Development of a Resource Recovery and Energy Facility, Beddington Lane, Beddington.

Landscape and Visual Assessment

For
Sterecycle

February 2011
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Sterecycle Ltd and Cappagh seek to promote the development of a new Beddington Resource Recovery and Energy Facility (BBREF) and a new Plastics Reprocessing and Fuels Plant on land fronting Beddington Lane (B272), Beddington, Croydon (the Sites).

2. The South London Waste Plan (Croydon, Kingston, Merton and Sutton Councils’ Joint Waste Development Plan Document) is proposed for submission to the Secretary of State shortly. The Plan identifies key strategic sites within these boroughs for the siting of waste and recycling treatment plants as it is recognised that the existing capacity to compost, recycle and treat waste in facilities outside landfill is low, when compared with the Mayor of London’s waste distribution for the plan area as a whole.

3. As part of the Consultation Process, sites within the catchment area of the Plan including London Borough of Sutton were reviewed for suitability. The Site promoted by Sterecycle was received favourably and was accordingly ranked high on the list. The Greater London Authority objected only on a point of principle with regard to the loss of land from within the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

4. Other pertinent issues include the fact that the land adjoining the Sites (Beddington Farmlands) and the land owned by Cappagh (but not the Sterecycle land) is included within the land safeguarded for the Wandle Valley County Park. The whole area is also subject to policies relating to the Metropolitan Green Chain and Green Corridor and Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.

5. This report addresses these issues by firstly establishing the intrinsic visual and landscape qualities of the Sites and those of the adjoining land, the key views into the Sites and the relevant landscape related planning policies that impact upon it. Then the landscape effect of the proposals has been considered against this existing situation to distinguish whether the development proposals would detrimentally affect the quality and attributes of the environment and the aims and purposes of the MOL. The assessment was undertaken using recognised criteria provided in the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, Second Edition, 2002’.

6. The findings of the assessment found that the Sites comprising redundant sludge drying beds (Sterecycle land) and rough grazing land (Cappagh land) are of low\(^1\) landscape and visual quality with no attributes of landscape value. They lie overshadowed by adjacent industrial sheds and pylons on the edge of Beddington

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\(^1\) **Low value:** unattractive or degraded landscape/townscape, often in poor condition and affected by visual detractors. Refer to Appendix A, A10
Farmlands landfill sandwiched between the current recycling plant, Beddington Lane (B272) and the Beddington Industrial Area within the wider urban context of the London Borough of Sutton. The area as a whole has been appraised as part of the Sutton Boroughs’ LDF Core Planning Strategy in the document entitled, ‘Understanding Sutton’s Local Distinctiveness: Characterisation Report of Studies’ and was described in that report as being poor in terms of landscape value.

7. Collectively this area as a whole detracts from the more sensitive and high quality landscapes to the north (Mitcham Golf Course and Common) and south (Beddington Park). Currently these areas of good managed parkland character provide significant green breaks in this otherwise very urban semi-industrial context.

8. In their present derelict state whilst the Sites sit within the MOL and in the case of the Cappagh Site, within the land safeguarded for the Wandle Valley Country Park, they do little to contribute to the designation by way of nature conservation and amenity value and do not contribute at all to publicly open accessible space.

9. In terms of the openness of the land, the sites are visually contained to the east by Beddington Lane (B272) and the industrial units along it; to the south and west by the current recycling plant, the sewage works and landfill activities and to the north by the railway line and the mature woodland belts and scrub within Mitcham Golf Course and Mitcham Common.

10. The development proposals not only meet the criteria for inclusion within the London Waste Plan but offer substantial beneficial improvements to the quality of the surrounding environment. The proposals will bring the derelict land into positive use with high quality buildings which, through the use of organic forms and green roofs, will more satisfactorily integrate the urban context of Beddington Lane (B272) with the openness of the future Country Park without compromising access or nature conservation.

11. The green roofs will connect the eastern industrial landscape with the open landscape to the west via a series of undulating planes to create both a new ‘green’ landscape buffer and a ‘green’ visual link by offering unparalleled views to the north, east and south over it. This innovative ‘green gateway’ building would enable the open landscape of the Country Park to extend right up to the edge of Beddington Industrial Area thus creating a transition zone between the two. In addition, substantial areas of buffer planting within the Sites and an additional replacement habitat site are also proposed to fully mitigate any potential wildlife impacts.

12. The objectives of the MOL are therefore addressed through the careful siting and design of the development by facilitating access from Beddington Industrial Area directly into Beddington Farmlands and in the future, the Country Park where none presently exists and the use of green roofs and landscaping to promote and enhance nature conservation.
13. Taking into consideration the existing poor landscape quality of the Sites, the lack of current access, the beneficial improvements created by the developments and the size and openness of the developments in relation to the area of the future Country Park as a whole, the impact on the MOL is viewed as moderately beneficial\(^2\).

14. Similarly, the same applies to the equally important Metropolitan Green Chain and Green Corridor Policy with regard to preserving the open character, providing areas for and supporting nature conservation, amenity and leisure through the provision of direct access between Beddington Industrial Area and Beddington Farmlands and ultimately, the Country Park.

15. Recent ecological surveys suggest that there is a decline in bird interest within the Sites and that the Sites are of limited ecological value and declining further. Nature conservation would be improved by the inclusion of more favourable habitat as part of the landscape proposals for the developments. The development of the Sites would also enable the Pongo Park site to the south to be brought forward for nature conservation and biodiversity enhancement. There is therefore no reason to consider that any resulting landscape change arising from the development proposals will have any detrimental impact on nature conservation interest.

16. Aside from the need for these Sites to be allocated for waste management in order to meet the South London Waste Plan targets, the nature of the developments; their qualitative and visual attributes when weighed against the poor landscape and visual quality of the existing land and the future plans for the restoration of Beddington Farmlands as an extension to the Country Park merit the consideration of the developments to be viewed as a special circumstance. The loss of the site from MOL is therefore viewed as:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Not having a detrimental impact on the integrity of the remaining and adjoining MOL;
  \item Securing significant enhancement of the landscape and nature conservation interest and in so doing, supporting the future recreational purposes of the Country Park;
  \item Securing the structural value of the Sites by integrating the development into views from Beddington Farmlands and also significantly improving the quality of local views on Beddington Lane.
\end{itemize}

\(^2\) Moderate beneficial: the proposed development would cause improvement to an existing landscape/townscape by reinforcing and/or enhancing its integrity, character, value and amenity of its characteristic features and elements, including replacements of some existing, Appendix A, A16
17. In summary, given the current aspirations over the future intended use of Beddington Farmlands as a Country Park, this assessment concludes that the development proposals demonstrate ably that this land is capable both in landscape and visual terms to successfully integrate within the wider environment and therefore justifies further consideration for inclusion within the site allocation for waste within the South London Waste Plan.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sterecycle Ltd and Cappagh seek to promote land for the development of an integrated waste management development for the treatment of municipal solid waste and commercial and industrial waste on land fronting Beddington Lane (B272), Beddington, Croydon. The land being promoted comprises two parcels of land as shown on Figure 1.0 and for the purposes of this report are referred to as ‘the Sites’.

Background

1.2 The South London Waste Plan (Croydon, Kingston, Merton and Sutton Councils’ Joint Waste Development Plan Document) is proposed for submission to the Secretary of State shortly. It is being prepared to be in compliance with the adopted Core Strategy for Sutton and also the emerging Core Strategies for Croydon, Kingston and Merton. Central to the preparation of the Plan is its ‘Vision and Objectives’ in achieving the relevant aims of each borough’s Sustainable Community Strategies. To make sure sufficient additional waste management capacity is deliverable, the plan must be flexible enough to adapt to changing environmental circumstances. The timeframe for the Waste Plan is therefore 10 years, as set out in national guidance.3

1.3 Currently, London manages around 60% of its waste. To improve this, the London Plan has set targets to increase the amount of London’s waste to be managed within the capital. These are to reach 85% by 2020 and 100% by 2031. To achieve this and to provide for greater self-sufficiency in waste management, all London boroughs are required to manage a proportion of London’s waste within their own boundaries4. The Plan therefore identifies key sites within these boroughs for the siting of waste and recycling treatment plants thus providing a strategic view with regard to the management of waste for South London. In South London, it is recognised that the existing capacity to compost, recycle and treat waste in facilities outside landfill is low, when compared with the Mayor of London’s waste distribution for the plan area5.

1.3 As part of the Consultation Process first initiated between September and October 2008, sites within the catchment area of the Plan including London Borough (L.B.) of Sutton were reviewed for suitability and were assessed using criteria such as site configuration, proximity to residential areas, traffic impacts and visual intrusion and ranked accordingly. The sites that ranked well were those which had the fewest

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4 South London Waste Plan Proposed Submission Publication Stage -Section 2 The Need for Waste-Local Drivers, Para 2.11
5 South London Waste Plan Proposed Submission Publication Stage – Section 2 The Need for Waste-Local Drivers, Para 2.11
constraints and were therefore potentially the most suitable sites for hosting waste management facilities. The Site promoted by Sterecycle was received favourably and was accordingly ranked high on the list. The Greater London Authority objected only on a point of principle with regard to the loss of land (i.e. Sites) from within the Metropolitan Open Land.

1.4 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report prepared on behalf of Sterecycle and Cappagh by Allen Scott Landscape Architects is one of a series of reports and documents that seeks in combination, to provide justification for the inclusion of the land fronting Beddington Lane (B272), Beddington, within the South London Waste Plan by demonstrating the suitability and absence of any significant impacts.

1.5 The most pertinent issue relating to the allocation of the land for waste purposes is that the Sites fall within the local designation of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). Although not a national designation, MOL is viewed in local planning terms as being equally important to Green Belt with the same restrictions applying to development. Another key issue is the fact that the land adjoining the Sites and the land owned by Cappagh (but not the Sterecycle land) is included within the land safeguarded for the Wandle Valley County Park.

1.6 This report seeks to address these issues by firstly establishing the intrinsic visual and landscape qualities of the Sites, its physical characteristics and attributes and those of the adjoining land; the key views into the Sites and the relevant landscape related planning policies that impact upon it. This is followed by a brief resume of the proposed development proposals. The impact of the development proposals is then assessed against the existing site situation using recognised and accepted criteria. Lastly the final section of the report draws to a conclusion the overall findings of the assessment.

