.2.25 The Census reports that an estimated 24% of housing on High Path is classified as 'overcrowded' – as defined by having at least one room fewer than needed for household requirements. This is well above the national average of 9%.

### Access and Transport

- 3.2.26 Given its size, High Path varies in terms of existing accessibility with Transport for London's, Public Transport Accessibility Level<sup>2</sup> (PTAL) of the site ranging from 4 ('Good') to 5 ('Very Good').
- 3.2.27 South Wimbledon Underground Station is located to the north western edge of the site and provides frequent services into central London via the northern line. There are existing bus services around the site running along Merton High Street (A238) and Morden Road (A219) providing seven different bus routes.
- 3.2.28 WYG Group has been commissioned by Circle Housing to provide traffic, transport and highways advice<sup>3</sup> in connection with emerging masterplan proposals for High Path. Parking surveys were carried out on-site and off-site (i.e. in the immediate surrounding streets of High Path) during different times of the day in early November 2014. These showed that:
- A parking ratio of 0.86 for the existing site, this is based on the number of houses with private driveways and the number of permit and unrestricted spaces on the site. This calculated parking ratio does not include the 182 garages on the site;
  - On-site parking stress<sup>4</sup> ranged from 72% to 84% during the weekdays indicating that the parking on High Path is primarily used by residents;
  - Off-site parking stress increased during the day, particularly for the unrestricted parking spaces. This is largely driven by commuter parking. Parking stress ranged from approximately 94% at 04:00 to 100% capacity at the hours of 07:30 and 12:30 then reduce slightly to 91% at 19:30 on the weekday survey;

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<sup>1</sup> Merton Borough Character Study: South Wimbledon Local Neighbourhood, LBM Council, ([http://www.merton.gov.uk/2\\_south\\_wimbledon.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/2_south_wimbledon.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> PTALs are a theoretical measure of the accessibility of a given point to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability.

<sup>3</sup> Merton Regeneration – High Path: Transport Note 01, WYG, December 2014

<sup>4</sup> The significance of parking pressure on an area or street is known as 'parking stress' and is measured as the percentage of vehicles parking against the capacity identified in the study area. It is generally perceived within the highway industry that when a parking study area has a parking stress of 90% or above it is deemed to be 'heavily parked'.



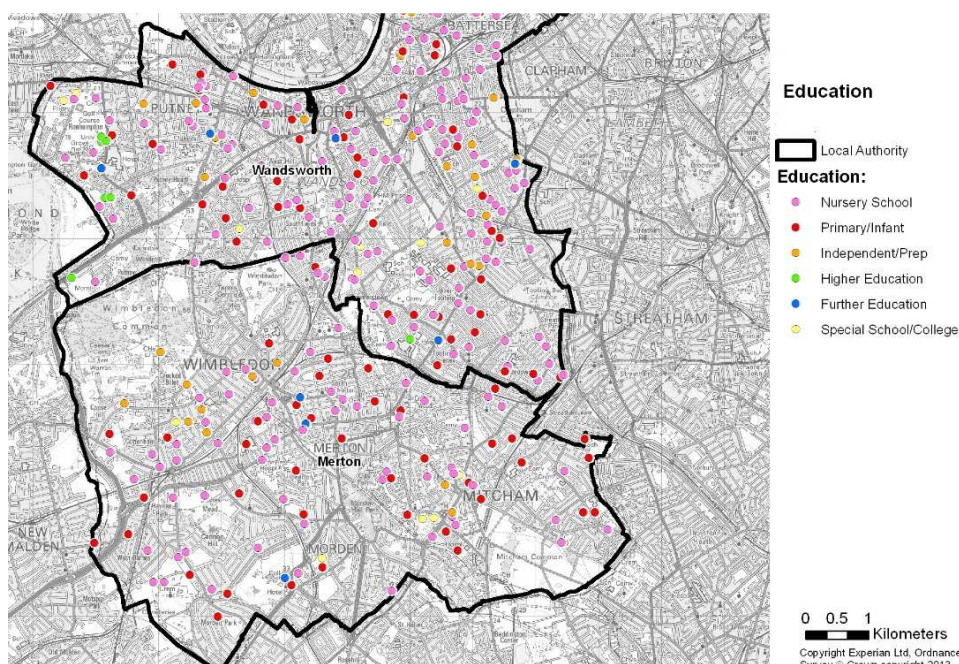
- On Saturdays, the survey shows similar results to weekdays, where the off-site parking stress is already high and increases to 100% by 12:30.

