

# Morden Sub Area Neighbourhoods



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DRAFT

**18** Morden Park

# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

## Origins and General Character

Morden Park is a quiet leafy residential neighbourhood to the south of Morden town centre, it is bounded to the east by the railway and extends west across the open space of Morden Park. The area comprises of medium intensity 1930s suburban development, an enclave of distinct inter war garden city layouts, green open space, a college campus and a post 1945 council estate. Much of the area is included in the Upper Morden Conservation Area, there is a concentration of statutory and locally listed buildings located within this area.

The name Morden is derived from the Saxon word 'Mordune', which described the low ridge between the River Wandle Valley and East Pyle Brook, which runs through the south of Morden Park. In medieval times this area was wooded, and its development influenced by the presence of a Roman Road known as 'Stane Street' that linked London with Chichester, which roughly followed the alignment of the Epsom Road. It was along this road that the small agricultural community of Upper Morden came into being. There were a number of cottages, since demolished

to make way for the dual carriageway, St Lawrence's Church and a coaching Inn at the site now occupied by the 'Harvester'. St. Lawrence Church still stands today but is thought to have replaced a much older church. It is listed as Grade I, built in 1636 funded by Richard Garth. Described as of 'Carolean Gothic style' it is built of brick and has a square tower and stone tracery windows, some of which are claimed to have originated from the earlier church. The surrounding countryside would have been put to agricultural use. Church Farm Cottage, a weatherboarded building dating back to c1813, survives from the old Church Farm, records of which date back to the 14th Century.

After the dissolution of the monasteries Richard Garth acquired the Morden Estate in 1554. It remained in the ownership of the Garth family until around 1872 when the estate was sold to the Hatfeild family. In 1719 a school was built on the estate under the instruction of Elizabeth Garth, the building still survives today and is known as the Old School House. It is located on the corner of Central Road and Green Lane. Later extensions to the School House include Hall Cottage and the Parish Hall which was used for meetings of the Vestry, and

from 1894, the Morden Parish Council. In the 1700s part of the manor lands were leased to London merchant and distiller John Ewart who built Morden Park House in 1770, it is a fine villa, the surrounding land was used as both parkland and for agricultural purposes, there was at one time a deer park. In 1945 Morden Park was purchased from the Hatfeild family by Merton and Morden Urban District Council, and the house and 90 acres were preserved as public open space, the house is now used as council offices.

The greatest change to the area was to be in 1926, when the southern extension of the Northern Line was opened, vastly improving links between Morden and London. At this time, 25 acres of land located between the railway line, Central Road and Epsom, was leased by the London County Council to the trustees of the Douglas Haig Memorial Homes. The land was used to build houses and flats for the accommodation of ex-servicemen and the widows and families of ex-servicemen. The estate was built to the designs of Mr Grey Wornum RIBA. A section of this land, at the junction of Central Road and Green Lane, was used by the Housing Association for Officers' Families, founded by Mrs. Willie James



St. Lawrence Church

# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

in 1916 to provide homes for married disabled ex-officers of the three services, their widows and dependants. Sir Lawrence Weaver, KBE, was associated with both projects, and the two estates are included within the Upper Morden Conservation Area. Streets of typical 1930s terraced and semi-detached suburban houses appeared on streets adjacent to the Haig Home estates. The two Haig homes estate are a distinctive feature in the neighbourhood, arranged in courtyards set in landscaped surroundings comprising grassed area with trees and shrubs in a Garden suburb style. Although there are similarities between the two estates, both have their individual distinguishing features.

Later additions to the neighbourhood neighbourhood include Hatfeild Mead built post war, South Thames College Merton Campus the buildings of which were refurbished in 2009, the Travelodge adjacent Morden Park built during the 1980s. The public realm throughout area has abundant landscape features which enhance the streetscape for example established tree planting and grass verges.

## Built Form

Apart from the large open space of Morden Park and the historic buildings dotted around it such as Morden Park house. Much of the area is characterised by the distinctive 'Arts and Crafts' cottage style of its housing and typical 1930s terraced houses.

The junction of London Road and Central Road is defined by the variety of historic buildings which serve as fragments of the former village, buildings dating from the 1770s through to the inter war period. These include a Gothic style church, weather boarded cottage and red brick inter war school building. To the south-east of the neighbourhood there are relatively close grain avenues of semi-detached and terraced 1930s suburban houses. To the north east of the neighbourhood there is the distinct layout of the Haig Homes which are arranged around open courtyards. Adjacent to these is a post 1945 housing estate which has a defined symmetrical layout. Large blocks are concentrated around the eastern boundary of Morden Park such as the historic remnants of Upper Morden village and the South Thames College Campus. Prevalent materials in use in this area are red and brown brick. They are recurring motifs on the 1930s



# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

suburban dwellings such as double gabled bays, painted render, red tile hangings and timber beam decoration. The Haig Homes are in a palette of reddish-brown brick and yellow brick with recurring motifs which include, small paned sash windows, panelled and glazed front doors, decorative fanlights over front doors, and canopies over doors.