Structure of the Report

1.7 This assessment is therefore structured as follows:

**Chapter 2** describes the methodology used for the assessment;
**Chapter 3** sets out the existing (baseline) situation;
**Chapter 4** describes the proposals for the waste management facility;
**Chapter 5** describes the anticipated impacts (if any) relating to the proposals and any proposed mitigation to prevent or reduce significant effects identified. The likely effects are considered during the construction and operational stages. Due to the on-going changes and future proposals for the adjacent landfill area the impacts of the operational stage are considered in the site’s current context and in its future context when land adjacent to it will be restored and opened to the public as a ‘Country Park’.
**Chapter 6** summarises and concludes the main points.
2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Information for the assessment is derived from a wide variety of sources including the following:

- South London Sub-Regional Development Framework.
- Sutton Borough Local Development Framework encompassing the Adopted Core Strategy (December 2009), Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Plan Documents and evidence base.
- Ordnance Survey Mapping and Aerial Photographs
- Information sourced from the internet

2.2 Important guidance on assessment is provided by the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, Second Edition, 2002’.

2.3 Both parcels of land sit within an environment that has both open, industrial and urban elements and qualities, the assessment therefore concentrates on a combined landscape and townscape assessment and the assessment criteria adopted relates directly to both. For the purposes of this report the assessment is referred to as landscape assessment. The assessment is divided into three interrelated but separate areas of study:

- assessment of the existing (baseline) conditions of the landscape/townscape character and quality;
- assessment of the potential changes and effects on the landscape/townscape character and quality as a result of the proposed development, and the potential changes in views and visual effects on existing and potential sensitive areas and key receptors;
- consideration of the scope for mitigation and its effectiveness in overcoming significant adverse impacts.

2.4 The full assessment methodology is given in Appendix A.
3.0 **EXISTING SITUATION**

**The Sites**

3.1 The proposed sites consist of two parcels of land referred to in this report as ‘the Sites’. The first owned by Sterecycle straddles the Viridor access to the current recycling plant and landfill off Beddington Lane (B272) and is approximately 3 hectares in size. This area was formerly used for the spreading and disposal of sludge from the Beddington Sewage Treatment Works. Both sites sit on the edge of an area known locally and in planning terms as Beddington Farmlands and are included within it.

3.2 The northern boundary of the Sterecycle land is defined by a substantial embankment and a disused area of land previously used as a rifle range. This land acts as a buffer between the site and Brookmead Industrial Estate on Jessop’s Way. The eastern boundary is shared with Beddington Lane (B272) and defined by a metal 2 metre high continuous palisade security fence. The occasional isolated mature tree softens the fenced boundary but it is largely open enabling views into the land from Beddington Lane (B272) although the Site is at a higher elevation relative to the road. To the west, the boundary is undefined but is contained by further bunding, a dirt track and the existing recycling centre facilities. The land within the site comprises a series of former open sludge drying beds bordered internally by 1-2 metre high embankments loosely covered with sporadic regenerative shrubs and ground flora. Interspersed within this can be found windblown detritus from the adjoining recycling plant and larger waste material (plastic drain piping, tyres etc). In terms of landscape character, the land is of **low** landscape quality and value.

3.3 The second Site is situated immediately to the south of the first land parcel and is divorced from it by another palisade security fence which encloses the whole site. It lies within the ownership of Cappagh and is slightly smaller at 2 hectares in size and L shaped in plan. Its eastern boundary, abuts the proposed access route to the Sterecycle land, also borders Beddington Lane (B272) whilst its southern boundary is stepped around a large industrial shed unit (Morgan Elliot Ltd) at its south eastern corner. Further southwards, the site backs onto an area of more sludge drying beds known locally as ‘Pongo Park’. Westwards the site is contained by the palisade security fence; an open ditch, dirt track and a continuous high wooded bund.

3.4 Currently, the land consists of an area of rough grassland which has been vacant and unused for a significant period although historically it had been subject to low intensity horse grazing.

3.5 This land has no attributes of landscape value. It lies overshadowed by adjacent industrial sheds and pylons; consequently it too, is also deemed a **low** quality landscape of little landscape value.

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6 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
7 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
3.6 General views of the Sites are shown on Figures 1.0 and 3.0

**Planning and Landscape Character Context  Refer to Figs 2.0, 3.0 & 4.0**

Beddington Farmlands

3.7 The Sites sit at the edge of a broader area of land known as the Beddington Farmlands which extends from Beddington Park in the south to the border with the London Borough of Merton in the north. Beddington Farmlands lies within the Greater London conurbation approximately 3.5kms from Croydon town centre and 4kms from Sutton town centre. It is also surrounded by the local centres of Morden, Carshalton, Wallington and Mitcham. The surrounding land use and a local area analysis of Beddington Farmlands are shown on Figure 2.0.

3.8 The land is accessed via Beddington Lane (B272). Historically this area once farmland, has changed over the last century to encompass a wide variety of brownfield and semi–industrial land uses and is now home to housing, sewage treatment, sewage disposal, gravel extraction, landfill, waste recycling and flood relief measures. The area is crossed by two major power transmission lines strung between pylons which act as dominant visual detractors in the landscape. Despite this there is an open aspect although large stockpiles, mounds and active extractive and waste operations foreshorten most long distance views into and out of the area.

3.9 The biggest land use within Beddington Farmlands has been the large landfill and gravel extraction site approximately 130ha in size.

3.10 The distinct sub-areas of landscape character arising from past and present uses for extraction, waste disposal and waste treatment within the Beddington Farmlands are described as follows:

- The ‘100 Acre’ area: This forms the northern part of the Beddington Farmlands and comprises an area of old sludge drying pits divided into rectangular shapes by bunds and is distinct from the land owned by Sterecycle. The pits vary from being very wet to very dry and have a mosaic of colonising vegetation and are of nature conservation interest. The northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the sludge drying pits have mature tree and shrub belts screening the pits from views. The western boundary is formed by a planted bund that screens the permissive foot/cycle path that runs north-south along the Beddington Farmlands western boundary. The area is largely remote from the activities within the rest of the Farmlands and because of this, is not as littered with as much rubbish as

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8 The Conservation strategy for the SINC prescribes the need to maximise conservation and biodiversity opportunities within this area whilst still undertaking sludge management. The principle behind this is that a balance is struck between operational works and conservation
the Sites. North eastwards, the area merges with the wider open landscape extending up to the tramway and further northwards still, Mitcham Golf Course and Mitcham Common. Even though this area lies adjacent to the recycling plant it has a sense of isolation and tranquillity. The combination of reeded embankments, open water, dense shrub perimeter vegetation and wildlife create a landscape that is of moderate landscape quality with a high sensitivity to change.

- Mineral processing and stocking area: This is situated to the south of the ‘100 Acre’ and to the west where the dominant overhead transmission lines start to cross the Beddington Farmlands. Here lie several large piles of sand and gravel with associated industrial conveyor belts and hoppers around and functional site offices. The area is fenced and inaccessible to anyone but employees although due to the height of the stockpiles and associated machinery the operation is visible from the access road entrance off Beddington Lane. In terms of landscape quality, the area is deemed as being low with a low sensitivity to change.

- Recycling Centre, access road, hardstanding and site offices: This area to the south of the ‘100 Acre’ site and to east of the mineral processing and stocking area is of more mixed character and a focus of some activity. Visually it includes the Recycling Centre, and grass and scrub areas to the east. The access road, hardstanding areas and office car park are functionally surfaced in concrete. The site offices and weighbridge are similarly functional in character and are the natural focus of activity. Immediately to the east of the offices is planted bund of trees, and the rough grassland site owned and promoted by Cappagh. Further to the east in the areas abutting warehousing on Beddington Lane (B272) there are a number of mature trees scattered through the scrub and grass. It is a ‘busy unkempt’ area full of windblown detritus and other waste material which has escaped the central depot areas consequently it has the appearance and quality of a low valued landscape with a low sensitivity to change.

- Stockpiles and Mounds: The centre of the site contains a series of very large landforms that are crossed on the south-eastern corner by the landfill access track connecting to Mile Road. The mounds reach approximately 16m above surrounding ground level and it is assumed that these are intended for use as landfill day cover and restoration soils. They are therefore subject to change over the lifetime of the landfill site. Their current appearance is clearly of a man-made shape with the soil stockpiles being fairly well ‘greened’ by colonising grasses and weeds. The permanent Landfill Phase 1 landform is approximately 44m AOD, around 20m above the surrounding landform. This will form part of the final ‘Country Park’s’ landform and will increase slightly.

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9 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
10 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
11 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
in height in accordance with an approved scheme of infilling and restoration. Although this landscape is set to change through the restoration of the area as part of the Wandle Country Park and its future value will therefore be high\(^\text{12}\), its current landscape character and quality can only be described as low\(^\text{13}\) with a low sensitivity to change blending with the other industrial land uses that adjoin it.

- **Lakes and Lagoons:** Along the western boundary there are three main water bodies that will ultimately form part of the Wandle Valley Country Park adjacent to the sand and gravel extraction operation. These have been specifically created for nature conservation and particularly for wild fowl. They are well planted around their edges and appear tranquil in relation to the industrial operations going on in the immediate surroundings. Consequently they have a landscape value of medium\(^\text{14}\) with the potential to rise to high\(^\text{15}\) on completion of the Country Park.

- **Active Landfill Area:** The southern part of the site is dominated by the active landfill area and subsequently has rather bleak if dramatic industrial landscape character. This areas quality can therefore be summarised as Low\(^\text{16}\) quality and value.

3.11 In Section 5: Open Environment of the Sutton Unitary Development Plan: Adopted April 2003 the overall quality of the Beddington Farmlands area was defined as poor in terms of landscape quality.

**Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)**

3.12 Within the London Plan (Strategic Policy SO9 and policies 3D.8 -12, 3D14- 17\(^\text{17}\)) and the current Sutton Core Planning Strategy (policies PMP5 and PMP9\(^\text{18}\)) the Beddington Farmlands is regionally and locally designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and is safeguarded for the future expansion of the Wandle Valley Country Park. Although the Sites are wholly contained within MOL interestingly, the land owned by Sterecycle is excluded from the future expansion plans for the Wandle Valley Country Park.

3.13 The expansion plans are a long-term aspiration of the Mayor of London and the Borough Council and provision is made for it in the planning permission for the Beddington Farmlands landfill and gravel extraction. Both the outgoing UDP and its replacement, the Local Development Framework recognise that the plans will not be implemented until restoration of the gravel pits has been undertaken although it is

\(^{12}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10

\(^{13}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10

\(^{14}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10

\(^{15}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10

\(^{16}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10

\(^{17}\) Refer to Appendix B Planning Core Strategy – Key Planning Policies

\(^{18}\) Refer to Appendix B Planning Core Strategy - Key Planning Policies
possible that some restoration areas, principally in the south-west corner of Beddington Farmlands, may be opened prior to a complete cessation of operations. In addition, the existing Recycling Centre adjoining the Sites western boundaries may still be operational and/or be decommissioned during the first stages of the Park. The centre is currently due for closure in 2016 although permission is currently being sought to extend its life to 2023. Its position in the opposite, north-east, corner however, means that it will not delay the start of the programmed restoration.

