All responses Alphabetical

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

December 2016 – February 2017
Dear Sir/Madam,

We write with reference to pdf document ’16-12-05-High-Path-boards_final-exhibition’ we provide the following questions and considerations of the proposed redevelopment of the High Path Estate.

We understand that the new population is 1600 people, please could you provide information on the current population and therefore the population increase?

Please could the council advise how future additional nursery, primary and secondary school provision will be met? Both primary and secondary provisions in the area have been extended to cope with the current population.

We would like assurances from the council that all public services would cope with an increase in population. Have TFL been consulted and confirmed additional tube services, especially during peak hours?

Please could the council advise on how future additional Doctors GP provision will be met?

We assume that Traffic Impact Studies have been carried out and the proposals have no negative impact on the current traffic?

What is the split between social housing, PRS and private ownership?

Are all existing High Path residents, in both private ownership and social housing, offered the opportunity to move back to high path with the same housing offer as their existing properties or better and at no additional cost?

What percentage of existing High Path residents are in favour of the proposed development?

What assurances can be provided that large volumes of people living in such a dense community will be satisfied with their built and social environment?

The CGIs should genuinely show the intended construction materials and architectural details. The use of lower quality, cheaper materials should not be permitted.

Please could you advise on what the mechanism is for answering our questions?

With regard to the drawings represented in the proposals we provide the following pros and cons:

**Pros**

- Coherent street layout responding to the existing street pattern
- The principal of taller development to the rear of the tube station is appropriate, but general concerns over the overall height shown in the development
- Seemingly good provision of public realm
- CGIs at end of doc titled ‘Nelson’s Yard’, ‘Mansion Blocks’, ‘St. John’s Mews’ suggest properties will be masonry constructed with good quality brick and precast elements with attention to detail. The Council and the developer need to ensure that
the quality suggested in the CGI’s is upheld and not diluted into cheaper options such as characterless polymer modified renders

Cons

- The scheme is too dense, overdeveloped and out of scale with the context
- All properties surrounding the proposals are primarily 2 – 3 stories
- 6 stories onto the Merton High Street is twice the height of the existing properties on the north side of the road. The proposed new properties will tower above the existing on the opposite side of the road
- We suspect that in winter the large areas of the Merton High Street will be in shadow cast by the 6 story properties on the south side of the road
- The majority of outer London high streets are characterised by properties of a maximum height of 3 stories such as the existing context. 6 stories is not only out of character of the context it is out of character to the city
- Existing schools are already strained and there is no provision for addition school places in the proposals

Thank you.

Regards
Dear Circle Housing,

My name is [REDACTED] and I would like to inform you that we are happy with the estate plan.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my HTC
L Betancourt

Good afternoon.
I would like to be informed about the submission to the Secretary of state.
Many thanks
I don't think for one moment my opinion means anything to anyone involved in the above. I now realise that despite a lot of hard work on behalf of the residents/tenants we were on to a loser right from the beginning with the council coming at us from one side and Circle housing from the other side determined to take our homes away from us. Mitcham is becoming as the song goes a town of Little Boxes and soon the only green space left will be the common.

As for building a road leading to Grove Road I think it won't be long before there are serious accidents as it so close to the bend.

G Bigmore
hello,

In regards to the High Path estate proposals.

my main concerns are:

increase in general road traffic - Abbey Road is a rat run in itself, often clogged up or with speeding cars. With a proposed secondary school and increasing accommodation numbers locally, are there any contingencies in place. I am resident and cars will bomb down this street, Mill road, Dane Road, Meadow road when they come up against queues on Abbey Road or Merton High Street. Many residential streets are dead ended locally and I don't understand why some streets both off Merton High Street and Colliers Wood are prioritised for such a feature over others. can you explain this to me.

You mention you want to avoid rat-runs through the estate so maybe this whole area, south of Merton High Street, north of Momentum way, East of Morden road could be devoid of rat-run opportunties. so only residents would need to access the area and keep the Mementum way access for the schools, church, Eddie Catz and High Path, Station Road Business units.

I imagine making Abbey Road straight would increase traffic and speed - so we would need efficient speed control furniture put in place - what is in place now doesn't work assides from the narrow entrance at the South end of the road and the immediate left turn into High Path at the South end.

Building work, noise and dust pollution for all local residents and local schools. Can you give me an indication what disturbance I and my neighbours are likely to endure. I am led to believe the actual building work could go on for over a decade. What timeline do you have? it's a great concern for people living on the estate as well.
Dear Sirs

There is much in the Estates Local Plan (High Path) to commend it.

I would like to make the following comments:-

There is a grave danger of turning the High Path Estate and south Wimbledon into an inner city enclave instead of an integral part of the wonderful borough of Merton - by increasing the density dramatically and allowing tall buildings to be developed. This will totally spoil the character and feel of the area as well as having a grave impact on services and amenities.

The recent survey regarding Wimbledon town centre identified that people do not want tall buildings. This applies to the areas outside the town centre as well as within the town centre.

There was little in the Estates Local Plan regarding the internal living space. For example, no mention was made
* that all rooms should have windows
* that there should be sufficient family/communal rooms within a family dwelling so that there is space for different activities to be carried out at the same time, for example children have a quiet space for doing homework and not just one room serving as kitchen, dining room and living room.
* that new homes will have at least as much space as existing homes and with an appropriate layout providing sufficient space within different room types.

The Estates Local Plan does not take into account the proposed new school on High Path - The Harris Academy Wimbledon.

The following are my comments on specific sections of the document:-

2.44 p 37 - Defensible space - I welcome the statement that all perimeter blocks should have active frontages with well designed appropriate defensible space. I would like to suggest, from the perspective of a pedestrian, that the most pleasant defensible space in front of buildings such as flats, houses and office blocks, are those that have railings or a wall to waist height with greenery between the building and the boundary, the greenery thus visible from the street. In addition, if the boundary is defined by a wall, greenery on top of the wall can be an attractive feature if it is well maintained. The use of the railings or wall gives a feeling that the building is not encroaching on the pavement whilst requiring very little distance to separate the building from the street.

2.47 p 37 - Promoting sustainable development - does this take into account the carbon emissions etc of the building materials, machinery, equipment etc used in the construction as well as the carbon footprint of the finished buildings over the years of usage? If not, it should do so. There is no point in having a low carbon footprint building if it has used many times the carbon to build.

p 88 - The current site analysis might be correct at this time, however, with the proposed new school to be built on High Path in the very near future, this needs to be taken into account in the site analysis.

p 101 Issues Summary
3.116 - I see no problem with green space fronting onto Merton High Street - it gives an aspect of open-ness and relaxation rather than frenetic and hemmed in.

3.117 - Morden Road has not been enhanced by developments such as the grossly unattractive Spur House especially at ground level. It is not appropriate for the council to make comments regarding the lack of cohesion in this road when they have allowed developments such as Spur House to take place.

3.119 - Whilst I acknowledge that the estate is badly designed in terms of buildings and space and that it has a high PTAL rating, this does not automatically mean that the area can sustain a huge increase in density on the estate and the surrounding area, where much development is also taking place. The local transport links can only support a finite number of people, ditto other services. Is enough being done to ensure, for example (amongst other amenities and services), sufficient sewage waste extraction and medical facilities.

p 102 Opportunities Summary
3.123 - Whilst Morden Road is perceived as a wide road, there is a danger the buildings will be too high and too close to the pavement (ie without defensible space) changing the aspect from a wide road to a hemmed in, over-shadowed road. This 'wide road' has nothing like the width of the roads say in Vauxhall where tall buildings do not give a feeling of imposition to the pedestrian or road user.

3.128 - Whilst creating views to Merton Abbey Mills is a commendable intention, Merton Abbey Mills itself has been grossly neglected over very, very many years and has none of the vibrancy it originally had. Unless Merton Abbey Mills is to be fully utilised as a key asset to the vicinity, there seems little point in providing views. However, providing views to the Wandle and green area alongside is well worthwhile.

3.129 - I welcome the suggestion that the estate should be designed to guide future developments outside the estate. Currently, there seems to have been no thought given to integrating developments with the surrounding area - Spur House being a typical example.

p 104 - Site Specific Policies
EP H1 d) A focal point or space to highlight the area's links with Lord Nelson needs to be carefully thought out so as to be recognised as such and not thought of as a waste of space or a lost opportunity.

3.132 - Morden Road - Do not make the buildings too high as is the current policy. The road might be deemed wide enough but in reality tall buildings will result in a feeling of domination and being hemmed in and overlooked.

p 106 - EP H2 Street Network
3.141 - Any links with Rodney Place should only be made with the approval of the existing residents/property owners in Rodney Place.

p 107 - H2 Street Network map
North-South future extensions into Merantun Way will not be possible with the development of the proposed new secondary school on High Path (Harris Academy Wimbledon). I think it is also fair to make the assumption that future extensions cannot pass through the existing primary school and it's land. It is misleading to show these suggested extensions on the map.
p 108 - EP H3 Movement and Access
3.147 - The development of the proposed new school is a redevelopment of the land between High Path and Merantun Way - presumably this will include the redesign of Merantun Way into a boulevard? and will presumably be discussed with TFL (3.148)?

p 126 - EP H8 Building Heights
It is disappointing that the maximum building heights are not specified in the document.

c) Morden Road - the document states that taller buildings are more appropriate along Morden Road and the heights should be guided by the newer developments springing up along Morden Road. These developments do not necessarily have the backing of residents and locals. The appallingly unattractive and indeed ugly buildings that are being developed with inappropriate heights - ie far too tall - are not a basis on which to guide the development of the High Path Estate on Morden Road. To create a boulevard feel it is not necessary to have extremely tall buildings.

e) Any development along the north side of High Path must enhance the feeling of safety walking along the street at night. I do not think these buildings should be taller than the mews streets within the estate.

f) Merantun Way - As I understand it, the south side of this road is currently industrial usage and likely to remain so? This is another street that will not benefit from tall buildings.

p 129 - Indicative Street Sections - I am a puzzled by the diagramatic representations of a high street (eg Merton High Street), an urban boulevard (eg Morden Road) and a wider boulevard (eg Merantun Way). Currently there is insufficient width on all of these roads to accommodate 4 lanes of traffic or 4 lanes of traffic plus cycle lanes and footpaths. I cannot imagine how these roads will be widened sufficiently along their whole length to accommodate the additional lanes of traffic, cycles and pavements. I therefore have to assume these illustrations are not accurate and are misleading. In addition, the illustration of the urban boulevard in comparison with the high street shows just how inappropriately tall the buildings along the boulevard are.

4.4 - P176 - I am not sure if this paragraph leads on to point 4.5 and the following points or if there is some text missing...
"Notwithstanding the requirements of the council’s validation checklist the applicant will be required to provide information to address the following:" There is nothing following this paragraph except the subsequent sections.

4.5 - P176 - I am concerned that there is a danger the idea that different phases of development have their own character may in itself lead to a mismatch in design rather than mitigate the concern over monotony.

4.7 - P176 - The materials should be in keeping with the existing local area. For example, in general brickwork of the buildings in the surrounding area tends to be London yellow stock, multicolour or red brick. Some buildings may be discoloured due to pollution through the years from coal fires and soot to modern day traffic pollution. Care should be taken to not assume dark bricks were originally dark bricks and thus lead to the use of inappropriate or out of context building materials.
4.16 - P178 - Ensure that street furniture does not hinder the path of pedestrians especially, for example, people pushing buggies, pulling shopping trolleys or mobility scooters.

Many thanks for your consideration.
Kind regards
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to comment on Merton’s Estate Local plan to make it very clear that I completely and utterly opposed to the current proposal.

This is on the following grounds:

1) I live in [redacted]. The project makes no allowance to protect our houses or preserve what is effectively a piece of history. Every single house and every single garden in the street is kept in beautiful condition.

2) the current proposal involves building 6 to 9-storey buildings on three sides of [redacted]. This will prevent sunlight from reaching [redacted] for pretty much the whole day, even in the summer. Effectively the whole of [redacted] will be situated at the bottom of a lightless pit. This is totally unacceptable. The figures put forward in the proposal are clearly in breach of the regulations for light and do not meet the legal requirements.

3) the current proposal includes opening a way out of [redacted]. This would completely change the feel and atmosphere of the street as it has been for the past 90 years. One reason we bought a property there is because it was safe. Safe for children to play out because it is a close, safe because there are no cars driving through. There is absolutely no reason to make a through road.

4) the proposal does not cater for parking spaces for residents. [redacted] will now have nowhere to park. In addition, parking in [redacted] will be an impossible problem with 4 additional houses - potentially 4-8 more cars

I attended most of the meetings with the regeneration project managers and we have been given no answers, no reassurance of anything. We are simply being ignored, and constantly advised to go online to raise concerns.

I very much hope that you will hear us out and look into the above issues.

Thank you very much.

Best regards.
To whom it may concern

Regarding Mitcham Eastfields estates plan.

In my view I think the estate should stay the same but make improvements to what's already there, to make better, the front, rear and internal of the properties. This will save a lot of money, better than knocking down people's homes.

That is my view.

Regards.

C Falzon
It has been considered appropriate for a Secondary school to be located next to the primary school in High Path.
I understand that at the moment there are over 400 children in the current primary school and that in excess of 1000 pupils will be accommodated in the proposed Secondary school.
My concern is that there is already difficulty for parents to park in the one way High Path both for dropping their children off to attend school and even more so when collecting them when school is over for the day. Has consideration been given to the chaos which will occur when another 1000 children arrive and leave at the same time, some of whom will be dropped of by a parent and some arriving by public transport. I live in [redacted] and can only imagine the sight of so many children swamping the area both arriving and leaving, plus parents attempting to park at the same time.
Nowhere to park - insufficient public transport - safety - the possibility of road rage as a consequence - frustration - 5 days each week. Am I alone in worrying about the inevitable chaos?
The mind boggles and I would like to receive your alternative view, if you have one, as an attempt to put mine and I'm sure many other minds at rest.

Sent from my iPad
10.12.16. Dear Future Martin Team, and Secretary of State (ENVIRONMENT)

I would be pleased to take this opportunity to put forward comments, based on my unique experience of life here on High Path Estate, where I've resided since 2000. I would say that it is the variety and character of the buildings that give this area a quality which the residents, especially the younger folk, benefit from in their individual approaches to everyday living. This is a precious gift and should be maintained for future generations; therefore, the best way forward is to demolish the three ugly high-rise blocks, to build, as proposed on the area behind the Old Bungalows, and to have families in available houses elsewhere, in Menton, leaving new flats on the estate for use of single people, or older couples on their own. I suggest Down House is left alone, as this suits families.

As for the older flats, they were built to last, and will continue to provide solid, weatherproof homes for at least another 40 years, so why the playground and football pitch are excellent as they are, and it would say you might easily re-surface the public paths and roads through the estate, leaving precious trees alone. Sheds and garages could be removed.

The estate needs some attention, eg, the stairway, and the ramp, and the exterior of the walls is deteriorating, but basically, the estate is sound enough to give at least 25 years more habitation.

Minor improvements to surrounding areas could be undertaken and more trees put in to give shade and interesting outlook from our windows.

Across the road, there are blocks which could be improved on, but basically, are sound, because they offer privacy and more sheltered outlooks than the proposed new flats. It would be surprising to hear of many people wishing to leave - especially Menton Place which looks Eastwards offering a historic perspective rather than the plans which Circle Housing have put on the table, which are quite frankly boring, dull, and soul-less, and biased towards ethincity.

I recommend a good environmental agency (eg Greenpeace) to collaborate with a more open-minded think tank like Kevin McCloud, to investigate some Dutch housing estates, using new technologies eg split-level housing or spiral. Also, why use bricks? There are new materials now. Think ahead! Menton should try to retain its reputation and find a better plan.

Finally, the name High Path is not relevant to . I suggest Hesperone Estate instead.

Yours Sincerely
I would be pleased to take this opportunity to put forward comments, based on my unique experience of life here on High Path Estate, where I’ve resided since [redacted]. I would say that it is the variety and character of the buildings that give this area a quality which the residents, especially the younger folk, benefit from in their individual approaches to everyday living. This is a precious gift and should be maintained, for future generations, therefore the best way forward is to demolish the three ugly high rise blocks, to build, as proposed on the area behind the Old Town House, and to house families in available houses elsewhere, in Menton, leaving new flats on the estate for use of single people, or older couples on their own.

I suggest how all this is left alone, as this suits families.

As for the older flats, they were built to last, and will continue to provide solid weatherproof homes for at least another 50 years. The playground and football pitch are excellent as they are, and I would say you might easily re-surface the public paths and roads through the estate, leaving precious trees alone. Sheds and garages could be removed.

Some attention is needed on the stair way, and damp proofing of walls to exterior but basically, again, the homes are solid and sound enough to give at least 25 years more habitation. Minor improvements to surrounding areas could be undertaken and more trees put in to give shade and interesting outlook from our windows.

Across the road, these are blocks which could be improved on but basically are sound, because they offer privacy and more sheltered outlook than the proposed new flats. It would be surprising to hear of many people wishing to leave – especially Menton Place which looks Eastward, offering a historic perspective rather than the plans which Circle Housing have put on the table, which are quite frankly boring, dull, and soul-less, and biased towards ethnicity.

I recommend a good environmental agency (e.g. Greenpeace) to collaborate with a more open-minded think tank like Kevin McCloud to investigate some Dutch housing estates, using new technologies on speed dwell housing or spirals. Also, why use blocks? There are new materials now. Think ahead! Menton should try to retain its reputation and find a better plan.

Finally, the name High Path is not relevant to [redacted]. I suggest Hopemore Estate instead.
As I mentioned, a Nelson Youth Park—designed and built by local youth—
should include skateboard facilities, a well for painting frescoes, or playing squash,
and water sprays for children and pets.
High Path Estates’ Local Plan 2016/17: High Path Community Association Committee’s Summary

The following is a summarisation of comments by the *High Path Community Association’s members regarding the document: “Estates’ Local Plan Winter 2016/17”.

2. Background, Key Drivers, The Case For Regeneration, The Vision, Urban Design Principles

It is fair to point out that the residents’ views was requested by Circle Housing Merton Priory (CHMP) at regular intervals since the idea of an upgrading of the estate was proposed around 2013. Complaints about the repairs and maintenance programme had reached a tipping point and, as social tenants were voicing comments such as “tear it down”, “pull it down and start again”, in relation to a quick fix for restoring a well rounded aesthetic pride to the area, we need to note that it was never clear what this work on the estate meant. The latter remark has been a constant theme throughout this entire process and moving forward it is hoped that the Secretary of State and whomsoever is heading up strategic positions for the entire timeline of the estate will bring about an energy to regenerate an area such as those allocated (High Path, Ravensbury and Eastfields) for new works.

Pop up exhibitions on the estate were strategically placed and passers by were asked their views as to how they felt about the state of the area.

Fast-forwarding to when CHMP’s draft masterplan was delivered (late Summer 2014) it had the unfortunate effect of clashing with Merton Council’s ‘Have Your Say’ document. These two major documents which would ask a different set of questions but nevertheless wanted residents opinions on the ideas posed caused much confusion among the majority. As a result residents questioned who was delivering the overall improvement to the area and when one considers that a
proportion of residents are still under the misguided impression that Merton Council still own and manage the estate then the general view is of bewilderment, and a overwhelming sense of no control of the entire process. Set within this is the view of the homeowners (leaseholders/freeholders) who have felt detached from the social tenants since the transfer of stock and even alienated despite the fact that they (leaseholders) have paid service charges since the transfer of the land.

If this is placed within the context as to why the regeneration was called upon (a general improvement to the internal/external areas of the estate) and as to how this came about (the poor repairs and maintenance programme by Circle Housing Merton Priory and the suspension of the Decent Homes programme) then the necessity of such a wide-spread programme could be argued is one that the residents did not request. The general opinion is that if CHMP managed their contractors appropriately then the estate might well be considering a refurbishment of the buildings or a partial regeneration at best. This view is taken when one considers the delivery of its repairs and maintenance programme which was mismanaged mainly because of the poorly executed procurement process and it also coincided with allegations of fraudulent behaviour by CHMP’s contractors (Keepmoat) which in turn evolved at the time of the suspension of the ‘Decent Homes’ programme by Merton Council’s Regeneration member. Bringing also to bear down heavily is also the daily upkeep of the estate by the cleaners and caretaker

CHMP’s document/s from start to finish - if you engaged with the process - was clear: regeneration was the outcome that they wanted to deliver. They felt that this was best for all concerned. However Merton Council’s document asked what variation of the scheme the residents wanted:

We are minded to note that a regeneration is needed so that those who are living in overcrowded dwellings are rehoused suitably. Also the performance of some buildings, specifically the tower blocks are not in keeping with modern day standards and in some homes, specifically where overcrowding is evident this leads to an extensive build up of condensation and damp which in turn leads to a lowering of a resident’s general state of health (physical and mental well being).

The ‘Estates Local Plan’ refers to the Equality Act 2010, specifically “2.37. The Equality Act describes a disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ones ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. All development proposals will be expected to have consideration to people with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010. This includes physical and mental conditions - for example, dementia.” We anticipate a wholesale improvement on the woeful promises (eg ’91 Promises’ and ‘10 Commitments”) made by the resident provider in this regard as it is noted in the draft document of the stock transfer “WOULD MERTON PRIORY HOMES DO ANY WORK IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?”
Yes. *Merton Priory Homes would work closely with residents, local councillors and public bodies like social services, education, the police, the health authority, GPs and voluntary agencies to help local communities tackle problems and improve the quality of life for residents.* (Consultation on the proposal to transfer Merton Council’s homes to Merton Priory Homes - Appendix 3, 2008/9)

We have noted that as CHMP have not engaged with Merton NHS CCG as a community partner to the level we deem appropriate for a project of this magnitude, there is a concern on the part of not just the community on the whole and the services we use, if it is assumed a near tripling of the density of the population is to go ahead as preferred that in this context, we have a heightened concern for the increasing population of the elderly and the indigenous vulnerable cohort. Moreover CHMP have sought to remove staff for this particular service last year (June 2016) as it was not considered appropriate or within their remit as a resident provider and this was partly due to their inability to engage with the areas they covered (East and West Merton aka Merton Central). We need also to point out that in view of financial challenges in adult social care and the mitigating financial issues for the NHS in general then a more robust level of discussion needs to be had with the respective agencies related to health and wellbeing in our community.

It is difficult to give a fair appraisal of the ‘Estate Local Plan’s Urban Design Principles as we have been told by architects on the events on numerous occasions that the finer details are yet to come. With that in mind we are concerned as to the general height of the build and most especially the ‘right to light’ aspect. Open space within the plans show little in the way for what we currently have and if the density is to be propelled forward as intended (608 homes to 1,600 homes) then the whole estate will be making a mad dash to the proposed central park for their uptake of vitamin D.

As with most new builds the building design is typical of the London vernacular and though we empathise with PRP’s desire to have a modern outlook we regard this as an opportunity to harp back to the past and refer to the curves of yesterday for the facades of the buildings instead of the cold, Brutal preference. A way around this would be to work with another company of architects as PRP seem intent on stamping their Goldfingeresque footprint around the city. Most of the staff of said company have been laissez-faire and uninvolved when residents have opened up the conversation in public events to different designs to their own and this has not been lost by the indigenous population. Size of proposed dwellings has brought with it some contentious thoughts and this needs to be agreed upon and the task repeated because a number of residents have had misgivings as to the authenticity of surveys conducted by the likes of Savills.

In accordance with this are the materials for the build and given that we are supposedly a long way off we would ask that in the forthcoming workshops the
leading designers look to incorporating sustainable materials for the proposed works. We say this because convention says that as this is a multi-million proposal the big companies will utilise the usual mediums to frame our new homes. This is an opportunity to work with materials and train residents within the process. If the intention is to rebuild the estate for more people and have homes that perform holistically then why not be forward looking and opt for different materials such as lime and straw? Our concern is that because of the urgency to appease central government and meet the targets for housing those in need that this will be a big moment lost. Working with what we know is the prevailing narrative amongst builders of this type of instead of being groundbreaking.

The raw materials are there and readily available and presently going to waste - residents living in these homes will have lower fuel bills and the surrounding area will benefit with the reduced offset of pollution should we decide to build with such organic materials.

We commend the retaining of mature trees in the area as this not only adds to the ‘greenspace’ aesthetic but also enhances the clean/environmental buffer for air pollution off the nearby highways.

Last month we formed with other neighbouring resident groups the ‘South Wimbledon Enhancement Plan’ as the area is not only bereft of a neighbourhood plan but also any localised character. Heritage is important to those that live here and we are disappointed at the rapid advancement of planning for some heinous examples of design in the area. If ‘Rose Cottage’ in Hamilton Road is to go the way as planned then epic historical draws for outsiders will never happen and so again this is an opportunity to funnel avenues towards the nearest transport hub or currently quiet Merton Abbey Mills. Containing the estate (as it currently is) and minimising traffic flow will give the new estate a homely feel and residents will have a place of community. The High Street will still act as a fulcrum for those travelling east to west (or vice versa) but the commercial premises must reflect and retain this connection with the estate. The estate is not to be a hub for the masses ala Oxford Street but we are mindful as work is nearing completion on the former Brown & Root building in Colliers Wood and the desire to increase the aesthetics by the SWEP in the area on the whole it would be preferred if ownership of such commercial venues was pitched at independent proprietors. The connectivity to the area will then ease the transition to Wimbledon’s Business Investment District and as Colliers Wood and us are twinned as an area of intensification then the fluidity will be simpler. A plan for working with the Council with SWEP can easily be formulated to keep everyone happy and if the opportunity to employ local residents in such establishments was to come about then this would be beneficial all round: residents will have less of a desire to work in ‘town’ and community spirit will be enhanced. A good example of this connectivity is ‘Battersea Square’ where residents are forced due to a lack of regular public transportation to socialise nearby and this enhances the neighbourhood both financially and collectively.
Given the fact that Crossrail 2 has not been reignited as a topic for sometime and the Tram extension to the area has gone quiet too we would say that keeping certain corridors of access open to change and, flexibility. Locking in plans now will be difficult to change later and this is very evident in the road en route to Colliers Wood (near to the station there is always a bottle neck throughout this journey and this ruins what could have been a pleasant ride if the small parade of shops on the left were set back nearer to Wandle Park).
Executive summary

As a community we endorse a regeneration but this needs to be delivered in a manner that is in keeping with the implicit wishes of the community on the whole. A good and sound example of this can be found in the paper: Estate Regeneration National Strategy, December 2016 Department for Communities and Local Government.

5. Residents’ involvement in the management of estates
The ongoing management of the estate is vital to its sustainability. Residents should have the opportunity to participate in the ongoing management of the regenerated estate. In some cases this may be through a formal tenant or resident management organisation or through a resident-led board. Ongoing opportunities should be provided for residents to influence decisions and develop the necessary skills to take on more responsibility, if they choose.

Where elected or self-selected residents represent the estate, landlords should provide them with the resources to communicate and engage with all residents to ensure their representative approach is inclusive. This could include a place to meet or computers for preparing and distributing communication materials.

Estate regeneration schemes can play an active role in identifying community facilities which can be owned and managed by resident and community groups. Where community assets are run by the community, people are more likely to have an active and sustainable voice in their neighbourhood.

It is also important to undertake post-occupancy evaluation to understand the impact of regeneration, and to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to residents by acting on the results of any evaluations. This maintains trust with the local community, and encourages social sustainability and community cohesion.

As important as the aforementioned is the need for clear and transparent dialogue between the resident provider, local authority and the residents. In particular is the Council’s recent proposal with Harris Academy to build a secondary school on the area of South Wimbledon. We oppose such a venue as not only is it too small to accommodate the needs of its pupils but the proposed regeneration makes no mention of it and all affected stakeholders are wrought with anxiety, exacerbated by the impact of such a venture. Married to this is the large contingent of disadvantaged young people who attend the local primary school that live on the estate and the neighbouring district therein it is folly of the Department of Education and smacks of desperation on the part of the Council to entertain such a proposal. If any of the adjacent stakeholders considered such a proposal it is because they were not aware of the massive undertaking by the resident provider and as such the general conversation was as disjointed as we had previously noted in the consultation back in 2013. The head teacher of the local primary school was
unaware of the proposed increase of the density of the estate as was the manager of the Resource centre which houses groups for those with learning difficulties and the resident provider is unaware of the significantly high proportion of disadvantaged youth in the area and to compound this Harris Academy plead ignorance regarding the proposed regeneration on the whole.

The estate has had to endure a consistently bad level of service over the entire period since the stock transfer took place and as a result this has built a very high level of mistrust. Rumourmongering and disgruntled members of staff whose conditions proliferate their lackadaisical approach to their toil does not help matters either when residents approach or telephone staff earnestly to assist with queries.

When you set this out in the mix of the ‘Residents Offer’ and the pitiful financial renumeration if residents want to sell to CHMP and or the loss of footprint on the new homes for the freeholders then the ‘plan’ on the whole does not look enticing to many. The tenants may acquire free ‘white goods’ but what assurance have they got as well if they are tied into a district heating system which might well offset the ‘freebies’ given the prolonged tie ins that other new builds have had to withstand. The Council needs to address the latter aspect robustly as we are minded to say that whilst this is a policy imposed upon them from a greater Central London administrator the local authority must implement a charge that benefits the resident as opposed to any other agency and that includes the resident provider. An example of bad practice has meant that an estate in London (Myatt Field) has been locked into a deal which has them tied in with an energy provider for decades and residents were misguided as to the longevity of the contract and now they are having to experience long periods of no heating or hot water as contractual obligations mean no one wants to admit liability or accountability. It is with this in mind we refer to:

**EP H6 and h)** The feasibility of CHP and district heating must be investigated. As a minimum this should include:

(i) An assessment of the secondary heat sources within a 400 metre radius of the site boundary (e.g. river water heat recover from the Wandle; heat extraction from the London Underground).
(ii) Evidence to demonstrate ongoing engagement with key stakeholders associated with the potential secondary heat sources such as Transport for London and the Environment Agency feasibility.
(iii) Consideration of air quality issues should include an investigation in to the potential benefits that a district heat network could deliver to the wider area through the connection to existing buildings or development sites outside of the high path regeneration.
(iv) Energy strategies should clearly demonstrate that development delivers energy efficiency improvements at each level of the Mayors Energy Hierarchy when compared to the existing buildings on the estate. Outlining how improvements have been achieved according to the hierarchy of; improved building fabric, increasing the efficiency of supply and renewable energy generation, and how this compares to existing development on the sites.
*High Path Community Association* is a constitutionalised residents group based on the High Path Estate, South Wimbledon, SW19, which works with the following community partners:
(alphabetical order) Baitful Futuh Mosque, Catch 22, Circle Housing Merton Priory, Cooperative Foods, Duke of Edinburgh Awards (Merton), Healthwatch Merton, High Path Resource Centre, Independent Merton Greenspace Forum, Merton CIL, Merton Council, Merton Abbey Primary School (‘Governors’ and ‘Friends’), Merton Heritage Forum, Merton Tenants Residents Federation, Merton Voluntary Service Council, Prostate Cancer UK, Safer Neighbourhood Panel (Abbey ward), St John Divine Church, Sustainable Merton, WIFFA (West Indian Families and Friends), and YMCA.

1. **regenerate**
   (verb)
   1. (of a living organism) regrow (new tissue)
   2. bring new and more vigorous life to (an area or institution)

1. **adjective**
   1. reborn, especially in a spiritual or moral sense

Origin from Latin regenratus ‘create again’

**Concise Oxford Dictionary**

2. **caretaker**
   (noun)
   1. a person employed to look after a public building

**derivatives of care** - feel concern or interest and **take** - reach for and hold with one's hands. Carry or bring with one; convey or guide.

**Concise Oxford Dictionary**

Cypren Edmunds
Chair

email: highpath@live.co.uk
Twitter: @highpath
Facebook: High Path Community Association
Dear Merton, I have just received the 230 page plan about the regeneration plan on High Path Estate (the third one) I wonder how much all this costs? I did fill in a form for Priory Homes and said then that all the residents I speak to do not want to move especially my neighbours in [REDACTED] who are mostly elderly and do not want to be uprooted at their time of life as they have done a lot of decorating and got new carpets, flooring, curtains and furniture and are happy where they are. The houses in [REDACTED] are only 30 years old and are big with separate kitchen and bathroom that suit the residents just fine. They also are well insulated and warm in the winter and most look after the gardens front and back which they will miss. I do hope that you can consider some of these points and think about the people who live here who are getting upset and worried about their future. Thank You [REDACTED]
To: Future Merton Team,

Thank you for your reminder letter dated 16th January.

I attended the Circle Housing Masterplan consultation at St Marks Academy on 19th November which was very informative and gave them my views. I live off the Estate nearby but it is in full view from my property.

I agree with the redevelopment plan. The overall design and specification of the buildings and layout of the estate will be a big improvement on the current site. I do have a concern about the height of the some of the flats in relation to the surrounding area.

A maximum height of five storeys would be more appropriate.

I agree with the through road proposal between Tamworth Lane and Woodstock Way mainly to allow the diversion of or provision of a new bus route to serve the estate. But there could be a problem of traffic using the road as a 'shortcut route' through the estate. Probably a restriction maybe required for non-estate traffic. In any case a junction improvement with Tamworth Lane would be required.

In view of the increased number of residents planned consideration should be given for provision of a GP surgery on the estate.

Concern also for the increased amount of road traffic that will follow the redevelopment which will impact on the congestion that already occurs at the nearby railway level crossing.

Thank you for the information that is available please keep me informed of further developments.

Kind Regards,

Mr L Kilroy
T Latimer

Dear Future Merton,

I am a local resident in [Redacted] and my house backs on to [Redacted].

The estate is a huge eye-sore and a hideous blot on the landscape. All around are lovely victorian terraced houses.

The new proposed ‘cheap’ blocks are just replacing one eye-sore with another. The victorian style terraced houses work. They have stood the test of time. They will not need redeveloping in 30 years. The answer is staring us in the face - I think we should learn from history and flatten the High Path Estate and rebuild it in the style of victorian terraced houses.

It’s what people actually want to live in.

Thanks
Dear Team,

The residents of Hammond Avenue raised a great deal of concerns over the current draft plans for the Eastfields regeneration.

A petition was sent to the Merton Planning Team, for the attention of Mr Chris Lee. (Royal mail tracking reference KX 7802 6042 5GB, should you wish to identify who signed for it).

Could you please kindly confirm receipt of this petition and advise what action is being taking to ensure our concerns are being addressed?

Look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards
Mr Modasia
Dear Future Merton Team,

In reference to your recent communication dated 16th January, please find attached a petition, signed by residents of Hammond Avenue in relation to our concerns regarding the draft proposed plans that Circle Housing are in the process of submitting.

We did not receive a response from Merton regarding this, so would appreciate it if you could kindly follow up accordingly and similarly enhance further your plan guidance with reference to the proposed layout and building heights. At present, it appears that not enough consideration has been taken regarding our concerns and similarly incorporating these concerns to ensure they are addressed in your plan guidance.

As you can appreciate, Hammond Avenue consists of mostly one storey bungalows, so the new plans are deeply concerning for us, as they include the removal of the road (Clay Avenue) behind us and propose to build taller 4/5 storey buildings closer to our homes, which will leave us with no privacy whatsoever. (We are already forced to keep our rear curtains drawn with the current 3 storey buildings at the rear of our properties, so under these new proposals, it will worsen the situation for us all). A few of the residents also went to voice concerns at the evening sessions that Circle Housing held at the local school (St Marks Academy), but with no avail, as the architects/planning team were quite dismissive of our concerns and suggestions for amendments. This is very disheartening, as there is plenty of scope for them to amend the designs to avoid causing upset and imposing on anyone's privacy.

I believe it was approximately page 80 in the plan guidance that has specific reference to building heights being, ie *buildings across the estate must be of a height similar and harmonious to surrounding residential areas to contribute to achieving consistency with the surrounding character* and "*when viewed from outside the estate, taller buildings must not be seen to dominate the landscape*". The current designs are not taking any of this into consideration, which is very worrying, as there is plenty of scope for the designs to be amended and similarly the plan guidance needs to be reviewed to ensure that this is being addressed, as at present the guidance relating to the height and layout appears to be very generic.

A copy of the attached petition was also sent to:

Royal Mail Tracking: KX 7802 6042 5GB

P Modasia
Dear Future Merton Team,

Thank you for the email. Just to let you know, some of the residents from Hammond Avenue met with a couple of people from Circle Housing/the design team on 04/02/2017 with regards to our concerns.

We were advised that they are still planning to create a 4 storey block at the rear, which we are still concerned about. I have highlighted below the main concerns post the meeting.

- Additionally, at the meeting one of the ladies, advised that the location of the new buildings would be positioned no closer than they are today. However, based on the leaflet that was shared with us, it is evident from the yellow and blue diagrams, that this is not the case, as based on the diagrams it is clear that some of the new buildings would be actually closer than they are today, so this is a major concern.

- Also, at the meeting we were advised that the older designs had taller buildings, however upon reviewing the older designs, this was not the case. (Please see attached). Based on this, it appears that none of the initial concerns raised, were taken into consideration with the new designs, so I do feel we need more clarity around this. Whilst they may have been draft, a vast amount of feedback and comments were submitted raising concerns, which do not appear to have been addressed with the current designs.

We are currently awaiting the designs, which we were advised we would receive approximately 1 week after the meeting.

We would be grateful if you could take the above into consideration when you do receive the plan submissions from Circle Housing.

Kind Regards

Mrs Modasia
Dear future merton team,

I just wanted to send an email stating my views on the new estate plan.

I am completely for the regeneration of Eastfields and I think it would be great for the community.

I am however, disappointed with the lack of communication about what is actually going to happen to the tenants. I have received numerous leaflets and paperwork showing me what the estate is going to look like, but nothing telling me when we are likely to be moving or what year everything is likely to happen. I currently have a front door that is close to falling off, which the council refuse to replace because they said that as they are knocking the estate down they don't see this as an urgent repair. This is frustrating because if I knew how long I was going to be living in my flat for, I would predict if it was worthwhile to spend almost £300 on a new front door as I wouldn't like to spend that kind of money and be told that we are moving within the next couple of years!

I would also like to know that if I would like to move away or out of the area, would I be given priority to move quicker than others?

thanks for reading and answering my questions,

R Moore
Hi

Apologies for the late submission but my original email was rejected due to a typo in the email address.

With respect to the Merton Estates Local Plan, we had a question with regards to the detail of the plan that sets out an objective to "reduce the severance on Morden Road" where the pink arrows indicate this is between the estate and Milner Road.

Our main concern / question is that this is only about reducing pedestrian severance, rather than any proposal to remove the traffic barriers on Milner Road to allow for through traffic to go from Milner Road, cross Morden Road into the estate.

The traffic barriers were installed onto Milner Road for a good reason and we want to ensure that they continue to be in place as part of this proposal.

Kind Regards
C Muller-Carpenter

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please note that I am the owner of [redacted], please could you forward me any information/correspondence relating to the redevelopment of High Path as the building I own is next door.

Regards

[redacted]
Good evening,

This is a submission to the Merton’s pre-submission Estates Local Plan.

We broadly welcome the proposal and revised pre-submission with four reservations. To gain a greater level of support amongst the residents, the final iteration of this plan must address the following:

1. Take the opportunity to improve the transport accessibility from in the Mitcham Eastfields area from ‘poor’ to ‘good’. Perhaps with the addition of more frequent busses and/or a commuter shuttle to and from Balham station from Mitcham Eastfields by using large area of unused land in and around the station. Turing Mitcham Eastfields into a spoke and Balham into a commuter hub – essentially giving tube access to Mitcham residents without the need to extend the Northern Line. Examples of hub and spoke model can be found globally.

2. p. 57 and 81 does not consider residents’ views from Grove Road in line of sight through Lonesome Primary school site. Preferably a limit of building to two story within this line of sight. This would also address the feeling of being overlooked by residents of Woodstock way whose property back on to the site. Such a statement would add further weight and clarifies paragraph 3.38 p.62.

3. Further develop the ideas stated on pg.68 to allocate reasonable space to the development of a business community to support local employment. Restrict zoning to avoid the sites use to serve fast food. This would be in line with the councils stated ambitions of making Mitcham a safer and healthier place to live.

4. Clear guarantee that the construction of a road adjacent to the Acacia Centre would not put at risk the continued existence of the centre i.e. that it would be demolished or footprint reduced because of the roads construction.

Final point, the plan has misidentified the estate’s location as Figges Marsh Ward (P.46) . It is in fact located in Longthornton Ward.

Please do keep us informed about the submission to the Secretary of State and the publication of the independent planning inspector’s report and adoption of Merton’s Estate Local Plan.

Regards,

A Mundy & K Boniface
V Odera

Dear Sir,

Please find attached document related to Merton’s Estates Local Plan for submission to an independent planning inspector for examination.

Thank you.

Dear Sir,

Sub: Merton’s Estates Local Plan

This is to inform you that as responsible citizens and long standing residents of Merton, we do not object to any House building projects which are fair and are not robbing us to subsidise new housing at our expense in the name of general/common good, through systematic means.

Merton does not own any housing stock therefore the subject heading is misleading. It is the housing association in the driving seat and not the Merton Council and the housing association staff are the main contributors of the above document.

Our housing rights, housing facilities and housing standards as we are enjoying now must be fully protected and at least be matched if cannot be improved in the replacement houses being offered to us.

There must not be any restrictive/punitive covenants and ransom/clawback clauses (if we were to sell our house to upsize to meet our family needs), such as a 5 year 100% property price difference repayment and 11 year staggered profit repayment clauses, when we are currently enjoying 100% freehold house ownership rights without any debts and are in our 60s.

We must be given at least the same opportunity to maintain our current housing facilities and employment chances as we are enjoying now, if it cannot be improved in the regeneration plan.

Unfortunately, it would appear that the secret pact between the housing association and Merton Council is to safeguard their financial position without safeguarding our freehold and leasehold house owners’ housing, financial and economic rights and wellbeing. It would also appear that the local plan is prepared to meet Merton’s and the housing association’s objectives at the expense of the High Path freeholders and leaseholders and we must be protected from these almighty powers who are not acting fairly in performing their public duties to all their residents.

There is overwhelming bias in supporting/subsidising all social tenants of all estates and house owners of at the expense of freehold and leasehold house owners of and it is not fair.

The resident offer to freehold house owners of is totally unfair, as well as misleading and must be changed.

The housing association boasts that all replacement houses will be at least of the same size or bigger, as well as of high standards and designs.
Unfortunately, the above statement is somewhat misleading as follows:

Our current house is [redacted] We have an [redacted] garage which is our lifeline for our daily living space and employment. This facility is not replaced or taken into account at all as a loss of quality house space and facility which is our bread and butter. We require an independent [redacted] garage for our livelihoods as we have had it for the last 30 years.

The new replacement house does not have a garage at all. This means a loss of our livelihoods. Any financial compensation for loss of a big garage is not an answer to our requirements of daily housing space needs and economic sustainment.

A one size fits all approach is not the answer to our plight and the housing association must adopt flexible methods to meet our housing requirements, as we are enjoying now, as stated above.

The housing association’s measurements for Internal and external properties and facilities are selective and somewhat manipulative, for example, we have a separate living room and kitchen, but in the new property it is open plan, so if we want to divide it separately, then the new wall which we will build will make it an even smaller house than what we have now. Also, access to living room is via the kitchen door which is totally impractical and dangerous for family living as well detrimental to home/self-employment.

Focal spaces such as a fire/chimney place, is not taken into account. If we were to remove the chimney, we can have enough space to fit an office desk. So that is a total loss of space. Also we have big windows and windowsills, which will be lost in the new designs. We will not have direct sunlight and natural air circulation because of the new designs which are extremely poor, for example, a bathroom is in the middle of two bedrooms, without windows.

All new houses are at least 0.5-1metre narrower than our current house, therefore we will not be able to use bigger 4 seater sofas as we have now in our new houses. It will be cramped and an impractical living space. Although it may be same in total square metres, it is not in terms of its most usable design/space. Roof terrace space and the ground level space are not comparable spaces.

Our living rooms are not of the same size as we have now. The layout/designs of the living room, kitchen and bathroom are impractical unusable designs – for example, all rooms are rather narrower and linear than our current squarely build living room and bedrooms.

The wall between the kitchen and living room allows us to have extra wall cupboards for storage, as well as ground level storage or to hang a flat screen TV. But new designs are open space, therefore totally useless for our big family use.

The same applies to loft space and quality ground level garden space, as well as the location of the property which is deprived of direct sun light, natural air circulation and open sky views which we are enjoying at the present time.

Replacement houses’ internal designs and sizes are extremely undesirable. Our needs and views are totally ignored, particularly for internal designs and sizes, which is extremely demoralising.
The so-called independent surveys (e.g. Membership Engagement Services, Newman Francis, PRP architects, Savills, Future Merton) and public consultation questions were designed to achieve selective outcomes in favour of the housing associations and the Merton Councils secret housing regeneration plans and true feedback from affected residents is systematically excluded or misrepresented in all documents.

There will be no direct sunlight for [redacted] once the tower blocks/flats are built around it, and this is not good for a healthy environment or in line with the current layout of the area.

We were going to convert our huge loft space into a third bedroom similar to [redacted], but cannot do it now due to the impending housing regeneration proposals. We have plenty of loft space, which we are using for multipurpose use, and we can convert it to another bedroom as per our needs.

[redacted] we look to have [redacted] [redacted] but we will only be offered [redacted] as we have now, we are happy to upsize it [redacted] by paying a reasonable cost to difference between [redacted] and [redacted], but not at an open market value. We will be charged for a [redacted], which is in fact of the same size as [redacted].

New housing is supposed to resolve overcrowding problems for all residents affected by the housing regeneration and not only the social tenants. We [redacted] just managed to improve our life chances after [redacted] of struggle and hard work only to face punishment for being prudent when we are at the end of our lifecycles.

There is nothing wrong with our current [redacted]. It is of sound build and has gas central heating, double glazing, loft and cavity insulation etc. and we are being forced to accept lower housing facilities to facilitate housing regeneration at our cost, basically to rob us to support the housing association to meet their decent home standards requirements at our cost. This should not be allowed because the housing association acquired Merton’s housing stock to bring it up to what it considers decent home standards within five years, and it failed to do so. And we are being penalised for Merton Council’s and the housing association’s deficiencies.

The housing association wants to become the sole owner of the High Path area through systematic means. It is offering us punitive/restrictive covenants and terms and conditions by changing our current favourable house ownership rights. For example, the housing association is deliberately designing the houses in such a way, to attract service and administration charges from current 100% freehold house owners, when it is not appropriate. For example, linking street houses to a communal heating system, or running services mains utilities under the new replacement houses, when it is not necessary to do so.

We [redacted] cannot afford any new financial burden, such as admin and service charges, which can be avoided by not linking certain facilities to our properties, when it is not required, and treat us differently to the normal street properties.

The housing association is also using manipulative measurements so that our properties look smaller, and there is clear manipulative interpretation of spaces, for example, usable space, habitual space, space not in use at the moment. Replacement houses based on bedroom numbers and not
the actual size occupied by the bedrooms plus living room and the plan fails to include big on plot garages, stores and loft spaces from material documents and the same is true for Merton Council which is the main backer of this housing regeneration project.

Pincott Road is a historical, traditional Victorian terrace type street with some traditional terrace houses similar to Victory Road across Merton High Street, but it is not mentioned in any documents, and there are no prominent pictures of houses in Pincott Road in the housing association’s or Merton Council’s documents.

All of High Path can be designed to fit in with the streets and houses across Merton High Street and Abbey Road which is more in line with the properties in the area. Rather than turning High Path into a concrete jungle of tower blocks owned by a monopoly multinational charitable organisation, robbing Paul to pay Peter. We were told that the tower blocks will be replaced with traditional street type houses as there was plenty of space on High Path to do so with innovative designs but this was just a ploy to meet their devious objectives.

The above option is not mentioned or offered in any of the residents surveys or local plans and documents.

We the law abiding, prudent citizens and true financial stakeholders, (owners of freehold traditional houses and leasehold houses and flats are the main losers because not treated fairly in terms of replacement houses and terms and conditions related to new housing/housing offer etc. in comparison to social housing tenants).

It is rather strange that the housing association and Merton Council has decided to exclude the proposed Harris Academy Secondary School development on High Path from all their documents.

The impact of a new proposed secondary school on High Path, is not mentioned anywhere in the whole document, and will have a detrimental and devastating effect on the current and future residents, the entire High Path regeneration project, antisocial behaviour/law and order situation and an adverse effect on other residents of Merton passing through High Path. For example, extra traffic, footfall, problems at bus stops and underground stations, local supermarkets with more than 1000 children entering and leaving High Path at least 3 times a day and not to mention evening activities which is now a norm for all Secondary Comprehensive Schools.

The entire project is skewed in favour of Circle Housing and Merton Council, but not in favour of independent residents of freehold houses and leaseholders of Merton, for example Pincott Road terraced houses.

The High Path local plan must not be inferior than any other housing standards applicable to other houses in Merton. The so called acute need for more houses in London must not be used to subsidise Council budgets at the expense of current freehold and leasehold owners of High Path. London Mayor’s minimum housing standards, density and parking restrictions must not be used to lower our current and better standards of housing and parking facilities.

If our current housing standards and facilities cannot be improved by the regeneration project than please do not rob us of what we have got now.

Thank you.
Hi,

Thanks for a copy of the above 'Plan'.

I thought it was very Geometric in design.

No curves or bends. Right angles and like it!! And you must face in the correct direction!!

Very Eco. Eutopia then????

A couple of points. You mention a couple of times how presently, some people complain of feeling 'unsafe' when walking through the estate (High Path). It's the lack of right angled junctions and controlled traffic, but, might it also be the fact;

* there are parts on this estate, where there have been no street lights (five in one area alone)
  for at
* roads not swept for years, think Hayword Close and Nelson Grove Road, where the leaves are
  so crunched into the Tarmac, on wet days, it's downright dangerous under foot.

When we're living in an Eutopic environment, with the creation of Geometric roads will we be permitted
more regular street cleaning, and street lighting, the later, only if it's Eco., I suppose

What I find a bit mystifying about the whole 'Plan', is the sudden change in mind-set, re. estate
maintenance. Tasks which should be carried out to a high standard at present, eg. street cleaning,
street lighting, replacement of broken or missing fencing, out door painting of bike shed door,
of course
there aren't any in 'The Plan', so that's one problem solved, highway maintenance etc. All these tasks
are going to be of the highest standard. If it is known standards are not satisfactory at the moment,
why are residents having to wait. Surely insulting treatment to residents.

One last thing. A few years ago, large sums of money were spent renovating Nelson Gardens to
celebrate his, I think, 200th anniversary. All sorts of people attended, including the media. It wasn't long before the place became a wilderness and a popular for alcoholics to chill out in.

You forgot to mention the 1,000 pupil school going to be 'slotted in' in a narrow strip of land on
High Path!!!!

Thanks again for a copy of 'The Plan'.

Yours
Hello I live in Clay Avenue and I want know when the project will start because I'm going to decorate my house and changing a lot of stuff as well e.g. kitchen, bathroom etc. So if it will start soon I don't need to spend my money.

Thank You!

Y Rahli
To: Future Merton Team

I am responding to the Pre-Submission Estates Local Plan for Eastfields.

I do not feel there has been enough time to fully process and research the plan, having received it after the 16th January. Especially for those of us who work full time and have young/elderly families to support. Also, the Design workshops planned by Circle, supposedly to give us a fuller understanding of design, design principles and how these fit with local planning have not yet been completed; the last one is not due to be held until the 28th February.

As a homeowner, I am also concerned about the mixed messages being received from Circle Housing and Merton Council. Whilst the plan, and covering letter, infers that the regeneration will go ahead, we were told by Merton representatives, at a meeting last year, that Eastfields was highly unlikely to be regenerated due to flooding, insufficient space for new builds (before houses could be demolished), and one road in, one road out making it impossible for lorries and building work to access the estate safely, and without major disruption to residents. How has this suddenly changed?

The plan itself only appears to focus on the 'negatives' within the estate and, whilst I agree Eastfields does look slightly shabby (predominantly those dwellings owned by Housing Associations), I was concerned about Eastfields being seen as a 'Fortress'.

Having lived here for over 30 years, the sense of community is strong, as witnessed by the attendance at meetings and the anger and dismay of being told Eastfields was being regenerated.

More specifically:

**Health & wellbeing**

2.12 Who was involved in the health impact assessment? Does this relate to health and wellbeing during the whole process, or just once regeneration is agreed and takes place? And whose health and wellbeing does it relate too?

Obviously not those of use currently living here. At no point during the past four years has our health and wellbeing been discussed. The stress and upset of not knowing what will happen to our homes has been immense. This has been made worse by crass and insensitive comments by both Merton and Circle staff during the consultation, i.e. 'You're lucky you haven't got a mortgage. My husband left me and I've got to pay mine mortgage for another 20 years.' (but they aren't at risk of losing their home). 'You should feel lucky you are getting a new home which is better that where you live now, and will be worth more.' We do not feel lucky at all! We have worked hard to pay our mortgages and keep our properties in good order, as have many of the housing association tenants. We may now be forced to move out of our homes (Circle representatives did admit, in a public meeting, that compulsory purchase would be used if residents didn't agree to their offer), or move into temporary accommodation whilst Circle houses are being built! We will then have to live on a building site for up to 10 years whilst the regeneration is completed.

**Urban Design principles**

2.4 ‘...promote biodiversity through open space, street trees......'

There will be much less open space once regeneration takes place, with over twice the amount of dwellings/units are there are currently. One of the features that attracted us to
Eastfields was the open space, which creates light within our homes. Under the new designs, houses will be much closer together and overlooking each other, making them darker inside.

2.8 **Permeable, legible and accessible layouts**
Eastfields is accessible and easy to get around. Many local people from 'off the estate', are able to walk or cycle to Eastfields station, to local bus stops and to Mitcham Town Centre. There is nothing on the estate that restricts this.

**Site analysis**

3.23 & 3.27 'Access for vehicles is confusing as the estate is part access from Acacia Road and part from Woodstock Way.' 'This inefficient layout restricts accessibility for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.'
The road closure was put in place to stop commercial and private vehicles, from off the estate, using the road as a rat run, causing danger to children, and air pollution. There were also young moped riders using it as a race track, with several accidents.
Eastfields is accessible and easy to get around. Many local people from 'off the estate', are able to walk or cycle to Eastfields station, to local bus stops and to Mitcham Town Centre. There is nothing on the estate that restricts this.
How can vehicle access be restricted when it is predominantly residents who live here driving onto the estate?? By opening up the road you risk the road becoming a rat run again, and greater car usage through the estate will cause higher pollution levels. Why is it ok for public roads to have barriers restricting cars but estates can't?

3.30 ‘...the smaller spaces leading off this are less successful, as they are enclosed by the back gardens of the surrounding houses.'
This is precisely what has supported the community feel within the estate. Children have a safe space to meet and play, where parents can keep an eye on them. During summer months, people use the smaller spaces to socialise.

3.36 ‘.....to make the BMX track less visually isolated.'
Whoever has been involved in this plan has not taken anyone's views into account regarding the BMX track and the major issues it causes. Noise; air pollution, from the dozens of cars attending events; danger from cars; road rage; residents not being able to park, or get into their own properties easily as BMX spectators have parked in front of their houses. Fortunately, I don't live anywhere near the track, but these are just some of the issues which have been raised at meetings and ignored. Whilst the BMX track is a great idea for children, there needs to be some consideration of the problems caused.

**Site specific policies**

**Justification**

3.61 'Eastfields is located in an area with a low Public Transport Accessibility Level....'
We have a mainline railway station, within 10 minutes walk, with easy access to London Victoria and London Bridge, as well as many local stations, including Balham, Streatham, Sutton, Wimbledon and Kingston. We can also get the train to local tram stops. There are two local buses that stop just on the edge of the estate, both go through Mitcham, where other transport can be accessed. Ten minutes walk away are buses to Croydon and Streatham. These bus stops can also be accessed via the local buses. Whilst I appreciate that people with disabilities may find access difficult, it would not be because their is a lack of public transport. During our many previous meetings with Circle, one thing that was raised was the good transport links, with people who have moved to Eastfields as it's easy for them to get to London for work. The cynical amongst us are wondering whether this is being 'played down', as new properties could bring a premium price being so close to the station.
To be honest, I could add more points but I have run out of both time and motivation (I can hear you cheering!!). And have no faith that these comments will be acknowledged, especially as they are the same comments that we, as residents, have put to both Merton Council and Circle Housing time and again, and which continue to be ignored.

Regards

C Reeves
Dated 21st June 2016

For the attention of Mr Shaun Hamilton, Case Officer

Dear Sir,

**Reference:** PLANNING APPLICATION : 16/P1968

64-70 Ravensbury Grove, Ravensbury Garages & Adjacent Land Mitcham Surrey CR4 4DL

In regards to the above planning application, I have read through the documentation, plans, sections and artists impressions supplied by Circle Housing to yourselves. I know the proposed area for development extremely well having been a resident in Ravensbury for the past 45 years.

I wish to object strongly to the proposed development in this location.

**Setting : Character and views along Ravensbury Grove:**

The Ravensbury Estate is a small village-like area positioned on the banks of the River Wandle. It is cradled by the Wandle Valley Conservation Area, comprising of Ravensbury Park and Morden Hall Park. The Ravensbury Estate is unusual in that it sits like a country village, in the midst of this green and leafy area.

Turning off the main road, onto Ravensbury Grove, you are greeted by mature trees, and buildings set back so as to afford large green open spaces. The spatial relationship between the flats on the left-hand side and the houses on the right-hand side is generous and open. The buildings are in balance, there is a harmony in the existing design. The impact of the 4 storey height of Ravensbury Court is reduced by the set-back and further improved by the large trees. Trees have been employed in order to break up the facade and engender a feeling of openness. This feeling is continued down Ravensbury Grove (southwards), culminating in the park at the end of the road. The existing built environment engenders a positive relationship with the surroundings: Ravensbury Park and Morden Hall Park. This is achieved through a gradual reduction in building height as it nears Ravensbury Park. By not imposing the built environment on either of these beautiful nature reserves, the existing Ravensbury Estate
attempts to magnify the form and function of the parks. These two green emeralds in the crown of the London Borough of Merton deserve respect through well-proportioned development and thankfully our predecessors saw fit to construct homes that struck this balance between the need for housing and a desire to relate to their immediate environment.
Relationship with the Wandle Valley

The market garden design of Ravensbury makes it an integral part of the Wandle Valley. In future we would expect parts of it to be incorporated into the extended boundary of the conservation area by virtue of the large areas of green space and scope for enhanced planting: these could support a broader range of species and effect a continuation of habitat. The scale and low density of the existing Ravensbury Estate also prove it to be worthy of being part of the Wandle Valley through its healthy proportioned relationship with its immediate surroundings. In truth, we are quite surprised this hasn't been recognised to date. There is a willingness on the part of many residents but it's important to get the housing association & council onboard also.

Views along Ravensbury Grove & Hengelo Gardens (Above)

Views within derelict garages sight indicating relationship with trees(Above) plus relationship with park. Below
View from Conservation Area towards locally listed wall and garages area beyond

View from Ravensbury Park Conservation Area towards locally listed wall and garages area beyond - Lamppost indicates approximate two storey height - houses will be roughly double this to top of roof
Panorama of Ravensbury Grove Seen from 64-70 in June 2016

View from Ravensbury Park toward existing 64-70 Ravensbury Grove
View along Ravensbury Garages footpath - Lamppost indicates two storey height (Mar 2015)
The Wandle Valley Conservation Area (WVCA):

As the Wandle passes by the Ravensbury Estate, it meanders around the current built environment. It is at this point that the Wandle Valley Conservation Area (WCVA) and Ravensbury Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) are therefore essentially compromised in terms of overall width. Indeed, the southern end of Ravensbury Grove denotes one of the Wandle Valley's narrowest points in the local area.
Merton's Sites and Policies Plan & Map denotes that much of the area chosen for redevelopment is Open Space - Policies CS13, DM01. The rest of the area is in the Wandle Valley Regional Park 400m Buffer (Policy CS13 para 21.13). The whole site is adjacent to the Wandle Valley Regional Park (Policies CS5, CS13, DM01) and adjacent to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Policies CS13, DM02) and Local Nature Reserves (Policies CS13, DM02).

**DM O1 Open space**

Link to Core Planning Strategy Policies CS 13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture; CS 5 Wandle Valley Regional Park - **Policy aim** - To protect and enhance open space and to improve access to open space.

We consider that this land is not truly surplus to requirements. These garages were designed to serve the residents of Ravensbury. Car parking is in great need in our area. Some of this land should be put back into use and some of it turned into a wildlife area.

This policy also states that the design should not harm the character, appearance or function of the open space. These designs definitely do infringe on these policies. Ravensbury Park will be affected unduly by the height of these buildings. Building on the open space in the area of block B will also harm the character of Ravensbury Park, and that of the Ravensbury Estate. It is for this reason also that these proposals do not actually improve the public access between existing public areas and open spaces. The current footpath is much more direct than the alignment proposed by the development, and the current footpath is far more pleasant than that suggested by the developer.

The character and function of leisure walks and green chains: in this development, these walks are harmed and are not enhanced. Block paving between two four storey blocks of flats in place of green open space is not an enhancement. It does not suit the character of Ravensbury. It is not sufficiently green nor open nor pleasant.

We also feel that part (e) is applicable in this instance, due to the fact that this development will be very conspicuous from MOL and designated open space, and that the visual amenities will indeed be harmed by the towering blocks and their siting so close to the River Wandle. This solution is not appropriate for Ravensbury at all.

**SA/SEA implications:**

In 5.1 of the Merton Site & Policies Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) states:

*The policy meets a number of sustainability objectives relating to green issues particularly well, including health and wellbeing and climate change. The protection of the open spaces will ensure that any development proposal does not have a negative impact on the local environment and the policy ensures that any appropriate development is concentrated on the most appropriate brownfield land. This policy approach will enhance the quality of life through the provision of open spaces for both active and passive leisure activities. Open spaces and their vegetation can also assist surface water runoff and help to mitigate flood risk to properties and people.*
This development paves over green open space and directs the surface water directly into the River Wandle. This is not an appropriate use of our open space. It would be far better to retain the green space and even use it as a soakaway for a percentage of the development. The use of swale areas through the use of grassed area like this area, should be employed also.

It is obvious that this development does indeed have a negative impact on the local environment through its massing and height.

Drainage drawing showing Levels proposed by the developers

Paragraph 5.10. states:

*The visual amenity provided by designated open spaces has much public value and therefore development in proximity to and likely to be conspicuous from designated open spaces must not harm these amenities.*

However it is obvious from reading the plans, elevations and sections, that this area does not have as high a public value as currently exists. The proposals do indeed harm the visual amenities afforded by the current open space. The utility of the green space at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove is multiple. Walkers, residents, wildlife all benefit from this space. Everyone and everything enjoys the green space. It would not be an improvement to lose it, and the setting and the character of this area as well. Block B simply should not be built at all and Block A should not be so tall. Neither of these blocks and the associated landscaping improve on what is currently in place. The proposals do not "conserve and enhance the natural environment" as per paragraph 5.14.
DM O2 Nature conservation, trees, hedges and landscape features

**Link to Core Planning Strategy Policy CS 13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture - Policy aim** To protect and enhance biodiversity, particularly on sites of recognised nature conservation interest. To protect trees, hedges and other landscape features of amenity value and to secure suitable replacements in instances where their loss is justified.

Policy (a): "...proposals in and adjacent to these corridors will be expected to enhance their nature conservation value."

Due to the height, massing and proximity of the proposed development, we believe that this policy is particularly appropriate.

**DM D1**

**Policy (d):** The maintenance and enhancement of identified important local views, panoramas and prospects and their settings and where appropriate, create new views.

At discussed in this response, the removal of a key view by this development into Ravensbury Park is particularly worrying and should not be permitted.

**Policy (i):** Proposals for the conversion of front gardens for vehicle parking should not be detrimental to the character of the street or highway safety or undermine biodiversity, prevent sustainable drainage or reduce highway safety. (Further references on this are included in Merton’s borough character study. Also Policy DM T3 refers to parking bay dimensions).

Much has been made by Circle Housing during discussions with local residents regarding paving the front gardens over in order to provide parking for those residents. We are concerned that this is in contravention of the above policy and that these works could, if carried out incorrectly, be particularly onerous on the character of Ravensbury. Therefore, we expect Merton Council to effect appropriate measures to ensure the retention of the extensive hedges that characterise the Ravensbury landscape and enhance the biodiversity that is key to our area within the Wandle Valley. Sustainable drainage is of particular concern in an area of high risk for flooding. We would expect that Circle's developers submit plans denoting extents of parking proposed in each garden as opposed to being allowed to pave entire gardens, causing excessive runoff. It is important to limit the paving of the gardens for the reasons expected of a flood area of high risk.

In advance of this application, Circle Housing has quite recently allowed some of their properties around Ravensbury to install solid concrete front gardens, with no capacity for absorbing runoff. No drainage, and no soakaways. We would expect that as part of these proposals, Circle Housing rectify these garden conversions in order to avoid additional impact on the flood plain through not preventing their tenants taking matters into their own hands.

Front gardens should retain hedges and install adequate planting to prevent depletion of habitat and expand biodiversity to the benefit of the area being so close to the local nature reserve and the Wandle Valley Conservation Area. This will enhance the green chain effect that is so important for an area such as Ravensbury.
Safety & Security (6.7)

Well-designed places feel safe because they have built-in natural surveillance through the design of buildings and spaces, as well as having complementary mixes of uses and activities. Places that work well and look good also help engender a sense of belonging and local pride, which in itself encourages community participation and helps keep a place safe. Excessive and overt manifestations of security features often have the opposite effect.

Strangely enough, the southern end of Ravensbury Grove fulfils this policy to the letter. This is why we are so concerned about the general push for redevelopment at the expense of the character of our area.

Gated development (6.8)

An example of this is gated development which may address security concerns, however they restrict public access and therefore choice. This is considered divisive as it reduces social, visual and physical permeability and actively works against engendering community and social cohesion. It is therefore likely that most types of gated developments will be contrary to this policy, particularly parts (a), (b) and (e) and are therefore discouraged by the council. The council’s proposed Design SPD will contain further guidance on this matter.

We have concerns that the narrow access road down the side of the block B flats, effectively suggests a gated development, away from the rest of Ravensbury Estate, which is currently a very cohesive unit that residents and passersby enjoy.

This is another reason why Block B should not be built. Not only it is situated on valuable green space, it serves to further segregate Ravensbury Grove from the interior of the development, suggesting a private space. There is very restricted permeability in this new development.
In the garages area, there is a gate that leads onto the footpath. In this development, the gate has been removed and access is no longer possible through the site in question. The gate is indicated on the plan below:

Sustainability:

We do NOT believe that a 4 storey block of flats on actual Open Space is sustainable in any form. Arguments can be made that attempt to outweigh economic over environmental, but we believe that for this site this is impossible. The site is simply too sensitive for wildlife, for views, for the future of our environment. This will set a precedent for more excessive development adjacent to some of our most sensitive sites in Merton.

Because of The NPPF, the London Plan and Merton's own Local Plan states that sustainable development is about change for the better. This development is too crowded for such a sensitive site and the overall design should be rejected.

Economically, the development affects the park is therefore detrimental to our green economy - the extent to which our park remains attractive to those drawn to its beauty. Passersby will no choice about their views out of the park once this is completed. If the views, as we and many residents believe, are harmed then there will be no going back if this is given the go ahead.

Socially, we already have a very high quality built environment. Any building that have not fulfilled their function have only done so through poor repairs and maintenance on the run up to the push for regeneration.

Environmentally, our existing wildlife seem to be thriving. We are always keen to give them a helping hand, but this development makes little contribution to an improvement in an
environmental sense due to the overdevelopment of the site. If the proposals were that much more restrained then it is possible that Ravensbury Park could benefit, but the massing and overall impact because of it suggests to us that this development as it stands will be a backwards step.

It is for these reasons that we believe this development is indeed unsustainable.

In the proposals specified in 16/P1968, the open space is relegated to patches distributed around the development as opposed to relatively wide open space that currently sits adjacent to the conservation area. The current land serves to expand the park, creating an annex for wildlife and, very importantly, for residents and passersby. Enter into this space and you already feel as if you are in the park. Exit the park and this space serves to extend the sensation of parkland, softening the progress into the built environment that is the current Ravensbury Estate.

Losing a cohesive green space in this area would therefore run against a number of the stated sustainability benefits of health, locale, & neighbourhood character. Redeploying the green space in a piecemeal fashion around the proposed development would not maintain its current beneficial role in terms of:

1. Location immediately adjacent to the Wandle Valley Regional Park,
2. Views into and out of Ravensbury Park,
3. The role in terms of character on behalf of Ravensbury Estate,
4. Enhancing the transitional mood of the area (a green transition from park to estate).

This open and enjoyable green space should be protected from development for these reasons with the hope in future of being included in the Wandle Valley Regional Park. Creative thought on the behalf of the species management in this area will make a positive contribution to the Wandle Valley. The area could be utilised as a swale zone for any future development within the garages, encompassing possible pond life, something that seems to be deficient in an area so close to the river. This in turn would reduce run-off into the already high risk flood zone of Ravensbury Grove & Hengelo Gardens. Hard paving of this area is to our mind, a ludicrous idea due to the multiple benefits to both wildlife and the community at large through retention of this valuable open space. Having run-off fed directly into the Wandle also seems contrary to the sustainable objectives mooted.

Destroying this area in order to place a 4 storey block of flats on it is not sustainable. Making the argument that the benefits of greater housing provision outweigh the negatives does not hold water either as the significant impact on the neighbourhood and on the immediately adjacent conservation area indicate otherwise.

Overdevelopment is a major risk in this area due to its sensitive relationship with both Ravensbury Park, the Ravensbury Estate and the Wandle Valley. If this is indeed phase 1 of the regen, then it should be assumed that there is considerable scope for a proportion of the 21 homes to be redeployed within the proposed £1bn Merton regen. Pressure should be resisted to forcibly develop this sensitive location scope of the entirety of the Merton Regen documentation published extensively.

Building substantially only on the plot currently occupied by the maisonettes (64-70 Ravensbury Grove) and that of the derelict garages would be a better scheme, but even this should be reduced to two storeys. Three storeys could be acceptable in the current building
plot if one of the storeys was incorporated into the roof. This approach could attempt to reduce the sizable impact on the local environment.

Walking South down Ravensbury Grove

As one travels south along Ravensbury Grove towards the junction with Hatfeild Close, the trees in Ravensbury Park form a distinctive backdrop to the low rise, two storey houses with pitched roofs. This scale of building is sympathetic with the park due to its proportions. The existing homes do not encroach on the park (or even block the view of it) and thereby magnify the park's value to passers-by and residents alike. From the junction of Ravensbury Grove and Hatfeild Close, Block B, if built, will encroach very strongly on the surrounding trees that form part and parcel of the character of Ravensbury as a whole. To consider interfering with this sense of proportion and harming this relationship by means of a 4 storey block of flats (Block B) beggars belief.

It is from this point also that the other four storey block of flats (Block A) will be seen emerging above the existing tiled roofs and further blocking the view of the park. Block A stands forward of the main building line of the existing houses and the height will therefore be that much more noticeable from along Ravensbury Grove. The problem with Block A is that it is too high in relation to the surrounding buildings and especially too high in relation to the surrounding trees (it also towers over the River Wandle). If it were two storeys in height, or possibly three storeys if the uppermost level were incorporated into the roof space, the negative effects on the character of the neighbourhood would be that much less.

Approaching the Southern End of Ravensbury Grove

As one nears the end of Ravensbury Grove (practically in line with 60 Ravensbury Grove), to your left the view of Ravensbury Park begins to extend considerably, by roughly 100m. This is one of the best views of the park when seen from within the Ravensbury Estate, allowing the visitor to see for a relatively long way and admire the large trees. This area also excels in terms of amenity due to the fact that it is a public area and not a private back garden. This area, with its green space, quality views into the park and defensible public space is a highly valued amenity for the residents of Ravensbury. The small cherry tree and planter may be considered by the developer's arboricultural consultant as having low value, but for residents this magnifies the value of the area. Indeed the planter was bought and paid for by the Ravensbury Residents Association around 20 years ago in order to positively transform the grass and lend it greater value than a mere lawn. Before that, this area was a quiet wooded glade, with mature trees interspersed with lawn - a beautiful area serving its function as both park and open space of great value to the residents. The storm of 1989 brought down a number of these trees, which were not replanted.
The lack of strong views into the park is commented on in the developing Ravensbury Local Plan. This public view should be retained for future generations to enjoy. Any passerby or resident, old or new, would be able to appreciate this area from a natural perspective without actually needing to walk into the park proper.

(Above & Below) Standing at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove, one can see all the way down the side of the park, appreciating the size of the trees and enjoying the sensation of encountering the wooded area, complete with teeming bird life both above your head (herons, kestrels and the like)

View across garages seen in March 2016 - note relationship with immediate environment
If one were to permit the construction of Block B in this area, at best, one would be compromising both this view and the extension of park environment into Ravenbury, at worst one would be destroying the sense of the neighbourhood's location forever. There will be no going back. A building of four storeys in the location proposed for Block B will severely harm the neighbourhood. In fact, any kind of building on this grassed area would be a backwards step. It should be retained for the benefit of the natural environment, the future Merton residents, visitors from outside the area and for the obvious benefits in terms of sustainability.

Boundary between Ravensbury Estate & Ravensbury Park

The proposed development should not be given the go ahead in its current form due to the plans for the site representing overdevelopment in this area in the most sensitive area in the whole of Ravensbury. The southern end of Ravensbury Grove forms the boundary with Ravensbury Park. In this area, the park and the estate are synonymous with each other. Any buildings over two storeys in height will block a large amount of the tree line and affect the overall character of the neighbourhood. To build in this area requires sensitivity & respect in terms of damage to potential outlook for not only to the existing built environment of Ravensbury Grove, Hengelo Gardens & beyond, but also to Ravensbury Park & the conservation area of Wandle Valley. The two go hand-in-hand.

The garages site is 1m higher than in Hengelo Gardens, and therefore any development in this area has consequences that are that much more visible for both the park and for the development.

At the entrance to the garages, the stated level on page 22 of the Flood Risk Assessment (see planning application documentation) is 18.19m AOD. In front of No.60 Ravensbury Grove,
the stated level is 17.61m AOD at the kerb. In front of the houses 1-10 Hengelo Gardens, the stated levels range from 17.08m to 17.16m AOD. This is why from ground level within the garages site, one can see almost directly into the bedrooms of residents homes on Hengelo Gardens:

1. **Floor heights in Hengelo Gardens houses:**
   
   17.11m AOD Ground Level + 0.3m to Ground FFL + 2.5m storey height + 1.125m to first floor bedroom window level = 19.91m AOD = First Floor Level

2. 18.25mAOD ground level + 1.7m (assumed eye level) = 19.95m AOD.

