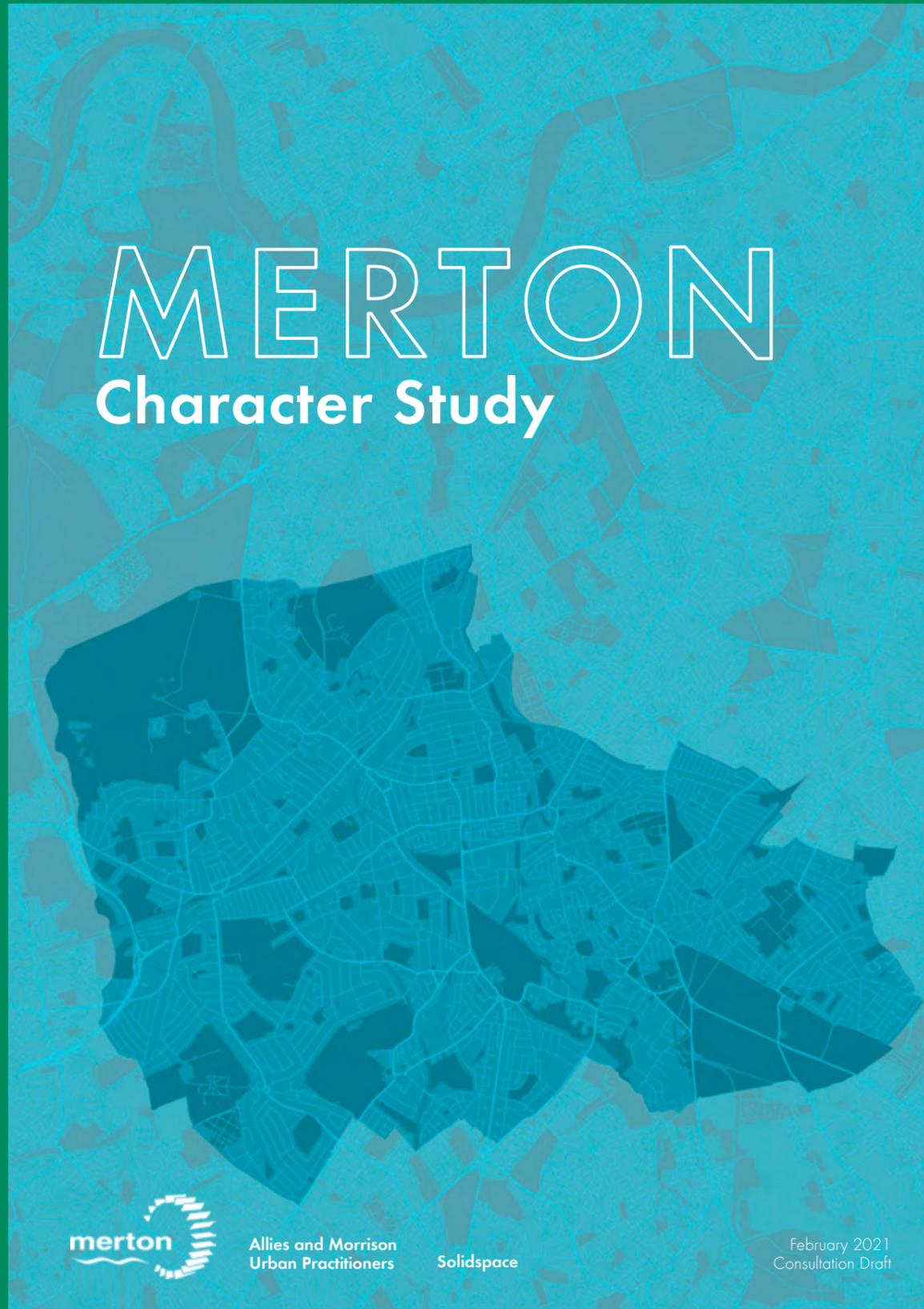


please leave feedback on [consult.merton.gov.uk](https://consult.merton.gov.uk) by 23 March



# WHY DO WE NEED A CHARACTER STUDY?

Character is more than buildings and spaces. It is social, historical and physical - and the interplay between these factors.

All of these factors should direct future growth in the borough.



# LAYERS OF CHARACTER: PEOPLE

The Character Study has been informed by over 400 residents that took part in the engagement events.

Page 33

## 01. Online public survey

reviewing perceived neighbourhood boundaries and what residents valued in their neighbourhoods

416 responses

## 02. Community groups survey

gaining insight from a representative cross section of groups to inform the study.