3.2.29 The High Path regeneration proposals are not expected to alter the existing parking arrangements

### 3.3 Social infrastructure

#### Schools

3.3.1 LBM is served by a number of education facilities including nurseries, primary and secondary schools and colleges. These are shown in the Figure 3.8 alongside the facilities in neighbouring LBW.



**Figure 3.8: School Facilities in LBM and LBW**

**Source: Experian MMG3, 2013**

3.3.2 According to a report by the Department for Education (DfE), the average class size for LBM's state-funded primary schools was about 28.5 pupils per teacher which is in line with the national average, and slightly below the London average. For secondary schools this ratio of 24 pupils per teacher is largely in line with the London and national average.

3.3.3 The DfE<sup>5</sup> also reported that six of the 43 state funded primary schools in LBM are operating above capacity, while six of the seven secondary schools have one or more unfilled places.

3.3.4 The nearest education facilities, by age group, to High Path are:

- Sunnyside Nursery School, ages 2-5, (1 km, north);
- Merton Abbey Primary School, ages 3-11, (within the immediate area of High Path); and
- Rutlish School, ages 12-16 (boys), (2 km, west).

<sup>5</sup>School Capacity statistics (2012-2013)

- 3.3.5 According to information from Ofsted, the provision of Early Years education in Sunnyside Nursery School is considered 'Good'.
- 3.3.6 Merton Abbey School is considered 'satisfactory'. The Ofsted report found that the school needed to "improve the standard of writing and the quality of teaching". It is also noted that Merton Abbey School is also undergoing expansion. Excluding the nursery class the current permanent capacity of the school is 210 and the proposed capacity will be 420.
- 3.3.7 Rutlish is considered "outstanding" in terms of behaviour of pupils and overall achievement. It is important to note that Rutlish serves a wider catchment area than the LSOA of High Path.
- 3.3.8 In accordance with LBM Sites and Polices, policy DM C2 (described in section 1), Circle Housing commissioned Savills to assess<sup>6</sup> the impact on child yield (and school places) arising from the master plan options for High Path based on the proposed accommodation schedule and the GLA's Supplementary Planning Guidance's (SPG) Child Yield Calculator<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.3.9 Savills considered two alternative accommodation schedules based on the masterplan proposals. The results from the Child Yield Calculator show estimate an uplift of some 85-102 primary school children, and some 14-15 secondary school children.
- 3.3.10 The calculations undertaken show that the options for the High Path site could have the potential of generating "substantial increased need for school places" in relation to primary school places.
- 3.3.11 Savills considered the need for school places arising from the High Path regeneration through reviewing the existing capacity of primary schools within 1km of the site based on DfE Edubase information in January 2014.
- 3.3.12 The four nearest schools located within 800m from the site have surplus capacity for 421 pupils. Taking this into account, and on-going expansion of Merton Abbey Primary School, the current capacity is considered sufficient to provide for additional school places arising from the High Path redevelopment.