3.14 Although not a definition of landscape quality the MOL designation recognises the open nature of the land and presumes against inappropriate development except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt but is not intended to obstruct existing business operational needs.

Metropolitan Green Chain

3.15 In addition to the MOL designation, the Sites are also included within the Metropolitan Green Chain and Green Corridor. The policy in both cases seeks generally to protect both the open character of these areas and their specific value for nature conservation, amenity and leisure purposes, landscape or access.

Nature Conservation

3.16 Due to the past and present activities on this expansive area, the Farmlands is also designated a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC7 and M92)\(^\text{19}\) as defined within Appendix 1 of the UDP; 2003 and supported in the LDF. Although not a reference to landscape quality there is clearly a connection between substantial change to the landscape and impact on nature conservation. The focus for nature conservation is primarily on land within the northern part of the farmlands which includes the Sites and also the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument in the south. There is no reason to consider that any resulting landscape change arising from the development proposals will have any detrimental impact on this nature conservation interest.

Beddington Industrial Area

3.17 Bordering the Sites eastern boundary lays an industrial area defined in Sutton’s Core planning Strategy as the ‘Beddington Strategic Industrial location’. The stretch of Beddington Lane (B272) past the sewage works to the Sites entrance is semi-

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\(^{19}\) The Site was designated as a “Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation” in September 1988. The Greater London Authorities defines a Site of Metropolitan Importance (SMI) as:

“…those sites which contain the best examples of London’s habitats, sites which contain particularly rare species, rare assemblages of species or important populations of species, or sites which are of particular significance within otherwise heavily built-up Areas of London. They are the highest priority for protection. The identification and protection of Metropolitan sites is necessary, not only to support a significant proportion of London’s wildlife, but also to provide opportunities for people to have contact with the natural environment….”
industrial in character with numerous large warehousing and works units including a skip waste operation, Country Waste Ltd, Mer Products Ltd and the like. There are also some large trade and public retail units such as a Builder Centre and timber yard. Immediately to the south of the site entrance, a new roundabout has been constructed at the Coomber Way junction that will provide alternative access to the Sites and the wider Beddington Farmlands area.

3.18 Tucked within the industrial area are pockets of housing including two adjacent to the sewage works entrance, a row of terraces behind the Builder Centre on Therapia Lane and a small area to the north of the site entrance on Beddington Lane (B272) itself and Elboron Avenue, Brookmead, Homemead and Oakmead Roads. The Croydon tramway line crosses Beddington Lane (B272) at this point and dissects this latter group of housing.

3.19 The west side of Beddington Lane (B272) is less built-up than the east side although where potential views towards the site may exist there are fences and advertising hoardings. The character of this northern section of Beddington Lane (B272) therefore remains semi-industrialised and enclosed.

3.20 This area stretching east towards the Purley Way retail and industrial parks of Croydon therefore contains a broad mix of industrial, housing and commercial/offices buildings and is described within the LDF Planning Core Strategy as ‘currently suffering from a poor quality environment’. This is further reinforced by the Report ‘Understanding Sutton’s Local Distinctiveness: Characterisation Report of Studies, Evidence Base, 2008’ which states this area to be of average to poor urban quality.

3.21 Further northwards, a railway line running through the local stations of Mitcham Junction and Hackbridge defines the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands. Between this and the nearby A237 London Road are areas of old gravel workings and a small area of existing housing some of it fairly recent including the experimental housing development ‘BedZed’. West of London Road there are some pockets of warehouse units although housing is predominately seen on rising land with the occasional tower block and the Carshalton St Helier Hospital noticeable. It is broadly an area of mixed average/moderate quality.

3.22 In addition to these broad areas, the Sites lie in relative close proximity to the following:

Historic Park: To the south of Beddington Farmlands lies Beddington Park, a popular and extensive resource of grasslands, mature trees and tree and shrub belts. Within the Park there is a cricket pitch and clubhouse, tennis courts and the River Wandle that flows east to west through the middle. Adjacent to Church Lane, that enters

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20 Para 2.10 Core Planning Strategy Adopted December 2009
21 Understanding Sutton’s Local Distinctiveness: Characterisation Report of Studies, Evidence Base 2008- Figure 8.3
22 Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
the Park from the A232 Croydon Road, there is also an historic church, Carew Manor School and Beddington Park Cottages. Beddington Park and the adjoining Carew Manor School and church are recognised collectively as a historic park and setting.

In planning terms any alterations or changes to the Park and buildings would require special consideration. The qualitative value of the Park is therefore considered to be high\textsuperscript{23} with a high sensitivity to accept change.

Conservation Areas: There are several Conservation Area designations also to the south covering Beddington Park, Carew Manor (school, church and cottages) and two areas of housing known as Church Lane and Beddington Village Conservation Areas. These are situated along the River Wandle and across a small southern section of Beddington Lane (B272). The value and quality of these areas is correspondingly high\textsuperscript{24}.

Mitcham Common: To the north of The Beddington Farmlands is situated Mitcham Common, a 182 hectare (460 acres) site of MOL and Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (MINC). The Common is also part of the Wandle Valley Country Park. Topographically, the area is at a similar elevation to the Farmlands with a localised area of high ground (35m AOD) north of the A236. The mature woodland within and bordering the Common prevent any real long distance views southwards. In terms of landscape value this area is deemed to be high\textsuperscript{25} due to its strategic status as MOL and MINC.

Mitcham Golf Course: Originally founded in 1891, the course is sandwiched between Mitcham Common, the A236, Mitcham Junction and the railway line. Mature tree stands frame the various greens restricting outward views towards the Sites and the adjoining Beddington Farmlands landscape.

To the east of the Park and south of the sewage works is an area of housing including part of the Beddington Village Conservation Area that is accessed from the southern section of Beddington Lane (B272) as it becomes Hillier’s Lane. There is mixed housing here from pre and post-war as well as fairly recently built flats both on the level areas adjacent to the River Wandle and on steeply rising land around Guy Road. There are also several community facilities including Beddington Park Primary School, Sherwood Park School and the Village Hall.

Other Planning Designations and Policies

3.23 There are other designations including an Archaeological Priority Area and Preferred Location for Hi-tech Industrial Uses within and adjacent to the site. Although not

\textsuperscript{23} Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
\textsuperscript{24} Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
\textsuperscript{25} Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
directly of landscape or visual relevance they do set the context for the site and are also shown for reference on Figure 4.0.

**Topography and Vegetation  Refer to Figures 3.0 and 5.0**

3.24 In terms of topography the Sites lies at approximately 28-30m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) although the various bunds enveloping the sludge drying beds distorts the true lie of the land visually. In the wider context, the Sites are within the low lying land associated with the edge of the Thames flood plain with land rising more significantly 7-8 kilometres to the south around Woodmansterne, Sanderstead and Selsdon with an average height of around 150m AOD.

3.25 There are a number of significant mature tree belts partially enveloping the Sites particularly within the 100 Acre area and until recently lopped, bordering Jessop’s Lane, along the Sterecycle land’s northern boundary and Beddington Lane. There is also a continuous bund topped with a planted tree belt close to the western boundaries of both sites. This was planned to screen the waste and recycling facilities and the vegetation is now in excess of 3-to 4 metres in height and this, in combination with the bund, provides significant visual containment to the land further westwards from the site. There are also scattered mature trees around the existing site access road and areas of regenerative scrub vegetation within the Sterecycle land. These are assessed in more detail within the ecological assessment.

3.26 In the wider context, substantial tree belts around the northern boundary of Beddington Park to the south of the Sites contain views within the Park. Further planting in combination with mounding within the landfill areas and around the periphery of the sewage works all assist in preventing long views from these areas into the Sites. The mature woodland stands and woodland scrub within Mitcham Golf Course, Mitcham Common and lining the railway embankments also helps to screen views of the Sites in views from the north.

**Public Open Space and Rights of Ways**

3.27 Beddington Park and Mitcham Common are the most significant public open spaces within the Site’s vicinity with widespread public access.

3.28 There are no public rights of way on the Sites although the closest to them is a permissive footpath that was formed by the previous Thames Waste Management Company extending along the western perimeter of the 100 Acre site southwards before terminating at London Road and Beddington Park. It follows the line of the railway and is screened from the wider area by planted bunds to avoid disturbance to wildfowl on the lakes. The path was included within L.B. of Sutton’s UDP as part of a wider area cycle network and has been retained within the LDF Spatial
The only footpath of note runs east–west from the A237, across the railway on a bridge and along part of the northern boundary of the ‘100 Acre’ site before following the tramway between the Brookmead Industrial Estate and warehousing to the north and crossing Beddington Lane. The area is visually contained by warehousing, mature trees and bunding along most of its length. There are glimpsed views from the top of the railway bridge towards the sand and gravel workings.

**Summary**

In summary, the Sites and their immediate surroundings to the east and west are of an industrial / semi-industrial and brownfield character dominated by power lines, landfill and extractive operations, sewage treatment, warehousing, rubbish and waste uses that could only be described as having an overall low\(^{27}\) value in terms of landscape quality. Collectively they currently detract from the more sensitive and high quality landscapes to the north (Mitcham Golf Course and Common) and south (Beddington Park). Currently these areas of good managed parkland character provide significant green breaks in this otherwise very urban industrial context.

The development of the Beddington Farmlands into an extension of the Wandle Valley Country Park is however likely to see significant improvements in the overall landscape quality of the area.

\(^{26}\) Sutton Local Development Framework Core planning Strategy PB10 Transport: Strategic and Borough wide Proposals

\(^{27}\) Rating in accordance with criteria given in Appendix A10
4.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The proposals for the Sites call for a new Beddington Resource Recovery and Energy Facility (BRREF) together with associated service yard, car parking and ancillary buildings to be developed on the land owned by Sterecycle with a new Plastics Reprocessing and Fuels Plant with hardstanding and car parking developed on the land owned by Cappagh. Both sites will be physically linked by an underground conveyor belt.

4.2 To minimise impacts on the surrounding environment several key features have been incorporated within the overall planning of the Sites and the buildings themselves. These are described below:

4.3 Sterecycle Site - Beddington Resource Recovery and Energy Facility (BRREF):

- A retained green buffer strip on the southern part of the site to accommodate replacement habitat for any displaced wildlife from the sites.

- The manipulation and enhancement of the landscape setting to minimise the impact of the proposed building. This includes the lowering of the overall site by approximately 2 metres, with the displaced earth banked around the perimeter to form a protective bund creating a visual barrier to the main road, entrance road and proposed future Country Park. Its purpose, to lower the overall height (38m) of the main facility and to hide the loading bay, vehicle parking and reduce associated traffic noise.