## 03. Stakeholder workshop

focussed workshops with residents and local groups to discuss specific neighbourhoods

c. 30 attendees

## 04. Public consultation

please leave feedback on the draft Character Study SPD by 23rd March



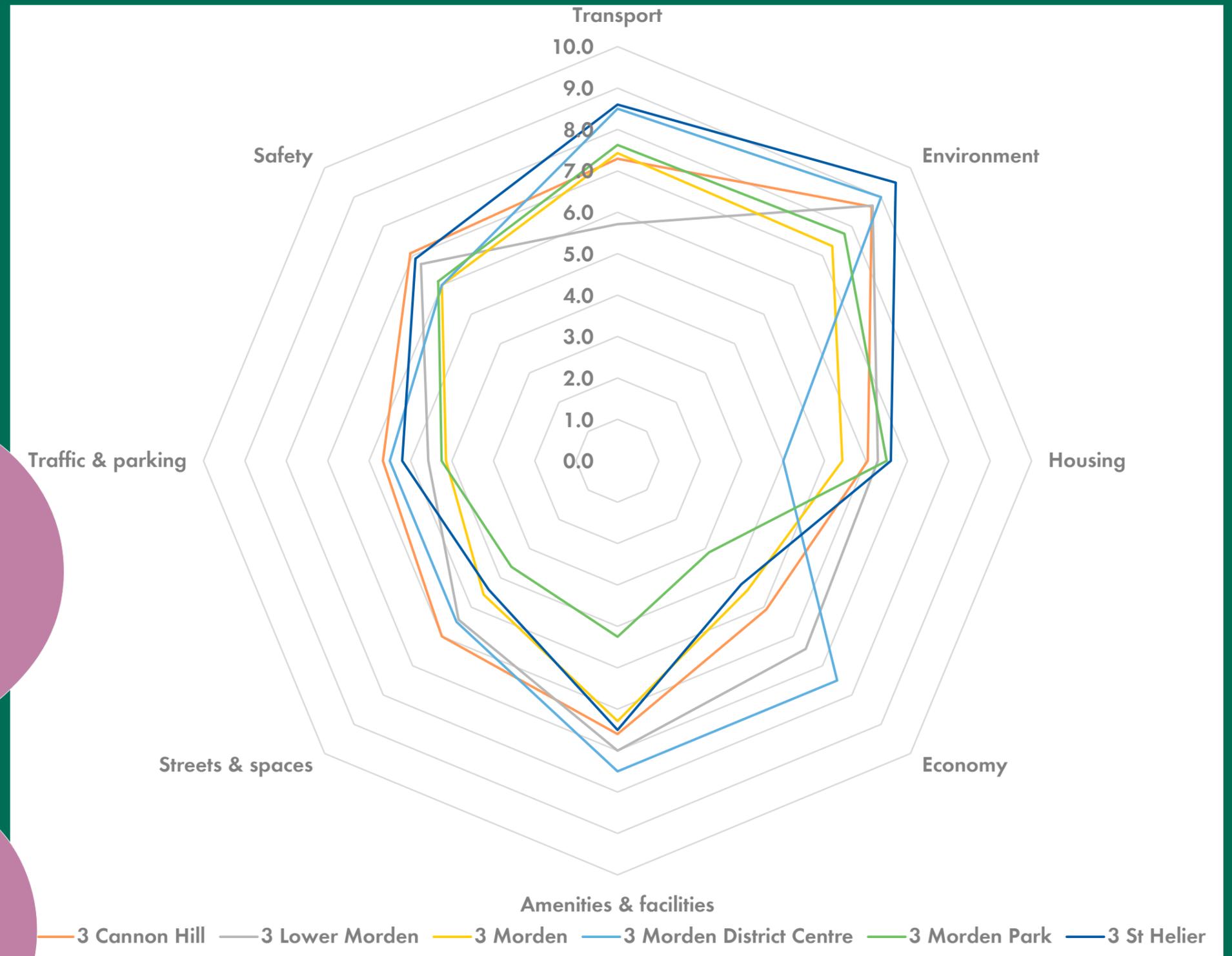


# MORDEN

Over 400 Merton residents responded to rate their neighbourhood

"The Morden area is made special by the beautiful parks, lots of street trees, low density 2-storey suburban houses and relatively good connectivity"

The green spaces and cultural diversity make this area great"



# DISTINCTIVENESS AND OPPORTUNITIES: MORDEN

Informed by analysis and conversations with residents



## MORDEN

### Distinctiveness - heritage and key features

- Focus is the town centre - historic commercial centre developed following northern line extension in 1920s
- Beyond town centre, predominantly residential in character - low rise suburban housing with more open 'garden city' style layout to the south, and more formal denser grid layout to west.
- Apartment blocks west of town centre
- Punctuated by major movement corridors - London Road, Morden Hall Road and Aberconway Road
- Civic centre and Baitul Futuh mosque are key local landmarks
- Morden Hall Park open space with historic buildings and features scattered to south
- Excellent transport links and open spaces

### key issues / opportunities

- Transition between densifying town centre and suburban residential could be improved, currently quite abrupt
- Poor relationship between Morden town centre and Morden Hall Park - hidden access points, busy major roads with few crossings - opportunity to improve this
- Improve pedestrian and cycling environment in centre
- Opportunity to reimagine Morden as a young and vibrant town centre through context-led mixed use development
- Barrier of railway line along park's edge to east - explore opportunities to improve connections across