From items 1 & 2 above it can be seen that a person standing in front of the Mews Houses will be able to see easily & directly into the bedrooms of the Hengelo Houses. This would constitute unreasonable overlooking. The layout of the houses could be rearranged and the boundary should be screened to prevent this.

*View from within the currently derelict garages site, looking towards Hengelo Gardens with the roof to the 4 storey section of Ravensbury Court visible beyond. Height difference between the derelict garages area & the houses on Hengelo Gardens beyond can be appreciated here.*

If this application is passed then we would expect that considerable boundary screening be incorporated in order to retain pre-existing levels of privacy and remedy to some degree the loss of amenity.
The images below demonstrate the impact of this development and loss of outlook for the homes along 1-10 Hengelo Gardens. The riverside houses block out much of the trees, whilst the mews houses encroach on the garden amenity that the residents currently enjoy.

Existing view from 3 Hengelo Gardens towards derelict garages and Ravensbury Park

View from 3 Hengelo Gardens with new development superimposed - existing trees within development will be removed according to arboricultural plan supplied by developer.

3d view of the relationship between the proposed blocks & Hengelo Gardens and Ravensbury Grove
Views from within Ravensbury Park

The proximity of Block A to the River Wandle and therefore the conservation area is of much concern. From within the park, one can view the rear of the existing homes backing onto the Wandle, namely 56-62 Ravensbury Grove and 64-70 Ravensbury Grove. The current block of 64-70 is angled in order to allow for a back garden, however this location also allows for a better spatial relationship with the conservation area that it backs onto.

The proposed location of Block A will be in far greater proximity to the small channel of the River Wandle and at 4 storeys will tower over it. Both banks of this small channel represent the Wandle Valley Conservation Area. We believe that the design of the new block is far too close to the channel and a location should be found that will give the River Wandle sufficient room to "breathe". In all honesty, the ideal location of a two storey version of Block A is the current location as it provides space for both the tenants and the river environment.

With reference to the Wandle Valley Conservation Area Character Assessment (2007), sub area 5, part 2 contains Policy WV.P3: Development adjacent to the conservation area, and states that development proposals will be expected to "preserve or enhance its setting and not detract from views into or out of the area". We feel that this development will indeed detract from views both into and out of the area.

3d representation of how the development massing and height will influence its surroundings

3d view of the relationship between the proposed blocks and the River Wandle
The massing and overbearing nature of the Block A proposal threatens to relegate this important tributary of the River Wandle into a moribund channel, suitable only for flood relief as opposed to its current role, serving kingfishers, dragonflies and also mammals such as hedgehogs in generally undisturbed river bank areas with little access for extensive pedestrian traffic.

The trees are also very important sites for nesting birds and even bats. To consider further compromising their status for the local flora and fauna should be beyond reproach.

Please note that consideration should also be given towards the possibility of further tree loss if the regen proper goes ahead. Currently, it seems that Circle Housing have proposed little by way of proper habitat replacement in terms of numbers of trees and areas suitable for habitat. Instead, this development seems to serve sterile landscaping and the occasional passing bee. We have an extensive invertebrate population in terms of spiders, stag beetles and other species. This development is removing a large area of potentially ideal habitat.

To our understanding, this development appears wholly unsustainable due to its push for overdevelopment immediately adjacent to the Wandle Valley Conservation Area.

On page 40 of the WVCA character assessment, the Special Guidance states that views should be opened up into the park and entrances enhanced. In our view, this development serves neither of those functions and instead does quite the opposite through the loss of the green open space and the closing in of the park by the 4 storey blocks and the 3 storey houses with tiled roofs that are practically equal in height.

The WCVA guidance continues: "Should the prospect of major or significant development in close proximity to this part of the conservation area become a possibility, a development brief/framework should be prepared for the site or area concerned to secure an appropriate form of development that maintains and enhances the character and setting of the conservation area including buildings and spaces, particularly the parks along the Wandle and entrances to them, and preserves any archaeological remains. Key requirements will include:

1. **Buildings of a form and scale that reinforces the relationship between built development and open spaces.** [Due to the development's scale, it does not serve to reinforce this relationship, but compromises it and has a high potential to irreparably damage it too].

2. **Buildings designed of a high quality and which integrate with the surrounding pedestrian network, and which provide overlooking/surveillance of public rights of way and spaces.**

3. **Use of good quality materials that reflect and complement but not necessarily copy the palette of historic materials that survive within the area.**

4. **Create links between the development and the Morden Hall and Ravensbury Parks.** [This development does not sufficiently benefit the existing links due to the demolition of the green space that is of considerable benefit as described elsewhere in this response].

5. **Where possible maximise opportunities to improve the entrances**, particularly to Ravensbury Park. [It is not an improvement to install paving where there was once grass and plants that can serve the wildlife and general environment that much better.
In our opinion, this is a very significant development due to its proximity to Ravensbury Park and the potential for damaging both the park's character and the character of the Ravensbury Estate.

We feel that this development has failed in regards to creating a sustainable link between Morden Hall and Ravensbury Park through the removal of the green space. It has also compromised the park entrance through the same.

The developing Ravensbury Local Plan describes how Ravensbury Court utilises the 4 storey height to block out the view of the industrial estates beyond. It seem ludicrous therefore to use homes of the same height against the park, effectively blocking out the tree line for many residents of Ravensbury and damaging the character and neighbourhood even for passersby.

This consultation has faced stiff opposition from Ravensbury Residents throughout its journey through the consultation stages. It is incorrect to represent the palpable anger of residents by suggesting it has been drawn up with their consent when in fact it is quite the opposite.

Key stakeholders were indeed consulted although Ravensbury Residents Association noted the breadth of opposition to this scheme from the outset. An opposition that did not wane throughout the process. Residents were angry and continue to be angry at how this consultation was foisted on an community that is happy with their homes, assuming repairs are carried out by a competent team.
Site Levels:

Much of the site under consideration is a high part of Ravensbury, rising up 1m above the levels within the estate. The area is key to the character of both Ravensbury Estate & Ravensbury Park due to the enveloping tree line. Building on this site needs special consideration in order to avoid unpleasant impacts on both the estate and the park.

For this reason we would have thought that the best proposals should be low storey, ie 2 storeys with flat "green" roofs - ie planted roofs that will minimise the impact of the newly built environment and serve the flora and fauna of our park at the same time. Building over this height compromises the park's internal environment and does little to respect the loss of outlook incurred upon the existing residents of Hengelo Gardens and Ravensbury Grove.

The Developing Ravensbury Local Plan:

The Ravensbury Draft Estates Local Plan has just completed its second stage in March 2016 as such we expect that it should be considered a material planning consideration. This has been developed in consultation with the local community and Merton Council and will go through the final stage 3 soon.

However, on page 166, Policy EP R8 Building Heights of the developing Local Plan, the area of the Ravensbury Garages site and the land at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove was left blank. We found this very strange and consider that by trying to gloss over the future plans for this area, against the spirit of developing a Local Plan for the Ravensbury Neighbourhood. This site is not part of the call for sites plan either, so we believe it goes against the development plan for Merton also.

Flooding, The Sequential Test & Exception Test

This application represents overdevelopment in an isolated area surrounded by an that is at high risk of flooding: zone 3a. We do not think it appropriate to put so many people on an island in this area when there is an already high reliance on emergency services if a flood does occur. With this in mind, we consider the scale of the development a cause for concern. In consideration of the flood risk assessment making mention of the larger scope of the regen, we consider it even more ridiculous to promote additional homes in this area due to its isolated nature. The density should be much lower here.

In section 3, page 5 of The Proposal, Flood Risk Assessment Par 02, Savills make mention of defective Orlit Housing. According to reports by Circle Housing's own structural engineers, submitted to Merton Council as part of the Case for Regeneration in October 2015, the Orlit Houses in question are not actually defective. Circle have mismanaged their repairs and therefore as per their own engineers recommendations, threaten the life span of these homes through neglecting repairs such as gutter replacement as well as facade repair.

On Page 11, para. 6.7, we note that the Inspector stated that appropriate development of such [floodplain] sites is not ruled out. This development is not appropriate due to the multiple reasons stated in this report. for Savills to seek to justify this over development surrounded by flood plains and rivers shows a degree of desperation.

Savills have used the lack of a response in determining the availability of sites and we would question their methodology, particularly in light of the extensive development destined for
Morden Town Centre, the multitude of industrial estates in the area that are awaiting a change in planning in order to sell the land off for housing. We would argue that it is in their interests not to find another site available due to their need to serve their client, Circle Housing. Independent verification would be most appropriate in this instance. We would argue that Savills assertion that there are no other sites, in comparison to Ravensbury in a flood risk zone 3a, holds little water until an independent body supplies their assessments. As such the Sequential Test prepared by Savills should not be solely relied on.

Other notes:

With regards to Design, we would like to note that balcony design in the existing built environment of Ravensbury are actually incorporated into the main facade and do not project outwards. This maintains the lines of the facades. We would have expected that this design would be incorporated in a development that abuts a conservation area so as to reduce the overall impact on the surroundings. This design would also maintain the design ethos already in existence and make any new development more homogenous. We fail to understand why this has not been incorporated.

Conclusion:

We request that this development and the associated planning application are refused on the basis of the arguments presented.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to this application for planning permission. Please also consider our request to attend and speak at the actual planning meeting for this application as soon as a date is fixed.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher Holt,

Chair, Ravensbury Residents Association
Appendix 1 : Photographs of Ravensbury Grove and associated areas.

Southern end of Ravensbury Grove, abutting the park, seen from Ravensbury Court

64-70 Ravensbury Grove showing relationship with tree line of Ravensbury Park
64-70 Ravensbury Grove showing relationship with tree line of Ravensbury Park

Existing Street scene approaching southern end of Ravensbury Grove
View of Ravensbury Park seen from end of Ravensbury Grove.

Treeline seen from end of Ravensbury Grove
View across existing landscaping towards garages (March 2016)

Ravensbury Grove: Planted and landscaped area seen in May 2016 (above & below)
Ravensbury Grove: Planted and landscaped area seen in May 2016

Ravensbury Grove: Planted and landscaped area in May 2016
View from Ravensbury Court towards Hengelo Gardens with garages site beyond, showing extensive vegetation and leafy outlook
View from Hengelo Garden to rear of Ravensbury Grove showing outlook

View from Hengelo Gardens & Ravensbury Court towards garages area.
View looking south down Ravensbury Grove towards the park

View from 64-70 Ravensbury Grove in June 2016 (above and below)
View of grassed amenity area and character of southern end of Ravensbury Grove

3d artist's impression of flats Block B in Ravensbury Grove
View from rear of Hengelo Gardens towards garages area

Artist’s impression of Proposed housing on derelict garages site. (above and below)
Artist’s impression of Proposed housing on derelict garages site.

Artist’s impression of proposed development site.
Artist’s impression of proposed development site.

Artist’s impression of relationship between existing buildings and River Wandle

Extent of vegetation within derelict garages site.
Derelict garages site indicating existing scale

Derelict garages site showing extent of park now within boundary.
Appendix 2: Aerial photographs

View from the East with Ravensbury Park on left hand side (Above)

View from the North, with Ravensbury Park at top of picture (Above)
View showing proximity to Ravensbury Park

View showing boundary with Hengelo Gardens
View showing southern end of Ravensbury Grove
Appendix 3: Shadow maps & 3d model simulations

January:

1st January @ 1200hrs
1st Jan @ 1500hrs

April:

1st April @ 0900hrs
1st April @ 1100hrs

June:

1st June @ 0700 hrs
1st June @ 0800 hrs
1st June @ 1630 hrs (above & below)
Shadow transitions on 1st January: @ 0900 to 1600 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st February: @ 0900 to 1600 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st March: @ 0800 to 1700 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st April @ 0800 to 1800 hrs:
Shadow transitions on 1st May: @ 0700 to 1800 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st June: @ 0500 to 1900 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st July : @ 0500 to 1900 hrs:
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Background

In 2010 the London Borough of Merton transferred all of its housing stock to Circle Housing Merton Priory following a successful ballot of tenants. Some 9,500 former council homes were transferred, including the Ravensbury estate.

The Transfer Agreement included a requirement that Circle Housing Merton Priory bring all the transferred homes up the Merton Standard, effectively ‘Decent Homes Standard’ improvements plus some locally agreed enhancements. The Agreement required that all these works be completed by December 2015.

The Merton Standard works are well advanced across Merton, with over two thirds of the improvement works completed. However in preparing the plans for the delivery of the works to the outstanding homes, Circle Housing Merton Priory have come to doubt the value for money case of investing in what are, in some instances, homes and neighbourhoods of a very poor standard. As a result Circle Housing Merton Priory is currently exploring regeneration-based alternatives for three specific estates, including the 192 home Ravensbury estate.

Circle Housing Merton Priory see two main options:

1. The continuation of the Merton Standard works as originally planned
2. The regeneration of Ravensbury including the demolition of some homes and improvement of others to provide a total of 396 homes.
About the study area

The Ravensbury Estate is located between Mitcham and Morden, towards the south east of the London Borough of Merton. The area has a predominantly suburban and residential character, typically with 1, 2 and 3 storey houses, mainly of the inter-war and post-war period. The nearest district centre to the estate is Morden, just over 1 kilometre to the west - about a 15 minute walk. A small parade of shops is located on Morden Road, opposite the estate.

Morden Road runs along the northern and western boundaries of the estate and The River Wandle forms the southern boundary. The river valley creates a sequence of major green spaces that surround Ravensbury on three sides: Morden Hall Park, Ravensbury Park and Watermeads Nature Reserve. Mitcham Common and Golf Course lie about 1.5km further east. These extensive green spaces and the mature trees of the historic park of Morden Hall give Ravensbury an attractive setting and feels very much to be at the ‘soft edge’ of London. The only visible built-up edge to the site is at the north -eastern corner where there is a small estate of business units and to the north Deer Park Gardens.

Above: Merton in the wider London context: Map showing the location of Merton and Ravensbury in relation to the city.

Right: Site context map.
Source: HTA Design LLP
Testing the case for regeneration

As part of their regeneration plans for Ravensbury, Circle Housing Merton Priory is continuing to build up a ‘layered’ approach to the evidential case, including assessment of building condition and viability of regeneration options.

Another layer in the evidential case will be to examine the quality of the built environment within Ravensbury, with particular reference to permeability and access; usable private and communal open space; densities; adjacencies and overlooking of spaces. This will require a comprehensive and impartial review of the existing Ravensbury estate from an urban design perspective.

In January 2015 Circle Housing Merton Priory commissioned Sue McGlynn Urban Design Ltd to carry out the review.
Process

This study sets out to evaluate Ravensbury against the established principles of good design and does not attempt to make aesthetic or value judgements on the architectural style of Ravensbury. Instead it concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the design and the quality of the neighbourhood that results.

The National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance on Design endorse the principles set out in a number of previous documents, such as the Urban Design Compendium, Safer Places: The planning system and crime prevention, Manual for Streets 1&2, The Mayor’s London Plan (chapter 7), and older documents such as By Design. A comprehensive commentary on better design can be found in Circle Housing’s own publication Design Guide for Development Use.

The National Planning Policy Framework (para.58) defines well-designed places as places that:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
Methods

The review involved an assessment of the elements of the built environment of Ravensbury identified in Circle Housing Merton Priory’s brief. These are:

- Urban structure and access
- Building layout and alignment in relation to routes
- Façades and their interfaces with public spaces
- Height and massing
- Density and mix
- Building, landscape and public realm quality

A number of key measures were used to evaluate these elements and their performance in relation to current best practice urban design principles and policy:

- Relative integration of the estate with its surrounding area, using techniques developed by Space Syntax Ltd;
- Building position relative to routes to reveal the degree of definition of public and private spaces, using ‘figure ground’ analysis;
- The extent to which buildings provide active frontage to all public routes for safety, surveillance and sociability, by mapping ‘active’, ‘passive’ and ‘dead’ frontage;
- Photographic survey of buildings, landscape, streetscape and open space quality.
In addition, simple mapping and recording of other characteristics of the estate were compiled with a combination of on-site observation and use of secondary sources where data already exists. These are credited in the report where used.

The commission took place over 4 weeks in late January and February 2015. The surveys were carried out during weekdays and during working hours so no assessment has been made of the night-time experience of Ravensbury, such as lighting levels or parking.

The report is in three sections dealing with the main themes of analysis:

1. Urban structure
2. Layout
3. Quality of the external environment

Each section of the report provides an explanation of the methods used, an account of the analysis, followed by conclusions and key findings.

At the end of the report, the overall performance of Ravensbury is summarized against the Building for Life 12 criteria, the Government and industry endorsed assessment method for residential development.
Review themes

Urban structure | Layout | Quality of the external environment
Urban structure

Urban structure is an important spatial measure of social inclusion or exclusion and therefore a significant factor in deciding whether to refurbish or regenerate Ravensbury.

This section evaluates two aspects of Ravensbury’s urban structure, integration and connectivity. Each aspect is considered at two scales – the wider context within which Ravensbury is set and the immediate surroundings of the estate.

Integration: Assessing the ‘depth’ of Ravensbury relative to the wider area of south-west London and to its locality. This is an important measure of the extent to which residents have access to public transport and all the other opportunities that living in a capital city offer. Accessibility at this scale is often a significant indicator of life chances and residential value.

Connectivity: Assessing the relative interconnectedness of routes around and within the estate. This type of analysis reveals the nature of pedestrian access and the ease, convenience and safety of moving around the immediate neighbourhood. Accessibility at this scale is often a significant indicator of legibility and perceived safety of routes in the locality.

Above: A fully connected ‘deformed grid’ in the Merton district.

Above: A ‘Radburn’ layout in Grove Hill, Hemel Hempstead, with segregated routes and a confused building arrangement.
We have used Space Syntax theory and its techniques of analysis to measure Ravensbury’s level of integration and connectivity. The study area for the analysis was defined by bounding features such as railways, rivers, major routes and open spaces and encompasses most of the district of Merton.

Research since the 1970s by Bill Hillier and his colleagues at The Space Syntax Laboratory, University College London has led to a fundamental understanding of the relationship between spatial design and the use of space, the emergence of land uses and longer-term social outcomes.

Analysis of connected street systems reveals a structure of a few long straight lines that form the main settlement-wide movement routes. The remainder, the more numerous and shorter lines, represent the more local movement system. These are the quieter streets that carry less movement but are still connected to the wider movement network.

In the hierarchical movement systems introduced from the 1950s onwards, the pattern of development is very different, with pedestrians frequently segregated from vehicular movement at the local level. The very ends of the movement system are the culs-de-sac so familiar from the 1960s onwards in both public and private sector housing development. This has frequently resulted in pedestrian paths that are routed along the backs of property with little or no surveillance, that are less direct and legible and have a very low quality of walking experience.
Recent design guidance has recognized that we need streets that are designed for all modes of movement to be integrated within the same space; streets that are convenient for vehicular movement but are also safe, convenient and attractive for walking and cycling at a local scale (Manual for Streets 1 and 2, Building for Life 12).

Hillier et al’s Space Syntax approach uses a number of geometric measures to represent the relative connectivity of the ‘segments’ of public space, defined by drawing lines, called ‘axial lines’, through the system being analysed.

These studies show that the movement intensity along any line segment – that is, any length of line with an unobstructed view from one end to the other – depends on the segment’s pattern of connections to all the other segments in a given area around it. Segment length depends on the bendiness of the corridor with the longest segments tending naturally to pick up the largest number of connections. The most intensive movement will flow along these straightest, most-connected segments (in hotter colours in the diagram), while the shortest, least-connected segments will be quietest; as shown by the cooler colours.

The geometry of a layout has a pronounced effect on actual and perceived connectivity and legibility as well as actual and perceived levels of safety.
Wider context: accessibility

Accessibility is well-documented in transport and planning policy documents and Ravensbury falls within an area with a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 2, defined as ‘poor’ by The London Plan. This rating reflects the peripheral location of Morden and Mitcham within the Greater London area.

The PTAL score is used as an initial basis for determining housing density and parking ratios as defined in the London Plan and so has implications should the decision to regenerate Ravensbury be taken. Generally, the higher the score, the higher the housing density with significantly reduced car parking levels. In lower PTAL areas, such as at Ravensbury, dense flatted development is unlikely to be acceptable and parking levels need to reflect the relevant London Plan or local authority standards compatible with the likely car ownership levels.

Ravensbury has a reasonable range of public transport options within a 15 minute walking radius. The underground station at Morden is a 15 minute walk but the Belgrave Walk tram stop is only a 5-minute walk, accessed via Ravensbury Path. Two other tram stations, Phipps Bridge and Merton, also fall within the 10 and 15 minute radii and the estate is also relatively well-served by bus services on the London and Morden Roads.

A summary diagram of accessibility is included here.
Wider context: Integration analysis R8

Using the Space Syntax ‘Depthmap’ software, here we perform graph analysis on an ‘axial map’ of the study area of wider Merton. The axial lines are drawn through routes available for use by all movement modes but exclude routes accessible only to pedestrians and cyclists.

Integration is a measure of the average depth of a space to all other spaces in the system. The spaces of a system can be ranked from the most integrated to the most segregated. The software applies a relative colour scheme to help show a route’s level of integration, with the most integrated routes appearing in warm colours (red, orange yellow) and the most segregated routes showing in cooler colours (greens, blues, purples). As such, integration analysis is a measure of ‘depth’ in the system.

As Ravensbury is embedded within a large city it cannot be analysed as a closed system. ‘R8’ is used here to help routes near the edge of the area modelled from showing as overly ‘cool’ when in effect they are just located at the edge of the study area.

As the diagram shows, Ravensbury is in a relatively isolated location within the Borough and is consequently ‘deep’ from the most integrated routes that provide access to the wider area of south London and beyond. Movement is disrupted in this part of the Borough by the river valley and its flood plain and the canals, railways and commons lying within it. These green wedges can be traced following the course of the Wandle and other tributaries of the River Thames and is very visible in the space syntax diagram as a ‘gap’ in the street grid of south London.
Wider context: Integration analysis R3

As before, integration analysis is useful as a measure of ‘depth’ in the system. Here we change the analysis to R3 as this is an important consideration for assessing the walkability of a movement system. Radius 3 has been shown to be a ‘tipping point’ for modal choice; areas deeper than R3 within a system show a marked shift towards motorised travel, likely because routes become unnecessarily indirect and complicated.

As the diagram shows, virtually the whole area south of Mitcham and Morden is relatively ‘cool’ indicating that many journeys will require three-step changes of direction (R3) or more. This is a strong indication that the car will increasingly be the mode of choice, even for short journeys. In these circumstances, not only will car ownership likely to increase but also car use.

The estate is adjacent to the Morden Road which has an important movement function in the study area. Movement is intensified along Morden Road owing to this disruption of the movement grid and the lack of alternative routes. As a location, Ravensbury benefits from its proximity to and direct connection with Morden Road as it provides the link between the main radial routes of Mitcham and Morden.
Wider context: line length across the study area

Line lengths can be used as a proxy for intelligibility. Longer sight lines allow you to see further ahead on your journey, identify possible junctions and route options and assess alternatives in terms of direction and convenience. This is an important feature of movement networks as it allows us to move confidently even in unfamiliar places as we are able to judge which routes are part of the overall movement system and which give access only to more local areas. By contrast, short lines with frequent changes of direction mean it is difficult to understand at ground level how one route relates to another and whether the route you are on will take you in the right direction.

Again, the colour system in the diagram denotes line length, with warm colours representing the longest lines in the study area and blue and dark blue the shortest. The analysis, as shown by the diagram, reveals a very high number of ‘cool’ lines in the whole study area. This is in part caused by the widespread truncation of routes where they meet rivers, railway lines and extensive areas of green space.

In addition, the space syntax analysis confirms observation on the ground, or by Google Street view, that the relatively small number of longer, warmer-coloured lines identify historic routes or those dating from the 19th and early- to mid-20th century periods of suburban development.
Local context: Integration Analysis (R3)

The analysis of the wider context has shown that Ravensbury is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough. Moving to the site in more detail, we can see that low levels of integration are apparent here too. Ravensbury is defined and bounded by the River Wandle, parks, open spaces and the railway line to the north. This means that the estate cannot be anything other than a segregated enclave, almost regardless of the design of the layout.

On the one hand this creates a quiet residential environment but on the other hand restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.

Being a cul-de-sac, the current layout of the estate re-inforces this ‘natural’ separation but it remains very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly – they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.

The challenge for every new development in the Borough is to make small but potentially significant improvements in integration, particularly when situated in an already relatively isolated location such as Ravensbury. However, opportunities to achieve this at Ravensbury are limited by the enclave nature of the site.
Local context: Connectivity analysis

Connectivity can be used as a proxy for the intelligibility of a layout. The ability to understand how the route you are on is connected to other routes has been shown to be a key factor in developing a ‘picture’ of an overall system. Poorly connected routes give little information about an overall structure and make navigation more difficult, whereas highly visible, connected routes allow users to gather a great deal of information about the place they are in and whether they can move through it easily and without backtracking. Put simply, connectivity is a measure of the number of times a line in the model is connected onto other lines. In this type of analysis, axial lines are drawn for all connections including footpaths and cycle paths.

The analysis shows that the section of Morden Road adjacent to the estate is ‘hot’. This is because many vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connections converge on this section of the road. This explains the location of the small parade of shops as it is here that local movement is intensified.

However, it should be noted that this is a quantitative assessment of connection not a qualitative one. Many of the connections shown may not be easy or pleasant to use in all weathers or times of the day.

The other point to note is that within Ravensbury the vehicular routes are relatively ‘warm’ by comparison with the pedestrian and cycle routes, which show as ‘blue’ in the analysis. Although the estate is very shallow to the green spaces of the riverside and parks the connections between the two are not as legible. The regeneration of the estate could provide the opportunity to improve this situation by making better connections between the estate and the nearby ‘green’ routes and play spaces.
Urban structure summary

The various scales of the Space Syntax analysis show that this part of the Borough is relatively isolated. The combination of the peripheral location of the site within south London and the natural and other boundaries that surround Ravensbury make it an enclave. The overall isolation of the estate cannot be significantly improved. However, the seclusion and absence of through traffic is valued highly by residents and adds to the attraction of the location as a residential environment.

1. Ravensbury is located in a peripheral location of the Greater London area and this is reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2). However, the estate does have a reasonable range of public transport options within a 15 -minute walking isochrone.

2. A number of natural and other barriers create very strong edges around the estate and restrict movement and access locally and to the surrounding area. This is likely to encourage both higher car ownership and higher car use.

3. As a location, Ravensbury benefits from its proximity to and direct connection with Morden Road which has an important movement function in the local area. Movement is intensified along Morden Road owing to the distortion of the street grid by extensive areas of green infrastructure and the lack of alternative routes.

4. Ravensbury is very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly: they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.

5. It is important not to make the estate over- permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.

6. The regeneration of the estate could provide the opportunity to make better pedestrian connections between the ‘everyday’ routes within the estate and the nearby ‘green’ routes, play spaces and other footpath and cycling routes.
Layout

The previous section analysed various aspects of the movement network in both the wider area and locality of Ravensbury. This section evaluates the layout of buildings on the estate and the way that they are oriented to streets, pedestrian routes and open spaces.

The purpose of the analysis is to assess whether the building layout and facades provide the required level of surveillance and activity to animate the streets and communal open spaces as well as ensuring the privacy and security of gardens.

Two aspects are considered:
• Building layout
• Building interfaces
Building layout

The following sequence of ‘figure ground’ diagrams illustrates the ways in which buildings define both public and private spaces. They compare the pattern seen in Ravensbury with that of the surrounding area.

A ‘figure ground’ plan highlights either the ‘figure’, ie the enclosed space of buildings or the ‘ground’, ie the ‘unbuilt’ open space in either public or private ownership.

The first ‘figure ground’ plan maps only the buildings in black. The street network is clearly visible and well-defined on the Ravensbury estate, as it is in the majority of the surrounding residential areas. This is because there is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.

Right: A ‘figure ground’ diagram of the wider Merton area, with Ravensbury estate outlined in yellow. Note the uniformity of the both Ravensbury and the housing to the south of the river built in a similar period.
The second figure ground plan maps only the open space in black ie the ‘unbuilt’ space. In the residential areas immediately around the estate most of this is either the public space of the street or is enclosed as private front and rear gardens. At Ravensbury and Deer Park Gardens the distribution of open space shows a different pattern, with significant areas being given over to communal spaces at the front of buildings as well as the private space of rear and front gardens. However, there are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home.

Right: Unbuilt space is revealed in this reverse of the normal ‘figure ground’ diagram and shows how the buildings define public space and enclose private space.
Building interfaces: Active frontages

One of the most important features of ‘perimeter block development’ is that building fronts and entrances should be oriented to face the street. This sets up the mutually re-inforcing relationship of active and well-surveilled public spaces at the front of dwellings and private spaces away from public view at the rear. The importance of this relationship for creating safe, lively and sociable places is recognized in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning policy Guidance on Design.

The logical extension of this is that all streets and pedestrian routes should be lined by the front of buildings rather than their sides and backs. The following sequence of diagrams adds a further layer to the analysis by indicating the position of building entrances and mapping the ‘transparency’ of building facades at ground floor level where they are adjacent to publicly-accessible space.

Building facades have been mapped according to the following classifications:
• Active frontage is defined as facades that having both doors and windows of inhabited rooms (ie not bathrooms, storerooms, lobbies or garages) at regular intervals along the street or route to provide surveillance as well as contact and movement between inside and out.
• Passive frontage is defined as facades with only windows of inhabited rooms but no doorways, providing surveillance but no contact between public and private space.
• Dead frontage is where the edge to the public space or route is a blank wall or wall that is effectively blank, for instance rows of garage doors or where windows are obscured.

Key:
- Active
- Passive
- Dead
1. Ravensbury Court: ‘Passive frontage’ but good surveillance to the street and communal space.
2. Ravensbury Grove flats, again showing ‘passive frontage’ but with good surveillance.
3. ‘Active frontages’ of Ravensbury Court face the internal space rather than the public space.
As the diagrams illustrate, the analysis at Ravensbury shows two different responses. This may indicate that it was planned and designed at a period when theories of residential layout and movement were in transition.

The houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. Private amenity space is provided away from public view at the rear of properties. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’ of the buildings, minimizing contact and activity with the streets. The archways in Ravensbury Court provide pedestrian access from the street fronts to the dwelling entrances at the rear.

The maisonette typology does at least ensure continuous passive frontage. Living rooms rather than bedrooms are adjacent to the ground floor street edges and communal spaces. However, maisonettes have no external amenity space and the ground floor units do not have independent entrances from the street. The 2-storey flats have access only to a small terrace or balcony but this does overlook the street without having direct access from it.

There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The exception to this pattern is the edges of the garage courts and the pedestrian paths that have no frontage at all. This issue could be addressed and rectified by regeneration of the estate.

In summary, most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces.
1. Rear access to flats on Ravensbury Grove. All gates to flats were open at the time of visit.
2. Ground floor entrances for the maisonettes inside Ravensbury Court.
3. Entry to the upper floor maisonettes in Ravensbury Court.
4. Terraced houses with shared access to rear gardens.
Layout summary

1. The figure ground plans show that Ravensbury adopts a similar ‘perimeter block’ pattern of development to surrounding residential areas.

2. There is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.

3. There are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home.

4. Most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces. Houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’, reducing contact and activity between buildings and streets.

5. There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The spaces with the least intervisibility and surveillance are the garage courts and the pedestrian paths. This issue could be remedied during the regeneration of the estate.
Quality of the external environment

This final theme of the review assesses the quality of the external environment of the estate. It reviews Ravensbury from an urban design point of view and concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the estate’s design.

It does not include stock condition of buildings or a detailed analysis of dwelling types as this is provided in other baseline studies.

The elements reviewed are:

Buildings
- Building character, types and massing
- Density and mix

Public realm
- Streetscape
- Landscape
- Open spaces

This part of the review primarily uses photos to identify characteristic types of buildings and spaces and highlights key issues of quality and use.
Building character, density and mix

The majority of the area surrounding Ravensbury is characterized by post-war suburban housing, typically detached, semi-detached or in short terraces and of one or two storeys in height. Although constructed during the same period, the Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces and sub-areas within the estate.

It has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and ‘rural’ edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.

Building types are:
- 2-storey, semi-detached pre-cast concrete Orlit houses, around the perimeter and mainly the western half of the site
- 2-storey terraces of houses and flats
- 4-storey, L-shaped terrace of maisonettes
- Apart from the concrete Orlit houses, a simple palette of brick and tile materials unifies the building types and groups.

Ravensbury currently has 192 homes in an area of 4.43 ha, giving a density of 43 dwellings per hectare (dph). This density is similar to the surrounding development of the same period but is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location. The homes are a mix of 1-bed flats, 2-bed maisonettes and 2- and 3-bed houses. Of the 192, 66 are in private ownership with the remaining 126 occupied by Circle Merton Priory tenants.

The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration. For instance, the garage courts at the south-east corner of the site are little used yet they occupy the most valuable part of the site with river frontage. There is also potential to increase building height within the site and to create a stronger built edge to the section of Morden Road east of The Surrey Arms public house.
This sequence of images shows the range of building heights and types present on the estate. A simple palette of materials unifies the building types and groups within the estate.

1. Two-storey, semi-detached Orlit houses to the urban edge of Morden Road.
2. Orlits with slip-road to Morden Road. There is potential along both these frontages to increase building heights.
3. Four storey maisonettes. The building to building distance across Ravensbury Grove (pictured) and Henglo Gardens combined with landscape preserve the open feel of the estate.
4. Sub-areas within the estate defined by building height, type and landscape, as shown here in Henglo Gardens.
5. Short two-storey terraces of flats in Ravensbury Grove.
6. Two-storey terraced houses to Hengelo Gardens.
Streetscape: vehicular routes

- The road types are typical of this period of development, with standard widths and surface treatment of black-top carriageways and pavements with concrete kerbs. The exception is the narrower carriageway of Rutter Gardens.
- The simple, straight street layout provides an efficient edge for parking. This does not dominate the streetscape where carriageways are wide enough to park on street and where mature trees reduce visual impact, for instance on Ravensbury Grove and Hengelo Gardens.
- High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey – day time during a weekday. It is safe to assume that this gets more problematic in the evening and weekends. This is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, “poor”.
- At the moment a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. The garage courts looked unused and are probably too small for modern cars.
- There is a significant amount of ‘wheels up’ parking in Hatfield Close and this is visually intrusive as well as blocking pavements for pedestrians. However, as the whole estate is in effect a cul-de-sac vehicle flows and speeds are generally low and it feels quite safe to walk in the carriageway. During the regeneration of the estate it would be positive to formalize this by introducing shared-surface streets.
- Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.
1. Morden Road is the only busy through route. Its standard highways design and treatment is softened by the mature trees on both sides of the road.
2. Ravensbury Grove is the main access for the estate. It has parking on both sides of the street.
3. Hatfield Close has on-plot parking in long front gardens but ‘wheels-up’ parking still happens.
4. Internal street behind Ravensbury Court.
Streetscape: pedestrian routes

Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and these feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian-only routes within the estate. The exceptions are the route that connects the southern end of Rutter Gardens with Morden Road and the paths at the south of Ravensbury Grove and Hengelo Gardens to the riverside. All of these routes could be improved.

- The long footpath from Rutter Gardens is narrow and unsurveilled and was the only place on the estate where litter was evident. This is the only existing pedestrian access from the west of the estate to Morden Road and the bus stop.
- Of the paths at the south of the estate, the route from Ravensbury Grove is the most important. This provides access not only to the stream edge but also across the stream onto the Wandle riverside pathway and to Ravensbury Park.
- The route from Hengelo Gardens is gated and evidently little used, giving access to an overgrown area by the stream and then passes behind the rear of the garage court.
1. Footpath connecting Rutter Gardens to Morden Road.
2. Archway route connecting interior of Ravensbury Court to Ravensbury Grove.
3. Footbridge at the southern end of the estate giving access across the stream to the riverside walk.
4. Pedestrian routes giving access to entrances at the rear of flats.
Landscape

Ravensbury has a distinctive landscape and an open and green character. The whole estate is set within a significant area of high landscape value, with access to an extensive area of parkland and the green corridor of the River Wandle. Even its ‘urban’ northern and western boundaries with Morden Road face the woodland within Morden Hall Park.

Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.

The height of the largest building on the estate, the 4-storey block of Ravensbury Court, is balanced by building to building set backs of approximately 30 metres, the communal open spaces and the tree-lined streets. The line of trees on Hengelo Gardens is particularly impressive and mirrors the height and enclosure of Ravensbury Court on the other side of the street.

All elements of the landscape are well-maintained, with the exception of the frontage to Morden Road between the junction with Ravensbury Grove and The Surrey Arms. Here the houses are set well back from the main road behind a row of mature pollarded trees that form an attractive feature along this stretch of busy road. However, the frontages to these properties are noticeably less well cared for than the rest of the estate. The Morden Road frontage facing Morden Hall Park is set behind a slip road that insulates houses from the main road. These homes are, by contrast, very well maintained. There is no obvious physical reason for this difference between the two Morden Road frontages and may reflect other social or economic factors.

The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

As part of the green corridor of the River Wandle the trees have ecological value as well as their visual significance and role in well-being. No matter which option is selected for the future of Ravensbury, it will be important to protect mature trees and increase tree planting wherever possible.
Amenity and play spaces

The consultation process carried out at Ravensbury has indicated the value to residents of the open spaces, gardens and mature trees.

All the semi-detached houses have larger than average front and rear gardens. However, none of the maisonettes or flats have private amenity space but all are adjacent to communal open spaces. These communal spaces do not have any play equipment or seats and therefore appear to offer more of a visual amenity rather than being actively used. However, the survey was carried out in February and a very different picture of use might emerge in summer.

The lack of play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.

The various open spaces within the estate are well-located in terms of intervisibility and surveillance, meaning that they are well overlooked from buildings and passers by even at distance. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality. Physical evidence of this can be seen in the amount of personalisation of gardens and threshold spaces by doorways to the maisonettes and flats.
Quality of the external environment summary

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition rather than urban design or landscape. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration.

1. Ravensbury has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and ‘rural’ edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.

2. High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey but this is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, ‘poor’.

3. Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.

4. Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and routes feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian-only routes within the estate but all could be improved.

5. Ravensbury Estate is set within a distinctive and significant area of high landscape value. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.

6. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

7. The lack of formal play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.

8. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
Review conclusions
Building for Life 12

Building for Life 12 is a tool kit that is aimed at assessing residential quality. It is a national initiative, endorsed by government for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use to help stimulate conversations about creating good places to live.

It uses a series of 12 questions to interrogate a place and develop a picture of its likely performance against design best practice.

Each headline question is followed by a series of additional questions, and also provided are five recommendations in the form of ‘design prompts’.

The 12 questions are broken into chapters, and there are four questions in each of the three chapters:

- Integrating into the neighbourhood
- Creating a place
- Street and home

Based on a simple ‘traffic light’ system (red, amber and green) it is recommended that proposed new developments aim to:

- Secure as many ‘greens’ as possible,
- Minimise the number of ‘ambers’ and;
- Avoid ‘reds’.

The more ‘greens’ that are achieved, the better a development will be.

A red light gives warning that a particular aspect of a proposed development needs to be reconsidered.

Here we use the BfL12 questions to compare existing Eastfields with current best practice to draw conclusions on how it performs.
## Integrating into the neighbourhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Connections</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The estate connects reasonably well to its surroundings given that it is surrounded by barriers to movement, with good connections to the water and to the shops along Morden Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Facilities and services</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Although the site is adjacent to a small parade of shops, it is relatively isolated from the wider district centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Public transport</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The site is well placed for access to train and bus connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Meeting local housing requirements</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The current estate offers a range of dwellings sizes and tenures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Character</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The estate has a distinctive character, aided by the mature vegetation and feelings of openness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Working with the site and its context</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally, the estate uses mature planting to good effect, but more could be made of its river and park-side location.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Creating well defined streets and spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td>Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The streets are well-defined by buildings and boundaries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Easy to find your way around</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The estate has a simple layout with good sight lines and this makes it easy to navigate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Street and home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 Streets for all</td>
<td></td>
<td>Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vehicle speeds on the streets are low, not necessarily by design, and the streets are well overlooked by adjacent properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Car parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is a good range of parking solutions on offer, with most of it well-resolved. Lots of on-street wheels-up parking suggests an issue with overall levels of parking or car ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Public and private spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td>Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Much of the space on the estate is well-defined by clear boundaries, and is well overlooked by adjacent properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 External storage and amenity space</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All of the dwellings have either dedicated bin storage or have access to front or rear gardens for bins and recycling etc. The bins stores for the flats could be more secure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This summary shows that the Ravensbury estate performs quite well against the BfL12 questions, with eight ‘greens’ being awarded. This reflects the benefits of its location as well as the design design solutions used on the estate.

In the areas where ‘amber’ scores are awarded, this should give pointers for any future design work on the estate, highlighting issues that could be compounded should they not be properly addressed.
Review summary

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its seclusion and landscape setting but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups that define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and are likely to be determined by ownership, viability and building condition rather than urban design or landscape.

1. The Ravensbury Estate is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough, as reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2).
2. The extensive parks, riverside open spaces and other barriers surrounding the estate make it an enclave and there is relatively little that can be done to integrate Ravensbury better into its wider area.
3. This relative isolation creates, on the one hand, a quiet and secluded residential neighbourhood but, on the other hand, restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.
4. There is some scope to improve access on foot and cycle through the process of regeneration. However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.
5. Analysis of building facades reveals that the entire external and internal perimeters of the estate have active or passive frontages providing good levels of surveillance. Conversely, there is very little dead frontage with the exception of the edges to garage courts and the pedestrian paths that are not overlooked.
6. The density of the estate at 43 dwellings per hectare (dph) is similar to surrounding development of the same period. However, this is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location, and there is potential to increase density and building height through the various permutations of retention and regeneration.
7. Ravensbury Estate is set within an area of high landscape value. Internally, this green and open character is maintained by the presence of grassed communal areas, mature trees and other planting. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.
8. It is important that mature trees and riparian landscape are protected and improved. This is most likely to be possible with masterplan options that combine retention and regeneration rather than complete redevelopment.
9. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
10. High levels of car ownership were evident at the time of the survey.
11. Currently, a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. However, car parking may become a serious problem should regeneration options significantly increase the number of dwellings on the site. This will need careful design and management.
12. The Building for Life 12 assessment for Ravensbury results in 8 ‘greens’ out of the 12 questions.
Ravensbury RA Response to
Stage 3 Local Plan for Ravensbury

1.0 Introduction:

This is the Ravensbury Residents Association response to Merton Council's Stage 3 Pre-Submission Local Plan for Ravensbury.

2.0 Overview of Report

In the Stage 3 report, it does appear that very little attention has been paid to certain aspects of the residents Stage 2 responses. We would like the Planning Inspector to request copies of all of these Stage 2 responses in order to independently ascertain to what extent the residents own views have been overruled by the council officers own personal viewpoints which lack proper professional substantiation relative to the actual experience of living in Ravensbury the residents themselves.

Case in point is EP R1 para 3.242 (page 150) concerning the reversal of the Ravensbury Court flats. At all stages of this consultation, many residents have said that this is a ridiculous idea, but Merton Council have chosen to retain this idea even at Stage 3, showing lack of regard to consultation responses.

It also appears that conversations between the council and their housing partner Circle Housing (now Clarion/Latimer) have exerted excessive influence in certain aspects of this final version of the Local Plan.

Case in point are the references to the area of Ravensbury Garages at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove. At first this area was barely even referred to in the draft Local Plan, due to Merton Council's desire to sell off the site as quickly as possibly, & thereby advancing the push for demolition of the Ravensbury Estate. This area has now been granted planning permission in advance of the Local Plan being finalised. This seems to be an attempt to usurp the proper process of consultation for the Local Plan, and therefore the push for regeneration and the consultation itself has been seen as an affront to Ravensbury community at large. This is why many residents feel it to be pointless to partake in the consultation.

3.0 Previous Responses to Stage 2

It should be noted that we have provided extensive responses to Stage 2 of the Local Plan, but have observed that some of these points have been ignored by Merton Council and their Future Merton team at Stage 3. Those responses will not be extensively repeated here but we hope they will be reviewed by the Planning Inspector.

4.0 Policy EP R1: Townscape

Paragraph 3.242 makes mention of the reversal of Ravensbury Court flats. This idea was revealed to the residents of Ravensbury Court who thought the idea preposterous. They were more than happy with their current layout as it provides the privacy & intimacy of a post-war mews type arrangement. Furthermore, the interior courtyard provides for a sense of community and has done for a number of generations. It seems that the council is unhappy with a cohesive community such as Ravensbury and it is also unhappy that such an enormous amount of scorn has been poured upon their ideas. This idea has to be one of the most ridiculous ones ever meted out on a thoroughly undeserving number of residents.

In paragraph 3.243, Ravensbury Court is said to have "a rather dead frontage". Some residents thought it might be nice to be able to access the grassed areas through a new back door, but none thought it a good
idea to actually reverse the entire layout to suit. Why this idea has been retained at Stage 3 is beyond any understanding. It should be also noted that residents did not want further concrete patios to be installed to the rear of their properties.

Photographs and Diagrams relevant to Section EP R1:

Image above: Corner of Morden Road at the Surrey Arms, Image below: Aerial image of same
Images above: Ravensbury Park entrance onto Morden Road

Images above: Ravensbury Court
Images above: Ravensbury Court

Images above: Ravensbury area including Hengelo Gardens, Rutter Gardens, Hatfeild Close & Ravensbury Grove
Above: Aerial view of Ravensbury as a whole

Above: The significant tree-line when observed from Ravensbury Court & Hengelo Gardens
Image: Ravensbury Park Entrance onto Morden Road

Images above: Ravensbury Mill

Image: Better locations for pedestrian crossings
Image: Page 152 - R1 Townscape Map.
5.0 Policy EP R2: Street Network

EP R2 part b) states that Ravensbury Grove MUST be extended fully to the boundary of Ravensbury Park, suggesting that a paved area or road should be run right up to the park. However this ignores the fact that the southern end of Ravensbury Grove forms designated open space land that has been used by residents for access to the park as well as an area for leisure pursuits and relaxation ever since the estate was built. This area must not be lost. For many years this has formed a transition zone from park to estate. This area has been invaluable to residents as it presents an introduction to the estate and also actively extends the park into the estate. We feel that the report serves to undervalue this grassed space in order to enable excessive construction density.

In paragraph 3.252, the Morden Road access lane should be retained. Flood attenuation measures can be served without removal of this area which currently serves as shared space and for incidental play.

In paragraph 3.253, residents have repeatedly rejected the potential for a new access onto Morden Road. A new access would ruin the secluded nature of the estate, which it should be noted is considered by both residents and professionals as a high quality of the area, allowing for relaxation, seclusion from the busy main road and a very high quality of living for those away from the main road.

Running a straight Ravensbury Grove up to the park will also serve to destroy the tranquillity of this area. It should also be noted that Ravensbury Grove will need speed attenuation measures in order to reduce speeding in future. There is little mention in this report of speeding and prevention of anti social behaviour through motorbikes or speeding cars.

Image above: Southern part of Ravensbury Grove with effective traffic measures
Image above: Southern part of Ravensbury Grove with effective traffic measures

Image above: Southern extremity of Ravensbury Grove on approach to park.

Image above: Hengelo Gardens & grassed areas with parking facilities.
Image above: Pedestrian Movement from Ravensbury towards park & tramstops
6.0 Policy EP R3: Movement & Access

Little has been said of the Ravensbury Urban Design review report by Sue McGlynn Urban Design Ltd, in which mention is made in regards to:

"However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity."

Our residents back this concept and feel that the theme of permeability is exaggerated in terms of the benefits to Ravensbury.

We feel that there has been no suggestion to improve links with Morden in terms of crossing Morden Road. Removal of the current crossing and moving it towards the Surrey Arms helps leisure usage but does nothing to encourage the safe passage of commuters. Inclusion of another crossing at the junction of Wandle Road would be preferable due to the fact that many people attempt the dangerous crossing in order to shorten the journey towards Morden. This should form part of the traffic calming measures suggested.

Ravensbury Grove will need speed attenuation measures in order to reduce speeding in future. There is little mention in this report of speeding here and prevention of anti-social behaviour through motorbikes or speeding cars.

Images above: R3 Movement & Access with annotations
7.0 Policy EP R4: Land Use

Densities are key to the character of Ravensbury and should be moderated in an area of such outstanding character. We are concerned that there is little here in this section than fully reflects the unique environment of the Ravensbury estate and the need to restrict the densities to the benefit of the immediate area and that of Merton generally.

8.0 Policy EP R5: Open Space

The open space directly adjacent to Ravensbury Park has the potential to be of lower quality than that currently in existence. In fact, the planning permission for Ravensbury Garages has already implied that the actual quality of the space is a feature that is lacks proper interrogation. We would request that the language in this section be strengthened to preserve high quality views and appreciation of Ravensbury Park. Replacing the total area of say a grassed space with chunks of gardens that will no longer be public space is not the correct reinterpretation of open space. Also suggesting that the sum area of patches of grass placed around a paved area is equal to the previously large expanse of grass that provided for an extensive view of the park and also provided communal leisure space, seems an incorrect deployment of planning guidance. Positioning a building in the direct line of sight of the park seems against the spirit of planning itself.

Essentially, the division of a large open space into multiple area and redistributing those parts around an area in piecemeal fashion should be proscribed in this section. This would enable the quality of the space and environment to be retained and enhanced.
Image above: Trees within the Ravensbury Estate requiring proper survey & retention

*Trees to be retained in future redevelopment*

Image above: Trees under threat within the Ravensbury Estate requiring proper survey & retention

*Trees to be retained in future redevelopment*
9.0 Policy EP R6: Environmental Protection

Little seems to be said in regards to the creation and promotion of habitat within the estate as the current estate layout provides for wildlife through its large gardens, extensive number of trees and shrubbery. The new estate should readily incorporate wildlife provision through the planting of hedges, trees and general shrubs. There will otherwise be a sum loss of wildlife & habitat through the regeneration of Ravensbury.

Gardens and even homes themselves should be designed to actively promote wildlife in the form of birds, invertebrates and small mammals.

Green roofs could be incorporated but there seems to be no mention of this.

Maintenance of the banks of the Wandle needs to be controlled by means of a wildlife statement detailing when its ok to trim vegetation and which trees should be left alone. We have had recent cases of Merton Council instructing their tree surgeon contractors to cut back the trees and carry out their own risk assessments. We think risk assessments for wildlife need to be created independently in such a sensitive area frequented by roosting bats and other creatures. Independent wildlife risk assessments should be incorporated into part n)

In terms of flooding, nothing has been said of the Ravensbury Mill which has two channels already, one hidden beneath the mill, and one that runs alongside. This suggests that there is no need for a small channel along Morden Road and that such a channel would actively promote flooding due to the contours of the land in the area.

Existing flow paths could be exacerbated by the incorrect provision of roads and openings on to Morden Road. Provision should be made for studies to examine the impact of the road layout on flooding and the modifications required to improve the situation.

In paragraph 3.289 we think it advisable to agree where the top of the bank of the main river actually lies, and to consider the reinstatement of the bank where possible if this is of benefit to the wildlife habitat.

In paragraph 3.291, the use of open swales could suggest the use of gravel, but we do not think this particularly suit the estate character and does little to encourage earth worms which are a staple diet of many creatures in the area. We request that grassed swale area are considered equally.
Image above: R6 annotated with observations
10.0 Policy EP R7: Landscape

Nothing has been said of the extensive area at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove and how the Ravensbury area will be made worse by the overdevelopment of this uniquely sensitive area. Excessive height here impact on the entirety of Ravensbury estate and will also damage the park itself. The public views here should be mostly retained, otherwise they will be lost forever.

We have included our response to the planning application as this covers many of the salient points in regards to Landscape in Ravensbury. Please see Appendix 3.0, attached separately.
11.0 Policy EP R8: Building Heights

We think that "taller buildings must be located around the edge of the estate" is open to misinterpretation, and that more specifically Morden Road should be defined as the location for slightly higher buildings. Ravensbury Grove must not receive taller buildings and neither must the southern boundary with Ravensbury Park.

It should be noted that Ravensbury Court is actually a part 3 and part 4 storey building. The part 3 storey is closer to the park and does not attempt to compete with the surrounding tree canopy. This should inform future buildings to not exceed 3 storeys in height. The 4 storey element of Ravensbury Court actually serves to screen the industrial estate. Therefore any building of 4 storeys in height will effectively screen the tree canopy of Morden Hall Park and Ravensbury Park, which should be fully proscribed.

We think it unfortunate that no mention of storey heights has been made in section EP R8.

The character of Ravensbury is made up of the scale of the buildings. Along Ravensbury Grove, buildings should not exceed 3 storeys, preferably with the uppermost storey being contained within the roof. In fact 3 storeys incorporating roof space living is an ideal height around Ravensbury as it enables higher density without excessively impacting on the character and environment. Mansard roofs could be employed to good use in this respect.

It is important not to compete with the 4 storey element of Ravensbury Court as the result will ruin the character of the area.
Views around Ravensbury Court showing established mature trees forming a vital backdrop

Image: Northern End of Ravensbury Grove showing significant trees and two storey construction befitting landscape

Image: Southern end of Ravensbury Grove showing gladed area where park blends with estate.
Tree locations requiring retention in order to preserve character of Ravensbury

Image above: Trees to be retained in Northern end of Ravensbury

Image above: Trees to be retained in Southern end of Ravensbury
Image above: Effect on views from existing buildings towards garages area
Image above: Effect on views from Ravensbury Court across Ravensbury areas

Image above: Views from Ravensbury Court looking West
Boundary indicates extent of the "Ravensbury Estate", otherwise considered to be the "Ravensbury Village" by local residents.

Image above: Extents of Ravensbury Estate/Village

Image above: View along Hatfield Close with tree-line including Morden Hall Park beyond.
Images above: Southwest & Northwest corners of Ravensbury Village

Images above: Southeast & Northeast corners of Ravensbury Village

Image above: annotated R8 Building Heights map with guidance on heights proposed

Building height to be 3 storeys including mansard roof design to accommodate upper storey

Building height to be 2 storeys with provision for third storey within roof

Buildings to be 2 storeys within this area with some provision for mansard roof design for additional storey

Buildings adjacent to park should be 2 storeys in height, or 3 if including roof structure

Garages area abuts Ravensbury Park & should be 2 storeys, not exceeding 3 storeys including roof structure.

Note additional tree canopies within Ravensbury Area

Utilise Ravensbury Court as outside edge of entire development & prevent creation of channel of relatively high buildings along Ravensbury Grove

In: existing building forms outside edge of building height envelope preventing excessive massing along both sides of Ravensbury Grove.
14.0 Conclusion:

Whilst we appreciate this opportunity to guide the future of Ravensbury, we also think that many opportunities are being lost. Namely those that will preserve the unique character and environment of Ravensbury.

The now 4 year old push for regeneration has resulted in a great deal of anger from residents. This has been due to the high levels of disregard meted out by the housing association's regen team towards existing members of the Ravensbury community.

Many residents are only too aware of the beauty that resides in Ravensbury and the fact that any redevelopment will effectively scar the setting of the area and result in a net loss of area afforded to social housing and quite possibly the loss of quality public space. The fact that the self same regen team meet with the council's Future Merton on a regular basis only serves to muddy any possible concept of impartiality during the assembly of the Estates Local Plan.

We therefore hope that the information we have provided enables the independent Planning Inspector to judge this document appropriately & fairly.

Christopher Holt, Chair RRA.

Ravensbury Residents Association.
APPENDIX 1.0 : 3D Renders of our understanding of the proposals
Image above: proposed buildings shown in pink with Orlit homes (etc) shown in white

Image above: proposed buildings shown in pink with Ravensbury & Hengelo homes (etc) shown in orange
Image above: Garages area seen from Hengelo Gardens proposed buildings shown in pink

Image above: proposed buildings showing proposed redevelopment density
Image above: Existing buildings showing overall density

Ravensbury Regeneration Plans:
Proposed buildings shown in pink
APPENDIX 2.0: CHMP Reports on Ravensbury Orlit Housing

1 Asbestos Surveys

It is noted that asbestos was only found in the soffit panels of the Orlit houses on Ravensbury. In 34 Ravensbury Grove, one of the recently refurbished properties, these soffit panels were replaced with plastic. However following discussions with CHMP staff, we are unable to ascertain whether the proper asbestos procedures were followed.

The results of the asbestos surveys by Pennington Choices Ltd (dated 15th & 19th September 2014) concur with residents own information regarding Merton Council checking all properties and finding no evidence of asbestos aside from the soffit boards.

2 Ravensbury Existing Stock Refurbishment Appraisal by HTA

It is noted that this report makes mention of the Energy Performance Certificates and the potential energy costs to residents. For clarity we think it would be important for Circle to present potential per annum costs of living in the new homes so that residents would have a better idea of total costs and be able to forecast appropriately.

3 Structural Assessment of Orlit Homes by Tully De’Ath


We note the comments regarding the Chloride Content, namely:

"6.11 GBG tested fifty dust samples for chloride content. These samples were taken from the PRC columns and beams and the in-situ mortar joints. The chloride contents of all seven mortar samples were low at 0.15% or less. Generally the chloride content of the concrete samples were also low at 0.07% or less. There were six exceptions to this however which showed a chloride content ranging from 0.16% to 1.33%. These were on two samples extracted from the secondary beams within 193 Morden Road, three samples extracted from columns within 20 Hatfield Close and a single sample extracted from a primary beam in the roof space of 20 Hatfield Close."

We note the comments regarding the Cement Content, namely:

"6.12 From visual inspections of eight samples, the cement contents vary between 10.3% to 18.7%. GBG consider these are indicative of reasonable to good quality precast concrete. The variability of cement content is considered not uncommon for structures of this age."

We note the comments regarding High Alumina Cement, namely:

"6.13 High-alumina cement (HAC) is an alternative cement mix to Ordinary Portland cement (OPC). It became favourable within the industry as concrete made from it sets rapidly and has a high initial strength. However, under certain conditions it loses strength over time due to a chemical process. As such, it became classified as a deleterious material and was banned from use in 1975. The BRE report on Orlit Houses highlights that many of the precast reinforced concrete elements and in-situ mortar stitches of the Orlit houses that they surveyed contain HAC. 6.14 Twenty four samples were tested by GBG across the four properties. None of these were found to contain HAC."

We note the comments regarding Petrographic Examinations:

The results of all the petrographic examinations showed that the concrete appears to be good quality with no obvious evidence of significant distress.
We note the concluding remarks of the Structural Engineers report, namely:

"8.6...There have been no structural engineering concerns identified however and the concrete frames, where investigated, are in a reasonable structural condition. The main concerns highlighted with the BRE research related to concrete beams on flat roofs. The roofs of the Orlit houses at Ravensbury Estate are pitched. It should be recognised however that this conclusion is based on only a limited amount of investigations within a small proportion of all the Orlit houses."

"8.7 If the conclusions reached from the assessment of the 4 Orlit houses were to be reflected in the other 68 properties, then the main issues to consider are linked with the effects of water ingress and the cladding panels.

8.8 Water ingress can affect the condition of the roof timbers through beetle infestation or decay. As has been seen with the entrance canopies, water ingress can also cause deterioration of concrete elements, especially where reinforcement is allowed to corrode. To extend the useful life of such buildings it is therefore important to have an effective maintenance regime in place to keep external finishes in good order and to limit potential for water ingress.

8.9 It is therefore important to keep gutters and downpipes clear for debris so they can work effectively."

"8.10 The cladding panels need to be made good where the joints in the cladding panels have opened up. This will reduce the potential for water ingress. The spalled and cracked corner panels also need replacing and will require additional restraint to tie them back to the structure behind. This will take the form of remedial wall ties and these may also need to be introduced around window and door openings where there are currently a lack of ties. Such an approach will require both a visual and a radar survey of every elevation to be carried out.

8.11 The strategy for repairs to the cladding panels needs to be coordinated with non-structural matters to improve the insulation to the elevations. The cavities which are currently filled with insulation are potential encouraging water to become trapped in the building. Options here include removing the cladding panels so that the insulation can be removed or over-cladding the building with a new rainscreen.

8.12 Similarly the cracking to the window frames should also be made good.

8.13 Although not significant structurally the concrete entrance canopies and support where deteriorated should also be made good and/or removed and replaced with new canopies. The junction of the canopy with the elevations needs to prevent water draining back on to the elevation."

From these results, we conclude that the Orlit homes are essentially structurally sound and require responsive maintenance to keep them in that way.

4 Ravensbury Case for Regeneration by Savills

We note the purpose of the document, namely: "...to set out the findings of the technical work that has been undertaken to date and to demonstrate the economic, social and environmental arguments for and against the “Case for Regeneration” of the Ravensbury Estate, whilst giving equal consideration to reasonable alternative options."

We also note that:

"... it has been developed to form part of the evidence base for LBM’s emerging Estates Plan Development Plan Document (DPD) which will set out the planning policy framework against which regeneration proposals for the Estate will be assessed as part of any future planning application. Therefore, this Case for Regeneration is intended to be an important consideration at the independent examination of the DPD to assist the Inspector in the assessment of whether the submitted DPD is prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and whether the plan is sound, as per Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and whether it is, as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) (paragraph 182):"
We feel that the case for demolition with regards to the structure of the Orlit Homes has been vastly overstated relative to the evidence made available by the structural engineers. Savills appear to have missed the concluding remarks within the Structural Engineers report. We suggest that it is possible that the writer of the Savills report was unable to properly interpret the findings of the Structural Engineer.

We note the following paragraph:
"...CHMP are fully committed to continuing to consult closely with residents and other stakeholders."

We would like to point out that this close consultation, performed by the regen team and their professional advisers, has been very arrogant from the outset. Residents have been furious at how CHMP cherry-picked their comments to suit their objectives. To suggest that there are a number of residents who lack confidence in the integrity and conduct of the regen team at CHMP would be an understatement.

We note the paragraph:
"Continuing to take a reactive approach to repairs to these properties as issues arise would involve significantly higher costs to CHMP than considering a comprehensive regeneration of the Estate over a period of 50 years."

However the costs concerned have not been detailed or referenced. Therefore we are unable to qualify these expressions of intent. In fact there are very few facts available throughout this document and it is impossible to quantify or qualify any of the statements. Therefore we find this document lacking in proper evidence.

We do understand the notion of land however, which seems to feature highly in this report. The available land that the Orlit Houses occupy is considerable and potentially very valuable relative to its salubrious location. We understand that an increase in density would bring a great deal of revenue in. To many of our residents this seems to be the only reason why regeneration is being proposed, due to their own knowledge that their homes are structurally sound.

We note that in 6.39, the writer of this report presumes to second guess the Environment Agency’s own advice on flood risk. We find this somewhat misguided. We believe the report also references an out of date flood risk plan as this has been recently revised.

We note that in 8.22, the writer suggests that a high level of support has been received for the scheme. However we believe that this support has been chosen somewhat selectively. It would be most appropriate to be able to scrutinise these results. Interpreting results such as these can be something of an art.

We note that in 8.28, it has been impossible to properly validate these assumptions, which is especially necessary considering the nature of Savills acting on behalf of the developer rather than as an independent advisor.
5 Ravensbury Urban Design Review

We note the following:
"This study sets out to evaluate Ravensbury against the established principles of good design and does not attempt to make aesthetic or value judgements on the architectural style of Ravensbury. Instead it concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the design and the quality of the neighbourhood that results."

We note the following:
"Urban structure summary
4. Ravensbury is very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly: they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.
5. It is important not to make the estate over- permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity."

These comments are supported by the residents own comments. Numerous residents have described the seclusion as effectively being highly valuable to them. In addition, the residents have also made mention of effectively limiting proposals in increasing permeability. Therefore we support statements 4 & 5 in the Urban Structure Summary.

We note the following:
"...Building facades have been mapped according to the following classifications:
• Active frontage is defined as facades that having both doors and windows of inhabited rooms (ie not bathrooms, storerooms, lobbies or garages) at regular intervals along the street or route to provide surveillance as well as contact and movement between inside and out.
• Passive frontage is defined as facades with only windows of inhabited rooms but no doorways, providing surveillance but no contact between public and private space.
• Dead frontage is where the edge to the public space or route is a blank wall or wall that is effectively blank, for instance rows of garage doors or where windows are obscured."

It should be noted from the maps provided for Ravensbury Court that there is practically zero dead frontage, but instead some passive frontage (ie providing "good surveillance"). We would state that this has proven to be very feasible over time and that this provides support for our earlier statements dismissing the proposal to re-orientate the ground floor flats.

We note the following:
"In summary, most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces"

"Layout summary
1. The figure ground plans show that Ravensbury adopts a similar ‘perimeter block’ pattern of development to surrounding residential areas.
2. There is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.
3. There are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home."
4. Most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces. Houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’, reducing contact and activity between buildings and streets.

5. There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The spaces with the least intervisibility and surveillance are the garage courts and the pedestrian paths. This issue could be remedied during the regeneration of the estate."

As residents, we agree that Ravensbury has very little wrong with it. We point out that in relation to item 4, the comment about rear facing flats, many residents enjoy the privacy that this design infers. They find it a positive feature rather than negative.

We note the following:

"Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents."

This is indeed a problematic area. An increase in density will definitely cause a great deal of problems along these lines. However, a number of cars that park on the estate are actually workers from the VW garage. We even have had Ravensbury Grove used as a temporary showroom car park with one resident counting 15 cars from this company.

We note the following:

"Landscape
Areas of private gardens Ravensbury has a distinctive landscape and an open and green character. The whole estate is set within a significant area of high landscape value, with access to an extensive area of parkland and the green corridor of the River Wandle. Even its ‘urban’ northern and western boundaries with Morden Road face the woodland within Morden Hall Park. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens. The height of the largest building on the estate, the 4-storey block of Ravensbury Court, is balanced by building to building set backs of approximately 30 metres, the communal open spaces and the tree-lined streets. The line of trees on Hengelo Gardens is particularly impressive and mirrors the height and enclosure of Ravensbury Court on the other side of the street."

"All elements of the landscape are well maintained, with the exception of the frontage to Morden Road between the junction with Ravensbury Grove and The Surrey Arms. Here the houses are set well back from the main road behind a row of mature pollarded trees that form an attractive feature along this stretch of busy road. However, the frontages to these properties are noticeably less well cared for than the rest of the estate. The Morden Road frontage facing Morden Hall Park is set behind a slip road that insulates houses from the main road. These homes are, by contrast, very well maintained. There is no obvious physical reason for this difference between the two Morden Road frontages and may reflect other social or economic factors. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate. As part of the green corridor of the River Wandle the trees have ecological value as well as their visual significance and role in wellbeing. No matter which option is selected for the future of Ravensbury, it will be important to protect mature trees and increase tree planting wherever possible."
We find also important to point out that on page 44 of the Urban Design Review, the writer has identified the areas in front of the flats in Ravensbury Court as private gardens. This is quite the opposite to certain CHMP officers attempting to tell residents that these areas were ambiguous. Residents are only too aware that the courtyard is part of their home, as indeed are passersby.

We note the following positive statements about Ravensbury:
"The various open spaces within the estate are well-located in terms of intervisibility and surveillance, meaning that they are well overlooked from buildings and passers by even at distance. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality. Physical evidence of this can be seen in the amount of personalisation of gardens and threshold spaces by doorways to the maisonettes and flats."

We also note the summary on page 47:

Quality of the external environment summary
The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition rather than urban design or landscape. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration.

1. Ravensbury has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and 'rural' edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.

2. High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey but this is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, 'poor'.

3. Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.

4. Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and routes feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian-only routes within the estate but all could be improved.

5. Ravensbury Estate is set within a distinctive and significant area of high landscape value. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.

6. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

7. The lack of formal play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.

8. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
We note the main Urban Design Review summary:

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its seclusion and landscape setting but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups that define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and are likely to be determined by ownership, viability and building condition rather than urban design or landscape.

1. The Ravensbury Estate is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough, as reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2).

2. The extensive parks, riverside open spaces and other barriers surrounding the estate make it an enclave and there is relatively little that can be done to integrate Ravensbury better into its wider area.

3. This relative isolation creates, on the one hand, a quiet and secluded residential neighbourhood but, on the other hand, restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.

4. There is some scope to improve access on foot and cycle through the process of regeneration. However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.

5. Analysis of building facades reveals that the entire external and internal perimeters of the estate have active or passive frontages providing good levels of surveillance. Conversely, there is very little dead frontage with the exception of the edges to garage courts and the pedestrian paths that are not overlooked.

6. The density of the estate at 43 dwellings per hectare (dph) is similar to surrounding development of the same period. However, this is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location, and there is potential to increase density and building height through the various permutations of retention and regeneration.

7. Ravensbury Estate is set within an area of high landscape value. Internally, this green and open character is maintained by the presence of grassed communal areas, mature trees and other planting. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

8. It is important that mature trees and riparian landscape are protected and improved. This is most likely to be possible with masterplan options that combine retention and regeneration rather than complete redevelopment.

9. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.

10. High levels of car ownership were evident at the time of the survey.

11. Currently, a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. However, car parking may become a serious problem should regeneration options significantly increase the number of dwellings on the site. This will need careful design and management.

12. The Building for Life 12 assessment for Ravensbury results in 8 ‘greens’ out of the 12 questions.

This Urban Design Review has merely repeated what the residents have been saying from the start of the regeneration consultation: that Ravensbury is about as perfect as you're going to get in terms of environment for a broad demographic within Merton.

Point 4 supports the residents argument regarding limited permeability preserving the benefits of the Ravensbury area. Point 5 supports the good overall design of Ravensbury, that it is not actually in need of fixing in the first instance. Point 7 & 8 further illustrates just how valuable this area really is, in terms of a personal level and in terms of the immediate environment. Point 9 points to the fact that the community at large are significant in their sense of neighbourhood, and that Circle's lack of understanding and arrogance has damaged the community. The residents believe that this is exactly what they want to do - divide and conquer: push through a regen and get their return on investment. Point 12 identifies the very high quality of living that Ravensbury residents have in their current environment.
Appendix 3.0

Please see attached document RRA-16P1968 response to planning.
Future Merton Team  
London Borough of Merton  
London Road  
Morden  
SM4 5DX

RE: Pre-Submission High Path Estate Local Plan

Dear Future Merton Team,

I am writing to express my reasons why the regeneration plan should not go ahead.

The main reason is that Merton Priory has not considered the impact of Merton Council decision to build a 1000 place school on the estate (see enclosed article from Wimbledon Guardian).

At the last meeting I attended they were not aware of the school being built.

The available land is limited and pollution levels will affect the local residents.

The other reason is the fact that the housing stock on High Path is not sub-standard and it is questionable as to why they have to demolish all of the properties, when a high percentage of residents are on low income.
Merton Council confirm new Wimbledon secondary school will be built on a church and a centre for adults with learning disabilities

The new school site. Picture: Merton Council

/Pippa Allen-Kinross, Reporter - Wimbledon + Mitcham/  📲 @pippa_ak

🔗 7 comments

Merton Council have confirmed a new secondary school will be built on the High Path estate, and force the relocation of a community centre for adults with learning difficulties.
The location of the new Harris Academy Wimbledon school had been kept under wraps by Merton Council, but was widely believed to be in the location they have confirmed today.

The school will be built on land currently being used by the High Path Community Resource Centre, the Elim Church and Domex appliance services.

The High Path Community Centre

The council have also confirmed that nearby Merton Abbey Primary School will lose part of their playing fields to the site, but insist they are working to ensure both schools benefit from the new arrangement.

The High Path Community Resource Centre will be moved to a new premises in nearby Leyton Road in spring 2018. The council have said £1 million will be spent to adapt and extend the new building and ensure it is fit for purpose in time.

Merton Council have also said they will be providing a replacement facility for the Elim Church at Merton Hall, which is currently used by the South Wimbledon Community Association (SWCA), who will in turn be moved to Pincott Road.

Merton Council Deputy Leader Councillor Mark Allison said: “More
Firstly, photos of the estate show just about the most drab and down-at-heal section of the estate - in Rutter Gardens. There are no photos showing the trees and lovely open green area in front of the community centre, the raised flower beds at the end of Ravensbury Grove (near the garages) or the other open/green spaces around Henglo Gardens and Ravensbury Court. If the more typical/prettier parts of the estate were shown it would be highlight the fact that regeneration isn't really needed at all and that the current residents are at risk of losing some beautiful spaces if the current plans go ahead.

Secondly, the photos in the "The Vision" section, suggesting what the Ravensbury estate could look like (page 34), show mainly low-level buildings surrounded by plenty of green space. The actual plans however indicate that the pretty, low-level buildings currently in place (eg around the community centre) are to be bulldozed & replaced by high-rise blocks. No-one who lives on the estate wants high-rise blocks. We do not want to lose the current amount of open space or the low-level buildings which encourage a sense of community. The only valid purpose of these high-rise, wind-tunnel, community destroying blocks is to cram more people onto the estate...something that no-one living on the estate wants.

Thirdly, I understand that parking will be reduced in the current plans, though this is not made clear in the stage 3 Local estates plan at all. Parking is already quite difficult around the estate. Reducing parking spaces and increasing residents will make the situation very stressful, and could, I imagine will lead to residents parking permits etc, something else that no-one wants.

It's a shame that Merton Council and Circle Housing are so focused on meeting government housing quotas that the continued pleas of actual residents seem to be ignored, and something really rather lovely is likely to be destroyed. I'm writing this email in the vain hope that someone has enough integrity to look again at the plans and reign in the bull-dozers.

Thanks & kind regards,
Dear Sir / Madam,

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the plans.

Re: p156 Part 03 R3: Movement & Access 3.237 Proposed alterations will increase the volume of vehicular traffic along Ravensbury Grove. Proposed alternations at the end of Ravensbury Grove will give the impression that Ravensbury Grove is a connector road.

Proposals should consider introducing physical features at key points along Ravensbury Grove to better manage the speed and flow of traffic to improve road safety.

Re: Part 03, p172 EP R8 Building heights e) Building heights in the vicinity of Ravensbury garages should take into account existing views to the tree-line from the existing buildings.

Re: Part 03, p172 EP R8 Building heights, Justification 3.3.10 Reference to the existing buildings in vicinity of Ravensbury garages should made in relation to the views to the tree line visible from around the estate.

I would be grateful if you can confirm receipt of this email. I would also be grateful if I can to be kept informed about the submission, the publication and the adoption.