- Sloping grass banking links to the new curved grass roofs to connect the eastern industrial landscape with the open landscape to the west via a series of undulating planes to create both a new ‘green’ landscape buffer and ultimately, a ‘green’ visual bridge to the proposed Country Park. This innovative ‘green gateway’ building would enable the open landscape of the Country Park to extend right up to the edge of Beddington Industrial Area thus creating an accessible transition zone between the two.

- The varying heights of the curved roof forms are intended to house the technical equipment within including the turbine hall and autoclaves. The apex of the curves has also been purposely designed to partially screen the chimneys in views from the south.

- External Appearance - The building is to be primarily clad in concrete panels with a wall of timber cladding to soften the building’s appearance and set up a datum aligning with the eaves height of the adjacent fuel plant. Above this datum the proposal offers a mix of materials- pre cast concrete, Reglit glass strips and polycarbonate curtain walling. These ‘cathedral like’ windows will enable views from the outside into the plant whilst providing natural daylight.
At night the large overhanging roof will frame these light boxes, emphasising the undulating curves whilst minimizing light pollution.

4.4 Cappagh Site - Plastics Reprocessing and Fuels Plant. This site will comprise:

- The new plastics to fuel plant which sits directly adjacent to the existing shed on Beddington Lane matching it in height and mass. The building and surrounding hard standing and storage are located directly on the perimeter of the site and are both unified and hidden by an 8 metre high green wall which forms a frontage to Beddington Lane, an edge to the new access road and a counter point to the green bridge of the new waste facility.

- The design has been purposely created to reflect both the neighbouring sheds in mass and scale but also to mirror the curved roofs of the waste facility in form, the roof springs vertically and curves to form a slow green roof ‘arc’. This green roof is visible from behind the green wall, blending together to form a green edge to the site thereby reducing the building’s impact to the street and park.

- A retained green buffer strip on the southern part of the site to provide replacement habitat for any displaced wildlife from the sites.

- In addition to the perimeter banking the proposal retains existing trees to Beddington Lane and introduces a further layer of semi mature trees to each edge to further reduce the buildings’ visual impact.

4.5 Further information relating to the site layout including plans, elevations and visualisations is provided within the information supplied by Archial.
5.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS.

Introduction

5.1 This section provides an assessment of effects of the proposed BRREF on the local and wider landscape and on existing visual amenity identifying where significant impacts are likely during construction and operational stages.

5.2 Due to the on-going changes and future proposals for the adjacent landfill and gravel extraction areas, the impacts of the operational stage are considered in the site’s current context and in its future context when it will be restored and opened to the public as a ‘Country Park’.

The Zone of Visual Influence

5.3 Based on desk-top study and on site visits, a visual envelope has been defined as shown on Figure 6.0. The main factors that have defined the envelope are a combination of existing tree belts, the central landfill and it’s partially restored landforms, the built-up nature of surrounding areas and the distance from the Sites.

5.4 The envelope has also been considered with particular regard to the general mass and height of the largest and tallest element on the Sites notably, the main BRREF building (38m to apex from reduced ground level of -2m below road level and up to 50m to the top of the tallest stack) and the general spread of the development on the Sites.

5.5 The heights and close proximity to the proposed development sites of the existing recycling centre main building (approx 15-18m high to roofline), the pylons (estimated at approx 85m high) and the nearby warehouses on Beddington Lane (B272) (estimated at 16m high) are useful comparative aids in this assessment.

Rationale for the ZVI Refer to Figure 6.0

5.6 From Beddington Lane (B272), south of the current site entrance there are very limited views into any part of Beddington Farmlands due the built-up nature of the road with large warehousing, industrial units, walls and advertising hoardings blocking most views. The following photographs illustrate the views from Beddington Lane (B272).
View of Cappagh land frontage on Beddington Lane against the backdrop of the pylons and overhead transmission lines. Croydon Depot can be seen occupying the left hand of the frame whilst the Recycling Centre is just visible in the distance in the middle to right hand side of the frame.

View towards the existing recycling centre from Beddington Lane (B272)
Existing entrance off Beddington Lane (B272) into the Recycling Centre and the Sites

5.7 Further towards the current site entrance the vegetation bordering the former sludge drying beds shields views of them from the access road. These would all fall within the footprint of the new development proposals.

5.8 North of the existing site entrance there is a substantial woodland belt along the site boundary on the west side of Beddington Lane (B272) that screens views from the industrial units within the Brookmead Industrial Estate and from the small area of housing on Beddington Lane (B272) and adjacent roads. From these localities, glimpses of just the very tops of the grassed roof structures and the chimney stack may be possible through occasional gaps in the trees that may be more prominent in winter months. During the summer the view would be completely obscured although the occasional plumes from the chimney stacks may be visible.

View into Brookmead Industrial Estate from the corner of Jessops Way and Beddington Lane

5.9 To the north, the tree belts on the southern and northern boundaries of the ‘100 Acre’ site largely screen the Sites from view. However, there are theoretical glimpsed views to the upper roof sections of the BRREF green roofs and chimney stacks over the tops of the trees from within the ‘100 Acre’ site area. Although not available to public access, the visual envelope has therefore been shown following the northern boundary.
5.10 The envelope largely excludes the footpath bordering the northern border of the Beddington Farmlands as it is generally secluded although there are possible glimpsed views to the BRREF roof from three locations. These are from between two units within the Brookmead Industrial Estate, the top of the footpath bridge as it rises to cross the railway and at the junction of Goat Road and the A237 Carshalton Road.

View from the footbridge towards the Sites

5.11 Further north still within Mitcham Golf Course and Mitcham Common, views of the Sites are unlikely as these areas tend to be at a similar elevation to the Sites. In addition, any potential views are interrupted by mature dense woodland belts as shown in the photograph below.

View towards the Sites from the highest elevated ground within Mitcham Common

5.12 To the west, the housing on the A237 at Beddington Corner and adjacent industrial estates are screened from the Sites by the aggregates gravel working area and its associated tree belts. In addition the large landforms within the active sand and gravel extraction area of Beddington Farmlands and transmission line pylons lie in between potential views.

5.13 Housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road and the railway line are likely to have limited potential views towards the Sites from upper storey windows. These are anticipated as views are
just available from the top of Mile Road Bridge, to the south, and the edge of the housing, including the roof tops of the Bed Zed development, are just visible from within the current Recycling Centre area and edge of the sites. The envelope therefore includes the eastern ends of Primrose Close and Bluebell Close and the eastern side of Foxglove Way. Views from the upper floors of properties within these localities are likely to be open and panoramic taking in the Recycling Centre, landfill sites, sewage works and prominent IKEA chimney stacks.

View from Bluebell Close

5.14 Areas to the south-west and south, including Beddington Park, are excluded from the Zone of Visual Influence due mainly to the large permanent landforms in the centre of Beddington Farmlands. Although the exact line of the envelope may change over time as vegetation matures and the restoration of the land concludes it is worth noting that ultimately the landscape of the proposed ‘Country Park’ will screen views from these areas even more. Currently the existing tree belts around Beddington Park already contain and foreshorten views to an extent so that even views to the existing landforms are difficult to obtain from public vantage points.

5.15 From the south-east corner of the Farmlands, there is a potential ‘thin window’ to the east of the grassed mounds and scrub allowing possible intermittent views across from the sewage works site. However, the housing to the south, along Crispin Crescent, the Village Hall and nearby housing on Beddington Lane (B272) are excluded from the envelope due to existing mature vegetation, bunding and works buildings around the southern boundary of the sewage works.

5.16 The ZVI as described above does not allow for exceptional overlooking views from tall buildings such as occasional tower blocks, the Bell Tower of Carew Manor School, the Carshalton St Helier Hospital or from housing on the rising land around the hospital area and around Guy Road. These are excluded due to their distance from the Sites (i.e. 2.5km from the hospital), the availability of views from upper storeys only and the insignificance of the proposals within the context of the panoramic predominantly urban views that these locations would have. They are not, therefore, considered further.
Impact on Landscape and Conservation Designations

5.17 Although not a designation of landscape quality the area of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) recognises the essential openness of Beddington Farmlands.

5.18 The elements of the proposed BRREF and Plastics Reprocessing and Fuels Plant are all situated within the same area of the MOL and Green Chain Corridor within a total approximate area, including hardstanding and landscaped areas of 64500m².

5.19 The actual built elements of the BRREF amount to approximately half of the available land. Although a good proportion of the site, the grassed roofs of the building, elevated some 38 metres above a reduced ground level of 2 metres, provide a 'green' bridge visually linking Beddington Lane with the hinterland of Beddington Farmlands and in doing so would preserve the openness of the site through increased nature conservation value and also direct access to Beddington Farmlands via the new access road. Impacts arising from the development of the Sterecycle land in relation to the MOL policy with regard to 'openness' are therefore considered to be moderately beneficial as previously there were no positive attributing qualities or public access to the Beddington Farmlands.

5.20 Similarly the adjoining landscape and hardstanding areas within the Sterecycle development not only preserve and maintain the open character of the landscape but visually and considerably enhance it, especially along the public frontage of Beddington Lane (B272) dramatically improving the quality of the urban streetscape. In addition, the retention of a green buffer strip on the southern part of the site to provide replacement habitat for any displaced wildlife from the Sites meets the objectives in relation to nature conservation enhancement. Overall the development proposals are therefore considered to be beneficial to the wider environment.

5.21 The BRREF development proposal would also appear to conform to the equally important Metropolitan Green Chain and Green Corridor Policy with regard to preserving the open character, providing areas for and supporting nature conservation, amenity and leisure through direct access between Beddington Industrial Area to Beddington Farmlands and ultimately the Wandle Valley Country Park. The impact on these designations is therefore also considered to be moderately beneficial given the low quality environment of the existing site.

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28 **Moderate beneficial**: the proposed development would cause improvement to an existing landscape/townscape by reinforcing and/or enhancing its integrity, character, value and amenity of its characteristic features and elements, including replacements of some existing, Appendix A, A16

29 **Moderate beneficial**: the proposed development would cause improvement to an existing landscape/townscape by reinforcing and/or enhancing its integrity, character, value and amenity of its characteristic features and elements, including replacements of some existing, Appendix A, A16
5.22 The ancillary plastics to fuel development occupies a slightly smaller site. Although the built development would occupy just under half of the site’s available area and there are implications regarding the land’s designation of MOL and Green Chain through the loss of ‘open land’, it is worth noting that the present state of the existing site, notably rough grassland of low ecological importance and low landscape quality contributes very little by way of nature conservation and amenity to these policies. In contrast, the development would ameliorate this to some degree by sympathetically improving the quality of the external environment to support and reinforce the wider nature conservation values of the Beddington Farmlands area. This site as noted previously is included within the land safeguarded for the Country Park and therefore the environmental enhancements would seek to create an environmental buffer to the Country Park segregating the urban industrial edge to the east from the future park. The impact of this proposal therefore on the MOL designation is considered to be minor to moderate but beneficial (refer to footnote 29).