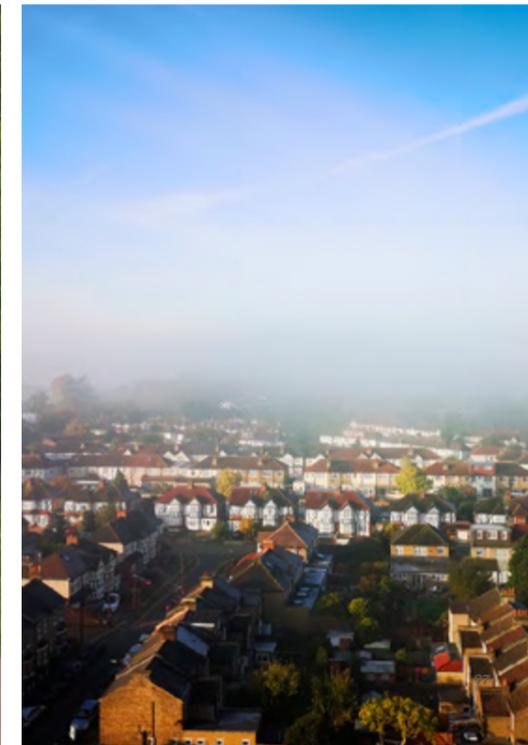
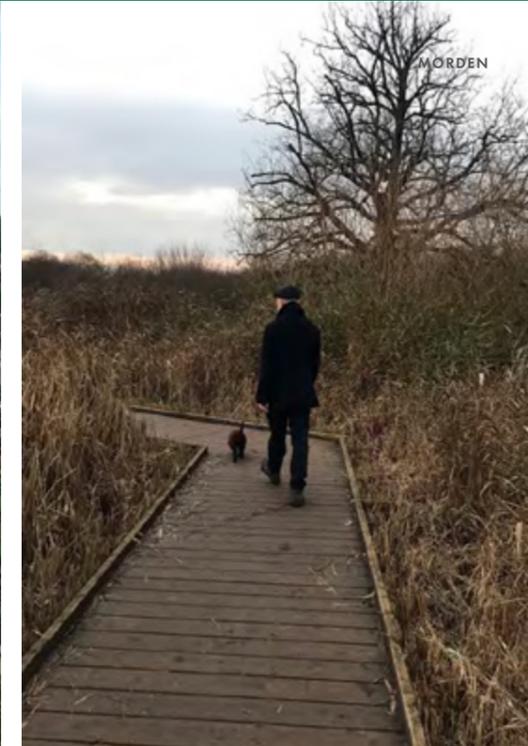
## ST HELIER

### Distinctiveness - heritage and key features

- Focus on St Helier Avenue which cuts through the middle of the area
- London County Council (LCC) interwar planned residential estate designed with garden city characteristics - cul-de-sac comprised of red brick terraces around greens a key feature
- Large areas of open space for recreation and green verges / hedges enhancing quality and green character of area
- Shopping parades with flats above
- Morden Recreation Ground to south

### key issues / opportunities

- Loss of front gardens to hard standing and replacement of hedges - opportunity to reinstate these
- St Helier Avenue is a busy car dominated route - opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle environment along this wide route
- Public realm improvements at shopping parades
- Explore infill opportunities for cottage style housing, potentially on corner plots



# STRATEGIC GROWTH THEMES: MORDEN

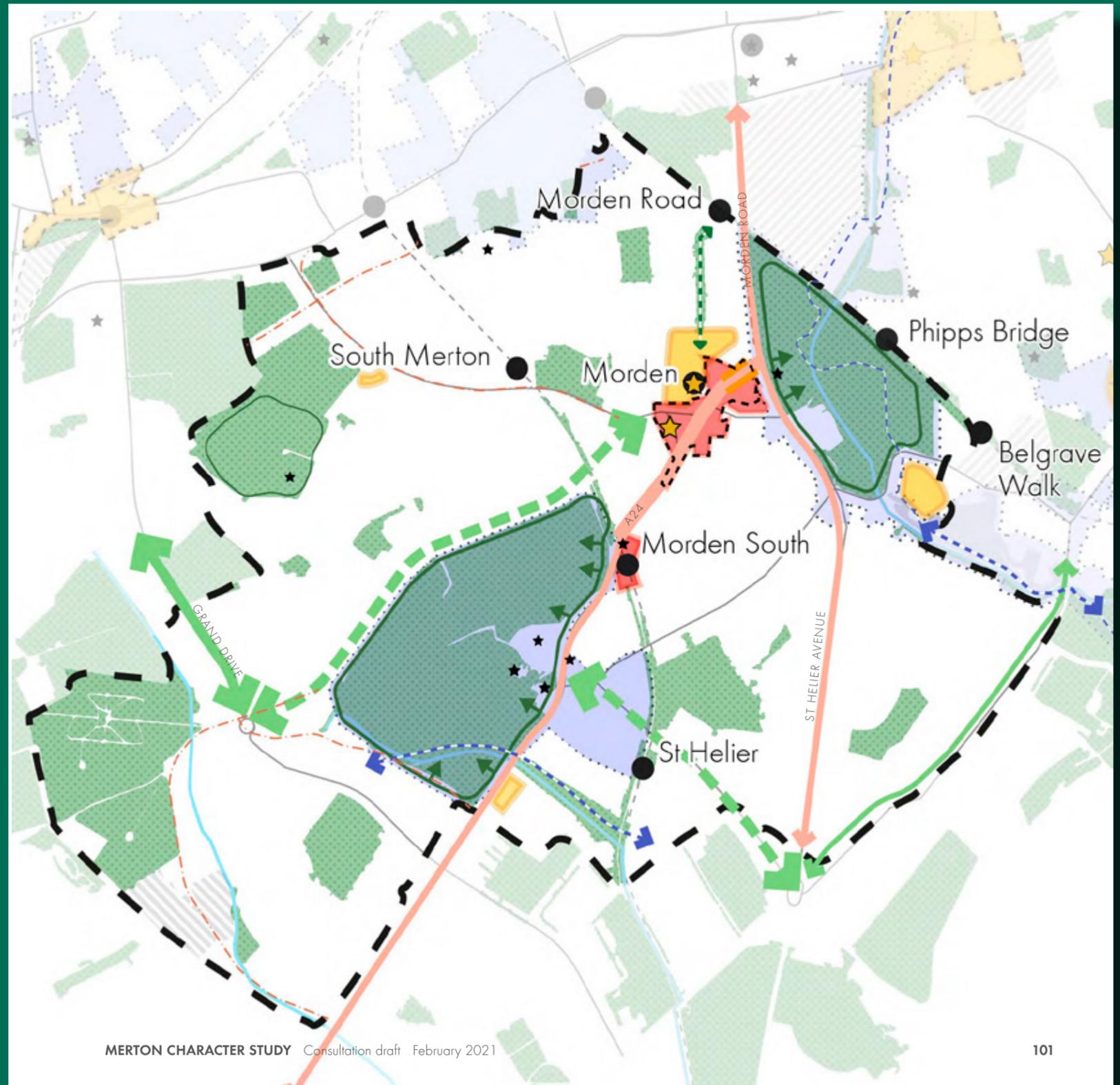
Potential growth opportunities that enhance character