Best Regards,
Dear Future Merton Team,

Please find feedback on the High Path Estate pre-submission publication

- The proposal appears to indicate an increase in the housing density which would mean increased congestion in the area and an increase in the pollution. Merton High Street, and the surrounding areas are already very polluted, anything that will increase the congestion must be avoided. The housing density must be decreased
- The plan appears to show a decrease in the amount of green areas, this too will mean that pollution will be increased. There needs to be focus on creating more green spaces, and more trees being planted and cared for.
- The tram stop need not be in South Wimbledon as the walk to either Morden Road or Merton Park tram stops are not more than a 6 minute walk from South Wimbledon station. The tram stop would be better placed in Colliers Wood
- Further to the pollution, it needs to be re-considered whether to have schools built in such a highly polluted area, any further increase in local schools will simply increase the number of children suffering from toxic air respiratory problems. Along with the impact on Teachers who will be required to work in the area and parents/residents.

I would like to be kept informed about the submission to the Secretary of State, the publication of the independent planning inspector's report and when Merton's Estates Local Plan is adopted.

Please can you acknowledge receipt of this email

Kind Regards
Dear Future Merton Team,

Thank you for your letter inviting us to view the ‘Pre-Submission Estates Plan’.

Our main concern, that we would like to see reflected before submission, is that the plan does not seem to reflect the most recent proposals we have seen and objected to from Circle Housing. This raises serious concerns that the council and the housing authority are not in sync, and that Circle Housing is not reflecting key elements and policies laid out in your plan. In general we like and support your plan, which clearly puts the people who live in the neighbourhood at the centre of its policies. However we feel that these policies are not reflected in the plans of Circle Housing.

We raised objections to the most recent consultation which was the proposed purchase and regeneration of the Old Lampworks in Rodney Place (Planning Application 16/P3738) - an area which is almost entirely excluded from the plan you outline (exceptions are noted below). Attached are a copy of the concerns we raised in October, which in summary are right to light, disturbance/overcrowding, loss of privacy, the proposed houses do not fit the look & feel of Rodney Place and historical significance.

In relation to the ‘Pre-Submission Estates Plan’ we have the following comments:

Building Height
We respect and support your guidance on building height, in particular in respect to street width and density, e.g. That any taller buildings should be placed nearer the wide boulevard of Morden Road and in keeping with other developments on that road. We feel however that because Rodney Place is not part of the estates plan our views, right to light, building proximity & height in relation to our buildings are not being considered, and that Circle Housing are not adhering to the policies you have outlined.

The Pre-Submission Estates Plan Policy EP H8 Building Heights states:

(a) “The prevailing height across the estate must be lower than the heights along Morden Road and Merantun Way, but marginally higher than heights in the more sensitive areas of High Path, Abbey Road, Rodney Place”

(g) “The close proximity of Rodney Place and Merantun Way create a need to respect existing low-rise development as well as retaining the most of the potential for taller buildings fronting Merantun Way. Building heights in this area must particularly respect, and be sensitive to, these constraints and opportunities”.

The proposed 3 storey townhouse opposite our house may be marginally higher but adds density in a very narrow estate, whilst a 7 storey apartment block directly contradicts your policy asking that the Rodney Place development be respected.

The illustration on pg. 98 (Site analysis) highlights a negative view from the centre of Rodney Place looking west to the existing blocks. We believe that a similar, if worse, view would exist looking south if the proposed apartment block were to be developed, as well as generally taller buildings in surrounding area than the existing majority 2-3 storey blocks.
(with the exception of the 12 storey tower blocks). Whilst you have considered the new buildings in the estate in relation to each other, you have not considered existing buildings who are also valid council members and part of this neighbourhood, and the impact on us.

**Character Assessment**

We were surprised that in your character assessment (Site Analysis 1 Character Areas - pg. 86) reference was not made to Rodney Place, which is an enclave of well preserved cottages surrounded on 3 sides by the estate. The houses are believed to date from approx. 1920 as railway cottages and the council are considering listed status for the buildings. As a wider point, although you reference that you intend to create some sort of focus point for Lord Nelson (EP H1 Townscape - d) generally it feels there is more opportunity to recognise the historical significance, and that due thought has not been given to this in favour of making the neighbourhood look like “the London vernacular”. That’s just a bit cold and thoughtless to us, and for an area rich in history surrounded by Merton Abbey Mills, Morden Hall, St John the Divine Church and the River Wandle, it feels like our character is being lost not celebrated, which is a real shame. We have visited one of the estates you highlight as your design inspiration - St Andrews in Bromley-by-Bow - and it could be any estate anywhere in the world, lacking any sort of soul and character. We urge you to sustain and reclaim some of the neighbourhood’s character while you still can.

**Streets & Passways:**

Policy EP H2 Street Network 3.140 (pg 106) references Mews style streets for Rodney Place. A change to the street layout would open us to additional traffic, parking problems, strangers in the area (we’ve already been robbed over Christmas) and general security issues which we feel is unfair as a street which is not part of the local estate.

Illustration on pg. 111 (H3 Movement & Access) highlights a cycle/pedestrian path/flow through [redacted] without any further elaboration on how or why this is propose. Similarly the illustration on pg. 122 (H6 Environmental Protection) highlights a ‘green chain’ towards Wandle River crossing [redacted] without any further elaboration on how or why this is proposed.

We hope that you will listen to our concerns and consider them, as throughout this process we and our neighbours feel we’ve been ignored. In particular we urge that measurable controls are put in place to ensure that Circle Housing must adhere to the policies you’ve outlined.

Kind regards,
I Veacock

One is uncertain as to whom this response to the Merton Estates Plan is actually to be addressed to in respect of the person of influence to make change happen for the benefit of the existing residents of the areas considered therein. Therefore I take this opportunity to submit, via the channel created by Merton Council, my opinions, evidence and challenges to the Estates Plan, to the Planning Inspector so appointed by the Secretary of State and as such the wording will be such as to be to an independent, experienced, suitably qualified, third party, but is someone whom has no knowledge of the geographical areas considered other than the bundle of documents submitted to them by the proposing authorities and their respondents to the proposals.

I must, for the sake of brevity, make clear that as primarily a carer for a resident on High Path Estate, my thoughts are generally confined to that area, and it is for the residents of Ravensbury and Eastfields to make such representation as they see fit, however I (and my family) also have an interest in the specific dwelling of the person I undertake caring duties for and as such I may need to reference other areas where pertinent and where I am aware of other individual thoughts on the process and present proposed outcome of the plan.

It is too easy to fix as planning considerations simply the proposed activities within a geographical area, assess their environmental / transport / health / educational impact and consider the external envelope and appearance. Indeed it is relatively easy if the site is either one of ‘greenfield’ development or of a ‘brownfield’ site of a, typically industrial nature or an area where little residential development has been in place hitherto. But for these estates this does not apply. These are our homes, and as such, the Council seeks to interfere, not for some greater public ‘good’ – such as a strategic rail, airport or road development, or to facilitate strategic development of mineral resources (eg fracking), but to arguably break the implied contract with residents when our estate was first built, and to unfairly deprive us of our amenity space, storage and living space and to design external development which is out of keeping of key buildings in the public realm, to create enclaves, rather than build communities, and build prison-plus style apartments that are no better than cheap hotels for commuters to travel to central London in, we deserve better.

For High Path, unlike the other two ,more self contained areas, there are a multiplicity of problems and challenges which have not been properly acknowledged, and therefore not properly resolved, but way before we identify here exactly what they are, we need to travel back in time and look a little at the development of Central Merton and is immediately surrounding character study areas. I would have to assume that the inspector will have done some background reading and is aware of some of the individual characters whose circumstances have led to the development area as is at present, but the inspector may not be aware of some points that have been chosen to be hidden. Now at this time we need to define a few key entities in the present process that the scheme appears to have been concocted under - Merton Council (MC) Planning Department (hereafter called the Scheme Promoter), Circle Housing Merton Priory (hereinafter called the Scheme Developer), Merton Council Housing Department (MCHD) and Merton Council Highways Department (Highways), Merton and Morden Urban District Council (MMUDC) and Wimbledon Urban District Council (WUDC). Furthermore I have to define South Wimbledon, as the area to the immediate east of Montague Road / South of Pelham Road / Quicks Road / North Road, and west of Bewely Street/Wandle Bank and North of Merton High Street (this broadly encompasses the 1963 South Wimbledon proposals of WUDC for development of ‘South Wimbledon’, which, after much opposition by residents, moved forward in the late 1970s resulting in the development in much modified form, of All Saints Estate. The area occupied by High Path Estate, immediately to the West of the MC Mill Road Character study area broadly encompasses some of the land once occupied by Richard Hotham under the land of Moat House Farm, which after acquisition by Charles Graves and renaming as Merton Place was purchased from Graves’ widow in 1801 by Admiral Lord Nelson. The original lands with Merton Place were in the majority to the North of Merton High Street, but Nelson acquired other farmlands to the west and south broadly as far south as the present Wimbledon-Croydon tramline. Following Nelson’s death and contrived circumstances those lands were sold off in various parcels, with the area between the tramline and Merton High Street by the time of the 1851 census was known as Nelson’s Fields. The farmland to the south of Meretune Way (formerly the line of the Wimbledon and Tooting Railway LBSC/LSWR joint, closed finally in 1975) became in stages predominantly light Industrial use, including post WW2 some firms from the High Path area relocating thereto.
Indeed many of the houses, in Wandle Road, and Nelson Grove Road, had they not been demolished in the 1960s and 1970s would, like those remaining in Grove Road and Meadow Road for example, have qualified for Housing Renovation Grants (administered by the local authority) and the private occupiers of those houses installed indoor bathrooms/wcs and renovated windows and roofs to give desirable accommodation. Meanwhile the Local Authority designed Flats began to lose the reason for construction – that of better standard of accommodation for the working family or individual as the criteria for access to a 'social house' was change. The right to buy gave the hope though that ones family could have the potential to guarantee a succession of passing on as required to descendents – local authority tenancies would generally only permit one succession and this potentially would mean a child or grandchild becoming homeless with no guarantee of accommodation suitable for their needs, this desire – to take control of our lives – was the primary reason for availing of right to buy (the discount reflected in many ways some of the potential defects, asbestos containing materials in the flat, single glazing) – although many authorities had already sold council housing at market price with a local authority mortgage I dont recall this being offered by Merton, it was by the GLC for its (mostly ex LCC) housing stock. It should also be noted that many whom lived in High Path, Pincott Road, Reform Place worked at Omega Lampworks in Rodney Place,

Now all this social history actually has an impact on the estate at the present time. If we had remained in our existing house – in all likelihood the private landlord who actually owned quite a few houses on the high path area would have either sold them to those of us in the accommodation, or would have found as required larger houses from their portfolio – the cottages ranged from 2up2down through to six/7 habitable room terraced houses of substantial brick construction, but some MMUDC propaganda, which I have no record of residents being opposed to decided that the area needed improvement, and also a reduction in the number of housing units for a declining population (as London residents were encouraged to move to the New Towns – for merton this was the likes of Crawley and Haywards Heath.) This encouragement in part from the central government fear from the 1950s of a nuclear strike taking out central and suburban London – and engineering and other manufacturing was being promoted with housing in (non-easily rail connected to discourage commuting back) the home counties at what were considered 'safe distances' to enable some surviving of the population. The original terraces of High Path – on the likes of the East West Orientation of High Path, Nelson Grove Road, and Reform Place, all with fairly substantial rear gardens, and the remaining terraces of Pincott Road and Abbey Road, had over the years had some back garden infill, for business or other purposes of increasing housing – 'Back Buildings' in Pincott Road for example, where demolishing one terraced house gave rise to three houses built in its former back garden. The most extreme example was the construction in 1927 by the City and South London Railway of Rodney Place, which must have taken some of the 68ft normal rear gardens on the south of Nelson Grove Road, and some of the farmland to the north of High Path (Bakers Farm and Brookfield Farm were around the North and East of High Path, with Deeds Farm and Bunce's Farm to the South of High Path), and these continued to be worked in part through the 1940s until the building of the industrial units immediately to the south of High Path in the 1950s.
Terraced housing generally does not have off-street parking, and I would argue it was the implied offer of parking facilities in the 1960s which contributed to the acceptance of moving into the new flats of the High Path Mansion Blocks, and for some whom had previously rented private garages on land in Nelson Grove Road and Reform Place, the assured continuation of secure vehicle parking in the newly built garages in the likes of Hillborough Close, that these garages could also be used for overspill of some domestic chattels is useful – and the provision of ground floor sheds only went some way to accommodating domestic items like prams, bicycles and the previous television model – just in case it was needed when the new one broke down. It could be argued for the estate the amount of garages is excessive, which strangely remained as the only original (actually I suspect there could have been earlier cottages built sometime 1830 to 1880 on that plot the census returns are confused as to orientation of enumerators walk) detached house, when all around had been demolished –

And so, we have piecemeal development. Land immediately south of Merton High Street, acquired from business owners, taking away most of the commercial heart of Central Merton by the early 1970s. Initial acquisitions appear to have been for proposals of road widening including roundabout at Haydons Road (WUDC South Wimbledon Plan, 1963) leading to at best temporary leases and run down of the smaller shop units toward Pincott Road, then the deliberate acquisition of land and businesses from Pincott Road to the Dark House pub. This was to provide, with the now-aborted road scheme land, new housing (predominantly, some flats) as replacement homes for persons displaced from Wandle Road and other parts of the now All Saints area – North Road, South Road terraced cottages and parts of Leyton Road predominantly. Effectively many folk have already been decanted once in their lifetime.

But these new houses stopped short of Merton High Street, clearly there were still considerations of a form of road widening potentially along the south side of Merton High Street, green space was put in place and some plane trees planted (I note that London Plane trees are now under threat from a fungus disease – Plane trees are one of the best absorbers of traffic pollution). Quite how the junction at South Wimbledon (The Grove) was supposed to accommodate a wider road I am not certain, if it was desired to retain The Dark House, South Wimbledon (Merton) Tube station, The Grove Pub, Bank House as listed buildings and the Merton Road/Merton High Street corner buildings. But, at the same time as the houses facing toward Merton High Street were being completed in the early 1980s, new plans and changes were occurring nearby.

Merton still had industry, investment in New Merton Board Mills (Dickinson Robinson Group Packaging) had occurred and and the Tandem Works of Eyer Smelting/Fry Metals continued to process metal alloys. But DRG/Reed Papers decided to sell the site to Sainsburys/Bhs and a number of community proposals for Priory Park Retail and Leisure development, at the same time Merton Council and the GLC were looking for a relief road to Merton High Street/Kingston Road taking the alignment of the now closed and track lifted Wimbledon-Tooting Railway. For various reasons the segment of Road proposed from Morden Road to Kingston Road was never built – that area was turned into a managed nature reserve and (pre-tramlink) some of the area directly adjoining the trackbed was developed at the Merton Park for housing, the proposals for that part of the road were stopped by organisation of local people who formed their own community association funding and supporting independent people to stand for election to Merton Council. The section from Colliers Wood (Christchurch Road) to Morden Road was built and opened in 1989 and is today part of the A24 Tfl Road Network. The Sainsburys (Savacentre) site was built as a retail hypermarket with some additional internal units and surface level parking for some 2000 cars. Delivery access was from a light controlled junction to an eastern service yard, and customer access by footbridge across the river Wandle from Merton High Street additional pedestrian access under Merantun Way and from the dead-end of Station Road, (this access is unsuitable for use by disabled persons) and by road from a new roundabout from the new Merantun Way. This roundabout also served the Merton Abbey Mills craft and leisure complex, which was later expanded to have additional restaurants, mid rise flat blocks a private leisure centre and a hotel complex, all of
which put pressure on the road, not as a relief road but becoming an access road, it is noted that the developments,
other than the heritage items and some conservation of the Norman Merton Priory foundations, were not in the
Priory Park proposals, but that the promised community enhancements in those proposals around the Brown and
Root Tower at Colliers Wood did not take place. A little later the land to the east of Savacentre and West of Priory
Road was developed as a Priory Park retail site, with access by road from Merton High Street.

Now since the Savacentre road access was from Merantun Way, this meant for residents surrounding High Path and
adjoining for collecting heavy shopping etc an access road was created from High Path into Meretun Way with left
turn only towards Colliers Wood. To minimise, but not eradicate, rat running from Merton High Street 7 foot Width
Limits were put in place at the southern end of Abbey Road and Pincott Road. Finally with respect to Meretun Way
the Christchurch Road roundabout was converted to a light controlled junction and the Tandem Works demolished
and replaced with retail developments with additional parking and service access from Prince Georges Road. This,
along with the now ongoing London and Quadrant Development of flats on Christchurch Road has all put pressure
on the road network, particulary into Abbey Road during school peaks, and weekend shopping hours.

What this has done is to place High Path estate into an island of dense traffic, along A24 Meretun Way, A219
Morden Road, Merton High Street and Abbey Road. This would be full either of people coming to visit the area
around the estate, sometimes workers from the estate area travelling to their initial work location (not all of us by
any means use the underground on a regular basis when our work is on sites around Surrey and the surrounding
areas), but most traffic is passing through, from areas were they may well have larger houses than we have, they
may have their own garages on site or in blocks and just because they are further out and away from less regular
public transport than this estate may enjoy why should they be permitted to pollute our air and we be forbidden to
park our vehicles or have the land enjoyment rights to our garages?

Having conceded that there would have been a little less available parking, and that it would have been on-street, as desirable as that dwelling in terraced houses may have been, I would prefer to look at our existing flats, which specifically for us are much larger in room sizes than any comparable local authority constructed flats that I am aware of within Great Britain (and I am quite well travelled),

Given this, and taking into account values of much smaller flats built nearby, without prejudice, I would estimate the need for a value to replace the property in its present, leafy, sunny, triple-aspect location would be not less than £572,000. But overall it is not about the money. Location wise – despite the traffic problems we are, by accident rather than design, in quite a Goldilocks location – we have potential good access when required from the Zone 3 Tube system – and walking distance to a shop with the cheap bulk buy pricing and good range of products, better than in Wimbledon or Morden and closer than we would be if moved to Croydon or Sutton. The only downside is that there is no level access to the front door, we did request CHMP to provide an access lift, or ramp access - the reply was that CHMP were a charity, had no funds, and that was not suitable to fit a lift to (this clearly shows they never visited here as there is plenty of space – I have fitted access lifts to similar at split level churches and they are similar say to the car park lift at St Georges Hospital), for various reasons we did not pursue as yet, this, which would be beneficial to other residents and would have been to myself when I had serious health issues – This access issue aside, our honey-coloured flats have airy open access
to the outside and our trees are up to 55 years old now, with an annual display of blossom which is much
appreciated by my mother.

This leads us to greenspace management, which is ill-defined and insufficiently specified to the benefit of wildlife.
Planting should ideally be of British Native plants, that will encourage native wildlife, subject to such wildlife or
plants / trees not being injurious to health affecting skin, breathing or toxins from accidental consumption of leaf, flower or berry. Ideally they should be managed to ensure growth is not excessive, and complementary for bloom
and foliage and providing nesting and food source for birds. It is known that good external air and landscape quality is beneficial to health.

We also have the internal transport and access, and the existing cut off from Meretun Way is a problem. Ideally High Path should be converted to a quiet way for bicycles and pedestrians only, with access to Merton Abbey School, The Resource (disabled persons) centre, Elim Church and Domex Office and service yard being onto a speed-limited Meretun Way, however TfL and Mayor's Office have consistently insisted that this is a relief road, without realising the development I have outlined above has altered the character and actual use of the road from its original—literally half-baked—purpose. Abbey Road (and inter-alia Mill Road can be very congested if in any way Merton High Street / Haydons Road are blocked or not free flowing. If the junctions at South Wimbledon Tube or Plough Lane are blocked then it is very difficult for vehicles to proceed along Abbey Road, the air quality deteriorates and it is not really suitable to build houses closely abutting the pavements thereof.

It has probably been realised that the existing estate is quite complex, not necessarily in terms of navigability, but in the diversity of building styles. While diversity is good and preferable to the proposed 'me-too' monoculture, what it means that each set of flat blocks have particular access characteristics.

This may be a good time to divert to the initial issue of the acquisition of land from MCHD to CHMP.

Merton Council made a number of promised inducements over the years to force ownership of their remaining council housing out en-bloc to a 3rd Party. The inducements were mainly to tenants, where the likes of, where needed and where desired by the resident a programme of kitchen and bathroom renewals mostly would be undertaken with other works, predominantly to houses, to bring them to the Merton Standard, for flats this would include some common parts, door-entry systems, double glazing and where needed electrical and roofing renewals where existing was life expired or in dangerous condition. , prior to transfer work was due to take place for soffitt and fascia repair at eaves level and installation of double glazing. After being excluded from the vote on the transfer, the survey of leaseholders was against the transfer, and for tenants the majority in favo

The biggest problem with the stock transfer, which is why we were not in favour of, was the de-coupling of Housing provision at the local authority strategic level, loss of democratic oversite at the ballot-box level, and the eventual five-way inefficient councillor-chmp officer—chmp distant management—local authority strategic on a regular basis across the portfolio of social sector housing in the borough. Merton Council retained some board level representation and have a financial interest in the development profit and land sales revenues of CHMP as part of the transfer agreement. However recently Merton Council agreed to reduce the number of resident participation at board level (reducing members to one leaseholder and one tenant). CHMP also withdrew all local estate offices to a central location in Morden, this meant it was very difficult to contact to get simple issues logged and resolved in a prompt manner. Finally for High Path, and possibly other estates it was either unclear exactly what land and responsibilities actually passed to CHMP (Merton Priory Homes), in terms of greenspace management along Merton High Street, Footpaths and paving generally along adopted highways and unnamed off roads of High Path. For example Merton Highways recently re-surfaced the east arm of Nelson Grove Road roadway and highway, but did not do the same for the highly defective and uneven defective tarmac on east side of Pincott Road Northern segment, despite both footpaths dog-legging around CHMP managed parking areas. Additionally there is confusion among residents over parking enforcement, and this would apply to visitors with random single yellow lines with no ministry standard enforcement hours signage on what are named MC adopted roads. Similar situations apply to
blocked surface water drains and gulleys, which years ago I remember Merton Highways Gulley sucker regulary flushing through.

Since transfer CHMP have generally failed to provide a reasonable schedule of maintenance for common internal parts of flats, and for external parts, particulary review of upstands on rooves, gutters, rainwater goods, pointing, facias and soffit boards box gutter enclosures. They also fail to respond promptly to ingress of water and drips and overflows from water and header tanks with failed float operated valves in roof spaces. Likewise there is no greenspace management on appropriate cutting of types of shrubbery, clearance of broken tree branches and the like, which all conspire to make Merton as a whole look shabby. Tenants can inform you of the problems of actually getting competent persons to assess internal defects correctly and arrange timely remedial works, I have three items which CHMP failed to do inside our own flat (this was as a supposed quid pro quo for failure to adhere to an advised appointment). This has been compounded with the plans of CHMP to demolish and re-build the area they supposedly have responsibility for. Residents have been treated by officers, agents, and staff as less than second-class citizens in a patronising manner, and vulnerable persons have had verbal promises made by persons whom have no authority so to do. The whole procedure has been handled in a stress-inducing manner and has (in my opinion) hastened to an early death at least 4 persons nearby on the estate.

Returning to an analysis of the existing blocks
The Mansion Blocks all share the generallity of being predominantly four stories high, Built of double skin brick in an interesting bond pattern, brickwork is not the normal present day standard height brick and again gives the flats some echo of what Merton Priory may have had finishes of some tiling detail in an italianate style with cartouches indicating block names and numbers in a scripted font that echoes cursive script as may have been written at the nearby Merton Priory. The entrance to stairwells have had later wood and glazed doors with entry system fitted but ground floors have doors opening to the external air-space, most upper level flats are accessed from tarmac paved concrete verandas but some external doors open onto the stairwell. There are no lifts and most staircases are concrete of up to 15 steps normally in return flights of 7 to 8 steps with metal railing handrails. Few properties have external balconies or juliette balconies, to my knowledge few residents have ever complained about this, but it does mean washing is often hung out to dry on the verandas, rather than using the up to 60 steps to access the ground floor external clothes-lines. There are two main play areas which are well used, a tarmac ball court and an softer surfaced toddler play area. The external grounds to outside roads have dwarf walls with interesting rounded brick finishes matching the external of the flats. Windows originally were timber single-glazed in a georgian bar style (the not dissimilar Parkleigh Court by Morden Road Tramstop has double glazing fitted in a style which is close to the original. Space heating originally was by single coal-fire to living room, I have no knowledge if back-boilers were fitted, and I presume electric immersion heaters were also provided. As originally built to my memory these flats were incredibly cold, and only with the fitting of double glazing could some heat retention start to be considered, I also assume Merton Council took advantage of cavity wall insulation retro fill a couple of decades ago, and roofspace mineral wool insulation likewise when government challenge funds were available. Central heating has been fitted by CHMP / Merton Council to all tenanted properties and an upgrade programme to gas combination boliers was done across the estate about three years ago. At the time of the 1970s clean air acts Merton Council replaced the coal fires with 4 burner two position gas fires, I presume they amended the flues and chimney cowlings appropriately.

Further external features are the access arches in two of the blocks, and the gated access to Morden Road with brick pillars and concrete decorative pediments thereon, The pillars to High Path exit had similar concrete on to but these appear to have been lost. Accompaning the dwarf walls were privit hedges to same height, these have not been maintained and have some ingress of trees as weeds and other shrubs. Normally such height hedging would be used for nesting birds, but with insufficient regular food source few hedge sparrows make their home there. The growth of hedges obscures views to Morden Road, but this appears to be not unwelcome by residents. Main
defects are paintwork to undersides of verandas where insufficient preparation has led to emulsions flaking, in part in combination of failure of the waterproof tarmac to the walkways. Modern mixes laid to correct falls should solve this. There are also problems of drains blockages, I suspect due to mis-use, tree-root ingress and possible ground movement. Re-lining is not excessively expensive, but most generally if cleared with mechanical cutting devices and clearance of main drains should solve most problems. Rodding eyes appear not to have been inspected or greased regularly and external gulleys likewise have not had benching or upstands properly maintained or repaired, leading to the potential of internal dampness due to insufficient rate of clearance of surface water. Where ends of blocks have lower height flats located with flat rooves upstands have not been correctly mortared into place and flat roof failure (common every 15 to 20 years due to design of flat rooves ) again gives rising damp at upper level flats, and ingress of water to ceilings particulary where downpipes and rainwater hoppers to rooves are not cleared of vegetation on an annual basis resulting in standing water and potential for differing thermal movement properties. Most refuse disposal bin units are too small, having been designed in the years of less packaging, and a single normal galvanised waste bin per property for which there was original space. The introduction of palladin recepticles mean these did still fit in the bin stores, but the Euro 1100 bins do not, particulary with the addition of recycling bins. Some re-modelling of bin service areas would be possible, and was promised as part of the stock transfer agreement. Road surfaces were generally re-covered with tarmac sometime in the 1980s, the original pimped concrete road surface had started to break up with heavier vehicles, and frost damage , and patch repairs not really done to a good standard. Most flats have access to a ground floor storage shed for prams, bicycles etc of approx 2MSq. Other defects include damaged drips and formation of lower window cills – reshuttering and forming with repair this, and some areas of pointing – which is a quite tight white mortar differing from present day standard mixes.

Prioro Close
The first block to be built (c1953-57) , mostly on the site of larger villas, including Mulberry Cottage, the home of Lord Nelson’s gardener if I read the maps correctly. Its U shape gives a light and airy view across to St Johns Church , with all flats being at lease dual aspect and maximising the south facing aspects where possible. There is scope to add mansard roof or similar cedar clad box dwelling units if the water storage tanks are replaced with modern mains-valve controlled supplies to water services in the mains flats. Similar style flats elsewhere in London (including where as part of consultation participation Stockwell Park ) have had, albeit inelegantly, lift shafts built to the stairwells giving step free access to all flats. This could be done, finance by sale or market rental of the mansard units. Priory Close also overlooks the toddler play area, which is good. The roadway around the internal of Priory Close is unnamed but specified as unadopted as Priory Close – High Path The road to the north of Priory Close I had always known as Nelson Grove Road, but was renamed Rowland Way at the same time as the roads of Hayward Close and Dowman Close were extended northwards in 1977 to form the housing areas and Rowland Way is confirmed as being adopted by Merton Council Highways Department. The double height archway within Priory Close presumably allows for two flats to be larger than others within the block. Arguably it is confusing in that 4 entrances to the flats are within the internal of the U, with two stairwells to the external facing Rowland Way. One could only ask the logic of this of the orginal architect and their brief – more logically the entrances on Rowland Way would have been better named and numbered as a separate block name.

Gilbert Close / Beckett Close
This pairing form complementary, but slightly different layouts, to the east and west of the courtyard that is the ball court for young people. Access to upper storeys for persons with disabilities or infirmaties has same issues as the other mansion and low rise blocks across the existing high path estate. Again opportunities exist for providing dwelling accomodation to double or single mansard level (similar is on flats to similar style at Hatfield Mead on London Road, Morden) It is unclear if Highways department are responsible for maintainance of road surface as in their list of adopted roads they exclude a number of un-named roads across the borough but do not specifically exclude this roadway around the ball court. The garage block to the north takes advantage of the difficulties of building dwelling units adjacent to the large electricity transformer station of London Underground. The northern end of Beckett Close is determined by the access area to The Dark House (Kilkenny Tavern) on Merton High Street and other former land in private hands in Merton High Street prior to acquisition by Merton Council in the 1970s. Gilbert Close is part built on a Congregational Church former burial ground. Beckett Close broadly on an area owned by fairground and traveller families – mostly the Bonds – Caroline Bond was killed by aircraft machine gun fire in WW2 on this site, there were also farmlands serving shops in Merton High street prior to 1955 and possibly was the site of an Italian Prisoner of War Camp during WW2.
Ryder House
Broadly a block of flats facing east/west for dual aspect flats, with two stairwell cores on Hayward Close, and Two on area of named roads (arguably the East end of Rowland Way, or the, as I would say, the West extension of Nelson Grove Road, short arms to north and south form an effective [shape], with the far extensions thereof looking like elegance bay extensions, but again flat roofs suffer from the same lack of attentive maintenance. The main part of the block has an Italianate red tiled pitched roof, again the formation of mansard flats would not be impossible, along with extending the end flats over the flat roofs, to provide larger dwellings assisting with overcrowding. Much of Ryder House is built on the former repair works of Pilcher Motor Bodies (who moved to Andover in the 1950s)

Eleanor House
This provides a strange duplex of flats in an L shape. The external is not unattractive but access is difficult and appears impossible to improve for persons with disabilities, one solution would be to gut internally the unit, and re-configure as duplex maisonettes instead, forming a new block a little further north on part of the parking areas and/or extending into the 'bear pit' play area, which has never, since construction with the tower blocks, been a suitable place to play, in forming a better courtyard area to the east of existing Eleanor House a better working of accommodation and space could be made at minimal disruption for a good gain.

Ramsey House
The lounges of this have an elegant view over the playing fields of the primary school and although steam trains no longer puff along the railway there is external movement to be noticed. Access to the two stairwell cores is poor and the bin stores and washing areas need re-working. The roadway again is unspecified as to adoption by merton council. The verandas are the only ones on the estate to have elegant 1950s decorative metalwork on them. The four storeys only work here on high path itself because the building is set back from the road and behind a grass area, there is scope to break-out the ground floor flats as gardens, but gardens need time and maintenance which not every householder is able to devote effectively.

Pincott Road
With only The Trafalgar Public house standing from the original terrace of houses, it is important that whatever is decided is desirable that such building remains as a viable business. The terrace of houses, again with Italianate Roofing, are solid, desirable and quite spacious, with space for offroad parking and rear gardens giving amenity. Quite how these were originally allocated is a mystery to me, I am sure a lot of people at the time would have liked much of high path estate to be built like these.

Tanner House
Built quite late into the end of the 1970s what should be a good sized rooms was built unnecessarily small to my view, with a cramped form of the L Shape. But there is scope to extend at the east to build three larger flats, and with re-work of bin store, break the L and provide two separate blocks, otherwise overall I am personally unworried about the loss of this property IF a building or buildings of quality can be placed on its footprint.

Mychell House
Has the two commercial units built into the estate, one was a convience store, replacing Lee’s Store on the site of May Court and a replacement for WW Lamperts from Merton High Street, at present there is an office and convience store, which I use from time to time and it is important for a retail offering on the south side of merton high street accessible by all persons. All flats are 2 Bed but they are smaller than other two bed units, sensitive re-construction maybe extending toward nelson grove road may provide some better space and more dwellings.

Doel Close
The former estate office – then police station, lies unused, it should be brought back into use ideally as estate hub for residents use and for caretakers /community support persons etc, or converted into residential use. Our independent representatives midway into earlier consultation were of the opinion that an estate and community centre was desirable where issues could be raised and solved promptly, our visit to Stockwell Park, an estate of similar size and density, had such, including strong local management by resident representatives, reinforced this need, which is ignored by merton council and CHMP.

Vanguard House
Probably exemplifies some of the worse construction on the estate, small internal units, dark internal stairwell and
corridor, dual entrance yet only four units per landing core – two per doorway, no access for wheelchairs to upper floors. I am afraid that demolition is the only sensible thing, and allowing nibble of the green space and trees to Merton High Street there is scope for a quality, four to three storey building in a modern but not the brick and metal window design proposed - a white render with flying V balconies and some vertical timber cladding should look quite good on this corner, possibly rounded into the curve.

Dole Close Stane Close Hayward Close Downow Close
The houses seem acceptable as they are. Stane Close on the site of the Dog and Partridge does have a present day meaningless hump of grass in front of it. Councillors have suggested an open-air market on new proposals, this area, if re-modelled with green draining hardstanding could be suitable as it is. Houses themselves too small for me, presumably residents are happy with them. The other closes have houses built that obliterated much of the commercial side of Merton High Street. Built as replacement for houses demolished for the All Saints Estate many owners have already moved once. Some problems with the sheer busyness of Merton High Street Traffic and pedestrian usage of the estate roadways, but the use of the high street won’t go away with new development on the similar footprint. Houses themselves too narrow for my personal use, but fairly large, and most people I know are happy with what they have, or have bought (I can quote four persons from the roads with ease). It appears proposed replacements are planned for Abbey Road, but we on Abbey Road do not want to move from our existing area and its present landscaping. There is scope to extend north and south to similar style the houses in these roads by a couple of properties in each direction, if one does not mind loss of housefoot print greenspace.

Merton Place
Duplex Two BedMaisonettes, a little small, but function well, the large steps up and building on higher ground presumable reflects the pile of Nelson’s Merton Place allegedly on this site, and possibility of the former moat of the house running under the foundations thereof.

DeBurghHouse
Raised on its plinth for no real reason that I can understand, slightly small one bed flats have little to commend them, as long as replacement can be no greater than 3 storeys on Nelson Grove Road and 4 storeys to a facing of Hillborough Close then if parking, amenity and a way around the plane trees to the north solved there is little that could be worse. Ideally where possible sound tiles, bricks, metalwork and timbers should all be set aside and re-used on the grounds of saving the earth’s scarce resources.

Will Miles Court
Its own little community of flats, in desperate need of proper painting to timberwork and front doors. No one wishes to move from there, the last units on the estate to be built, almost as an afterthought, but still leaving space for merton high street to be widened.

Hillborough Close – internals see Norfolk House.
Biggest problem is outlook is mostly to the north over not a lot, bedrooms and lounges face south, which is generally good. Solid construction, completed earlier just after merton place. Has Block and Brick construction throughout, cavity wall and roof insulation in loft space of tiled pitched roof. Possibly build mansard flats into roofspace if water tanks relocated.

Norfolk House
Good, some 2 beds have triple aspect flats, spacious internals, 2msq (7mcu) approx ground floor storage, 2msq (6mcu external storage on 2 beds, 3mcu on 1 beds). 1 Beds have internal built-in bedroom wardrobe and plenty of storage space. Separate kitchens mean easy to entertain with guests overnighting in lounge if required. Original space heating Coal fire with back boiler to immersion heater – quite efficient some have back radiator to a bedroom Design could have been better but overall 16foot by 12ft lounge beds 12ft by 12ft and good sized kitchen/diner with plenty of coat hanging etc space in hallways. Difficult to find larger flat in any purpose built block private or council house anywhere in South London or Surrey. Delays in completing original construction from 1959 to 1962 possibly led to some concrete failure by assured by Mr Harold Turner of Merton Housing Department in the 1980s this was not a problem. As long as day-to-day maintenance is completed a budget of £1800 a year on service charges would not be unreasonable to assure this, build lift to stairwells, not impossible. Extend West Flank to turn 2 beds into 4 bed properties for overcrowding and south wing toward nelson grove road to create 2/3 bed units and
reform doorways there to avoid the ground floor dark spot under overlooked for crime minimisation. Nice central gardens provide visual amenity for the North facing windows, wide spacing from Nelson Grove Road means good airy and sunny southern view. 'I never knew these flats were so nice' (Comment from someone visiting to third floor from west end of High Path for the first time). The gardens are also, being a better distance from building than DeBurgh House gardens, attractive for wildlife, we have visiting Robins, Magpie, Crow, Pidgeon, Seagulls, Starlings, Sparrows and Wagtail. There are fewer birds than there used to be, this is due to loss of nearby tall trees at the 1 Nelson Grove Road development and tall dense trees that were where the east end of Will Miles Court was built, nesting habitat needs to be improved, we are prepared to work with professionals to enhance the garden areas. Although tenants doors have recently been renewed, it is noteworthy that some letterplates are already broken, leading to the conclusion that CHMP do not specify materials for longevity and fitness for purpose.

Lovell House
Tile Hung in 1960s style with black brickwork not unpleasant to view, 3 Bed maisonettts, 2 bed flats, seem spacious enough to be desired on a regular basis, definitely better than adjoining new build. Could build in same style town house 5 bed to the north of the block without loss of amenity.

Garage space- best turned over into a community land trust for novel affordable housing solution OR if no extension to Lovell House, create 4 multi-generational units using part of existing sheds space and shared pavement over some grass area. Reprove Flat sheds in flat gardens.

Overall Hillborough, Norfolk and Lovell are rarely considered as part of High Path estate,

Tower Blocks
Cracking to concrete external faces appears no more than surface stress cracks are not important, give the external a wash down to improve. Some damage to roof from where cradles for double glazing installation works were hung

From a distance, including Wimbledon Hill Road and roads up Wimbledon hill and Alexander Road, these identify home, externally not displeasing having interesting mosaics to murals to fronts.

Improvements – build and sell two off penthouse glazed flats to roof level provide ground floor conseige space and convert side accesses to storage areas to community uses, storage for gardening materials, coffee room, table tennis room etc. Like all tower blocks the ground floor areas attract gale force winds from the generally prevailing westerlies. All replacement buildings should have wind flow modelled to ensure not to excess to detriment of persons or chattels.

Noted that original kitchen units not as well built as say Norfolk House, drawers have hardboard bottoms rather than plywood for example. Noted that as vacant units pass back to CHMP kitchens, bathrooms and flooring are replaced, wether needed or not it seems.

As built space heating by means of gas-fired warm air system (not communal) didn't work (my Grandmother and Cousin have lived in these blocks in the 70s and 80s), so darned cold in winter, less so now conventional central heating and double glazed. Kitchens smaller and dont work as diners but replacement properties seem little gain for the pain involved, unless good justification on estimated physical life left less than 40 years seems to be no point replacing with anything that does not look as nice. 6 Flats on a core level works well, if you like that few internals, one would not like to live in any of these, nor there replacement (but then I don't like the listed Barbican development of similar age nor new build at Chelsea Harbour – private or social flats)

The staggering across the centre of the estate is interesting view and works well from visual point of view. Larger blocks work better towards the centre.

Hudson Court
Last of Tower Blocks to be built, in 1971, interesting mosaic muriel to front. Some detail differences to flat door architrave spaces appear wider but have developed cracks compared to other blocks

May Court
Marsh Court
Bascially if it aint broke, dont fix it, ills as much the class of some people who live there as much as the design of
the flats.

General
It is important that the Scheme developer provide dimension details of all of the flat & house types including areas of usable loftspace, gardens correctly measured, sheds where not in gardens, and all internal space including integrated storage space of the foregoing to the inspector for independent review of the assertion that replacement properties will in fact be larger than each flat they seek to replace and that the same amount of storage and dwelling space be provided.

It is also contended that new properties will be easier to heat. As all of the existing have insulation in roof spaces where there are pitched roofs, most have infilled cavity, and all tenanted properties have double glazing. The only improvement would be if all roofs were pitched and insulated (admittedly today one would build with purledeck insulation to flat roofs which existing do not have- they could be retrofitted), triple glazed and solar panels contributing to space heating.

Roads and Surrounding Area

Hillborough Close
Formerly Reform Place /Queens Terrace. Alignment dates back to 1832 when cottages and terraces first built. Works OK as access road but difficulty at peak hours for vehicles to access Abbey Road and Thence Merton High Street. Garages could be built over using YMCA Y Cube design, would enhance area – see Eastfields development already completed we could have housed 12 families by now over all the talking we have had.
Extremely confusing having block of flats and a road having same name. Someone needs to rename one of them. Brexit Close would be topical as Reform Place was. Road requires resurfacing – is listed as adopted road – as patchwork repairs have failed and do not direct rainwater to existing drains correctly.

Abbey Road
Existing maisonettes and terrace of houses on east side noted. (former Abbey Gate House and Gardens thereof Site)
One time known (along with station road ) as Abbey Lane.
New Build at Number 1 Abbey Road, built on former car parking area for Hillborough Close, land sold by Merton Council and new build does not comply with regulations and conditions, particularly on disabled access. Better to acquire and demolish if a comprehensive build to the area is imperative.

Kelmscott House
Relatively newly built 1 Bed Flats very small and cramped, built on purpose-built for disabled person house sold under right to by. Better to acquire and put into plan area if a truly comprehensive plan is desired, otherwise little justification for demolish and rebuild of Lovell or Norfolk House.

High Path
Other Buildings at time of writing
South Side
Brookfield House, ARC Car Wash, Meretune Way Access Road -somewhere under here is a stream to/from the Wandle, formerly known as The Dipping Hole. Elim Church (Industrial Building) Domex Domestic Repairs and other offices. Community Resource Centre (which is not managed by the community but merton council for mostly for disabled persons and parking of community transport mini-buses), Merton Abbey Primary School- was a nice 1930s Surrey County Council design ruined by Merton Council short term dash for places building on outside, inside functions well as school building, Surestart early years centre (nursery to the rest of the world understanding, useful, almost certainly over-subscribed), Colborne Court and Vicarage. Private flats, difficult access to high path exit for refuse vehicles, typical 80s smaller flats with less storage that High Path estate ones, OK if you like that kind of thing. St Johns Church, CoFE Parish Church. Built 1912. OK if you are a conformist and like your services by the book and going through the motions rather than the emotive will. Nelson Gardens, difficult to work on without a future plan and numbers of people, treading difficult area between overgrown and managed for wildlife, not really been the same since overbridge across railway was removed, losing embankment and natural southern end for the site.
North Side (in Reverse)
St Johns Church Hall, Possibly too small for good community use, insufficient parking for visitors, borrows part footprint for external storage from CHMP land. The Trafalgar PH – already mentioned, nice ham salad rolls. Wisepress – extended from former Omega Lampwork has 4 independent offices on site too, mostly printed media distribution, provides existing employment activity. Martin Harkness House – probation service formerly Parcelforce distribution depot, probably site of Bretts Packaging, previously farmlands – site has potential for any use, including school, which would be better sited on south side of High Path than the proposal to use area immediately north of Meretune Way.

Rodney Place
The 1920s built cottages have their own distinct character and have been excluded from the acquisition of freehold houses, if they can be excluded why not the houses in Pincott Road? The loss of the curved road isolating the cottages is to be missed and people here use the garages as the small cul-de-sac has little safe parking access. If one is solely talking about building, then the presence of the houses to the east end precludes efficient re-developement of Lovell House site, however under the present plans – which could be enhanced existing if Lovell House is retained as is, a large area of potential private greenspace which could be good for wildlife.

Nelson Grove Road
In truth the planning permission should never have been granted for 1 Nelson Grove Road, built on greenspace on the last undeveloped land of highpath – the pub garden had been part of an orchard from and onwards from Nelson's Merton Place lands. Its amenity and waste space depended on access over roadway to Lovell House Garages, which was not in the public road network, therefore there are unsightly recycling boxes and large Eurobin to the front concrete area, the eurobin is frequently overflowing with bin bags and polystyrene as tenants move in and out. Merton Evangelical (Baptist) Church is postally Rodney Place, it is in need of a little external improvement, but most faith groups are excluded from applying for public and private funds that other community organisations could use, and by faith would not seek lottery funding, however it should be retained and protected its corrugated cladding and asbestos tiled roof is one of the few buildings in the borough to still have these features, although the extended baptistry area is build of conventional brick and tile work. The Hope Mission has been associated with Merton since the 1880s as a temperance coffee house in High Street, Merton and opened its additional church facilities in the 1920s when Rodney Place would have been created, for many years when I attended there the church was affiliated with the Shaftsbury Society, my mother ran the primary classes in the mid 1970s and it was only dispute with a new church leader on expression of christian faith that caused me and my mother to leave. 68 Nelson Grove Road (with its garden annex 68a) remain as the sole representative of assorted detached houses that were around Nelson Grove Road from the 1920s onward. Quite why it remains is a mystery, but I suspect part of the reason the adjacent garage block was not built as houses was part of an agreement with the house owner as relating to building heights and over-looking, the council must provide full detail of land covenants from its 1950s/60s acquisition of 66 Nelson Grove Road downwards to the inspector, along with all correspondence relating to 68 Nelson Grove Road in the 50s/60s should be forwarded to the inspector for a proper legal decision to be made. The remainder of Nelson Grove Road has been resurfaced recently, but on the western segment the falls to drains have not been made correctly leading to large puddles at junction of Pincott Road and again drains opposite Hudson Court have not been cleared with large areas of standing water. The garages are generally well built compared to others in the borough, with substantial timbers joists and decking and brickwork, minor maintance when not done promptly to rooves can cause problems with flat roof water ingress, but to say they are under used is incorrect, I contacted on behalf of others – with view to rent two garages in early 2016, CHMP did not respond in any way to that request and this lack of response and poor marketing is typical of CHMP in general.

Hubert Close
The 3 storey block really is too high for the gardens and homes of Rodney Place to the south to be comfortable with. This replaced an earlier 2 storey 13 unit plus day room elder persons bedsits, and they functioned reasonably but they had the indignity of shared bathrooms, which probably was not missed when it was demolished. The existing Hubert Close does not have good design standards, and the rooms and layout are far to small to be considered for example suitable accommodation for a resident of Norfolk
House. The original houses on this site were a terrace somewhat identical to parts of the south side of Croft Road or Meadow Road, and the loss of what could have been renovatable and nowadays desirable properties has to be regretted as one of the poor decisions of the 1950s. More practically though including this building in the estate plan area gives scope to better integrate it, possibly by extending in similar style across the Lovell House garages site, and if the revised access to Rodney Place into new road adjacent 68 Nelson Grove Road, frees the north end of Rodeny Place for a westwards extension of Hubert Close. (though of course the turning space in Rodney Place is possibly too small for service vehicles and access into Nelson Grove Road is still needed as existing. In some ways we are leading to a conclusion that to maximise potential housing space a new east-west road from Abbey Road to Pincott Road parallel to Nelson Grove Road could be a better, from a planning point of view, for build and access.

Navigation and Signage
A criticism of the existing is difficulties in finding ones way around, and walkways that are designed inducing fear of crime. These problems can be overcome without wholesale demolition of the site. I have already stated that duplication of Hillborough Close is confusing, but many signs, and noticeboards provided by CHMP are in the wrong places and not viewed by residents, nor are easy to read at a distance by vehicle drivers, or pedestrians. The choice of white lettering on an orange background is unreadable, most signs are too small and located on flanks which do not face where the need to see them is. The dog leg in Nelson Grove Road is confusing, but could be signed better, and the unnamed accessways off high path for Ramsey House would benefit from naming. Roadways and walkways are not significantly different from other areas of the borough, and public footpaths are ill maintained by Merton Council, the footpath to Lombard Trading Estate for example from Meretune Way is oft overgrown with nettles and brambles. There are funds from parking charges penalties and levies to enhance pavements etc. One confusion has been CHMP replacing flagstones with Tarmac (because it is longer life wearing according to their publicity), which has been difficult to keep clean and free from algae making it slippery in wet weather, I believe again the grade of macadam specified is incorrect as the flatter finish Merton Council created in Nelson Grove Road east segment does not suffer from this. Meanwhile in Merton High Street Merton Council was replacing tarmac with small concrete tiling pavors. Some footpaths have suffered from heave mostly from tree roots, and it is a requirement of any planting that incidents of this are considered properly at the outset.

Setting and Buildings In The Area
Mill Road Character Study area to the East, The Battles Roads to the North and the Australians to The West of Morden Road define much of the feel of South Wimbledon and Central Merton. The use of brick is not exclusive, the key contrast of stonework natural and cast concrete is a feature of window lintels and cills along with some dash rendering and painted surfaces. The natural development would be one of terraced housing (with the problems of on-street parking), and provision of differing sizes would be welcome for families, but it is only the 1 Bed flat that is really suitable for smaller households and single persons – sharing in multiple home situations is not dignified when there are plenty of options in the area for those that form living. Overall the honey yellow stock brickwork with the odd banding contrast works well, Lovell House is different, but on its own is not displeasing to the eye, but increasing the mass too much and fitting ‘sad eyes’ window shapes does not work at all well, the mix of brick and concrete in the existing towers work well as external finishes, and indeed are similar to chequerboard finish of some mansion blocks in the Victoria area of London. The red brick mansions work well – because of the bond, white narrow pointing and depth of bricks used they trick the eye into reducing the height and mass of the blocks, it is good visual design and should be followed through, with improvement, in any new build.

Key Buildings are South Wimbledon Tube station, which appears to be abandoned by TfL. A choice has to be made, either clean, enhance and provide additional pedestrian entrance to the rear of existing, decide if substation is needed or can services be provided from an area where land is less valuable, and bring it the whole up to a building that will enhance The Grove Double Gate Junction, or we conclude that despite the elegance of Holdens’s design it is holding back development for the 21st Century, and bold incorporation of a new station into a modern, clean, functional but elegant retail, commercial and residential offering be considered. The proposals of the Scheme Developer do not enhance the station as is, nor provide an elegant build for the area that will last the test of time. Indeed high towers at this junction should be avoided, there is a need to ensure no shadowcasting to the north east corner of the junction, the maximisation of natural sunlight is required across the whole of the north side of merton high street, we cannot risk vitamin D deficiency and the build heights and designs assessed against health policies.
The Dark House – same considerations as to Tube Station Apply.
The Nelson Arms and adjoining shops and flats over. There could be some merit in repeating this style facing Merton High Street, but the problem is access to rear. Again one starts to conclude that an East-West Road from Abbey Road to Pincott Road would give the best form of access, and would allow Will Miles Court to remain - but of course planning permission to 1 Abbey Road was granted, which has painted into a corner the development of the estate, the proposed north south road adjacent Haydons Road will not work, access at the junction in is asking for problems (once again I note today roadworks are in place there), and cuts across the historic alignments. Details aside, no development along the south side of Merton High Street should be of greater overall height than this existing 3 storey terraced block, which compliments the lower heights of Abbey Parade.
Overall the estate as existing is too large for a uniformity of external design, and some visual break up is needed, the Nelson Arms gives rise to an opportunity to do something different – maybe the Mock Tudor of Malden Manor or Acton area would be an inspiration to copy for buildings facing Merton High Street.

Highways and Present Lack of Maintenance by Merton Highways Department
I have no time to detail this, suffice to say that a separate set of demands for action on dealing with drainage and uneven and unclean pavements will follow and should be dealt with irrespective of, and without delay because of any future plan, we have already had 36 months of much inaction from Merton Council, other than to make matters worse with pathways to nowhere and new road crossings created which do not have pathways directly to them. We have also lost our nearby Bus Stop, increasing walk and journey times.

Overdevelopment
As proposed the scale and mass in brutalist shape (if not style) appears to be excessive for the area. We are suburban Zone 3, not a central location, and our roots remain in Surrey as much as London. The key has to be that buildings are properly ‘set back’ from most of the main roads, to maintain airspace, and to ensure a feeling of clastrophobia does not occur. Enclaves of enclosed doorways around courtyards should be avoided. Ideally garden squares similar to Belgravia could be created with a variety of dwelling types behind the facings. Blockwork built can be quick to construct, and provided disabled access can be maintained there is a possibility of up to four storeys plus mansard being the ideal type across the main part of the estate.

Not a done deal
The biggest problem is that there have not been a limited range of options brought forward and assessed in public or presented to the residents, this should be done rather than ram-roading through one single option. Housing Associations must take as their priority the affordability of housing those in greatest need, while respecting those whom have bought under right to buy having respect in their property, but providing assistance when the likes of maintaining ones garden or externals to ensure a good and pleasing environment.

Affordabilty Of New Build
Although some of my ideas may be an uncosted expensive wish list, it is still imperative that any build for rent must be at an affordable level. We cannot lift the drawbridges of quality affordable homes for the working man that we and our parents enjoyed in the properties that did replace some old, tired and substandard properties let at insecure tenancies with rents that could rise without control, and we must ensure new generations have that embedded into the new build that 100% must be affordable, there should be no aim in the High Path development to seek to cross-subsidise other parts of the Scheme Promoters portfolio. Rents should be set at affordable levels for new numbers of flats, but at no greater levels than existing for replacement units. For Freeholders, many have affordable properties, they own, outright, as they stand, their domains or have already in place finance for the limit of what they could afford to pay. In no way should they be undervalued or the theft of their landscape be compromised.
Where commercial development is proposed, business rents should also be set at affordable levels for retail and office and manufacturing functions (we still make stuff in merton – nearby - ovens, staircases, ductwork for restaurants and hotels to name just three). This was promised as an aim in Wimbledon Forum by Councillor Andrew Judge in 2016 that Merton would seek to promote, and this must be included in any new build for commercial classes.

Lack of Alternative Proposals with regard to Externals
I have already mentioned this in respect to consultation events. My personal dislike of the kind of building happening in the likes of Colindale/Hendon airport knows no bounds. The completed style at Wimbledon Chase is OK in small doses, but not in the main. Key points must be Kitchens to have external windows with natural daylight – this is important for herbs on the window cill and use of sunlight to dry dishes.

Rationale
Is indeed the dash for supposed more build in London needed. There are already too many properties that are unoccupied being only held for investment while interest rates are low, giving inflated capital prices. Across the country properties are being demolished because of no demand. It is not insufficient housing in London, but a lack of good job opportunities elsewhere in the North of England particulary where better public transport is desperately needed. We need only sufficient build to accommodate our existing estate overcrowding, and I belive I have brought forward ideas which can provide a moderate expansion of existing buildings (an idea mentioned by the leader of Westminster Council, which has some merit to it), horizontally and vertically and some infill development with moderate replacement of some flat blocks that really are dank and ill-designed to live in in a socially enhancing way.

Consultation and Requirement for Publication of All Documents and Transcripts of Meetings
I did not feedback to penultimate exhibition of the Scheme Developer, this was because I guessed the final proposals would significantly alter - as indeed they did, with the excess of height around South Wimbledon Tube station in particular, in ill-located blocks being the significant change one is now opposed to. The consultations to ‘Have your say’ were meaningless, there were no shorthand experts on site to record any of the conversations, the qualifications of CHMP agents were not made clear at any of the events, the models were difficult to comprehend (I have photos of other proposals for other places in the past that were much clearer), diagrams of proposed styles were un-dimensioned and proper comparison with all existing flat and house types were not, despite requests, brought forward to following presentations. Information provided was biased, misleading and did not show at first meetings how the proposals had been determined from the likes/dislikes of event in a tent early presentations.

I would request that all materials produced by the Scheme Promoter and The Scheme Developer for public display be forwarded to the inspector for them to draw their conclusions as to fitness for purpose and ask if the reasonably educated man could comprehend what was being put in front of them. Additionally all briefing notes internally (excluding costings) between CHMP, Merton Council, All Councillor and opposition missives to residents, Minutes of meetings with residents representatives and scope of terms of engagement of independent resrepresentative and all correspondence subsequent by email or otherwise between Newman Francis and CHMP and/or Merton Council be provided to the planning inspector.

Additionally all briefings to appointed public relations advisors to the schemes be provided to the inspector, for reasons of understanding choice of wording.

Many residents have decided not to attend meetings or otherwise particpate, the general feel I get from my neighbours is that the Council/ Circle are going to do it anyway, despite any misgivings that residents may voice. Some did attend the visits to new builds done by the Scheme Developer elsewhere and were distinctly unimpressed with the build quality and design compared to our existing arrangements of the estate.

The Triumvirate – relation between Scheme Promoter, Scheme Developer, and Local Councillors, and to some extent Residents Representatives and residents in general has been confusing, as landlord for the area the Scheme
Developer has not sought tomeaningfully engage, anyone whom disagrees with elements of the schemes has been
called a trouble-maker, and the small changes which could have been made to the existing estate so put on hold
and we have been unable to progress and move forward quick wins to enhance what we have at present due to lack
of able, knowledgable staff with authority on site to make enhancements (without prejudicing areas that may be
considered worth while for future re-development). We have had meetings involving each of the main three, but
they have not had a long and meaningful platform of questioning in order to explain how the initial plan was
hatched being closed doors and sprung, in batches of deeply unintelligible verbage, upon residents, most of whom
do not have the capacity, time or inclination to understand the implications of the proposals. We also have
evidence of staff of the Scheme Promoter and Staff of the Scheme Developer socialising after working hours in a
manner which for any other development could be construed as undue influence.

Relationship to Other Estate Plan Areas
Key to this is that High Path estate should not be the cash cow for funding other areas. Our profits arising from
capital development in part belong pro-rata to existing freeholders, and no corners cut to overdevelop or build
undersize removing space from existing residents to feed funds to elsewhere should be permitted. Development
should be to quality, with no compromise to the space or structure many of our residences have at the present time;

Problems of Dealing with CHMP in general, maintenance, procedures. We (residents association) could write a
book on this. The quality and qualifications of many of the sub-contractors and agents used is not good, surveyors
whom can not write correct specifications, determine correctly the actual cause of problems and therefore cannot
specify the correct remedy. Work done, late, dangerously (Electrical, gas appliances), incorrectly or not at all.
Appointments made that even when adhered to on time arrivals have been without correct tools, or parts,
plumbers sent to build fences (one man when that is at least a two man job), etc. I can still show to any
independent third party common parts works not done, and areas of danger. Street properties are not assessed or
visited as part of regular estate inspections, thereby missing issues of fly-tipping, littering and defective and
damaged frontages and trees. Lack of ability to contact easily CHMP with long-winded telephone system – when it
works and operatives who do not know where their estate properties are. In all highly unprofessional. There
appears no proper cyclical maintenance scheme written down or adhered to, work which could be dual specified is
instead duplicated (eg Flashing repair, works to soffits not done at same time with multiple erections and strike of
scaffolding). In all is the Scheme Developer a fit and proper entity to carry out the proposed development to the
long term benefit of residents.

Offer and Comparison to Compulsory Purchase Procedures
so this is my main area of concern, although similar applies to
outright freeholders and service charge paying freeholders and tenants too would have some concerns.

Alternative accommodation on the estate. Ideally we would wish to remain in , despite the traffic
issues, and although we understand a lift can be costly , aside from this we have demonstrated above
that the existing flat just about meets our needs, but only to the extent that the external storage is retained, the
opportunity to rent a garage – indeed it is unfairly prejudicial to tenancy types that a for historic reasons a family
may have had a house with integral on plot garage, when the original offer of accommodation to ourselves was one
of a flat with the possibility of garage to rent – and the completion of DeBurgh
House, and the provision of charge-free parking space on first come first served basis, this provides the initial
package of minium like for like. As I have previously made clear in terms of a replacement home any reduction in
the existing floor space including all integral and external storage areas within the demised lease will not be
accepted, nor any reduction in the running length of any wall or reduction in door aperture width or height
including any wall or window space above doors. We will also not accept any enclosed common parts entrance
lobby, and although ground floor might be nice, which gives a good compromise
for looking over external areas and roads and generally being nosey neighbours participating in community activities. Additionally no window to be smaller than existing ( and, for reasons of privacy) no larger than 10% of existing and
none other than lounge window to be to floor level , this is to maintain the wallspace which we use for shelving and
storage, finally no reduction in the running length of window cills nor reduction
in the size of kitchen cupboards – ideally we would like to move the existing to any new accommodation. Naturally as the move is at the behest of the Scheme Developer all fitments in existing property to be in prompt and workmanlike manner to be uplifted moved with all care and attention throughout and re-provided in the new property.

Funding, although we see no reason to pay more for replacement accommodation given the block, brick, filled cavity, double glazed, pitched tiled roof construction of our existing we struggle to see any enhancement over this although prepared to agree to additional value in the provision of solar panels for heating and electric feed in direct to the flat or the common parts as a revenue stream credit to service charges, and for the provision of triple glazing.

Funding Offer – having noted the foregoing, if it is considered that a replacement property has an additional value beyond the £££ value agreed for the property being relinquished one accepts that the lien or charge on the property at the staircasing years proposed by the scheme developer are not unacceptable as long as it is clear that the scheme developer bears the % risk in the event of net sale proceeds of a replacement property being less than the agreed value at the time of grant of new lease or freehold, and that a transfer of lease or freehold title by way of operation of law following the decease of any lessee or freeholder to any other family member by probate under a will or letters of administration under intesticy shall not be deemed to trigger a disposal for consideration requiring any payback of any equity shared claimed by the scheme developer.

Now the offer is confusing in respect of if the Scheme Developers offer of Market Value + 10% for occupiers (limited to 26th May 2015 residence qualification). This has both halted potential moves within the estates to properties more suitable to a householders requirements, and given rise to a monopsony situation – the decision of the Southwark planning inspector in recognising this is welcome and to some extent we have similar (but smaller) flats to compare prices with – Falcon House from 1971 in Morden Road where a £ per Sq Ft can be used as guidance for flats, Victory Road post war re-build for houses in Pincott Road are good examples. Values of flats already sold are not necessarily good guidance as this may have been sold under stressful duress following specific family needs. I note deceased occupier ground floor maisonette is currently being offered at £325,000. which seems a little low as one is uncertain what rear garden is included, the size and layout is also smaller by about 6msq of useable space compared to my mothers. To some extent that price is calculated on a 4.5% gross rental yield at £1200 per month rental and obviously is discounted as should for example my other family members buy that property they are excluded from the Scheme Developers’ offer, this is of course unfair on the family members of that seller, they are getting less than the market value, even if they sell at MV+10% because we cannot calculate a fair market value with no development planned, one could expect, given that smaller new builds being offered at 1 bed nearby at £499,000 that a two bed, adjusted for age (little work actually needs doing – I would propose a true market value of £475,000 assuming the new 1 beds actually sell for £450,000), and that anyone buying at less than £370,000 is getting a bargain deal for SW19.

Now one can consider the valuation under a compulsory purchase, and it is unclear if a suitable price or deal cannot be concluded with the scheme developer, then the scheme promoter, if permitted by the Inspector may issue demolition order and subject to the land tribunal agreeing compensation value. This value would normally be the same market value, plus the 7% compensation and 3% for disturbance to the occupier, value based on the building as it stands (not ‘As Originally Built per Scheme Developer Offer), However where there is a reasonable prospect of development the land occupier may be entitled to the higher amount of the development value of the land – while this normally relates to schemes of public importance and undeveloped land but we have two types of occupier here. Freehold house occupiers where the scheme developer seeks to acquire the land for the purpose of building flats for resale or let at a profit. If we take the gross value of completed building, divided over the sq ft of land acquired less the build cost we can calculate the profit, a reasonable amount of this profit should then be provided to the land owner of the acquired land. A similar rationale can be applied in equitable fairness to a leaseholder of a flat. However we have some houses that the scheme provider wishes to acquire for a park – should the calculation here to be on a development basis on the grounds that the scheme provider could reasonably develop the land for profit (such scenario being permitted under compulsory purchase order guidelines). Now, can we extend the profit amount to other leaseholders. At present, under the service charge agreement, there is an agreed fraction paid for ‘estate services’ where a fraction per flat or dwelling is charged on annual invoice for the expenditure incurred. Although there appears to be no specific mechanism for refund charge payers where a profit is made (example is
rents received for Mobile Phone Antennas on tower block roof spaces), there appears to be no set-off to repairs to
rooves, when equitably there should be, and following the logic of this any profit (less reasonable 'normal profit' for
the scheme promoters time and trouble) should be divided to the service charge payers in addition to the amount
paid for market value plus disturbance. If the compulsory purchase route is the only means by which the Scheme
Developer can complete acquisitions, then it is noted that the local authority is responsible for providing
accommodation suitable for the resident's needs. Equitably this would be a property again no less in size or utility of
accommodation (adjusted for any 'over accommodation of bedroom issues) including location comparable to that
being acquired. Again there is the problem of physically finding a Zone 3 property of suitable size and layout close
to frequent public transport, with charge free parking and good shopping amenities. Given what would appear to
be an impass, unless the inspector can determine a reasonable alternative area of affordable accommodation the
proposals for at least some of the flats and houses on High Path Estate should not move forward at the extent and
type of accommodation and setting currently proposed in the Estates Plan and therefore on the grounds of equity
and natural justice rulings should be made to protect the resident home occupiers in this situation.

One must question if within the offer to tenants of white new goods in kitchens can be construed as a bribe or
inducement thereby invalidating tenants responses to like or dislike the plan in accepting short term gain at the
expense of pain of others of different tenure.

To be protected from being unfairly denied of ones interest in land is a basic part of this and one should ensure that
all forms of tenancy and land holding are treated equally. This is the implication of the Southward decision. We
have problems with residents whom are tenants of affected non-resident owners not having an entitlement to re-
homing on the estate, which is grossly unfair, and also of the May 26th cut-off date as we consider all whom join in
our community for any reason have the offer applied to them. The Scheme Developer seeks to reduce the quantum
of houses in the proposals by not providing replacement houses for those that it is acquiring prior to development
on the open market not to be included in the number of houses presently available for social rent or replacement
ownership. As stated it is not preferable that we are currently discriminated against the potential of acquiring a
house, if it meets our needs, either pre or post development simply because when first moved here we were
allocated a flat, there should be opportunity to acquire, on same shared ownership terms excluding down
staircasing on the difference in price, a house, if we so desire and it is determined, against our wishes, that our
existing flat be demolished, and sufficient houses for this purpose should be provided within the proposed
development.

Walkways, Pavements and Fear of Crime
Note I have not considered things like street lighting, as this can be changed and modified without any demolition
of the estate and therefore is irrelevant for our purposes.

General Notes

Note I would like all comments and representations I have made in respect of Ravensbury Kick-Starter Planning
Application and Phase 1A High Path Planning representation to be appended by Merton Council Future Merton
Department hereto and forwarded to Planning Inspector for the Estate Plan as my comments are pertinent to this
response.

Locked In Carbon Calculation
Following From Central Hill Estate Development Calculations.
https://architectsforsocialhousing.wordpress.com/2017/02/02/embodied-carbon-estimation-for-central-hill-estate-
report-by-model-environments/
Central Hill is an estate of about 400 properties, mostly of concrete, resulting in 7300 tonnes of embodied CO2, with
an estimate of 154 tonnes of CO2 involved in demolition. High Path has more properties, mostly of brick, so one
could assess something in the region of 14,000 tonnes of embedded CO2 and 280 tonnes of CO2 = 14,280. Adding
in CO2 required for new build is going to be similar, slightly more if window frames are proposed as extruded
aluminium, so magnitude total 26,000tn for 600 replacement dwelling. Now the average household is estimated to
use for space heating about 1.7885 tonnes pa, allowing for 25% reduction in new build this would be 1.35tn per annum. Assuming 600 households this amount of CO2 is equivalent of 22 years of household use a, actually the saving of 25% is .44tn, which for 600 housing units is a payback period of 96 years.

Summary and Conclusions

Given the lack of resident desire for the proposals as first mooted by the scheme provider, the appalling lack of respect to the adjoining character areas and listed buildings immediately adjacent to the plan area and lack of integration of some private developments into the plan area, the plan should be rejected as unfairly prejudicial to existing residential occupiers. I have given some areas where moderate development could be considered, and no doubt over time there will be a need to replace some properties where there is a demonstrable increase in utility to the resident by so doing. However I believe that the concept of partial regeneration is best considered with the retention of our flats which are airy and spacious internally and in setting, although the lack of maintenance promised has diminished value and would be unfairly costly to existing leaseholders.

I would consider that the majority of house proposed sizes are smaller than the existing, I can provide later proof when this is needed, and likewise that the proposed replacement flats are smaller than our existing one, likewise proof can be provided under later examination.

I would propose a small area of the site be transferred to a community land trust for innovative and importantly affordable homes.

I would consider external envelope of the proposed properties is less desirable than our existing flats.

I would request that our existing home be retained, there is no immediate pressure to replace it for structural purposes and that the proposed replacements are insufficient, have less usable internal space and less external amenity and utility space.

There is also, when taken into consideration proposals for additional housing in Morden insufficient peak-hour space on the Northern Line and other public transport to support the overall additional housing units proposed by the Scheme Promoter.
High Path - Circle Housing Merton Priory research

Circle Housing Merton Priory have provided background research on each of the three estates to inform the case for regeneration. Circle Housing Merton Priory's research for High Path is published below.

Condition Survey & lifecycle cost analysis (added 14 Sep 2016)

This is an 88 page document. This should have been presented to residents at the displays at Elim Church, rather than hidden away on website were the majority of older people have no means of access, nor do many of use have the fast and stable technology to review many of these documents. Indeed such has been the extent of information presented it is in formats which are difficult to put into programmes for analysis without giving the computer I use significant intigestion. Please note the previous notes of my own, which I created without reference to these documents.

So Prepared by Baily Garner let us see how this differs from my own visual work preceding. I must declare have found them to be impartial, fair, and methodically in their corporate ethos. One problem with the report is that it draws on other prior commissioned work which is mentioned, but not set out or published here as part of the Estate Plan Submission by Circle. Items in[] or {} are generally my responses/

Executive Summary

The surveys (2014) generally found the buildings and properties on the estate to be in a fair condition. Specific condition issues were identified to various elements including flat roofs, defective rainwater goods, concrete repairs and (window replacements completed approximately 15 years ago.) [This is unclear WHAT window replacements in which blocks this refers to]

[For rainwater goods and cill work I identified this as part of circle lack of maintenance ability above]

Internally approximately 60% of kitchens and 80% of bathrooms were found to be in either a good or serviceable condition [I would agree, some defects are the result of tenant misuse or abuse I have removed doors and drawers to demonstrate this ] {I assume internals only apply to tenanted properties} 2015 Internal survey of 10% found over 90% of kitchens/bathrooms in good condition [In my opinion the average replacement Kitchen is worse than that which it replaces – as a rule of thumb there is nothing which ages faster than something new – this applies to housing as a whole – I can demonstrate on other estates – and am prepared to show our own original kitchen which is over 50 years old ] 23% of surveyed had old and in poor condition on electrical installations (I would like to see detail on this, some can be old, but working safely, a number of units have been re-wired, again in a poor manner by Circle, broadly blocks built 60s to 80s have PVC insulated copper cable which does not perish, and arguably fused circuits are as safe as MCB panels {I have website links that can demonstrate this where false negatives and non tripping occur in MCBs systems which can be quite dangerous to occupants].

Presence of Damp and Mould – [again I would like to see specific units, some is from lifestyle, some is from external failures most others can be solved with passive venting brick ducts, which authorities are reluctant to install, I dont know why in most circumstances this works, new build has constant on forced ventilation, this can be retrofitted in most circumstances it is not a per se justification on its own for demolition ]

There are a number of excessive costs and incorrect specifications. In the main, for tenanted properties, unless tenancy agreements have changed since mother was a tenant internal, decorating, other than for older persons, is the responsibility of the tenant, likewise internal doors and architraves and floor coverings (other than kitchen/bathrooms/WCs). The maintenance of kitchens and bathrooms were also tenant responsibilities and it was only the introduction of the 'Merton Standard' and the transfer promise that this was included in that these were included to existing tenancies, the repairs at tenancy relinquishment might be necessary.

It could be that it has been estimated to be desirious to replace internal doors with half-hour fire doors with intumescent strips in door or frame. This may be an upgrade, we have had three fires in our block, and provided doors to hallways are closed, so far there has been time for escape without significant injury. This work can be carried out as properties are updated at end of tenancy, obviously most existing doors are imperial sizes, and to date to my knowledge such replacement of internal doors has not appeared to have been done so one wonders what the imminent necessity is.

Even so if one is to take 608 properties at a total cost of £100m over 50 years this is £2m per year or £3289 per property per annum, £65 per week which is within the lowest rental of a 1 Bed Unit. This is hardly a large sum as this includes window
I would note some ground areas have been made more defective by incorrect repairs of adjoining parts. Heavy, these have a bulk finger in the air cost estimate on desired external groundwork. Significant foundation issues due to the presence of a sand/gravel soil build-up [Hmm, they didn't check the pavements which do possibly done in old blocks with imagination. Locks, this should be done in any new build to correctly isolate and enable swap-outs with ease and reduce disruption but could possibly done in old blocks with imagination.]

[2014] structural survey generally identified that the buildings were in a good structural condition, with no significant foundation issues due to the presence of a sand/gravel soil build-up [Hmm, they didn't check the pavements which do have heavy, these have a bulk finger in the air cost estimate on desired external groundwork. I would note some ground areas have been made more defective by incorrect repairs of adjoining parts.]

{Why were these documents not placed to Merton Councillors or presented to tenants representatives at the consultation events promoted by Circle}

Detail

152 There are no buildings on the estate dating to the 1930s in CHMP ownership or control

Tower Blocks were built 1964 to 1974. Items 4 were built 1970s not 1960s) Items 5 only Hillborough Close was built in the tail end of 1950, the others completed in early 1960 (see MMUDC yearbooks in Morden Library. Items 6 effectively built 1970 It rather depends if I was less than 7 when I used to jump over the wooden external fences on pincott road., Item 8 built by 1961 – need to confirm from voters lists. Item 9 Probably more 1960 I have access to Jimmy Hemmings tenancy grant from when he moved back to Pincott Road from Reform Place

211 Positive Vote – This is subjective and misleading, omits to state leaseholders against stock transfer.

212 Is a fair summary

421 Items seem a little illogical Tower Blocks, if dates of construction wrong how can servicable life be assessed as being near, assumption on thermal characteristics original drawing specifications required and I understand concrete has good thermal characteristics, it is not impossible to add deck roofing sheets, ideally this should have be done when the windows were renewed. Flat rooves to mansion blocks dont look like felt to me,they are a particular galvanised finish and some (Ramsey, Priory and Gilbert to lower sections have been renewed since and during date of this report, but one is pleased if the main roof elements to the upper storeys are indeed in good , renewed condition. Pitched roof renewals one is uncertain what the tiled failure limit is, generally it would be nails in the wood that would fail, there would appear to be a reasonable programme of renewal, but I have conceded that Eleanor House is better demolished for other reasons. Remaining mansion blocks can be done in stages as most actually appear to be interlocking tiles, laid over battens so should last for significant length of time, you may wish to take independent advice and verification of failure of roof tiles and the appropriate maintenance of replacement regime required. Rainwater issues, they dont see what I see (trees growing in rainwater hoppers and puddling. Other rainwater goods , agreed, but these are not checked and reviewed at the times roof repair scaffolds are put in place. Most work can be done with a cherry picker and does not need a fixed scaffolding for safe access. There is no render finish to tower blocks, I belive it is the type of float used on the final concrete set and that re-infroced concrete is designed to withstand such cracks although they may not look good. Most other concrete cracking is to corners of balconies and sides of staircases, epoxy fixed rendering system can be employed at around £200 per sq foot treated plus access, and is part of normal maintenance. Pointing – I found work required in Gilbert and Priory Closes. Double Glazing omits the wooden windows in Stane Close, this may be a private house now. The assumption of Crittal windows on the estate would be Norfolk House only and at the 2014 writing would be incorrect , however two remain and indeed these were private units where one owner declined to accept renewal and one was in an institution and unable to give consent or consideration to renewal. There are non-working Crittal windows in common parts but these are hardly a problem when the opposite side is open to the elements.