5.23 In summary it is anticipated that the development proposals will not impede the future plans for the ‘Country Park’ or affect the other conservation designations which are all situated outside of the Zone of Visual Influence. No further impacts have therefore been identified.

Construction Effects

5.24 The Beddington Farmlands site is already subject to a variety of industrial activities landfilling and sand and gravel extraction, rubbish treatment etc requiring intense site activity and works vehicles. This in addition to the industrial buildings/warehouses and sheds sited along Beddington Lane (B272) serve to reinforce the distinctive urban semi-industrial character of area. The construction activities for the proposed BRREF and the Plastics Reprocessing Fuel Plant although intense would therefore not seem out of context.

5.25 In terms of impacts from Beddington Lane (B272) the impacts are likely to be minor and temporarily adverse in nature\(^{30}\) as the construction site would be screened with temporary hoardings.

Operational Effects

5.26 The present landscape is semi-industrial and brownfield in character with active uses present. There are also significant operations on-going in the vicinity of the Sites with the current recycling centre and other waste related activities within

\(^{30}\) Slight or Minor adverse: The proposed development would cause some damage to the landscape/townscape and would be slightly at variance with its scale, pattern and landform. It would cause some visual intrusion and would have no significant effects on characteristic elements or features.
Beddington Lane. It is therefore considered that the proposed BRREF and ancillary Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant will not be incongruous with the existing landscape character. In direct contrast to the existing low quality environment the innovative design and siting of the BRREF main building combined with a unified green frontage to both sites on Beddington Lane and links through to the eventual Country Park extension would significantly improve the overall quality of the local environment.

5.27 The organic design of the roof structure of the main BRREF building together with its green roofs are not only designed to be functional but to provide ecological value and views over, Beddington Farmlands when it is transformed into the Country Park. In addition the use of natural materials such as timber cladding, green walls, perimeter bunding and naturalised buffer areas help to aid the transition between the stark low quality industrial area to the east and the open landscape to the west.

5.28 Considerably taller than other buildings within its vicinity the main building within the Sterecycle development would be visually prominent within its local environment and also in some long distance views. However, due to its unique shape, it would not be viewed as a detractor but as a distinctive landmark in its own right. The other ancillary development while not as unique in form would positively contribute to the currently poor street scene along Beddington Lane (B272). Visual Impacts therefore from Beddington Lane (B272) are considered to be **moderately to substantially beneficial**\[31\].

5.29 In the wider context, it is likely that where views are available, only the roofs and chimney stacks will be visible due to the low lying nature of the surrounding topography but even these views would be viewed against an essentially urban industrial backdrop. Impacts are therefore considered to be **minor to negligible and beneficial**\[32\] in nature.

5.30 Even with the advent of the Country Park the developments are not likely to create visual discord as the landscape buffer treatments; organic shaped green roofs acting as a land bridge are likely to be visually absorbed into the overall Country Park landscape. The protruding chimneys are likely to act as point of reference within the wider landscape. Impacts are therefore also considered to be **negligible**\[33\].

5.31 The areas where potential views may be available are discussed in further detail below.

**Viewpoint Selections**  
Refer to Figures 6.0 and 6.1

5.32 In order to make assessments of the scale of impact the following views from public vantage points within the Zone of Visual Influence have been identified and visited:

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31 Criteria given in A16
32 Criteria given in A16
33 Criteria given in A16
• View from Beddington Lane (B272) at junction with the existing site access road.
• View from Beddington Lane (B272) adjacent to Metrobus London Transport and northwards.
• Views from London Road
• Views from housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road
• View from A237 adjacent to Beddington Corner Area
• View from Mitcham Common
• View from house on Goat Road / A237 Carshalton Road junction
• View from ‘100 Acre Railway Bridge’ on public footpath.
• View from permissive footpath along western boundary.

5.31 As discussed in 5.16 above in the wider context exceptional viewpoints may be possible although none have been identified from public vantage points.

5.32 The effects on the identified viewpoints are anticipated as follows (refer to Photographs (to be added) :

5.33 **View from Beddington Lane (B272)**: the whole of the Sterecycle BRREF site frontage including at the lower level, by a grassed bund would be open to view from Beddington Lane including residential properties, and industrial units on the eastern side of the road. The buildings within the Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant development however would be less conspicuous being screened by an 8 metre high continuous green wall fronting the road above which, all but the upper parts of the buildings would be visible. The green wall would continue into the site providing an edge to the new access road enabling far reaching views into the back of the Sites and the land beyond.

5.34 This view would be available to passing motorists and pedestrians and to some extent from within the front yards of industrial units directly opposite and residential properties obliquely on the east side of Beddington Lane (B272). Although the view would constitute a significant change the impacts are not considered to be adverse in nature. Trees planted on the sides and top of the grassed bund would visually link the frontage with the perimeter woodland planting further north adjoining Jessops Way and the entrance into the Brookmead industrial Site. From the opposite side of Beddington Lane this visual screen would act as a green foil to the land within Beddington Farmlands and ultimately, the Country Park to the west. The changes in the visual quality of this stretch of the Lane would therefore be quite dramatic altering the perception of users from a low quality environment to a substantially better one. The actual resulting impact is therefore considered to be **substantially beneficial**.34

34 Para A17, Appendix A **Substantial beneficial**: the proposed development would considerably improve an existing/townscape by substantially reinforcing and/or enhancing its overall integrity, character, value and amenity, including replacement of most detractors.
5.35 **View from Beddington Lane (B272) adjacent to Metrobus London Transport and northwards:** The land within the vicinity of the Metrobus station is relatively high in relation to the general surrounds and allows oblique views through gaps along the Lane between hoardings and existing mature vegetation to the top of the active landfill area. Based on the proposed height of the main BRREF building and the chimney stacks it would be likely that the top of this facility and especially the chimney stacks would be visible from this viewpoint and selective viewpoints further along the Lane northwards. The Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant development however would be less conspicuous. These views however, would be largely tempered by the surrounding and intervening industrial scene; impacts are therefore considered to be **negligible**.

5.36 **View from London Road:** From these viewpoint intermittent glimpses over and between the roadside vegetation are possible over the landfill area. It is conceivable therefore that the top of the green roofs and chimneys stacks within the BRREF development would be visible in the distance. This view would be available to passing motorists and pedestrians and therefore transient in nature. The anticipated impacts are therefore likely to be **negligible to minor**.

5.37 **Views from housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road:** The views from this area have already been discussed in 5.13. From this location, dense vegetation lining the A237 screens views to properties adjoining it. However the more recent housing within Foxglove Way, Primrose Close and Bluebell Close including the Bed Zed development would have potential views towards the Sites and in particular, of the distinctive form of the main BRREF building and its associated chimneys from upper storey windows. The Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant development would be less obvious as from this location the development would appear more uniform and viewed within the context of the more visually dominant and distinctive BRREF development.

5.38 Given the views are from upper storey windows only, the distance from the Sites of approximately 0.75kms, the nature of the land in between including the pylons, gravel workings, and the landfill activities, impact is considered to be **negligible to minor but beneficial**.

5.39 **With regard to the future Country Park, the visual impact of the development proposals is likely to be negligible** as the developments’ landscape infrastructure and green roofs would appear to blend seamlessly with the edge of the Park.

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35 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A  
36 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A  
37 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A  
38 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
5.40 **View from A237 adjacent to Beddington Corner Area:** Fragmented but widespread views are available across the old sewage works site towards vegetation marking the railway line. Above the tips of this vegetation there are glimpses of the gravel workings and housing to the south. There would therefore logically be potential glimpses of the top of the main BRREF building and the chimney stacks. Over time however, it is likely that even these will diminish as the vegetation bordering the permissive footpath matures further. The impact is therefore considered **negligible**.

5.41 **View from Mitcham Common:** Views from this small corner of the Common open up across the entrance to aggregate site. As mature tree belts around the railway line and the ‘100 Acre’ site screen views towards the Sites no view of the proposals is anticipated. This is also partly due to the lay of the land being at a lower elevation relative to land within the 100 Acre Site. No impacts have therefore been identified.

5.42 **View from House on Goat Road / A237 Carshalton Road Junction:** Views are clearly available towards the sand and gravel extraction site adjacent to the 100 Acre Site with longer distance views towards the industrial area beyond Beddington Lane (B272). It is likely therefore that views to the Sites particularly the main BRREF building and other built elements within the developments would be visible from the upper storeys and possible within the grounds.

5.43 The built elements would be seen within the context of the existing semi industrial landscape and are therefore unlikely to be considered incongruous. The impact is therefore considered to be **minor**.

5.44 **View from ‘100 Acre Bridge’ on public footpath:** The general views along the footpath heading east are influenced by the Brookmead Industrial Estates, the wider Beddington Industrial Estates to the south east and by the railway. Further west however they become pleasant as it passes through linear woodland with some views out to the north across the golf course. Views out to the south however remain consistently screened due to bunding and dense vegetation. Towards the ‘100 Acre Bridge’ the vegetation begins to thin out and once onto the bridge over the railway views open up across land on either side and it becomes a natural place to stop. The tops of the sand and gravel workings are clearly visible and it would be reasonable to assume that glimpses of the top of the green roofs and chimney stacks of the BRREF main building and possibly those within the Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant may also be obtained.

5.45 Given the distance of approximately 1km, the presence of the sand and gravel workings and the partial view set against the industrial backdrop of units on Beddington Lane, the visual impact is considered to be **minor**.

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39 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
40 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
41 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
5.46 View from permissive footpath along the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands: The footpath although extensive over much of the western perimeter of the Beddington Farmlands is pleasantly wide and contained within bunds that have been extensively planted. There are no general views over the bunds towards the existing sites however given the height of the main building within the BRREF it is likely that the top of the roof structures and chimneys and possibly the top of the buildings within the Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant would be glimpsed by pedestrian users walking the path. As the planting either side or on top of the bunds continues to mature it is likely that even in time, these views would diminish further. The visual impact is therefore considered to be minor reducing to negligible over time.

Mitigation Proposals

5.47 Mitigation proposals are usually essential, wherever feasible, to minimise significant effects. The development proposals for both sites have been purposefully and sensitively designed to avoid the need for additional mitigation. As a result, the impacts identified have tended to be either negligible and/or beneficial in nature. There are however several additional measures which could be taken to improve the developments further. These include:

- Indigenous species selected for tree and shrub planting and grasses to promote nature conservation. Interface with the ecological requirements of the Country Park would ensure that a seamless transition between the two is developed.

- Reinforcement tree planting in gaps within the existing tree belt on the northern boundary of the Sterecycle site to thicken the visual screen and increase the woodland buffer to the nature conservation area beyond.