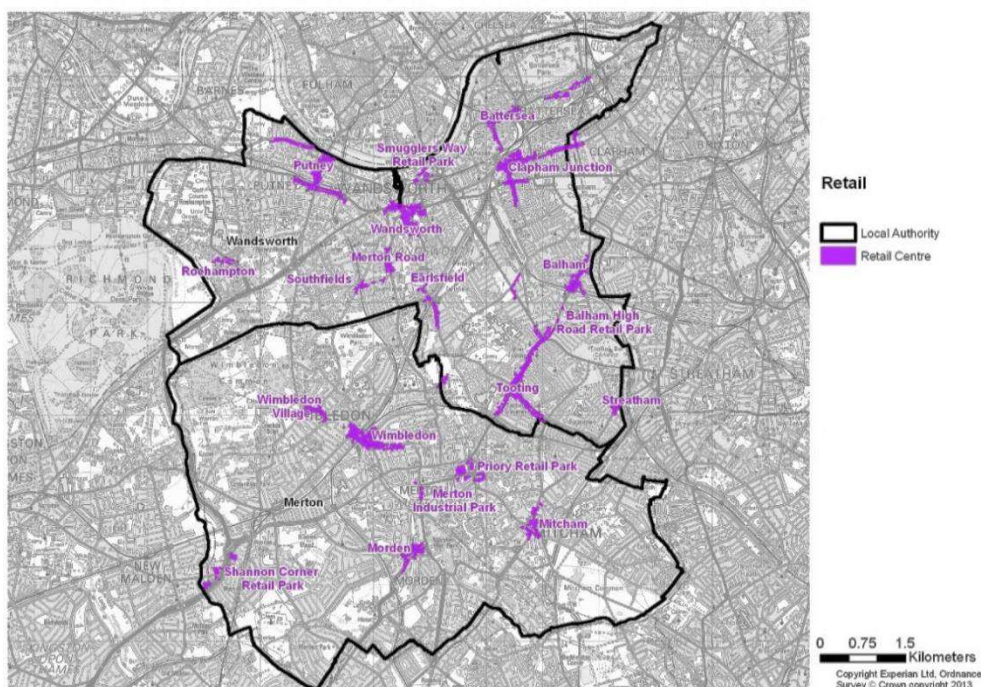
### Retail

- 3.3.13 Figure 3.7 shows the retail facilities in LBM and LBW. Wimbledon and Colliers Wood are the main shopping centres in the LBM (in terms of turnover), followed by Morden and Mitcham.

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<sup>6</sup> High Path, Eastfields and Ravensbury site Regeneration Proposals – School Places, Savills, 2014

<sup>7</sup> The SPG provides updated child yield figures for boroughs and developers to assess child occupancy and play space requirements (<https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/publications/shaping-neighbourhoods-play-and-informal-recreation-spg>)



**Figure 3.7: Retail Facilities in LBM and LBW**

Source: Experian MMG3, 2013

- 3.3.14 The nearest shopping centres to High Path are Colliers Wood (1.5km, east) and Wimbledon (2.5 km north-west). High Path is also within a good proximity of all Morden (2.6 km, south).
- 3.3.15 The LBM Retail and Town Centre Capacity Study<sup>8</sup> noted that occupiers of retail facilities in Colliers Wood reported challenging trading conditions. They highlighted declining trade over the previous twelve months. Vacancy rates in Colliers Wood are above than the national average, suggesting that the centre is in relative decline.
- 3.3.16 LBM plans to revitalise Colliers Wood into a ‘thriving and attractive District Centre’ as part of a wider regeneration programme for South Wimbledon. This will help contribute to a more attractive shopping environment, improved trading conditions, and the potential for employment opportunities.

### Leisure

- 3.3.17 LBM is also served by numerous leisure facilities as shown in Figure 3.8.