**proposals / opportunities:**

- Reimagine character
- Re-examine character
- Repair character
- ↔ Corridor Intensification (major)
- ↔ Corridor Intensification (minor)
- Enhance parade
- ↔ Strategic greening and improvements
- ↔ Strategic improvements
- ↔ Active travel improvements
- ↔ Local green link improvements
- ↗ Improving connection to park

**baseplan:**

- Area Boundary
- Town Centre Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Green Space
- Locally Significant Industrial Sites
- Strategic Industrial Locations
- Train/Tube/Tram Station
- ★ Strategic Landmark
- ★ Local Landmark
- Road
- Rail
- Waterway
- ↔ Waterway Link



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARACTER LED GROWTH

Identifies growth opportunities, small and large

## URBAN TERRACE

Examples of context-led growth:



1



2



3



4



5

Examples of contextual, mid-rise intensification in low-scale / residential areas



Quicks Road, South Wimbledon. Image © Google Street View



Stage House, Wimbledon. Image © Google Street View



Flora Court, Croydon. Image © Pitman Tozer Architects



King Edward's Road, Hackney. Image © Hawkins / Brown



Essex Close, Waltham Forest. Image © Bell Phillips Architects



Great Eastern Buildings, Hackney. Image © Karakusevic Carson Architects

Examples of context-led, tall intensification in town centre locations



Mizen Heights, Colliers Wood. Image © Future Merton



Wellington House, Wimbledon. Image © MATT architecture



Porters Edge, Southwark © Maccreanor Lavington



# SMALL SITES TOOLKIT

CONSULTATION DRAFT

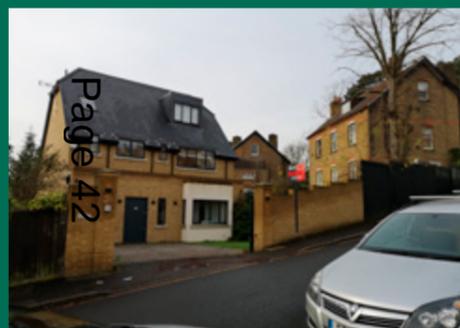
# WHY SMALL SITES?

Small sites have always largely contributed to housing delivery in the borough.



# SMALL SITES ARE ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

The quality of small sites are mixed. With some guidance we aim to encourage more development on small sites to a higher quality.



# FOUR TYPES OF SITE

## 1. EXISTING BUILDINGS



Fig. 3.5 - Salt Yard, Wimbledon, by Franis Philips Architects  
(Left: Before, Right: After)