## Land Use

The predominant land uses are residential to the east and public open space to the west. Morden Park and Morden Park sports ground cover a vast area of this neighbourhood. Land use along the edge of the park fronting onto the London Road is more diverse ranging from education to hotel for example South Thames College, St. Lawrence Church, Morden Primary school, the Harvester pub and Morden Travelodge. The rest of the neighbourhood comprises residential a large proportion of which is under the management of Haig Homes.

## Movement

London Road is a Transport for London route and is the busiest traffic corridor in the neighbourhood running from north to south. It is a dual carriageway carries a large volume of traffic through the area, at peak times it

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can become congested. Traffic moves at speed along this route which makes pedestrian crossing difficult outside of designated crossing points. Cycle facilities along this route are undergoing improvement to establish it as a feeder route into the CS Superhighway. Both Central Road and Green Lane are London distributor roads which feed into London Road. The neighbourhood has some localised movement issues at peak or during event times at the Baitul Futuh Mosque just outside the boundary of the neighbourhood.

Accessibility into Morden Park is limited for both walkers and cyclists; there is a desire to create better routes into and across the park. In addition there are plans to link the park to green spaces in the wider area. A number of bus routes operate along London Road and Green Lane. Morden South train station at the north of the area is on the Wimbledon loop, with plans to improve the frequency of services to this station.

## Open Space

Morden Park is large metropolitan open space, it consists of more formal parkland around Morden Park House and the sports ground to the north. The park consists of extensive parkland

with mature trees grouped in copses and a continuous belt around the edges. A distinctive 40ft mound within the park situated within woodland is believed to be a Romano-British burial mound. A railed area is the site of an old velodrome. Park contains playing fields, paddling pool, cricket pitch, pitch and putt golf course. The park is managed with an emphasis on ecology, including the provision of woodland, meadows and scrub habitats. Among amenities added to the public park is a red brick open air theatre with hedged enclosure.

Adjacent to Holne Chase is the George Hill Open Space which is used to keep beehives and also George Hill East and George Hill West allotments. The allotments comprises of a long strip of well maintained garden plots.

Throughout the area, particularly in the Haig Homes developments there are well maintained courtyards of green space which contribute to the open grain character of the area.



Morden Park House

# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

## Neighbourhood Analysis



### General Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Major movement corridor
- Minor movement corridor
- Major barrier
- Major Gateway
- Minor Gateway
- Minor neighbourhood node
- Topography gradient

### Positive Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Local landmark
- Key view to green space
- Panoramic view
- Green space
- Linear grass verge
- Waterspace