Residual Effects

5.48 On the basis of the assessment of viewpoints the proposed development would represent a negligible to minor change in distant views to the Sites and a moderate to substantial beneficial change in some close views but will not result in any significant adverse effects.

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42 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The proposed BRREF and Plastics Reprocessing Fuels Plant developments are situated on the edge of Beddington Farmlands landfill site sandwiched between the current recycling plant, Beddington Lane (B272) and the Beddington Industrial Area within the wider urban context of the London Borough of Sutton. The area as a whole has been appraised as part of the Sutton Boroughs’ LDF Core Planning Strategy in the document entitled, ‘Understanding Sutton’s Local Distinctiveness: Characterisation Report of Studies’ and was described in that report as being poor in terms of landscape value.

6.2 In accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, Second Edition, 2002, the Sites have been assessed and have been found to be of low quality and value. The Sterecycle land comprises a series of former open sludge drying beds bordered internally by 1-2 metre high embankments loosely covered with sporadic regenerative shrubs and ground flora and strewn with windblown detritus from the adjoining recycling plant and larger waste material (plastic drain piping, tyres etc).

6.3 The second ancillary Cappagh site consists of an area of rough grassland which has been vacant and unused for a significant period and lies overshadowed by adjacent industrial sheds and pylons. This land consequently, has no attributes that landscape or ecological value.

6.4 The Sites front Beddington Lane (B272) which is dominated by large warehousing, industrial, trade and retail units with small pockets of housing. These areas too, provide little by way of value in terms of landscape quality.

6.5 South of the Beddington Farmlands can be found Beddington Park, a popular and extensive resource of grasslands, mature trees and tree and shrub belts and Carew Manor. Both of these areas are subject to several designations including historic park and setting and conservation area status. As a result their landscape quality and value is recognised as being high. To the north the equally valued landscapes within Mitcham Golf Course and Mitcham Common can be found. To some extent the low quality landscapes within the Beddington Farmland and the Beddington Industrial Area adjoining these high quality environment areas implies a lessening of their quality where they directly adjoin. But this is set to change with extensive restoration of the Beddington Farmlands into an extension to the Wandle Valley Country Park at the beginning of 2018.

6.6 The Beddington Farmlands are designated MOL, which although not a recognition of quality does value the ‘openness’ of the land. MOL land is considered within the London Plan and also Sutton Boroughs’ Core Planning Strategy to play an important
role as part of London’s multi-functional green infrastructure and both stress the need to see improvements in its overall quality and accessibility. The policies relating to MOL prescribe that development that involves the loss of MOL in return for the creation of new open space elsewhere, will not be considered appropriate and that appropriate development should be limited to small scale structures to support outdoor open space uses and minimise any adverse impact on the open character of MOL and its key objectives. Green chains are also similarly important within the Plan and Core Planning Strategy adding to London’s open space network, recreation and biodiversity and consist of footpaths and the open spaces that they link, which are accessible to the public.

6.7 The BRREF and Plastic Reprocessing Fuels Plant development proposals do not seek to conflict with these policies or their key objectives. On the contrary, they would appear to conform to many of the objectives of the policy, notably those relating to access openness and nature conservation. In addition the use of natural materials such as timber cladding, green walls, perimeter bunding and naturalised buffer areas help to aid the transition between the stark low quality industrial area to the east and the open landscape to the west.

6.8 The objectives of the MOL are addressed through the careful siting and design of the development by facilitating access from Beddington Industrial Area directly into Beddington Farmlands and in the future, the Country Park where none presently exists and the use of green roofs to promote and enhance nature conservation. Further ecological and visual enhancement is provided through the retention of naturalised buffer strips and the bunding along the site frontage.

6.9 The nature of the developments; their qualitative and visual attributes when weighed against the poor landscape and visual quality of the existing land and the future plans for the restoration of Beddington Farmlands as an extension to the Country Park merit the consideration of the developments to be viewed as a special circumstance. The loss of the site from MOL is viewed as:

- Not having a detrimental impact on the integrity of the remaining and adjoining MOL;

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43 Key objectives of MOL:

MOL Objective 1: Contribution to area’s physical structure and an attractive break in urban area
MOL Objective 2: Provision of Leisure and Recreation
MOL Objective 3: Landscape and Nature Conservation value in the area

44 Wychnavon and Doncaster Test Cases regarding development within the Green Belt – General ruling – ‘Any circumstance, or combination of circumstances, is capable of amounting to very special circumstances such as to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. That includes the personal circumstances of the applicant. Thus a decision maker, provided he follows the approach indicated in the Doncaster case, ought to be able to justify the outcome that he thinks is the “right” (or fair) one.’ Neil King Q.C
• Securing significant enhancement of the landscape and nature conservation interest and in so doing, supporting the future recreational purposes of the Country Park; and,

• Securing the structural value of the Sites by integrating the development into views from Beddington Farmlands and also significantly improving the quality of local views on Beddington Lane.

6.10 These are in addition to the main special circumstance, which is the need for these Sites to be allocated for waste management in order to meet the South London Waste Plan targets.

6.11 Taking into consideration the existing poor landscape quality of the Sites, the lack of current access, the beneficial improvements created by the developments and the size and openness of the developments in relation to the area of the future Country Park as a whole, the impact on the MOL is viewed as moderately beneficial.\(^{45}\)

6.12 Similarly, the same impacts apply to the equally important Metropolitan Green Chain and Green Corridor Policy with regard to preserving the open character, providing areas for and supporting nature conservation, amenity and leisure through direct access between Beddington Industrial Area and Beddington Farmlands and ultimately, the Wandle Valley Country Park.

6.13 Recent ecological surveys suggest that there is a decline in bird interest within the Sites and that the Sites are therefore of limited ecological value and declining further. Nature conservation would therefore be improved by the inclusion of more favourable habitat as part of the landscape proposals for the developments and the enhancement of the Pongo Park site to the south for nature conservation and biodiversity enhancement. There is therefore no reason to consider that any resulting landscape change arising from the development proposals will have any detrimental impact on nature conservation interest.

6.13 Due largely to existing tree belts, the large landforms within the Farmlands area and the surrounding built-up area, the Zone of Visual Influence is restricted largely to the immediate surroundings. Views into the Sites from various locations have been assessed and no significant impacts identified. The majority of impacts during the operational stage are mostly minor due to the distances over which the developments would be viewed and one moderate to substantial. The changes in view arising from the developments are also deemed to be beneficial in comparison to the poor visual quality of the existing land.

\(^{45}\) Criteria given in Para A16, Appendix A
6.14 In summary key findings from the visual assessment are:

- View from Beddington Lane (B272): **moderately to substantially beneficial**
- View from Beddington Lane (B272) adjacent to Metrobus London Transport and northwards: **negligible**
- View from London Road: **negligible to minor**
- Views from housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road: **negligible to minor and beneficial**
- View from A237 adjacent to Beddington Corner Area: **negligible**
- View from House on Goat Road / A237 Carshalton Road Junction: **minor**
- View from ‘100 Acre Bridge’ on public footpath: **minor**
- View from permissive footpath along the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands: **minor to negligible**

6.15 Although no permanent significant impacts are identified as the design proposals have been specifically designed to address the environmental issues, mitigation measures to further reduce the above effects have been recommended.

6.16 In conclusion, given the current aspirations over the future intended use of Beddington Farmlands as a Country Park, the development proposals demonstrate ably that this land is capable both in landscape and visual terms to successfully integrate within the wider environment and therefore justifies further consideration for inclusion within the site allocation for waste within the South London Waste Plan.

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46 Criteria given in Para A17, Appendix A
FIGURES
1. View south from within the northern part of the Sterecycle site.

2. View from within the northern part of the Sterecycle site towards northeastern corner of the site and Beddington Lane (B272).

3. Existing access into the recycling centre and Sterecycle land. The sludge beds within the northern part of the Sterecycle site are hidden by the bund in the middle foreground.
4. View of existing recycling centre.

5. View of former sludge drying beds from within the Sterecycle site.

6. View of the Sterecycle site frontage onto Beddington Lane.
7. View from within the Sterecycle site north over the existing site access road.

8. View from within the Sterecycle site west towards the existing recycling centre.

9. View from the edge of the Sterecycle site south towards the Cappagh site. The pylons act as major visual detractors in this semi-industrial view.
10. View through palisade fence of the Cappagh land. Buildings on Beddington Lane (B272) provide visual containment.

11. View from the edge of Pongo Park northwards over the Cappagh site.

Sterecycle Clean Recycling Technology

Development of a Resource Recovery and Energy Facility, Beddington Lane (B272), Beddington, Croydon

Landscape and Visual Assessment Report

1. Views from Beddington Lane (B272) at the junction with the existing site access road.

2. Views from Beddington Lane (B272) adjacent to Metrobus London Transport and northwards.

3. View from London Road.

4. View from housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road.

5. View from A237 adjacent to Beddington Corner area.

6. View from house on Goat Road / A237 Carshalton Road junction.

4. View from housing on the edge of the western boundary of Beddington Farmlands between the A237 London Road.

Sterecycle BRREF
Landscape and Visual Assessment
Fig 6.1 - Key Views

Date 10.02.2011 Rev. 0
APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY


A2 An assessment is made of the character and value of the existing landscape/townscape within and around the Sites. The effects of the proposed development are then considered. This process involves an appraisal of the existing landscape/townscape and views, and a visualisation of the degree to which the proposed development would change them.

A3 The impacts of the proposed waste facility developments are then compared to the existing baseline conditions, and consideration given to reduce impacts through design changes or mitigation measures to reduce any anticipated adverse effects. The development has been assessed with and without the proposals for the Wandle Valley Country Park.

A4 The baseline assessment involved site visits by duly qualified and experienced Landscape Architects on 24th January 2011. Prior to the site visits, use was also made of aerial photographs, mapping and information derived from planning documents. In addition an approximate zone of visual envelope for the scheme was produced using baseline mapping and verified through the site visit.

A5 Photographs were taken using a 55 mm length lens using the correct focal length of 50 mm approximating to a normal human field of view. In some cases this field of view was extended by joining together a number of separate images to create a panorama.

Assessing Significance

A6 Any assessment of landscape/townscape and visual effects contains an element of subjectivity. However, the assessment should still be undertaken in a logical, consistent and rigorous manner, based on experience and judgement, and in accordance with published guidelines. The following text describes methods used to arrive at the necessary judgements in the specific context of townscape/landscape and visual impacts.

A7 The landscape/townscape matters and visual effects have been assessed in terms of the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and also the sensitivity of the resource affected. The magnitude of change generally decreases with distance from the source, until a point is reached where there is no discernible change. Residential properties are taken to be of high sensitivity in general, though this can vary with the degree of openness of their view (for example, a property

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where only one floor window faces the development in question would be less sensitive than one where the entire frontage was exposed at both ground and first floor levels).