Fire strategy has never been shared and door detail for fire resistance not calculated. Balcony elements already noted by me. Internal Communal Facilities in Fair Condition is a more generous than I would have given to a number of
areas, there is a handy person service used by CHMP, this can be done over the years to give a 7 year painting program, again cost wise going forward it is neutral whether in existing stock or to new build.

Poor and Failed Kitchens, probably abuse or sheer hard working use, the transfer promise was indeed that these would be renewed as required and agreed. Thermal Performance calculations, does not tally with the declared methods of construction, were any surveys by a CTRDS or similar qualified person undertaken to assess causes of damp, mould and condensation within domestic dwellings carried out?

522 Any answers?

531 Concrete Access Decks sounds a bit negative, Verandas is the nicer word, defects and repairs noted above anyway, caused by years of neglect and denial by Merton Council HD that anything was wrong.

532 Any results?

541 Agreed, epoxy resin repair solutions if not structural in imminent danger of collapse.

551 1970s defined blocks does not make clear which are the defectively pointed walls. If they are what I think they are I mentioned this at time of construction and was ignored.

561 Rather wonders what was being done in the 1980s, it is worth checking the pointing on more recent CHMP build as there are reports of defects on other newly built estates.

611 Do you understand? does X mean good or bad? Is a tick an affirmative answer to the questions. 8 Norfolk House I know the gentleman had refused to have the kitchen replaced. I have spare doors that I could probably upgrade for him, the underlying carcasses are of solid timber, blockboard and plywood and unless damaged by water spillages are fairly indistrucable as long as one bees-waxes the drawer runners regulary.

Interesting that 51 Priory Close has a less old kitchen still in disrepair – see my earlier comments. Tenants that are old could use the handyman service to refurbish existing kitchens if carcasses still sound.

Noteworthy that hardly any Kitchens or Bathrooms appear to have failed the assessments.

There appears to be no correlation between age of electrical systems and the quality of the installation and as such the report summary percentages are misleading and better reported in a Venn Diagram. Inadequate appears to be the number of outlet sockets, which indeed was based on a low initial installation when the flats were first built. This could have been because some appliances typically would tee of the lighting circuits in the days when power for lighting was billed at a lower rate than power for ring main circuits. Naturally hammer chisel and recessed double sockets and small runs to the ring main can provide extra if one does not mind the disruption. CHMP are adding extra surface mount double socket outlets as units fall empty as tenants die off or move to nursing homes.

651 inherent ‘cold bridging’ issues related to the fabric of the buildings, [This would need specific determination, some bathrooms of tower blocks are on the internal core, so would like to see detail if there is difference to ground floor, mid floor or upper floor issues] along with potential occupier issues [agreed but solvable]

652 Overcrowded with Chattels [rather my point, but the increase in floor space in proposed properties does not necessarily increase USEABLE SPACE designs of new need significant thought particularly for how children live and study, and the sheer space needed for clothing – eg an external shed allows for change of workboots and clothing, storage of tools and equipment. Kitchens need plenty of space for appliances and means for preparation of food (home prepared food is more nutritious and cheaper than ready meals and takeaways).

712 Difficult to be 50 years old if Hudson Court completed 1972 [that is only 45 years] One would need proof of how this servicable life, costing and means of refurbishment is calculated.

713 Seems excessive to budget for repairs to rooves in year 1 if they have been renewed, 10 year renewal is reasonable, new homes being built seem to depend on flat rooves so no additional marginal maintenance costs either way.

714 Costs appear to exclude scaffolding to 3 and 4 storey rooves, presumably 2 two storey flat rooves access tower or cherry picker usable in safe manner.

715 As essential repairs have not been quantified year 1 is a bit steep on cost, better to fully assess cost need over a 15 year time frame then at 40 years thereafter? New build still has identical cost as roof needed on the new items, I have suggested defray costs with creation of mansard habitable spaces.

716 ??Windows probably OK, Renewals possibly ok, better to assume 1/10 need repair each year, with replacement in 12 year intervals. Again windows in new build presumably need renewal or servicing periodically. Our own windows we replaced about 20 years ago and appear useable. Replacements should be triple glazed?

717 Some 18 Front doors have already been replaced to norfolk house and have been ongoing to other ones (hillborough close for example), cost has been around £800 per door. Therefore estimates are already over costed. There appears to be no requirement to replace external doors at Lovell House as these as a fire assessment open onto
the street.

718 accepted.

719 Seems overspecifying on floor finished to be done in one lump. One would expect most floors where not heavy trafficked to have plenty of life in them, tower blocks have had piecemeal replacement to floors as required and likewise doors. Most doors look to have, if lubricated and adjusted annually, a good 20 years life if not abused by residents.

7110 seems way over specified and most blocks recently have landlord electrical and lighting upgrades already completed (see galvanised trunking – which does need snagging ), some blocks are behind schedule and work not fully done as yet, and uncertain if wholly needed in blocks without resistance testing. Costs therefore excessive and over too short a time frame

7111 please check dates of lift renewals already completed. New blocks will need lifts anyway and therefore zero marginal cost difference. You cannot make an assessment on something you have confirmed you have not seen !

721-3 Seems totally illogical based on the survey results. A better cost basis would be on the normal basis of tenancy churn which is normally around 5% so 30 properties per year, and allow additional void period time of average of 10 weeks, plus 2% for general wear and tear for long term resident so say 20 properties = 50 per annum which is reasonable, teams can then move in sequence around spending 1 to 2 weeks on clear and fix and repair in a methodical. After 8 years the tenanted properties would be complete, although one might be expected to kickstart with additional units in first year, a number of void and acquired properties have already been completed – 3 in May Court and 2 in Marsh since report written for example. I am uncertain why one would replace internal doors, I have never had to do this – cleaning painting and washing of internal doors and finishes and painting of walls are the tenants responsibility anyway, with handyman assistance for older or vulnerable tenants. Otherwise no difference in provision as all needed (arguably more so ) in new build.

822 The cost assessment to strip and rebuild one off pincott road house (2 bed) 58/56 Pincott Road at £114, 977 or about £90K is somewhere in cuckoo land, do they not check for reasonableness ? We can do quick calc -Roof and chimey pointing £20K, reprint front rear £3K New Bathroom £2K Kitchen £3k Electrics £3k Gast2K Floor coverings and 2nd Fix £3K , Redec 6 rooms £5K Drains RWP gutters soffits £3K Max £38K which is about Homes Under the Hammer typical prices. Most unlikely to need new windows or external doors , add £6K if so, either way well under Bailey Garner estimate. Mostly likely other works and prices on other blocks and houses way over priced, Lovell House, particulary as different to 2 bed and 3 bed units not understood. Cost information should come from the agreed schedule of rates contract CHMP has , not from Dailly Garner internal cost files.Cost of prelims percentage seems high, inflation uplift irrelevant if at SoR agreement, and contingencies unlikely on those costs as everything included (except Asbestos Removal – most vinyl tiles still have this and the Asbestos register and survey should be on record to check ). However it may be that this lifecycle cost I have mis-read so a repeat over three periods in the 50 years is of £30K x 3= £90K plus inflation, if so cost is reasonable, and would not vary significantly if new build as presumably maintenance in that too.? Communal estimate for Norfolk House is £45K over 50 years per dwelling which seems at £1000 pa or £20 per week a reasonable amount to place into a sinking fund, there is scope to perhaps reduce this if proper preparation done as little painted areas, nil work done on walkways in last 55 years other than painting and cleaning. Indeed one might expect a little more than this cost, based on £15,000 per flat initial expenditure and £600 per flat thereafter pa with additional £10,000 at Y25 and £15,000 at Y£50. This would be broadly comparably with new build maintenance as the main cost would be roofing and soffit work. Across estate works at £500 per annum per dwelling seem excessive, one would expect a chargeable amount at present day rates of more like £300 per annum or £6 per week, and much of this is already billed in service charges.

911 Sound Attenuation. Residents of new blocks designed by PRP report sound transmission from adjoining and adjacent flats is occurring. Therefore newbuild is not necessarily solution to this problem. Accoustic mass and mats can be retrofitted where acoustics are transmitted via service voids.

9112 Means What?

Cost Spreadsheet appendixes. Need adjustment to reality where first year works have already been completed as of 1st March 2017 -eg Bolier Renewals already recently , with much errors of incorrect service conecions, parts not brought to site , pump and circuit board failure on installation, incorrect analysis of faults, temperature contrils defective leading to scalds or no hot water, in general this re-inforses my contention that new is not necessarily better (off site test required and certificated for each new boiler and installation procedure may solve this ), completed to Norfolk House, Hillborough Close and Others. It is not demonstrated where cost per flat may be cheaper in years in future for second renewals and repairs in the case of new build. If blocks are larger in newbuild then there will be some reduction of common parts costs per flat, but this may be offset as more blocks will have lifts and so it cannot be said that new build of itself will be cheaper and easier to maintain that existing blocks?
Norfolk House and other costs for renew cold water incoming service Cost Consultant has never seen how and where these run as existing!! Asbestos Surveys have already been done (and show CHMP incompetence as these were on file with MCHD at time of stock transfer. Internal Doors rarely need replacement, is the reduction of doors in new build indicative of a desperate cost saving by CHMP? Note for replacement flat we cannot accept integrated lounge and dinner / kitchen, they must be separated out for smells (extractor fan notwithstanding) and to retain wall space and storage space. Returning to costings little need for most replastering and re-decoration is tenant responsibility. Loft insulation already exists, Cavity Wall Insulation already exists, I have no idea where communal entrance doors could be hung in addition to those existing without blocking electrical installations. Not costed is a Lift, there is space and looks like budget provision for this is possible. (I am lost as to where 6 communal doors are – bin stores?)

There are not 30 Cold Water Tanks not a full 30 RWP/ SVP (Actually for SVP good luck they run internally) this should be re-costed at LM plus Bends. I note 'Norfolk House' is repeated I presume this is Hillborough Close. Same costing notes apply in general. I am not certain why cavity wall insulation needs re-doing every 40 years, does it crumble to dust and get eaten by insects? Costs for external signage seem excessive!!

Costs for remainder of estate, particular refuse systems to houses seem illogical, other first year costs incorrect on specification, a request should be made for proper costs, although accepted this is a good starting point and one can build and assesses needs for Y1 to Y15 and then thereafter. Drainage repairs need doing, and some surveys have been completed, so work values from hereonin can be adjusted.

Overall the report is good even if costs are over robust in some areas and lacking in others, The danger is that the report will be mis-interpreted and misused by CHMP and twisted in the same way as it does statistical analysis. Ideally there should be a comparison of costs over the expected lifetime of new build and existing units, and assess if there is a significant difference per unit, one suspects not.

Therefore we are back to the political decision of should householders lose their dwelling simply for the replacement with dense flatted developments of poor quality and visual appeal where houses take up the predominant landscape, when those houses are mostly freehold held and of good build quality.

**Additional Analysis of Lifetime Cost Report/s By PPS Ltd High Path Estate Condition Assessment**

This introduces the incorrect schedule of dates of construction but defines the 9 Types of Flats.

**Type 1 Tower Blocks**

113 1960s and 70s. There are minor differences in Hudson Court.

Overall one agrees with the report here, key elements are is the rendering defects significant, and the thermal (again what is Mu Value for different external walls). The dangers of the balconies are noted, why has PRP shown tables and chairs on balconies on new building drawings presented to residents if climb and fall hazards are a significant potential problem? In all honesty I wondered in 1966, aged 4, of the building of these blocks, as magnificent is the view from, and view of, the coldness of my relatives and friends properties was noted, but the central heating systems and double glazing have assisted to reduce this in later years, input from solar and renewable sources may reduce costs. Other than external finishes there would be little to chose between new build and these, except the existing probably are situated on the best footprint, and development of similar heights to full length of pincott road east, north leg, would be an excess of scale and mass, the 4+2 arrangement of flats on the core is probably optimal for external sizes and internal stairwell management. Would an external clad in better performing thermal materials be a better solution for the next 50 years, with revenue-earning improvements at ground level – eg building a shop unit to frontage of Marsh Court and offices with green rooves to High Path elevation? If demolished hardwood items should be set aside for re-use or reclamation yard collection.

**Type 2 / Type 3**

Mansion Blocks

Generally in agreement re work not done and required. Consideration of thermal walls, have heard that these are cavity and two half brick thick walls but one and a half makes sense. Replacement properties should not take up significantly larger footprints or heights – five plus set back 6th maximum but walkway external access should be maintained rather than the dank enclosed access of other block types. If demolished hardwood fittings and internal doors should be set-aside for re-use. I am not sure of why Type 3 has cavity walls at first floor and above and Type 2 which appear similar does not. The entrance archways mimic an interpretation of the Norman historic gateways to Merton Abbey (one lost by Merton Council, one extant relocated to Merton Church, St Marys, and the doorways to the stone build St Johns Church in High Path.
This type of block has had recent window and roof works completed elsewhere in the borough, Parkleigh Court, Hatfield Mead in London Road Morden being similar examples, others being in Grand Drive, Lower Morden as well as similar styles in Mitcham – Glebe Court, Pitt Crescent in Wimbledon and Ravensbury Court in Mitcham would all have the same thermal characteristics.

Type 4
P178/8.1 Blocks – 213 More specifically general replacement of part of All Saints Area demolition and re-build. Completed c1978 Vanguard has 12 no 1 bed flats of which one is used as office/base/tea-room for caretakers and cleaners and hot-desk for technical officer. Roof tiles more like 38 years old, Boxing to roof gutters is generally cosmetic, but does prevent thermal warping of upvc goods. Agreed cleaning would be benificial at £15 per LM. Apparently painting tiles with natural yoghurt prevents moss. Downpipes are to every other property on the houses, and the pictures are misleading, there is no gutter outlet above the garage forward recess. I am not aware of spill from rain gutters. Repairs to lintels are common need – resin bonded is a useful fix, 333 / 334 noted, all seems normal maintenance 3510, but probably are. 362/ 363 Timber fences will need replacements normally, paving slabs are in need of replacement, this is part of normal requirements. 4.0 May is not a good professional word in the context. 714, may is not one would expect from professionals, one would like to see ideal variances of Building Regs, which in 1978 were quite strong, and have varied little to the present day, some retro fit if not already done on thermal insulation should meet present W/M value requirements. 717 I am not certain where this is, seems a small works(photo shows what I think is freeholder house) Map is incorrectly shaded, photos show the whole place needs a good brush up and highlights the daily lack of cleanliness that the service charge paying freeholders would expect for their monies.

Type 5 Blocks.
114 Late 1950s/Early 1960s/ Mid 1960s is more truthful. More true that DeBurgh house constructed for residents of part of All Saints area re-development, remainder for former house dwellers from Pincott Road and High Path predominantly. General misspellings not acceptable in a professional report. 219 They have missed Nos 10 and 11 Norfolk House which have level access bar small entrance thresholds. 311 Blocks are 59 years old maximum. As generally, apart from wind-blow rain mostly around flashings to chimneys, one fails to see what the deterioration in interlocking concrete tiles is as long as fascias to gable ends are kept in good repair and assessment, but I note build up of moss which I do not recall in previous years, perhaps they were cleaned by brush when the fascia boards were overhauled in the late 1970s ?(I recall scaffolding erected by cannot remember date) 323 Does this apply when cavity insulation is in situ ?, 'Low' is unspecified and proper Mu value provided for comparion, 333 replaced since report written. 337/338 note hardwood a tropical endangerment of species, these frames should be re-used rather than chipped for landfill or biomass if demolished. 341 Informed by Merton Council housing department this was not a problem. 343 access verandas I see not evidence of corrosion 346 redecoration works last carried out just prior to stock transfer, specification of paintwork appeared not to contain rub down make good and properly prime and paint as underlayers of original paintwork appears exposed. 347 painting has been carried out, but not to external sides of steps, another typical CHMP job half done. 364 the original kitchen has been ruined on removal, the gas dryer worked only on town gas and service pipe was capped off in 1973, most other units had further removal work of metalwork a few years back shortly after transfer, no 28 missed out as owner was in hospital. Asbestos report needs confirming, my understanding is that drying cabinets have a refractory material and concrete finish with a crysotile removabale panel. 366 this paragraph seems illogical to the three kitchens reviewed as the detail on them is different in fact and opinion. 413 I can confirm since fitting double glazing that there is a low incidence of mould growth adjacent to windows. 414 see surveys, 413 possibly but most have had at least one repaint to wood architraves and doors. 416 yes please. 716 agreed and programme should be phased over three years. Photo 1 is of rear. Photo 7/8 front rears reversed as front doors access from walkway, not roadway. Photo 12, sheds not mentioned in report, agreed problems with shed roof coverings, some of which have been renewed since the report.

Overall Hillborough and Norfolk Houses larger internally than most other flats, any replacement must be absolutely no smaller than existing including storage sheds and wall/door spaces.

Type 6
213 Try 1970s. 219 agreed, 2110, this applies to all blocks as in no dedicated parking area, but the main parking area for Mychell House is adjacent in Doel Close, the area for Tanner House is shared with Hudson Court rear and
onstreet parking on Nelson Grove Road. West Arm. 312 probably no fire separation as single loft hatches on stairwells, insulation should have been replaced under central govt grants, timbers were pretreated. 313 I think they mean the external boxing which is for aesthetic purposes (and to reduce thermal stress on black upvc) 323 again Mu values wanted, cavity insulation exists. 335 is against the stock transfer promise, but this may be tolerated by residents, if after 30 years can the open walkways be treated as public footpaths? 341 I am not certain if not having private balconies is a good thing or not, retro fit is optional, but does mean accessways in living rooms are needed to get to the outside, this is cold, wet, england, getting outside is normally not that desirable. There are no drying courtyards to Mychell House. External sheds are in poor condition and need attention. 412 trickle vents in windows can help with condensation abatement. Want of Repair and Potential for Improvement is an interesting way of assessing cost priorities and makes sense and should be used for all CHMP managed properties, one suspects that a good use of 50% of rental income and service charges to maintain and enhance housing stock is reasonable leaving the remainder for interest payments, day to day cleaning and management, rather what a Housing Association is supposed to do, with a little amount for community co-hesion and tenant improvement budgets.

Type 7
216 Parking is to rear of Hillborough/Deburgh Garages, and in accordance with Mayor's office guidelines is unallocated other than estate parking permit scheme, and along the north pathway, independent living bungalow has dedicated parking area. There is scope to narrow the road and still have on street parking and provide Y-Cube type accommodation over the garages and parking area. 311 Type 7 are build 1986 (per date year in the gabling!) so rooves are ~ 30 years old. Probable fire separation, for flats blockwork was built up on construction from memory. Timber trusses are of the pre-stressed type with impregnated preservative. 323 (and the thermal changes are, given the embedded CO2 in the buildings?) 334 yes, a painting regime has been neglected by CHMP, so the costs that should have been spent in years from transfer to date are underspent, making year 1 costs seem excessive as this is catch-up on 5 years delay in repairs and painting, which can lead to additional work when timbers start to rot for want of a lick of paint. 716 Damp in flat 6, try checking the external ground and airflows.

Type 8
219 Parking to rear accessed off nelson grove road, and use of garage block for additional rent. On street parking permitted for Abbey Road / Mill Road CPZ permit holders. Concrete is blockwork with battening for the tiles. 312 Insulation should have been done a few years back. General insulation problems normally solve by most having book-cases against the walls. More noteworthy of this type is the high proportion of window to wall particularly to main maisonette lounges. The lower flats had insulated sandwich under window panels, replaced when upvc double glazing done. Photo 5, the flat appears to be appropriating communal garden space, not very well, we would like to work with ' Sustainable Merton ' & use community grants / landfill tax credits and similar to improve areas like this.

Type 9
213 There has been some messing about with front walls and gates, which has detracted from the original pleasing street frontage. 215 The rear access is strictly by an estate access roadway off High Path (Historically this was the site of Sunny Villas, the car parking areas are further north than the end of the terraces gardens. 311 no expert by they don't look like imminent failure, pictures fairly show the timberwork repairs required, which freeholders may be unwilling to commit to with the uncertainty to demolition proposals by the Scheme Developer. 315 should have been grant aided and is still available to householders under say British Gas schemes. Ideally felt batten and jablite sandwich to loft space, which is capable of conversion to habitable space for households experiencing overcrowding, but this could affect the nice 1950s styling of the terrace.

General
Joinery paintwork, specification seems to be wrong, should be burn off or rub down, prime, undercoat and final
finish, the re-primering has not been done in past, leading to premature flaking of painted finishes.

Slipped and missing tiles again always better to have prompt attention, that is what service charges are levied and paid for. 345 possible funds for a common style if request for conservation area status on 50s blocks would be desirable. 414 absolutely, some has been done ad-hoc by CHMP handyman team. 514 difficult to do, smaller kitchens tend to be in 1 beds, do function adquately but no room for a dishwasher or washing machine, the presence of separate utility room in any new build would be desirable away from eating /food preparation areas. 551 Lasted well hasn't it. 633 due to roof material failure, once sorted not a significant problem. 651 waste management some £35,000 spent on tower blocks waste storage recently. There are insufficient recycling bins still properly provided even after this expenditure, this is typical of poor CHMP planning and assessment. 661 Design review, this is a tool for designing new build areas, not for adversarilly critisicing existing buildings and layouts which are marginal as to their function, particulary 1980s built houses in this area compared to other estates built of this age. 691 most I understand have the necessary consents. 6101 Energy costs much have a DCF analysis if Leaseholders/ Freeholders expected to financially contribute to replacement properties from the normal Compulsory Purchase 10% disturbance allowance.
Urban design review analysis and thoughts

A) From a planning point of view merely including the footprint on page 1 is illogical the entire area hangs as an area, working with the adjoining Future Merton Character Study Areas and the buildings which my submission had earlier noted. The area map is also incorrect as the latest CHMP elim church display includes thoughts and changes for the area of St Johns Parish Hall as such the inclusion of misleading information on the merton website as submission from CHMP wastes our time in looking at the detail therein.

Background – successful ballot is misleading, tenants is correct, for residents as a whole leaseholders and freeholders of houses were excluded from stock transfer ballot and the survey of them indicated opposition to the transfer, and would have given an overall rejection of the proposal. There were no alternatives such as transfer of part of the estates to the likes of community land trusts, and the goalposts of things like residents involvement at board level have been reduced since and therefore what was supported by tenants at stock transfer time is not presented in local democracy and control at time of writing now.

The concept of homes in poor standards, it is difficult to distinguish between housing stock in High Path and similar blocks elsewhere, eg Moffat and Poplar Courts in Wimbledon, Pelham House in South Wimbledon, indeed only the ex LCC St Helier Estate Houses built 1930s are a difference in external style at least. Of course it is easy to see that now the templates and justifications for demolition are with CHMP it is easy to cut and paste and bring forward documentation that all of the estates and many of the street properties under CHMP control have a general direction toward demolition and re-build. It should be noted that CHMP are not the only provider in Merton, including nearby the estate London and Quadrant and Wandle Housing Associations, and elsewhere substantial and minor provision by Moat Housing and Anchor/Hanover Housing Associations as examples. (Other minor charities have mansion blocks in the borough – Queen Alexandra’s Homes and Haig Homes for example).

As we consider doubling the density of the estate at High Path, we must consider, given present day pressures on NHS services particulary the likes of closure of walk-in treatment centre in Mitcham at Wilson Hospital centre and the threatened closure of St Helier Hospital Services that can this additional number of residents be accommodated properly for health choices. As being near busy roads which are polluted and sometimes in toxic airstream from Beddington Waste incinerator plumes one must ask if, combined with loss of light at ground level if the increase in proposed height and mass is actually going to worsen expected health outcomes.

Celebration of Admiral Lord Nelson, there are some intellectual reasons why this should not be the case, depends on how much of a democrat one is, and Nelson spent little time at Merton, and his loved ones were arguably robbed by their advisors, despite Nelson's brother's family getting a perpetual pension at an annual value of some £4m at present day terms.

Much of the design study is intellectual tosh, and could be used elsewhere on the likes of blank return walls at road junctions throughout the borough. Our flats do properly overlook most areas, but it is admitted some improvement of the alleyway access by alleygating as elsewhere in say Mill Road character area was not desired by residents when asked at resident association meetings. One indeed could question the sanity of the original estate architects, there appear say little improvement in building flats of solid construction when the original terraces shared that method of build in on the more substantial houses. For the 1980s houses, unless the garages were built integral with the house, and the kitchens effectively pushed to the rear in extensions into gardens, there is little way doors could be brought to street frontage without needing more artificial illumination. The 1980s houses are probably a fair representation of other, exclusive, gated estates around the borough – larger types say off Lake Close in Wimbledon.

Part of the incremental build problem of the estate has resulted from the change in proposals of what Merton High Street should actually be as determined for by the Local Authority, should residents be subject to the vagaries of allledged learned persons changing their minds with latest architectural whim, if this takes away space, utility and amenity from those residents?

The example of connectivity is more applicable to All Saints Estate rather than High Path, which generally has a good connected grid, there are some further areas that could be opened up, and better ways of providing links east-west if the design constrain of the spacing from Merton High Street to Nelson Grove Road and onto High Path is maintained, given the need to retain 68 and Hubert Close Nelson Grove Road, Rodney Place, and 1,25 and Kelmscott House Abbey Road within the area, The main difficulty of transport out of the area is Abbey Road,
congested, left (east) turn only at Meretune Way and left (south) turn only at Morden Road. I would contend that separation of cycling from motoring routes is an imperative, as such High Path could be a far better alternative though east-west route than Merton High Street, with alternatives to north and south at Quicks Road and Windsor Avenue.

Note where any traffic count submissions are made by the Scheme Promoter or The Scheme Developer it should be noted that these were last carried out at school holiday times and during periods of road closures to merton high street and haydons road and are not typical of weekend shopping hour flows and peak school day vehicle movements and normal scale factors do not apply, you should also ask to see results of previous traffic counts.

Page 11 Merton Diagram, arguably incorrect as 'Red Line' of Montague Road/Trinity Road fails to note the low traffic light priority to this route at Wimbledon Broadway, and its general deterrence for use by buses and large goods vehicles.

Parking provision, I have already noted that much of the parking spaces are used by business light goods vehicles, where the use of public transport is impracticable. I have also noted that bus services are less frequent early mornings, sundays and no longer go to some key destinations, particularty Wandsworth and Sutton.

Provision of a rail station at Colliers Wood High Street would be useful as Haydons Road Station is not wheelchair accessible, nor are the north side platforms served by bus services as such. Conversion of 'Thameslink' loop to tram operation may be useful, as would the provision of tram stop at east end of trading estate for deen city farm and industrial area and closer more direct route to high path east end than the difficult to access Morden Road tram stop (road underpass dank and surface crossings do not have clear pedestrian phases at Jubilee Way, Meretun Way across Morden Road and Nursery Road Junctions. Page 12 Bus Stop splodges are in wrong locations compared to actual.

Page 115/16 One would like to see the justifications for development brought forward and ongoing to South East of of High Path estate in Christchurch Road and Western Road as these would appear to be contrary analysis. Page 16 is utter nonsense in respect of footpaths as the determination of use of Meretun Way with prohibited pedestrian access is the largest determinate of non-footpath use, but there is a steady, if unspectacular walk mode via Station Road to Sainsburys/Merton Abbey Mills and across Meretun Way for access to Lombard Industrial Estate- note access to Jubilee Trading Estate is difficult due to fence barriers along footpath. Off estate plan but of recommendation is to re-align public footpath away from dipping hole ditch and into the Jubilee Estate, better integrating a single wildlife corridor for about 75metres. Page 16 it is agreed that the footpaths around St Johns Parish Hall are non-existent, one should request of the original design brief the reason for that, it would be better to add these in at little cost as these have been informal footway routes, opposed by Merton Housing department, since the estate was built.

Page 17 map sage green footway crossing over Merton High Street at Haydons Road is now prohibited, despite estate footways pointing in that direction, this is as a result of a TfL grant to a Merton Council for street repairs and cycleway to Merton High Street and typical non-joined up thinking of MC working with (not) CHMP. The second purple line to west in Will Miles Court is not possible due to doorway being padlocked out of use. The coloured logic of the access road to Meretun Way bears no relation to its actual heavy use.

Connectivity analysis is likewise flawed in the maps and therefore not fit for purpose at the detail level. Much of the explaining of where one is on the estate was defined by the Pubs – similar to the days of bus destinations for example. The loss of the Princess Royal is particulary missed, one now directs to certain places by reference to Domex, or St Johns Church. The continuation of road names has confused everyone since 1861 censuses where the Split of Nelson Grove (Road) and Pincott Road (part known as Double Row) is confusing as to east/west and north/south segments. Eleanor House remains impossible to give directions to, and Ramsey House has no clear public parking and difficult access for delivery vehicles, the logical is to park in 'Rowland Way' and walk, but there are no road signs for this, two parking slots should be re-allocated to timed loading only for general public, this would help in the immediate time going forward. Indeed many recommendations for any interim period across the estate prior to demolition, if that is agreed on, should be made to ensure the best use of landscape as things change and to maximise the best use now, before any consideration of demolition is made, it is the refusal to engage with residents on this issues that have the biggest frustration when attempting to deal with circle, and the excuse for not doing anything (of significance) is that the buildings/roads are all going to be demolished, without acknowledgement that we still have to live, and walk, drive and cycle here and now.

Line length short views, in part this has changed when merton high street south side was demolished, some routes now for pedestrians were not possible before, and the original cruciform had the terraces, the block around Beckett Close was always one single farm/light industrial area with no need for external access! Routes do not show the ground heave from tree roots or poor finish of tarmac, etc areas that make journeys by foot NOW a chore, not an enjoyment. I suppose in my preamble I somewhat ommited to mention that so I am
experienced, if not expert, in the pavings of the area, additionally it should be noted that many footpaths are often (illegally) used by cyclists, including south side of High Path and the routes from Will Miles Court to Merton High Street.

Page 22 Dead end routes seems to imply a negative, this may not be so as the roads to north of merton high street are also dead end roads, although have fire path access, some routes circle round (stane close) so are not dead end. Routes that claim to be connected omit banned movements for pedestrians or vehicles. Photo2 Vehicles on pavements, MC has new policy allowing this where 1m of pavement remains, however this is narrower than a double buggy – or my trolley when loaded with a large TV or other materials, my trolley wheels are also sensitive to ill repairs and uneven surfaces. Rodney Place residents value their dead end road (see reponses to Phase 1A planning application), and Station Road desperately needs proper pedestrian crossing over the unnamed access road into Sainsbursys.

Page 24, Bungalow would have been better built facing footpath, but designed for privacy. Photo 2, two routes needed when roadworks (such as recent gas works) have closed off pavements to pedestrians. Wall at this location should be removed, serves not purpose. Dead end footpath route of Rowland Way not so, gate is open for pedestrians and leads to bus stop. Photo 3 this architectural trick are not being proposed in new build, which seems waste of space of say new proposed route adjacent 68 Nelson Grove Road. Photo 4, agreed by residents value their rear access to gardens and do not want alley gating – a footpath from Hillborough Close to Doel Close was long requested by denied by MCHD. Page 26, item 5, fairly difficult with the presence of Meretune Way, only one effective route by Morden Road or through Nelson Memorial Garden, the alternative via Lyon Road footpath is blocked by Martin Harkness House for a direct route. Page 30, methinks the originator of this babble woorieth too much, this is a small estate, coverable in few paces. (I am reminded of larger, darker estate in Wapping in the 1970s where this may have been a problem). Page 32, 5, depends on priorities. I would consider one review the Barbican Estate in London as a contrast where these attributes have been welcome. It should be noted that there was early 1960s deliberate reduction in housing stock across MMUDC, although it was replaced in areas by new and so department of the obvious needs to temper with historical document declarations. Page 34, etc. OK for analysis of a new build, but the statement regarding fronts and backs can depend on the working of the property functions, particluarly kitchens where the most overview of front areas happens and it depends what happens to backs. Are terraced houses where there is no rear access worse, as everything has to be accessed through the building to the rear – eg garden materials? The alternative is rear quadrangles or similar and a tight landscaped or utility space, but this can result in building enclaves, and the working of doors to front otherwise is inefficient and gives dark internal cores to buildings (existing tower blocks, or Vanguard House), access via external walkways is preferable, it does not matter quite where the street is as long as access points are logical. Photo 2 probably not, and for that sunny view one should have been aware of the previous funeral directors premises in that area!! The active frontage marked to Falcon House on Morden Road is clearly incorrect, from the analysis, likewise area 3 does not make sense in ground reality. One would put frontages to Lovell, Norfolk and Hillborough as active where front doors are, so the analysis is flawed. Page 36, Photo 2, 'offering nothing' is an exaggeration. Photo 3 this is the rear gate entrance and untypical as used mostly for egress of waste or access from parking areas into storage areas. The bedrooms at ground floor level have to face one way or the other, and the set back behind private space can be created from existing, but that private space needs maintenance and access to tools and materials, which is lost if we lose garages and store sheds.

Conclusions : 2 does not really matter, 3 this in part depends on footprint determination at time of build, and desire to orientate upper stories as views to London or the Surrey Hills. 5 But enlarging or re-configuring could do this. 6. The flats in Abbey Road do not unattractively have views from the road, and the view of maisonettes opposite is quite nice from our lounges. Page 39 rental structures are not a grand determination of why demolition should occur, it is better to provide the most amount of affordable properties in these financially tightened times. Community Land Trust rules may be better for the prospective occupants. Page 40, this analysis of heights does not mean that the procedure is best for occupants, residents or pedestrians, one cannot complain that airy corners make one feel 'insecure' then build high, dominating, sunlight blocking buildings at the next turn. One might consider, just, the tube station at Clapham South, where high flats and low commercial units do work in a 1930s context. However opposite the high buildings is an open common parkland, the flats are oriented to the north, and wide roads can accommodate shadows missing buildings on the far side thereto. This is not practical on the area around South Wimbledon Tube Station. New context's may not be a bad thing? Page 42 Height and Massing Conclusions, agreed, and there will need to have special relevance to High Path area where a 5? Storey Secondary School is being mooted, to the south, which will cast shadow, and have serious consequences socially, for any residential buildings on the opposite side of High Path thereto.
1, streetscape, trees were planted at a mix of times, but along Merton High Street around 1980 when the last of the terrace houses to Merton High Street complete, one can scarcely believe their growth, but having good sunlight must be a contribution to this. 2, the Abbey Road chicane causes much frustration and speed humps noise when scaffolding lorries etc pass over them. 3, High Path, agreed a quietway would be better, at least from Meretune Way, and narrowing at that point if areas agreed for development, but the proposals for a School and indications from FutureMerton is that this is NOT desired by them, I beg to disagree. I would like light controlled junction at Meretune way, with right turn permitted, but that will encourage rat-running from Merton High Street via Abbey and Pincott Roads, which are required as entrance, and exist, to the high path area from the north.

4 Misnamed, means Morden Road, see older pictures and note diminution of quality from previous planning errors? By Merton Council. 5 Pincott Road, seems to work OK in its present state and has for the last 55 plus years. 6 Many garages used as storage, even from persons at all saints estate where houses there built too small. Otherwise needed for our area to have the safe storage of vehicles and excess of necessities of oils, additives, bicycles, ideally garages should be integrated into houses, and they were part of the promise of moving from our original houses around the area to the new built estate for us, one supposes they are a better need than the pigeon-lofts in the pictured space that were taken away from us in 1963. Page 46 better base activity around the Tower Blocks we have asked for, but CHMP unwilling to progress forward ideas for social interaction and community purposes. Page 48, Photo and para 3, it is nice for someone to agree with me after 51 years, although there is step-free access from High Path side walkway, the steps are a pain, and dangerous and should have been replaced, or preferably not built in the first place. Para 5/Pic 5 The wonderful bear pit, of course its in the wrong place, alternatives would have been nice to see before wasting money building in this way. 6- one can walk out the front door with a small trowel, it can be done but generally was discouraged by MCHD. Landscape, Hayward Close trees probably planted around 1980, not from 1950s, disliked by some as branches shed over leaves and grass. 2 not mentioned, but one would have built full length long block east-west, although how to locate bin stores and sheds is beyond my architectural expertise. 3 the estate was rather proud of this little LEAF funded area, but maintenance needed as with any landscaping to deal with weeds around the decorative ironmongery, which has seating opposite, not pictured.

Conclusions, 3 – I would not worry about cohesive character – good randomness is a lovely British Trait. 7 Trees in Norfolk House, at ends of the 1980s driveways and to Deburgh House have been omitted, but Birches are a real invasive species, seeding too greatly and easily, Plane trees are now suffering in Eastern UK from fungal die-back, which is worrying.

Review Conclusions – Misleading picture, this is Rodney Place, not in the Estate Plan Area – this is a problem with the estate plan cover sheet pictures, they are not of the estate, but of areas outside the plan area ( which I have argued should have been included ).

BIL 12. The ? To housing requirements must surely change and affordable housing be proritised subject to good sized rooms and sufficient bedrooms for families. 5 Character, trying to make the east of Pincott Road look like West of is not desirable, monoculture should be avoided, the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s style do meld well without feeling sufficiently wrong. 8 See preceeding notes for means to sign and route better. 9, oddly Nelson Grove Road has less trouble with fast moving traffic under normal circumstances than Abbey Road does. 10, requests for garages have been unresponded to, possible lack of marketing, people may think they are not spare. Street parking persons tend to be 50/50 Commuter / business employees. 11 this is over-eggd, have people reasonably made these comments, I have seen worse in London, and elsewhere. 12. Cycles tend to be in the resident store sheds (I can give proof of this, or garages ). One disagrees overall with the final conclusion.
Socio-economic analysis considerations

Report is probably out of date.

Sustainable development may be good in developing redundant brownfield sites, but for where people are living in good homes the presumption in favour of development has to be questioned, mostly with embedded CO2, other pollutants in demolition and new build and lack of re-use of materials the question of what is truly sustainable has to be interrogated. Costs of refurbishment can be compared to the likes of expenditure calculated for the likes of Buckingham Palace, or the Houses of Westminster, both of which have age related problems, and the occupation of useful space for low level purposes may be compared with the attitude to social housing. If opportunities for home ownership were to be widened then the cut off of dates on CHMP offer would not apply, more private owners would have added to the overall percentage of those desiring to take control of their own lives, and being able to afford to do so. 234 it is not the number of new homes that is important, but that they are of the right type and size for families, and without leaving behind persons with disabilities, including mental illness, and older persons – and their families. The logic of this for the plan areas as a whole is that all properties must be fully accessible, see my note and comment to the Ravensbury Planning Application. It terms of High Path Estate Plan, the predominance for housing is agreed with, with Community Facilities, retail, office and health and fitness provision along Morden Road and Merton High Street is agreed with, one would support light industry and warehousing along High Path, although the Nelson Grove Road Garages site could be good for educational purposes if this is desired for the SW19 area. 321 – no one as such lives on wimbledon park/common or Mitcham common, St Helier estate has wide roads giving a low dwellings and population density. 328 persons in work possibly slewed by social housing provision for single mothers not working. 3210 low income needs clearer reasoning, mostly persons with needs have been allocated into social housing, and the amount of retired & disabled persons is probably under reported 3216 depends on reasons for unemployment, 3220 pension credit could actually make people better off with triggers to other benefits and services. 3222 rather depends on type and size of houses selling, unrepresentative as Zone 3 cheaper normally to travel from than Zone 4/5 of Morden and Mitcham areas. 3225 agreed. 3228 clearly reducing garages will increase parking stress, some has come from the new developments in Nelson Grove Road. 3229, planning permission sought for phase 1A contradicts this. 3312, is this calculation taking account of new build ongoing in Christchurch Road and Western Road, there is real danger of overloading Primary Schools local at the level of units planned to increase by. No clear assessment of actual secondary school places needed. 3319 Plans to reduce two of the youth services, one has already been served notice to quit. Community Hall at Merton Hall Kingston Road is being converted to church, the small replacement on high path pincott road is too small and only temporary. 414 If there is overcrowding the correct size of housing unit must be brought forward clearly in the plan. 4110 Employment in construction will not be long term and almost certain to be a skills mis-match. Has not new homes bonus been abolished? 521 Good, spacious homes where children can learn and study to apprenticship level are welcome, but the designs provided by Scheme Developer appear not to meet this criteria. Although new commercial areas are welcome, at the same time former shop and office units in the vicinity are being turned into residential units. Will the commercial provision be affordable, and of the correct type to enable a full range of economic activity?

http://www.merton.gov.uk/high_path_chmp_housing_needs.pdf
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Housing needs

11 Circle as housing provider. We are worried on reduction in local democracy and over-sight, and the effective
privatisation indicated in Housing Bill and enactments. There is little teeth in the bodies charged with ensuring good compliance of registered housing providers. I would agree there is need to manage housing stock and ensure it remains good and fit for purpose, but we have need to ensure that residents are treated with the upmost respect as clients, who often have difficulties, and sometimes are frustrated at the lack of good communication from their housing provider. 21 Demographics appear to indicate older persons dying off or moving away, and possibly older middle-aged selling up and moving to retirement areas, many of mothers friends have been in this situation. Although there remain 8 households, maybe a few more, that I know of, that are on the estate now that were here in at the time the relevant blocks were first constructed in the 1960s, there are more persons moved from all saints in the late 1970s that remain in their homes at the time of writing. Ethnic spread has increased particularily from older, disabled asian persons, this may represent lack of alternative public sector accommodation elsewhere in the borough.

213 If one houses lower income groups in social housing then one should not be surprised when statistics show this/217 Although a high proportion of 1 and 2 bed properties the 2 bed in particular can function as, and can have room sizes larger than many 3 bed houses, including in nearby places like Streatham Vale or North Cheam. It is good to note that we have affordable accommodation at present, this should be built on and expanded. Single Persons under age 35 are currently being discriminated against, these are the largest cohort of people with problems of homelessness that we see at Faith In Action project in Kingston Road. For housing sizes it is important that three and four bedroom properties are of full size bedrooms and lounge sizes not compromised by intrusion of kitchens or utility areas. Overall the method of housing needs survey is robust, but to exclude persons whom can afford market purchase to that tenure is a dangerous thing if future circumstances, including interest rate robustness tests, change. I will be participating in the actual needs of current household to the Scheme Developer in due course.

Case for regeneration Analysis and Comments

CHMP muddling of housing provision and social manipulation is a problem when intrusion into household life and data protection issues arise. There is also mis-communication on health, financial inclusion and job sourcing initiatives, which are not as effective as they could be, in part this is as a result of the lack of an estate office where all key officers are contactable face to face. 19 the areas of consideration are of interest and the presence of this work in public domain would be welcome. The suspicion is High Path has been chosen as a cash-cow rather than to coherently providing the true housing need at the affordable level in High Path area. For Ravensbury the justification seems to be that 'defective properties' cannot be borrowed against, rather than seeking to abate the mostly insulation issues with the type of sizeable buildings that there are there. External Doors and windows. Nil social housing units now have single-glazed crittal or similar windows. I am not certain of a true UPVC window lifespan. 227 Sizes exclude garages .227 I calculate for Norfolk House the two bedroom has 74msq of usable floorspace excluding balcony. There is no consideration of extenal clothes drying areas. 237 CHMP appear to have lost the MCHD asbestos register. 34 Does not square with demolition of Marsh Court while new build adjacent is being inhabited. Main blocks that could be retained are the houses in Pincott Road and Hillborough Close and Norfolk House ( the need for good floorcoverings and underlay is noted where there is some external exposed concrete edge beams. 1980 houses appear in good condition and appear privately owned, these are unlikely to be relinquished at anything less than a good private sale value. 416 Mayor indicated that at least 50% of uplift of floorspace be also affordable housing, as well as maintaining present affordable floorspace. I would contend that housing bought under right to be be counted as affordable, as we either own outright, or have affordable mortgages on our existing properties. 417 agreed, but that the context of within borough or on estate area has not been challenged and I have already considered the question of human rights act and property valuation, compensation, and ideally suitable replacement property. 418 agreed, but does not seem to be happening in Scheme Developer proposals. 427 but policy is potentially changing in face of meaningful resistance to the ram-roading through of inappropriate that fails to meaningfully considers residents views. 526 This was not made wholly clear at on-site meetings and proposals being a vague maybe, and it appears not be desired by residents of the wider area. 63 This is a reversal of planning thought of the 1960s, as I have stated my great-grandmother in 1925 had retail premises on the south side of merton high street and this opportunity has been much missed for the last 30 years. 64 unlikely many visitors from wider for retail offerings. 639 please give incremental savings for each stage, claims elsewhere on CHP systems savings have been proven to be illusory and residents tied into single heating system and supplier. PV can be retro-fitted. PV systems were not shown at meetings with residents. Section 7 the costs are somewhat not split out into what would be needed for future maintenance of new build compared with existing. 8.10 One cannot recall this meeting at all, the numbers appear slewed compared to Merton Council Feedback, please check the questions asked by CHMP and where these people residents? 815 Re separate kitchens, This appears to have been consistently ignored by the Scheme Developer, no wonder we are frustrated. 817 We now have tower blocks proposed around South Wimbledon Tube Station. 827 attendees actually mean about 40persons, some from off the estate from 600 properties supported
the general proposals, hardly ringing endorsements. Problem is I know of persons whom have not attended these events whom are not in favour of the proposals overall, at least without significant caveats. Full attendee detail responses at all events should be provided, not just the selection that serves CHMP's desires. Detailed questions appear not to have been referenced, nor my feedback on Newman Francis' organised trip to Stockwell Park Estate.

Visual impact study (added November 2016)

This would help as a document if the wording were actually readable, it is very small. Context para 5 is biased, detrimental and a leading comment. Para 11 Some referenced documents said over-permeable, not lack of permeability. [ It should be noted at the time High Path initially developed, Meretune Way did not exist ), The trading estate to the west at The Path was a mix of terrace housing along Morden Road similar to that remaining south of The Path, and a large single use industrial site – Foster Transformers. There was the railway line and on the East of Morden Road the largest toy-factory in the world — Lines Bros Tri-Ang , Pedigree Prams and Frog Model Aircraft Works with associated staff facilities including running track and sports ground to the east. At Merton Abbey Mills Merton Fabric Printers – Littlers – were still in production, there was light industry in Station Road under present Meretune Way Alignment, and New Merton Board Mills were still in production, and Merton High Street had south side commercial units all in occupation and trade. It has only been the gradual economic changes from oil crises onwards that has changed the characteristics around High Path estate making it look outdated. 31 So what, beauty indeed in beholders eyes. 32 biased they have a charm in the striping visually, compared to what is proposed for around South Wimbledon Station 33 negative bias to the current built form. 34 Disagree, I rather like the walk back down Victory Road from exercise class or down Nelson Road if walking back from Wimbledon Town Centre or Trinity Church. The view was quite happy from MMUDC when constructed of towers, but of course much of merton high street had 2 storey frontages directly on thereto which would have broken view up.

Basically, for the Estate Plan Purpose, this study has little value, as it fails to generate the proposed views as would appear from the Scheme Developer's proposals.
Case for regeneration (updated – October 2016).

This overall shows the mental muddle that the documents for planning that come to us. Are we planning for the external realm, the type of economic activity type specified in the planning system, for the external facings of buildings, or perhaps what is more key to residents, the internal layout and method of construction of the proposed alternate dwellings to the existing? So a short review of what the scheme developer, CHMP state therein.

Before I review, let me return to some of my key themes of protection. While the planning policies themselves appear noble, the slavish use of them can act against the best interests of some residents, and this solely relates to the lottery of allocation they may have had in the past, or now, to reside one or other of the different dwelling types identified. The preparers and summarisers of the raw information have selected items and failed to consider alternatives, and additionally have where some conclusions been drawn not evidence the steps to make those conclusions. This is most apparent in the thermal performance of the building types, where no specific Mu values have been declared, no external wall length specified, including build outs from main structures to accommodate additional bedrooms, W.C.s etc where wall length in new properties appears shortened, leading to the cost reduction estimate for space heating to have no audit trail shown between proposed accommodation method of build and that of the present accommodation, indeed the costs may be for an upper floor under a flat, uninsulated, roof, and that of a middle storey property where part of the flat's external wall is within the buildings external wall by means of corridor or similar. This implies choices being made for us without full presentation of the facts and alternatives, that our external window views as a consequence are being removed, or no external access from upper floors from doorways. The other problem is rooms in that the usable circulating, habitable, utility and storage space being less than existing, this is exemplified for example by a Bathroom that may, for example be currently 3.5m x 2.4m = 8.4m². The alternative may be 2.9mx2.9m to increase circulation space for a wheelchair for example = 8.41m², but the loss of 600mm on two walls loses some of the store space for linen baskets, towels, baby baths hanging on wall for example, a loss of usable space. This is why I have requested that the protection of minimum wall running lengths, due allowance for loss of wallspace lost to door returns, other designs can be the wall to door hinge distance, where the use behind door openings can be used for wall art, or small furniture eg fold up tables when not in use, too much space makes the rest of room less usable, too little loses this fractional store space, in our own flat, which other types do not have, is a thicker, loadbearing wall, which has part lintel in it, giving a block thick 2ft wide opening, this acts like a small cupboard space, and present day metal stud dryline walls loose this space if not planned into from existing. By not providing detailed comparative dimensions of all existing flat types these small adjustments may not be noted and sub-optimal internal arrangements missed by supposed professionals. I have submitted written questions to Merton Council and remain unhappy that they are unwilling, despite local councillors indicating otherwise, to commit, via the planning process, that there will be condition by schedule of no loss of space in new replacement properties compared to existing.

This also applies to the end to have properly separated Kitchens.

Detail Analysis / Comments where I diverge from the Savills 44 page report Oct 2016

13 As does on street parking with CPZ in Abbey Road for Lovell House Residents. There is also on street parking within the estate on MC adopted roads

15 Community Centre not over-used by Local Community, is used by various groups from around the borough. There are significant plans to build on the South Side of High Path a secondary school of up to 1100 pupils with loss of community facility as it now is causing user groups in alternative locations to be given notice to quit. This also applies to the re-location of the Church congregation and facilities to other community use area in the borough, This lack of joined up planning and poor site for the secondary school could suggest the High Path Garages and Lamp Works site could be better used for the secondary school on an alternative orientation.

16 Some at other levels of CHMP would prefer to be just a housing supplier and the potential privatisation in Housing Bill causes concern that social engineering functions may be lost or changed. If 'life-chances' are to be enhanced then bedrooms must be spacious for study and away from family distractions.

110 = we can make more money

111= poor quality, without some numbers as desired is a little subjective, although the lack of step free access in existing is a concern it is noteworthy that CHMP in Ravensbury Phase1 Kickstarter have excluded providing lift-
access to new 4 storey blocks on grounds of cost and service charges being excessive. CHMP talk two ways to suit themselves

117 Mu values and comparative flat/house floorplans for all existing layouts are required.

21 In part decline from denials in past by MC that things were defective, in others cost-effective timely repairs not done. Example is the renewal of windows to Norfolk House where access scaffolding was put up, as has been (by different company) inspection access towers for roof, tile and flashing repair and renewal (including mis-diagnosing and mis-specifying some work and duplicating work), and meanwhile barge, facia and soffit boards need repair and proper paintwork, this could easily be done at same time, but was not, this is inefficiency and lack of communication, evidence by meetings with Merton Council reported on council communities website where there is a long list of promises and that 'things' will improve, then there is changes of management, of personnel, and the whole cycle starts again with basic work not done in timely manner.

29 Housing targets, depend on the contentious issue of inward migration and population growth within London, there are possibilities to encourage under-populated parts of England which would benefit from enterprise to grow in those areas of NE England for example.

212 But not the main alternatives of different external designs, which would be nice rather than the bland brick monotypes proposed.

225 'Low' needs specifying in technical values. Crittal = 3 all leasehold/freehold +2 unimportant common parts. Our UPVC windows have lasted 25 years so far, maintenance would generally be handles and lock mechanisms, and would last as long if in new buildings. This paragraph shows that CHMP do not have much clue in one part of what is happening / has happened elsewhere, eg the kitchen renewals where recent void premises have been done over the last 13 months.

226 Problem is that an 4x2 m space = 8msq may be more useful than a 3x3m space =9msq depending on circumstances. 2 bed house, shows the current good size the existing 2 beds have – something we have been arguing about since day 1 ( uncertain of Stane Close sizes these are probably smaller ). Our 2 bed flat is probably in excess of 70msq.

228 not really worried about balcony- falls and h&s risk must be in place. Gardens nice by have a maintenance premium whether public or private gardens. Current Merton Council iVerde contractor agreement would need to be confirmed for any new public space as this cost should not fall on estate service charge payers.

230 this looks as a worse-case scenario, we have seen that old, and in poor condition do not correlate in the way the sentence implies. Tenant abuse and mis-use I have seen in 3 and 4 year old properties in London and Sutton this past year. Mould related much to the crittal installation, which have been changed out and improved. Sound problems have been noted in Circle New Build elsewhere in London. 231 'low' needs specifying in numeric assessment. 237 there should be full asbestos register from pre-transfer date.

34 We have shown that houses in Pincott Road (which have only a park proposed for their footprint, leaving the Trafalgar Public House Marooned in a sea of greem) the majority of which are Freeholder occupied, and Flats at Norfolk House are considerably better condition, and that houses in Hayward, Dowman and Doel closes in their modern size and design and location are desired by their freeholder owners and that the community at Will Miles Court do not wish to be up-rooted, their being no area dedicated to their needs seemingly on the new plans.

43 argueably written to enforce in rural areas where marginal landspace has been undeveloped in past years.

45 We have a mix of housing already!

410 there is the problem of Zone 4/5 dwellers having access to garages on their land (including Circle Employees and Agents) imposing their pollution on us Zone 3 dwellers, who are being denied the use of our long established land and lifestyle for secure parking with minor storage space (we have the likes of bicycles, bulk buy kitchen dry goods for example in our garages living with our classic and daily use cars).

411 equivalent floorspace must be defined as including no less running wall length or door aperture width including
store space, and garages where part of residence, and for natural justice garages where rented by occupant of estate and considered as part of their land occupation.

413 So not too high along high street and morden road, reflecting local character.
415 OK you can work that one out, we are relatively balanced as things stand with mix of rents, private tenants and leaseholders and freeholders.
416 The plan area should incorporate under-size new build, particularly that which has wrongly accessed and built amenity and waste disposal areas for bringing forth good design within the former Nelson's Fields Area. Due retention of older parts of the area cul-de-sac form into Rodney Place should be encouraged.
417 But makes no mention of other grant funding that may be available. High Path should not be used to finance developments in other parts of Merton where this deprives utility, space and views from residents of High Path and immediately adjoining areas.
418 Agreed, particularly around South Wimbledon Tube Station. Taller buildings are best on the footprints of the existing tower blocks if it is desired to replace them at this present moment.
421 Side of Morden Road looks pretty good as is, and has been since the 1950s.
422 The area of say Morden, there is general acceptance of this policy, less so and under question for South Wimbledon particularly where older buildings, including Rose Cottage, are under threat, and difficult to resolve if sub station and Kilkenny Tavern are to be retained in their present format. Inappropriate non matching development has already been passed at Milner Road which dis-respects listed adjoining building and 1920s terraces, we have little trust in the Masterplanning of Merton Council to define good classic external fabric finishes that match existing good architecture.
424 statement really of the (thankfully) obvious
429 Some responses unreadable
516 Because many have illnesses or home care responsibilities and cannot participate, in part the social nature of housing puts such persons into the type of accommodation so designed to house them surely?
522 Please come and see the prices of the cafes in the area, they are not cheap as the used to be at one time, designer delis are us is the motto of the north side of merton high street (Though the tube station bacon rolls sell out quickly each day)
524 COULD, we have had these promises in the past with little of benefit actually occurring.
525 Or maybe not, as some commute and spend in inner London.
526 To put commercial back along Merton High Street seems to need to lose either existing houses, or the existing London Plane Trees.
527 Less disruption if works done to voids on ongoing process generally.
528 Problem is this conclusion could be pasted into most areas of Merton, including say, the east of Merton Park, where there is some vacant space and 80s built housing, area around tramstop could be intensified if desired.
63 We are integrated well, building frontages to Merton High Street would reverse the 1970s changes designed to accommodate residents from All Saints area. As long as the worse excess of similar designs to Tooting High Street at Blackshaw Road Area, the proposals are not unwelcome if commercial units are truly affordable and ready for occupation before businesses that use garages in High Path are requested to relinquish garage space they rent.
613 etc, already discussed
619 Generally I would not worry, but I would have liked in the past Houses build to behind garages in High Path and Nelson Grove Road and frustrated with Merton Council HD who said it was not possible.
624 Our garages were so much nicer when we had double opening wooden doors, becoming small man-caves with boat builders and general wood and metal work being done by the light and warmth of hurricane lamps we had our own community, the loss of internal space when new doors fitted has always been missed.
626 Can we have the duck pond back on the grass area?
629 Disagree, unless one wants to dismiss the likes of the GPO tower in London on similar argument. We have our own elongated east-west grid and the tower blocks are not displeasing in the constrasting bands from visual view,
the ground level hurricane winds are another matter and indeed apparent pointless mini-steps are unliked.

630 Subjective it seems not too bad to some places.

631 Disagree with conclusions, but hope for some postitive changes for the future.

640 well get on and do it I have only requested this for three years.

641 unproven

643 marginal steps analysis should be shown

It is considered given the heating issues of the Northern Line some geo-thermal and heat sink from the tube line could provide additional inputs to heating plant particularly for commercial units.

656 Could be incorporated without demolition of whole existing estate.

73 Already shown costs have been incorrectly calculated. Already commented that high path should not be from residential changes be a subsidy to other places in the borough as such, particularly where those residents are not in favour of build change at the present moment.

73 Table presumably assumes that the unwanted high flatted mansions around South Wimbledon Tube are built. This should not be included or be a given and that partial new build options should be investigated.

834 I will forward my photos of the 1 bed flat later

835 We believe that the event responses have been manipulated by CHMP, you should ask for all paperwork handed in since ideas first mooted and from all events and Merton Council Plan responses to satisfy that the consultation in two-way means is robust. Most persons I have spoken or overheard to have been unhappy with the CHMP proposals for High Path, with some understandable exceptions as they have flats that have not been modernised as promised and live in accommodation that is less good than our part of the estate. CHMP also publicised an event which then was cancelled without informing us (I have dates somewhere)
All Statutory responses

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

December 2016 – February 2017
3 February 2017

Future Merton
London Borough of Merton
12th Floor Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX

Dear Sir / Madam

Submission Draft Estates Local Plan Consultation
Representations made on behalf of Latimer Developments Limited

Further to the issue of the ‘Submission Draft Estates Local Plan – Stage 3 Consultation (December 2016 – February 2017) we write to make formal representations to the consultation on behalf of Latimer Developments Limited (Latimer).

Circle Housing Merton Priory and Latimer Developments Limited

The Submission Draft Estates Local Plan (ELP) refers to Circle Housing Merton Priory (CHMP) as the body to which the three estates were transferred to. Merton Priory Homes (which trades as Circle Housing Merton Priory) was formed in 2010 as a result of the transfer of stock from Merton Council and at that time became a subsidiary within the Circle Housing Group. Circle Housing Merton Priory owns and manages around 9,500 homes across Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham including the Eastfields, High Path and Ravensbury estates.

In November 2016 the Circle Housing Group merged with the Affinity Sutton Group (through a merger of the two parent companies, Circle Anglia Limited and Affinity Sutton Group Limited) to become Clarion Housing Group. Clarion Housing Group is the largest housing group in the country with over 125,000 homes. The merged organisation comprises the parent company, Clarion Housing Group Limited, a number of charitable housing associations, including Circle Housing Merton Priory, a charitable foundation and a commercial company called Latimer Developments Limited.

As part of the Merton Regeneration Project, Latimer and Circle Housing Merton Priory plan to regenerate the Eastfields, High Path and Ravensbury estates.

Overview

Latimer welcomes the Council’s support for regeneration and intensification of the estates as set out in the Draft Local Plan and for the broad changes and alterations made since the Stage 2 Consultation.
Latimer (and Savills as their planning agent) also request to participate in the examination hearings on Merton’s ELP and to be notified when the document is adopted.

As you will be aware, Latimer is at an advanced stage of preparation of the outline planning applications for the three estates and it is anticipated that these will be submitted prior to the examination hearings.

Following a thorough review of the latest draft ELP, we have a number of minor comments and suggested amendments that we discuss in the following sections.

**Comprehensive Regeneration**

Latimer has undertaken an extensive feasibility and discounting exercise in selecting these three Estates for regeneration. Latimer has considered a number of alternative options, such as meeting Decent Homes Standards only, as set out in the Case for Regeneration and after extensive assessment recognises that the full regeneration of High Path and Eastfields and the partial regeneration of Ravensbury presents the greatest opportunity to realise significant physical, social, economic and environmental benefits for not only the Estates but the wider Borough. Latimer is therefore supportive of the Council for bringing forward the DPD to aid the comprehensive regeneration of each of the Estates.

The DPD at paragraph 2.21 refers to “comprehensive regeneration”. Whilst Latimer is committed to the delivery of all three schemes, in planning terms planning permission could be granted for them individually. As such it would be helpful if the DPD recognised that the schemes are not mutually dependable and that they could therefore be granted planning permission separately should this be required.

**Development Plan**

The draft ELP will form part of the development plan and as such it is important to make it clearer, that any planning application must have regard to the whole development plan, including The London Plan (2016), the Merton Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD, in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is an important legislative context that should be included within the DPD. This is currently not clear in paragraph 2.8 of the draft ELP.

**Large Sites and Surrounding Character**

As we stated in our previous representations, the London Plan Policy 3.7 identifies that large sites (measuring 5ha or more) are able to create their own distinct character and support higher densities. This is further supported within the GLA Housing SPG paragraph 1.3.35 which refers to sites over 2ha being a large site and therefore able to create their own character and define their own setting. Whilst it is recognised that development proposals should integrate with the wider area, as each of the estates are large sites, the policies should provide flexibility for the development proposals to create their own distinct character. Eastfields and High Path are large sites as defined by London Plan Policy 3.7 and all three sites are large sites as defined in the Housing SPG. It is therefore considered appropriate for this to be recognised and referred to throughout the DPD.
The draft ELP frequently refers to the ‘suburban setting’ in which the Eastfields and Ravensbury estates are situated. Given that they are large sites which can create their own character whilst integrating with the surrounding area, this should be made clearer. Furthermore, it would be prudent for the draft ELP to replace the definitions of both urban and suburban within the glossary to those that are set out within the London Plan Table 3.2. This would ensure conformity with the London Plan.

The London Plan describes suburban sites as ‘areas with predominantly lower density development such as, for example, detached and semi-detached housing, predominantly residential, small building footprints and typically buildings of two to three storeys’. Whereas an urban area is classified as ‘areas with predominantly dense development such as, for example, terraced houses, mansion blocks, a mix of different uses, medium building footprints and typically buildings of two to four storeys, located within 800 metres walking distance of a District Centre, or along main arterial routes’. Taking these definitions into account, alongside the size of the sites we do not regard it appropriate to describe the estates as suburban.

Additionally, the Design Requirements section (para 4.5) notes that ‘A general approach to architectural design should be designed which allows different phases of development to have their own character’. As noted above, the sites are large enough to accommodate different character areas which could be delivered as a single phase or over a series of phases. The phasing will be influenced by a number of matters, including but not limited to: construction logistics, decanting strategy, viability; therefore, there may be circumstances where a single phase could contain parts of a number of character areas which will be influenced by the design led character areas.

**Conflict Between Policies and Inconsistencies**

The design teams have undertaken an extensive review of the draft ELP and wider Development Plan and have developed outline masterplan proposals on the basis of detailed urban design analysis. We are broadly supportive of the changes the Council has made to rectify the conflicts between policies in the previous draft. Notwithstanding this, we have identified the following areas where amendments should be made:

- Policies EP H7, EP E7, EP R7 contain restrictive landscape requirements which do not align with the requirements contained under other policies. For example, Policy EP H7 ‘Landscape’ requires a number of mature trees to be retained in the playground to the north of the ‘Marsh Court’ block which is in direct contradiction with the urban design requirements for a building to be located fronting Pincott Road. We suggest therefore that Policies EP H7, EP E7 and EP R7 should read that where possible, existing trees will be retained, however retention should be based upon a robust arboriculture and urban design analysis in line with Policy 7.21 of the London Plan.

- In accordance with national policy there is no requirement for the Exception Test to be undertaken for Eastfields and High Path. Reference to this should be removed from the justification sections for Policies EP E6 and EP H6.
The PTAL rating at High Path varies across the site from between 4 and 6a. Eastfields and Ravensbury also have a PTAL rating of up to 3, and at Eastfields there is potential for this to improve through an increase in Thameslink services. These more accurate PTAL ratings could be recognised in the draft Local Plan rather than the blanket figure currently set out for each estate.

The High Path red line plan does not include St John’s Hall which is within the forthcoming outline application boundary for the estate regeneration. It is recognised that the red line boundary for the applications can differ to those included in the DPD. However, for completeness we have provided an updated Plan for High Path at Appendix 1 which we would encourage the Council to utilise.

Prescriptive Policies

Paragraph 2.5 of the draft ELP introduces the plan as a ‘wholly design-led’ document and is stated as being ‘pitched at a high level; [with] specific building details will be developed by applicants such as CHMP and determined by the council through the planning application process’. This general approach is supported. However, this approach has not always been followed through in the policies and supporting text of the draft Plan.

We welcome the increased flexibility in the draft ELP since the Stage 2 Consultation. However, there remain a few policies which are considered overly prescriptive. Any planning application for the regeneration of the Estates would have to be determined in accordance with the whole development plan, and not just the policies within the ELP. The ELP should not therefore be applied mechanistically without regard to other Development Plan policies, and this could be made clearer within the DPD wording.

Furthermore, as already noted, these are all large sites capable of creating their own character; therefore, the ELP should provide the flexibility required to allow this. Paragraph 59 of the NPPF, states that ‘design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail’. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (ref: 12-010-20140306) also states that Local Plans “…should concentrate on the critical issues facing the area – including its development needs – and the strategy and opportunities for addressing them, paying careful attention to both deliverability and viability.” Further, given that the regeneration of the Estates will be delivered over a number of years it is considered entirely appropriate that flexibility should be built into the ELP to allow development proposals to respond to changing circumstances in order to create successful places. This approach would be entirely consistent with the NPPF and the PPG.

We support the increased flexibility in the draft policies; however set out below are a few examples of where additional flexibility could be incorporated:

- Townscape - Policy EP H1 (b) states that ‘Streets must be designed to allow for clear unobstructed views along the whole length of the street particularly along Pincott Road and Nelson Grove’. As highlighted within our previous representations, the PPG (Reference ID: 26-008-20140306) notes that ‘Development proposals should promote accessibility and safe local
routes by making places that connect appropriately with each other and are easy to move through...for this reason streets should be designed to be functional and accessible for all, to be safe and attractive public spaces and not just respond to engineering considerations. They should reflect urban design qualities as well as traffic management considerations and should be designed to accommodate and balance a locally appropriate mix of movement and place based activities’. There are design and existing utilities constraints which will impact on the ability to provide a straight street through the site. Staggered streets create character and can reduce vehicular speeding. As such, this policy should allow for flexibility in how the central street is designed.

- **Street Network** - Policy EP H2 (b) provides prescriptive policy as to the street network to be retained and altered. Following the PPG guidance as noted above, providing a junction from Nelson Grove onto Morden Road may have traffic impact and movement issues, including being too close to the Merton High Street signalised junction. It would require all traffic to instead route through the masterplan site. As such, this policy could be amended to allow highways proposals to be developed at application stage through consultation with the relevant highways authorities.

- **Movement and Access** - Policy EP H3(c) refers to including measures to reduce the physical barrier of Morden Road. It is suggested this is amended to refer to “where possible” to take account of this being outside of the site boundary and proposals to be developed in conjunction with the relevant highways authorities.

- **Open Space** – Policies EP E5 (d), H5 (c) and R5 (d) state that ‘All new houses must have gardens that meet or exceed current space standards’. This blanket approach is too restrictive and does not take into account the nature of various styles of properties. It is common for both mews and town house properties to have smaller garden spaces, reflecting their historic design. As such, the policy could incorporate greater flexibility to reflect the various characteristics of different housing types and character areas.

- **Environmental Protection** – Policy EP H6 refers to investigating the potential air quality benefits of a CHP on existing buildings outside the High Path estate. It is considered unreasonable and unfeasible for an air quality assessment to consider the potential benefits to existing buildings which are outside the control of the applicant and the application site. In addition, Policy EP E6 refers to the existing culverted watercourse, which as set out in our earlier representations, has not been identified by extensive technical surveys. As such reference to this should be removed or evidence provided by the Council to demonstrate the existence of the watercourse.

- **Landscaping** – Policies EP H7, E7 and R7 each request that some existing trees on site should be retained. As previously mentioned some of these requirements are in direct conflict with other policies contained within the draft ELP. Furthermore, their restrictive nature limits the design-led process which the Council supports. The policy should therefore note that “where possible” existing trees will be retained; however retention should be based on a robust arboriculture and urban design analysis. This addition would reflect the wording contained within the High Path ‘Issues and Opportunities: Good quality landscaping and vegetation’ section (Page 102) which incorporates the statement ‘unless there are other compelling reasons that provide benefits to outweigh this’. It is also noted that Policy EP R7 requires the widening and enhancement of the
entrance to Ravensbury Park. This Policy should suggest the investigation of such measures only and be subject to feasibility.

- **Design Requirements** (Pg 174 – 179) – This section of the draft ELP provides ‘detailed guidance to applicants that they will be expected to focus on in more detail to demonstrate that the Vision, Urban Design Principles and Site-Specific Policies of the Plan can be delivered’. The section continues to refer to the design principles as guidance throughout this section. The title ‘Design Requirements’ thereby gives the impression of strict requirements and as such the section could be more suitably titled ‘Design Guidance’ to allow the masterplan proposals to respond accordingly. As set out previously, the draft ELP could also recognise that the level of detail to be provided with applications should be commensurate to the type and nature of the application i.e. an outline application will have less detail than a full application.

- **Design Requirements** – This section makes reference to providing communal bin stores for refuse storage. This could be amended to allow other solutions to be considered, for example Underground Refuse Systems, which will be subject to agreement with the Council’s waste team.

- Whilst the drawings provided within the draft ELP provide helpful imagery as to the potential opportunities of the estates, these should not be regarded as rigid design requirements and therefore a statement noting that the drawings are for indicative purposes only could be added.

### Planning Application Specialist Document Requirements

The draft ELP identifies a number of required documents to be submitted as part of a planning application on each Estate. An example of this is Policy EP E6 ‘Environmental Protection’ where section (k) states that ‘Development proposals must be accompanied by a working method statement and construction logistics plan’. The level of detail to be submitted as part of a planning application should be commensurate to the type and nature of the application. Additionally, policy requirements should not be so onerous as to require details not normally required for planning application validation purposes. Taking account of this, planning conditions should be used in which to secure the further details of outline planning applications for the three estates. This is acknowledged in the latter parts of the draft Plan; however, is not clear in some earlier policies.

### Intensification Areas

Policy 2.13 of the London Plan identifies South Wimbledon / Colliers Wood as an Intensification Area. High Path is within this Intensification Area and this should be acknowledged within the Estates Local Plan. Further, it could also be recognised that London Plan (paragraph 2.59) identifies that higher densities can be supported in Intensification Areas.

### Financial Viability

Part 05 (Delivery, Implementation and Monitoring) Paragraph 5.4 states that ‘CHMP have committed to an open book accounting process to facilitate the understanding of the impact on residents and council services’ with regards to financial viability. Latimer would like to confirm that they are committed to an
open book accounting process with the Council; however it would not be appropriate for this to be made available in the public domain due to commercially sensitive information.

Summary

The Council’s support for the regeneration and intensification of the three Estates is welcomed, and the alterations made to date from previous consultations are broadly supported. There are however some remaining concerns with the draft ELP, highlighted in detail above. Latimer welcomes the opportunity to discuss these concerns with the Council in order to ensure flexibility within the policies can be achieved.

Latimer reserve the right to submit additional representations to those set out, having regard to the detailed planning, design, technical and viability analysis that they are undertaking as part of the preparation of the masterplans for the three estates.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Catherine Bruce on 020 3320 8286 / cbruce@savills.com. We look forward to receiving convenient dates to meet to discuss the evolving DPD.

Yours faithfully

pp. Jane Barnett
Director
Dear Sir/Madam,

Merton Estates Local Plan pre-submission publication

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above. Having been involved in the previous consultations, we are satisfied that most of our comments have been incorporated in the Merton’s Estates Local Plan pre-submission publication.

Overall the pre-submission publication appears to be founded on robust and credible evidence base. The Environment Agency notes that the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal have been reflected in the document and used to inform the policies.

It is clear that flood risk is a consideration that has been taken into account in the preparation of the plan. We certainly welcome that the preferred options for the redevelopment of the estates are seeking to ensure that flood risk elsewhere is not increased, ways to reduced flood risk are being sought and any opportunities to make space for water are being considered.

The proximity of the Ravensbury Estate to the river Wandle and Ravensbury Park mean that there are good opportunities to restore the river Wandle through the park or undertake enhancements to improve the condition of the river as part of major redevelopment adjacent to it. Currently, the river is impounded and subject to a number of problems such as midges which have been problematic on a yearly basis. Redevelopment of the area provides an opportunity to improve the park and consider river restoration and enhancement to create a better functioning river and river corridor. This is recognised on paragraph 3.282, which we welcome.