### Negative Neighbourhood Characteristics

- MOP** Public realm enhancement needed

# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

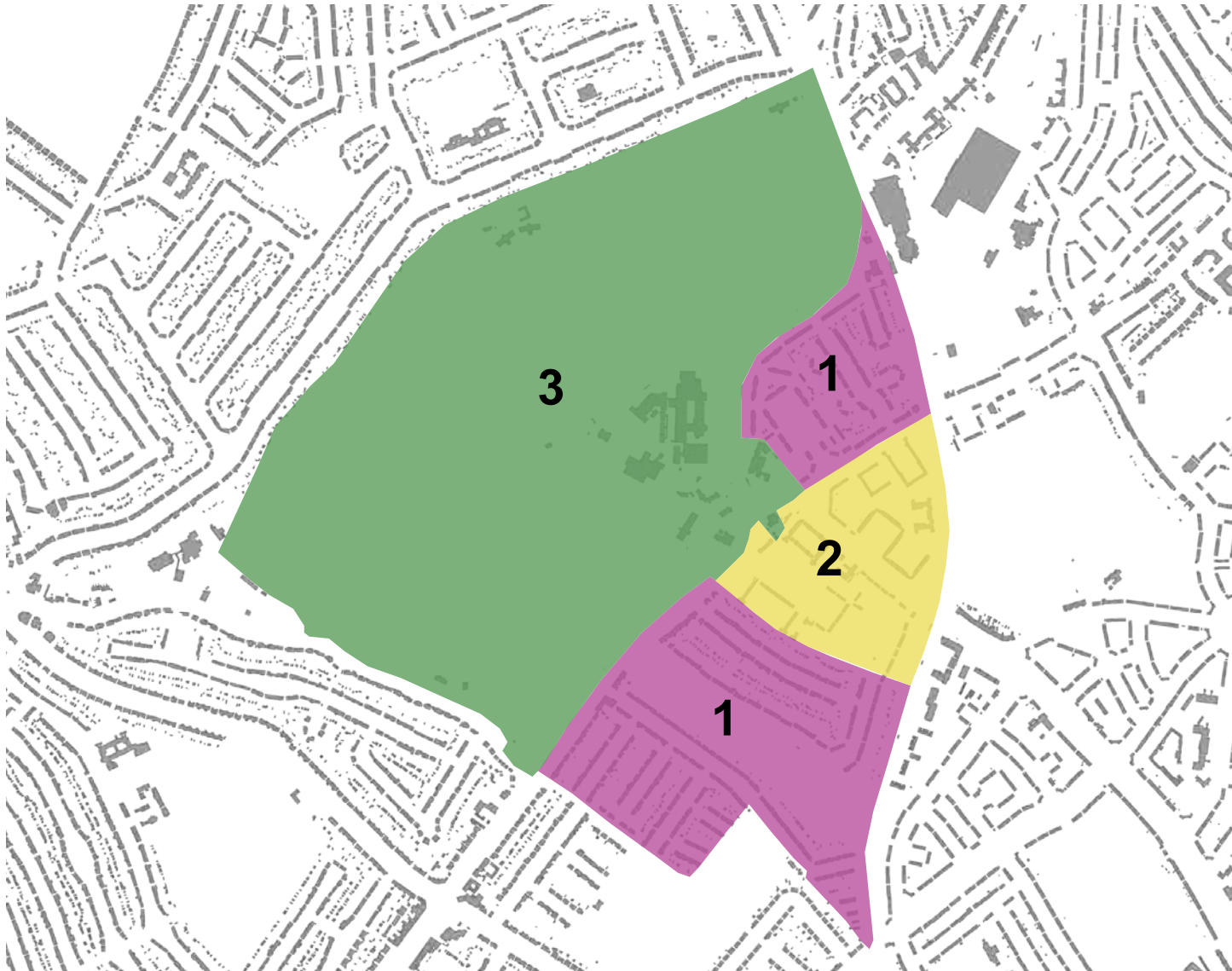
## Heritage Assets

**Heritage map to be added at later stage**

# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

## Character Areas

- 1 Rosedene Avenue
- 2 Green Lane
- 3 Morden Park

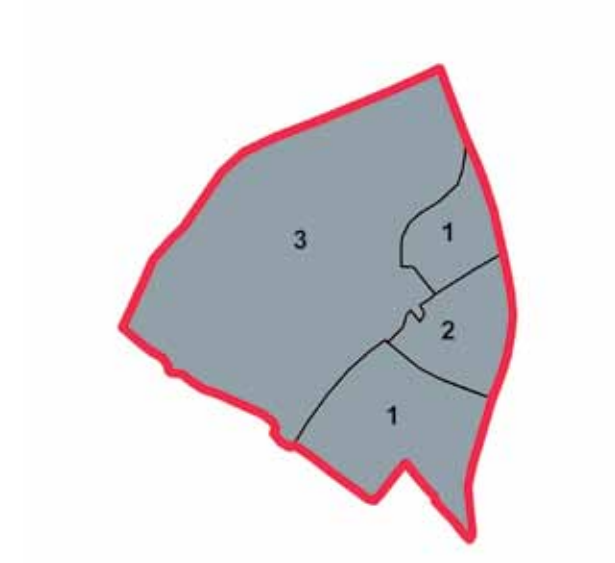






# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

## Character Area Assessment, Issues and Guidance



# 1 Rosedene Avenue Character Area

## Assessment

### Character Statement

This area comprises of 2 pockets of predominantly 1930s residential housing, it contains a series of tree lined avenues of 2 storey terraced and semi-detached houses. This is a quiet residential area which is enhanced by street trees, grass verges and front garden planting. Houses are typically set back from street behind front garden with boundary wall or fence however there has been widespread loss of boundary and or paving over of front garden.

The architectural motifs evident are typical of 1930s housing with repetition throughout the area however materials or features can vary along each street. Materials used are red or brown brick on ground floor with painted render or pebbledash on upper floor; some have additional timber decoration or red tile hangings across gabled bay. Features include double bow or square bay windows, gabled front porch or canopy porch. Along streets such as Rougemount Avenue there is a change in topography where the houses are aligned along an incline with steps up to houses on one side and a sloped driveway on the other. Some pairs along this street share a wide sweeping gabled protrusion which is typically pebble dashed or painted.

Along Rutland Drive there are also oriel window on upper floors. Prevalent features on streets off Rutland Drive are double square gabled bays with red tile hangings or timber beam decoration across gable.