## 2. ROOFTOPS

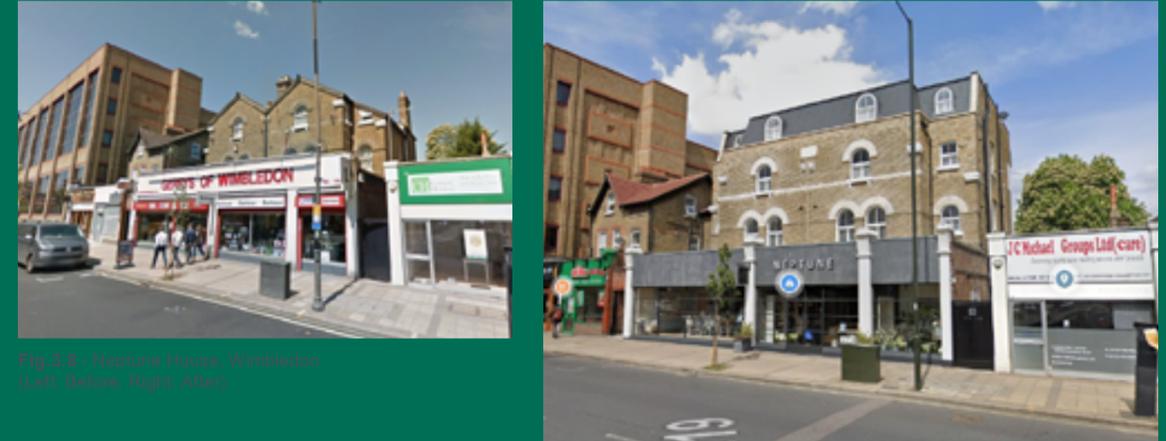


Fig. 3.8 - Neptune House, Wimbledon  
(Left: Before, Right: After)

## 3. STREET-FACING



Fig. 3.12 - Lucien Road, Wimbledon by Harp & Harp Architects  
(Credit: Harp & Harp Architects)  
(Left: Before, Right: After)

## 4. BACKLAND



Fig. 3.16 - Graveney Mews, Tooling by MMA Architects  
(Credit: MMA Architects)  
(Left: Before, Right: After)

# THE TOOLKIT

We've developed three tools to assist in the design process to encourage applicants to think holistically about design and deliver better quality planning applications.

## 1. Design Guidance

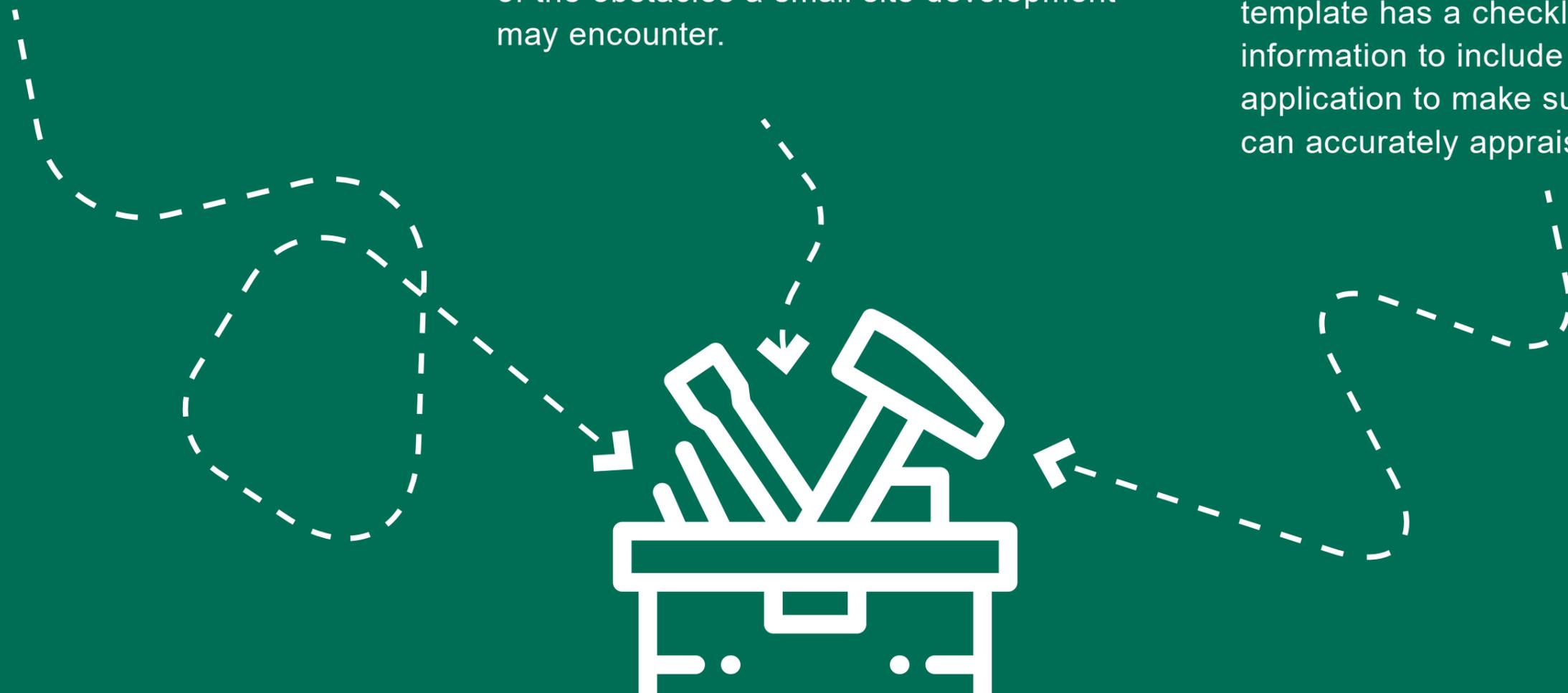
A sequence of questions and recommendations to guide you when designing your project. Merton Council will use these guidance notes to appraise your project during the planning process.