Since we last made comment on the Estates Plan, the legislation for permitting works on watercourses has changed. Flood Defence Consents have been superseded by Flood Risk Activity Permits and now fall under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Prior permission is still required for works in, over or under a main river or within 8m of the top of the riverbank.

We have attached more detailed comments below for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours faithfully,

Charles Muriithi, MRTPI
Planning Specialist

Direct dial 0203 263 8077
Direct e-mail charles.muriithi@environment-agency.gov.uk
Eastfields

This area is situated within Flood Zone 1. However, the need to ensure surface water runoff is suitability managed to allow for the runoff rates that are compliant with guidance and policy is noted, as are the references to the inclusion of SUDS.

The suggestion of opening up a currently culverted watercourse on the eastern boundary of the site should be investigated further as part of the overall redevelopment. The opening up of a currently culverted watercourse could assist in managing flood risk at the site, as well as providing habitat and other biodiversity benefits.

High Path

This area is mainly situated within Flood Zone 1, though a part of the site is located within Flood Zone 2. The opportunity to increase the density of housing within a low fluvial flood risk area has been highlighted in the Plan. The recognition of needing to ensure surface water runoff is suitability managed to allow for the runoff rates that are compliant with guidance and policy is noted, as are the references to the inclusion of SUDS.

The Bunces Ditch, a designated main river, runs along the edge of or just within the boundary of the overall site. We note that comment is made regarding further investigations into the origin and route of this watercourse, as the exact line of a culverted watercourse can be difficult to determine from the surface. If there was an opportunity to open up a culverted watercourse it should be looked into further, as this can help to manage flood risk as well as having a number of biodiversity benefits. If development could be moved away from the watercourse that would also be of benefit in terms of access for maintenance purposes.

Ravensbury

The Ravensbury Estate is shown as being located within an area considered to be a high risk to fluvial flooding from the adjacent River Wandle. However the plan recognises that this needs to be effectively managed as part of the redevelopment of the estate. Ravensbury Estate is already developed for residential use and new development would offer the opportunity and potential for mitigation measures to be incorporated into the redevelopment. This would include the raising of the finished floor levels of dwellings to a minimum of 300mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level, taking into account climate change.

There would also be the opportunity for flood resistant and resilience in the redevelopment, which is also welcomed. Reference is also made to a SUDS strategy as part of the redevelopment. However, due to the varying levels of flood risk across the Estate, there is a need to carefully consider the sequential and exception tests, as well as the requirement for a site specific flood risk assessments. Adequate provision and consideration needs to be given to the category of development proposed for each area on the Estate and its compliance with the NPPF and the Boroughs own Policy on flooding. The introduction of a greater number of residential dwellings in an area at risk to flooding should be carefully assessed to determine whether it can be considered as appropriate in that location. In addition, any redevelopment proposal should be able to clearly demonstrate that there will be no loss of floodplain storage capacity and ideally, further storage for flood waters should be created.

It should also be noted that updated climate change guidance was released earlier this year, and therefore the most up to date information should be taken into account as part of any redevelopment plans. Any development should also take every opportunity to increase both the flood resistance and resilience to buildings and the surrounding environment.
We note that reference is made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in relation to flood risk, and that it will be necessary to comply with the Sequential and Exception Tests as appropriate, and also the necessity of producing site specific Flood Risk Assessments to accompany detailed plans for the redevelopment of these areas.

Charles Muriithi, MRTPI
Future Merton
LB Merton
9th Floor Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Sent by email to:
estatesplan@london.gov.uk

Dear Sir/madam,

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended);
Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007;
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012

Re: Merton Estates Local Plan Pre Submission

Thank you for consulting the Mayor of London on the Merton Estates Local Plan Pre Submission regarding its general conformity with the London Plan under section 24 (1)(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This letter covers matters from the GLA and TfL.

General

The Local Plan is supported in principle and conforms with the London Plan in aiming to bring forward the redevelopment of existing municipal housing and the delivery of new housing within the Merton Housing Zones. In particular the Local Plan aims to provide significant additional housing through making efficient use of land, in line with policies in Chapter 3 of the London Plan.

The Local Plan makes clear that the redevelopment will include the protection of open space. This is welcomed and in line with London Plan 7:18, and is an important element in providing a high quality environment for future residents.

However, there does not appear to be an indication of the quantum of new development or even a range of new and re-provided homes for each of the three sites. Such a figure or range will be important to help set the context for most readers. The GLA and TfL are aware of the broad quantum envisaged through our involvement with Housing Zone designations, but this will not be the case for many others.

Affordable Housing
The Council will be aware that the Mayor has recently consulted on his Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance and Local Planning Authorities are strongly encouraged to follow the approach set out in the SPG. While this document is still in draft form, Merton is encouraged to take account of its approach and set a threshold level of viability for schemes coming through the planning system without any public subsidy (see SPG
for detailed guidance) and have a clear approach to seeking to increase the amount of affordable housing delivered to 50% using grant (as set out in the recently published Affordable Housing Programme Funding guidance) and other public subsidy. The SPG also offers guidance in relation to Vacant Building Credit.

**Detailed Site and Design Policies**
The Plan includes an appropriate level of detail in relation to landscape and environmental protection, including flood risk and drainage, (which are recognised as significant issues in some locations) for the three housing estates where development will be focused. The Local Plan also contains a range of more detailed points and policies relating to the design and height of buildings within the new developments, these are largely a local matter, but are broadly in line with London Plan design policies.

**Transport Issues**
TfL welcomes the reference to estate car parking being provided in accordance with London Plan maximum standards and would recommend that reference is also made to cycle parking conforming with London Plan minimum standards.

As stated previously, TfL would encourage the estate street networks to accord with TfL’s Street Types guidance.

**High Path**
Page 106 f) “Future extensions of the north-south streets ending at High Path southwards towards to Merantun Way must be a possibility, subject to TfL’s support”. TfL would recommend that ‘must be a possibility’ is replaced with ‘should be explored’. As stated previously TfL would be unlikely to support additional vehicle access points onto Merantun Way.

Page 106 para 3.139 – It is important to reiterate that TfL will not pay for the reconfiguration of the station but should there be other funding mechanism for improvements, TfL would be willing to consider proposals

TfL welcomes reference to the tram extension to South Wimbledon and the requirement for developers to consult TfL on how to integrate the tram extension into development proposals on Morden Road.

If you would like to discuss any of the representations in more detail, please contact Kevin Reid (020 7983 4991) who will be happy to discuss any of the issues raised.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

John Lett
Strategic Planning Manager

cc
Leonie Cooper, London Assembly Constituency Member
Tony Devenish, Chair of London Assembly Planning Committee
National Planning Casework Unit, DCLG
Lucinda Turner, TfL
Dear Future Merton Team,

This is further to my previous comments regarding Merton’s Estate Local Plan, please pass the following onto the inspector.

By the inclusion of Secured by Design principles and standards within the regeneration of the estates the cumulative impact for all three estates would be positive in relation to crime. The design and layout of the estates should provide well-defined routes with spaces and entrances promoting convenient movement without compromising security so improve access and movement. The designs should be structured so that different uses do not cause conflict. All publicly accessible spaces should be overlooked to enhance surveillance. The developments should promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community. If necessary physical protection can be included with well-designed security features. Increased activity in appropriate locations can create a reduced risk of crime and increase a sense of safety. The designs should also have future management and maintenance in mind to discourage crime in the present and the future.

In order to achieve a sustainable development the government has defined three fundamental dimensions: economic, social and environmental (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), page 2, paragraph 7). Crime has a direct impact on all three dimensions. NPPF section 7. Requiring good design, paragraph 58 requires local authorities to produce ‘Local and neighbourhood plans’ with a specific aim to ‘create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion’. This message was repeated in paragraph 69 in section 8 Promoting healthy communities with the addition of ‘safe and accessible developments, contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas’.

Policy 7.3 Designing Out Crime of the London Plan promotes a city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods with greater security through design. "Boroughs and others should seek to create safe, secured and appropriately accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion...........Development should reduce the opportunities for criminal behaviour and contribute to a sense of security without being overbearing or intimidating..............Measures to design out crime should be integral to development proposals and be considered early in the design process, taking into account the principles contained in Government guidance on 'Safer Places' and other guidance such as Secured By Design published by the Police".

In the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities Secured by Design principles and practices should be incorporated within the Estates Local Plan for Eastfields, High Path and Ravensbury and the development carried out in accordance to those details. By working with the local Met Police Designing Out Crime Officers I am sure accreditation could be achieved.

Please note: if you do not receive a reply from me it might mean I have not received your email as some are redirected into a Spam box that I can not access.

Kind regards

Pat

Pat Simcox BSc (Hons) | Designing Out Crime Officer | Metropolitan Police Service

MPS Crime Prevention and TP Capability
Dear Planning,

Many thanks for consulting Natural England Regarding the Estates Local Plan pre-submission version; Apologies for the delay in providing our response.

Having taken a look at the documentation submitted it’s clear that there is a desire to see the environment take a front and centre role (Policy ELP1) in the life of these estates in future both in terms of improvements on the ground now and also when accounting for climate change in years and decades to come. There is a big benefit to be seen from the proposed use of SuDS within the redevelopment on the three estates as this will help to improve water quality and quantity going into the River Wandle in the long term and also help reduce the surface water flood risks on the sites which are the primary area of concern from future changes to weather patterns from climate change.

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been used to help ensure that there are realistic choices made during the process which enable redevelopment to go ahead while still achieving gains for the environment which are key to combating climate change and improving the health and wellbeing of those living in London where air quality is an issue. The options chosen give a good account of the reasons why and allow for a wide scope of improvements to the biodiversity on site across the three sites, with links to green corridors possible as well as green or brown roof spaces a possible feature.

Overall Natural England believes that provided the above elements are taken forward and there is a tangible improvement seen at the three estates as a result of redevelopment work then the environment will see benefits in the long term locally and more widely within London. The changes being suggested are not proposing huge modifications to the numbers of homes on the sites so it is unlikely that there would be a detrimental impact upon either Wimbledon Commons SAC or Richmond Park SAC however the Habitats Regulations Assessment process needs to be followed through to ensure that this is taken into account and mitigation is considered at the early stage to reduce risks in the first instance before impacts are possible.

Natural England will of course consider further comment when next consulted either during or after examination. Broadly however we do not have any major concerns to highlight.

Regards,

Piotr Behnke
Adviser
Sustainable Development
Thames Team

Natural England,
Area 3A Nobel House,
17 Smith Square,
London
SW1P 3JR

Tel: 0208 026 3893

www.gov.uk/natural-england
We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England’s traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

Natural England is accredited to the Cabinet Office Customer Service Excellence Standard
Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for consulting Sport England prior to the consultation on the preferred options version of the above document. Sport England is the Government agency responsible for delivering the Government’s sporting objectives. Maximising the investment into sport and recreation through the land use planning system is one of our national and regional priorities. You will also be aware that Sport England is a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing fields.

In response to the below email, Sport England would like to make the following comments:


**Objection**

These policies should specifically mention indoor and outdoor sports facilities and be in line with Objective 3 of Sport England’s Land Use Planning Policy Statement ‘Planning for Sport Aims and Objectives’, to ensure that new sports facilities are planned for and provided in a positive and integrated way and that opportunities for new facilities are identified to meet current and future demands for sporting participation.


**Objection**

These policies should specifically mention outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches and be in line with Objective 3 of Sport England’s Land Use Planning Policy Statement ‘Planning for Sport Aims and Objectives’, to ensure that new sports facilities are planned for and provided in a positive and integrated way and that opportunities for new facilities are identified to meet current and future demands for sporting participation.

**OBJECTION – Local Plan & Evidence Base**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires each local planning authority to produce a Local Plan for its area. Local Plans should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. Local Plans should be based on an adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence base. In addition, paragraph 73 of the NPPF requires that:

> “Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessment should identify specific needs and quantitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area.”

Paragraph 175 of the NPPF states:

> “Where practical, Community Infrastructure Levy charges should be worked up and tested alongside the Local Plan.”

Sport England advocates that new developments should contribute to the sporting and recreational needs of the locality made necessary by their development.
Sport England is not aware of a robust evidence base for playing pitches and indoor sports facilities for Merton. It is not clear how this lack of evidence base has been/will be taken into account to develop this document.

Sport England would be happy to provide further advice on how local authorities can strategically plan for sports facilities. There are a number of tools and guidance documents available, which can be found on Sport England’s website at: http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/forward-planning/. In addition Sport England has a web based toolkit which aims to assist local authorities in delivering tailor-made approaches to strategic planning for sport. This can be found on Sport England’s website at: http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/previous-guidance/. The toolkit focuses on built facilities for sport and recreation, setting out how planners can make the best use of sport-specific planning tools in determining local facility needs. Information regarding planning obligations for sport can be found on Sport England’s website at: http://www.sportengland.org/facilities__planning/planning_tools_and_guidance/planning_contributions.aspx.

We hope these comments can be given full consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or would like to discuss the response.

Kind regards

Dale Greetham
Planning Manager

T: 0207 273 1642
M: 07787 582 803
F: 020 7273 1513
E: Dale.Greetham@sportengland.org
To whom this may concern,

In regards to the Pre-Submission Estates Local Plan, I have had a look through and I'm fairly pleased with it. Although my only concerns are the sizes of the rooms as I am assuming that they will be quite small as your aim is to build more houses? Nevertheless the plan seems fine.

Thank you

Kind regards,

F Acquah
Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your letter of 16th January regarding the Merton's "Pre-submission Estates Local Plan". I have no particular comments or views to make.

However, I would be grateful if you could keep me informed about the submission to the Secretary of State, the publication of the independent planning inspector's report and when Merton Estates Local Plan is adopted.

Many thanks,

[Signature]

Buckman
All responses relating to all estates

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

December 2016 – February 2017
All responses Eastfields

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

December 2016 – February 2017
Good evening,

This is a submission to the Merton’s pre-submission Estates Local Plan.

We broadly welcome the proposal and revised pre-submission with four reservations. To gain a greater level of support amongst the residents, the final iteration of this plan must address the following:

1. Take the opportunity to improve the transport accessibility from in the Mitcham Eastfields area from ‘poor’ to ‘good’. Perhaps with the addition of more frequent busses and/or a commuter shuttle to and from Balham station from Mitcham Eastfields by using large area of unused land in and around the station. Turing Mitcham Eastfields into a spoke and Balham into a commuter hub – essentially giving tube access to Mitcham residents without the need to extend the Northern Line. Examples of hub and spoke model can be found globally.

2. p. 57 and 81 does not consider residents’ views from Grove Road in line of sight through Lonesome Primary school site. Preferably a limit of building to two story within this line of sight. This would also address the feeling of being overlooked by residents of Woodstock way whose property back on to the site. Such a statement would add further weight and clarifies paragraph 3.38 p.62.

3. Further develop the ideas stated on pg.68 to allocate reasonable space to the development of a business community to support local employment. Restrict zoning to avoid the sites use to serve fast food. This would be in line with the councils stated ambitions of making Mitcham a safer and healthier place to live.

4. Clear guarantee that the construction of a road adjacent to the Acacia Centre would not put at risk the continued existence of the centre i.e. that it would be demolished or footprint reduced because of the roads construction.

Final point, the plan has misidentified the estate’s location as Figges Marsh Ward (P.46) . It is in fact located in Longthornton Ward.

Please do keep us informed about the submission to the Secretary of State and the publication of the independent planning inspector’s report and adoption of Merton’s Estate Local Plan.

Regards,

A Mundy & K Boniface
To whom it may concern

Regarding Mitcham Eastfields estates plan.

In my view I think the estate should stay the same but make improvements to what's already there, to make better, the front, rear and internal of the properties. This will save a lot of money, better than knocking down peoples homes.

That is my view.

Regards.

C Falzon
To: Future Merton Team

I am responding to the Pre-Submission Estates Local Plan for Eastfields.

I do not feel there has been enough time to fully process and research the plan, having received it after the 16th January. Especially for those of us who work full time and have young/elderly families to support. Also, the Design workshops planned by Circle, supposedly to give us a fuller understanding of design, design principles and how these fit with local planning have not yet been completed; the last one is not due to be held until the 28th February.

As a homeowner, I am also concerned about the mixed messages being received from Circle Housing and Merton Council. Whilst the plan, and covering letter, infers that the regeneration will go ahead, we were told by Merton representatives, at a meeting last year, that Eastfields was highly unlikely to be regenerated due to flooding, insufficient space for new builds (before houses could be demolished), and one road in, one road out making it impossible for lorries and building work to access the estate safely, and without major disruption to residents. How has this suddenly changed?

The plan itself only appears to focus on the 'negatives' within the estate and, whilst I agree Eastfields does look slightly shabby (predominantly those dwellings owned by Housing Associations), I was concerned about Eastfields being seen as a 'Fortress'.

Having lived here for over 30 years, the sense of community is strong, as witnessed by the attendance at meetings and the anger and dismay of being told Eastfields was being regenerated.

More specifically:

**Health & wellbeing**

2.12 Who was involved in the health impact assessment? Does this relate to health and wellbeing during the whole process, or just once regeneration is agreed and takes place? And whose health and wellbeing does it relate too?

Obviously not those of use currently living here. At no point during the past four years has our health and wellbeing been discussed. The stress and upset of not knowing what will happen to our homes has been immense. This has been made worse by crass and insensitive comments by both Merton and Circle staff during the consultation, i.e. 'You're lucky you haven't got a mortgage. My husband left me and I've got to pay mine mortgage for another 20 years.' (but they aren't at risk of losing their home). 'You should feel lucky you are getting a new home which is better that where you live now, and will be worth more.' We do not feel lucky at all! We have worked hard to pay our mortgages and keep our properties in good order, as have many of the housing association tenants. We may now be forced to move out of our homes (Circle representatives did admit, in a public meeting, that compulsory purchase would be used if residents didn't agree to their offer), or move into temporary accommodation whilst Circle houses are being built! We will then have to live on a building site for up to 10 years whilst the regeneration is completed.

**Urban Design principles**

2.4 ‘...promote biodiversity through open space, street trees......'

There will be much less open space once regeneration takes place, with over twice the amount of dwellings/units are there are currently. One of the features that attracted us to
Eastfields was the open space, which creates light within our homes. Under the new designs, houses will be much closer together and overlooking each other, making them darker inside.

2.8 Permeable, legible and accessible layouts
Eastfields is accessible and easy to get around. Many local people from 'off the estate', are able to walk or cycle to Eastfields station, to local bus stops and to Mitcham Town Centre. There is nothing on the estate that restricts this.

Site analysis
3.23 & 3.27 'Access for vehicles is confusing as the estate is part access from Acacia Road and part from Woodstock Way.' 'This inefficient layout restricts accessibility for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.'
The road closure was put in place to stop commercial and private vehicles, from off the estate, using the road as a rat run, causing danger to children, and air pollution. There were also young moped riders using it as a race track, with several accidents.
Eastfields is accessible and easy to get around. Many local people from 'off the estate', are able to walk or cycle to Eastfields station, to local bus stops and to Mitcham Town Centre. There is nothing on the estate that restricts this.
How can vehicle access be restricted when it is predominantly residents who live here driving onto the estate?? By opening up the road you risk the road becoming a rat run again, and greater car usage through the estate will cause higher pollution levels. Why is it ok for public roads to have barriers restricting cars but estates can't?
3.30 '...the smaller spaces leading off this are less successful, as they are enclosed by the back gardens of the surrounding houses.'
This is precisely what has supported the community feel within the estate. Children have a safe space to meet and play, where parents can keep an eye on them. During summer months, people use the smaller spaces to socialise.
3.36 '.....to make the BMX track less visually isolated.'
Whoever has been involved in this plan has not taken anyone's views into account regarding the BMX track and the major issues it causes. Noise; air pollution, from the dozens of cars attending events; danger from cars; road rage; residents not being able to park, or get into their own properties easily as BMX spectators have parked in front of their houses. Fortunately, I don't live anywhere near the track, but these are just some of the issues which have been raised at meetings and ignored. Whilst the BMX track is a great idea for children, there needs to be some consideration of the problems caused.

Site specific policies
Justification
3.61 'Eastfields is located in an area with a low Public Transport Accessibility Level....'
We have a mainline railway station, within 10 minutes walk, with easy access to London Victoria and London Bridge, as well as many local stations, including Balham, Streatham, Sutton, Wimbledon and Kingston. We can also get the train to local tram stops. There are two local buses that stop just on the edge of the estate, both go through Mitcham, where other transport can be accessed. Ten minutes walk away are buses to Croydon and Streatham. These bus stops can also be accessed via the local buses. Whilst I appreciate that people with disabilities may find access difficult, it would not be because their is a lack of public transport. During our many previous meetings with Circle, one thing that was raised was the good transport links, with people who have moved to Eastfields as it's easy for them to get to London for work. The cynical amongst us are wondering whether this is being 'played down', as new properties could bring a premium price being so close to the station.
To be honest, I could add more points but I have run out of both time and motivation (I can hear you cheering!!). And have no faith that these comments will be acknowledged, especially as they are the same comments that we, as residents, have put to both Merton Council and Circle Housing time and again, and which continue to be ignored.

Regards

C Reeves
I don't think for one moment my opinion means anything to anyone involved in the above. I now realise that despite a lot of hard work on behalf of the residents/tenants we were on to a loser right from the beginning with the council coming at us from one side and Circle housing from the other side determined to take our homes away from us. Mitcham is becoming as the song goes a town of Little Boxes and soon the only green space left will be the common.

As for building a road leading to Grove Road I think it won't be long before there are serious accidents as it so close to the bend.

G Bigmore
To: Future Merton Team,

Thank you for your reminder letter dated 16th January.

I attended the Circle Housing Masterplan consultation at St Marks Academy on 19th November which was very informative and gave them my views. I live off the Estate nearby but it is in full view from my property.

I agree with the redevelopment plan. The overall design and specification of the buildings and layout of the estate will be a big improvement on the current site. I do have a concern about the height of the some of the flats in relation to the surrounding area.

A maximum height of five storeys would be more appropriate.

I agree with the through road proposal between Tamworth Lane and Woodstock Way mainly to allow the diversion of or provision of a new bus route to serve the estate. But there could be a problem of traffic using the road as a ‘shortcut route’ through the estate. Probably a restriction maybe required for non-estate traffic. In any case a junction improvement with Tamworth Lane would be required.

In view of the increased number of residents planned consideration should be given for provision of a GP surgery on the estate.

Concern also for the increased amount of road traffic that will follow the redevelopment which will impact on the congestion that already occurs at the nearby railway level crossing.

Thank you for the information that is available please keep me informed of further developments.

Kind Regards,

Mr L Kilroy
Dear Team,

The residents of Hammond Avenue raised a great deal of concerns over the current draft plans for the Eastfields regeneration.

A petition was sent to the Merton Planning Team, for the attention of Mr Chris Lee. (Royal mail tracking reference KX 7802 6042 5GB , should you wish to identify who signed for it).

Could you please kindly confirm receipt of this petition and advise what action is being taking to ensure our concerns are being addressed?

Look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards
Mr Modasia
Dear Future Merton Team,

In reference to your recent communication dated 16th January, please find attached a petition, signed by residents of Hammond Avenue in relation to our concerns regarding the draft proposed plans that Circle Housing are in the process of submitting.

We did not receive a response from Merton regarding this, so would appreciate it if you could kindly follow up accordingly and similarly enhance further your plan guidance with reference to the proposed layout and building heights. At present, it appears that not enough consideration has been taken regarding our concerns and similarly incorporating these concerns to ensure they are addressed in your plan guidance.

As you can appreciate, Hammond Avenue consists of mostly one storey bungalows, so the new plans are deeply concerning for us, as they include the removal of the road (Clay Avenue) behind us and propose to build taller 4/5 storey buildings closer to our homes, which will leave us with no privacy whatsoever. (We are already forced to keep our rear curtains drawn with the current 3 storey buildings at the rear of our properties, so under these new proposals, it will worsen the situation for us all). A few of the residents also went to voice concerns at the evening sessions that Circle Housing held at the local school (St Marks Academy), but with no avail, as the architects/planning team were quite dismissive of our concerns and suggestions for amendments. This is very disheartening, as there is plenty of scope for them to amend the designs to avoid causing upset and imposing on anyone’s privacy.

I believe it was approximately page 80 in the plan guidance that has specific reference to building heights being, ie buildings across the estate must be of a height similar and harmonious to surrounding residential areas to contribute to achieving consistency with the surrounding character” and "when viewed from outside the estate, taller buildings must not be seen to dominate the landscape”. The current designs are not taking any of this into consideration, which is very worrying, as there is plenty of scope for the designs to be amended and similarly the plan guidance needs to be reviewed to ensure that this is being addressed, as at present the guidance relating to the height and layout appears to be very generic.

A copy of the attached petition was also sent to:

Royal Mail Tracking: KX 7802 6042 5GB

P Modasia
Dear Future Merton Team,

Thank you for the email. Just to let you know, some of the residents from Hammond Avenue met with a couple of people from Circle Housing/the design team on 04/02/2017 with regards to our concerns.

We were advised that they are still planning to create a 4 storey block at the rear, which we are still concerned about. I have highlighted below the main concerns post the meeting.

- Additionally, at the meeting one of the ladies, advised that the location of the new buildings would be positioned no closer than they are today. However, based on the leaflet that was shared with us, it is evident from the yellow and blue diagrams, that this is not the case, as based on the diagrams it is clear that some of the new buildings would be actually closer than they are today, so this is a major concern.

- Also, at the meeting we were advised that the older designs had taller buildings, however upon reviewing the older designs, this was not the case. (Please see attached). Based on this, it appears that none of the initial concerns raised, were taken into consideration with the new designs, so I do feel we need more clarity around this. Whilst they may have been draft, a vast amount of feedback and comments were submitted raising concerns, which do not appear to have been addressed with the current designs.

We are currently awaiting the designs, which we were advised we would receive approximately 1 week after the meeting.

We would be grateful if you could take the above into consideration when you do receive the plan submissions from Circle Housing.

Kind Regards

Mrs Modasia
Dear future merton team,

I just wanted to send an email stating my views on the new estate plan.

I am completely for the regeneration of Eastfields and I think it would be great for the community.

I am however, disappointed with the lack of communication about what is actually going to happen to the tenants. I have received numerous leaflets and paperwork showing me what the estate is going to look like, but nothing telling me when we are likely to be moving or what year everything is likely to happen. I currently have a front door that is close to falling off, which the council refuse to replace because they said that as they are knocking the estate down they don't see this as an urgent repair. This is frustrating because if I knew how long I was going to be living in my flat for, I would predict if it was worthwhile to spend almost £300 on a new front door as I wouldn't like to spend that kind of money and be told that we are moving within the next couple of years!

I would also like to know that if I would like to move away or out of the area, would I be given priority to move quicker than others?

thanks for reading and answering my questions,

R Moore
Hello I live in Clay Avenue and I want know when the project will start because I'm going to decorate my house and changing a lot of stuff as well e.g. kitchen, bathroom etc. So if it will start soon I don't need to spend my money.

Thank You!

Y Rahli
All responses High Path

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

December 2016 – February 2017
hello,

In regards to the High Path estate proposals.

my main concerns are:

increase in general road traffic - Abbey Road is a rat run in itself, often clogged up or with speeding cars. With a proposed secondary school and increasing accommodation numbers locally, are there any contingencies in place. I am resident and cars will bomb down this street, Mill road, Dane Road, Meadow road when they come up against queues on Abbey Road or Merton High Street. Many residential streets are dead ended locally and I don't understand why some streets both off Merton High Street and Colliers Wood are prioritised for such a feature over others. can you explain this to me.

You mention you want to avoid rat- runs through the estate so maybe this whole area , south of Merton High Street, north of Momentum way, East of Morden road could be devoid of rat-run opportunities. so only residents would need to access the area and keep the Mementum way access for the schools, church, Eddie Catz and High Path, Station Road Business units.

I imagine making Abbey Road straight would increase traffic and speed - so we would need efficient speed control furniture put in place - what is in place now doesn't work assides from the narrow entrance at the South end of the road and the immediate left turn into High Path at the South end.

Building work, noise and dust pollution for all local residents and local schools. Can you give me an indication what disturbance I and my neighbours are likely to endure. I am led to believe the actual building work could go on for over a decade. What timeline do you have? it's a great concern for people living on the estate as well.
Dear Future Merton Team,

Please find feedback on the High Path Estate pre-submission publication

- The proposal appears to indicate an increase in the housing density which would mean increased congestion in the area and an increase in the pollution. Merton High Street, and the surrounding areas are already very polluted, anything that will increase the congestion must be avoided. The housing density must be decreased
- The plan appears to show a decrease in the amount of green areas, this too will mean that pollution will be increased. There needs to be focus on creating more green spaces, and more trees being planted and cared for.
- The tram stop need not be in South Wimbledon as the walk to either Morden Road or Merton Park tram stops are not more than a 6 minute walk from South Wimbledon station. The tram stop would be better placed in Colliers Wood
- Further to the pollution, it needs to be re-considered whether to have schools built in such a highly polluted area, any further increase in local schools will simply increase the number of children suffering from toxic air respiratory problems. Along with the impact on Teachers who will be required to work in the area and parents/residents.

I would like to be kept informed about the submission to the Secretary of State, the publication of the independent planning inspector's report and when Merton’s Estates Local Plan is adopted.

Please can you acknowledge receipt of this email

Kind Regards
C Muller-Carpenter

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please note that I am the owner of [redacted], please could you forward me any information/correspondence relating to the redevelopment of High Path as the building I own is next door.

Regards
C Phillips

Hi,

Thanks for a copy of the above 'Plan'.

I thought it was very Geometric in design.

No curves or bends. Right angles and like it!! And you must face in the correct direction!! Very Eco. Eutopia then???

A couple of points. You mention a couple of times how presently, some people complain of feeling 'unsafe' when walking through the estate (High Path). It's the lack of right angled junctions and controlled traffic, but, might it also be the fact;

* there are parts on this estate, where there have been no street lights (five in one area alone)
  for at
* roads not swept for years, think Hayword Close and Nelson Grove Road, where the leaves are
  so crunched into the Tarmac, on wet days, it's downright dangerous under foot.

When we're living in an Eutopic environment, with the creation of Geometric roads will we be permitted more regular street cleaning, and street lighting, the later, only if it's Eco., I suppose

What I find a bit mystifying about the whole 'Plan', is the sudden change in mind-set, re. estate maintenance. Tasks which should be carried out to a high standard at present, eg. street cleaning, street lighting, replacement of broken or missing fencing, out door painting of bike shed door, of course there aren't any in 'The Plan', so that's one problem solved, highway maintenance etc. All these tasks are going to be of the highest standard. If it is known standards are not satisfactory at the moment, why are residents having to wait. Surely insulting treatment to residents.

One last thing. A few years ago, large sums of money were spent renovating Nelson Gardens to celebrate his, I think, 200th anniversary. All sorts of people attended, including the media. It wasn't long before the place became a wilderness and a popular for alcoholics to chill out in.

You forgot to mention the 1,000 pupil school going to be 'slotted in' in a narrow strip of land on High Path!!!!

Thanks again for a copy of 'The Plan'.

Yours
Dear Sir/ Madam,

We write with reference to pdf document ’16-12-05-High-Path-boards_final-exhibition’ we provide the following questions and considerations of the proposed redevelopment of the High Path Estate.

We understand that the new population is 1600 people, please could you provide information on the current population and therefore the population increase?

Please could the council advise how future additional nursery, primary and secondary school provision will be met? Both primary and secondary provisions in the area have been extended to cope with the current population.

We would like assurances from the council that all public services would cope with an increase in population. Have TFL been consulted and confirmed additional tube services, especially during peak hours?

Please could the council advise on how future additional Doctors GP provision will be met?

We assume that Traffic Impact Studies have been carried out and the proposals have no negative impact on the current traffic?

What is the split between social housing, PRS and private ownership?

Are all existing High Path residents, in both private ownership and social housing, offered the opportunity to move back to high path with the same housing offer as their existing properties or better and at no additional cost?

What percentage of existing High Path residents are in favour of the proposed development?

What assurances can be provided that large volumes of people living in such a dense community will be satisfied with their built and social environment?

The CGIs should genuinely show the intended construction materials and architectural details. The use of lower quality, cheaper materials should not be permitted.

Please could you advise on what the mechanism is for answering our questions?

With regard to the drawings represented in the proposals we provide the following pros and cons:

**Pros**

- Coherent street layout responding to the existing street pattern
- The principal of taller development to the rear of the tube station is appropriate, but general concerns over the overall height shown in the development
- Seemingly good provision of public realm
- CGIs at end of doc titled ‘Nelson’s Yard’, ‘Mansion Blocks’, ‘St. John’s Mews’ suggest properties will be masonry constructed with good quality brick and precast elements with attention to detail. The Council and the developer need to ensure that
the quality suggested in the CGI’s is upheld and not diluted into cheaper options such as characterless polymer modified renders

Cons

- The scheme is too dense, overdeveloped and out of scale with the context
- All properties surrounding the proposals are primarily 2 – 3 stories
- 6 stories onto the Merton High Street is twice the height of the existing properties on the north side of the road. The proposed new properties will tower above the existing on the opposite side of the road
- We suspect that in winter the large areas of the Merton High Street will be in shadow cast by the 6 story properties on the south side of the road
- The majority of outer London high streets are characterised by properties of a maximum height of 3 stories such as the existing context. 6 stories is not only out of character of the context it is out of character to the city
- Existing schools are already strained and there is no provision for addition school places in the proposals

Thank you.

Regards
L Betancourt

Good afternoon.
I would like to be informed about the submission to the Secretary of state.
Many thanks
Dear Sirs

There is much in the Estates Local Plan (High Path) to commend it.

I would like to make the following comments:-

There is a grave danger of turning the High Path Estate and south Wimbledon into an inner city enclave instead of an integral part of the wonderful borough of Merton - by increasing the density dramatically and allowing tall buildings to be developed. This will totally spoil the character and feel of the area as well as having a grave impact on services and amenities.

The recent survey regarding Wimbledon town centre identified that people do not want tall buildings. This applies to the areas outside the town centre as well as within the town centre.

There was little in the Estates Local Plan regarding the internal living space. For example, no mention was made
* that all rooms should have windows
* that there should be sufficient family/communal rooms within a family dwelling so that there is space for different activities to be carried out at the same time, for example children have a quiet space for doing homework and not just one room serving as kitchen, dining room and living room.
* that new homes will have at least as much space as existing homes and with an appropriate layout providing sufficient space within different room types.

The Estates Local Plan does not take into account the proposed new school on High Path - The Harris Academy Wimbledon.

The following are my comments on specific sections of the document:-

2.44 p 37 - Defensible space - I welcome the statement that all perimeter blocks should have active frontages with well designed appropriate defensible space. I would like to suggest, from the perspective of a pedestrian, that the most pleasant defensible space in front of buildings such as flats, houses and office blocks, are those that have railings or a wall to waist height with greenery between the building and the boundary, the greenery thus visible from the street. In addition, if the boundary is defined by a wall, greenery on top of the wall can be an attractive feature if it is well maintained. The use of the railings or wall gives a feeling that the building is not encroaching on the pavement whilst requiring very little distance to separate the building from the street.

2.47 p 37 - Promoting sustainable development - does this take into account the carbon emissions etc of the building materials, machinery, equipment etc used in the construction as well as the carbon footprint of the finished buildings over the years of usage? If not, it should do so. There is no point in having a low carbon footprint building if it has used many times the carbon to build.

p 88 - The current site analysis might be correct at this time, however, with the proposed new school to be built on High Path in the very near future, this needs to be taken into account in the site analysis.

p 101 Issues Summary
3.116 - I see no problem with green space fronting onto Merton High Street - it gives an aspect of open-ness and relaxation rather than frenetic and hemmed in.

3.117 - Morden Road has not been enhanced by developments such as the grossly unattractive Spur House especially at ground level. It is not appropriate for the council to make comments regarding the lack of cohesion in this road when they have allowed developments such as Spur House to take place.

3.119 - Whilst I acknowledge that the estate is badly designed in terms of buildings and space and that it has a high PTAL rating, this does not automatically mean that the area can sustain a huge increase in density on the estate and the surrounding area, where much development is also taking place. The local transport links can only support a finite number of people, ditto other services. Is enough being done to ensure, for example (amongst other amenities and services), sufficient sewage waste extraction and medical facilities.

p 102 Opportunities Summary
3.123 - Whilst Morden Road is perceived as a wide road, there is a danger the buildings will be too high and too close to the pavement (ie without defensible space) changing the aspect from a wide road to a hemmed in, over-shadowed road. This 'wide road' has nothing like the width of the roads say in Vauxhall where tall buildings do not give a feeling of imposition to the pedestrian or road user.

3.128 - Whilst creating views to Merton Abbey Mills is a commendable intention, Merton Abbey Mills itself has been grossly neglected over very, very many years and has none of the vibrancy it originally had. Unless Merton Abbey Mills is to be fully utilised as a key asset to the vicinity, there seems little point in providing views. However, providing views to the Wandle and green area alongside is well worthwhile.

3.129 - I welcome the suggestion that the estate should be designed to guide future developments outside the estate. Currently, there seems to have been no thought given to integrating developments with the surrounding area - Spur House being a typical example.

p 104 - Site Specific Policies
EP H1 d) A focal point or space to highlight the area's links with Lord Nelson needs to be carefully thought out so as to be recognised as such and not thought of as a waste of space or a lost opportunity.

3.132 - Morden Road - Do not make the buildings too high as is the current policy. The road might be deemed wide enough but in reality tall buildings will result in a feeling of domination and being hemmed in and overlooked.

p 106 - EP H2 Street Network
3.141 - Any links with Rodney Place should only be made with the approval of the existing residents/property owners in Rodney Place.

p 107 - H2 Street Network map
North-South future extensions into Merantun Way will not be possible with the development of the proposed new secondary school on High Path (Harris Academy Wimbledon). I think it is also fair to make the assumption that future extensions cannot pass through the existing primary school and it's land. It is misleading to show these suggested extensions on the map.
p 108 - EP H3 Movement and Access
3.147 - The development of the proposed new school is a redevelopment of the land between High Path and Merantun Way - presumably this will include the redesign of Merantun Way into a boulevard? and will presumably be discussed with TFL (3.148) ?

p 126 - EP H8 Building Heights
It is disappointing that the maximum building heights are not specified in the document.

c) Morden Road - the document states that taller buildings are more appropriate along Morden Road and the heights should be guided by the newer developments springing up along Morden Road. These developments do not necessarily have the backing of residents and locals. The appallingly unattractive and indeed ugly buildings that are being developed with inappropriate heights - ie far too tall - are not a basis on which to guide the development of the High Path Estate on Morden Road. To create a boulevard feel it is not necessary to have extremely tall buildings.

e) Any development along the north side of High Path must enhance the feeling of safety walking along the street at night. I do not think these buildings should be taller than the mews streets within the estate.

f) Merantun Way - As I understand it, the south side of this road is currently industrial usage and likely to remain so? This is another street that will not benefit from tall buildings.

p 129 - Indicative Street Sections - I am a puzzled by the diagramatic representations of a high street (eg Merton High Street), an urban boulevard (eg Morden Road) and a wider boulevard (eg Merantun Way). Currently there is insufficient width on all of these roads to accommodate 4 lanes of traffic or 4 lanes of traffic plus cycle lanes and footpaths. I cannot imagine how these roads will be widened sufficiently along their whole length to accommodate the additional lanes of traffic, cycles and pavements. I therefore have to assume these illustrations are not accurate and are misleading.
In addition, the illustration of the urban boulevard in comparison with the high street shows just how inappropriately tall the buildings along the boulevard are.

4.4 - P176 - I am not sure if this paragraph leads on to point 4.5 and the following points or if there is some text missing... "Notwithstanding the requirements of the council’s validation checklist the applicant will be required to provide information to address the following;"
There is nothing following this paragraph except the subsequent sections.

4.5 - P176 - I am concerned that there is a danger the idea that different phases of development have their own character may in itself lead to a mismatch in design rather than mitigate the concern over monotony.

4.7 - P176 - The materials should be in keeping with the existing local area. For example, in general brickwork of the buildings in the surrounding area tends to be London yellow stock, multicolour or red brick. Some buildings may be discoloured due to pollution through the years from coal fires and soot to modern day traffic pollution. Care should be taken to not assume dark bricks were originally dark bricks and thus lead to the use of inappropriate or out of context building materials.
4.16 - P178 - Ensure that street furniture does not hinder the path of pedestrians especially, for example, people pushing buggies, pulling shopping trolleys or mobility scooters.

Many thanks for your consideration.
Kind regards
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to comment on Merton’s Estate Local plan to make it very clear that I completely and utterly opposed to the current proposal.

This is on the following grounds:

1) I live in [redacted]. The project makes no allowance to protect our houses or preserve what is effectively a piece of history. Every single house and every single garden in the street is kept in beautiful condition.

2) The current proposal involves building 6 to 9-storey buildings on three sides of [redacted]. This will prevent sunlight from reaching [redacted], for pretty much the whole day, even in the summer. Effectively the whole of [redacted] will be situated at the bottom of a lightless pit. This is totally unacceptable. The figures put forward in the proposal are clearly in breach of the regulations for light and do not meet the legal requirements.

3) The current proposal includes opening a way out of [redacted]. This would completely change the feel and atmosphere of the street as it has been for the past 90 years. One reason we bought a property there is because it was safe. Safe for children to play out because it is a close, safe because there are no cars driving through. There is absolutely no reason to make a through road.

4) The proposal does not cater for parking spaces for residents. [redacted] will now have nowhere to park. In addition, parking in [redacted] will be an impossible problem with 4 additional houses - potentially 4-8 more cars.

I attended most of the meetings with the regeneration project managers and we have been given no answers, no reassurance of anything. We are simply being ignored, and constantly advised to go online to raise concerns.

I very much hope that you will hear us out and look into the above issues.

Thank you very much.

Best regards.
Dear Future Merton Team,

Thank you for your letter inviting us to view the ‘Pre-Submission Estates Plan’.

Our main concern, that we would like to see reflected before submission, is that the plan does not seem to reflect the most recent proposals we have seen and objected to from Circle Housing. This raises serious concerns that the council and the housing authority are not in sync, and that Circle Housing is not reflecting key elements and policies laid out in your plan. In general we like and support your plan, which clearly puts the people who live in the neighbourhood at the centre of its policies. However we feel that these policies are not reflected in the plans of Circle Housing.

We raised objections to the most recent consultation which was the proposed purchase and regeneration of the Old Lampworks in Rodney Place (Planning Application 16/P3738) - an area which is almost entirely excluded from the plan you outline (exceptions are noted below). Attached are a copy of the concerns we raised in October, which in summary are right to light, disturbance/overcrowding, loss of privacy, the proposed houses do not fit the look & feel of Rodney Place and historical significance.

**In relation to the ‘Pre-Submission Estates Plan’ we have the following comments:**

**Building Height**
We respect and support your guidance on building height, in particular in respect to street width and density. e.g. That any taller buildings should be placed nearer the wide boulevard of Morden Road and in keeping with other developments on that road. We feel however that because Rodney Place is not part of the estates plan our views, right to light, building proximity & height in relation to our buildings are not being considered, and that Circle Housing are not adhering to the policies you have outlined.

The Pre-Submission Estates Plan Policy EP H8 Building Heights states:

(a) “The prevailing height across the estate must be lower than the heights along Morden Road and Merantun Way, but marginally higher than heights in the more sensitive areas of High Path, Abbey Road, Rodney Place”

(g) “The close proximity of Rodney Place and Merantun Way create a need to respect existing low-rise development as well as retaining the most of the potential for taller buildings fronting Merantun Way. Building heights in this area must particularly respect, and be sensitive to, these constraints and opportunities”.

The proposed 3 storey townhouse opposite our house may be marginally higher but adds density in a very narrow estate, whilst a 7 storey apartment block directly contradicts your policy asking that the Rodney Place development be respected.

The illustration on pg. 98 (Site analysis) highlights a negative view from the centre of Rodney Place looking west to the existing blocks. We believe that a similar, if worse, view would exist looking south if the proposed apartment block were to be developed, as well as generally taller buildings in surrounding area than the existing majority 2-3 storey blocks.
(with the exception of the 12 storey tower blocks). Whilst you have considered the new buildings in the estate in relation to each other, you have not considered existing buildings who are also valid council members and part of this neighbourhood, and the impact on us.

**Character Assessment**

We were surprised that in your character assessment (Site Analysis 1 Character Areas - pg. 86) reference was not made to Rodney Place, which is an enclave of well preserved cottages surrounded on 3 sides by the estate. The houses are believe to date from approx. 1920 as railway cottages and the council are considering listed status for the buildings. As a wider point, although you reference that you intend to create some sort of focus point for Lord Nelson (EP H1 Townscape - d) generally it feels there is more opportunity to recognise the historical significance, and that due thought has not been given to this in favour of making the neighbourhood look like “the London vernacular”. That’s just a bit cold and thoughtless to us, and for an area rich in history surrounded by Merton Abbey Mills, Morden Hall, St John the Divine Church and the River Wandle, it feels like our character is being lost not celebrated, which is a real shame. We have visited one of the estates you highlight as your design inspiration - St Andrews in Bromley-by-Bow - and it could be any estate anywhere in the world, lacking any sort of soul and character. We urge you to sustain and reclaim some of the neighbourhood’s character while you still can.

**Streets & Passways:**

Policy EP H2 Street Network 3.140 (pg 106) references Mews style streets for Rodney Place. A change to the street layout would open us to additional traffic, parking problems, strangers in the area (we’ve already been robbed over Christmas) and general security issues which we feel is unfair as a street which is not part of the local estate.

Illustration on pg. 111 (H3 Movement & Access) highlights a cycle/pedestrian path/flow through [highlighted area] without any further elaboration on how or why this is propose. Similarly the illustration on pg. 122 (H6 Environmental Protection) highlights a ‘green chain’ towards Wandle River crossing [highlighted area] without any further elaboration on how or why this is proposed.

We hope that you will listen to our concerns and consider them, as throughout this process we and our neighbours feel we’ve been ignored. In particular we urge that measurable controls are put in place to ensure that Circle Housing must adhere to the policies you’ve outlined.

Kind regards,
Dear Merton, I have just received the 230 page plan about the regeneration plan on High Path Estate (the third one) I wonder how much all this costs? I did fill in a form for Priory Homes and said then that all the residents I speak to do not want to move especially my neighbours in [redacted] who are mostly elderly and do not want to be uprooted at their time of life as they have done a lot of decorating and got new carpets, flooring, curtains and furniture and are happy where they are. The houses in [redacted] are only 30 years old and are big with separate kitchen and bathroom that suit the residents just fine. They also are well insulated and warm in the winter and most look after the gardens front and back which they will miss. I do hope that you can consider some of these points and think about the people who live here who are getting upset and worried about their future. Thank You [redacted]
It has been considered appropriate for a Secondary school to be located next to the primary school in High Path. I understand that at the moment there are over 400 children in the current primary school and that in excess of 1000 pupils will be accommodated in the proposed Secondary school. My concern is that there is already difficulty for parents to park in the one way High Path both for dropping their children off to attend school and even more so when collecting them when school is over for the day. Has consideration been given to the chaos which will occur when another 1000 children arrive and leave at the same time, some of whom will be dropped of by a parent and some arriving by public transport. I live in [redacted] and can only imagine the sight of so many children swamping the area both arriving and leaving, plus parents attempting to park at the same time. Nowhere to park - insufficient public transport - safety - the possibility of road rage as a consequence - frustration - 5 days each week. Am I alone in worrying about the inevitable chaos? The mind boggles and I would like to receive your alternative view, if you have one, as an attempt to put mine and I'm sure many other minds at rest.

Sent from my iPad
Dear Circle Housing,

My name is [REDACTED] and I would like to inform you that we are happy with the estate plan.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my HTC
Dear Future Merton,

I am a local resident in [redacted] and my house backs on to [redacted].

The estate is a huge eye-sore and a hideous blot on the landscape. All around are lovely victorian terraced houses.

The new proposed ‘cheap’ blocks are just replacing one eye-sore with another. The victorian style terraced houses work. They have stood the test of time. They will not need redeveloping in 30 years. The answer is staring us in the face - I think we should learn from history and flatten the High Path Estate and rebuild it in the style of victorian terraced houses.

It’s what people actually want to live in.

Thanks
Dear Sir,

Please find attached document related to Merton’s Estates Local Plan for submission to an independent planning inspector for examination.

Thank you.

---

Dear Sir,

**Sub: Merton’s Estates Local Plan**

This is to inform you that as responsible citizens and long standing residents of Merton, we do not object to any House building projects which are fair and are not robbing us to subsidise new housing at our expense in the name of general/common good, through systematic means.

Merton does not own any housing stock therefore the subject heading is misleading. It is the housing association in the driving seat and not the Merton Council and the housing association staff are the main contributors of the above document.

Our [redacted] housing rights, housing facilities and housing standards as we are enjoying now must be fully protected and at least be matched if cannot be improved in the replacement houses being offered to us.

There must not be any restrictive/punitive covenants and ransom/clawback clauses (if we were to sell our house to upsize to meet our family needs), such as a 5 year 100% property price difference repayment and 11 year staggered profit repayment clauses, when we are currently enjoying 100% freehold house ownership rights without any debts and are in our 60s.

We must be given at least the same opportunity to maintain our current housing facilities and employment chances as we are enjoying now, if it cannot be improved in the regeneration plan.

Unfortunately, it would appear that the secret pact between the housing association and Merton Council is to safeguard their financial position without safeguarding our freehold and leasehold house owners’ housing, financial and economic rights and wellbeing. It would also appear that the local plan is prepared to meet Merton’s and the housing association’s objectives at the expense of the High Path freeholders and leaseholders and we must be protected from these almighty powers who are not acting fairly in performing their public duties to all their residents.

There is overwhelming bias in supporting/subsidising all social tenants of all estates and house owners of [redacted] at the expense of freehold and leasehold house owners of [redacted] and it is not fair.

*The resident offer to freehold house owners of [redacted] is totally unfair, as well as misleading and must be changed.*

The housing association boasts that all replacement houses will be at least of the same size or bigger, as well as of high standards and designs.
Unfortunately, the above statement is somewhat misleading as follows:

Our current house is [insert details] We have an [insert details] garage which is our lifeline for our daily living space and employment. This facility is not replaced or taken into account at all as a loss of quality house space and facility which is our bread and butter. We require an independent [insert details] garage for our livelihoods as we have had it for the last 30 years.

The new replacement house does not have a garage at all. This means a loss of our livelihoods. Any financial compensation for loss of a big garage is not an answer to our requirements of daily housing space needs and economic sustainment.

A one size fits all approach is not the answer to our plight and the housing association must adopt flexible methods to meet our housing requirements, as we are enjoying now, as stated above.

The housing association’s measurements for internal and external properties and facilities are selective and somewhat manipulative, for example, we have a separate living room and kitchen, but in the new property it is open plan, so if we want to divide it separately, then the new wall which we will build will make it an even smaller house than what we have now. Also, access to living room is via the kitchen door which is totally impractical and dangerous for family living as well detrimental to home/self-employment.

Focal spaces such as a fire/chimney place, is not taken into account. If we were to remove the chimney, we can have enough space to fit an office desk. So that is a total loss of space. Also we have big windows and windowsills, which will be lost in the new designs. We will not have direct sunlight and natural air circulation because of the new designs which are extremely poor, for example, a bathroom is in the middle of two bedrooms, without windows.

All new houses are at least 0.5-1metre narrower than our current house, therefore we will not be able to use bigger 4 seater sofas as we have now in our new houses. It will be cramped and an impractical living space. Although it may be same in total square metres, it is not in terms of its most usable design/space. Roof terrace space and the ground level space are not comparable spaces.

Our living rooms are not of the same size as we have now. The layout/designs of the living room, kitchen and bathroom are impractical unusable designs – for example, all rooms are rather narrower and linear than our current squarely build living room and bedrooms.

The wall between the kitchen and living room allows us to have extra wall cupboards for storage, as well as ground level storage or to hang a flat screen TV. But new designs are open space, therefore totally useless for our big family use.

The same applies to loft space and quality ground level garden space, as well as the location of the property which is deprived of direct sun light, natural air circulation and open sky views which we are enjoying at the present time.

Replacement houses’ internal designs and sizes are extremely undesirable. Our needs and views are totally ignored, particularly for internal designs and sizes, which is extremely demoralising.
The so-called independent surveys (e.g., Membership Engagement Services, Newman Francis, PRP architects, Savills, Future Merton) and public consultation questions were designed to achieve selective outcomes in favour of the housing associations and the Merton Council’s secret housing regeneration plans, and true feedback from affected residents is systematically excluded or misrepresented in all documents.

There will be no direct sunlight for [redacted] once the tower blocks/flats are built around it, and this is not good for a healthy environment or in line with the current layout of the area.

We were going to convert our huge loft space into a third bedroom similar to [redacted], but cannot do it now due to the impending housing regeneration proposals. We have plenty of loft space, which we are using for multipurpose use, and we can convert it to another bedroom as per our needs.

[redacted] we look to have [redacted] but we will only be offered [redacted] as we have now, we are happy to upsize it [redacted] by paying a reasonable cost to difference between [redacted] and [redacted], but not at an open market value. We will be charged for a [redacted], which is in fact of the same size as [redacted].

New housing is supposed to resolve overcrowding problems for all residents affected by the housing regeneration and not only the social tenants. We [redacted] just managed to improve our life chances after [redacted] of struggle and hard work only to face punishment for being prudent when we are at the end of our lifecycles.

There is nothing wrong with our current [redacted]. It is of sound build and has gas central heating, double glazing, loft and cavity insulation etc. and we are being forced to accept lower housing facilities to facilitate housing regeneration at our cost, basically to rob us to support the housing association to meet their decent home standards requirements at our cost. This should not be allowed because the housing association acquired Merton’s housing stock to bring it up to what it considers decent home standards within five years, and it failed to do so. And we are being penalised for Merton Council’s and the housing association’s deficiencies.

The housing association wants to become the sole owner of the High Path area through systematic means. It is offering us punitive/restrictive covenants and terms and conditions by changing our current favourable house ownership rights. For example, the housing association is deliberately designing the houses in such a way, to attract service and administration charges from current 100% freehold house owners, when it is not appropriate. For example, linking street houses to a communal heating system, or running services mains utilities under the new replacement houses, when it is not necessary to do so.

We [redacted] cannot afford any new financial burden, such as admin and service charges, which can be avoided by not linking certain facilities to our properties, when it is not required, and treat us differently to the normal street properties.

The housing association is also using manipulative measurements so that our properties look smaller, and there is clear manipulative interpretation of spaces, for example, usable space, habitual space, space not in use at the moment. Replacement houses based on bedroom numbers and not
the actual size occupied by the bedrooms plus living room and the plan fails to include big on plot garages, stores and loft spaces from material documents and the same is true for Merton Council which is the main backer of this housing regeneration project.

Pincott Road is a historical, traditional Victorian terrace type street with some traditional terrace houses similar to Victory Road across Merton High Street, but it is not mentioned in any documents, and there are no prominent pictures of houses in Pincott Road in the housing association’s or Merton Council’s documents.

All of High Path can be designed to fit in with the streets and houses across Merton High Street and Abbey Road which is more in line with the properties in the area. Rather than turning High Path into a concrete jungle of tower blocks owned by a monopoly multinational charitable organisation, robbing Paul to pay Peter. We were told that the tower blocks will be replaced with traditional street type houses as there was plenty of space on High Path to do so with innovative designs but this was just a ploy to meet their devious objectives.

The above option is not mentioned or offered in any of the residents surveys or local plans and documents.

We the law abiding, prudent citizens and true financial stakeholders, (owners of freehold traditional houses and leasehold houses and flats are the main losers because not treated fairly in terms of replacement houses and terms and conditions related to new housing/housing offer etc. in comparison to social housing tenants).

It is rather strange that the housing association and Merton Council has decided to exclude the proposed Harris Academy Secondary School development on High Path from all their documents.

The impact of a new proposed secondary school on High Path, is not mentioned anywhere in the whole document, and will have a detrimental and devastating effect on the current and future residents, the entire High Path regeneration project, antisocial behaviour/law and order situation and an adverse effect on other residents of Merton passing through High Path. For example, extra traffic, footfall, problems at bus stops and underground stations, local supermarkets with more than 1000 children entering and leaving High Path at least 3 times a day and not to mention evening activities which is now a norm for all Secondary Comprehensive Schools.

The entire project is skewed in favour of Circle Housing and Merton Council, but not in favour of independent residents of freehold houses and leaseholders of Merton, for example Pincott Road terraced houses.

The High Path local plan must not be inferior than any other housing standards applicable to other houses in Merton. The so called acute need for more houses in London must not be used to subsidise Council budgets at the expense of current freehold and leasehold owners of High Path. London Mayor’s minimum housing standards, density and parking restrictions must not be used to lower our current and better standards of housing and parking facilities.

If our current housing standards and facilities cannot be improved by the regeneration project than please do not rob us of what we have got now.

Thank you.
I Veacock

One is uncertain as to whom this response to the Merton Estates Plan is actually to be addressed to in respect of the person of influence to make change happen for the benefit of the existing residents of the areas considered therein. Therefore I take this opportunity to submit, via the channel created by Merton Council, my opinions, evidence and challenges to the Estates Plan, to the Planning Inspector so appointed by the Secretary of State and as such the wording will be such as to be to an independent, experienced, suitably qualified, third party, but is someone whom has no knowledge of the geographical areas considered other than the bundle of documents submitted to them by the proposing authorities and their respondents to the proposals.

I must, for the sake of brevity, make clear that as primarily a carer for a resident on High Path Estate, my thoughts are generally confined to that area, and it is for the residents of Ravensbury and Eastfields to make such representation as they see fit, however I (and my family) also have an interest in the specific dwelling of the person I undertake caring duties for and as such I may need to reference other areas where pertinent and where I am aware of other individual thoughts on the process and present proposed outcome of the plan.

It is too easy to fix as planning considerations simply the proposed activities within a geographical area, assess their environmental / transport / health / educational impact and consider the external envelope and appearance. Indeed it is relatively easy if the site is either one of 'greenfield' development or of a 'brownfield' site of a, typically industrial nature or an area where little residential development has been in place hitherto. But for these estates this does not apply. These are our homes, and as such, the Council seeks to interfere, not for some greater public 'good' – such as a strategic rail, airport or road development, or to facilitate strategic development of mineral resources (eg fracking), but to arguably break the implied contract with residents when our estate was first built, and to unfairly deprive us of our amenity space, storage and living space and to design external development which is out of keeping of key buildings in the public realm, to create enclaves, rather than build communities, and build prison-plus style apartments that are no better than cheap hotels for commuters to travel to central London in, we deserve better.

For High Path, unlike the other two, more self contained areas, there are a multiplicity of problems and challenges which have not been properly acknowledged, and therefore not properly resolved, but way before we identify here exactly what they are, we need to travel back in time and look a little at the development of Central Merton and is immediately surrounding character study areas. I would have to assume that the inspector will have done some background reading and is aware of some of the individual characters whose circumstances have led to the developed area as is at present, but the inspector may not be aware of some points that have been chosen to be hidden. Now at this time we need to define a few key entities in the present process that the scheme appears to have been concocted under - Merton Council (MC) Planning Department (hereafter called the Scheme Promoter), Circle Housing Merton Priory (hereinafter called the Scheme Developer), Merton Council Housing Department (MCHD) and Merton Council Highways Department (Highways), Merton and Morden Urban District Council (MMUDC) and Wimbledon Urban District Council (WUDC). Furthermore I have to define South Wimbledon, as the area to the immediate east of Montague Road / South of Pelham Road / Quicks Road / North Road, and west of Bewely Street/Wandile Bank and North of Merton High Street (this broadly encompasses the 1963 South Wimbledon proposals of WUDC for development of 'South Wimbledon', which, after much opposition by residents, moved forward in the late 1970s resulting in the development in much modified form, of All Saints Estate. The area occupied by High Path Estate, immediately to the West of the MC Mill Road Character study area broadly encompasses some of the land once occupied by Richard Hotham under the land of Moat House Farm, which after acquisition by Charles Graves and renaming as Merton Place was purchased from Graves' widow in 1801 by Admiral Lord Nelson. The original lands with Merton Place were in the majority to the North of Merton High Street, but Nelson acquired other farmlands to the west and south broadly as far south as the present Wimbledon-Croydon tramline. Following Nelson's death and contrived circumstances those lands were sold off in various parcels, with the area between the tramline and Merton High Street by the time of the 1851 census was known as Nelson's Fields. The farmland to the south of Meretune Way (formerly the line of the Wimbledon and Tooting Railway LBSC/LSWR joint, closed finally in 1975) became in stages predominantly light Industrial use, including post WW2 some firms from the High Path area relocating thereto.
Indeed, many of the houses in Wandle Road and Nelson Grove Road, had they not been demolished in the 1960s and 1970s, would have qualified for Housing Renovation Grants (administered by the local authority) and the private occupiers of those houses installed indoor bathrooms/wcs and renovated windows and roofs to give desirable accommodation. Meanwhile, the Local Authority designed Flats began to lose the reason for construction—that of better standard of accommodation for the working family or individual as the criteria for access to a 'social house' was changed. The right to buy gave the hope though that one's family could have the potential to guarantee a succession of passing on as required to decedents—local authority tenancies would generally only permit one succession and this potentially would mean a child or grandchild becoming homeless with no guarantee of accommodation suitable for their needs. This desire—to take control of our lives—was the primary reason for availing of right to buy (the discount reflected in many ways some of the potential defects, asbestos containing materials in the flat, single glazing) —although many authorities had already sold council housing at market price with a local authority mortgage. I don't recall this being offered by Merton, it was by the GLC for its (mostly ex LCC) housing stock. It should also be noted that many whom lived in High Path, Pincott Road, Reform Place worked at Omega Lampworks in Rodney Place.

Now all this social history actually has an impact on the estate at the present time. If we had remained in our existing house—in all likelihood the private landlord who actually owned quite a few houses on the high path area would have either sold them to those of us in the accommodation, or would have found as required larger houses from their portfolio—the cottages ranged from 2up2down through to six/7 habitable room terraced houses of substantial brick construction, but some MMUDC propaganda, which I have no record of residents being opposed to decided that the area needed improvement, and also a reduction in the number of housing units for a declining population (as London residents were encouraged to move to the New Towns—for merton this was the likes of Crawley and Haywards Heath.) This encouragement in part from the central government fear from the 1950s of a nuclear strike taking out central and suburban London—and engineering and other manufacturing was being promoted with housing in (non-easily rail connected to discourage commuting back) the home counties at what were considered 'safe distances' to enable some surviving of the population. The original terraces of High Path—on the likes of the East West Orientation of High Path, Nelson Grove Road, and Reform Place, all with fairly substantial rear gardens, and the remaining terraces of Pincott Road and Abbey Road, had over the years had some back garden infill, for business or other purposes of increasing housing—'Back Buildings' in Pincott Road for example, where demolishing one terraced house gave rise to three houses built in its former back garden. The most extreme example was the construction in 1927 by the City and South London Railway of Rodney Place, which must have taken some of the 68ft normal rear gardens on the south of Nelson Grove Road, and some of the farmland to the north of High Path (Bakers Farm and Brookfield Farm were around the North and East of High Path, with Deeds Farm and Bunce's Farm to the South of High Path), and these continued to be worked in part through the 1940s until the building of the industrial units immediately to the south of High Path in the 1950s.
Terraced housing generally does not have off-street parking, and I would argue it was the implied offer of parking facilities in the 1960s which contributed to the acceptance of moving into the new flats of the High Path Mansion Blocks, and for some whom had previously rented private garages on land in Nelson Grove Road and Reform Place, the assured continuation of secure vehicle parking in the newly built garages in the likes of Hillborough Close, that these garages could also be used for overspill of some domestic chattels is useful — and the provision of ground floor sheds only went some way to accommodating domestic items like prams, bicycles and the previous television model; just in case it was needed when the new one broke down. It could be argued for the estate the amount of garages is excessive, which strangely remained as the only original (actually I suspect there could have been earlier cottages built sometime 1830 to 1880 on that plot the census returns are confused as to orientation of enumerators walk) detached house, when all around had been demolished —

And so, we have piecemeal development. Land immediately south of Merton High Street, acquired from business owners, taking away most of the commercial heart of Central Merton by the early 1970s. Initial acquisitions appear to have been for proposals of road widening including roundabout at Haydons Road (WUDC South Wimbledon Plan, 1963) leading to at best temporary leases and run down of the smaller shop units toward Pincott Road, then the deliberate acquisition of land and businesses from Pincott Road to the Dark House pub. This was to provide, with the now-aborted road scheme land, new housing (predominantly, - some flats) as replacement homes for persons displaced from Wandle Road and other parts of the now All Saints area — North Road, South Road terraced cottages and parts of Leyton Road predominantly. Effectively many folk have already been decanted once in their lifetime

But these new houses stopped short of Merton High Street, clearly there were still considerations of a form of road widening potentially along the south side of Merton High Street, green space was put in place and some plane trees planted (I note that London Plane trees are now under threat from a fungus disease – Plane trees are one of the best absorbers of traffic pollution). Quite how the junction at South Wimbledon (The Grove) was supposed to accommodate a wider road I am not certain, if it was desired to retain The Dark House, South Wimbledon (Merton) Tube station, The Grove Pub, Bank House as listed buildings and the Merton Road/Merton High Street corner buildings. But, at the same time as the houses facing toward Merton High Street were being completed in the early 1980s, new plans and changes were occurring nearby.

Merton still had industry, investment in New Merton Board Mills (Dickinson Robinson Group Packaging) had occurred and and the Tandem Works of Eyre Smelting/Fry Metals continued to process metal alloys. But DRG/Reed Papers decided to sell the site to Sainsburys/Bhs and a number of community proposals for Priory Park Retail and Leisure development, at the same time Merton Council and the GLC were looking for a relief road to Merton High Street/Kingston Road taking the alignment of the now closed and track lifted Wimbledon-Tooting Railway. For various reasons the segment of Road proposed from Morden Road to Kingston Road was never built — that area was turned into a managed nature reserve and (pre-tramlink) some of the area directly adjoining the trackbed was developed at the Merton Park for housing, the proposals for that part of the road were stopped by organisation of local people who formed their own community association funding and supporting independent people to stand for election to Merton Council. The section from Colliers Wood (Chorlwood Road) to Morden Road was built and opened in 1989 and is today part of the A24 TfL Road Network. The Sainsburys (Savacentre) site was built as a retail hypermarket with some additional internal units and surface level parking for some 2000 cars. Delivery access was from a light controlled junction to an eastern service yard, and customer access by footbridge across the river Wandle from Merton High Street additional pedestrian access under Merantun Way and from the dead-end of Station Road, (this access is unsuitable for use by disabled persons) and by road from a new roundabout from the new Merantun Way. This roundabout also served the Merton Abbey Mills craft and leisure complex, which was later expanded to have additional restaurants, mid rise flat blocks a private leisure centre and a hotel complex, all of
which put pressure on the road, not as a relief road but becoming an access road, it is noted that the developments, other than the heritage items and some conservation of the Norman Merton Priory foundations, were not in the Priory Park proposals, but that the promised community enhancements in those proposals around the Brown and Root Tower at Colliers Wood did not take place. A little later the land to the east of Savacentre and West of Priory Road was developed as a Priory Park retail site, with access by road from Merton High Street.

Now since the Savacentre road access was from Merantun Way, this meant for residents surrounding High Path and adjoining for collecting heavy shopping etc an access road was created from High Path into Mertune Way with left turn only towards Colliers Wood. To minimise, but not eradicate, rat running from Merton High Street 7 foot Width Limits were put in place at the southern end of Abbey Road and Pincott Road. Finally with respect to Meretun Way the Christchurch Road roundabout was converted to a light controlled junction and the Tandem Works demolished and replaced with retail developments with additional parking and service access from Prince Georges Road. This, along with the now ongoing London and Quadrant Development of flats on Christchurch Road has all put pressure on the road network, particularly into Abbey Road during school peaks, and weekend shopping hours. What this has done is to place High Path estate into an island of dense traffic, along A24 Meretun Way, A219 Morden Road, Merton High Street and Abbey Road. This would be full either of people coming to visit the area around the estate, sometimes workers from the estate area travelling to their initial work location (not all of us by any means use the underground on a regular basis when our work is on sites around Surrey and the surrounding areas), but most traffic is passing through, from areas were they may well have larger houses than we have, they may have their own garages on site or in blocks and just because they are further out and away from less regular public transport than this estate may enjoy why should they be permitted to pollute our air and we be forbidden to park our vehicles or have the land enjoyment rights to our garages?

Having conceded that there would have been a little less available parking, and that it would have been on-street, as desirable as that dwelling in terraced houses may have been, I would prefer to look at our existing flats, which specifically for us are much larger in room sizes than any comparable local authority constructed flats that I am aware of within Great Britain (and I am quite well travelled). Given this, and taking into account values of much smaller flats built nearby, without prejudice, I would estimate the need for a value to replace the property in its present, leafy, sunny, triple-aspect location would be not less than £572,000. But overall it is not about the money. Location wise – despite the traffic problems we are, by accident rather than design, in quite a Goldilocks location – we have potential good access when required from the Zone 3 Tube system – and walking distance to a shop with the cheap bulk buy pricing and good range of products, better than in Wimbledon or Morden and closer than we would be if moved to Croydon or Sutton. The only downside is that there is no level access to the front door, we did request CHMP to provide an access lift, or ramp access - the reply was that CHMP were a charity, had no funds, and that was not suitable to fit a lift to (this clearly shows they never visited here as there is plenty of space – I have fitted access lifts to similar at split level churches and they are similar say to the car park lift at St Georges Hospital), for various reasons we did not persue as yet, this, which would be beneficial to other residents and would have been to myself when I had serious health issues – This access issue aside, our honey-coloured flats have airy open access to the outside and our trees are up to 55 years old now, with an annual display of blossom which is much appreciated by my mother.

This leads us to greenspace management, which is ill-defined and insufficiently specified to the benefit of wildlife. Planting should ideally be of British Native plants, that will encourage native wildlife, subject to such wildlife or plants/trees not being injurious to health affecting skin, breathing or toxins from accidental consumption of leaf, flower or berry. Ideally they should be managed to ensure growth is not excessive, and complementary for bloom
and foliage and providing nesting and food source for birds. It is known that good external air and landscape quality is beneficial to health.

We also have the internal transport and access, and the existing cut off from Meretun Way is a problem. Ideally High Path should be converted to a quiet way for bicycles and pedestrians only, with access to Merton Abbey School, The Resource (disabled persons) centre, Elim Church and Domex Office and service yard being onto a speed-limited Meretun Way, however TfL and Mayor's Office have consistently insisted that this is a relief road, without realising the development I have outlined above has altered the character and actual use of the road from its original—literally half-baked—purpose. Abbey Road (and inter-alia Mill Road can be very congested if in any way Merton High Street/Haydons Road are blocked or not free flowing. If the junctions at South Wimbledon Tube or Plough Lane are blocked then it is very difficult for vehicles to proceed along Abbey Road, the air quality deteriorates and it is not really suitable to build houses closely abutting the pavements thereof.

It has probably been realised that the existing estate is quite complex, not necessarily in terms of navigability, but in the diversity of building styles. While diversity is good and preferable to the proposed 'me-too' monoculture, what it means that each set of flat blocks have particular access characteristics.

This may be a good time to divert to the initial issue of the acquisition of land from MCHD to CHMP.

Merton Council made a number of promised inducements over the years to force ownership of their remaining council housing out en-bloc to a 3rd Party. The inducements were mainly to tenants, where the likes of, where needed and where desired by the resident a programme of kitchen and bathroom renewals mostly would be undertaken with other works, predominantly to houses, to bring them to the Merton Standard, for flats this would include some common parts, door-entry systems, double glazing and where needed electrical and roofing renewals where existing was life expired or in dangerous condition. Prior to transfer work was due to take place for soffitt and fascia repair at eaves level and installation of double glazing. After being excluded from the vote on the transfer, the survey of leaseholders was against the transfer, and for tenants the majority in favour of transfer was 2% and this after a number of attempts by merton to transfer its stock, we had a number of organisations involved in the earlier propaganda, such as TPAS, and previous transfer votes amongst all residents had been rejected. So the undemocratic final vote happened. did not get its soffits, etc renewed, repaired or painted, but prior to transfer shed doors were replaced without consultation and were done to a standard that was less than the doors replaced (most doors actually just required scarfing in of some new timber sections and weather strip fitted to lip at top of door and to base of door——this was not provided on the new doors and consequently some have become shabby with poor paint preparation. To date CHMP have recently replaced tenants single-glazed windows with PVCu double glazed windows and composite front firecheck doors, bringing in line with all other properties on High Path Estate.

The biggest problem with the stock transfer, which is why we were not in favour of, was the de-coupling of Housing provision at the local authority strategic level, loss of democratic oversite at the ballot-box level, and the eventual five-way inefficient councillor-chmp officer—chmp distant management—local authority strategic on a regular basis across the portfolio of social sector housing in the borough. Merton Council retained some board level representation and have a financial interest in the development profit and land sales revenues of CHMP as part of the transfer agreement. However recently Merton Council agreed to reduce the number of resident participation at board level (reducing members to one leaseholder and one tenant). CHMP also withdrew all local estate offices to a central location in Morden, this meant it was very difficult to contact to get simple issues logged and resolved in a prompt manner. Finally for High Path, and possibly other estates it was either unclear exactly what land and responsibilities actually passed to CHMP (Merton Priory Homes), in terms of greenspace management along Merton High Street, Footpaths and paving generally along adopted highways and unnamed off roads of High Path. For example Merton Highways recently re-surfaced the east arm of Nelson Grove Road roadway and highway, but did not do the same for the highly defective and uneven defective tarmac on east side of Pincott Road Northern segment, despite both footpaths dog-legging around CHMP managed parking areas. Additionally there is confusion among residents over parking enforcement, and this would apply to visitors with random single yellow lines with no ministry standard enforcement hours signage on what are named MC adopted roads. Similar situations apply to...
blocked surface water drains and gulleys, which years ago I remember Merton Highways Gulley sucker regular flushing through.

Since transfer CHMP have generally failed to provide a reasonable schedule of maintenance for common internal parts of flats, and for external parts, particular review of upstands on rooves, gutters, rainwater goods, pointing, facias and soffit boards box gutter enclosures. They also fail to respond promptly to ingress of water and drips and overflows from water and header tanks with failed float operated valves in roof spaces. Likewise there is no greenspace management on appropriate cutting of types of shrubbery, clearance of broken tree branches and the like, which all conspire to make Merton as a whole look shabby. Tenants can inform you of the problems of actually getting competent persons to assess internal defects correctly and arrange timely remedial works, I have three items which CHMP failed to do inside our own flat (this was as a supposed quid pro quo for failure to adhere to an advised appointment:)

This has been compounded with the plans of CHMP to demolish and re-build the area they supposedly have responsibility for. Residents have been treated by officers, agents, and staff as less than second-class citizens in a patronising manner, and vulnerable persons have had verbal promises made by persons whom have no authority so to do. The whole procedure has been handled in a stress-inducing manner and has (in my opinion) hastened to an early death at least 4 persons nearby on the estate.