A8 For landscape/townscape, those areas which carry a landscape/townscape quality designation, or which are otherwise attractive or unspoilt generally are more sensitive, while those which are less attractive or already affected by significant visual detractors are generally less sensitive. The magnitude of change can be categorised as follows.

- **No change**: no change in the view;
- **Negligible**: change is discernible but no real significance;
- **Slight**: perceptible change in existing views or to existing landscape/townscape;
- **Moderate**: obvious change in existing views or to existing landscape/townscape;
- **Substantial**: dominant change in existing views or to existing landscape/townscape.

A9 Sensitivity has then to be taken into account in the assessment, such that a lesser magnitude of change would be needed to create a substantial effect on a sensitive receptor than on one of lesser sensitivity.

A10 The landscape Institute’s GLVIA consider ‘landscape value’ as a measure to be assessed in association with landscape character, in order to avoid consideration only of how scenically attractive an area may be, and thus to avoid undervaluing areas of strong character but little scenic beauty. The guidelines define landscape value partly in terms of quality, but also in terms of tranquillity, wildness, cultural associations or matters relating to conservation. The following definitions are used to describe the Landscape/townscape value.

- **Very high value**: national park, area of outstanding natural beauty or conservation area standard, value based on condition, scenic quality, and sense of place or cultural associations;
- **High value**: attractive landscape/townscape, usually with varied topography and few visual detractors (for landscape) or varied and (usually) historic elements (for townscape), with a strong sense of place. Likely to be of local or regional importance and may be covered by county or local designations;
- **Moderate value**: pleasant landscape/townscape with a positive character and few detractors but with no distinctive qualities;
- **Low value**: unattractive or degraded landscape/townscape, often in poor condition and affected by visual detractors.

A11 In accordance with the GLVIA, an assessment has also been made of the ability of the landscape/townscape to accommodate change, which is referred to as the landscape/townscape capacity or sensitivity. This is defined in the GLVIA as “…the extent to which a landscape is able to accommodate change (due to a particular development of land use change) without unacceptable adverse effects on its character.”
A12 This is noted in the GLVIA as varying with:

- existing land use;
- the pattern and scale of the landscape
- visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of the visual receptors;
- the scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape;
- the value placed on the landscape.

A13 A landscape/townscape of high sensitivity will be one with a low ability to accommodate change and vice versa.

A14 A useful concept in considering the potential visual effects of any proposal is that of the visual envelope. This is the area from within which the development would be visible. Any visual effects must therefore be contained within this area, and land falling outside it need not be considered in terms of visual effects.

A15 The following terms are used in the description of views and visibility:

- **No view**: no views of the proposed development;
- **Glimpse**: a fleeting or distant view of the proposed development, often in the context of wider views of the landscape/townscape;
- **Partial**: a clear view of part of the proposed development only;
- **Filtered**: views of the proposed development which are partially screened, usually by intervening vegetation (the degree of filtering may change with the seasons);
- **Open**: a clear view to the proposed development.

A16 Taking all of the above into account, the assessment will then categorise landscape/townscape and visual effects in terms of their significance. The effects may be either adverse or beneficial and are categorised as follows.

- **Substantial adverse**: the proposed development would be damaging to a valued landscape/townscape, and would be at considerable variance with its scale, pattern and landform. It would be visually intrusive and disrupt valued views, and would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of characteristic features and elements.
- **Moderate adverse**: the proposed development would be damaging to the landscape/townscape and would be moderately at variance with its scale, pattern and landform. It would be visually intrusive and disrupt valued views, and would partly degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of characteristic features and elements.
- **Slight or Minor adverse**: The proposed development would cause some damage to the landscape/townscape and would be slightly at variance with its scale, pattern and landform. It would cause some visual intrusion and would have no significant effects on characteristic elements or features.
• **Slight or Minor beneficial**: the proposed development would cause some improvement to an existing landscape/townscape, which would slightly reinforce and/or enhance one or more of its integrity, character, value and amenity of its characteristic features and elements.

• **Moderate beneficial**: the proposed development would cause improvement to an existing landscape/townscape by reinforcing and/or enhancing its integrity, character, value and amenity of its characteristic features and elements, including replacements of some existing detractors.

• **Substantial beneficial**: the proposed development would considerably improve an existing/townscape by substantially reinforcing and/or enhancing its overall integrity, character, value and amenity, including replacement of most detractors.

• **Negligible or neutral**: This is an additional criteria resulting in no impact which has been added for this specific project.

A17  Visual effects can be recognised as follows:

• **Substantial adverse**: the proposed development would be damaging to a valued view from a sensitive receptor, and would constitute a discordant, dominant element of the view.

• **Moderate adverse**: the proposed development would cause some damage to a view with some value, and would be an obvious element in the view.

• **Minor or Slight adverse**: the proposed development would cause limited damage to a view, but would still be a noticeable element within the view, or greater damage to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.

• **Negligible or Neutral**: the proposed development would not significantly change the view and/or would not be readily discernible.

• **Minor or Slight beneficial**: the proposed development would cause some limited improvement to a view, but would nevertheless be noticeable within it.

• **Moderate beneficial**: the proposed development would be an improvement to a view and would be an obvious interesting and attractive element within it.

• **Substantial beneficial**: the proposed development would be an improvement, largely replacing an existing low quality view with a new, interesting and attractive landscape/townscape that is a dominant element within the view.
APPENDIX B

PLANNING POLICY

The London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2004, Published February 2008

B1 The London Plan Policy 7.17 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

Strategic Objective SO9

A. The Mayor strongly supports the current extent of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), its extension in appropriate circumstances and its protection from development having an adverse impact on the openness of MOL.

B. The strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL.

C. To designate land as MOL boroughs need to establish that the land meets at least one of the following criteria:

a. it contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area.

b. it includes open-air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London.

c. it contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value.

d. it forms part of a Green Chain or a link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria.

B2 The policy guidance of PPG 2 on Green Belts applies equally to Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). It has an important role to play as part of London's multi-functional green infrastructure and the Mayor is keen to see improvements in its overall quality and accessibility. Such improvements are likely to help human health, biodiversity and quality of life. Development that involves the loss of MOL in return for the creation of new open space elsewhere will not be considered appropriate. Appropriate development should be limited to small scale structures to support outdoor open space uses and minimise any adverse impact on the open character of MOL. Green chains are important to London's open space network, recreation and biodiversity. They consist of footpaths and the open spaces that they link, which are accessible to the public. The open spaces and links within a Green Chain should be designated as MOL due to their London wide importance.
Strategic Objective 17

B3 To promote a safe and attractive living environment for all that supports social interaction and cohesion by improving the design and layout of buildings and public spaces throughout the Borough.

Strategic Objective 19

B4 To identify physical, social and community, and green infrastructure provision requirements to support development and where, when, by whom and what means these will be delivered.

Policies

Policy 3D.8 Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure

B5 The Mayor will work with strategic partners to protect, promote and improve access to London’s network of open spaces, to realise the current and potential value of open space to communities, and to protect the many benefits of open space, including those associated with health, sport and recreation, children’s play, regeneration, the economy, culture, biodiversity and the environment.

B6 Policies in DPDs should treat the open space network as an integrated system that provides a “green infrastructure” containing many uses and performing a wide range of functions, such as the East London Green Grid. All developments will be expected to incorporate appropriate elements of open space that make a positive contribution to and are integrated with the wider network.

Policy 3D.9 Green Belt

B7 The Mayor will and boroughs should maintain the protection of London’s green belt and proposals for alterations to green belt boundaries should be considered through the DPD process in accordance with government guidance in PPG2. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the green belt, and such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Mayor will and boroughs should encourage positive uses for the green belt that realise the potential to improve the environmental and landscape quality and accessibility of the land while meeting its statutory purposes.

Policy 3D.10 Metropolitan Open Land

B8 The Mayor will and boroughs should maintain the protection of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) from inappropriate development. Any alterations to the boundary of MOL should be undertaken by boroughs through the DPD process, in consultation
with the Mayor and adjoining authorities. Land designated as MOL should satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

• land that contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area
• land that includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London
• land that contains features or landscapes of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at a metropolitan or national level
• land that forms part of a Green Chain and meets one of the above criteria.

B9 Policies should include a presumption against inappropriate development of MOL and give the same level of protection as the green belt. Essential facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they do not have an adverse impact on the openness of MOL.

Policy 3D.11 Open space provision in DPDs

B10 In addition to the policy in 3D.8, DPD policies should:

• identify and support Regional and Metropolitan Park opportunities;
• identify broad areas of public open space deficiency and priorities, for addressing them on the basis of audits carried out as part of an open space strategy, and using the open space hierarchy set out in Table 3D.1 as a starting point;
• ensure that future open space needs are considered in planning policies for Opportunity Areas and other areas of growth and change in their area encourage functional and physical linkages within the network of open spaces and to the wider public realm;
• improve accessibility for all throughout the network and create new links based on local and strategic need;
• identify, promote and protect Green Corridors and Green Chains and include appropriate designations and policies for the protection of local open spaces that are of value, or have the potential to be of value, to local communities.

Policy 3D.12 Open space strategies

B11 Boroughs should, in consultation with local communities, the Mayor and other partners, produce open space strategies to protect, create and enhance all types of open space in their area. Such strategies should include approaches for the positive management of open space where appropriate to prevent or remedy degradation or enhance the beneficial use of it for the community. To assist with such strategies the Mayor has produced a Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies.

B12 Boroughs should undertake audits of existing open space and assessments of need in their area, considering both the qualitative and the quantitative elements of open space, wildlife sites, sports and recreational facilities, as part of an open space
strategy and in accordance with the guidance given in PPG1718. In doing so, they should have regard to the cross-borough nature and use of many open spaces in London.

Policy 3D.14 Biodiversity and nature conservation

B13 The Mayor will work with partners to ensure a proactive approach to the protection, promotion and management of biodiversity in support of the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy.

B14 The planning of new development and regeneration should have regard to nature conservation and biodiversity, and opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gains for conservation through the form and design of development. Where appropriate, measures may include creating, enhancing and managing wildlife habitat and natural landscape and improving access to nature. Priority for both should be given to sites which assist in achieving the targets in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and sites within or near to areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites.

B15 DPDs should identify these deficiency areas and the opportunities for addressing them. Boroughs, in reviewing DPDs and in considering proposals for development should accord the highest protection to internationally designated and proposed sites (SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites), and to nationally designated sites (SSSIs) in accordance with government guidance and the Habitat Regulations, 199422.