<sup>8</sup> Retail and Town Capacity Study, Merton Council, 2011

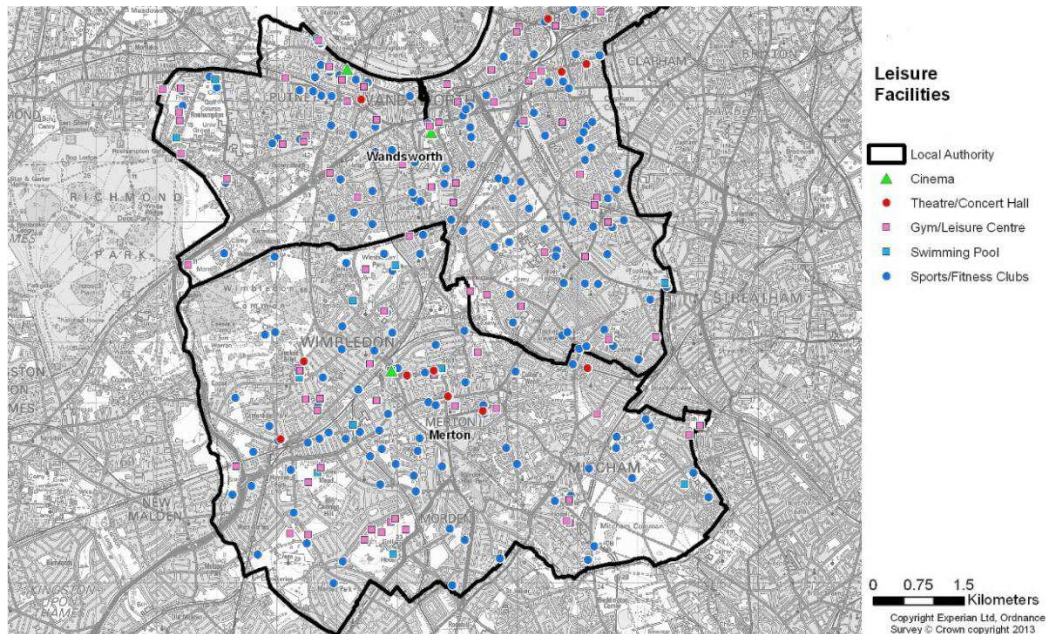


Figure 3.8: Leisure Facilities in LBM and LBW

Source: Experian MMG, 2013

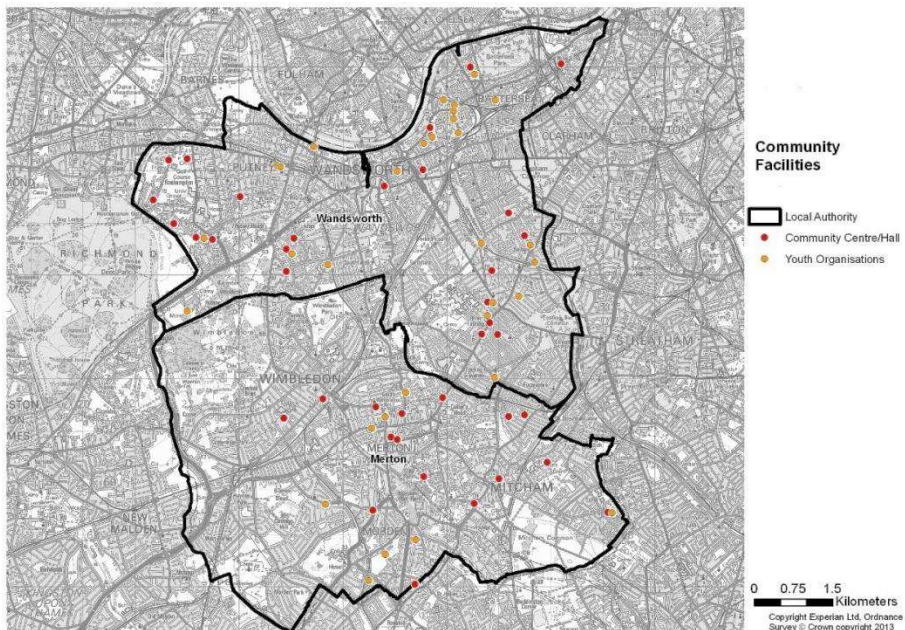
3.3.18 The leisure facilities within 2km of High Path are:

- Cinema,(1.3km, north-west);
- Two Gym/Leisure centres within or immediately adjacent;
- One sports/fitness club within the immediate site area;
- 17 further sports/fitness clubs within 1.5km to the north, east and south;
- Three further gyms/leisure centres, (one of which is 1.3 km to the east and the others to the north);
- One Swimming Pool,(500m, north);
- Two Theatres/Concert Halls immediately adjacent(one to the north west corner and a further one to south); and
- Two further theatres/concert Halls, (600m, north-west)

### Community Facilities

3.3.19 The community facilities in LBM and LBW are shown in Figure 3.9. High Path is served by a number of community facilities, comprising:

- Three Youth Organisations to the north and north west respectively;
- Two Community Centres/Halls within the immediate area of the site; and
- Nine further Community Centres/ Halls within a 1.5km radius around the site.



**Figure 3.9: Community Facilities in LBM and LBW**

**Source: Experian MMG3, 2013**

3.3.20 There are also 15 National Health Service General Practitioner(NHS GP) surgeries within 2km of the High Path. The majority are currently accepting new patients. The area is also served by 16 dental surgeries. There are three hospitals and health clinics. These offer a variety of services for patients and people with special needs, such as mental health.