Returning to an analysis of the existing blocks

The Mansion Blocks all share the generality of being predominantly four stories high, built of double skin brick in an interesting bond pattern, brickwork is not the normal present day standard height brick and again gives the flats some echo of what Merton Priory may have had finishes of some tiling detail in an italianate style with cartouches indicating block names and numbers in a scripted font that echoes cursive script as may have been written at the nearby Merton Priory. The entrance to stairwells have had later wood and glazed doors with entry system fitted but ground floors have doors opening to the external air-space, most upper level flats are accessed from tarmac paved concrete verandas but some external doors open onto the stairwell. There are no lifts and most staircases are concrete of up to 15 steps normally in return flights of 7 to 8 steps with metal railing handrails. Few properties have external balconies or juliette balconies, to my knowledge few residents have ever complained about this, but it does mean washing is often hung out to dry on the verandas, rather than using the up to 60 steps to access the ground floor external clothes-lines. There are two main play areas which are well used, a tarmac ball court and an softer surfaced toddler play area. The external grounds to outside roads have dwarf walls with interesting rounded brick finishes matching the external of the flats. Windows originally were timber single-glazed in a georgian bar style (the not dissimilar Parkleigh Court by Morden Road Tramstop has double glazing fitted in a style which is close to the original. Space heating originally was by single coal-fire to living room, I have no knowledge if back boilers were fitted, and I presume electric immersion heaters were also provided. As originally built to my memory these flats were incredibly cold, and only with the fitting of double glazing could some heat retention start to be considered, I also assume Merton Council took advantage of cavity wall insulation retro fill a couple of decades ago, and roofspace mineral wool insulation likewise when government challenge funds were available. Central heating has been fitted by CHMP / Merton Council to all tenanted properties and an upgrade programme to gas combination boilers was done across the estate about three years ago. At the time of the 1970s clean air acts Merton Council replaced the coal fires with 4 burner two position gas fires, I presume they amended the flues and chimney cowlings appropriately.

Further external features are the access arches in two of the blocks, and the gated access to Morden Road with brick pillars and concrete decorative pediments thereon. The pillars to High Path exit had similar concrete on to but these appear to have been lost. Accompaning the dwarf walls were privit hedges to same height, these have not been maintained and have some ingress of trees as weeds and other shrubs. Normally such height hedging would be used for nesting birds, but with insufficient regular food source few hedge sparrows make their home there. The growth of hedges obscures views to Morden Road, but this appears to be not unwelcome by residents. Main
excludes the roadway around the ball court. The garage block to the north takes advantage of the difficulties of London Road, Morden. It is unclear if Highways department are responsible for maintenance of road surface as in dwelling accommodation to double or single mansard level (similar is on flats to similar style at Hatfield Mead on other mansion and low rise blocks across the existing high path estate. Again opportunities exist for providing a court for young people. Access to upper storeys for persons with disabilities or infirmities has same issues as the This pairing forms complementary, but slightly different layouts, to the east and west of the courtyard that is the ball court for young people. Access to upper storeys for persons with disabilities or infirmities has same issues as the other mansion and low rise blocks across the existing high path estate. Again opportunities exist for providing dwelling accommodation to double or single mansard level (similar is on flats to similar style at Hatfield Mead on London Road, Morden). It is unclear if Highways department are responsible for maintenance of road surface as in their list of adopted roads they exclude a number of un-named roads across the borough but do not specifically exclude this roadway around the ball court. The garage block to the north takes advantage of the difficulties of building dwelling units adjacent to the large electricity transformer station of London Underground. The northern end of Beckett Close is determined by the access area to The Dark House (Kilkenny Tavern) on Merton High Street and other former land in private hands in Merton High Street prior to acquisition by Merton Council in the 1970s. Gilbert Close is part built on a Congregational Church former burial ground. Beckett Close broadly on an area owned and other former land in private hands in Merton High Street prior to acquisition by Merton Council in the 1970s. The end of Beckett Close is determined by the access area to The Dark House (Kilkenny Tavern) on Merton High Street and other former land in private hands in Merton High Street prior to acquisition by Merton Council in the 1970s. Gilbert Close is part built on a Congregational Church former burial ground. Beckett Close broadly on an area owned by fairground and traveller families – mostly the Bonds – Caroline Bond was killed by aircraft machine gun fire in WW2 on this site, there were also farmlands serving shops in Merton High street prior to 1955 and possibly was the site of an Italian Prisoner of War Camp during WW2.
Ryder House
Broadly a block of flats facing east/west for dual aspect flats, with two stairwell cores on Hayward Close, and Two on area of named roads (arguably the East end of Rowland Way, or the, as I would say, the West extension of Nelson Grove Road, short arms to north and south form an effective shape, with the far extensions thereof looking like elegance bay extensions, but again flat roofs suffer from the same lack of attentive maintenance. The main part of the block has an Italianate red tiled pitched roof, again the formation of mansard flats would not be impossible, along with extending the end flats over the flat roofs, to provide larger dwellings assisting with overcrowding. Much of Ryder House is built on the former repair works of Pilcher Motor Bodies (who moved to Andover in the 1950s)

Eleanor House
This provides a strange duplex of flats in an L shape. The external is not unattractive but access is difficult and appears impossible to improve for persons with disabilities, one solution would be to gut internally the unit, and re-configure as duplex maisonettes instead, forming a new block a little further north on part of the parking areas and/or extending into the 'bear pit' play area, which has never, since construction with the tower blocks, been a suitable place to play, in forming a better courtyard area to the east of existing Eleanor House a better working of accommodation and space could be made at minimal disruption for a good gain.

Ramsey House
The lounges of this have an elegant view over the playing fields of the primary school and although steam trains no longer puff along the railway there is external movement to be noticed. Access to the two stairwell cores is poor and the bin stores and washing areas need re-working. The roadway again is unspecified as to adoption by merton council. The verandas are the only ones on the estate to have elegant 1950s decorative metalwork on them. The four storeys only work here on high path itself because the building is set back from the road and behind a grass area, there is scope to break-out the ground floor flats as gardens, but gardens need time and maintenance which not every householder is able to devote effectively

Pincott Road
With only The Trafalgar Public house standing from the original terrace of houses, it is important that whatever is decided is desirable that such building remains as a viable business. The terrace of houses, again with Italianate Roofing, are solid, desirable and quite spacious, with space for offroad parking and rear gardens giving amenity. Quite how these were originally allocated is a mystery to me, I am sure a lot of people at the time would have liked much of high path estate to be built like these.

Tanner House
Built quite late into the end of the 1970s what should be a good sized rooms was built unnecessarily small to my view, with a cramped form of the L Shape. But there is scope to extend at the east to build three larger flats, and with re-work of bin store, break the L and provide two separate blocks, otherwise overall I am personally unworried about the loss of this property IF a building or buildings of quality can be placed on its footprint.

Mychell House
Has the two commercial units built into the estate, one was a convience store, replacing Lee's Store on the site of May Court and a replacement for WW Lamperts from Merton High Street, at present there is an office and convience store, which I use from time to time and it is important for a retail offering on the south side of merton high street accessible by all persons. All flats are 2 Bed but they are smaller than other two bed units, sensitive re-construction maybe extending toward nelson grove road may provide some better space and more dwellings.

Doel Close
The former estate office – then police station, lies unused, it should be brought back into use ideally as estate hub for residents use and for caretakers/community support persons etc, or converted into residential use. Our independent representatives midway into earlier consultation were of the opinion that an estate and community centre was desirable where issues could be raised and solved promptly, our visit to Stockwell Park, an estate of similar size and density, had such, including strong local management by resident representatives, reinforced this need, which is ignored by merton council and CHMP.

Vanguard House
Probably exemplifies some of the worse construction on the estate, small internal units, dark internal stairwell and
corridor, dual entrance yet only four units per landing core – two per doorway, no access for wheelchairs to upper floors. I am afraid that demolition is the only sensible thing, and allowing nibble of the green space and trees to Merton High Street there is scope for a quality, four to three storey building in a modern (but not the brick and metal window design proposed) - a white render with flying V balconies and some vertical timber cladding should look quite good on this corner, possibly rounded into the curve.

**Dole Close, Stan Close, Hayward Close, Dowman Close**

The houses seem acceptable as they are. Stan Close on the site of the Dog and Partridge does have a present day meaningless hump of grass in front of it. Councillors have suggested an open-air market on new proposals, this area, if re-modelled with green draining hardstanding could be suitable as it is. Houses themselves too small for me, presumably residents are happy with them. The other closes have houses built that obliterated much of the commercial side of Merton High Street. Built as replacement for houses demolished for the All Saints Estate many owners have already moved once. Some problems with the sheer busyness of Merton High Street Traffic and pedestrian usage of the estate roadways, but the use of the high street won't go away with new development on the similar footprint. Houses themselves too narrow for my personal use, but fairly large, and most people I know are happy with what they have, or have bought (I can quote four persons from the roads with ease). It appears proposed replacements are planned for Abbey Road, but we on Abbey Road do not want to move from our existing area and its present landscaping. There is scope to extend north and south to similar style the houses in these roads by a couple of properties in each direction, if one does not mind loss of housefoot print greenspace.

**Merton Place**

Duplex Two Bed Maisonettes, a little small, but function well, the large steps up and building on higher ground presumably reflects the pile of Nelson’s Merton Place allegedly on this site, and possibility of the former moat of the house running under the foundations thereof.

**DeBurgh House**

Raised on its plinth for no real reason that I can understand, slightly small one bed flats have little to commend them, as long as replacement can be no greater than 3 storeys on Nelson Grove Road and 4 storeys to a facing of Hillborough Close then if parking, amenity and a way around the plane trees to the north solved there is little that could be worse. Ideally where possible sound tiles, bricks, metalwork and timbers should all be set aside and re-used on the grounds of saving the earths scarce resources.

**Will Miles Court**

Its own little community of flats, in desperate need of proper painting to timberwork and front doors. No one wishes to move from there, the last units on the estate to be built, almost as an afterthought, but still leaving space for merton high street to be widened.

**Hillborough Close – internals see Norfolk House.**

Biggest problem is outlook is mostly to the north over not a lot, bedrooms and lounges face south, which is generally good. Solid construction, completed earlier just after merton place. Has Block and Brick construction throughout, cavity wall and roof insulation in loft space of tiled pitched roof. Possibly build mansard flats into roofspace if water tanks relocated.

**Norfolk House**

Good, some 2 beds have triple aspect flats, spacious internals, 2msq (7mcu) approx ground floor storage, 2msq (6mcu external storage on 2 beds, 3mcu on 1 beds). 1 Beds have internal builtin bedroom wardrobe and plenty of storage space. Separate kitchens mean easy to entertain with guests overnighting in lounge if required. Original space heating Coal fire with back boiler to immersion heater – quite efficient some have back radiator to a bedroom Design could have been better but overall 16foot by 12ft lounge beds 12ft by 12ft and good sized kitchen/diner with plenty of coat hanging etc space in hallways. Difficult to find larger flat in any purpose built block private or council house anywhere in South London or Surrey. Delays in completing original construction from 1959 to 1962 possibly led to some concrete failure by assured by Mr Harold Turner of Merton Housing Department in the 1980s this was not a problem. As long as day-to-day maintenance is completed a budget of £1800 a year on service charges would not be unreasonable to assure this, build lift to stairwells, not impossible. Extend West Flank to turn 2 beds into 4 bed properties for overcrowding and south wing toward nelson grove road to create 2/3 bed units and
reform doorways there to avoid the ground floor dark spot under overlooked for crime minimisation.

Nice central gardens provide visual amenity for the North facing windows, wide spacing from Nelson Grove Road means good airy and sunny southern view. 'I never knew these flats were so nice' (Comment from someone visiting to third floor from west end of High Path for the first time). The gardens are also, being a better distance from building than DeBurgh House gardens, attractive for wildlife, we have visiting Robins, Magpie, Crow, Pigeon, Seagulls, Starlings, Sparrows and Wagtail. There are fewer birds than there used to be, this is due to loss of nearby tall trees at the 1 Nelson Grove Road development and tall dense trees that were where the east end of Will Miles Court was built, nesting habitat needs to be improved, we are prepared to work with professionals to enhance the garden areas. Although tenants doors have recently been renewed, it is noteworthy that some letterplates are already broken, leading to the conclusion that CHMP do not specify materials for longevity and fitness for purpose.

Lovell House
Tile Hung in 1960s style with black brickwork not unpleasant to view, 3 Bed maisonetts, 2 bed flats, seem spacious enough to be desired on a regular basis, definitely better than adjoining new build. Could build in same style town house 5 bed to the north of the block without loss of amenity.

Garage space- best turned over into a community land trust for novel affordable housing solution OR if no extention to Lovell House, create 4 multi-generational units using part of existing sheds space and shared pavement over some grass area. Reproduce Flat sheds in flat gardens.

Overall Hillborough, Norfolk and Lovell are rarely considered as part of High Path estate,

Tower Blocks
Cracking to concrete external faces appears no more than surface stress cracks are not important, give the external a wash down to improve. Some damage to roof from where cradles for double glazing installation works were hung

From a distance, including Wimbledon Hill Road and roads up Wimbledon hill and Alexander Road, these identify home, externally not displeasing having interesting mosaics to murals to fronts.

Improvements – build and sell two off penthouse glazed flats to roof level provide ground floor conseige space and convert side accesses to storage areas to community uses, storage for gardening materials, coffee room, table tennis room etc. Like all tower blocks the ground floor areas attract gale force winds from the generally prevailing westerlies. All replacement buildings should have wind flow modelled to ensure not to excess to detriment of persons or chattels.

Noted that original kitchen units not as well built as say Norfolk House, drawers have hardboard bottoms rather than plywood for example. Noted that as vacant units pass back to CHMP kitchens, bathrooms and flooring are replaced, wether needed or not it seems.

As built space heating by means of gas-fired warm air system (not communal) didn’t work (my Grandmother and Cousin have lived in these blocks in the 70s and 80s), so darned cold in winter, less so now conventional central heating and double glazed. Kitchens smaller and dont work as diners but replacement properties seem little gain for the pain involved, unless good justification on estimated physical life left less than 40 years seems to be no point replacing with anything that does not look as nice. 5 Flats on a core level works well, if you like that few internals, one would not like to live in any of these, nor there replacement (but then I don’t like the listed Barbican development of similar age nor new build at Chelsea Harbour – private or social flats)

The staggering across the centre of the estate is interesting view and works well from visual point of view. Larger blocks work better towards the centre.

Hudson Court
Last of Tower Blocks to be built, in 1971, interesting mosaic mural to front. Some detail differences to flat door architrave spaces appear wider but have developed cracks compared to other blocks

May Court
Marsh Court
Bascially if it ain’t broke, dont fix it, ills as much the class of some people who live there as much as the design of
the flats.

**General**

It is important that the Scheme developer provide dimension details of all of the flat & house types including areas of usable loftspace, gardens correctly measured, sheds where not in gardens, and all internal space including integrated storage space of the foregoing to the inspector for independent review of the assertion that replacement properties will in fact be larger than each flat they seek to replace and that the same amount of storage and dwelling space be provided.

It is also contended that new properties will be easier to heat. As all of the existing have insulation in roof spaces where there are pitched rooves, most have infilled cavity, and all tenanted properties have double glazing. The only improvement would be if all rooves were pitched and insulated (admittedly today one would build with purledeck insulation to flat rooves which existing do not have– they could be retrofitted ), triple glazed and solar panels contributing to space heating.

**Roads and Surrounding Area**

**Hillborough Close**

Formerly Reform Place /Queens Terrace. Alignment dates back to 1832 when cottages and terraces first built. Works OK as access road but difficulty at peak hours for vehicles to access Abbey Road and Thence Merton High Street. Garages could be built over using YMCA Y Cube design, would enhance area – see Eastfields development already completed we could have housed 12 families by now over all the talking we have had. Extremely confusing having block of flats and a road having same name. Someone needs to rename one of them. Brexit Close would be topical as Reform Place was. Road requires resurfacing – is listed as adopted road – as patchwork repairs have failed and do not direct rainwater to existing drains correctly.

**Abbey Road**

Existing maisonettes and terrace of houses on east side noted. (former Abbey Gate House and Gardens thereof Site) One time known (along with station road ) as Abbey Lane.

New Build at Number 1 Abbey Road, built on former car parking area for Hillborough Close, land sold by Merton Council and new build does not comply with regulations and conditions, particularly on disabled access. Better to acquire and demolish if a comprehensive build to the area is imperative.

**Kelmscott House**

Relatively newly built 1 Bed Flats very small and cramped, built on purpose-built for disabled person house sold under right to by. Better to acquire and put into plan area if a truly comprehensive plan is desired, otherwise little justification for demolish and rebuild of Lovell or Norfolk House.

**High Path**

Other Buildings at time of writing

**South Side**

Brookfield House, ARC Car Wash, Meretune Way Access Road -somewhere under here is a stream to/from the Wandle, formerly known as The Dipping Hole. Elim Church (Industrial Building) Domex Domestic Repairs and other offices. Community Resource Centre (which is not managed by the community but merton council for mostly for disabled persons and parking of community transport mini-buses ), Merton Abbey Primary School- was a nice 1930s Surrey County Council design ruined by Merton Council short term dash for places building on outside , inside functions well as school building, Surestart early years centre (nursery to the rest of the worlds understanding, useful, almost certainly over-subscribed), Colborne Court and Vicarage. Private flats, difficult access to high path exit for refuse vehicles, typical 80s smaller flats with less storage that High Path estate ones, OK if you like that kind of thing. St Johns Church, CoFé Parish Church. Built 1912. OK if you are a conformist and like your services by the book and going through the motions rather than the emotive will. Nelson Gardens, difficult to work on without a future plan and numbers of people, treading difficult area between overgrown and managed for wildlife, not really been the same since overbridge across railway was removed, losing embankment and natural southern end for the site.
North Side (in Reverse)
St Johns Church Hall, Possibly too small for good community use, insufficient parking for visitors, borrows part footprint for external storage from CHMP land. The Trafalgar PH – already mentioned, nice ham salad rolls. Wisepress – extended from former Omega Lampwork has 4 independent offices on site too, mostly printed media distribution, provides existing employment activity. Martin Harkness House – probation service formerly Parcelforce distribution depot, probably site of Bretts Packaging, previously farmlands – site has potential for any use, including school, which would be better sited on south side of High Path than the proposal to use area immediately north of Meretune Way.

Rodney Place
The 1920s built cottages have their own distinct character and have been excluded from the acquisistion of freehold houses, if they can be excluded why not the houses in Pincott Road? The loss of the curved road isolating the cottages is to be missed and people here use the garages as the small cul-de-sac has little safe parking access. If one is solely talking about building, then the presence of the houses to the east end precludes efficient re-developement of Lovell House site, however under the present plans – which could be enhanced existing if Lovell House is retained as is, a large area of potential private greenspace which could be good for wildlife.

Nelson Grove Road
In truth the planning permission should never have been granted for 1 Nelson Grove Road, built on greenspace on the last undeveloped land of highpath – the pub garden had been part of an orchard from and onwards from Nelson's Merton Place lands. Its amenity and waste space depended on access over roadway to Lovell House Garages, which was not in the public road network, therefore there are unsightly recycling boxes and large Eurobin to the front concrete area, the eurobin is frequently overflowing with bin bags and polystrene as tenants move in and out. Merton Evangelical (Baptist) Church is postally Rodney Place, it is in need of a little external improvement, but most faith groups are excluded from applying for public and private funds that other community organisations could use, and by faith would not seek lottery funding, however it should be retained and protected its corrugated cladding and asbestos tiled roof is one of the few buildings in the borough to still have these features, although the extended baptistry area is build of conventional brick and tile work. The Hope Mission has been associated with Merton since the 1880s as a temperance coffee house in High Street, Merton and opened its additional church facilities in the 1920s when Rodney Place would have been created, for many years when I attended there the church was affiliated with the Shaftsbury Society, my mother ran the primary classes in the mid 1970s and it was only dispute with a new church leader on expression of christian faith that caused me and my mother to leave.
68 Nelson Grove Road (with its garden annex 68a) remain as the sole representative of assorted detached houses that were around Nelson Grove Road from the 1920s onward. Quite why it remains is a mystery, but I suspect part of the reason the adjacent garage block was not built as houses was part of an agreement with the house owner as relating to building heights and over-looking, the council must provide full detail of land covenants from its 1950s/60s acquisition of 66 Nelson Grove Road downwards to the inspector, along with all correspondence relating to 68 Nelson Grove Road in the 50s/60s should be forwarded to the inspector for a proper legal decision to be made. The remainder of Nelson Grove Road has been resurfaced recently, but on the western segment the falls to drains have not been made correctly leading to large puddles at junction of Pincott Road and again drains opposite Hudson Court have not been cleared with large areas of standing water. The garages are generally well built compared to others in the borough, with substantial timbers joists and decking and brickwork, minor maintance when not done promptly to rooves can cause problems with flat roof water ingress, but to say they are under used is incorrect, I contacted on behalf of others – with view to rent two garages in early 2016 , CHMP did not respond in any way to that request and this lack of response and poor marketing is typical of CHMP in general.

Hubert Close
The 3 storey block really is too high for the gardens and homes of Rodney Place to the south to be comfortable with. This replaced an earlier 2 storey 13 unit plus day room elder persons bedsits, and they functioned reasonably but they had the indignity of shared bathrooms, which probably was not missed when it was demolished. The existing Hubert Close does not have good design standards, and the rooms and layout are far to small to be considered for example suitable accommodation for a resident of Norfolk
House. The original houses on this site were a terrace somewhat identical to parts of the south side of Croft Road or Meadow Road, and the loss of what could have been renovatable and nowadays desirable properties has to be regreted as one of the poor decisions of the 1950s. More practically though including this building in the estate plan area gives scope to better integrate it, possibly by extending in similar style across the Lovell House garages site, and if the revised access to Rodney Place into new road adjacent 68 Nelson Grove Road, frees the north end of Rodney Place for a westwards extension of Hubert Close. (though of course the turning space in Rodney Place is possibly too small for service vehicles and access into Nelson Grove Road is still needed as existing. In some ways we are leading to a conclusion that to maximise potential housing space a new east-west road from Abbey Road to Pincott Road parallel to Nelson Grove Road could be a better, from a planning point of view, for build and access.

Navigation and Signage
A criticism of the existing is difficulties in finding ones way around, and walkways that are designed inducing fear of crime. These problems can be overcome without wholesale demolition of the site. I have already stated that duplication of Hillborough Close is confusing, but many signs, and noticeboards provided by CHMP are in the wrong places and not viewed by residents, nor are easy to read at a distance by vehicle drivers, or pedestrians. The choice of white lettering on an orange background is unreadable, most signs are too small and located on flanks which do not face where the need to see them is. The dog leg in Nelson Grove Road is confusing, but could be signed better, and the unnamed accessways off high path for Ramsey House would benefit from naming. Roadways and walkways are not significantly different from other areas of the borough, and public footpaths are ill maintained by Merton Council, the footpath to Lombard Trading Estate for example from Meretune Way is oft overgrown with nettles and brambles. There are funds from parking charges penalties and levies to enhance pavements etc. One confusion has been CHMP replacing flagstones with Tarmac (because it is longer life wearing according to their publicity), which has been difficult to keep clean and free from algae making it slippery in wet weather, I believe again the grade of macadam specified is incorrect as the flatter finish Merton Council created in Nelson Grove Road east segment does not suffer from this. Meanwhile in Merton High Street Merton Council was replacing tarmac with small concrete tiling pavers. Some footpaths have suffered from heave mostly from tree roots, and it is a requirement of any planting that incidents of this are considered properly at the outset.

Setting and Buildings In The Area
Mill Road Character Study area to the East, The Battles Roads to the North and the Australians to The West of Morden Road define much of the feel of South Wimbledon and Central Merton. The use of brick is not exclusive, the key contrast of stonework natural and cast concrete is a feature of window lintels and cills along with some dash rendering and painted surfaces. The natural development would be one of terraced housing (with the problems of on-street parking), and provision of differing sizes would be welcome for families, but it is only the 1 Bed flat that is really suitable for smaller households and single persons – sharing in multiple home situations is not dignified when there are plenty of options in the area for those that form living. Overall the honey yellow stock brickwork with the odd banding contrast works well, Lovell House is different, but on its own is not displeasing to the eye, but increasing the mass too much and fitting 'sad eyes' window shapes does not work at all well, the mix of brick and concrete in the existing towers work well as external finishes, and indeed are similar to chequerboard finish of some mansion blocks in the Victoria area of London. The red brick mansions work well – because of the bond, white narrow pointing and depth of bricks used they trick the eye into reducing the height and mass of the blocks, it is good visual design and should be followed through, with improvement, in any new build.

Key Buildings are South Wimbledon Tube station, which appears to be abandoned by TfL. A choice has to be made, either clean, enhance and provide additional pedestrian entrance to the rear of existing, decide if substation is needed or can services be provided from an area where land is less valuable, and bring it the whole up to a building that will enhance The Grove Double Gate Junction, or we conclude that despite the elegance of Holden’s design it is holding back development for the 21st Century, and bold incorporation of a new station into a modern, clean, functional but elegant retail, commercial and residential offering be considered. The proposals of the Scheme Developer do not enhance the station as is, nor provide an elegant build for the area that will last the test of time. Indeed high towers at this junction should be avoided, there is a need to ensure no shadowcasting to the north east corner of the junction, the maximisation of natural sunlight is required across the whole of the north side of merton high street, we cannot risk vitamin D deficiency and the build heights and designs assessed against health policies.
The Dark House – same considerations as to Tube Station Apply.  
The Nelson Arms and adjoining shops and flats over. There could be some merit in repeating this style facing Merton High Street, but the problem is access to rear. Again one starts to conclude that an East-West Road from Abbey Road to Pincott Road would give the best form of access, and would allow Will Miles Court to remain - but of course planning permission to 1 Abbey Road was granted, which has painted into a corner the development of the estate, the proposed north south road adjacent Haydons Road will not work, access at the junction in is asking for problems (once again I note today roadworks are in place there), and cuts across the historic alignments. Details aside, no development along the south side of Merton High Street should be of greater overall height than this existing 3 storey terraced block, which compliments the lower heights of Abbey Parade. Overall the estate as existing is too large for a uniformity of external design, and some visual break up is needed, the Nelson Arms gives rise to an opportunity to do something different – maybe the Mock Tudor of Malden Manor or Acton area would be an inspiration to copy for buildings facing Merton High Street.

Highways and Present Lack of Maintenance by Merton Highways Department
I have no time to detail this, suffice to say that a separate set of demands for action on dealing with drainage and uneven and unclean pavements will follow and should be dealt with irrespective of, and without delay because of any future plan, we have already had 36 months of much inaction from Merton Council, other than to make matters worse with pathways to nowhere and new road crossings created which do not have pathways directly to them. We have also lost our nearby Bus Stop, increasing walk and journey times.

Overdevelopment
As proposed the scale and mass in brutalist shape (if not style) appears to be excessive for the area. We are suburban Zone 3, not a central location, and our roots remain in Surrey as much as London. The key has to be that buildings are properly 'set back' from most of the main roads, to maintain airspace, and to ensure a feeling of claustrophobia does not occur. Enclaves of enclosed doorways around courtyards should be avoided. Ideally garden squares similar to Belgravia could be created with a variety of dwelling types behind the facings. Blockwork built can be quick to construct, and provided disabled access can be maintained there is a possibility of up to four storeys plus mansard being the ideal type across the main part of the estate.

Not a done deal
The biggest problem is that there have not been a limited range of options brought forward and assessed in public or presented to the residents, this should be done rather than ram-roading through one single option. Housing Associations must take as their priority the affordability of housing those in greatest need, while respecting those whom have bought under right to buy having respect in their property, but providing assistance when the likes of maintaining ones garden or externals to ensure a good and pleasing environment.

Affordabilty Of New Build
Although some of my ideas may be an uncosted expensive wish list, it is still imperative that any build for rent must be at an affordable level. We cannot lift the drawbridges of quality affordable homes for the working man that we and our parents enjoyed in the properties that did replace some old, tired and substandard properties let by insecure tenancies with rents that could rise without control, and we must ensure new generations have that embedded into the new build that 100% must be affordable, there should be no aim in the High Path development to seek to cross-subsidise other parts of the Scheme Promotors portfolio. Rents should be set at affordable levels for new numbers of flats, but at no greater levels than existing for replacement units. For Freeholders, many have affordable properties, they own, outright, as they stand, their domains or have already in place finance for the limit of what they could afford to pay. In no way should they be undervalued or the theft of their landscapbe be compromised.
Where commercial development is proposed, business rents should also be set at affordable levels for retail and office and manufacturing functions (we still make stuff in merton – nearby - ovens, staircases, ductwork for restaurants and hotels to name just three). This was promised as an aim in Wimbledon Forum by Councillor Andrew Judge in 2016 that Merton would seek to promote, and this must be included in any new build for commercial classes.

Lack of Alternative Proposals with regard to Externals

I have already mentioned this in respect to consultation events. My personal dislike of the kind of building happening in the likes of Colindale/Hendon airport knows no bounds. The completed style at Wimbledon Chase is OK in small doses, but not in the main. Key points must be Kitchens to have external windows with natural daylight – this is important for herbs on the window cill and use of sunlight to dry dishes.

Rationale

Is indeed the dash for supposed more build in London needed. There are already too many properties that are unoccupied being only held for investment while interest rates are low, giving inflated capital prices. Across the country properties are being demolished because of no demand. It is not insufficient housing in London, but a lack of good job opportunities elsewhere in the North of England particulary where better public transport is desperately needed. We need only sufficient build to accommodate our existing estate overcrowding, and I belive I have brought forward ideas which can provide a moderate expansion of existing buildings (an idea mentioned by the leader of Westminster Council, which has some merit to it), horizontally and vertically and some infill development with moderate replacement of some flat blocks that really are dank and ill-designed to live in in a socially enhancing way.

Consultation and Requirement for Publication of All Documents and Transcripts of Meetings

I did not feedback to penultimate exhibition of the Scheme Developer, this was because I guessed the final proposals would significantly alter- as indeed they did, with the excess of height around South Wimbledon Tube station in particular, in ill-located blocks being the significant change one is now opposed to. The consultations to ‘Have your say’ were meaningless, there were no shorthand experts on site to record any of the conversations, the qualifications of CHMP agents were not made clear at any of the events, the models were difficult to comprehend (I have photos of other proposals for other places in the past that were much clearer), diagrams of proposed styles were un-dimensioned and proper comparison with all existing flat and house types were not, despite requests, brought forward to following presentations. Information provided was biased, misleading and did not show at first meetings how the proposals had been determined from the likes/dislikes of event in a tent early presentations.

I would request that all materials produced by the Scheme Promoter and The Scheme Developer for public display be forwarded to the inspector for them to draw their conclusions as to fitness for purpose and ask if the reasonably educated man could comprehend what was being put in front of them. Additionally all briefing notes internally (excluding costings) between CHMP, Merton Council, All Councillor and opposition missives to residents, Minutes of meetings with residents representatives and scope of terms of engagement of independent representative and all correspondence subsequent by email or otherwise between Newman Francis and CHMP and/or Merton Council be provided to the planning inspector.

Additionally all briefings to appointed public relations advisors to the schemes be provided to the inspector, for reasons of understanding choice of wording.

Many residents have decided not to attend meetings or otherwise particpate, the general feel I get from my neighbours is that the Council/ Circle are going to do it anyway, despite any misgivings that residents may voice. Some did attend the visits to new builds done by the Scheme Developer elsewhere and were distinctly unimpressed with the build quality and design compared to our existing arrangements of the estate.

The Triumvirate – relation between Scheme Promoter, Scheme Developer, and Local Councillors, and to some extent Residents Representatives and residents in general has been confusing, as landlord for the area the Scheme
Developer has not sought to meaningfully engage, anyone whom disagrees with elements of the schemes has been called a trouble-maker, and the small changes which could have been made to the existing estate so put on hold and we have been unable to progress and move forward quick wins to enhance what we have at present due to lack of able, knowledgable staff with authority on site to make enhancements (without prejudicing areas that may be considered worth while for future re-development). We have had meetings involving each of the main three, but they have not had a long and meaningful platform of questioning in order to explain how the initial plan was hatched being closed doors and sprung, in batches of deeply unintelligible verbage, upon residents, most of whom do not have the capacity, time or inclination to understand the implications of the proposals. We also have evidence of staff of the Scheme Promoter and Staff of the Scheme Developer socialising after working hours in a manner which for any other development could be construed as undue influence.

Relationship to Other Estate Plan Areas

Key to this is that High Path estate should not be the cash cow for funding other areas. Our profits arising from capital development in part belong pro-rata to existing freeholders, and no corners cut to overdevelop or build undersize removing space from existing residents to feed funds to elsewhere should be permitted. Development should be to quality, with no compromise to the space or structure many of our residences have at the present time;

Problems of Dealing with CHMP in general, maintenance, procedures. We (residents association) could write a book on this. The quality and qualifications of many of the sub-contractors and agents used is not good, surveyors whom can not write correct specifications, determine correctly the actual cause of problems and therefore cannot specify the correct remedy. Work done, late, dangerously (Electrical, gas appliances), incorrectly or not at all. Appointments made that even when adhered to on time arrivals have been without correct tools, or parts, plumbers sent to build fences (one man when that is at least a two man job), etc. I can still show to any independent third party common parts works not done, and areas of danger. Street properties are not assessed or visited as part of regular estate inspections, thereby missing issues of fly-tipping, littering and defective and damaged frontages and trees. Lack of ability to contact easily CHMP with long-winded telephone system – when it works and operatives who do not know where their estate properties are. In all highly unprofessional. There appears no proper cyclical maintenance scheme written down or adhered to, work which could be dual specified is instead duplicated (eg Flashing repair, works to soffits not done at same time with multiple erections and strike of scaffolding). In all is the Scheme Developer a fit and proper entity to carry out the proposed development to the long term benefit of residents.

Offer and Comparison to Compulsory Purchase Procedures

so this is my main area of concern, although similar applies to outright freeholders and service charge paying freeholders and tenants too would have some concerns.

Alternative accommodation on the estate. Ideally we would wish to remain in, despite the traffic issues, and although we understand a lift can be costly, with means tested contribution, aside from this we have demonstrated above that the existing flat just about meets our needs, but only to the extent that the external storage is retained, the opportunity to rent a garage – indeed it is unfairly prejudicial to tenancy types that a for historic reasons a family may have had a house with integral on plot garage, when the original offer of accommodation to ourselves was one of a flat with the possibility of garage to rent – and the completion of DeBurgh House, and the provision of charge-free parking space on first come first served basis, this provides the initial package of minium like for like. As I have previously made clear in terms of a replacement home any reduction in the existing floor space including all integral and external storage areas within the demised lease will not be accepted, nor any reduction in the running length of any wall or reduction in door aperture width or height including any wall or window space above doors. We will also not accept any enclosed common parts entrance lobby, and although ground floor might be nice, which gives a good compromise for looking over external areas and roads and generally being nosey neighbours participating in community activities. Additionally no window to be smaller than existing (and, for reasons of privacy) no larger than 10% of existing and none other than lounge window to be to floor level, this is to maintain the wallspace which we use for shelving and storage, finally no reduction in the running length of window cills nor reduction
in the size of kitchen cupboards – ideally we would like to move the existing to any new accommodation. Naturally as the move is at the behest of the Scheme Developer all fitments in existing property to be in prompt and workmanlike manner to be uplifted moved with all care and attention throughout and re-provided in the new property.

Funding, although we see no reason to pay more for replacement accommodation given the block, brick, filled cavity, double glazed, pitched tiled roof construction of our existing we struggle to see any enhancement over this although prepared to agree to additional value in the provision of solar panels for heating and electric feed in direct to the flat or the common parts as a revenue stream credit to service charges, and for the provision of triple glazing.

Funding Offer – having noted the foregoing, if it is considered that a replacement property has an additional value beyond the £££ value agreed for the property being relinquished one accepts that the lien or charge on the property at the staircasing years proposed by the scheme developer are not unacceptable as long as it is clear that the scheme developer bears the % risk in the event of net sale proceeds of a replacement property being less than the agreed value at the time of grant of new lease or freehold, and that a transfer of lease or freehold title by way of operation of law following the decease of any lessee or freeholder to any other family member by probate under a will or letters of administration under intesticy shall not be deemed to trigger a disposal for consideration requiring any payback of any equity shared claimed by the scheme developer.

Now the offer is confusing in respect of if the Scheme Developers offer of Market Value + 10% for occupiers (limited to 26th May 2015 residence qualification). This has both halted potential moves within the estates to properties more suitable to a householders requirements, and given rise to a monopsony situation – the decision of the Southwark planning inspector in recognising this is welcome and to some extent we have similar (but smaller) flats to compare prices with – Falcon House from 1971 in Morden Road where a £ per Sq Ft can be used as guidance for flats, Victory Road post war re-build for houses in Pincott Road are good examples. Values of flats already sold are not necessarily good guidance as this may have been sold under stressful duress following specific family needs. I note deceased occupier ground floor maisonette is currently being offered at £325,000. which seems a little low as one is undercertain what rear garden is included, the size and layout is also smaller by about 6msq of useable space compared to my mothers. To some extent that price is calculated on a 4.5% gross rental yield at £1200 per month rental and obviously is discounted as should for example my other family members buy that property they are excluded from the Scheme Developers’ offer, this is of course unfair on the family members of that seller, they are getting less than the market value, even if they sell at MV+10% because we cannot calculate a fair market value with no development planned, one could expect, given that smaller new builds being offered at 1 bed nearby at £499,000 that a two bed, adjusted for age (little work actually needs doing – I would propose a true market value of £475,000 assuming the new 1 beds actually sell for £450,000), and that anyone buying at less than £370,000 is getting a bargain deal for SW19.

Now one can consider the valuation under a compulsory purchase, and it is unclear if a suitable price or deal cannot be concluded with the scheme developer, then the scheme promoter, if permitted by the Inspector may issue demolition order and subject to the land tribunal agreeing compensation value. This value would normally be the same market value, plus the 7% compensation and 3% for disturbance to the occupier, value based on the building as it stands (not ‘As Originally Built per Scheme Developer Offer). However where there is a reasonable prospect of development the land occupier may be entitled to the higher amount of the development value of the land – while this normally relates to schemes of public importance and undeveloped land but we have two types of occupier here. Freehold house occupiers where the scheme developer seeks to acquire the land for the purpose of building flats for resale or let at a profit. If we take the gross value of completed building, divided over the sq ft of land acquired less the build cost we can calculate the profit, a reasonable amount of this profit should then be provided to the land owner of the acquired land. A similar rationale can be applied in equitable fairness to a leaseholder of a flat. However we have some houses that the scheme provider wishes to acquire for a park – should the calculation here to be on a development basis on the grounds that the scheme provider could reasonably develop the land for profit (such scenerio being permitted under compulsory purchase order guidelines). Now, can we extend the profit amount to other leaseholders. At present, under the service charge agreement, there is an agreed fraction paid for ‘estate services’ where a fraction per flat or dwelling is charged on annual invoice for the expenditure incurred. Although there appears to be no specific mechanism for refund charge payers where a profit is made (example is
rents received for Mobile Phone Antennas on tower block roof spaces), there appears to be no set-off to repairs to roofs, when equitably there should be, and following the logic of this any profit (less reasonable 'normal profit' for the scheme promoters time and trouble) should be divided to the service charge payers in addition to the amount paid for market value plus disturbance. If the compulsory purchase route is the only means by which the Scheme Developer can complete acquisitions, then it is noted that the local authority is responsible for providing accommodation suitable for the resident’s needs. Equitably this would be a property again no less in size or utility of accommodation (adjusted for any ‘over accommodation of bedroom issues) including location comparable to that being acquired. Again there is the problem of physically finding a Zone 3 property of suitable size and layout close to frequent public transport, with charge free parking and good shopping amenities. Given what would appear to be an impass, unless the inspector can determine a reasonable alternative area of affordable accommodation the proposals for at least some of the flats and houses on High Path Estate should not move forward at the extent and type of accommodation and setting currently proposed in the Estates Plan and therefore on the grounds of equity and natural justice rulings should be made to protect the resident home occupiers in this situation.

One must question if within the offer to tenants of white new goods in kitchens can be construed as a bribe or inducement thereby invalidating tenants responses to like or dislike the plan in accepting short term gain at the expense of pain of others of different tenure.

To be protected from being unfairly denied of ones interest in land is a basic part of this and one should ensure that all forms of tenancy and land holding are treated equally. This is the implication of the Southward decision. We have problems with residents whom are tenants of affected non-resident owners not having an entitlement to re-homing on the estate, which is grossly unfair, and also of the May 26th cut-off date as we consider all whom join in our community for any reason have the offer applied to them. The Scheme Developer seeks to reduce the quantum of houses in the proposals by not providing replacement houses for those that it is acquiring prior to development on the open market not to be included in the number of houses presently available for social rent or replacement ownership. As stated it is not preferable that we are currently discriminated against the potential of acquiring a house, if it meets our needs, either pre or post development simply because when first moved here we were allocated a flat, there should be opportunity to acquire, on same shared ownership terms excluding down staircasing on the difference in price, a house, if we so desire and it is determined, against our wishes, that our existing flat be demolished, and sufficient houses for this purpose should be provided within the proposed development.

Walkways, Pavements and Fear of Crime
Note I have not considered things like street lighting, as this can be changed and modified without any demolition of the estate and therefore is irrelevant for our purposes.

General Notes

Note I would like all comments and representations I have made in respect of Ravensbury Kick-Starter Planning Application and Phase 1A High Path Planning representation to be appended by Merton Council Future Merton Department hereto and forwarded to Planning Inspector for the Estate Plan as my comments are pertinent to this response.

Locked In Carbon Calculation
Following From Central Hill Estate Development Calculations.
Central Hill is an estate of about 400 properties, mostly of concrete, resulting in 7300 tonnes of embodied CO2, with an estimate of 154 tonnes of CO2 involved in demolition. High Path has more properties, mostly of brick, so one could assess something in the region of 14,000 tonnes of embedded CO2 and 280 tonnes of CO2 = 14,280. Adding in CO2 required for new build is going to be similar, slightly more if window frames are proposed as extruded aluminium, so magnitude total 26,000tn for 600 replacement dwelling. Now the average household is estimated to
use for space heating about 1.7885 tonnes pa, allowing for 25% reduction in new build this would be 1.35tn per annum. Assuming 600 households this amount of CO2 is equivalent of 22 years of household use a, actually the saving of 25% is .44tn, which for 600 housing units is a payback period of 96 years.

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**Summary and Conclusions**

Given the lack of resident desire for the proposals as first mooted by the scheme provider, the appalling lack of respect to the adjoining character areas and listed buildings immediately adjacent to the plan area and lack of integration of some private developments into the plan area, the plan should be rejected as unfairly prejudicial to existing residential occupiers. I have given some areas where moderate development could be considered, and no-doubt over time there will be a need to replace some properties where there is a demonstrable increase in utility to the resident by so doing. However I believe that the concept of partial regeneration is best considered with the retention of our flats which are airy and spacious internally and in setting, although the lack of maintenance promised has diminished value and would be unfairly costly to existing leaseholders.

I would consider that the majority of house proposed sizes are smaller than the existing, I can provide later proof when this is needed, and likewise that the proposed replacement flats are smaller than our existing one, likewise proof can be provided under later examination.

I would propose a small area of the site be transferred to a community land trust for innovative and importantly affordable homes.

I would consider external envelope of the proposed properties is less desirable than our existing flats.

I would request that our existing home be retained, there is no immediate pressure to replace it for structural purposes and that the proposed replacements are insufficient, have less usable internal space and less external amenity and utility space.

There is also, when taken into consideration proposals for additional housing in Morden insufficient peak-hour space on the Northern Line and other public transport to support the overall additional housing units proposed by the Scheme Promoter.
High Path - Circle Housing Merton Priory research

Circle Housing Merton Priory have provided background research on each of the three estates to inform the case for regeneration. Circle Housing Merton Priory's research for High Path is published below.

Condition Survey & lifecycle cost analysis (added 14 Sep 2016)

This is an 88 page document. This should have been presented to residents at the displays at Elim Church, rather than hidden away on website were the majority of older people have no means of access, nor do many of use have the fast and stable technology to review many of these documents. Indeed such has been the extent of information presented it is in formats which are difficult to put into programmes for analysis without giving the computer I use significant intigestion. Please note the previous notes of my own, which I created without reference to these documents.

So Prepared by Baily Garner let us see how this differs from my own visual work preceding. I must declare have found them to be impartial, fair, and methodically in their corporate ethos. One problem with the report is that it draws on other prior commissioned work which is mentioned, but not set out or published here as part of the Estate Plan Submission by Circle. Items in[ ] or {} are generally my responses/

Executive Summary

The surveys (2014) generally found the buildings and properties on the estate to be in a fair condition. Specific condition issues were identified to various elements including flat roofs, defective rainwater goods, concrete repairs and (window replacements completed approximately 15 years ago.) [This is unclear WHAT window replacements in which blocks this refers to]

[For rainwater goods and cill work I identified this as part of circle lack of maintenance ability above]

Internally approximately 60% of kitchens and 80% of bathrooms were found to be in either a good or serviceable condition [I would agree, some defects are the result of tenant misuse or abuse I have removed doors and drawers to demonstrate this] [I assume internals only apply to tenanted properties] 2015 Internal survey of 10% found over 90% of kitchens/bathrooms in good condition [In my opinion the average replacement Kitchen is worse than that which it replaces – as a rule of thumb there is nothing which ages faster than something new – this applies to housing as a whole – I can demonstrate on other estates – and am prepared to show our own original kitchen which is over 50 years old] 23% of surveyed had old and in poor condition on electrical installations (I would like to see detail on this, some can be old, but working safely, a number of units have been re-wired, again in a poor manner by Circle, broadly blocks built 60s to 80s have PVC insulated copper cable which does not perish, and arguably fused circuits are as safe as MCB panels [I have website links that can demonstrate this where false negatives and non tripping occur in MCBs systems which can be quite dangerous to occupants].

Presence of Damp and Mould – [again I would like to see specific units, some is from lifestyle, some is from external failures most others can be solved with passive venting brick ducts, which authorities are reluctant to install, I dont know why in most circumstances this works, new build has constant on forced ventilation, this can be retrofitted in most circumstances it is not a per se justification on its own for demolition]

There are a number of excessive costs and incorrect specifications. In the main, for tenanted properties, unless tenancy agreements have changed since mother was a tenant internal, decorating, other than for older persons, is the responsibility of the tenant, likewise internal doors and architraves and floor coverings (other than kitchen/bathrooms/WCs). The maintenance of kitchens and bathrooms were also tenant responsibilities and it was only the introduction of the ‘Merton Standard’ and the transfer promise that this was included in that these were included to existing tenancies, the repairs at tenancy relinquishment might be necessary.

It could be that it has been estimated to be desirious to replace internal doors with half-hour fire doors with intumescent strips in door or frame. This may be an upgrade, we have had three fires in our block, and provided doors to hallways are closed, so far there has been time for escape without significant injury. This work can be carried out as properties are updated at end of tenancy, obviously most existing doors are imperial sizes, and to date to my knowledge such replacement of internal doors has not appeared to have been done so one wonders what the imminent necessity is.

Even so if one is to take 608 properties at a total cost of £100m over 50 years this is £2m per year or £3289 per property per annum, £65 per week which is within the lowest rental of a 1 Bed Unit. This is hardly a large sum as this includes window
renewal, kitchen bathroom renewal. I have proposed means of funding the tower block rooves, these were part neglected in the past by Circle, and the wording appears that this was due to the window works (referenced above) presumably there is some claim on the product liability of the installers insurance? Additionally if the Tower Blocks are in such poor condition, why on the estate plan of the Scheme Developer have the worse one been shunted to the back of the demolition schedules. The report is now 7 months old, draws on older and recommendations as works, some of which have been carried out between report dates, and others in progress into 2016. Other works have been noted as a high priority but these have not been carried out, one wonders what further deterioration CHMP is going to allow to run down the estate.

The 50year time frame is going to be much the same for new build, rainwater goods, internal bathrooms and kitchens will still need maintenance over this time frame irrespective of new or old building age. I would concede that service pipe failure may be more likely in items already 50 years old, and that the embedded nature of much of the services is a problem. New build however still does not install on a modular basis key routings of electrical and water and sewerage pipes with release joints and locks, this should be done in any new build to correctly isolate and enable swap-outs with ease and reduce disruption but could possibly done in old blocks with imagination.

[2014] structural survey generally identified that the buildings were in a good structural condition, with no significant foundation issues due to the presence of a sand/gravel soil build-up [Hmm, they didn't check the pavements which do have heavy, these have a bulk finger in the air cost estimate on desired external groundwork. I would note some ground areas have been made more defective by incorrect repairs of adjoining parts.

{Why were these documents not placed to Merton Councillors or presented to tenants representatives at the consultation events promoted by Circle}

Detail

152 There are no buildings on the estate dating to the 1930s in CHMP ownership or control

Tower Blocks were built 1964 to 1974. Items 4 were built 1970s not 1960s) Items 5 only Hillborough Close was built in the tail end of 1950, the others completed in early 1960 (see MMUDC yearbooks in Morden Library. Items 6 effectively built 1970 It rather depends if I was less than 7 when I used to jump over the wooden external fences on pincott road,. Item 8 built by 1961 – need to confirm from voters lists. Item 9 Probably more 1960 I have access to Jimmy Hemmings tenancy grant from when he moved back to Pincott Road from Reform Place

211 Positive Vote – This is subjective and misleading, omits to state leaseholders against stock transfer.

212 Is a fair summary

421 Items seem a little illogical Tower Blocks, if dates of construction wrong how can servicable life be assessed as being near, assumption on thermal characteristics original drawing specifications required and I understand concrete has good thermal characteristics, it is not impossible to add deck roofing sheets, ideally this should have be done when the windows were renewed. Flat rooves to mansion blocks dont look like felt to me,they are a particular galvanised finish and some (Ramsey, Priory and Gilbert to lower sections have been renewed since and during date of this report, but one is pleased if the main roof elements to the upper storeys are indeed in good, renewed condition. Pitched roof renewals one is uncertain what the tiled failure limit is, generally it would be nails in the wood that would fail, there would appear to be a reasonable programme of renewal, but I have conceded that Eleanor House is better demolished for other reasons. Remaining mansion blocks can be done in stages as most actually appear to be interlocking tiles, laid over battens so should last for significant length of time, you may wish to take independent advice and verification of failure of roof tiles and the appropriate maintenance of replacement regime required.

Rainwater issues, they dont see what I see (trees growing in rainwater hoppers and puddling. Other rainwater goods, agreed, but these are not checked and reviewed at the times roof repair scaffolds are put in place. Most work can be done with a cherry picker and does not need a fixed scaffolding for safe access. There is no render finish to tower blocks, I belive it is the type of float used on the final concrete set and that re-inforced concrete is designed to withstand such cracks although they may not look good. Most other concrete cracking is to corners of balconiess and sides of staircases, epoxy fixed rendering system can be employed at around £200 per sq foot treated plus access, and is part of normal maintenance. Pointing – I found work required in Gilbert and Priory Closes. Double Glazing omits the wooden windows in Stane Close, this may be a private house now. The assumption of Crittal windows on the estate would be Norfolk House only and at the 2014 writing would be incorrect, however two remain and indeed these were private units where one owner declined to accept renewal and one was in an institution and unable to give consent or consideration to renewal. There are non-working Crittal windows in common parts but these are hardly a problem when the opposite side is open to the elements.

Fire strategy has never been shared and door detail for fire resistance not calculated. Balcony elements already noted by me. Internal Communal Facilities in Fair Condition is a more generous than I would have given to a number of
areas, there is a handy person service used by CHMP, this can be done over the years to give a 7 year painting program, again cost wise going forward it is neutral whether in existing stock or to new build.

Poor and Failed Kitchens, probably abuse or sheer hard working use, the transfer promise was indeed that these would be renewed as required and agreed. Thermal Performance calculations, does not tally with the declared methods of construction, were any surveys by a CTRDS or similar qualified person undertaken to asses causes of damp, mould and condensation within domestic dwellings carried out?

522 Any answers?

531 Concrete Access Decks sounds a bit negative, Verandas is the nicer word, defects and repairs noted above anyway, caused by years of neglect and denial by Merton Council HD that anything was wrong.

532 Any results?

541 Agreed, epoxy resin repair solutions if not structural in imminent danger of collapse.

551 1970s defined blocks does not make clear which are the defectively pointed walls. If they are what I think they are I mentioned this at time of construction and was ignored.

561 Rather wonders what was being done in the 1980s, it is worth checking the pointing on more recent CHMP build as there are reports of defects on other newly built estates,

611 Do you understand? does X mean good or bad? Is a tick an affirmative answer to the questions. 8 Norfolk House I know the gentleman had refused to have the kitchen replaced. I have spare doors that I could probably upgrade for him, the underlying carcasses are of solid timber, blockboard and plywood and unless damaged by water spillages are fairly indistrucable as long as one bees-waxes the drawer runners regulary.

Interesting that 51 Priory Close has a less old kitchen still in disrepair – see my earlier comments. Tenants that are old could use the handyman service to refurbish existing kitchens if carcasses still sound.

Noteworthy that hardly any Kitchens or Bathrooms appear to have failed the assements.

There appears to be no correlation between age of electrical systems and the quality of the installation and as such the report summary percentages are misleading and better reported in a Venn Diagram. Inadequate appears to be the number of outlet sockets, which indeed was based on a low initial installation when the flats were first built. This could have been because some appliances typically would tee of the lighting circuits in the days when power for lighting was billed at a lower rate than power for ring main circuits. Naturally hammer chisel and recessed double sockets and small runs to the ring main can provide extra if one does not mind the disruption. CHMP are adding extra surface mount double socket outlets as units fall empty as tenants die off or move to nursing homes.

651 inherent ‘cold bridging’ issues related to the fabric of the buildings, [This would need specific determination, some bathrooms of tower blocks are on the internal core, so would like to see detail if there is difference to ground floor, mid floor or upper floor issues] along with potential occupier issues [agreed but solvable]

652 Overcrowded with Chattels [rather my point, but the increase in floor space in proposed properties does not necessarily increase USEABLE SPACE designs of new need significant thought particularly for how children live and study, and the sheer space needed for clothing – eg an external shed allows for change of workboots and clothing, storage of tools and equipment. Kitchens need plenty of space for appliances and means for preparation of food (home prepared food is more nutritious and cheaper than ready meals and takeaways).

712 Difficult to be 50 years old if Hudson Court completed 1972, that is only 45 years) One would need proof of how this servicable life, costing and means of refurbishment is calculated.

713 Seems excessive to budget for repairs to rooves in year 1 if they have been renewed, 10 year renewal is reasonable, new homes being built seem to depend on flat rooves so no additional marginal maintenance costs either way.

714 Costs appear to exclude scaffolding to 3 and 4 storey rooves, presumably 2 two storey flat rooves access tower or cherry picker usable in safe manner.

715 As essential repairs have not been quantified year 1 is a bit steep on cost, better to fully assess cost need over a 15 year time frame then at 40 years thereafter? New build still has identical cost as roof needed on the new items, I have suggested defray costs with creation of mansard habitable spaces

716 Windows probably OK, Renewals possibly ok, better to assume 1/10 need repair each year, with replacement in 12 year intervals. Again windows in new build presumably need renewal or servicing periodically. Our own windows we replaced about 20 years ago and appear useable. Replacements should be triple glazed?

717 Some 18 Front doors have already been replaced to norfolk house and have been ongoing to other ones (hillborough close for example), cost has been around £800 per door. Therefore estimates are already over costed. There appears to be no requirement to replace external doors at Lovell House as these as a fire assessment open onto
the street.

718 accepted.

719 Seems overspecifying on floor finished to be done in one lump. One would expect most floors where not heavy trafficked to have plenty of life in them, tower blocks have had piecemeal replacement to floors as required and likewise doors. Most doors look to have, if lubricated and adjusted annually, a good 20 years life if not abused by residents.

7110 seems way over specified and most blocks recently have landlord electrical and lighting upgrades already completed (see galvanised trunking – which does need snagging ), some blocks are behind schedule and work not fully done as yet, and uncertain if wholly needed in blocks without resistance testing. Costs therefore excessive and over too short a time frame

7111 please check dates of lift renewals already completed. New blocks will need lifts anyway and therefore zero marginal cost difference. You cannot make an assessment on something you have confirmed you have not seen !

721-3 Seems totally illogical based on the survey results. A better cost basis would be on the normal basis of tenancy churn which is normally around 5% so 30 properties per year, and allow additional void period time of average of 10 weeks, plus 2% for general wear and tear for long term resident so say 20 properties = 50 per annum which is reasonable, teams can then move in sequence around spending 1 to 2 weeks on clear and fix and repair in a methodical. After 8 years the tenanted properties would be complete, although one might be expected to kickstart with additional units in first year, a number of void and acquired properties have already been completed – 3 in May Court and 2 in Marsh since report written for example. I am uncertain why one would replace internal doors, I have never had to do this – cleaning painting and washing of internal doors and finishes and painting of walls are the tenants responsibility anyway, with handyman assistance for older or vulnerable tenants. Otherwise no difference in provision as all needed (arguably more so ) in new build.

822 The cost assesment to strip and rebuild one off pincott road house (2 bed) 58/56 Pincott Road at £114, 977 or about £90K is somewhere in cuckloo land, do they not check for reasonableness ? We can do quick calc -Roof and chimey pointing £20K, repoint front rear £3K New Bathroom £2K Kitchen £3k Electrics £3k Gast£2K Floor coverings and 2nd Fix £3K , Redec 6 rooms £5K Drains RWP gutters soffits £3K Max £38K which is about Homes Under the Hammer typical prices. Most unlikely to need new windows or external doors , add £6K if so, either way well under Bailey Garner estimate. Mostly likely other works and prices on other blocks and houses way over priced, Lovell House, particulary as different to 2 bed and 3 bed units not understood. Cost information should come from the agreed schedule of rates contract CHMP has , not from DAILY Garner internal cost files.Cost of prelims percentage seems high, inflation uplift irrelevant if at SoR agreement, and contingencies unlikely on those costs as everything included (except Asbestos Removal – most vinyl tiles still have this and the Asbestos register and survey should be on record to check ), However it may be that this lifecycle cost I have mis-read so a repeat over three periods in the 50 years is of £30K x 3= £90K plus inflation, if so cost is reasonable, and would not vary significantly if new build as presumably maintenance in that too.? Communal estimate for Norfolk House is £45K over 50 years per dwelling which seems at £1000 pa or £20 per week a reasonable amount to place into a sinking fund, there is scope to perhaps reduce this if proper preparation done as little painted areas, nil work done on walkways in last 55 years other than painting and cleaning. Indeed one might expect a little more than this cost, based on £15,000 per flat initial expenditure and £600 per flat thereafter pa with additional £10,000 at Y25 and £15,000 at Y£50. This would be broadly comparably with new build maintenance as the main cost would be roofing and soffit work. Across estate works at £500 per annum per dwelling seem excessive, one would expect a chargeable amount at present day rates of more like £300 per annum or £6 per week, and much of this is already billed in service charges.

911 Sound Attenuation. Residents of new blocks designed by PRP report sound transmission from adjoining and adjacent flats is occurring. Therefore newbuild is not necessarily solution to this problem. Accoustic mass and mats can be retrofitted where acoustics are transmitted via service voids.

9112 Means What?

Cost Spreadsheet appendixes. Need adjustment to reality where first year works have already been completed as of 1st March 2017 -eg Boiler Renewals already recently, with much errors of incorrect service conecctions, parts not brought to site , pump and circuit board failure on installation, incorrect analysis of faults, temperature constrits defective leading to scalds or no hot water, in general this re-inforces my contention that new is not necessarily better (off site test required and certificated for each new boiler and installation procedure may solve this ), completed to Norfolk House, Hillborough Close and Others. It is not demonstrated where cost per flat may be cheaper in years in future for second renewals and repairs in the case of new build. If blocks are larger in newbuild then there will be some reduction of common parts costs per flat, but this may be offset as more blocks will have lifts and so it cannot be said that new build of itself will be cheaper and easier to maintain that existing blocks?
Norfolk House and other costs for renew cold water incoming service Cost Consultant has never seen how and where these run as existing!! Asbestos Surveys have already been done (and show CHMP incompetence as these were on file with MCHD at time of stock transfer. Internal Doors rarely need replacement, is the reduction of doors in new build indicative of a desperate cost saving by CHMP? Note for replacement flat we cannot accept integrated lounge and diner / kitchen, they must be separated out for smells (extractor fan notwithstanding) and to retain wall space and storage space. Returning to costings little need for most replastering and re-decoration is tenant responsibility. Loft insulation already exists, Cavity Wall Insulation already exists, I have no idea where communal entrance doors could be hung in addition to those existing without blocking electrical installations. Not costed is a Lift, there is space and looks like budget provision for this is possible. (I am lost as to where 6 communal doors are – bin stores?)

There are not 30 Cold Water Tanks not a full 30 RWP/ SVP (Actually for SVP good luck they run internally) this should be re-costed at LM plus Bends. I note ‘Norfolk House’ is repeated I presume this is Hillborough Close. Same costing notes apply in general. I am not certain why cavity wall insulation needs re-doing every 40 years, does it crumble to dust and get eaten by insects!? Costs for external signage seem excessive !?

Costs for remainder of estate, particulary refuse systems to houses seem illogical, other first year costs incorrect on specification, a request should be made for proper costs, although accepted this is a good starting point and one can build and asses needs for Y1 to Y15 and then thereafter. Drainage repairs need doing, and some surveys have been completed, so work values from hereonin can be adjusted.

Overall the report is good even if costs are over robust in some areas and lacking in others. The danger is that the report will be mis-interpreted and misused by CHMP and twisted in the same way as it does statistical analysis. Ideally there should be a comparison of costs over the expected lifetime of new build and existing units, and assess if there is a significant difference per unit, one suspects not.

Therefore we are back to the political decision of should householders lose their dwelling simply for the replacement with dense flatted developments of poor quality and visual appeal where houses take up the predominant landscape, when those houses are mostly freehold held and of good build quality.

Additional Analysis of Lifetime Cost Report/s By PPS Ltd High Path Estate Condition Assessment

This introduces the incorrect schedule of dates of construction but defines the 9 Types of Flats.

Type 1 Tower Blocks

113 1960s and 70s. There are minor differences in Hudson Court.

Overall one agrees with the report here, key elements are is the rendering defects significant, and the thermal (again what is Mu Value for different external walls). The dangers of the balconies are noted, why has PRP shown tables and chairs on balconies on new building drawings presented to residents if climb and fall hazards are a significant potential problem? In all honesty I wondered in 1966, aged 4, of the building of these blocks, as magnificent is the view from, and view of, the coldness of my relatives and friends properties was noted, but the central heating systems and double glazing have assisted to reduce this in later years, input from solar and renewable sources may reduce costs. Other than external finishes there would be little to chose between new build and these, except the existing probably are situated on the best footprint, and development of similar heights to full length of pincott road east, north leg, would be an excess of scale and mass, the 4+2 arrangement of flats on the core is probably optimal for external sizes and internal stairwell management. Would an external clad in better performing thermal materials be a better solution for the next 50 years, with revenue-earning improvements at ground level – eg building a shop unit to frontage of Marsh Court and offices with green rooves to High Path elevation? If demolished hardwood items should be set aside for re-use or reclamation yard collection.

Type 2 / Type 3

Mansion Blocks

Generally in agreement re work not done and required. Consideration of thermal walls, have heard that these are cavity and two half brick thick walls but one and a half makes sense. Replacement properties should not take up significantly larger footprints or heights – five plus set back 6th maximum but walkway external access should be maintained rather than the dank enclosed access of other block types. If demolished hardwood fittings and internal doors should be set-aside for re-use. I am not sure of why Type 3 has cavity walls at first floor and above and Type 2 which appear similar does not. The entrance archways mimic an interpretation of the Norman historic gateways to Merton Abbey (one lost by Merton Council, one exant relocated to Merton Church, St Marys, and the doorways to the stone build St Johns Church in High Path.
This type of block has had recent window and roof works completed elsewhere in the borough, Parkleigh Court, Hatfield Mead in London Road Morden being similar examples, others being in Grand Drive, Lower Morden as well as similar styles in Mitcham – Glebe Court, Pitt Crescent in Wimbledon and Ravensbury Court in Mitcham would all have the same thermal characteristics.

Type 4

P178/8.1 Blocks – 213 More specifically general replacement of part of All Saints Area demolition and re-build. Completed c1978 Vanguard has 12 no 1 bed flats of which one is used as office/base/tea-room for caretakers and cleaners and hot-desk for technical officer. Roof tiles more like 38 years old, Boxing to roof gutters is generally cosmetic, but does prevent thermal warping of upvc goods. Agreed cleaning would be benificial at £15 per LM. Apparently painting tiles with natural yoghurt prevents moss. Downpipes are to every other property on the houses, and the pictures are misleading, there is no gutter outlet above the garage forward recess. I am not aware of spill from rain gutters. Repairs to lintels are common need – resin bonded is a useful fix, 333 / 334 noted, all seems normal maintenance 3510, but probably are. 362/ 363 Timber fences will need replacements normally, paving slabs are in need of replacement, this is part of normal requirements. 4.0 May is not a good professional word in the context. 714, may is not one would expect from professionals, one would like to see ideal variances of Building Regs, which in 1978 were quite strong, and have varied little to the present day, some retro fit if not already done on thermal insulation should meet present W/M value requirements. 717 I am not certain where this is, seems a small works ( photo shows what I think is freeholder house) Map is incorrectly shaded, photos show the whole place needs a good brush up and highlights the daily lack of cleanliness that the service charge paying freeholders would expect for their monies.

Type 5 Blocks.

114 Late 1950s/Early 1960s/ Mid 1960s is more truthful. More true that DeBurgh house constructed for residents of part of All Saints area re-development , remainder for former house dwellers from Pincott Road and High Path predominantly. General misspellings not acceptable in a professional report. 219 They have missed Nos 10 and 11 Norfolk House which have level access bar small entrance thresholds. 311 Blocks are 59 years old maximum. As generally, apart from wind-blow rain mostly around flashings to chimneys, one fails to see what the deterioration in interlocking concrete tiles is as long as fascias to gable ends are kept in good repair and assessment, but I note build up of moss which I do not recall in previous years, perhaps they were cleaned by brush when the fascia boards were overhauled in the late 1970s ?(I recall scaffolding erected by cannot remember date) 323 Does this apply when cavity insulation is in situ ?, 'Low' is unspecified and proper Mu value provided for comparion, 333 replaced since report written. 337/338 note hardwood a tropical endangerment of species, these frames should be re-used rather than chipped for landfill or biomass if demolished. 341 Informed by Merton Council housing department this was not a problem. 343 access verandas I see not evidence of corrosion 346 redecoration works last carried out just prior to stock transfer, specification of paintwork appeared not to contain rub down make good and properly prime and paint as underlayers of original paintwork appears exposed. 347 painting has been carried out, but not to external sides of steps, another typical CHMP job half done. 364 the original kitchen has been ruined on removal, the gas dryer worked only on town gas and service pipe was capped off in 1973 , most other units had further removal work of metalwork a few years back shortly after transfer, no 28 missed out as owner was in hospital. Asbestos report needs confirming, my understanding is that drying cabinets have a refractory material and concrete finish with a crysotile removable panel. 366 this paragraph seems illogical to the three kitchens reviewed as the detail on them is different in fact and opinion. 413 I can confirm since fitting double glazing that there is a low incidence of mould growth adjacent to windows. 414 see surveys, 413 possibly but most have had at least one repaint to wood architraves and doors. 416 yes please. 716 agreed and programme should be phased over three years. Photo 1 is of rear. Photo 7/8 front rears reversed as front doors access from walkway, not roadway. Photo 12, sheds not mentioned in report, agreed problems with shed roof coverings, some of which have been renewed since the report.

Overall Hillborough and Norfolk Houses larger internally than most other flats, any replacement must be absolutely no smaller than existing including storage sheds and wall/door spaces.

Type 6

213 Try 1970s. 219 agreed, 2110, this applies to all blocks as in no dedicated parking area, but the main parking area for Mychell House is adjacent in Doel Close, the area for Tanner House is shared with Hudson Court rear and
onstreet parking on Nelson Grove Road. West Arm. 312 probably no fire separation as single loft hatches on stairwells, insulation should have been replaced under central govt grants, timbers were pretreated. 313 I think they mean the external boxing which is for asthetic purposes (and to reduce thermal stress on black upvc) 323 again Mu values wanted, cavity insulation exists. 335 is against the stock transfer promise , but this may be tolerated by residents, if after 30 years can the open walkways be treated as public footpaths ? 341 I am not certain if not having private balconies is a good thing or not, retro fit is optional, but does mean accessways in living rooms are needed to get to the outside, this is cold, wet , england, getting outside is normally not that desirable. There are no drying courtyards to Mychell House. External sheds are in poor condition and need attention. 412 trickle vents in windows can help with condensation abatement.  

Want of Repair and Potential for Improvement is an interesting way of assessing cost priorities and makes sense and should be used for all CHMP managed properties, one suspects that a good use of 50% of rental income and service charges to maintain and enhance housing stock is reasonable leaving the remainder for interest payments , day to day cleaning and management, rather what a Housing Association is supposed to do, with a little amount for community co-hesion and tenant improvement budgets.

Type 7

216 Parking is to rear of Hillborough/Deburgh Garages, and in accordance with Mayor's office guidelines is unallocated other than estate parking permit scheme, and along the north pathway, independent living bungalow has dedicated parking area. There is scope to narrow the road and still have on street parking and provide Y-Cube type accommodation over the garages and parking area. 311 Type 7 are build 1986 (per date year in the gabling !) so rooves are ~ 30 years old. Probable fire separation, for flats blockwork was built up on construction from memory. Timber trusses are of the pre-stressed type with impregnated preservative. 323 (and the thermal changes are, given the embedded CO2 in the buildings ?) 334 yes, a painting regime has been neglected by CHMP, so the costs that should have been spent in years from transfer to date are underspent, making year 1 costs seem excessive as this is catch-up on 5 years delay in repairs and painting, which can lead to additional work when timbers start to rot for want of a lick of paint. 716 Damp in flat 6, try checking the external ground and airflows.

Type 8

219 Parking to rear accessed off nelson grove road, and use of garage block for additional rent. On street parking permitted for Abbey Road / Mill Road CPZ permit holders. Concrete is blockwork with battening for the tiles. 312 Insulation should have been done a few years back. General insulation problems normally solve by most having book-cases against the walls. More noteworthy of this type is the high proportion of window to wall particulary to main maisonette lounges. The lower flats had insulated sandwich under window panels, replaced when upvc double glazing done. Photo 5 , the flat appears to be appropriating communal garden space, not very well, we would like to work with 'Sustainable Merton' & use community grants / landfill tax credits and similar to improve areas like this.

Type 9

213 There has been some messing about with front walls and gates, which has detracted from the original pleasing street frontage. 215 The rear access is strictly by an estate access roadway off High Path (Historically this was the site of Sunny Villas name urlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlurlul, the car parking areas are further north than the end of the terraces gardens. 311 no expert by they don't look like imminent failure, pictures fairly show the timberwork repairs required, which freeholders may be unwilling to commit to with the uncertainty to demolition proposals by the Scheme Developer. 315 should have been grant aided and is still available to householders under say British Gas schemes. Ideally felt batten and jablite sandwich to loft space, which is capable of conversion to habitable space for households experiencing overcrowding, but this could affect the nice 1950s styling of the terrace.

General

Joinery paintwork, specification seems to be wrong, should be burn off or rub down, prime, undercoat and final
finish, the re-primering has not been done in past, leading to premature flaking of painted finishes. Slipped and missing tiles again always better to have prompt attention, that is what service charges are levied and paid for. 345 possible funds for a common style if request for conservation area status on 50s blocks would be desirable. 414 absolutely, some has been done ad-hoc by CHMP handyman team. 514 difficult to do, smaller kitchens tend to be in 1 beds, do function adequately but no room for a dishwasher or washing machine, the presence of separate utility room in any new build would be desirable away from eating/food preparation areas. 551 Lasted well hasn't it. 633 due to roof material failure, once sorted not a significant problem. 651 waste management some £35,000 spent on tower blocks waste storage recently. There are insufficient recycling bins still properly provided even after this expenditure, this is typical of poor CHMP planning and assessment. 661 Design review, this is a tool for designing new build areas, not for adversarily criticising existing buildings and layouts which are marginal as to their function, particularly 1980s built houses in this area compared to other estates built of this age. 691 most I understand have the necessary consents. 6101 Energy costs much have a DCF analysis if Leaseholders/Freeholders expected to financially contribute to replacement properties from the normal Compulsory Purchase 10% disturbance allowance.
Urban design review analysis and thoughts

A) From a planning point of view merely including the footprint on page 1 is illogical the entire area hangs as an area, working with the adjoining Future Merton Character Study Areas and the buildings which my submission had earlier noted. The area map is also incorrect as the latest CHMP elim church display includes thoughts and changes for the area of St Johns Parish Hall as such the inclusion of misleading information on the merton website as submission from CHMP wastes our time in looking at the detail therein.

Background – successful ballot is misleading, tenants is correct, for residents as a whole leaseholders and freeholders of houses were excluded from stock transfer ballot and the survey of them indicated opposition to the transfer, and would have given an overall rejection of the proposal. There were no alternatives such as transfer of part of the estates to the likes of community land trusts, and the goalposts of things like residents involvement at board level have been reduced since and therefore what was supported by tenants at stock transfer time is not presented in local democracy and control at time of writing now.

The concept of homes in poor standards, it is difficult to distinguish between housing stock in High Path and similar blocks elsewhere, eg Moffat and Poplar Courts in Wimbledon, Pelham House in South Wimbledon, indeed only the ex LCC St Helier Estate Houses built 1930s are a difference in external style at least. Of course it is easy to see that now the templates and justifications for demolition are with CHMP it is easy to cut and paste and bring forward documentation that all of the estates and many of the street properties under CHMP control have a general direction toward demolition and re-build. It should be noted that CHMP are not the only provider in Merton, including nearby the estate London and Quadrant and Wandle Housing Associations, and elsewhere substantial and minor provision by Moat Housing and Anchor/Hanover Housing Associations as examples. (Other minor charities have mansion blocks in the borough – Queen Alexandra's Homes and Haig Homes for example).