## 2. Case Studies

A selection of relevant case studies illustrating exemplar developments that have been delivered on small sites. Using thoughtful solutions the designers of these projects have successfully overcome some of the obstacles a small site development may encounter.

## 3. Design and Access Statement Template

As part of your planning application, you should produce a Design and Access Statement (DAS). A DAS will help explain and justify your proposal. The template has a checklist of necessary information to include with your application to make sure Merton Council can accurately appraise you project.



# 1. DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Design Guidance revolves around 4 key objectives that encourage applicants to look beyond their site boundaries.



## MADE IN MERTON

- Respond to the vision of the borough set out in Merton's Local Plan.
- Respond to local character and needs set out in Merton's Borough Character Study.
- Encourage active travel.



## FIT FOR PURPOSE

- Create homes that are innovative and built to a high standard.
- Provide rooms that are functional, adequately sized and adaptable.
- Ensure internal and external spaces maintain safety and privacy.



## PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

- Promote health and wellbeing by creating spaces that encourage interactions between neighbours.
- Provide a mix of housing types and uses that meet the needs of present and future residents.
- Ensure that the amenity of neighbours is protected.



## ECONOMICAL & SUSTAINABLE

- Make use of robust materials that retain their aesthetic quality.
- Challenge rising fuel costs, flood risk and climate change with good design.
- Encourage biodiversity by integrating landscape and

# 'TYPICAL' GUIDANCE

The guidance provides suggestions that will guide the built quality of future development...

## How does your proposal respond to the language of the street?

5.1.17 A positive pedestrian experience on the street creates successful places. Your proposal should respond to existing rhythms and street frontages to strengthen the street scene. Street elevations and 3D perspectives can illustrate your design.

5.1.18 Where there is a strong rhythmic street composition, proposals should seek to continue this. This can be achieved through visual breaks and considered use of material. Conjoining buildings is strongly discouraged as it creates a terracing effect and breaks the rhythm of the street elevation. Visual breaks must be used to maintain the rhythm of the street. See Fig.5.7.

5.1.19 The frontage of your development must not exceed the frontage of its neighbour and/or host property. Moving beyond this line will only be acceptable if:

- The character of the street is such that the frontage of buildings step and there is no clear street frontage.
- It can be justified that it provides a positive interface with the street.

See Fig.5.8.

5.1.20 Maximise active street frontages to improve natural surveillance and create a sense of community. Large areas of inactive street frontage, such as doors to bin stores, garage doors and blank façades must be kept to a minimum. See chapter 8, 'Better Streets', for more details.

5.1.21 Contemporary proposals with good architectural design can make a positive contribution on the character of the street. A considered material pallet, articulated massing and good attention to detail can all contribute to a successful building.



Fig.5.7 - Maintaining rhythm  
Conjoining buildings can create long street frontages and have a negative impact on the character of the street.

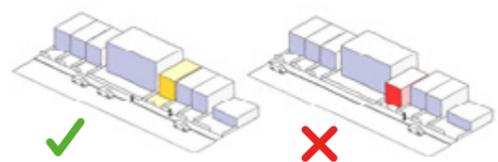


Fig.5.8 - Building front alignment  
If the building front exceeds the frontage of its neighbour, it could have a negative impact on the character of the street.



Fig.5.9 - A contemporary 3 storey building continues the roof forms of its neighbours. (Housing in Mitcham by Groves Natcheva Architects)

5.1.22 Front gardens and boundary structures are important elements that define the character of a street. New boundary structures should respect the prevailing style along the street and protect any original boundary structures and trees.

5.1.23 Homes in many areas of the Borough are characterised by defensible entrance spaces such as front gardens, hedges, boundary walls and fences. If your proposal sits in such a neighbourhood, it must reflect this feature. This will give new residents a sense of security and privacy.

5.1.24 Consider planting trees and shrubs to improve air quality and the appearance your proposal. Planting may contribute to the wellbeing of residents by protecting garden spaces from busy roads.

5.1.25 Whether it's the front door to a new home, or the entrance into a shared lobby, the approach to the front door, house name and/or number must be clearly readable from the street. This can be achieved by clearly differentiating the entrance into the building from other openings in the facade.

5.1.26 Where mechanical plant equipment is required on the roof of the development, proposals should have uncluttered roof profiles and equipment should not be seen from the street level. There are many ways to hide these such as setting the plant equipment away from the edge of the roof, or integrating the plant with the design of the building. Flues should also be located in locations that create minimal impact to the elevation. Good forward planning for plant requirements should be done early in the design process. See Fig.5.11.



Fig.5.10 - The entrance of these villa blocks protrude towards the street and stand higher than the concrete banding marking each level. This creates a welcoming entrance that is distinct from other openings in the building fabric. (Finsbury Park Villas, Haringey by Sergison Bates Architects) [Credit: Stefan Müller]

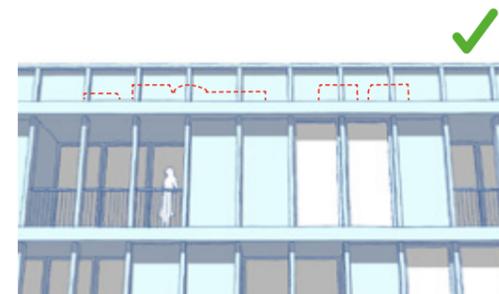
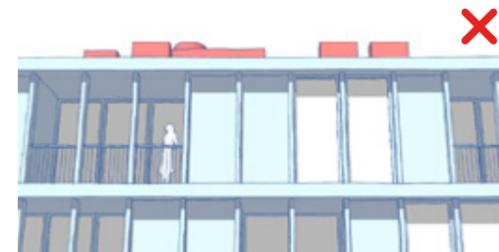


Fig.5.11 - Plant and services on roof. Seeing plant equipment from street level can have a negative impact on the character of the street.