B16 The Mayor will identify Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMIs), which, in addition to internationally and nationally designated sites, includes land of strategic importance for nature conservation and biodiversity across London. Boroughs should give strong protection to these sites in their DPDs. Boroughs should use the procedures adopted by the Mayor in his Biodiversity Strategy to identify sites of Borough or Local Importance for Nature Conservation and should accord them a level of protection commensurate with their borough or local significance.

B17 The Mayor will and boroughs should resist development that would have a significant adverse impact on the population or conservation status of protected species or priority species identified in the UK, London and borough Biodiversity Action Plans. Appropriate policies for their protection and enhancement and to achieve the targets set out in BAPs, should be included in DPDs.

B18 Where development is proposed which would affect a site of importance for nature conservation or important species, the approach should be to seek to avoid adverse impact on the species or nature conservation value of the site, and if that is not possible, to minimise such impact and seek mitigation of any residual impacts. Where, exceptionally, development is to be permitted because the reasons for it are judged to outweigh significant harm to nature conservation, appropriate compensation should be sought.
Policy 3D.15 Trees and woodland

B19 The Mayor will and boroughs should protect, maintain and enhance trees and woodland in support of the London Tree and Woodland Framework

Policy 3D.16 Geological conservation

B20 The Mayor will work with partners to ensure the protection and promotion of geodiversity. Boroughs should:

- accord the highest protection to nationally designated sites (SSSIs) in accordance with Government guidance,
- give strong protection in their DPDs to Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) which, in addition to nationally designated sites, includes sites of strategic importance for geodiversity across London,
- identify additional sites which are of value at the local level and should accord them a level of protection commensurate with their local significance.

Policy 3D.17 London’s countryside and the urban fringe

B21 The Mayor will work with strategic partners to improve access to the countryside and the quality of landscape in the urban fringe. The Mayor will and boroughs should support sub-regional and cross-borough boundary urban fringe management through the Green Arc28 partnership initiatives and explore the potential for taking forward the concept of the Community Forests within London.

B22 DPD policies should:

- support the Green Arc vision of creating and protecting an extensive, attractive and valued recreational landscape of well-connected and accessible countryside around London for people and wildlife,
- include proposals to improve access to open land and to conserve and enhance biodiversity value,
- encourage appropriate attractive destinations for visitors and the local population

Sutton Core Planning Strategy Adopted December 2009
Core Policy PMP5 – Wandle Valley

B23 The Council will promote sustainable regeneration within the Wandle Valley Corridor in partnership with the neighbouring boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton and Croydon and with public agencies, external investors, local business and community groups by implementing proposals for:
• Managing the re-use of land/premises within established industrial areas to provide mixed-use development for employment, housing and other purposes;

• Improving accessibility by sustainable modes, including improved access to stations, improved bus services, options for extending London Tramlink, and improved/extended cycle and walking networks along the Wandle Trail;

• Protecting and enhancing the River Wandle and adjoining open spaces, other green corridors and green chains for wildlife and biodiversity;

• Creating the Wandle Valley Regional Park (as shown on the Proposals Map), including improved provision for recreation and leisure along the River Wandle and within adjoining parks and open spaces;

• Safeguarding identified sand and gravel reserves against sterilisation; and

• Undertaking restoration of mineral extraction/landfill tipping sites and environmental/landscape improvements within the public realm.

**Core Policy PMP9 – The Open Spaces Network**

B24 The Council will seek to safeguard and enhance the Borough’s open space network, including: land within the Metropolitan Green Belt; Metropolitan Open Land; parks and other open spaces comprising the Wandle Valley Regional Park; and local open space (as shown on the Proposals Map). The Council will ensure that the overall Borough-wide target of public open space with unrestricted access of 2.88ha per 1,000 populations is maintained. The Council will designate the former Orchard Hill Hospital and BIBRA sites as major developed sites’ (as shown on the Proposals Map). The Council will work with its partners and adjoining authorities to support the enhancement and management of the urban fringe through ‘Green Arc’ initiatives. The Council will seek to safeguard and enhance the Metropolitan Green Chains within the Borough (as shown on the Proposals Map) and will improve public access to and through them. The Council will ensure that proposals for new housing development make provision for children’s play and informal recreation. The Council will protect and seek to enhance the Borough’s biodiversity through supporting measures, which meet the objectives of the London and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and will seek to improve access to nature. The Council will protect and promote Locally Important Geological Sites within the Borough (as shown on the Proposals Map).

**Core Policy BP12 – Good Urban Design and Heritage**

B25 The Council will seek to ensure that development:

• Respects the local context and distinctive local character;

• Creates safe and attractive building layouts;

• Creates vibrant, attractive and accessible public spaces;

• Creates easier movement; • Creates a sense of welcome by promoting legible places through the development of landmark buildings, public realm features, landscape and public art; and
• Creates buildings that are adaptable and promote the best in sustainable
design and construction.

B26 The Council will designate and seek to preserve or enhance heritage areas in the
Borough, designated as Conservation Areas or Areas of Special Local Character (as
shown on the Proposals Map), and the statutory and local list of buildings.
The Council will protect the Borough’s archaeological heritage.


Policy G/OE2 - Metropolitan Open Land

B27 The Council will safeguard the permanence and integrity of Metropolitan Open Land
(as defined on the Proposals Map and set out in Appendix 1, Schedule 1.1) within the
Borough which contributes significantly to the physical structure of London or
which contains features of strategic value for leisure, sport, landscape, nature
conservation or heritage.

Policy G/OE3 - Green Chains

B28 The Council will safeguard and seek to enhance Metropolitan Green Chains (as
defined on the Proposals Map and set out in Appendix 1, Schedule 1.1) within the
Borough and improve public access for walking and cycling.

Policy G/OE4 - Local Open Space

B29 The Council will seek to safeguard and enhance the quality of local open space within
the Borough (as defined on the Proposals Map and set out in Appendix 1, Schedule
1.2) and will seek to improve public access and rectify deficiencies in existing
provision.

Policy G/OE5 - Nature Conservation and Important Landscape Features

B30 The Council will seek to enhance the ecology and ‘green’ character of the borough
by safeguarding areas of nature conservation value, protecting existing valuable trees
and hedgerows and supporting appropriate proposals for new habitat.

Policy OE1 - Acceptable Uses in the Green Belt

B31 The Council considers that development within the Green Belt is inappropriate
unless it is for:

I. The use of agriculture and forestry; or,
II. The provision of essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for
cemeteries, or for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the
Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land
within it.

Policy OE2 - Green Belt Positive Objectives

B32 The Council will see to enhance the positive objectives of the Metropolitan Green
Belt within the Borough.
Reasoned Justification for Policy OE2

The Council considers that the use of land within the Green Belt should have a positive role to play in fulfilling a number of objectives by:

• providing opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
• providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation near urban areas;
• retaining attractive landscapes near to where people live;
• improving damaged and derelict land around towns;
• securing nature conservation interest; and,
• retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

Policy OE13 – Development Adjacent to the Green Belt

B33 Proposals for new development adjacent to the Green Belt should seek to secure a significant enhancement to the landscape character of the urban edge through a combination of perimeter planting and good design which respects the character of its surroundings. The Council will resist proposals which have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

Policy OE15 – Enhancement of Metropolitan Open Land

B34 The Council will seek to enhance open air sports, recreational arts and cultural opportunities together with the landscape, nature conservation and general amenity value of Metropolitan Open Land.

Policy OE17 – Protection and Enhancement of Green Chains

B35 The Council will strongly resist any development that would have an adverse impact on the open character of an identified green chain and will encourage the provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages within and between sites.

Policy OE21 – Creation of Wandle Valley Country Park

B36 The Council will safeguard land within the Beddington/Mitcham areas for the development of the Wandle Valley Country Park (as shown on the Proposals Map) and will seek to secure;

I. Improved sports, recreation and leisure facilities within the park;
II. Protection and enhancement of features of nature conservation value within the park;
III. Landscape Improvements and structure planting within the park, together with the provision of landscaped entrance around the park and appropriate car and cycle parking facilities;
IV. Improvements to the network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways within the park, including the provision of safe and convenient crossing facilities to and from the park;
V. A heritage centre, amphitheatre and environmental arts centre in Beddington Park;
VI. A sustainable living centre and wildlife hospital on land east of London Road; and,
VII. An archaeological centre on Beddington Farmlands

Policy OE23 - Development Affecting Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

B37 Development proposals adjacent to, or otherwise likely to have an adverse impact on Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation must have regard to the nature conservation value of such sites. Development will be refused unless it can be shown that there will be no significant damaging impact on the nature conservation value of the SINC concerned.

Policy OE24 - Access to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

B38 The Council will seek to ensure through the control of development, negotiation with landowners and through its own actions that the public has access, including where possible access for disabled people, to sites of importance for nature conservation except where such access would be detrimental to the nature conservation value of the site.

Policy OE28 - Habitat Creation and Enhancement

B39 The Council will actively support proposals which would increase the number, size, and diversity of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and will give priority to the identification and creation of new sites within areas of nature conservation deficiency.

Policy OE31 - Green Corridors

B40 The Council will seek to protect Green Corridors (as shown on the Proposals Map and as set out in Appendix 1, Schedule 1.3) from development which would adversely affect their value for nature conservation, amenity and leisure purposes, landscape or access.

Policy BE1 - Good Urban Design

B41 Proposals for new development and redevelopment should incorporate the basic elements of good urban design and complement good quality elements of the existing urban fabric and enhance those areas where the urban fabric needs to be improved. The Council considers that good urban design should:
I. Respect or reinforce the character and identity of the area, including the buildings and their context;
II. Avoid isolated developments which do not integrate well into the surrounding area;
III. Create attractive well functioning spaces within the site;
IV. Provide a responsive architecture which is relevant to a human scale
V. Respond to contextual features, including views and landscape;
VI. Contribute to a safe and secure urban environment;
VII. Include relevant new or otherwise appropriate technological innovations to ensure sustainability;
VIII. Be accessible to all members of the community.

**Policy BE11 - Protection of Borough Views**

B42 The Council will resist development which will obstruct or detract from identified significant local views within the Borough....

.....8. From Beddington Farmlands of Central Croydon.

Development proposals will not be permitted if, by reason of height and impact of proposed buildings or structures, they are deemed to adversely affect or damage these identified views.

**Urban Landscape**

Landscape within the urban area is an important part of sustainable development and forms an integral and essential component of the Borough’s townscape characteristics. It is thus important to ensure that any new development is successfully integrated within the street scene and complements and enhances existing landscape features.

**Policy BE12 - Landscape Provision in New Development**

B43 Development proposals shall make suitable provision for high quality hard and soft landscape treatment of space around buildings, designed as an integral part of the development scheme. Landscape proposals will need to ensure that new development is integrated into, positively contributes to or enhances the street scene and the local character of the area and adjoining land. Proposals which make no or inadequate landscape provision will be refused.