As we consider doubling the density of the estate at High Path, we must consider, given present day pressures on NHS services particulary the likes of closure of walk-in treatment centre in Mitcham at Wilson Hospital centre and the threatened closure of St Helier Hospital Services that can this additional number of residents be accommodated properly for health choices. As being near busy roads which are polluted and sometimes in toxic airstream from Beddington Waste incinerator plumes one must ask if, combined with loss of light at ground level if the increase in proposed height and mass is actually going to worsen expected health outcomes.

Celebration of Admiral Lord Nelson, there are some intellectual reasons why this should not be the case, depends on how much of a democrat one is, and Nelson spent little time at Merton, and his loved ones were arguably robbed by their advisors, despite Nelson's brother's family getting a perpetual pension at an annual value of some £4m at present day terms.

Much of the design study is intellectual tosh, and could be used elsewhere on the likes of blank return walls at road junctions throughout the borough. Our flats do properly overlook most areas, but it is admitted some improvement of the alleyway access by alleygating as elsewhere in say Mill Road character area was not desired by residents when asked at resident association meetings. One indeed could question the sanity of the original estate architects, there appear say little improvement in building flats of solid construction when the original terraces shared that method of build in on the more substantial houses. For the 1980s houses, unless the garages were built integral with the house, and the kitchens effectively pushed to the rear in extensions into gardens, there is little way doors could be brought to street frontage without needing more artificial illumination. The 1980s houses are probably a fair representation of other, exclusive, gated estates around the borough – larger types say off Lake Close in Wimbledon.

Part of the incremental build problem of the estate has resulted from the change in proposals of what Merton High Street should actually be as determined for by the Local Authority, should residents be subject to the vagaries of allledged learned persons changing their minds with latest architectural whim, if this takes away space, utility and amenity from those residents?

The example of connectivity is more applicable to All Saints Estate rather than High Path, which generally has a good connected grid, there are some further areas that could be opened up, and better ways of providing links east-west if the design constrain of the spacing from Merton High Street to Nelson Grove Road and onto High Path is maintained, given the need to retain 68 and Hubert Close Nelson Grove Road, Rodney Place, and 1,25 and Kelmscott House Abbey Road within the area, The main difficulty of transport out of the area is Abbey Road,
congested, left (east) turn only at Meretune Way and left (south) turn only at Morden Road. I would contend that separation of cycling from motoring routes is an imperative, as such High Path could be a far better alternative though east-west route than Merton High Street, with alternatives to north and south at Quicks Road and Windsor Avenue.

Note where any traffic count submissions are made by the Scheme Promoter or The Scheme Developer it should be noted that these were last carried out at school holiday times and during periods of road closures to merton high street and haydons road and are not typical of weekend shopping hour flows and peak school day vehicle movements and normal scale factors do not apply, you should also ask to see results of previous traffic counts.

Page 11 Merton Diagram, arguably incorrect as 'Red Line' of Montague Road/Trinity Road fails to note the low traffic light priority to this route at Wimbledon Broadway, and its general deterrence for use by buses and large goods vehicles.

Parking provision, I have already noted that much of the parking spaces are used by business light goods vehicles, where the use of public transport is impracticable. I have also noted that bus services are less frequent early mornings, sundays and no longer go to some key destinations, particulary Wandsworth and Sutton.

Provision of a rail station at Colliers Wood High Street would be useful as Haydons Road Station is not wheelchair accessible, nor are the north side platforms served by bus services as such. Conversion of 'Thameslink' loop to tram operation may be useful, as would the provision of tram stop at east end of trading estate for deep city farm and industrial area and closer more direct route to high path east end than the difficult to access Morden Road tram stop (road underpass dank and surface crossings do not have clear pedestrian phases at Jubilee Way, Meretun Way across Morden Road and Nursery Road Junctions. Page 13 Bus Stop splodges are in wrong locations compared to actual.

Page 15/16 One would like to see the justifications for development brought forward and ongoing to South East of of High Path estate in Christchurch Road and Western Road as these would appear to be contrary analysis. Page 16 is utter nonsense in respect of footpaths as the determination of use of Meretun Way with prohibited pedestrian access is the largest determinate of non-footpath use, but there is a steady, if unspectacular walk mode via Station Road to Sainsburys/Merton Abbey Mills and across Meretun Way for access to Lombard Industrial Estate note access to Jubilee Trading Estate is difficult due to fence barriers along footpath. Off estate plan but of recommendation is to re-align public footpath away from dipping hole ditch and into the Jubilee Estate, better integrating a single wildlife corridor for about 75metres. Page 16 it is agreed that the footpaths around St Johns Parish Hall are non-existant, one should request of the original design brief the reason for that, it would be better to add these in at little cost as these have been informal footway routes, opposed by Merton Housing department, since the estate was built.

Page 17 map sage green footway crossing over Merton High Street at Haydons Road is now prohibited, despite estate footways pointing in that direction, this is as a result of a TfL grant to a Merton Council for street repairs and cycleway to Merton High Street and typical non-joined up thinking of MC working with (not) CHMP. The second purple line to west in Will Miles Court is not possible due to doorway being padlocked out of use. The coloured logic of the access road to Meretun Way bears no relation to its actual heavy use.

Connectivity analysis is likewise flawed in the maps and therefore not fit for purpose at the detail level. Much of the explaining of where one is on the estate was defined by the Pubs – similar to the days of bus destinations for example. The loss of the Princess Royal is particulary missed, one now directs to certain places by reference to Domex, or St Johns Church. The continuation of road names has confused everyone since 1861 censuses where the Split of Nelson Grove (Road) and Pincott Road (part known as Double Row) is confusing as to east/west and north/south segments. Eleanor House remains impossible to give directions to, and Ramsey House has no clear public parking and difficult access for delivery vehicles, the logical is to park in 'Rowland Way' and walk, but there are no road signs for this, two parking slots should be re-allocated to timed loading only for general public, this would help in the immediate time going forward. Indeed many recommendations for any interim period across the estate prior to demolition, if that is agreed on, should be made to ensure the best use of landscape as things change and to maximise the best use now, before any consideration of demolition is made, it is the refusal to engage with residents on this issues that have the biggest frustration when attempting to deal with circle, and the excuse for not doing anything (of significance) is that the buildings/roads are all going to be demolished, without acknowledgement that we still have to live, and walk, drive and cycle, here and now.

Line length short views, in part this has changed when merton high street south side was demolished, some routes now for pedestrians were not possible before, and the original cruciform had the terraces, the block around Beckett Close was always one single farm/light industrial area with no need for external access! Routes do not show the ground heave from tree roots or poor finish of tarmac, etc areas that make journeys by foot NOW a chore, not an enjoyment. I suppose in my preamble I somewhat ommited to mention that so I am
experienced, if not expert, in the pavings of the area, additionally it should be noted that many footpaths are often (illegally) used by cyclists, including south side of High Path and the routes from Will Miles Court to Merton High Street.

Page 22 Dead end routes seems to imply a negative, this may not be so as the roads to north of merton high street are also dead end roads, although have fire path access, some routes circle round (stand close) so are not dead end. Routes that claim to be connected omit banned movements for pedestrians or vehicles. Photo2 Vehicles on pavements, MC has new policy allowing this where 1m of pavement remains, however this is narrower than a double buggy – or my trolley when loaded with a large TV or other materials, my trolley wheels are also sensitive to ill repairs and uneven surfaces. Rodney Place residents value their dead end road (see responses to Phase 1A planning application), and Station Road desperately needs proper pedestrian crossing over the unnamed access road into Sainsburys.

Page 24, Bungalow would have been better built facing footpath, but designed for privacy. Photo 2, two routes needed when roadworks (such as recent gas works) have closed off pavements to pedestrians. Wall at this location should be removed, serves not purpose. Dead end footpath route of Rowland Way not so, gate is open for pedestrians and leads to bus stop. Photo 3 this architectural trick are not being proposed in new build, which seems waste of space of say new proposed route adjacent 68 Nelson Grove Road. Photo 4, agreed by residents value their rear access to gardens and do not want alley gating – a footpath from Hillborough Close to Doel Close was long requested by denied by MCHD. Page 26, item 5, fairly difficult with the presence of Meretune Way, only one effective route by Morden Road or through Nelson Memorial Garden, the alternative via Lyon Road footpath is blocked by Martin Harkness House for a direct route. Page 30, methinks the originator of this babble worrieth too much, this is a small estate, coverable in few paces. (I am reminded of larger, darker estate in Wapping in the 1970s where this may have been a problem). Page 32, 5, depends on priorities. I would consider one review the Barbican Estate in London as a contrast where these attributes have been welcome. It should be noted that there was early 1960s deliberate reduction in housing stock across MMUDC, although it was replaced in areas by new and so department of the obvious needs to temper with historical document declarations. Page 34, etc. OK for analysis of a new build, but the statement regarding fronts and backs can depend on the working of the property functions, particulary kitchens where the most overview of front areas happens and it depends what happens to backs. Are terraced houses where there is no rear access worse, as everything has to be accessed through the building to the rear – eg garden materials? The alternative is rear quadrangles or similar and a tight landscaped or utility space, but this can result in building enclaves, and the working of doors to front otherwise is inefficient and gives dark internal cores to buildings (existing tower blocks, or Vanguard House), access via external walkways is preferable, it does not matter quite where the street is as long as access points are logical. Photo 2 probably not, and for that sunny view one should have been aware of the previous funeral directors premises in that area!! The active frontage marked to Falcon House on Morden Road is clearly incorrect, from the analysis, likewise area 3 does not make sense in ground reality. One would put frontages to Lovell, Norfolk and Hillborough as active where front doors are, so the analysis is flawed. Page 36, Photo 2, 'offering nothing' is an exaggeration. Photo 3 this is the rear gate entrance and untypical as used mostly for egress of waste or access from parking areas into storage areas. The bedrooms at ground floor level have to face one way or the other, and the set back behind private space can be created from existing, but that private space needs maintenance and access to tools and materials, which is lost if we lose garages and store sheds.

Conclusions : 2 does not really matter, 3 this in part depends on footprint determination at time of build, and desire to orientate upper stories as views to London or the Surrey Hills. 5 But enlarging or re-configuring could do this. 6. The flats in Abbey Road do not unattractively have views from the road, and the view of maisonettes opposite is quite nice from our lounges. Page 39 rental structures are not a grand determination of why demolition should occur, it is better to provide the most amount of affordable properties in these financially tightened times. Community Land Trust rules may be better for the prospective occupants. Page 40, this analysis of heights does not mean that the procedure is best for occupants, residents or pedestrians, one cannot complain that airy corners make one feel 'insecure' then build high, dominating, sunlight blocking buildings at the next turn. One might consider, just, the tube station at Clapham South, where high flats and low commercial units do work in a 1930s context. However opposite the high buildings is an open common parkland, the flats are oriented to the north, and wide roads can accommodate shadows missing buildings on the far side thereto. This is not practical on the area around South Wimbledon Tube Station. New context's may not be a bad thing? Page 42 Height and Massing Conclusions, agreed, and there will need to have special relevance to High Path area where a 5? Storey Secondary School is being mooted, to the south, which will cast shadow, and have serious consequences socially, for any residential buildings on the opposite side of High Path thereto.
1. Streetscape, trees were planted at a mix of times, but along Merton High Street around 1980 when the last of the terrace houses to Merton High Street complete, one can scarcely believe their growth, but having good sunlight must be a contribution to this. 2. the Abbey Road chicane causes much frustration and speed humps noise when scaffolding lorries etc pass over them. 3. High Path, agreed a quietway would be better, at least from Meretune Way, and narrowing at that point if areas agreed for development, but the proposals for a School and indications from FutureMerton is that this is NOT desired by them, I beg to disagree. I would like light controlled junction at Meretune way, with right turn permitted, but that will encourage rat-running from Merton High Street via Abbey and Pincott Roads, which are required as entrance, and exist, to the high path area from the north.

4. Misnamed, means Morden Road, see older pictures and note diminution of quality from previous planning errors? By Merton Council. 5. Pincott Road, seems to work OK in its present state and has for the last 55 plus years. 6. Many garages used as storage, even from persons at all saints estate where houses there built too small. Otherwise needed for our area to have the safe storage of vehicles and excess of necessities of oils, additives, bicycles, ideally garages should be integrated into houses, and they were part of the promise of moving from our original houses around the area to the new built estate for us, one supposes they are a better need than the pigeon-lofts in the pictured space that were taken away from us in 1963. Page 46 better base activity around the Tower Blocks we have asked for, but CHMP unwilling to progress forward ideas for social interaction and community purposes. Page 48, Photo and para 3, it is nice for someone to agree with me after 51 years, although there is step-free access from High Path side walkway, the steps are a pain, and dangerous and should have been replaced, or preferably not built in the first place. Para 5/Pic 5 The wonderful bear pit, of course its in the wrong place, alternatives would have been nice to see before wasting money building in this way. 6- one can walk out the front door with a small trowel, it can be done but generally was discouraged by MCHD. Landscape, Hayward Close trees probably planted around 1980, not from 1950s, disliked by some as branches shed over leaves and grass. 2 not mentioned, but one would have built full length long block east-west, although how to locate bin stores and sheds is beyond my architectural expertise. 3 the estate was rather proud of this little LEAF funded area, but maintenance needed as with any landscaping to deal with weeds around the decorative ironmongery, which has seating opposite, not pictured.

Conclusions, 3 – I would not worry about cohesive character – good randomness is a lovely British Trait. 7. Trees in Norfolk House, at ends of the 1980s driveways and to Deburgh House have been omitted, but Birches are a real invasive species, seeding too greatly and easily, Plane trees are now suffering in Eastern UK from fungal die-back, which is worrying.

Review Conclusions – Misleading picture, this is Rodney Place, not in the Estate Plan Area – this is a problem with the estate plan cover sheet pictures, they are not of the estate, but of areas outside the plan area ( which I have argued should have been included ).

BIL 12. The ? To housing requirements must surely change and affordable housing be proritised subject to good sized rooms and sufficient bedrooms for families. 5. Character, trying to make the east of Pincott Road look like West of is not desirable, monoculture should be avoided, the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s style do meld well without feeling sufficiently wrong. 8. See preceeding notes for means to sign and route better. 9. oddly Nelson Grove Road has less trouble with fast moving traffic under normal circumstances than Abbey Road does. 10, requests for garages have been unresponded to, possible lack of marketing, people may think they are not spare. Street parking persons tend to be 50/50 Commuter / business employees. 11 this is over-egged, have people reasonably made these comments, I have seen worse in London, and elsewhere. 12. Cycles tend to be in the resident store sheds (I can give proof of this, or garages ). One disagrees overall with the final conclusion.
Socio-economic analysis considerations

Report is probably out of date.

Sustainable development may be good in developing redundant brownfield sites, but for where people are living in good homes the presumption in favour of development has to be questioned, mostly with embedded CO2, other pollutants in demolition and new build and lack of re-use of materials the question of what is truly sustainable has to be interrogated. Costs of refurbishment can be compared to the likes of expenditure calculated for the likes of Buckingham Palace, or the Houses of Westminster, both of which have age related problems, and the occupation of useful space for low level purposes may be compared with the attitude to social housing. If opportunities for home ownership were to be widened then the cut off of dates on CHMP offer would not apply, more private owners would have added to the overall percentage of those desiring to take control of their own lives, and being able to afford to do so. 234 it is not the number of new homes that is important, but that they are of the right type and size for families, and without leaving behind persons with disabilities, including mental illness, and older persons – and their families. The logic of this for the plan areas as a whole is that all properties must be fully accessible, see my note and comment to the Ravensbury Planning Application. It terms of High Path Estate Plan, the predominance for housing is agreed with, with Community Facilities, retail, office and health and fitness provision along Morden Road and Merton High Street is agreed with, one would support light industry and warehousing along High Path, although the Nelson Grove Road Garages site could be good for educational purposes if this is desired for the SW19 area. 321 – no one as such lives on wimbledon park/common or mitcham common, St Helier estate has wide roads giving a low dwellings and population density. 328 persons in work possibly skewed by social housing provision for single mothers not working. 3210 low income needs clearer reasoning, mostly persons with needs have been allocated into social housing, and the amount of retired & disabled persons is probably under reported 3216 depends on reasons for unemployment, 3220 pension credit could actually make people better off with triggers to other benefits and services. 3222 rather depends on type and size of houses selling, unrepresentative as Zone 3 cheaper normally to travel from than Zone 4/5 of Morden and Mitcham areas. 3225 agreed. 3228 clearly reducing garages will increase parking stress, some has come from the new developments in Nelson Grove Road. 3229, planning permission sought for phase 1A contradicts this. 3312, is this calculation taking account of new build ongoing in Christchurch Road and Western Road, there is real danger of overloading Primary Schools local at the level of units planned to increase by, No clear assessment of actual secondary school places needed. 3319 Plans to reduce two of the youth services, one has already been served notice to quit. Community Hall at Merton Hall Kingston Road is being converted to church, the small replacement on high path pincott road is too small and only temporary. 414 If there is overcrowding the correct size of housing unit must be brought forward clearly in the plan. 4110 Employment in construction will not be long term and almost certain to be a skills mis-match. Has not new homes bonus been abolished? 521 Good, spacious homes where children can learn and study to apprenticship level are welcome, but the designs provided by Scheme Developer appear not to meet this criteria. Although new commercial areas are welcome, at the same time former shop and office units in the vicinity are being turned into residential units. Will the commercial provision be affordable, and of the correct type to enable a full range of economic activity?

http://www.merton.gov.uk/high_path_chmp_housing_needs.pdf
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Housing needs

11 Circle as housing provider. We are worried on reduction in local democracy and over-sight, and the effective
privatisation indicated in Housing Bill and enactments. There is little teeth in the bodies charged with ensuring good compliance of registered housing providers. I would agree there is need to manage housing stock and ensure it remains good and fit for purpose, but we have need to ensure that residents are treated with the utmost respect as clients, who often have difficulties, and sometimes are frustrated at the lack of good communication from their housing provider. 21 Demographics appear to indicate older persons are moving off or moving away, and possibly older middle-aged selling up and moving to retirement areas, many of mothers friends have been in this situation. Although there remain 8 households, maybe a few more, that I know of, that are on the estate now that were here in at the time the relevant blocks were first constructed in the 1960s, there are more persons moved from all saints in the late 1970s that remain in their homes at the time of writing. Ethnic spread has increased particularly from older, disabled asian persons, this may represent lack of alternative public sector accommodation elsewhere in the borough.

213 If one houses lower income groups in social housing then one should not be surprised when statistics show this/ 217 Although a high proportion of 1 and 2 bed properties the 2 bed in particular can function as, and can have room sizes larger than many 3 bed houses, including in nearby places like Streatham Vale or North Cheam. It is good to note that we have affordable accommodation at present, this should be built on and expanded. Single Persons under age 35 are currently being discriminated against, these are the largest cohort of people with problems of homelessness that we see at Faith In Action project in Kingston Road. For housing sizes it is important that three and four bedroom properties are of full size bedrooms and lounge sizes not compromised by intrusion of kitchens or disabled asian persons, this may represent lack of alternative public sector accommodation elsewhere in the borough. Overall the method of housing needs survey is robust, but to exclude persons whom can afford market purchase to that tenure is a dangerous thing if future circumstances, including interest rate robustness tests, change. I will be participating in the actual needs of current household to the Scheme Developer in due course.

Case for regeneration  Analysis and Comments

CHMP muddling of housing provision and social manipulation is a problem when intrusion into household life and data protection issues arise. There is also mis-communication on health, financial inclusion and job sourcing initiatives, which are not as effective as they could be, in part this is as a result of the lack of an estate office where all key officers are contactable face to face. 19 the areas of consideration are of interest and the presence of this work in public domain would be welcome. The suspicion is High Path has been chosen as a cash-cow rather than to co-herently providing the true housing need at the affordable level in High Path area. For Ravensbury the justification seems to be that 'defective properties' cannot be borrowed against, rather than seeking to abate the mostly insulation issues with the type of sizeable buildings that there are there. External Doors and windows. Nil social housing units now have single-glazed crittal or similar windows. I am not certain of a true UPVC window lifespan. 227 Sizes exclude garages .227 I calculate for Norfolk House the two bedroom has 74msq of usable floorspace excluding balcony. There is no consideration of external clothes drying areas. 237 CHMP appear to have lost the MCHD asbestos register. 34 Does not square with demolition of Marsh Court while new build adjacent is being inhabited. Main blocks that could be retained are the houses in Pincott Road and Hillborough Close and Norfolk House ( the need for good floorcoverings and underlay is noted where there is some external exposed concrete edge beams. 1980 houses appear in good condition and appear privately owned, these are unlikely to be relinquished at anything less than a good private sale value. 416 Mayor indicated that at least 50% of uplift of floorspace be also affordable housing, as well as maintaining present affordable floospace. I would contend that housing bought under right to be be counted as affordable, as we either own outright, or have affordable mortgages on our existing properties. 417 agreed, but that the context of within borough or on estate area has not been challenged and I have already considered the question of human rights act and property valuation, compensation, and ideally suitable replacement property. 418 agreed, but does not seem to be happening in Scheme Developer proposals. 427 but policy is potentially changing in face of meaningful resistance to the ram-roading through of inappropriate that fails to meaningfully considers residents views. 526 This was not made wholly clear at on-site meetings and proposals being a vague maybe, and it appears not be desired by residents of the wider area. 63 This is a reversal of planning thought of the 1960s, as I have stated my great-grandmother in 1925 had retail premises on the south side of merton high street and this opportunity has been much missed for the last 30 years. 64 unlikely many visitors from wider for retail offerings. 639 please give incremental savings for each stage, claims elsewhere on CHP systems savings have been proven to be illusory and residents tied into single heating system and supplier. PV can be retro-fitted. PV systems were not shown at meetings with residents. Section 7 the costs are somewhat not split out into what would be needed for future maintainence of new build compared with existing. 8.10 One cannot recall this meeting at all, the numbers appear slewed compared to Merton Council Feedback, please check the questions asked by CHMP and where these people residents ? 815 Re separate kitchens, This appears to have been consistently ignored by the Scheme Developer, no wonder we are frustrated. 817 We now have tower blocks proposed around South Wimbledon Tube Station. 827 attendees actually mean about 40persons, some from off the estate from 600 properties supported
the general proposals, hardly ringing endorsements. Problem is I know of persons whom have not attended these events whom are not in favour of the proposals overall, at least without significant caveats. Full attendee detail responses at all events should be provided, not just the selection that serves CHMP's desires. Detailed questions appear not to have been referenced, nor my feedback on Newman Francis' organised trip to Stockwell Park Estate.

Visual impact study (added November 2016)

This would help as a document if the wording were actually readable, it is very small. Context para 5 is biased, detrimental and a leading comment. Para 11 Some referenced documents said over-permeable, not lack of permeability. [ It should be noted at the time High Path initially developed, Meretune Way did not exist ], The trading estate to the west at The Path was a mix of terrace housing along Morden Road similar to that remaining south of The Path, and a large single use industrial site – Foster Transformers. There was the railway line and on the East of Morden Road the largest toy-factory in the world – Lines Bros Tri-Ang, Pedigree Prams and Frog Model Aircraft Works with associated staff facilities including running track and sports ground to the east. At Merton Abbey Mills Merton Fabric Printers – Littlers – were still in production, there was light industry in Station Road under present Meretune Way Alignment, and New Merton Board Mills were still in production, and Merton High Street had south side commercial units all in occupation and trade. It has only been the gradual economic changes from oil crises onwards that has changed the characteristics around High Path estate making it look outdated. 31 So what, beauty indeed in beholder's eyes. 32 biased they have a charm in the striping visually, compared to what is proposed for around South Wimbledon Station 33 negative bias to the current built form. 34 Disagree, I rather like the walk back down Victory Road from exercise class or down Nelson Road if walking back from Wimbledon Town Centre or Trinity Church. The view was quite happy from MMUDC when constructed of towers, but of course much of merton high street had 2 storey frontages directly on thereto which would have broken view up.

Basically, for the Estate Plan Purpose, this study has little value, as it fails to generate the proposed views as would appear from the Scheme Developer's proposals.
Case for regeneration (updated – October 2016).

This overall shows the mental muddle that the documents for planning that come to us. Are we planning for the external realm, the type of economic activity type specified in the planning system, for the external facings of buildings, or perhaps what is more key to residents, the internal layout and method of construction of the proposed alternate dwellings to the existing? So a short review of what the scheme developer, CHMP state therein.

Before I review, let me return to some of my key themes of protection. While the planning policies themselves appear noble, the slavish use of them can act against the best interests of some residents, and this solely relates to the lottery of allocation they may have had in the past, or now, to reside one or other of the different dwelling types identified. The preparers and summarisers of the raw information have selected items and failed to consider alternatives, and additionally have where some conclusions been drawn not evidence the steps to make those conclusions. This is most apparent in the thermal performance of the building types, where no specific Mu values have been declared, no external wall length specified, including build outs from main structures to accommodate additional bedrooms, W.C.s etc where wall length in new properties appears shortened, leading to the cost reduction estimate for space heating to have no audit trail shown between proposed accommodation method of build and that of the present accommodation, indeed the costs may be for an upper floor under a flat, uninsulated, roof, and that of a middle storey property where part of the flat's external wall is within the buildings external wall by means of corridor or similar. This implies choices being made for us without full presentation of the facts and alternatives, that our external window views as a consequence are being removed, or no external access from upper floors from doorways. The other problem is rooms in that the usable circulating, habitable, utility and storage space being less than existing, this is exemplified for example by a Bathroom that may, for example be currently 3.5m x 2.4m = 8.4msq. The alternative may be 2.9mx2.9m to increase circulation space for a wheelchair for example = 8.41msq, but the loss of 600mm on two walls loses some of the store space for linen baskets, towels, baby baths hanging on wall for example, a loss of usable space. This is why I have requested that the protection of minimum wall running lengths, due allowance for loss of wallspace lost to door returns, other designs can be the wall to door hinge distance, where the use behind door openings can be used for wall art, or small furniture eg fold up tables when not in use, too much space makes the rest of room less usable, too little loses this fractional store space, in our own flat, which other types do not have, is a thicker, loadbearing wall, which has part lintel in it, giving a block thick 2ft wide opening, this acts like a small cupboard space, and present day metal stud dryline walls loose this space if not planned into from existing. By not providing detailed comparative dimensions of all existing flat types these small adjustments may not be noted and sub-optimal internal arrangements missed by supposed professionals. I have submitted written questions to Merton Council and remain unhappy that they are unwilling, despite local councillors indicating otherwise, to commit, via the planning process, that there will be condition by schedule of no loss of space in new replacement properties compared to existing. This also applies to the end to have properly separated Kitchens.

Detail Analysis / Comments where I diverge from the Savills 44 page report Oct 2016

13 As does on street parking with CPZ in Abbey Road for Lovell House Residents. There is also on street parking within the estate on MC adopted roads

15 Community Centre not over-used by Local Community, is used by various groups from around the borough. There are significant plans to build on the South Side of High Path a secondary school of up to 1100 pupils with loss of community facility as it now is causing user groups in alternative locations to be given notice to quit. This also applies to the re-location of the Church congregation and facilities to other community use area in the borough. This lack of joined up planning and poor site for the secondary school could suggest the High Path Garages and Lamp Works site could be better used for the secondary school on an alternative orientation.

16 Some at other levels of CHMP would prefer to be just a housing supplier and the potential privatisation in Housing Bill causes concern that social engineering functions may be lost or changed. If 'life-chances' are to be enhanced then bedrooms must be spacious for study and away from family distractions.

110 = we can make more money

111 = poor quality, without some numbers as desired is a little subjective, although the lack of step free access in existing is a concern it is noteworthy that CHMP in Ravensbury Phase1 Kickstarter have excluded providing lift-
access to new 4 storey blocks on grounds of cost and service charges being excessive. CHMP talk two ways to suit themselves

117 Mu values and comparative flat/house floorplans for all existing layouts are required.

21- In part decline from denials in past by MC that things were defective, in others cost-effective timely repairs not done. Example is the renewal of windows to Norfolk House where access scaffolding was put up, as has been (by different company) inspection access towers for roof, tile and flashing repair and renewal (including mis-diagnosing and mis-specifying some work and duplicating work), and meanwhile barge, facia and soffit boards need repair and proper paintwork, this could easily be done at same time, but was not, this is inefficiency and lack of communication, evidence by meetings with Merton Council reported on council communities website where there is a long list of promises and that 'things' will improve, then there is changes of management, of personnel, and the whole cycle starts again with basic work not done in timely manner.

29 Housing targets, depend on the contentious issue of inward migration and population growth within London, there are possibilities to encourage under-populated parts of England which would benefit from enterprise to grow in those areas of NE England for example.

212 But not the main alternatives of different external designs, which would be nice rather than the bland brick monotypes proposed.

225 'Low' needs specifying in technical values. Crittal = 3 all leasehold/freehold +2 unimportant common parts. Our UPVC windows have lasted 25 years so far, maintenance would generally be handles and lock mechanisms, and would last as long if in new buildings. This paragraph shows that CHMP do not have much clue in one part of what is happening / has happened elsewhere, eg the kitchen renewals where recent void premises have been done over the last 13 months.

226 Problem is that an 4x2 m space = 8msq may be more useful than a 3x3m space =9msq depending on circumstances. 2 bed house, shows the current good size the existing 2 beds have – something we have been arguing about since day 1 ( uncertain of Stane Close sizes these are probably smaller ). Our 2 bed flat is probably in excess of 70msq.

228 not really worried about balcony- falls and h&s risk must be in place. Gardens nice by have a maintenance premium whether public or private gardens. Current Merton Council iVerde contractor agreement would need to be confirmed for any new public space as this cost should not fall on estate service charge payers.

230 this looks as a worse-case scenario, we have seen that old, and in poor condition do not correlate in the way the sentence implies. Tenant abuse and mis-use I have seen in 3 and 4 year old properties in London and Sutton this past year. Mould related much to the crittal installation, which have been changed out and improved. Sound problems have been noted in Circle New Build elsewhere in London. 231 'low' needs specifying in numeric assessment. 237 there should be full asbestos register from pre-transfer date.

34 We have shown that houses in Pincott Road (which have only a park proposed for their footprint, leaving the Trafalgar Public House Marooned in a sea of green) the majority of which are Freeholder occupied, and Flats at Norfolk House are considerably better condition, and that houses in Hayward, Dowman and Doel closes in their modern size and design and location are desired by their freeholder owners and that the community at Will Miles Court do not wish to be up-rooted, their being no area dedicated to their needs seemingly on the new plans.

43 arguably written to enforce in rural areas where marginal land space has been undeveloped in past years.

45 We have a mix of housing already!

410 there is the problem of Zone 4/5 dwellers having access to garages on their land (including Circle Employees and Agents) imposing their pollution on us Zone 3 dwellers, who are being denied the use of our long established land and lifestyle for secure parking with minor storage space (we have the likes of bicycles, bulk buy kitchen dry goods for example in our garages living with our classic and daily use cars).

411 equivalent floorspace must be defined as including no less running wall length or door aperture width including
store space, and garages where part of residence, and for natural justice garages where rented by occupant of estate and considered as part of their land occupation.

413 So not too high along high street and morden road, reflecting local character.
415 OK you can work that one out, we are relatively balanced as things stand with mix of rents, private tenants and leaseholders and freeholders.
416 The plan area should incorporate under-size new build, particularly that which has wrongly accessed and built amenity and waste disposal areas for bringing forth good design within the former Nelson's Fields Area. Due retention of older parts of the area cul-de-sac form into Rodney Place should be encouraged.
417 But makes no mention of other grant funding that may be available. High Path should not be used to finance developments in other parts of Merton where this deprives utility, space and views from residents of High Path and immediately adjoining areas.
418 Agreed, particularly around South Wimbledon Tube Station. Taller buildings are best on the footprints of the existing tower blocks if it is desired to replace them at this present moment.
421 Side of Morden Road looks pretty good as is, and has been since the 1950s.
422 The area of say Morden, there is general acceptance of this policy, less so and under question for South Wimbledon particularly where older buildings, including Rose Cottage, are under threat, and difficult to resolve if sub station and Kilkenny Tavern are to be retained in their present format. Inappropriate non matching development has already been passed at Milner Road which dis-respects listed adjoining building and 1920s terraces, we have little trust in the Masterplanning of Merton Council to define good classic external fabric finishes that match existing good architecture.
424 statement really of the (thankfully) obvious
429 Some responses unreadable
516 Because many have illnesses or home care responsibilities and cannot participate, in part the social nature of housing puts such persons into the type of accommodation so designed to house them surely?
522 Please come and see the prices of the cafes in the area, they are not cheap as the used to be at one time, designer delis are us is the motto of the north side of merton high street (Though the tube station bacon rolls sell out quickly each day)
524 COULD, we have had these promises in the past with little of benefit actually occurring.
525 Or maybe not, as some commute and spend in inner London.
526 To put commercial back along Merton High Street seems to need to lose either existing houses, or the existing London Plane Trees.
527 Less disruption if works done to voids on ongoing process generally.
528 Problem is this conclusion could be pasted into most areas of Merton, including say, the east of Merton Park, where there is some vacant space and 80s built housing, area around tramstop could be intensified if desired.
63 We are integrated well, building frontages to Merton High Street would reverse the 1970s changes designed to accommodate residents from All Saints area. As long as the worse excess of similar designs to Tooting High Street at Blackshaw Road Area, the proposals are not unwelcome if commercial units are truly affordable and ready for occupation before businesses that use garages in High Path are requested to relinquish garage space they rent.
613 etc, already discussed
619 Generally I would not worry, but I would have liked in the past Houses build to behind garages in High Path and Nelson Grove Road and frustrated with Merton Council HD who said it was not possible.
624 Our garages were so much nicer when we had double opening wooden doors, becoming small man-caves with boat builders and general wood and metal work being done by the light and warmth of hurricane lamps we had our own community, the loss of internal space when new doors fitted has always been missed.
626 Can we have the duck pond back on the grass area?
629 Disagree, unless one wants to dismiss the likes of the GPO tower in London on similar argument. We have our own elongated east-west grid and the tower blocks are not displeasing in the contrasting bands from visual view,
the ground level hurricane winds are another matter and indeed apparent pointless mini-steps are unliked.

630 Subjective it seems not too bad to some places.

631 Disagree with conclusions, but hope for some positive changes for the future.

640 Well get on and do it I have only requested this for three years.

641 unproven

643 marginal steps analysis should be shown

It is considered given the heating issues of the Northern Line some geo-thermal and heat sink from the tube line could provide additional inputs to heating plant particularly for commercial units.

656 Could be incorporated without demolition of whole existing estate.

73 Already shown costs have been incorrectly calculated. Already commented that high path should not be from residential changes be a subsidy to other places in the borough as such, particularly where those residents are not in favour of build change at the present moment.

73 Table presumably assumes that the unwanted high flatted mansions around South Wimbledon Tube are built. This should not be included or be a given and that partial new build options should be investigated.

834 I will forward my photos of the 1 bed flat later

835 We believe that the event responses have been manipulated by CHMP, you should ask for all paperwork handed in since ideas first mooted and from all events and Merton Council Plan responses to satisfy that the consultation in two-way means is robust. Most persons I have spoken or overheard to have been unhappy with the CHMP proposals for High Path, with some understandable exceptions as they have flats that have not been modernised as promised and live in accommodation that is less good than our part of the estate. CHMP also publicised an event which then was cancelled without informing us (I have dates somewhere)
10.12.16. Dear Future Morton Team, and Secretary of State (ENVIRONMENT)

It would be pleased to take this opportunity to put forward comments, based on my unique experience of life here on High Path Estate, where I've resided since 1970s. I would say that it is the variety and character of the buildings that give this area a quality which the residents, especially the younger folk, benefit from in their individual approaches to everyday living. This is a precious gift and should be maintained, for future generations; therefore, the best way forward is to demolish the three ugly high rise blocks, to build, as proposed on the area behind the old tennis courts, and to house families in available houses elsewhere, in Morton, leaving new flats on the estate for use of single people, or older couples on their own.

I suggest the old house is left alone, as this suits families.

As for the older flats, they were built to last, and will continue to provide solid, weatherproof homes for at least another 40 years, so why.

The playground and football pitch are excellent as they are, and I would say you might easily re-surface the public paths and roads through the estate, leaving precious trees alone. Sheds and garages could be removed,

needs some attention, as the stair
way, and rampant growing of walls to exterior but basically, again, the homes are solid and sound enough to give at least 25 years more habitation.

Minor improvements to surrounding areas could be undertaken and more trees put in to give shade and interesting outlook from our windows.

Across the road, there are blocks which could be improvised on but basically are sound, because they offer privacy and more sheltered outlooks than the proposed new flats. It would be surprising to hear of many people wishing to leave - especially Morton Place which looks Eastward offering a historic perspective rather than the plans which Cumber Heart have put on the table, which are quite frankly boring, dull, and soul-less, and biased towards the ethic.

I recommend a good environmental agency (eg Greenpeace) to collaborate with a more open-minded think tank like Kevin McCloud to investigate some Dutch housing estates, using new technologies eg split level housing or spirals. Also, why use bricks? There are new manuscripts now. Think ahead!

Morton should try to retain its reputation and find a better plan.

Finally, the name High Path is not relevant to this. I suggest Hopkins Estate instead.

Yours Sincerely
I would be pleased to take this opportunity to put forward comments, based on my unique experience of life here on High Path Estate, where I have resided since [redacted]. I would say that it is the variety and character of the buildings that give this area a quality which the residents, especially the younger folk, benefit from in their individual approaches to everyday living. This is a precious gift and should be maintained, for future generations, therefore the best way forward is to demolish the three ugly high rise blocks & build, as proposed on the area behind the Old lapidarys, and house families in available houses elsewhere, in Menton, leaving new flats on the estate for use of single people, or older couples on their own. I suggest however the new estate is left alone, as this suits families.

As for the older flats, they were built to last, and will continue to provide solid weatherproof homes for at least another 50 years, so why the playground and football pitch are excellent as they are, and it would say you might easily re-surface the public paths and roads through the estate, leaving precious trees alone. Sheds and garages could be removed.

The stairway and damp proofing of walls in exterior but basically, again the homes are solid and sound enough to give at least 25 years more habitation.

Minor improvements to surrounding areas could be undertaken and more trees put in to give shade and interesting outlook from our windows.

Across the road there are blocks which could be improved on but basically are sound, because they offer privacy and more sheltered outlook than the proposed new flats. I would be surprised to hear of many people wishing to leave - especially Menton place which looks Eastward, offering a historic perspective rather than the plans which Circle Housing have put on the table, which are quite frankly boring, dull and soul-less, and biased towards the view of the old.

Therefore, I think the entire plan should be scrapped.

I recommend a good environmental agency (e.g. Greenpeace) to collaborate with a more open-minded think tank like Kevin McCloud, to investigate some Dutch housing estates, using new technologies, eg: solar-thermal, housing or spirals. Also, why use birds? There are new materials now. Think ahead!

Menton should try to retain its reputation and find a better plan. Finally, the name High Pets is not relevant to [redacted]. I suggest Hope Manor Estate instead.
As I wish to see a Nelson Youth Park—designed and built by local youth—to include skateboarding facilities, a well for painting frisbees, or playing squash, and water sprays for children and pets.
Future Merton Team  
London Borough of Merton  
London Road  
Morden  
SM4 5DX

RE: Pre-Submission High Path Estate Local Plan

Dear Future Merton Team,

I am writing to express my reasons why the regeneration plan should not go ahead.

The main reason is that Merton Priory has not considered the impact of Merton Council’s decision to build a 1,000 place school on the estate (see enclosed article from Wimbledon Guardian).

At the last meeting I attended they were not aware of the school being built.

The available land is limited and pollution levels will affect the local residents.

The other reason is the fact that the housing stock on High Path is not sub-standard and it is questionable as to why they have to demolish all of the properties, when a high percentage of residents are on low income.
Merton Council confirm new Wimbledon secondary school will be built on a church and a centre for adults with learning disabilities

The new school site. Picture: Merton Council

/Pippa Allen-Kinross, Reporter - Wimbledon + Mitcham/  /@pippa_ak/

7 comments

Merton Council have confirmed a new secondary school will be built on the High Path estate, and force the relocation of a community centre for adults with learning difficulties.
The location of the new Harris Academy Wimbledon school had been kept under wraps by Merton Council, but was widely believed to be in the location they have confirmed today.

The school will be built on land currently being used by the High Path Community Resource Centre, the Elim Church and Domex appliance services.

The High Path Community Centre

The council have also confirmed that nearby Merton Abbey Primary School will lose part of their playing fields to the site, but insist they are working to ensure both schools benefit from the new arrangement.

The High Path Community Resource Centre will be moved to a new premises in nearby Leyton Road in spring 2018. The council have said £1 million will be spent to adapt and extend the new building and ensure it is fit for purpose in time.

Merton Council have also said they will be providing a replacement facility for the Elim Church at Merton Hall, which is currently used by the South Wimbledon Community Association (SWCA), who will in turn be moved to Pincott Road.

Merton Council Deputy Leader Councillor Mark Allison said: "More
High Path Estates’ Local Plan 2016/17: 
High Path Community Association Committee’s Summary

The following is a summarisation of comments by the *High Path Community Association’s members regarding the document: “Estates’ Local Plan Winter 2016/17”.

2. Background, Key Drivers, The Case For Regeneration, The Vision, Urban Design Principles

It is fair to point out that the residents’ views was requested by Circle Housing Merton Priory (CHMP) at regular intervals since the idea of an upgrading of the estate was proposed around 2013. Complaints about the repairs and maintenance programme had reached a tipping point and, as social tenants were voicing comments such as “tear it down”, “pull it down and start again”, in relation to a quick fix for restoring a well rounded aesthetic pride to the area, we need to note that it was never clear what this work on the estate meant. The latter remark has been a constant theme throughout this entire process and moving forward it is hoped that the Secretary of State and whomsoever is heading up strategic positions for the entire timeline of the estate will bring about an energy to regenerate an area such as those allocated (High Path, Ravensbury and Eastfields) for new works.

Pop up exhibitions on the estate were strategically placed and passers by were asked their views as to how they felt about the state of the area.

Fast-forwarding to when CHMP’s draft masterplan was delivered (late Summer 2014) it had the unfortunate effect of clashing with Merton Council’s ‘Have Your Say’ document. These two major documents which would ask a different set of questions but nevertheless wanted residents opinions on the ideas posed caused much confusion among the majority. As a result residents questioned who was delivering the overall improvement to the area and when one considers that a
proportion of residents are still under the misguided impression that Merton Council still own and manage the estate then the general view is of bewilderment, and a overwhelming sense of no control of the entire process. Set within this is the view of the homeowners (leaseholders/freeholders) who have felt detached from the social tenants since the transfer of stock and even alienated despite the fact that they (leaseholders) have paid service charges since the transfer of the land.

If this is placed within the context as to why the regeneration was called upon (a general improvement to the internal/external areas of the estate) and as to how this came about (the poor repairs and maintenance programme by Circle Housing Merton Priory and the suspension of the Decent Homes programme) then the necessity of such a wide-spread programme could be argued is one that the residents did not request. The general opinion is that if CHMP managed their contractors appropriately then the estate might well be considering a refurbishment of the buildings or a partial regeneration at best. This view is taken when one considers the delivery of its repairs and maintenance programme which was mismanaged mainly because of the poorly executed procurement process and it also coincided with allegations of fraudulent behaviour by CHMP’s contractors (Keepmoat) which in turn evolved at the time of the suspension of the ‘Decent Homes’ programme by Merton Council’s Regeneration member. Bringing also to bear down heavily is also the daily upkeep of the estate by the cleaners and caretaker

CHMP’s document/s from start to finish - if you engaged with the process - was clear: regeneration was the outcome that they wanted to deliver. They felt that this was best for all concerned. However Merton Council’s document asked what variation of the scheme the residents wanted:

We are minded to note that a regeneration is needed so that those who are living in overcrowded dwellings are rehoused suitably. Also the performance of some buildings, specifically the tower blocks are not in keeping with modern day standards and in some homes, specifically where overcrowding is evident this leads to an extensive build up of condensation and damp which in turn leads to a lowering of a resident’s general state of health (physical and mental well being).

The ‘Estates Local Plan’ refers to the Equality Act 2010, specifically “2.37. The Equality Act describes a disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on one’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. All development proposals will be expected to have consideration to people with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010. This includes physical and mental conditions - for example, dementia.” We anticipate a wholesale improvement on the woeful promises (eg ‘91 Promises’ and ‘10 Commitments’) made by the resident provider in this regard as it is noted in the draft document of the stock transfer “WOULD MERTON PRIORY HOMES DO ANY WORK IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?”
Yes.

**Merton Priory Homes would work closely with residents, local councillors and public bodies like social services, education, the police, the health authority, GPs and voluntary agencies to help local communities tackle problems and improve the quality of life for residents.** *(Consultation on the proposal to transfer Merton Council’s homes to Merton Priory Homes - Appendix 3, 2008/9)*

We have noted that as CHMP have not engaged with Merton NHS CCG as a community partner to the level we deem appropriate for a project of this magnitude, there is a concern on the part of not just the community on the whole and the services we use, if it is assumed a near tripling of the density of the population is to go ahead as preferred that in this context, we have a heightened concern for the increasing population of the elderly and the indigenous vulnerable cohort. Moreover CHMP have sought to remove staff for this particular service last year (June 2016) as it was not considered appropriate or within their remit as a resident provider and this was partly due to their inability to engage with the areas they covered (East and West Merton aka Merton Central). We need also to point out that in view of financial challenges in adult social care and the mitigating financial issues for the NHS in general then a more robust level of discussion needs to be had with the respective agencies related to health and wellbeing in our community.

It is difficult to give a fair appraisal of the ‘Estate Local Plan’s Urban Design Principles as we have been told by architects on the events on numerous occasions that the finer details are yet to come. With that in mind we are concerned as to the general height of the build and most especially the ‘right to light’ aspect. Open space within the plans show little in the way for what we currently have and if the density is to be propelled forward as intended (608 homes to 1,600 homes) then the whole estate will be making a mad dash to the proposed central park for their uptake of vitamin D.

As with most new builds the building design is typical of the London vernacular and though we empathise with PRP’s desire to have a modern outlook we regard this as an opportunity to harp back to the past and refer to the curves of yesterday for the facades of the buildings instead of the cold, Brutal preference. A way around this would be to work with another company of architects as PRP seem intent on stamping their Goldfingeresque footprint around the city. Most of the staff of said company have been laissez-faire and uninvolved when residents have opened up the conversation in public events to different designs to their own and this has not been lost by the indigenous population. Size of proposed dwellings has brought with it some contentious thoughts and this needs to be agreed upon and the task repeated because a number of residents have had misgivings as to the authenticity of surveys conducted by the likes of Savills.

In accordance with this are the materials for the build and given that we are supposedly a long way off we would ask that in the forthcoming workshops the
leading designers look to incorporating sustainable materials for the proposed works. We say this because convention says that as this is a multi-million proposal the big companies will utilise the usual mediums to frame our new homes. This is an opportunity to work with materials and train residents within the process. If the intention is to rebuild the estate for more people and have homes that perform holistically then why not be forward looking and opt for different materials such as lime and straw? Our concern is that because of the urgency to appease central government and meet the targets for housing those in need that this will be a big moment lost. Working with what we know is the prevailing narrative amongst builders of this type of instead of being groundbreaking.

The raw materials are there and readily available and presently going to waste - residents living in these homes will have lower fuel bills and the surrounding area will benefit with the reduced offset of pollution should we decide to build with such organic materials.

We commend the retaining of mature trees in the area as this not only adds to the ‘greenspace’ aesthetic but also enhances the clean/environmental buffer for air pollution off the nearby highways.

Last month we formed with other neighbouring resident groups the ‘South Wimbledon Enhancement Plan’ as the area is not only bereft of a neighbourhood plan but also any localised character. Heritage is important to those that live here and we are disappointed at the rapid advancement of planning for some heinous examples of design in the area. If ‘Rose Cottage’ in Hamilton Road is to go the way as planned then epic historical draws for outsiders will never happen and so again this is an opportunity to funnel avenues towards the nearest transport hub or currently quiet Merton Abbey Mills. Containing the estate (as it currently is) and minimising traffic flow will give the new estate a homely feel and residents will have a place of community. The High Street will still act as a fulcrum for those travelling east to west (or vice versa) but the commercial premises must reflect and retain this connection with the estate. The estate is not to be a hub for the masses ala Oxford Street but we are mindful as work is nearing completion on the former Brown & Root building in Colliers Wood and the desire to increase the aesthetics by the SWEP in the area on the whole it would be preferred if ownership of such commercial venues was pitched at independent proprietors. The connectivity to the area will then ease the transition to Wimbledon’s Business Investment District and as Colliers Wood and us are twinned as an area of intensification then the fluidity will be simpler. A plan for working with the Council with SWEP can easily be formulated to keep everyone happy and if the opportunity to employ local residents in such establishments was to come about then this would be beneficial all round: residents will have less of a desire to work in ‘town’ and community spirit will be enhanced. A good example of this connectivity is ‘Battersea Square’ where residents are forced due to a lack of regular public transportation to socialise nearby and this enhances the neighbourhood both financially and collectively.
Given the fact that Crossrail 2 has not been reignited as a topic for sometime and the Tram extension to the area has gone quiet too we would say that keeping certain corridors of access open to change and, flexibility. Locking in plans now will be difficult to change later and this is very evident in the road en route to Colliers Wood (near to the station there is always a bottle neck throughout this journey and this ruins what could have been a pleasant ride if the small parade of shops on the left were set back nearer to Wandle Park).
Executive summary

As a community we endorse a regeneration but this needs to be delivered in a manner that is in keeping with the implicit wishes of the community on the whole. A good and sound example of this can be found in the paper: *Estate Regeneration National Strategy, December 2016 Department for Communities and Local Government*.

5. Residents’ involvement in the management of estates
The ongoing management of the estate is vital to its sustainability. Residents should have the opportunity to participate in the ongoing management of the regenerated estate. In some cases this may be through a formal tenant or resident management organisation or through a resident-led board. Ongoing opportunities should be provided for residents to influence decisions and develop the necessary skills to take on more responsibility, if they choose.

Where elected or self-selected residents represent the estate, landlords should provide them with the resources to communicate and engage with all residents to ensure their representative approach is inclusive. This could include a place to meet or computers for preparing and distributing communication materials.

Estate regeneration schemes can play an active role in identifying community facilities which can be owned and managed by resident and community groups. Where community assets are run by the community, people are more likely to have an active and sustainable voice in their neighbourhood.

It is also important to undertake post-occupancy evaluation to understand the impact of regeneration, and to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to residents by acting on the results of any evaluations. This maintains trust with the local community, and encourages social sustainability and community cohesion.

As important as the aforementioned is the need for clear and transparent dialogue between the resident provider, local authority and the residents. In particular is the Council’s recent proposal with Harris Academy to build a secondary school on the area of South Wimbledon. We oppose such a venue as not only is it too small to accommodate the needs of its pupils but the proposed regeneration makes no mention of it and all affected stakeholders are wrought with anxiety, exacerbated by the impact of such a venture. Married to this is the large contingent of disadvantaged young people who attend the local primary school that live on the estate and the neighbouring district therein it is folly of the Department of Education and smacks of desperation on the part of the Council to entertain such a proposal. If any of the adjacent stakeholders considered such a proposal it is because they were not aware of the massive undertaking by the resident provider and as such the general conversation was as disjointed as we had previously noted in the consultation back in 2013. The head teacher of the local primary school was
unaware of the proposed increase of the density of the estate as was the manager of the Resource centre which houses groups for those with learning difficulties and the resident provider is unaware of the significantly high proportion of disadvantaged youth in the area and to compound this Harris Academy plead ignorance regarding the proposed regeneration on the whole.

The estate has had to endure a consistently bad level of service over the entire period since the stock transfer took place and as a result this has built a very high level of mistrust. Rumourmongering and disgruntled members of staff whose conditions proliferate their lackadaisical approach to their toil does not help matters either when residents approach or telephone staff earnestly to assist with queries.

When you set this out in the mix of the ‘Residents Offer’ and the pitiful financial renumeration if residents want to sell to CHMP and or the loss of footprint on the new homes for the freeholders then the ‘plan’ on the whole does not look enticing to many. The tenants may acquire free ‘white goods’ but what assurance have they got as well if they are tied into a district heating system which might well offset the ‘freebies’ given the prolonged tie ins that other new builds have had to withstand. The Council needs to address the latter aspect robustly as we are minded to say that whilst this is a policy imposed upon them from a greater Central London administrator the local authority must implement a charge that benefits the resident as opposed to any other agency and that includes the resident provider. An example of bad practice has meant that an estate in London (Myatt Field) has been locked into a deal which has them tied in with an energy provider for decades and residents were misguided as to the longevity of the contract and now they are having to experience long periods of no heating or hot water as contractual obligations mean no one wants to admit liability or accountability. It is with this in mind we refer to:

**EP H6 and h)** The feasibility of CHP and district heating must be investigated. As a minimum this should include:

(i) An assessment of the secondary heat sources within a 400 metre radius of the site boundary (e.g. river water heat recover from the Wandle; heat extraction from the London Underground).
(ii) Evidence to demonstrate ongoing engagement with key stakeholders associated with the potential secondary heat sources such as Transport for London and the Environment Agency feasibility.
(iii) Consideration of air quality issues should include an investigation in to the potential benefits that a district heat network could deliver to the wider area through the connection to existing buildings or development sites outside of the high path regeneration.
(iv) Energy strategies should clearly demonstrate that development delivers energy efficiency improvements at each level of the Mayors Energy Hierarchy when compared to the existing buildings on the estate. Outlining how improvements have been achieved according to the hierarchy of; improved building fabric, increasing the efficiency of supply and renewable energy generation, and how this compares to existing development on the sites.
"High Path Community Association" is a constitutionalised residents group based on the High Path Estate, South Wimbledon, SW19, which works with the following community partners:
(alphabetical order) Baitful Futuh Mosque, Catch 22, Circle Housing Merton Priory, Cooperative Foods, Duke of Edinburgh Awards (Merton), Healthwatch Merton, High Path Resource Centre, Independent Merton Greenspace Forum, Merton CIL, Merton Council, Merton Abbey Primary School (‘Governors’ and ‘Friends’), Merton Heritage Forum, Merton Tenants Residents Federation, Merton Voluntary Service Council, Prostate Cancer UK, Safer Neighbourhood Panel (Abbey ward), St John Divine Church, Sustainable Merton, WIFFA (West Indian Families and Friends), and YMCA.

1. **regenerate**
   (verb)
   1. (of a living organism) regrow (new tissue)
   2. bring new and more vigorous life to (an area or institution)

   (adjective)
   1. reborn, especially in a spiritual or moral sense

   Origin from Latin *regenratus* ‘create again’

   Concise Oxford Dictionary

2. **caretaker**
   (noun)
   1. a person employed to look after a public building

   *derivatives of care* - feel concern or interest and *take* - reach for and hold with one’s hands. Carry or bring with one; convey or guide.

   Concise Oxford Dictionary

Cypren Edmunds
Chair

e-mail: highpath@live.co.uk
Twitter: @highpath
Facebook: High Path Community Association
Firstly, photos of the estate show just about the most drab and down-at-heel section of the estate - in Rutter Gardens. There are no photos showing the trees and lovely open green area in front of the community centre, the raised flower beds at the end of Ravensbury Grove (near the garages) or the other open/green spaces around Henglo Gardens and Ravensbury Court. If the more typical/prettier parts of the estate were shown it would be highlight the fact that regeneration isn't really needed at all and that the current residents are at risk of losing some beautiful spaces if the current plans go ahead.

Secondly, the photos in the "The Vision" section, suggesting what the Ravensbury estate could look like (page 34), show mainly low-level buildings surrounded by plenty of green space. The actual plans however indicate that the pretty, low-level buildings currently in place (eg around the community centre) are to be bulldozed & replaced by high-rise blocks. No-one who lives on the estate wants high-rise blocks. We do not want to lose the current amount of open space or the low-level buildings which encourage a sense of community. The only valid purpose of these high-rise, wind-tunnel, community destroying blocks is to cram more people onto the estate...something that no-one wants.

Thirdly, I understand that parking will be reduced in the current plans, though this is not made clear in the stage 3 Local estates plan at all. Parking is already quite difficult around the estate. Reducing parking spaces and increasing residents will make the situation very stressful, and could, I imagine will lead to residents parking permits etc, something else that no-one wants.

It's a shame that Merton Council and Circle Housing are so focused on meeting government housing quotas that the continued pleas of actual residents seem to be ignored, and something really rather lovely is likely to be destroyed. I'm writing this email in the vain hope that someone has enough integrity to look again at the plans and reign in the bull-dozers.

Thanks & kind regards,
Dear Sir / Madam,

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the plans.

Re: p156 Part 03 R3: Movement & Access 3.237 Proposed alterations will increase the volume of vehicular traffic along Ravensbury Grove. Proposed alternations at the end of Ravensbury Grove will give the impression that Ravensbury Grove is a connector road.

Proposals should consider introducing physical features at key points along Ravensbury Grove to better manage the speed and flow of traffic to improve road safety.

Re: Part 03, p172 EP R8 Building heights e) Building heights in the vicinity of Ravensbury garages should take into account existing views to the tree-line from the existing buildings.

Re: Part 03, p172 EP R8 Building heights, Justification 3.3.10 Reference to the existing buildings in vicinity of Ravensbury garages should made in relation to the views to the tree line visible from around the estate.

I would be grateful if you can confirm receipt of this email. I would also be grateful if I can to be kept informed about the submission, the publication and the adoption.

Best Regards,
Hi

Apologies for the late submission but my original email was rejected due to a typo in the email address.

With respect to the Merton Estates Local Plan, we had a question with regards to the detail of the plan that sets out an objective to “reduce the severance on Morden Road” where the pink arrows indicate this is between the estate and Milner Road.

Our main concern/question is that this is only about reducing pedestrian severance, rather than any proposal to remove the traffic barriers on Milner Road to allow for through traffic to go from Milner Road, cross Morden Road into the estate.

The traffic barriers were installed onto Milner Road for a good reason and we want to ensure that they continue to be in place as part of this proposal.

Kind Regards
Christopher Holt,
Chair of Ravensbury Residents Association,

Development Control
Merton Council
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Tel: 020 8545 3777
planning@merton.gov.uk

Dated 21st June 2016

For the attention of Mr Shaun Hamilton, Case Officer

Dear Sir,

Reference: PLANNING APPLICATION : 16/P1968

64-70 Ravensbury Grove, Ravensbury Garages & Adjacent Land Mitcham Surrey CR4 4DL

In regards to the above planning application, I have read through the documentation, plans, sections and artists impressions supplied by Circle Housing to yourselves. I know the proposed area for development extremely well having been a resident in Ravensbury for the past 45 years.

I wish to object strongly to the proposed development in this location.

Setting : Character and views along Ravensbury Grove:

The Ravensbury Estate is a small village-like area positioned on the banks of the River Wandle. It is cradled by the Wandle Valley Conservation Area, comprising of Ravensbury Park and Morden Hall Park. The Ravensbury Estate is unusual in that it sits like a country village, in the midst of this green and leafy area.

Turning off the main road, onto Ravensbury Grove, you are greeted by mature trees, and buildings set back so as to afford large green open spaces. The spatial relationship between the flats on the left-hand side and the houses on the right-hand side is generous and open. The buildings are in balance, there is a harmony in the existing design. The impact of the 4 storey height of Ravensbury Court is reduced by the set-back and further improved by the large trees. Trees have been employed in order to break up the facade and engender a feeling of openness. This feeling is continued down Ravensbury Grove (southwards), culminating in the park at the end of the road. The existing built environment engenders a positive relationship with the surroundings: Ravensbury Park and Morden Hall Park. This is achieved through a gradual reduction in building height as it nears Ravensbury Park. By not imposing the built environment on either of these beautiful nature reserves, the existing Ravensbury Estate...
attempts to magnify the form and function of the parks. These two green emeralds in the crown of the London Borough of Merton deserve respect through well-proportioned development and thankfully our predecessors saw fit to construct homes that struck this balance between the need for housing and a desire to relate to their immediate environment.
View South from Ravensbury Court on Ravensbury Grove

Ravensbury Grove looking South

View from Hengelo Gardens towards Ravensbury Park (L) & Flats on Ravensbury Grove looking South illustrating set-back (R)
Relationship with the Wandle Valley

The market garden design of Ravensbury makes it an integral part of the Wandle Valley. In future we would expect parts of it to be incorporated into the extended boundary of the conservation area by virtue of the large areas of green space and scope for enhanced planting: these could support a broader range of species and effect a continuation of habitat. The scale and low density of the existing Ravensbury Estate also prove it to be worthy of being part of the Wandle Valley through its healthy proportioned relationship with its immediate surroundings. In truth, we are quite surprised this hasn't been recognised to date. There is a willingness on the part of many residents but it's important to get the housing association & council onboard also.

Views along Ravensbury Grove & Hengelo Gardens (Above)

Views within derelict garages sight indicating relationship with trees(Above) plus relationship with park, Below
View from Conservation Area towards locally listed wall and garages area beyond

View from Ravensbury Park Conservation Area towards locally listed wall and garages area beyond - Lamppost indicates approximate two storey height - houses will be roughly double this to top of roof
Panorama of Ravensbury Grove Seen from 64-70 in June 2016

Panorama of Ravensbury Grove Seen from 64-70 in June 2016

View from Ravensbury Park toward existing 64-70 Ravensbury Grove
View along Ravensbury Garages footpath - Lamppost indicates two storey height (Mar 2015)
The Wandle Valley Conservation Area (WVCA):

As the Wandle passes by the Ravensbury Estate, it meanders around the current built environment. It is at this point that the Wandle Valley Conservation Area (WCVA) and Ravensbury Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) are therefore essentially compromised in terms of overall width. Indeed, the southern end of Ravensbury Grove denotes one of the Wandle Valley's narrowest points in the local area.
Merton's Sites and Policies Plan & Map denotes that much of the area chosen for redevelopment is Open Space - Policies CS13, DM01. The rest of the area is in the Wandle Valley Regional Park 400m Buffer (Policy CS13 para 21.13). The whole site is adjacent to the Wandle Valley Regional Park (Policies CS5, CS13, DM01) and adjacent to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Policies CS13, DM02) and Local Nature Reserves (Policies CS13, DM02).

**DM O1 Open space**

Link to Core Planning Strategy Policies CS 13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture; CS 5 Wandle Valley Regional Park - **Policy aim** - To protect and enhance open space and to improve access to open space.

We consider that this land is not truly surplus to requirements. These garages were designed to serve the residents of Ravensbury. Car parking is in great need in our area. Some of this land should be put back into use and some of it turned into a wildlife area.

This policy also states that the design should not harm the character, appearance or function of the open space. These designs definitely do infringe on these policies. Ravensbury Park will be affected unduly by the height of these buildings. Building on the open space in the area of block B will also harm the character of Ravensbury Park, and that of the Ravensbury Estate. It is for this reason also that these proposals do not actually improve the public access between existing public areas and open spaces. The current footpath is much more direct than the alignment proposed by the development, and the current footpath is far more pleasant than that suggested by the developer.

The character and function of leisure walks and green chains: in this development, these walks are harmed and are not enhanced. Block paving between two four storey blocks of flats in place of green open space is not an enhancement. It does not suit the character of Ravensbury. It is not sufficiently green nor open nor pleasant.

We also feel that part (e) is applicable in this instance, due to the fact that this development will be very conspicuous from MOL and designated open space, and that the visual amenities will indeed be harmed by the towering blocks and their siting so close to the River Wandle. This solution is not appropriate for Ravensbury at all.

**SA/SEA implications:**

In 5.1 of the Merton Site & Policies Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) states:

*The policy meets a number of sustainability objectives relating to green issues particularly well, including health and wellbeing and climate change. The protection of the open spaces will ensure that any development proposal does not have a negative impact on the local environment and the policy ensures that any appropriate development is concentrated on the most appropriate brownfield land. This policy approach will enhance the quality of life through the provision of open spaces for both active and passive leisure activities. Open spaces and their vegetation can also assist surface water runoff and help to mitigate flood risk to properties and people.*
This development paves over green open space and directs the surface water directly into the River Wandle. This is not an appropriate use of our open space. It would be far better to retain the green space and even use it as a soakaway for a percentage of the development. The use of swale areas through the use of grassed area like this area, should be employed also.

It is obvious that this development does indeed have a negative impact on the local environment through its massing and height.

*Drainage drawing showing Levels proposed by the developers*

Paragraph 5.10. states:

*The visual amenity provided by designated open spaces has much public value and therefore development in proximity to and likely to be conspicuous from designated open spaces must not harm these amenities.*

However it is obvious from reading the plans, elevations and sections, that this area does not have as high a public value as currently exists. The proposals do indeed harm the visual amenities afforded by the current open space. The utility of the green space at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove is multiple. Walkers, residents, wildlife all benefit from this space. Everyone and everything enjoys the green space. It would not be an improvement to lose it, and the setting and the character of this area as well. Block B simply should not be built at all and Block A should not be so tall. Neither of these blocks and the associated landscaping improve on what is currently in place. The proposals do not "conserve and enhance the natural environment" as per paragraph 5.14.
DM O2 Nature conservation, trees, hedges and landscape features

Link to Core Planning Strategy Policy CS 13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture - Policy aim To protect and enhance biodiversity, particularly on sites of recognised nature conservation interest. To protect trees, hedges and other landscape features of amenity value and to secure suitable replacements in instances where their loss is justified.

Policy (a): "...proposals in and adjacent to these corridors will be expected to enhance their nature conservation value."

Due to the height, massing and proximity of the proposed development, we believe that this policy is particularly appropriate.

DM D1

Policy (d): The maintenance and enhancement of identified important local views, panoramas and prospects and their settings and where appropriate, create new views.

At discussed in this response, the removal of a key view by this development into Ravensbury Park is particularly worrying and should not be permitted.

Policy (i): Proposals for the conversion of front gardens for vehicle parking should not be detrimental to the character of the street or highway safety or undermine biodiversity, prevent sustainable drainage or reduce highway safety. (Further references on this are included in Merton’s borough character study. Also Policy DM T3 refers to parking bay dimensions).

Much has been made by Circle Housing during discussions with local residents regarding paving the front gardens over in order to provide parking for those residents. We are concerned that this is in contravention of the above policy and that these works could, if carried out incorrectly, be particularly onerous on the character of Ravensbury. Therefore, we expect Merton Council to effect appropriate measures to ensure the retention of the extensive hedges that characterise the Ravensbury landscape and enhance the biodiversity that is key to our area within the Wandle Valley. Sustainable drainage is of particular concern in an area of high risk for flooding. We would expect that Circle's developers submit plans denoting extents of parking proposed in each garden as opposed to being allowed to pave entire gardens, causing excessive runoff. It is important to limit the paving of the gardens for the reasons expected of a flood area of high risk.

In advance of this application, Circle Housing has quite recently allowed some of their properties around Ravensbury to install solid concrete front gardens, with no capacity for absorbing runoff. No drainage, and no soakaways. We would expect that as part of these proposals, Circle Housing rectify these garden conversions in order to avoid additional impact on the flood plain through not preventing their tenants taking matters into their own hands.

Front gardens should retain hedges and install adequate planting to prevent depletion of habitat and expand biodiversity to the benefit of the area being so close to the local nature reserve and the Wandle Valley Conservation Area. This will enhance the green chain effect that is so important for an area such as Ravensbury.
Safety & Security (6.7)

Well-designed places feel safe because they have built-in natural surveillance through the design of buildings and spaces, as well as having complementary mixes of uses and activities. Places that work well and look good also help engender a sense of belonging and local pride, which in itself encourages community participation and helps keep a place safe. Excessive and overt manifestations of security features often have the opposite effect.

Strangely enough, the southern end of Ravensbury Grove fulfils this policy to the letter. This is why we are so concerned about the general push for redevelopment at the expense of the character of our area.

Gated development (6.8)

An example of this is gated development which may address security concerns, however they restrict public access and therefore choice. This is considered divisive as it reduces social, visual and physical permeability and actively works against engendering community and social cohesion. It is therefore likely that most types of gated developments will be contrary to this policy, particularly parts (a), (b) and (e) and are therefore discouraged by the council. The council’s proposed Design SPD will contain further guidance on this matter.

We have concerns that the narrow access road down the side of the block B flats, effectively suggests a gated development, away from the rest of Ravensbury Estate, which is currently a very cohesive unit that residents and passersby enjoy.

This is another reason why Block B should not be built. Not only it is situated on valuable green space, it serves to further segregate Ravensbury Grove from the interior of the development, suggesting a private space. There is very restricted permeability in this new development.
In the garages area, there is a gate that leads onto the footpath. In this development, the gate has been removed and access is no longer possible through the site in question. The gate is indicated on the plan below:

![Plan of the site with an indicated access gate](image)

Sustainability:

We do NOT believe that a 4 storey block of flats on actual Open Space is sustainable in any form. Arguments can be made that attempt to outweigh economic over environmental, but we believe that for this site this is impossible. The site is simply too sensitive for wildlife, for views, for the future of our environment. This will set a precedent for more excessive development adjacent to some of our most sensitive sites in Merton.

Because of The NPPF, the London Plan and Merton's own Local Plan states that sustainable development is about change for the better. This development is too crowded for such a sensitive site and the overall design should be rejected.

Economically, the development affects the park is therefore detrimental to our green economy - the extent to which our park remains attractive to those drawn to its beauty. Passersby will no choice about their views out of the park once this is completed. If the views, as we and many residents believe, are harmed then there will be no going back if this is given the go ahead.

Socially, we already have a very high quality built environment. Any building that have not fulfilled their function have only done so through poor repairs and maintenance on the run up to the push for regeneration.

Environmentally, our existing wildlife seem to be thriving. We are always keen to give them a helping hand, but this development makes little contribution to an improvement in an
environmental sense due to the overdevelopment of the site. If the proposals were that much more restrained then it is possible that Ravensbury Park could benefit, but the massing and overall impact because of it suggests to us that this development as it stands will be a backwards step.

It is for these reasons that we believe this development is indeed unsustainable.

In the proposals specified in 16/P1968, the open space is relegated to patches distributed around the development as opposed to relatively wide open space that currently sits adjacent to the conservation area. The current land serves to expand the park, creating an annex for wildlife and, very importantly, for residents and passersby. Enter into this space and you already feel as if you are in the park. Exit the park and this space serves to extend the sensation of parkland, softening the progress into the built environment that is the current Ravensbury Estate.

Losing a cohesive green space in this area would therefore run against a number of the stated sustainability benefits of health, locale, & neighbourhood character. Redeploying the green space in a piecemeal fashion around the proposed development would not maintain its current beneficial role in terms of:

1. Location immediately adjacent to the Wandle Valley Regional Park,
2. Views into and out of Ravensbury Park,
3. The role in terms of character on behalf of Ravensbury Estate,
4. Enhancing the transitional mood of the area (a green transition from park to estate).

This open and enjoyable green space should be protected from development for these reasons with the hope in future of being included in the Wandle Valley Regional Park. Creative thought on the behalf of the species management in this area will make a positive contribution to the Wandle Valley. The area could be utilised as a swale zone for any future development within the garages, encompassing possible pond life, something that seems to be deficient in an area so close to the river. This in turn would reduce run-off into the already high risk flood zone of Ravensbury Grove & Hengelo Gardens. Hard paving of this area is to our mind, a ludicrous idea due to the multiple benefits to both wildlife and the community at large through retention of this valuable open space. Having run-off fed directly into the Wandle also seems contrary to the sustainable objectives mooted.

Destroying this area in order to place a 4 storey block of flats on it is not sustainable. Making the argument that the benefits of greater housing provision outweigh the negatives does not hold water either as the significant impact on the neighbourhood and on the immediately adjacent conservation area indicate otherwise.

Overdevelopment is a major risk in this area due to its sensitive relationship with both Ravensbury Park, the Ravensbury Estate and the Wandle Valley. If this is indeed phase 1 of the regen, then it should be assumed that there is considerable scope for a proportion of the 21 homes to be redeployed within the proposed £1bn Merton regen. Pressure should be resisted to forcibly develop this sensitive location scope of the entirety of the Merton Regen documentation published extensively.

Building substantially only on the plot currently occupied by the maisonettes (64-70 Ravensbury Grove) and that of the derelict garages would be a better scheme, but even this should be reduced to two storeys. Three storeys could be acceptable in the current building
plot if one of the storeys was incorporated into the roof. This approach could attempt to reduce the sizable impact on the local environment.

Walking South down Ravensbury Grove

As one travels south along Ravensbury Grove towards the junction with Hatfeild Close, the trees in Ravensbury Park form a distinctive backdrop to the low rise, two storey houses with pitched roofs. This scale of building is sympathetic with the park due to its proportions. The existing homes do not encroach on the park (or even block the view of it) and thereby magnify the park's value to passers-by and residents alike. From the junction of Ravensbury Grove and Hatfeild Close, Block B, if built, will encroach very strongly on the surrounding trees that form part and parcel of the character of Ravensbury as a whole. To consider interfering with this sense of proportion and harming this relationship by means of a 4 storey block of flats (Block B) beggars belief.

It is from this point also that the other four storey block of flats (Block A) will be seen emerging above the existing tiled roofs and further blocking the view of the park. Block A stands forward of the main building line of the existing houses and the height will therefore be that much more noticeable from along Ravensbury Grove. The problem with Block A is that it is too high in relation to the surrounding buildings and especially too high in relation to the surrounding trees (it also towers over the River Wandle). If it were two storeys in height, or possibly three storeys if the uppermost level were incorporated into the roof space, the negative effects on the character of the neighbourhood would be that much less.

Approaching the Southern End of Ravensbury Grove

As one nears the end of Ravensbury Grove (practically in line with 60 Ravensbury Grove), to your left the view of Ravensbury Park begins to extend considerably, by roughly 100m. This is one of the best views of the park when seen from within the Ravensbury Estate, allowing the visitor to see for a relatively long way and admire the large trees. This area also excels in terms of amenity due to the fact that it is a public area and not a private back garden. This area, with its green space, quality views into the park and defensible public space is a highly valued amenity for the residents of Ravensbury. The small cherry tree and planter may be considered by the developer's arboricultural consultant as having low value, but for residents this magnifies the value of the area. Indeed the planter was bought and paid for by the Ravensbury Residents Association around 20 years ago in order to positively transform the grass and lend it greater value than a mere lawn. Before that, this area was a quiet wooded glade, with mature trees interspersed with lawn - a beautiful area serving its function as both park and open space of great value to the residents. The storm of 1989 brought down a number of these trees, which were not replanted.
The lack of strong views into the park is commented on in the developing Ravensbury Local Plan. This public view should be retained for future generations to enjoy. Any passerby or resident, old or new, would be able to appreciate this area from a natural perspective without actually needing to walk into the park proper.