# 'NON-TYPICAL' GUIDANCE

... And provides guidance to encourage building communities and improving emotional well-being.

## Have you considered accommodating a mix of uses and users in your project?

- 7.1.19 Subdividing existing residential properties to create two or more new dwellings especially in areas dominated by family housing. Consider the mix of tenure your project will bring to the neighbourhood and if this complements existing provisions.
- 7.1.20 Proposals for conversions must include re-provision of at least one family-sized unit where an existing family unit has been lost due to the proposal.
- 7.1.21 Proposals for change of use or conversion of an existing building must ensure that any loss or impact on utility, community facilities, infrastructure, or emergency services is fully mitigated. This requirement is normally satisfied by making alternative provisions on-site or elsewhere or by demonstrating that the current uses are no longer required by the community.
- 7.1.22 Sites in locations with commercial and business uses must be carefully designed to preserve the privacy of new residents. Proposals on these sites may also retain employment uses. Mixed-use developments have the opportunity to create a unique atmosphere in the variety of uses accommodated on the site.
- 7.1.23 Multigenerational living (homes consisting of at least two adult generations living under the same roof) is a growing trend across London and in Merton. If you are considering expanding your household or providing for this need you must consider how your proposal can be adapted to changing needs at various life stages. You can future-proof your development by including capped-off services for future use and maximising non-loadbearing walls to allow internal rearrangements.
- 7.1.24 Homes in Merton must meet the needs of our community including people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility, wheelchair users and older people. Please consider incorporating the [M4\(2\) optional requirements](#) of the Building Regulations.



Fig.7.32 - This scheme introduces a doctor's surgery and shop units at ground floor level with residences above. (Croxted Road, Southwark by Panter Hudspith Architects)  
[Credit: Panter Hudspith Architects]

## How do your common areas foster community?

- 7.1.11 Communal space for circulation such as front entrance lobbies, stairs and corridors must provide a safe, functional and comfortable setting for chance encounters. Well-designed communal spaces can create a sense of pride in where a person lives.
- 7.1.12 Shared circulation should have views out with adequate ventilation and natural light. Designs based on double-loaded corridors are often poorly lit and ventilated. This makes for unwelcoming spaces that are avoided or neglected by residents.
- 7.1.13 Shared circulation spaces should be finished in robust materials in order to create desirable common spaces for residents.
- 7.1.14 Where you are proposing housing in conjunction with other uses in the building, give careful consideration to the separation of circulations routes. Your proposal must demonstrate how circulation routes will allow residents to maintain privacy from other users in the building.
- 7.1.15 Each dwelling should have its own separate entrance externally or from a shared circulation route. In the case of Houses of Multiple Occupation you must provide secure private spaces for each resident, separate and independent from shared spaces and circulation routes.
- 7.1.16 Communal amenity spaces should be orientated to maximise the amount of daylight and sunlight and have a strong landscape approach.
- 7.1.17 Proposals with shared access routes must demonstrate that they will allow easy and safe access for pedestrians. You should include design features that will encourage neighbours to interact positively. Consider including public seating areas, communal gardens and play areas where possible.
- 7.1.18 We encourage shared access to communal spaces across different tenures. You should avoid segregating entrances for different tenures.



Fig.7.30 - A naturally lit lobby that is generously spaced has a view through from the front door to the communal courtyard. (Kings Crescent Estate, Hackney by Karakusevic Carson Architects)  
[Credit: Karakusevic Carson Architects]

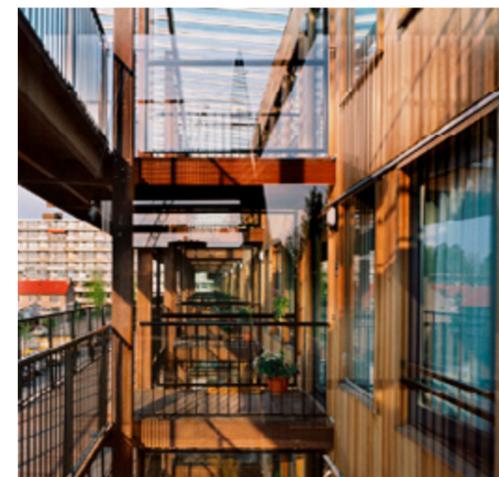


Fig.7.31 - Bridged gallery access provides semi public front garden and better privacy and daylight. (Koekoekspreeuw, Amersfoort by KCAP)  
[Credit: KCAP]

# 2. CASE STUDIES

A collection of exemplar projects provide a catalogue of good quality projects to learn from.