## 4 The Case for Regeneration

- 4.1.1 Regeneration of High Path will help address the socio-economic inequalities of the area compared to other parts of LBM – a key objective of the Core Strategy and overall vision of the Borough. It also improves South Wimbledon’s links to strategic growth area, such as Colliers Wood, which has been designated as a District Centre in the London Plan.
- 4.1.2 The proposed regeneration as part of the vision for the area will enable High Path to capture some of the growth in the wider area through improved economic prospects; increased accessibility to employment and training opportunities; and enhanced social infrastructure and community facilities.
- 4.1.3 The draft proposals provide for a much needed reconfiguration of High Path, including tree-lined streets; and a range of private outdoor spaces for all properties, including front and rear gardens for those on the ground floor. The improved layout and accessibility to open space will contribute to improvements in the public realm and result in significant health benefits to residents of the site and the immediate surroundings.
- 4.1.4 An improvement in living environment, through the delivery of higher quality housing will help address issues such as overcrowding; ease concerns over deprivation; and reduce poverty levels for the most vulnerable groups on High Path, such as children and pensioners, as identified in our analysis.
- 4.1.5 An increase in the quality, mix and supply of housing will provide housing opportunities for existing residents. The inclusion of over ten different types of homes including one, two and three bedroom flats, maisonettes and houses will help meet a diverse population’s needs and resolve issues such as overcrowding in High Path.
- 4.1.6 The dwellings mix will also contribute to a renewal of the site, adding to the character. This will improve perceptions of the area and help attract a more economically active population to South Wimbledon, including key workers. This will increase the level of average income in the area; the skills of the local population; and the proportion of spending retained in the local service economy, contributing to sustainable development.
- 4.1.7 The proposals also include improving access around the site. Internal routes along High Path are to be a mixture of high standard adoptable local residential streets and home zones. These will provide safe convenient connections with the existing public transport services. The proposals will likely include a mixture of, on and off-street car parking, with a mix of private, permit and visitor parking all within policy guidance to ensure the single car occupancy is kept low and sustainable transport modes are encouraged.
- 4.1.8 The existing site provides for a mix of uses, including residential dwellings, local amenities and facilities. The provision for a variety of small shops will help cater for the needs of residents and support the local economy through employment arising at the facilities.
- 4.1.9 The proposals also promote greater levels of health and well-being benefits for residents, arising from a safer living environment. The provision of better insulated and more energy efficient housing will help alleviate fuel poverty.
- 4.1.10 Other potential benefits include:
- Employment during the construction phase. This will positively impact a variety of residents in the local area (for instance, apprenticeships for young people; managerial and supervisory construction jobs for more experienced members of the workforce);

- New Homes Bonus, enabling LBM to retain a greater proportion of the council tax revenue to be made available to spend in borough; and
- Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other off-site contributions which will also be available for LBM to fund new facilities or enhance existing social infrastructure in the area.

## 5 Summary

### 5.1 Socio-economic Conditions

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

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

- A younger population/age profile;
- Relatively low levels of income;
- High levels of youth unemployment;
- A relatively low quality living environment with limited housing opportunities; and
- A high reliance on public transport

### 5.2 Implications for High Path

5.2.1 If the current trends continue then there are particular implications for High Path such as:

- The projected increase in population of children, alongside low levels of income and high unemployment in the area will heighten concerns over child poverty;
- High levels of youth unemployment constrain the skills and occupational profile of the local population which will impede access to higher value employment opportunities; constrain the spending power of residents; contribute to further inequalities in skills in the Borough and local area; and reduce the economic prosperity and social well-being of residents; and
- The poor quality living environment, limited housing opportunities and affordability issues will also adversely affect economic and social prospects contributing to poor levels of health; higher levels of deprivation; further health risks associated with overcrowded dwellings; contribute to an unattractive living environment; and reduce social cohesion.

### 5.3 The Case for Regeneration

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

- Reduce the socio-economic inequalities of the area compared to other parts of LBM.
- Enable High Path to capture some of the growth in the wider area through improved economic prospects and increased accessibility to employment and training opportunities, and enhanced social infrastructure and community facilities.
- The improved layout and accessibility to open space will contribute to improvements in the public realm and result in significant health benefits to residents of the site and the immediate surroundings.



- An increase in the quality, mix and supply of housing will provide housing opportunities for existing residents and people with special needs, currently underprovided (for instance, there is only one housing unit suitable for wheelchair users in High Path).
- Improvements in the sustainability of the housing in High Path such increased energy efficiency, will help reduce levels of fuel poverty;
- The provision for a variety of new and improved commercial, retail and community facilities, will help cater for the needs of residents and support the local economy through employment arising at the facilities; and
- New Homes Bonus, Community Infrastructure Levy, and S106 monies will also be available for LBM Council to invest in improved and enhanced social infrastructure in in the local area.