(Above & Below) Standing at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove, one can see all the way down the side of the park, appreciating the size of the trees and enjoying the sensation of encountering the wooded area, complete with teeming bird life both above your head (herons, kestrels and the like)

View across garages seen in March 2016 - note relationship with immediate environment
If one were to permit the construction of Block B in this area, at best, one would be compromising both this view and the extension of park environment into Ravenbury, at worst one would be destroying the sense of the neighbourhood's location forever. There will be no going back. A building of four storeys in the location proposed for Block B will severely harm the neighbourhood. In fact, any kind of building on this grassed area would be a backwards step. It should be retained for the benefit of the natural environment, the future Merton residents, visitors from outside the area and for the obvious benefits in terms of sustainability.

Boundary between Ravensbury Estate & Ravensbury Park

The proposed development should not be given the go ahead in its current form due to the plans for the site representing overdevelopment in this area in the most sensitive area in the whole of Ravensbury. The southern end of Ravensbury Grove forms the boundary with Ravensbury Park. In this area, the park and the estate are synonymous with each other. Any buildings over two storeys in height will block a large amount of the tree line and affect the overall character of the neighbourhood. To build in this area requires sensitivity & respect in terms of damage to potential outlook for not only to the existing built environment of Ravensbury Grove, Hengelo Gardens & beyond, but also to Ravensbury Park & the conservation area of Wandle Valley. The two go hand-in-hand.

Proposed Block B: This is the most sensitive area of Ravensbury for both the park and the estate-cum-village.

The garages site is 1m higher than in Hengelo Gardens, and therefore any development in this area has consequences that are that much more visible for both the park and for the development.

At the entrance to the garages, the stated level on page 22 of the Flood Risk Assessment (see planning application documentation) is 18.19m AOD. In front of No.60 Ravensbury Grove,
the stated level is 17.61m AOD at the kerb. In front of the houses 1-10 Hengelo Gardens, the stated levels range from 17.08m to 17.16m AOD. This is why from ground level within the garages site, one can see almost directly into the bedrooms of residents homes on Hengelo Gardens:

1. Floor heights in Hengelo Gardens houses:
   17.11m AOD Ground Level + 0.3m to Ground FFL + 2.5m storey height + 1.125m to first floor bedroom window level = 19.91m AOD = First Floor Level

2. 18.25mAOD ground level + 1.7m (assumed eye level) = 19.95m AOD.

From items 1 & 2 above it can be seen that a person standing in front of the Mews Houses will be able to see easily & directly into the bedrooms of the Hengelo Houses. This would constitute unreasonable overlooking. The layout of the houses could be rearranged and the boundary should be screened to prevent this.

View from within the currently derelict garages site, looking towards Hengelo Gardens with the roof to the 4 storey section of Ravensbury Court visible beyond. Height difference between the derelict garages area & the houses on Hengelo Gardens beyond can be appreciated here.

If this application is passed then we would expect that considerable boundary screening be incorporated in order to retain pre-existing levels of privacy and remedy to some degree the loss of amenity.
The images below demonstrate the impact of this development and loss of outlook for the homes along 1-10 Hengelo Gardens. The riverside houses block out much of the trees, whilst the mews houses encroach on the garden amenity that the residents currently enjoy.
Views from within Ravensbury Park

The proximity of Block A to the River Wandle and therefore the conservation area is of much concern. From within the park, one can view the rear of the existing homes backing onto the Wandle, namely 56-62 Ravensbury Grove and 64-70 Ravensbury Grove. The current block of 64-70 is angled in order to allow for a back garden, however this location also allows for a better spatial relationship with the conservation area that it backs onto.

The proposed location of Block A will be in far greater proximity to the small channel of the River Wandle and at 4 storeys will tower over it. Both banks of this small channel represent the Wandle Valley Conservation Area. We believe that the design of the new block is far too close to the channel and a location should be found that will give the River Wandle sufficient room to "breathe". In all honesty, the ideal location of a two storey version of Block A is the current location as it provides space for both the tenants and the river environment.

With reference to the Wandle Valley Conservation Area Character Assessment (2007), sub area 5, part 2 contains Policy WV.P3: Development adjacent to the conservation area, and states that development proposals will be expected to "preserve or enhance its setting and not detract from views into or out of the area". We feel that this development will indeed detract from views both into and out of the area.
The massing and overbearing nature of the Block A proposal threatens to relegate this important tributary of the River Wandle into a moribund channel, suitable only for flood relief as opposed to its current role, serving kingfishers, dragonflies and also mammals such as hedgehogs in generally undisturbed river bank areas with little access for extensive pedestrian traffic.

The trees are also very important sites for nesting birds and even bats. To consider further compromising their status for the local flora and fauna should be beyond reproach.

Please note that consideration should also be given towards the possibility of further tree loss if the regen proper goes ahead. Currently, it seems that Circle Housing have proposed little by way of proper habitat replacement in terms of numbers of trees and areas suitable for habitat. Instead, this development seems to serve sterile landscaping and the occasional passing bee. We have an extensive invertebrate population in terms of spiders, stag beetles and other species. This development is removing a large area of potentially ideal habitat.

To our understanding, this development appears wholly unsustainable due to its push for overdevelopment immediately adjacent to the Wandle Valley Conservation Area.

On page 40 of the WVCA character assessment, the Special Guidance states that views should be opened up into the park and entrances enhanced. In our view, this development serves neither of those functions and instead does quite the opposite through the loss of the green open space and the closing in of the park by the 4 storey blocks and the 3 storey houses with tiled roofs that are practically equal in height.

The WCVA guidance continues: " Should the prospect of major or significant development in close proximity to this part of the conservation area become a possibility, a development brief/framework should be prepared for the site or area concerned to secure an appropriate form of development that maintains and enhances the character and setting of the conservation area including buildings and spaces, particularly the parks along the Wandle and entrances to them, and preserves any archaeological remains. Key requirements will include:

1. **Buildings of a form and scale that reinforces the relationship between built development and open spaces.** [Due to the development's scale, it does not serve to reinforce this relationship, but compromises it and has a high potential to irreparably damage it too].

2. **Buildings designed of a high quality and which integrate with the surrounding pedestrian network, and which provide overlooking/ surveillance of public rights of way and spaces.**

3. **Use of good quality materials that reflect and complement but not necessarily copy the palette of historic materials that survive within the area.**

4. **Create links between the development and the Morden Hall and Ravensbury Parks.** [This development does not sufficiently benefit the existing links due to the demolition of the green space that is of considerable benefit as described elsewhere in this response].

5. **Where possible maximise opportunities to improve the entrances, particularly to Ravensbury Park.** [It is not an improvement to install paving where there was once grass and plants that can serve the wildlife and general environment that much better.]
In our opinion, this is a very significant development due to its proximity to Ravensbury Park and the potential for damaging both the park's character and the character of the Ravensbury Estate.

We feel that this development has failed in regards to creating a sustainable link between Morden Hall and Ravensbury Park through the removal of the green space. It has also compromised the park entrance through the same.

The developing Ravensbury Local Plan describes how Ravensbury Court utilises the 4 storey height to block out the view of the industrial estates beyond. It seem ludicrous therefore to use homes of the same height against the park, effectively blocking out the tree line for many residents of Ravensbury and damaging the character and neighbourhood even for passersby.

This consultation has faced stiff opposition from Ravensbury Residents throughout its journey through the consultation stages. It is incorrect to represent the palpable anger of residents by suggesting it has been drawn up with their consent when in fact it is quite the opposite.

Key stakeholders were indeed consulted although Ravensbury Residents Association noted the breadth of opposition to this scheme from the outset. An opposition that did not wane throughout the process. Residents were angry and continue to be angry at how this consultation was foisted on an community that is happy with their homes, assuming repairs are carried out by a competent team.

View of Ravensbury Grove from Ravensbury Court, showing two storey heights. Four storeys will represent overdevelopment and will tower over both the park and the existing homes. This will represent an unsustainable form of development in consideration of the conservation status of Ravensbury Park & the Wandle Valley.
Site Levels:

Much of the site under consideration is a high part of Ravensbury, rising up 1m above the levels within the estate. The area is key to the character of both Ravensbury Estate & Ravensbury Park due to the enveloping tree line. Building on this site needs special consideration in order to avoid unpleasant impacts on both the estate and the park.

For this reason we would have thought that the best proposals should be low storey, ie 2 storeys with flat "green" roofs - ie planted roofs that will minimise the impact of the newly built environment and serve the flora and fauna of our park at the same time. Building over this height compromises the park's internal environment and does little to respect the loss of outlook incurred upon the existing residents of Hengelo Gardens and Ravensbury Grove.

The Developing Ravensbury Local Plan:

The Ravensbury Draft Estates Local Plan has just completed its second stage in March 2016 as such we expect that it should be considered a material planning consideration. This has been developed in consultation with the local community and Merton Council and will go through the final stage 3 soon.

However, on page 166, Policy EP R8 Building Heights of the developing Local Plan, the area of the Ravensbury Garages site and the land at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove was left blank. We found this very strange and consider that by trying to gloss over the future plans for this area, against the spirit of developing a Local Plan for the Ravensbury Neighbourhood. This site is not part of the call for sites plan either, so we believe it goes against the development plan for Merton also.

Flooding, The Sequential Test & Exception Test

This application represents overdevelopment in an isolated area surrounded by an area that is at high risk of flooding: zone 3a. We do not think it appropriate to put so many people on an island in this area when there is an already high reliance on emergency services if a flood does occur. With this in mind, we consider the scale of the development a cause for concern. In consideration of the flood risk assessment making mention of the larger scope of the regen, we consider it even more ridiculous to promote additional homes in this area due to its isolated nature. The density should be much lower here.

In section 3, page 5 of The Proposal, Flood Risk Assessment Par 02, Savills make mention of defective Orlit Housing. According to reports by Circle Housing's own structural engineers, submitted to Merton Council as part of the Case for Regeneration in October 2015, the Orlit Houses in question are not actually defective. Circle have mismanaged their repairs and therefore as per their own engineers recommendations, threaten the life span of these homes through neglecting repairs such as gutter replacement as well as facade repair.

On Page 11, para. 6.7, we note that the Inspector stated that appropriate development of such [floodplain] sites is not ruled out. This development is not appropriate due to the multiple reasons stated in this report. for Savills to seek to justify this over development surrounded by flood plains and rivers shows a degree of desperation.

Savills have used the lack of a response in determining the availability of sites and we would question their methodology, particularly in light of the extensive development destined for
Morden Town Centre, the multitude of industrial estates in the area that are awaiting a change in planning in order to sell the land off for housing. We would argue that it is in their interests not to find another site available due to their need to serve their client, Circle Housing. Independent verification would be most appropriate in this instance. We would argue that Savills assertion that there are no other sites, in comparison to Ravensbury in a flood risk zone 3a, holds little water until an independent body supplies their assessments. As such the Sequential Test prepared by Savills should not be solely relied on.

Other notes:

With regards to Design, we would like to note that balcony design in the existing built environment of Ravensbury are actually incorporated into the main facade and do not project outwards. this maintains the lines of the facades. We would have expected that this design would be incorporated in a development that abuts a conservation area so as to reduce the overall impact on the surroundings. This design would also maintain the design ethos already in existence and make any new development more homogenous. We fail to understand why this has not been incorporated.

Conclusion:

We request that this development and the associated planning application are refused on the basis of the arguments presented.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to this application for planning permission. Please also consider our request to attend and speak at the actual planning meeting for this application as soon as a date is fixed.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher Holt,

Chair, Ravensbury Residents Association
Appendix 1: Photographs of Ravensbury Grove and associated areas.

Southern end of Ravensbury Grove, abutting the park, seen from Ravensbury Court

64-70 Ravensbury Grove showing relationship with tree line of Ravensbury Park
64-70 Ravensbury Grove showing relationship with tree line of Ravensbury Park

Existing Street scene approaching southern end of Ravensbury Grove
View of Ravensbury Park seen from end of Ravensbury Grove.

Treeline seen from end of Ravensbury Grove
View across existing landscaping towards garages (March 2016)

Ravensbury Grove: Planted and landscaped area seen in May 2016 (above & below)
View from Ravensbury Court towards Hengelo Gardens with garages site beyond, showing extensive vegetation and leafy outlook
View from Hengelo Garden to rear of Ravensbury Grove showing outlook

View from Hengelo Gardens & Ravensbury Court towards garages area.
View looking south down Ravensbury Grove towards the park

View from 64-70 Ravensbury Grove in June 2016 (above and below)
View of grassed amenity area and character of southern end of Ravensbury Grove

3d artist’s impression of flats Block B in Ravensbury Grove
View from rear of Hengelo Gardens towards garages area

Artist's impression of Proposed housing on derelict garages site. (above and below)
Artist’s impression of Proposed housing on derelict garages site.

Artist’s impression of proposed development site.
Artist’s impression of proposed development site.

Artist’s impression of relationship between existing buildings and River Wandle

Extent of vegetation within derelict garages site.
Derelict garages site indicating existing scale

Derelict garages site showing extent of park now within boundary.
Appendix 2: Aerial photographs

View from the East with Ravensbury Park on left hand side (Above)

View from the North, with Ravensbury Park at top of picture (Above)
View showing proximity to Ravensbury Park

View showing boundary with Hengelo Gardens
View showing southern end of Ravensbury Grove
Appendix 3: Shadow maps & 3d model simulations

January:

1st January @ 1200hrs

1st Jan @ 1500hrs

April:

1st April @ 0900hrs

1st April @ 1100hrs

June:

1st June @ 0700 hrs

1st June @ 0800 hrs
1st June @ 1630 hrs (above & below)
Shadow transitions on 1st January: @ 0900 to 1600 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st February: @ 0900 to 1600 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st March: @ 0800 to 1700 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st April @ 0800 to 1800 hrs:
Shadow transitions on 1st May: @ 0700 to 1800 hrs
Shadow transitions on 1st July: @ 0500 to 1900 hrs:
RAVENSBURY
Urban Design Review
Sue McGlynn Urban Design Ltd.
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Background

In 2010 the London Borough of Merton transferred all of its housing stock to Circle Housing Merton Priory following a successful ballot of tenants. Some 9,500 former council homes were transferred, including the Ravensbury estate.

The Transfer Agreement included a requirement that Circle Housing Merton Priory bring all the transferred homes up the Merton Standard, effectively ‘Decent Homes Standard’ improvements plus some locally agreed enhancements. The Agreement required that all these works be completed by December 2015.

The Merton Standard works are well advanced across Merton, with over two thirds of the improvement works completed. However in preparing the plans for the delivery of the works to the outstanding homes, Circle Housing Merton Priory have come to doubt the value for money case of investing in what are, in some instances, homes and neighbourhoods of a very poor standard. As a result Circle Housing Merton Priory is currently exploring regeneration-based alternatives for three specific estates, including the 192 home Ravensbury estate.

Circle Housing Merton Priory see two main options:
1. The continuation of the Merton Standard works as originally planned
2. The regeneration of Ravensbury including the demolition of some homes and improvement of others to provide a total of 396 homes.
About the study area

The Ravensbury Estate is located between Mitcham and Morden, towards the south east of the London Borough of Merton. The area has a predominantly suburban and residential character, typically with 1, 2 and 3 storey houses, mainly of the inter-war and post-war period. The nearest district centre to the estate is Morden, just over 1 kilometre to the west - about a 15 minute walk. A small parade of shops is located on Morden Road, opposite the estate.

Morden Road runs along the northern and western boundaries of the estate and The River Wandle forms the southern boundary. The river valley creates a sequence of major green spaces that surround Ravensbury on three sides: Morden Hall Park, Ravensbury Park and Watermeads Nature Reserve. Mitcham Common and Golf Course lie about 1.5km further east. These extensive green spaces and the mature trees of the historic park of Morden Hall give Ravensbury an attractive setting and feels very much to be at the ‘soft edge’ of London. The only visible built-up edge to the site is at the north -eastern corner where there is a small estate of business units and to the north Deer Park Gardens.
Testing the case for regeneration

As part of their regeneration plans for Ravensbury, Circle Housing Merton Priory is continuing to build up a ‘layered’ approach to the evidential case, including assessment of building condition and viability of regeneration options.

Another layer in the evidential case will be to examine the quality of the built environment within Ravensbury, with particular reference to permeability and access; usable private and communal open space; densities; adjacencies and overlooking of spaces. This will require a comprehensive and impartial review of the existing Ravensbury estate from an urban design perspective.

In January 2015 Circle Housing Merton Priory commissioned Sue McGlynn Urban Design Ltd to carry out the review.
Process

This study sets out to evaluate Ravensbury against the established principles of good design and does not attempt to make aesthetic or value judgements on the architectural style of Ravensbury. Instead it concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the design and the quality of the neighbourhood that results.

The National Planning Policy Framework (para.58) defines well-designed places as places that:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
Methods

The review involved an assessment of the elements of the built environment of Ravensbury identified in Circle Housing Merton Priory’s brief. These are:

- Urban structure and access
- Building layout and alignment in relation to routes
- Façades and their interfaces with public spaces
- Height and massing
- Density and mix
- Building, landscape and public realm quality

A number of key measures were used to evaluate these elements and their performance in relation to current best practice urban design principles and policy:

- Relative integration of the estate with its surrounding area, using techniques developed by Space Syntax Ltd;
- Building position relative to routes to reveal the degree of definition of public and private spaces, using ‘figure ground’ analysis;
- The extent to which buildings provide active frontage to all public routes for safety, surveillance and sociability, by mapping ‘active’, ‘passive’ and ‘dead’ frontage;
- Photographic survey of buildings, landscape, streetscape and open space quality.
In addition, simple mapping and recording of other characteristics of the estate were compiled with a combination of on-site observation and use of secondary sources where data already exists. These are credited in the report where used.

The commission took place over 4 weeks in late January and February 2015. The surveys were carried out during weekdays and during working hours so no assessment has been made of the night-time experience of Ravensbury, such as lighting levels or parking.

The report is in three sections dealing with the main themes of analysis:

1. Urban structure
2. Layout
3. Quality of the external environment

Each section of the report provides an explanation of the methods used, an account of the analysis, followed by conclusions and key findings.

At the end of the report, the overall performance of Ravensbury is summarized against the Building for Life 12 criteria, the Government and industry endorsed assessment method for residential development.
Review themes

Urban structure | Layout | Quality of the external environment
Urban structure

Urban structure is an important spatial measure of social inclusion or exclusion and therefore a significant factor in deciding whether to refurbish or regenerate Ravensbury. This section evaluates two aspects of Ravensbury’s urban structure, integration and connectivity. Each aspect is considered at two scales – the wider context within which Ravensbury is set and the immediate surroundings of the estate.

Integration: Assessing the ‘depth’ of Ravensbury relative to the wider area of south-west London and to its locality. This is an important measure of the extent to which residents have access to public transport and all the other opportunities that living in a capital city offer. Accessibility at this scale is often a significant indicator of life chances and residential value.

Connectivity: Assessing the relative interconnectedness of routes around and within the estate. This type of analysis reveals the nature of pedestrian access and the ease, convenience and safety of moving around the immediate neighbourhood. Accessibility at this scale is often a significant indicator of legibility and perceived safety of routes in the locality.

Above: A fully connected ‘deformed grid’ in the Merton district.

Above: A ‘Radburn’ layout in Grove Hill, Hemel Hempstead, with segregated routes and a confused building arrangement.
We have used Space Syntax theory and its techniques of analysis to measure Ravensbury’s level of integration and connectivity. The study area for the analysis was defined by bounding features such as railways, rivers, major routes and open spaces and encompasses most of the district of Merton.

Research since the 1970s by Bill Hillier and his colleagues at The Space Syntax Laboratory, University College London has led to a fundamental understanding of the relationship between spatial design and the use of space, the emergence of land uses and longer-term social outcomes.

Analysis of connected street systems reveals a structure of a few long straight lines that form the main settlement-wide movement routes. The remainder, the more numerous and shorter lines, represent the more local movement system. These are the quieter streets that carry less movement but are still connected to the wider movement network.

In the hierarchical movement systems introduced from the 1950s onwards, the pattern of development is very different, with pedestrians frequently segregated from vehicular movement at the local level. The very ends of the movement system are the culs-de-sac so familiar from the 1960s onwards in both public and private sector housing development. This has frequently resulted in pedestrian paths that are routed along the backs of property with little or no surveillance, that are less direct and legible and have a very low quality of walking experience.
Recent design guidance has recognized that we need streets that are designed for all modes of movement to be integrated within the same space; streets that are convenient for vehicular movement but are also safe, convenient and attractive for walking and cycling at a local scale (Manual for Streets 1 and 2, Building for Life 12).

Hillier et al’s Space Syntax approach uses a number of geometric measures to represent the relative connectivity of the ‘segments’ of public space, defined by drawing lines, called ‘axial lines’, through the system being analysed.

These studies show that the movement intensity along any line segment – that is, any length of line with an unobstructed view from one end to the other – depends on the segment’s pattern of connections to all the other segments in a given area around it.

Segment length depends on the bendiness of the corridor with the longest segments tending naturally to pick up the largest number of connections. The most intensive movement will flow along these straightest, most-connected segments (in hotter colours in the diagram), while the shortest, least connected segments will be quietest; as shown by the cooler colours.

The geometry of a layout has a pronounced effect on actual and perceived connectivity and legibility as well as actual and perceived levels of safety.
Wider context: accessibility

Accessibility is well-documented in transport and planning policy documents and Ravensbury falls within an area with a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 2, defined as ‘poor’ by The London Plan. This rating reflects the peripheral location of Morden and Mitcham within the Greater London area.

The PTAL score is used as an initial basis for determining housing density and parking ratios as defined in the London Plan and so has implications should the decision to regenerate Ravensbury be taken. Generally, the higher the score, the higher the housing density with significantly reduced car parking levels. In lower PTAL areas, such as at Ravensbury, dense flatted development is unlikely to be acceptable and parking levels need to reflect the relevant London Plan or local authority standards compatible with the likely car ownership levels.

Ravensbury has a reasonable range of public transport options within a 15 minute walking radius. The underground station at Morden is a 15 minute walk but the Belgrave Walk tram stop is only a 5-minute walk, accessed via Ravensbury Path. Two other tram stations, Phipps Bridge and Merton, also fall within the 10 and 15 minute radii and the estate is also relatively well-served by bus services on the London and Morden Roads.

A summary diagram of accessibility is included here.
Wider context: Integration analysis R8

Using the Space Syntax ‘Depthmap’ software, here we perform graph analysis on an ‘axial map’ of the study area of wider Merton. The axial lines are drawn through routes available for use by all movement modes but exclude routes accessible only to pedestrians and cyclists.

Integration is a measure of the average depth of a space to all other spaces in the system. The spaces of a system can be ranked from the most integrated to the most segregated. The software applies a relative colour scheme to help show a route’s level of integration, with the most integrated routes appearing in warm colours (red, orange yellow) and the most segregated routes showing in cooler colours (greens, blues, purples). As such, integration analysis is a measure of ‘depth’ in the system.

As Ravensbury is embedded within a large city it cannot be analysed as a closed system. ‘R8’ is used here to help routes near the edge of the area modelled from showing as overly ‘cool’ when in effect they are just located at the edge of the study area.

As the diagram shows, Ravensbury is in a relatively isolated location within the Borough and is consequently ‘deep’ from the most integrated routes that provide access to the wider area of south London and beyond. Movement is disrupted in this part of the Borough by the river valley and its flood plain and the canals, railways and commons lying within it. These green wedges can be traced following the course of the Wandle and other tributaries of the River Thames and is very visible in the space syntax diagram as a ‘gap’ in the street grid of south London.
Wider context: Integration analysis R3

As before, integration analysis is useful as a measure of ‘depth’ in the system. Here we change the analysis to R3 as this is an important consideration for assessing the walkability of a movement system. Radius 3 has been shown to be a ‘tipping point’ for modal choice; areas deeper than R3 within a system show a marked shift towards motorised travel, likely because routes become unnecessarily indirect and complicated.

As the diagram shows, virtually the whole area south of Mitcham and Morden is relatively ‘cool’ indicating that many journeys will require three-step changes of direction (R3) or more. This is a strong indication that the car will increasingly be the mode of choice, even for short journeys. In these circumstances, not only will car ownership likely to increase but also car use.

The estate is adjacent to the Morden Road which has an important movement function in the study area. Movement is intensified along Morden Road owing to this disruption of the movement grid and the lack of alternative routes. As a location, Ravensbury benefits from its proximity to and direct connection with Morden Road as it provides the link between the main radial routes of Mitcham and Morden.
Wider context: line length across the study area

Line lengths can be used as a proxy for intelligibility. Longer sight lines allow you to see further ahead on your journey, identify possible junctions and route options and assess alternatives in terms of direction and convenience. This is an important feature of movement networks as it allows us to move confidently even in unfamiliar places as we are able to judge which routes are part of the overall movement system and which give access only to more local areas. By contrast, short lines with frequent changes of direction mean it is difficult to understand at ground level how one route relates to another and whether the route you are on will take you in the right direction.

Again, the colour system in the diagram denotes line length, with warm colours representing the longest lines in the study area and blue and dark blue the shortest. The analysis, as shown by the diagram, reveals a very high number of ‘cool’ lines in the whole study area. This is in part caused by the widespread truncation of routes where they meet rivers, railway lines and extensive areas of green space.

In addition, the space syntax analysis confirms observation on the ground, or by Google Street view, that the relatively small number of longer, warmer-coloured lines identify historic routes or those dating from the 19th and early- to mid-20th century periods of suburban development.
Local context: Integration Analysis (R3)

The analysis of the wider context has shown that Ravensbury is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough. Moving to the site in more detail, we can see that low levels of integration are apparent here too. Ravensbury is defined and bounded by the River Wandle, parks, open spaces and the railway line to the north. This means that the estate cannot be anything other than a segregated enclave, almost regardless of the design of the layout.

On the one hand this creates a quiet residential environment but on the other hand restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.

Being a cul-de-sac, the current layout of the estate re-inforces this ‘natural’ separation but it remains very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly – they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.

The challenge for every new development in the Borough is to make small but potentially significant improvements in integration, particularly when situated in an already relatively isolated location such as Ravensbury. However, opportunities to achieve this at Ravensbury are limited by the enclave nature of the site.
Local context: Connectivity analysis

Connectivity can be used as a proxy for the intelligibility of a layout. The ability to understand how the route you are on is connected to other routes has been shown to be a key factor in developing a ‘picture’ of an overall system. Poorly connected routes give little information about an overall structure and make navigation more difficult, whereas highly visible, connected routes allow users to gather a great deal of information about the place they are in and whether they can move through it easily and without backtracking. Put simply, connectivity is a measure of the number of times a line in the model is connected onto other lines. In this type of analysis, axial lines are drawn for all connections including footpaths and cycle paths.

The analysis shows that the section of Morden Road adjacent to the estate is ‘hot’. This is because many vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connections converge on this section of the road. This explains the location of the small parade of shops as it is here that local movement is intensified.

However, it should be noted that this is a quantitative assessment of connection not a qualitative one. Many of the connections shown may not be easy or pleasant to use in all weathers or times of the day.

The other point to note is that within Ravensbury the vehicular routes are relatively ‘warm’ by comparison with the pedestrian and cycle routes, which show as ‘blue’ in the analysis. Although the estate is very shallow to the green spaces of the riverside and parks the connections between the two are not as legible. The regeneration of the estate could provide the opportunity to improve this situation by making better connections between the estate and the nearby ‘green’ routes and play spaces.
Urban structure summary

The various scales of the Space Syntax analysis show that this part of the Borough is relatively isolated. The combination of the peripheral location of the site within south London and the natural and other boundaries that surround Ravensbury make it an enclave. The overall isolation of the estate cannot be significantly improved. However, the seclusion and absence of through traffic is valued highly by residents and adds to the attraction of the location as a residential environment.

1. Ravensbury is located in a peripheral location of the Greater London area and this is reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2). However, the estate does have a reasonable range of public transport options within a 15-minute walking isochrone.

2. A number of natural and other barriers create very strong edges around the estate and restrict movement and access locally and to the surrounding area. This is likely to encourage both higher car ownership and higher car use.

3. As a location, Ravensbury benefits from its proximity to and direct connection with Morden Road which has an important movement function in the local area. Movement is intensified along Morden Road owing to the distortion of the street grid by extensive areas of green infrastructure and the lack of alternative routes.

4. Ravensbury is very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly: they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.

5. It is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.

6. The regeneration of the estate could provide the opportunity to make better pedestrian connections between the ‘everyday’ routes within the estate and the nearby ‘green’ routes, play spaces and other footpath and cycling routes.
Layout

The previous section analysed various aspects of the movement network in both the wider area and locality of Ravensbury. This section evaluates the layout of buildings on the estate and the way that they are oriented to streets, pedestrian routes and open spaces.

The purpose of the analysis is to assess whether the building layout and facades provide the required level of surveillance and activity to animate the streets and communal open spaces as well as ensuring the privacy and security of gardens.

Two aspects are considered:
• Building layout
• Building interfaces
Building layout

The following sequence of ‘figure ground’ diagrams illustrates the ways in which buildings define both public and private spaces. They compare the pattern seen in Ravensbury with that of the surrounding area.

A ‘figure ground’ plan highlights either the ‘figure’, ie the enclosed space of buildings or the ‘ground’, ie the ‘unbuilt’ open space in either public or private ownership.

The first ‘figure ground’ plan maps only the buildings in black. The street network is clearly visible and well-defined on the Ravensbury estate, as it is in the majority of the surrounding residential areas. This is because there is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.

Right: A ‘figure ground’ diagram of the wider Merton area, with Ravensbury estate outlined in yellow. Note the uniformity of the both Ravensbury and the housing to the south of the river built in a similar period.
The second figure ground plan maps only the open space in black ie the ‘unbuilt’ space. In the residential areas immediately around the estate most of this is either the public space of the street or is enclosed as private front and rear gardens. At Ravensbury and Deer Park Gardens the distribution of open space shows a different pattern, with significant areas being given over to communal spaces at the front of buildings as well as the private space of rear and front gardens. However, there are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home.

Right: Unbuilt space is revealed in this reverse of the normal ‘figure ground’ diagram and shows how the buildings define public space and enclose private space.
Building interfaces: Active frontages

One of the most important features of ‘perimeter block development’ is that building fronts and entrances should be oriented to face the street. This sets up the mutually re-inforcing relationship of active and well-surveilled public spaces at the front of dwellings and private spaces away from public view at the rear. The importance of this relationship for creating safe, lively and sociable places is recognized in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning policy Guidance on Design.

The logical extension of this is that all streets and pedestrian routes should be lined by the front of buildings rather than their sides and backs. The following sequence of diagrams adds a further layer to the analysis by indicating the position of building entrances and mapping the ‘transparency’ of building facades at ground floor level where they are adjacent to publicly-accessible space.

Building facades have been mapped according to the following classifications:

- Active frontage is defined as facades that having both doors and windows of inhabited rooms (ie not bathrooms, storerooms, lobbies or garages) at regular intervals along the street or route to provide surveillance as well as contact and movement between inside and out.
- Passive frontage is defined as facades with only windows of inhabited rooms but no doorways, providing surveillance but no contact between public and private space.
- Dead frontage is where the edge to the public space or route is a blank wall or wall that is effectively blank, for instance rows of garage doors or where windows are obscured.
1. Ravensbury Court: ‘Passive frontage’ but good surveillance to the street and communal space.
2. Ravensbury Grove flats, again showing ‘passive frontage’ but with good surveillance.
3. ‘Active frontages’ of Ravensbury Court face the internal space rather than the public space.
Building interfaces: Doors and building entrances

As the diagrams illustrate, the analysis at Ravensbury shows two different responses. This may indicate that it was planned and designed at a period when theories of residential layout and movement were in transition.

The houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. Private amenity space is provided away from public view at the rear of properties. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’ of the buildings, minimizing contact and activity with the streets. The archways in Ravensbury Court provide pedestrian access from the street fronts to the dwelling entrances at the rear.

The maisonette typology does at least ensure continuous passive frontage. Living rooms rather than bedrooms are adjacent to the ground floor street edges and communal spaces. However, maisonettes have no external amenity space and the ground floor units do not have independent entrances from the street. The 2-storey flats have access only to a small terrace or balcony but this does overlook the street without having direct access from it.

There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The exception to this pattern is the edges of the garage courts and the pedestrian paths that have no frontage at all. This issue could be addressed and rectified by regeneration of the estate.

In summary, most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces.
1. Rear access to flats on Ravensbury Grove. All gates to flats were open at the time of visit.
2. Ground floor entrances for the maisonettes inside Ravensbury Court.
3. Entry to the upper floor maisonettes in Ravensbury Court.
4. Terraced houses with shared access to rear gardens.
Layout summary

1. The figure ground plans show that Ravensbury adopts a similar ‘perimeter block’ pattern of development to surrounding residential areas.
2. There is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.
3. There are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home.
4. Most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces. Houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’, reducing contact and activity between buildings and streets.
5. There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The spaces with the least intervisibility and surveillance are the garage courts and the pedestrian paths. This issue could be remedied during the regeneration of the estate.
Quality of the external environment

This final theme of the review assesses the quality of the external environment of the estate. It reviews Ravensbury from an urban design point of view and concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the estate’s design.

It does not include stock condition of buildings or a detailed analysis of dwelling types as this is provided in other baseline studies.

The elements reviewed are:

Buildings
- Building character, types and massing
- Density and mix

Public realm
- Streetscape
- Landscape
- Open spaces

This part of the review primarily uses photos to identify characteristic types of buildings and spaces and highlights key issues of quality and use.
Building character, density and mix

The majority of the area surrounding Ravensbury is characterized by post-war suburban housing, typically detached, semi-detached or in short terraces and of one or two storeys in height. Although constructed during the same period, the Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces and sub-areas within the estate.

It has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and ‘rural’ edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.

Building types are:
2-storey, semi-detached pre-cast concrete Orlit houses, around the perimeter and mainly the western half of the site
2-storey terraces of houses and flats
4-storey, L-shaped terrace of maisonettes

Apart from the concrete Orlit houses, a simple palette of brick and tile materials unifies the building types and groups.

Ravensbury currently has 192 homes in an area of 4.43 ha, giving a density of 43 dwellings per hectare (dph). This density is similar to the surrounding development of the same period but is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location. The homes are a mix of 1-bed flats, 2-bed maisonettes and 2- and 3-bed houses. Of the 192, 66 are in private ownership with the remaining 126 occupied by Circle Merton Priory tenants.

The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration. For instance, the garage courts at the south-east corner of the site are little used yet they occupy the most valuable part of the site with river frontage. There is also potential to increase building height within the site and to create a stronger built edge to the section of Morden Road east of The Surrey Arms public house.
This sequence of images shows the range of building heights and types present on the estate. A simple palette of materials unifies the building types and groups within the estate.

1. Two-storey, semi-detached Orlit houses to the urban edge of Morden Road.
2. Orlits with slip-road to Morden Road. There is potential along both these frontages to increase building heights.
3. Four storey maisonettes. The building to building distance across Ravensbury Grove (pictured) and Henglo Gardens combined with landscape preserve the open feel of the estate.
4. Sub-areas within the estate defined by building height, type and landscape, as shown here in Henglo Gardens.
5. Short two-storey terraces of flats in Ravensbury Grove.
6. Two-storey terraced houses to Hengelo Gardens.
Streetscape: vehicular routes

• The road types are typical of this period of development, with standard widths and surface treatment of black-top carriageways and pavements with concrete kerbs. The exception is the narrower carriageway of Rutter Gardens.
• The simple, straight street layout provides an efficient edge for parking. This does not dominate the streetscape where carriageways are wide enough to park on street and where mature trees reduce visual impact, for instance on Ravensbury Grove and Hengelo Gardens.
• High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey – day time during a weekday. It is safe to assume that this gets more problematic in the evening and weekends. This is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, “poor”.
• At the moment a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. The garage courts looked unused and are probably too small for modern cars.
• There is a significant amount of ‘wheels up’ parking in Hatfield Close and this is visually intrusive as well as blocking pavements for pedestrians. However, as the whole estate is in effect a cul-de-sac vehicle flows and speeds are generally low and it feels quite safe to walk in the carriageway. During the regeneration of the estate it would be positive to formalize this by introducing shared-surface streets.
• Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.
1. Morden Road is the only busy through route. Its standard highways design and treatment is softened by the mature trees on both sides of the road.
2. Ravensbury Grove is the main access for the estate. It has parking on both sides of the street.
3. Hatfield Close has on-plot parking in long front gardens but ‘wheels-up’ parking still happens.
4. Internal street behind Ravensbury Court.
Streetscape: pedestrian routes

Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and these feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian-only routes within the estate. The exceptions are the route that connects the southern end of Rutter Gardens with Morden Road and the paths at the south of Ravensbury Grove and Hengelo Gardens to the riverside. All of these routes could be improved.

- The long footpath from Rutter Gardens is narrow and unsurveilled and was the only place on the estate where litter was evident. This is the only existing pedestrian access from the west of the estate to Morden Road and the bus stop.
- Of the paths at the south of the estate, the route from Ravensbury Grove is the most important. This provides access not only to the stream edge but also across the stream onto the Wandle riverside pathway and to Ravensbury Park.
- The route from Hengelo Gardens is gated and evidently little used, giving access to an overgrown area by the stream and then passes behind the rear of the garage court.
1. Footpath connecting Rutter Gardens to Morden Road.
2. Archway route connecting interior of Ravensbury Court to Ravensbury Grove.
3. Footbridge at the southern end of the estate giving access across the stream to the riverside walk.
4. Pedestrian routes giving access to entrances at the rear of flats.
Landscape

Ravensbury has a distinctive landscape and an open and green character. The whole estate is set within a significant area of high landscape value, with access to an extensive area of parkland and the green corridor of the River Wandle. Even its ‘urban’ northern and western boundaries with Morden Road face the woodland within Morden Hall Park.

Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.

The height of the largest building on the estate, the 4-storey block of Ravensbury Court, is balanced by building to building set backs of approximately 30 metres, the communal open spaces and the tree-lined streets. The line of trees on Hengelo Gardens is particularly impressive and mirrors the height and enclosure of Ravensbury Court on the other side of the street.

All elements of the landscape are well-maintained, with the exception of the frontage to Morden Road between the junction with Ravensbury Grove and The Surrey Arms. Here the houses are set well back from the main road behind a row of mature pollarded trees that form an attractive feature along this stretch of busy road. However, the frontages to these properties are noticeably less well cared for than the rest of the estate. The Morden Road frontage facing Morden Hall Park is set behind a slip road that insulates houses from the main road. These homes are, by contrast, very well maintained. There is no obvious physical reason for this difference between the two Morden Road frontages and may reflect other social or economic factors.

The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

As part of the green corridor of the River Wandle the trees have ecological value as well as their visual significance and role in well-being. No matter which option is selected for the future of Ravensbury, it will be important to protect mature trees and increase tree planting wherever possible.
Amenity and play spaces

The consultation process carried out at Ravensbury has indicated the value to residents of the open spaces, gardens and mature trees. All the semi-detached houses have larger than average front and rear gardens. However, none of the maisonettes or flats have private amenity space but all are adjacent to communal open spaces. These communal spaces do not have any play equipment or seats and therefore appear to offer more of a visual amenity rather than being actively used. However, the survey was carried out in February and a very different picture of use might emerge in summer.

The lack of play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.

The various open spaces within the estate are well-located in terms of intervisibility and surveillance, meaning that they are well overlooked from buildings and passers by even at distance. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality. Physical evidence of this can be seen in the amount of personalisation of gardens and threshold spaces by doorways to the maisonettes and flats.
Quality of the external environment summary

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition rather than urban design or landscape. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration.

1. Ravensbury has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and ‘rural’ edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.

2. High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey but this is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, ‘poor’.

3. Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.

4. Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and routes feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian-only routes within the estate but all could be improved.

5. Ravensbury Estate is set within a distinctive and significant area of high landscape value. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.

6. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.

7. The lack of formal play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.

8. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
Building for Life 12

Building for Life 12 is a tool kit that is aimed at assessing residential quality. It is a national initiative, endorsed by government for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use to help stimulate conversations about creating good places to live.

It uses a series of 12 questions to interrogate a place and develop a picture of its likely performance against design best practice.

Each headline question is followed by a series of additional questions, and also provided are five recommendations in the form of ‘design prompts’.

The 12 questions are broken into chapters, and there are four questions in each of the three chapters:

- Integrating into the neighbourhood
- Creating a place
- Street and home

Based on a simple ‘traffic light’ system (red, amber and green) it is recommended that proposed new developments aim to:

- Secure as many ‘greens’ as possible,
- Minimise the number of ‘ambers’ and;
- Avoid ‘reds’.

The more ‘greens’ that are achieved, the better a development will be.

A red light gives warning that a particular aspect of a proposed development needs to be reconsidered.

Here we use the BfL12 questions to compare existing Eastfields with current best practice to draw conclusions on how it performs.

## Integrating into the neighbourhood

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<th>Score</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Connections</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The estate connects reasonably well to its surroundings given that it is surrounded by barriers to movement, with good connections to the water and to the shops along Morden Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Facilities and services</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Although the site is adjacent to a small parade of shops, it is relatively isolated from the wider district centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Public transport</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The site is well placed for access to train and bus connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Meeting local housing requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The current estate offers a range of dwellings sizes and tenures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Creating a place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Character</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The estate has a distinctive character, aided by the mature vegetation and feelings of openness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Working with the site and its context</td>
<td></td>
<td>Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally, the estate uses mature planting to good effect, but more could be made of its river and park-side location.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Creating well defined streets and spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td>Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The streets are well-defined by buildings and boundaries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Easy to find your way around</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The estate has a simple layout with good sight lines and this makes it easy to navigate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Street and home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 Streets for all Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?</td>
<td>⬤</td>
<td>Vehicle speeds on the streets are low, not necessarily by design, and the streets are well overlooked by adjacent properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Car parking Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?</td>
<td>⬤</td>
<td>There is a good range of parking solutions on offer, with most of it well-resolved. Lots of on-street wheels-up parking suggests an issue with overall levels of parking or car ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Public and private spaces Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?</td>
<td>⬤</td>
<td>Much of the space on the estate is well-defined by clear boundaries, and is well overlooked by adjacent properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 External storage and amenity space Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?</td>
<td>⬤</td>
<td>All of the dwellings have either dedicated bin storage or have access to front or rear gardens for bins and recycling etc. The bins stores for the flats could be more secure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This summary shows that the Ravensbury estate performs quite well against the BfL12 questions, with eight ‘greens’ being awarded. This reflects the benefits of its location as well as the design design solutions used on the estate.

In the areas where ‘amber’ scores are awarded, this should give pointers for any future design work on the estate, highlighting issues that could be compounded should they not be properly addressed.
Review summary

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its seclusion and landscape setting but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups that define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and are likely to be determined by ownership, viability and building condition rather than urban design or landscape.

1. The Ravensbury Estate is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough, as reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2).
2. The extensive parks, riverside open spaces and other barriers surrounding the estate make it an enclave and there is relatively little that can be done to integrate Ravensbury better into its wider area.
3. This relative isolation creates, on the one hand, a quiet and secluded residential neighbourhood but, on the other hand, restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.
4. There is some scope to improve access on foot and cycle through the process of regeneration. However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.
5. Analysis of building facades reveals that the entire external and internal perimeters of the estate have active or passive frontages providing good levels of surveillance. Conversely, there is very little dead frontage with the exception of the edges to garage courts and the pedestrian paths that are not overlooked.
6. The density of the estate at 43 dwellings per hectare (dph) is similar to surrounding development of the same period. However, this is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location, and there is potential to increase density and building height through the various permutations of retention and regeneration.
7. Ravensbury Estate is set within an area of high landscape value. Internally, this green and open character is maintained by the presence of grassed communal areas, mature trees and other planting. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.
8. It is important that mature trees and riparian landscape are protected and improved. This is most likely to be possible with masterplan options that combine retention and regeneration rather than complete redevelopment.
9. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
10. High levels of car ownership were evident at the time of the survey.
11. Currently, a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. However, car parking may become a serious problem should regeneration options significantly increase the number of dwellings on the site. This will need careful design and management.
12. The Building for Life 12 assessment for Ravensbury results in 8 ‘greens’ out of the 12 questions.
Ravensbury RA Response to 
Stage 3 Local Plan for Ravensbury

1.0 Introduction:

This is the Ravensbury Residents Association response to Merton Council's Stage 3 Pre-Submission Local Plan for Ravensbury.

2.0 Overview of Report

In the Stage 3 report, it does appear that very little attention has been paid to certain aspects of the residents Stage 2 responses. We would like the Planning Inspector to request copies of all of these Stage 2 responses in order to independently ascertain to what extent the residents own views have been overruled by the council officers own personal viewpoints which lack proper professional substantiation relative to the actual experience of living in Ravensbury the residents themselves.

Case in point is EP R1 para 3.242 (page 150) concerning the reversal of the Ravensbury Court flats. At all stages of this consultation, many residents have said that this is a ridiculous idea, but Merton Council have chosen to retain this idea even at Stage 3, showing lack of regard to consultation responses.

It also appears that conversations between the council and their housing partner Circle Housing (now Clarion/Latimer) have exerted excessive influence in certain aspects of this final version of the Local Plan.

Case in point are the references to the area of Ravensbury Garages at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove. At first this area was barely even referred to in the draft Local Plan, due to Merton Council's desire to sell off the site as quickly as possibly, & thereby advancing the push for demolition of the Ravensbury Estate. This area has now been granted planning permission in advance of the Local Plan being finalised. This seems to be an attempt to usurp the proper process of consultation for the Local Plan, and therefore the push for regeneration and the consultation itself has been seen as an affront to Ravensbury community at large. This is why many residents feel it to be pointless to partake in the consultation.

3.0 Previous Responses to Stage 2

It should be noted that we have provided extensive responses to Stage 2 of the Local Plan, but have observed that some of these points have been ignored by Merton Council and their Future Merton team at Stage 3. Those responses will not be extensively repeated here but we hope they will be reviewed by the Planning Inspector.

4.0 Policy EP R1: Townscape

Paragraph 3.242 makes mention of the reversal of Ravensbury Court flats. This idea was revealed to the residents of Ravensbury Court who thought the idea preposterous. They were more than happy with their current layout as it provides the privacy & intimacy of a post-war mews type arrangement. Furthermore, the interior courtyard provides for a sense of community and has done for a number of generations. It seems that the council is unhappy with a cohesive community such as Ravensbury and it is also unhappy that such an enormous amount of scorn has been poured upon their ideas. This idea has to be one of the most ridiculous ones ever meted out on a thoroughly undeserving number of residents.

In paragraph 3.243, Ravensbury Court is said to have "a rather dead frontage". Some residents thought it might be nice to be able to access the grassed areas through a new back door, but none thought it a good
idea to actually reverse the entire layout to suit. Why this idea has been retained at Stage 3 is beyond any understanding. It should be also noted that residents did not want further concrete patios to be installed to the rear of their properties.

Photographs and Diagrams relevant to Section EP R1:

Image above: Corner of Morden Road at the Surrey Arms, Image below: Aerial image of same
Images above: Ravensbury Park entrance onto Morden Road

Images above: Ravensbury Court
Images above: Ravensbury Court

Images above: Ravensbury area including Hengelo Gardens, Rutter Gardens, Hatfeild Close & Ravensbury Grove
Above: Aerial view of Ravensbury as a whole

Above: The significant tree-line when observed from Ravensbury Court & Hengelo Gardens
Image: Ravensbury Park Entrance onto Morden Road

Images above: Ravensbury Mill

Image: Better locations for pedestrian crossings
Image: Page 152 - R1 Townscape Map.

- Significant site that requires sensitivity in terms of scale and massing. Architectural features should be inspired by Surrey Arms and White Cottage. 3 storeys max with tiled (possibly) mansard roofs.

- This area is a very dangerous location for a new crossing if extensive traffic calming is not introduced.

- Restrict scale of any new building in this area. Impact on park environment should be subtle and sensitive. Mill building deserves to remain suitably prominent and not have to compete in terms of scale. This site also overlooks the River Wandle.

- Reconfiguration of flats is a very bad idea and has the potential to ruin Ravensbury Court’s effective design.
5.0 Policy EP R2: Street Network

EP R2 part b) states that Ravensbury Grove MUST be extended fully to the boundary of Ravensbury Park, suggesting that a paved area or road should be run right up to the park. However, this ignores the fact that the southern end of Ravensbury Grove forms designated open space land that has been used by residents for access to the park as well as an area for leisure pursuits and relaxation ever since the estate was built. This area must not be lost. For many years, this has formed a transition zone from park to estate. This area has been invaluable to residents as it presents an introduction to the estate and also actively extends the park into the estate. We feel that the report serves to undervalue this grassed space in order to enable excessive construction density.

In paragraph 3.252, the Morden Road access lane should be retained. Flood attenuation measures can be served without removal of this area which currently serves as shared space and for incidental play.

In paragraph 3.253, residents have repeatedly rejected the potential for a new access onto Morden Road. A new access would ruin the secluded nature of the estate, which should be noted is considered by both residents and professionals as a high quality of the area, allowing for relaxation, seclusion from the busy main road and a very high quality of living for those away from the main road.

Running a straight Ravensbury Grove up to the park will also serve to destroy the tranquillity of this area. It should also be noted that Ravensbury Grove will need speed attenuation measures in order to reduce speeding in future. There is little mention in this report of speeding and prevention of anti-social behaviour through motorbikes or speeding cars.

Image above: Southern part of Ravensbury Grove with effective traffic measures
Image above: Southern part of Ravensbury Grove with effective traffic measures

Image above: Southern extremity of Ravensbury Grove on approach to park.

Image above: Hengelo Gardens & grassed areas with parking facilities.
Image above: Pedestrian Movement from Ravensbury towards park & tramstops
**6.0 Policy EP R3: Movement & Access**

Little has been said of the Ravensbury Urban Design review report by Sue McGlynn Urban Design Ltd, in which mention is made in regards to:

"However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity."

Our residents back this concept and feel that the theme of permeability is exaggerated in terms of the benefits to Ravensbury.

We feel that there has been no suggestion to improve links with Morden in terms of crossing Morden Road. Removal of the current crossing and moving it towards the Surrey Arms helps leisure usage but does nothing to encourage the safe passage of commuters. Inclusion of another crossing at the junction of Wandle Road would be preferable due to the fact that many people attempt the dangerous crossing in order to shorten the journey towards Morden. This should form part of the traffic calming measures suggested.

Ravensbury Grove will need speed attenuation measures in order to reduce speeding in future. There is little mention in this report of speeding here and prevention of anti social behaviour through motorbikes or speeding cars.

Images above: R3 Movement & Access with annotations
7.0 Policy EP R4: Land Use

Densities are key to the character of Ravensbury and should be moderated in an area of such outstanding character. We are concerned that there is little here in this section than fully reflects the unique environment of the Ravensbury estate and the need to restrict the densities to the benefit of the immediate area and that of Merton generally.

8.0 Policy EP R5: Open Space

The open space directly adjacent to Ravensbury Park has the potential to be of lower quality than that currently in existence. In fact, the planning permission for Ravensbury Garages has already implied that the actual quality of the space is a feature that is lacks proper interrogation. We would request that the language in this section be strengthened to preserve high quality views and appreciation of Ravensbury Park. Replacing the total area of say a grassed space with chunks of gardens that will no longer be public space is not the correct reinterpretation of open space. Also suggesting that the sum area of patches of grass placed around a paved area is equal to the previously large expanse of grass that provided for an extensive view of the park and also provided communal leisure space, seems an incorrect deployment of planning guidance. Positioning a building in the direct line of sight of the park seems against the spirit of planning itself.

Essentially, the division of a large open space into multiple area and redistributing those parts around an area in piecemeal fashion should be proscribed in this section. This would enable the quality of the space and environment to be retained and enhanced.
Image above: Trees within the Ravensbury Estate requiring proper survey & retention

Image above: Trees under threat within the Ravensbury Estate requiring proper survey & retention

Trees to be retained in future redevelopment

Trees to be retained in future redevelopment
9.0 Policy EP R6: Environmental Protection

Little seems to be said in regards to the creation and promotion of habitat within the estate as the current estate layout provides for wildlife through its large gardens, extensive number of trees and shrubbery. The new estate should readily incorporate wildlife provision through the planting of hedges, trees and general shrubs. There will otherwise be a sum loss of wildlife & habitat through the regeneration of Ravensbury.

Gardens and even homes themselves should be designed to actively promote wildlife in the form of birds, invertebrates and small mammals.

Green roofs could be incorporated but there seems to be no mention of this.

Maintenance of the banks of the Wandle needs to be controlled by means of a wildlife statement detailing when its ok to trim vegetation and which trees should be left alone. We have had recent cases of Merton Council instructing their tree surgeon contractors to cut back the trees and carry out their own risk assessments. We think risk assessments for wildlife need to be created independently in such a sensitive area frequented by roosting bats and other creatures. Independent wildlife risk assessments should be incorporated into part n)

In terms of flooding, nothing has been said of the Ravensbury Mill which has two channels already, one hidden beneath the mill, and one that runs alongside. This suggests that there is no need for a small channel along Morden Road and that such a channel would actively promote flooding due to the contours of the land in the area.

Existing flow paths could be exacerbated by the incorrect provision of roads and openings on to Morden Road. Provision should be made for studies to examine the impact of the road layout on flooding and the modifications required to improve the situation.

In paragraph 3.289 we think it advisable to agree where the top of the bank of the main river actually lies, and to consider the reinstatement of the bank where possible if this is of benefit to the wildlife habitat.

In paragraph 3.291, the use of open swales could suggest the use of gravel, but we do not think this particularly suit the estate character and does little to encourage earth worms which are a staple diet of many creatures in the area. We request that grassed swale area are considered equally.
Image above: R6 annotated with observations
10.0 Policy EP R7: Landscape

Nothing has been said of the extensive area at the southern end of Ravensbury Grove and how the Ravensbury area will be made worse by the overdevelopment of this uniquely sensitive area. Excessive height here impact on the entirety of Ravensbury estate and will also damage the park itself. The public views here should be mostly retained, otherwise they will be lost forever.

We have included our response to the planning application as this covers many of the salient points in regards to Landscape in Ravensbury. Please see Appendix 3.0, attached separately.
11.0 Policy EP R8: Building Heights

We think that "taller buildings must be located around the edge of the estate" is open to misinterpretation, and that more specifically Morden Road should be defined as the location for slightly higher buildings. Ravensbury Grove must not receive taller buildings and neither must the southern boundary with Ravensbury Park.

It should be noted that Ravensbury Court is actually a part 3 and part 4 storey building. The part 3 storey is closer to the park and does not attempt to compete with the surrounding tree canopy. This should inform future buildings to not exceed 3 storeys in height. The 4 storey element of Ravensbury Court actually serves to screen the industrial estate. Therefore any building of 4 storeys in height will effectively screen the tree canopy of Morden Hall Park and Ravensbury Park, which should be fully proscribed.

We think it unfortunate that no mention of storey heights has been made in section EP R8.

The character of Ravensbury is made up of the scale of the buildings. Along Ravensbury Grove, buildings should not exceed 3 storeys, preferably with the uppermost storey being contained within the roof. In fact 3 storeys incorporating roof space living is an ideal height around Ravensbury as it enables higher density without excessively impacting on the character and environment. Mansard roofs could be employed to good use in this respect.

It is important not to compete with the 4 storey element of Ravensbury Court as the result will ruin the character of the area.
Views around Ravensbury Court showing established mature trees forming a vital backdrop.

Image: Northern End of Ravensbury Grove showing significant trees and two storey construction befitting landscape.

Image: Southern end of Ravensbury Grove showing gladed area where park blends with estate.

Gladed area where Ravensbury Park extends into Ravensbury Grove; requires enhancing & preserving.
Tree locations requiring retention in order to preserve character of Ravensbury

**Image above:** Trees to be retained in Northern end of Ravensbury

**Image above:** Trees to be retained in Southern end of Ravensbury
Image above: Effect on views from existing buildings towards garages area
Image above: Effect on views from Ravensbury Court across Ravensbury areas

Image above: Views from Ravensbury Court looking West

(Flood Risk and AIMS Flood Defences Merton - Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Figure 3.1 Inset 2 Rev 02)
Boundary indicates extent of the "Ravensbury Estate" otherwise considered to be the "Ravensbury Village" by local residents.

Image above: Extents of Ravensbury Estate/Village

Image above: View along Hatfield Close with tree-line including Morden Hall Park beyond.
Images above: Southwest & Northwest corners of Ravensbury Village

Images above: Southeast & Northeast corners of Ravensbury Village

Image above: annotated R8 Building Heights map with guidance on heights proposed

Ravensbury Residents Association 2017

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14.0 Conclusion:

Whilst we appreciate this opportunity to guide the future of Ravensbury, we also think that many opportunities are being lost. Namely those that will preserve the unique character and environment of Ravensbury.

The now 4 year old push for regeneration has resulted in a great deal of anger from residents. This has been due to the high levels of disregard meted out by the housing association's regen team towards existing members of the Ravensbury community.

Many residents are only too aware of the beauty that resides in Ravensbury and the fact that any redevelopment will effectively scar the setting of the area and result in a net loss of area afforded to social housing and quite possibly the loss of quality public space. The fact that the self same regen team meet with the council's Future Merton on a regular basis only serves to muddy any possible concept of impartiality during the assembly of the Estates Local Plan.

We therefore hope that the information we have provided enables the independent Planning Inspector to judge this document appropriately & fairly.

Christopher Holt, Chair RRA.

Ravensbury Residents Association.
APPENDIX 1.0 : 3D Renders of our understanding of the proposals

![3D Render of Ravensbury Grove and Garages Site]

![3D Render of Proposed Buildings]

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Ravensbury Residents Association
- 3rd February 2017

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Image above: proposed buildings shown in pink with Orlit homes (etc) shown in white

Image above: proposed buildings shown in pink with Ravensbury & Hengelo homes (etc) shown in orange
Ravensbury Residents Association - 3rd February 2017

Image above: Garages area seen from Hengelo Gardens proposed buildings shown in pink

Image above: proposed buildings showing proposed redevelopment density
Image above: Existing buildings showing overall density
APPENDIX 2.0: CHMP Reports on Ravensbury Orlit Housing

1 Asbestos Surveys

It is noted that asbestos was only found in the soffit panels of the Orlit houses on Ravensbury. In 34 Ravensbury Grove, one of the recently refurbished properties, these soffit panels were replaced with plastic. However following discussions with CHMP staff, we are unable to ascertain whether the proper asbestos procedures were followed.

The results of the asbestos surveys by Pennington Choices Ltd (dated 15th & 19th September 2014) concur with residents own information regarding Merton Council checking all properties and finding no evidence of asbestos asides from the soffit boards.

2 Ravensbury Existing Stock Refurbishment Appraisal by HTA

It is noted that this report makes mention of the Energy Performance Certificates and the potential energy costs to residents. For clarity we think it would be important for Circle to present potential per annum costs of living in the new homes so that residents would have a better idea of total costs and be able to forecast appropriately.

3 Structural Assessment of Orlit Homes by Tully De’Ath


We note the comments regarding the Chloride Content, namely:

"6.11 GBG tested fifty dust samples for chloride content. These samples were taken from the PRC columns and beams and the in-situ mortar joints. The chloride contents of all seven mortar samples were low at 0.15% or less. Generally the chloride content of the concrete samples were also low at 0.07% or less. There were six exceptions to this however which showed a chloride content ranging from 0.16% to 1.33%. These were on two samples extracted from the secondary beams within 193 Morden Road, three samples extracted from columns within 20 Hatfield Close and a single sample extracted from a primary beam in the roof space of 20 Hatfield Close."

We note the comments regarding the Cement Content, namely:

"6.12 From visual inspections of eight samples, the cement contents vary between 10.3% to 18.7%. GBG consider these are indicative of reasonable to good quality precast concrete. The variability of cement content is considered not uncommon for structures of this age."

We note the comments regarding High Alumina Cement, namely:

"6.13 High-alumina cement (HAC) is an alternative cement mix to Ordinary Portland cement (OPC). It became favourable within the industry as concrete made from it sets rapidly and has a high initial strength. However, under certain conditions it loses strength over time due to a chemical process. As such, it became classified as a deleterious material and was banned from use in 1975. The BRE report on Orlit Houses highlights that many of the precast reinforced concrete elements and in-situ Structural Assessment Report of Orlit Houses Revision A 6th November 2014 11264 Page 14 of 18 mortar stitches of the Orlit houses that they surveyed contain HAC.
6.14 Twenty four samples were tested by GBG across the four properties. None of these were found to contain HAC."

We note the comments regarding Petrographic Examinations:

The results of all the petrographic examinations showed that the concrete appears to be good quality with no obvious evidence of significant distress.
We note the concluding remarks of the Structural Engineers report, namely:
"8.6...There have been no structural engineering concerns identified however and the concrete frames, where investigated, are in a reasonable structural condition. The main concerns highlighted with the BRE research related to concrete beams on flat roofs. The roofs of the Orlit houses at Ravensbury Estate are pitched. It should be recognised however that this conclusion is based on only a limited amount of investigations within a small proportion of all the Orlit houses."

"8.7 If the conclusions reached from the assessment of the 4 Orlit houses were to be reflected in the other 68 properties, then the main issues to consider are linked with the effects of water ingress and the cladding panels.
8.8 Water ingress can affect the condition of the roof timbers through beetle infestation or decay. As has been seen with the entrance canopies, water ingress can also cause deterioration of concrete elements, especially where reinforcement is allowed to corrode. To extend the useful life of such buildings it is therefore important to have an effective maintenance regime in place to keep external finishes in good order and to limit potential for water ingress.
8.9 It is therefore important to keep gutters and downpipes clear for debris so they can work effectively."

"8.10 The cladding panels need to be made good where the joints in the cladding panels have opened up. This will reduce the potential for water ingress. The spalled and cracked corner panels also need replacing and will require additional restraint to tie them back to the structure behind. This will take the form of remedial wall ties and these may also need to be introduced around window and door openings where there are currently a lack of ties. Such an approach will require both a visual and a radar survey of every elevation to be carried out.
8.11 The strategy for repairs to the cladding panels needs to be coordinated with non-structural matters to improve the insulation to the elevations. The cavities which are currently filled with insulation are potential encouraging water to become trapped in the building. Options here include removing the cladding panels so that the insulation can be removed or over-cladding the building with a new rainscreen.
8.12 Similarly the cracking to the window frames should also be made good.
8.13 Although not significant structurally the concrete entrance canopies and support where deteriorated should also be made good and/or removed and replaced with new canopies. The junction of the canopy with the elevations needs to prevent water draining back on to the elevation."

From these results, we conclude that the Orlit homes are essentially structurally sound and require responsive maintenance to keep them in that way.

4 Ravensbury Case for Regeneration by Savills

We note the purpose of the document, namely: "...to set out the findings of the technical work that has been undertaken to date and to demonstrate the economic, social and environmental arguments for and against the “Case for Regeneration” of the Ravensbury Estate, whilst giving equal consideration to reasonable alternative options."

We also note that:
"... it has been developed to form part of the evidence base for LBM’s emerging Estates Plan Development Plan Document (DPD) which will set out the planning policy framework against which regeneration proposals for the Estate will be assessed as part of any future planning application. Therefore, this Case for Regeneration is intended to be an important consideration at the independent examination of the DPD to assist the Inspector in the assessment of whether the submitted DPD is prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and whether the plan is sound, as per Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and whether it is, as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) (paragraph 182):
We feel that the case for demolition with regards to the structure of the Orlit Homes has been vastly overstated relative to the evidence made available by the structural engineers. Savills appear to have missed the concluding remarks within the Structural Engineers report. We suggest that it is possible that the writer of the Savills report was unable to properly interpret the findings of the Structural Engineer.

We note the following paragraph:
"...CHMP are fully committed to continuing to consult closely with residents and other stakeholders."

We would like to point out that this close consultation, performed by the regen team and their professional advisers, has been very arrogant from the outset. Residents have been furious at how CHMP cherry-picked their comments to suit their objectives. To suggest that there are a number of residents who lack confidence in the integrity and conduct of the regen team at CHMP would be an understatement.

We note the paragraph:
"Continuing to take a reactive approach to repairs to these properties as issues arise would involve significantly higher costs to CHMP than considering a comprehensive regeneration of the Estate over a period of 50 years."

However the costs concerned have not been detailed or referenced. Therefore we are unable to qualify these expressions of intent. In fact there are very few facts available throughout this document and it is impossible to quantify or qualify any of the statements. Therefore we find this document lacking in proper evidence.

We do understand the notion of land however, which seems to feature highly in this report. The available land that the Orlit Houses occupy is considerable and potentially very valuable relative to its salubrious location. We understand that an increase in density would bring a great deal of revenue in. To many of our residents this seems to be the only reason why regeneration is being proposed, due to their own knowledge that their homes are structurally sound.

We note that in 6.39, the writer of this report presumes to second guess the Environment Agency’s own advice on flood risk. We find this somewhat misguided. We believe the report also references an out of date flood risk plan as this has been recently revised.

We note that in 8.22, the writer suggests that a high level of support has been received for the scheme. However we believe that this support has been chosen somewhat selectively. It would be most appropriate to be able to scrutinise these results. Interpreting results such as these can be something of an art.

We note that in 8.28, it has been impossible to properly validate these assumptions, which is especially necessary considering the nature of Savills acting on behalf of the developer rather than as an independent advisor.
5 Ravensbury Urban Design Review

We note the following:
"This study sets out to evaluate Ravensbury against the established principles of good design and does not attempt to make aesthetic or value judgements on the architectural style of Ravensbury. Instead it concentrates on the physical, spatial and environmental aspects of the design and the quality of the neighbourhood that results."

We note the following:
"Urban structure summary
4. Ravensbury is very ‘shallow’ in terms of walkability to both the urban facilities on Morden Road and the leisure and play facilities afforded by the riverside and other green spaces. This perhaps explains why residents value this seclusion so highly: they have the benefit of a quiet and secluded neighbourhood combined with direct and convenient connections to local facilities, services and recreation spaces.
5. It is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity."

These comments are supported by the residents own comments. Numerous residents have described the seclusion as effectively being highly valuable to them. In addition, the residents have also made mention of effectively limiting proposals in increasing permeability. Therefore we support statements 4 & 5 in the Urban Structure Summary.

We note the following:
"...Building facades have been mapped according to the following classifications:
• Active frontage is defined as facades that having both doors and windows of inhabited rooms (ie not bathrooms, storerooms, lobbies or garages) at regular intervals along the street or route to provide surveillance as well as contact and movement between inside and out.
• Passive frontage is defined as facades with only windows of inhabited rooms but no doorways, providing surveillance but no contact between public and private space.
• Dead frontage is where the edge to the public space or route is a blank wall or wall that is effectively blank, for instance rows of garage doors or where windows are obscured."

It should be noted from the maps provided for Ravensbury Court that there is practically zero dead frontage, but instead some passive frontage (ie providing "good surveillance"). We would state that this has proven to be very feasible over time and that this provides support for our earlier statements dismissing the proposal to re-orientate the ground floor flats.

We note the following:
"In summary, most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces"

"Layout summary
1. The figure ground plans show that Ravensbury adopts a similar ‘perimeter block’ pattern of development to surrounding residential areas.
2. There is a strong and consistent correlation between building alignment and the line of the street. This can be seen at the external perimeter of the estate where the building line follows the curved edge to Morden Road as well as the internal perimeter where buildings follow the simple rectilinear street layout.
3. There are few ambiguous spaces within Ravensbury and buildings are used to make very clear distinctions between the communal spaces of the estate and the private spaces of the home."
4. Most building facades contribute positively to the surveillance, liveliness and activity of streets and communal spaces. Houses all face the streets in a consistent manner, providing continuous active frontage with doors and windows. However, the entrances to maisonettes and flats are all switched to the ‘rear’, reducing contact and activity between buildings and streets.

5. There is very little dead frontage to the main routes of the estate. The spaces with the least intervisibility and surveillance are the garage courts and the pedestrian paths. This issue could be remedied during the regeneration of the estate.

As residents, we agree that Ravensbury has very little wrong with it. We point out that in relation to item 4, the comment about rear facing flats, many residents enjoy the privacy that this design infers. They find it a positive feature rather than negative.

We note the following:
"Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents."

This is indeed a problematic area. An increase in density will definitely cause a great deal of problems along these lines. However, a number of cars that park on the estate are actually workers from the VW garage. We even have had Ravensbury Grove used as a temporary showroom car park with one resident counting 15 cars from this company.

We note the following:
"Landscape

Areas of private gardens Ravensbury has a distinctive landscape and an open and green character. The whole estate is set within a significant area of high landscape value, with access to an extensive area of parkland and the green corridor of the River Wandle. Even its ‘urban’ northern and western boundaries with Morden Road face the woodland within Morden Hall Park. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens. The height of the largest building on the estate, the 4-storey block of Ravensbury Court, is balanced by building to building set backs of approximately 30 metres, the communal open spaces and the tree-lined streets. The line of trees on Hengelo Gardens is particularly impressive and mirrors the height and enclosure of Ravensbury Court on the other side of the street."

"All elements of the landscape are well maintained, with the exception of the frontage to Morden Road between the junction with Ravensbury Grove and The Surrey Arms. Here the houses are set well back from the main road behind a row of mature pollarded trees that form an attractive feature along this stretch of busy road. However, the frontages to these properties are noticeably less well cared for than the rest of the estate. The Morden Road frontage facing Morden Hall Park is set behind a slip road that insulates houses from the main road. These homes are, by contrast, very well maintained. There is no obvious physical reason for this difference between the two Morden Road frontages and may reflect other social or economic factors. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate. As part of the green corridor of the River Wandle the trees have ecological value as well as their visual significance and role in wellbeing. No matter which option is selected for the future of Ravensbury, it will be important to protect mature trees and increase tree planting wherever possible."
We find also important to point out that on page 44 of the Urban Design Review, the writer has identified the areas in front of the flats in Ravensbury Court as private gardens. This is quite the opposite to certain CHMP officers attempting to tell residents that these areas were ambiguous. Residents are only too aware that the courtyard is part of their home, as indeed are passersby.

We note the following positive statements about Ravensbury:
"The various open spaces within the estate are well-located in terms of intervisibility and surveillance, meaning that they are well overlooked from buildings and passers by even at distance. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality. Physical evidence of this can be seen in the amount of personalisation of gardens and threshold spaces by doorways to the maisonettes and flats."

We also note the summary on page 47:

Quality of the external environment summary
The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its secluded setting and landscape but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups to define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and will mainly be determined by ownership and building condition rather than urban design or landscape. However, there is clearly potential to increase density and building height through various permutations of retention and regeneration.

1. Ravensbury has three very different characters: The busy, urban edge to Morden Road; the green and ‘rural’ edge to the River Wandle; and the secluded communal and private spaces within the estate.
2. High levels car ownership were apparent at the time of the survey but this is unsurprising in a suburban location with a PTAL rating of 2, ‘poor’.
3. Should the regeneration option be taken and the number of dwellings increased significantly then car parking might become a serious problem. This will need careful design and management to prevent the streetscape of the new neighbourhood from being dominated by parked cars and also to prevent this becoming a source of friction between new and existing residents.
4. Generally, pedestrians and drivers use the same street spaces to move around and routes feel safe, legible and direct. There are very few pedestrian -only routes within the estate but all could be improved.
5. Ravensbury Estate is set within a distinctive and significant area of high landscape value. Internally, the estate maintains this green and open character. This is created by a combination of design features: wide building to building set backs; grassed communal spaces; mature trees; hedges on plot boundaries and other planting in large, private front gardens.
6. The landscape setting, mature trees and other planting are the most significant features of the estate. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.
7. The lack of formal play spaces within the estate would not appear to be a problem for residents. This is partly because of the number and size of private gardens but also because Ravensbury Park offers a very accessible, well-equipped play area. The parks and riverside paths also provide excellent opportunities for leisure and activity for all age groups.
8. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
We note the main Urban Design Review summary:

The Ravensbury Estate has a distinctive identity, mainly by virtue of its seclusion and landscape setting but also because of the formal arrangement and massing of building groups that define spaces within the estate. The development options are complex on this site, and are likely to be determined by ownership, viability and building condition rather than urban design or landscape.

1. The Ravensbury Estate is located in a relatively isolated part of the Borough, as reflected in its PTAL classification of ‘poor’ (2).
2. The extensive parks, riverside open spaces and other barriers surrounding the estate make it an enclave and there is relatively little that can be done to integrate Ravensbury better into its wider area.
3. This relative isolation creates, on the one hand, a quiet and secluded residential neighbourhood but, on the other hand, restricts movement options for residents and is likely to encourage more trips to be taken by car.
4. There is some scope to improve access on foot and cycle through the process of regeneration. However, it is important not to make the estate over-permeable as this will undermine seclusion for residents and disperse movement and activity without any real gains in wider connectivity.
5. Analysis of building facades reveals that the entire external and internal perimeters of the estate have active or passive frontages providing good levels of surveillance. Conversely, there is very little dead frontage with the exception of the edges to garage courts and the pedestrian paths that are not overlooked.
6. The density of the estate at 43 dwellings per hectare (dph) is similar to surrounding development of the same period. However, this is low by modern standards, even in a suburban location, and there is potential to increase density and building height through the various permutations of retention and regeneration.
7. Ravensbury Estate is set within an area of high landscape value. Internally, this green and open character is maintained by the presence of grassed communal areas, mature trees and other planting. Together they create a most attractive residential setting, offering quiet and secluded spaces within the estate as well as easy access to the network of green spaces that surround the estate.
8. It is important that mature trees and riparian landscape are protected and improved. This is most likely to be possible with masterplan options that combine retention and regeneration rather than complete redevelopment.
9. There is little or no evidence of graffiti, litter or antisocial behaviour within the estate and residents report a strong sense of community and communality.
10. High levels of car ownership were evident at the time of the survey.
11. Currently, a large proportion of the houses have on-plot parking with the rest being provided on street. However, car parking may become a serious problem should regeneration options significantly increase the number of dwellings on the site. This will need careful design and management.
12. The Building for Life 12 assessment for Ravensbury results in 8 ‘greens’ out of the 12 questions.

This Urban Design Review has merely repeated what the residents have been saying from the start of the regeneration consultation: that Ravensbury is about as perfect as you're going to get in terms of environment for a broad demographic within Merton.

Point 4 supports the residents argument regarding limited permeability preserving the benefits of the Ravensbury area. Point 5 supports the good overall design of Ravensbury, that it is not actually in need of fixing in the first instance. Point 7 & 8 further illustrates just how valuable this area really is, in terms of a personal level and in terms of the immediate environment. Point 9 points to the fact that the community at large are significant in their sense of neighbourhood, and that Circle's lack of understanding and arrogance has damaged the community. The residents believe that this is exactly what they want to do - divide and conquer: push through a regen and get their return on investment. Point 12 identifies the very high quality of living that Ravensbury residents have in their current environment.
Appendix 3.0

Please see attached document RRA-16P1968 response to planning.
All responses Ravensbury

Stage 3 Consultation – Pre-Submission Publication

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