## STREET-FACING - CORNER INFILL

### LUCIEN ROAD

The site of this 3-storey 2-bed house sits at the end of a terrace and that was occupied by a detached single storey garage belonging to the neighbouring property. The new house shares a party wall with 32 Mount Road and references features of the 1920/30's houses in the area,



**Project Information**  
 Architect: Harp & Harp Ltd  
 Client: Private  
 Borough: Merton  
 Address: 43 Lucien Road, London, SW19 8EL  
 Completion date: February 2020  
 Current PTAL: 3

**Site Characteristics**  
 Site area net (sqm): 173  
 Site area gross (sqm): 173  
 Parking numbers: 1

**Building Characteristics**  
 Dwelling mix: 1-bed: 0  
 2-bed: 1  
 3-bed: 0  
 4-bed: 0  
 Total: 1  
 Average GIA per dwelling (sqm): 89  
 Typical number of dwellings per core: N/A  
 Typical number of dwellings per floor per core: N/A  
 Maximum height above ground level (m): 8  
 Maximum height above Ordnance Datum (m):  
 Maximum number of storeys: 3

**Tenure**  
 Affordable: 0%      PRS: 0%  
 Social rent: 0%      Market sale: 100%

**Planning use split**  
 Non-residential use: None  
 GEA (sqm): -  
 GIA (sqm): 90  
 NIA (sqm): -

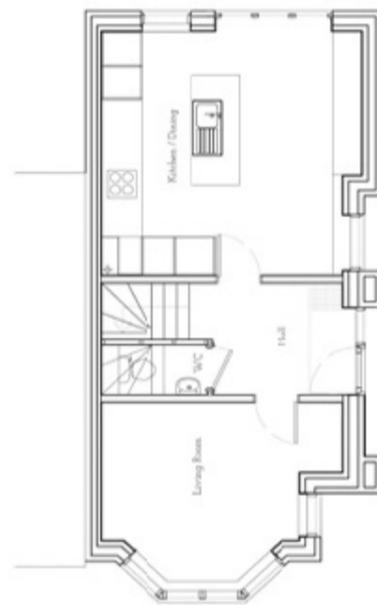


Fig.9.59 (Top)  
Site plan.

Fig.9.60 (Bottom)  
Ground floor plan.

This scheme is exemplary of the following Good Design Principles:

#### MADE IN MERTON

The house sits within an established context and was designed to reference both the 1930s arts and crafts terrace to which it is attached and the more formal Edwardian houses opposite whilst also being unmistakably contemporary. Details such as the white and black tiles around the entrance echo the tiled paths of its neighbours and break up the brick and render and create visual interest appropriate for the prominent corner site.

#### MADE IN MERTON

Clear steps have also been taken to make the new house address its corner position and frontage to both Mount and Lucien Road. The front door to the new house is placed on the side (Lucien Road) frontage to allow the building to turn the corner and properly address its context as well as creating an efficient layout internally.

#### PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The buildings massing breaks down to create a smaller more domestically scaled gable end with a large amount of fenestration giving the gable an active frontage to Lucien Road. The appropriately scaled massing avoids an overbearing appearance on the prominent corner site.



Fig.9.61 - View of house in context.  
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]



Fig.9.62 - Decorative tiles referencing Victorian floor tiles.  
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]



Fig.9.63 - Well-lit kitchen and dining space leading out to garden.  
[Credit: Harp & Harp Architects]

# 3. DAS STATEMENT

A template that asks the right questions to better appraise future planning submissions.



# consult.merton.gov.uk

please complete the feedback survey and leave any comments by **23 March**.

do you agree / disagree with what has been mentioned?

do you have any suggestions?

Page 50

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Consultations - Merton Council' page. The URL is <https://consult.merton.gov.uk/kms/dmart.aspx?LoggingIn=tempVar...>. The page features the Merton Council logo and a navigation menu with links to Home, Council and democracy, Get Involved, and Consultations. The main heading is 'Current and planned consultations'. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Type in here to search' and a 'Search' button. A link for 'Advanced Search' is also present. A pagination bar shows 'Pages 1 2' and 'Total results: 36'. The first consultation listed is 'Merton Character Study', which started on 09 Feb 2021 and ends on 23 Mar 2021. The text under this heading explains the purpose of the study: 'Why do we want your views? This study has been prepared to assist the Council, community groups, stakeholders and others with an interest in the borough to better understand Merton's distinctive local character. It is an update to the Borough Character Study undertaken between 2011 and 2015. The Character Study will support preparation of the Council's New Local Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and be used to inform a character and 'place-based' approach to managing growth in the borough. Similarly, neighbourhood forums will be able to draw on this study to assist with the preparation of their neighbourhood plans. The report will also inform decisions made by Council officers and should be an important tool used by developers and others investing in Merton to ensure proposals positively respond to the local context. You can read the document [here](#).' A 'More' button is located below the text. The second consultation listed is 'Merton Small Sites Toolkit', which also started on 09 Feb 2021 and ends on 23 Mar 2021. On the right side of the page, there is a 'Consultations' sidebar with links to 'Current and planned consultations', 'Completed Consultations and Feedback', and 'Register for Alerts'.