A later development from the 1950s is the 2 storey and 5 storey blocks which comprise the Hatfeild Mead development. Blocks are set in green space and arranged around central green space with 2 storey blocks facing onto Central Road and large blocks set back from London Road. 2 storey blocks are set back behind hedges; these are red brick at ground floor with white render band and brown brick on upper floor with red brick quoins and decoration around windows. Roofs are hipped with tall chimney stack at centre of front elevation. The 5 storey blocks are in similar materials and have additional features such as protruding bays, balconies and keystone decoration on windows. The top floor of these blocks is set back in a mansard roof.

Included are the George Hill Open Space and the George Hill Allotments which have established trees and planting which contribute to the leafy characteristic of this area.

### Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

**Identity**  
**Urban Layout**  
**Movement**  
**Architectural Interest**  
**Built Form**  
**Public Realm**  
**Trees**  
**Landscape**  
**Features**  
**Economic Vitality**

Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **80**

**Area type:**  
Area of established high quality



Rutland Drive

# 1 Rosedene Avenue Character Area

## Issues & Guidance



Rosedene Avenue



Hartland Avenue



Hatfeild Mead



Rutland Drive



Rutland Drive



Torrington Way

### Issues

#### Public Realm:

- Loss of front boundary and or front garden.

#### Built Form:

- Loss of original detail such as windows, doors and painting over of brickwork.
- Inappropriate addition of porches which break the architectural rhythm of terraces.
- Changes to front elevation of roofs such as the addition roof lights.

### Guidance

#### Public Realm:

- Retain existing front boundaries and landscape.

#### Built Form:

- All alterations to properties to be informed by the original detailing and materials.
- Roof lights should where possible be located on the rear elevation of houses.

## 2 Green Lane Character Area

### Assessment

#### Character Statement

This area is focused on 2 housing estates built during the 1930s, it is characterised by the 'Arts & Crafts' cottage style of its housing. Arranged in courtyards set in landscaped surroundings comprising grassed areas with trees and shrubs, they give the area an almost rural character. It forms part of the Upper Morden Conservation Area, much of the housing is locally listed, in addition there is a locally listed primary school and the Grade II listed Old School House.

The Haig Homes development falls into 3 distinctive styles.

- 1) 2 storey reddish-brown brick terraced cottages set around courtyards, some with the upper floor within the relatively steep pitch tiled or pantiled roofs,
  - 2) Larger 3 storey block of flat and/or maisonettes in courtyard formation, set within mature landscaping,
  - 3) 2 storey reddish-brown brick, semi-detached and terraced houses located to the south of Green Lane.
- Features on the Haig Homes include small paned sash windows, decorative fanlights over entrance doors, elaborate flat gauged arches over feature windows, boldly projecting bay windows at ground floor level, project-

ing canopies of varying design over the front doors, original front doors reminiscent of the cottage vernacular some are flush and others have small paned glazed panels.

The Housing Association's Homes for Officers' Families estate comprises of 2 storey, yellow brick, semi-detached and terraced houses set around courtyards, and 3 storey blocks of flats and maisonettes, the upper floors within mansard roofs, arranged around communal courtyard gardens, all set amidst mature landscape. Distinctive features include, small paned sash windows, panelled and glazed front doors, decorative fanlights over front doors, projecting timber door canopies of varying designs, prominent staircase enclosures incorporating balconies and a mature landscape setting located behind the brick wall enclosing the site.

Overall it is a distinctive enclave of well maintained and preserved buildings arranged in a Garden suburb style. The green spaces around the buildings are well maintained and complemented by well established tree and shrub planting throughout the area. More detailed analysis of the architectural features in the developments is included in Upper Morden Conservation Area appraisal.

#### Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

- Identity**
- Urban Layout**
- Movement**
- Architectural Interest**
- Built Form**
- Public Realm**
- Trees**
- Landscape**
- Features**
- Economic Vitality**

Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **90**

**Area type:**  
Area of established high quality



The Precincts

# 2 Green Lane Character Area

## Issues & Guidance



Alexandra Square off Central Road



Douglas Square, Green Lane



The Sanctuary, Green Lane



The Precincts, Green Lane



Legion Court, Green Lane



Douglas Sq



Alexandra Sq

### Guidance

#### Public Realm:

- Ensure the conservation of the high quality public realm treatments and landscaped spaces in this area.

#### Built Form:

- Ensure the conservation of materials and detailing of these distinctive 'Arts and Craft' style houses and flats.
- Ensure the continued preservation of this distinctive area.

# 3 Morden Park Character Area

## Assessment

### Character Statement

This area is predominantly public open space west of London Road, the widening of which fragmented the Morden Park estate from the rest of the locality. Buildings are informally arranged, occupy a variety of plots sizes and there is space between plots. A number of buildings with diverse uses straddle the boundary of the park set back from London Road; these include remnants of the old village such as the church and more recent additions such as a college. This area is also part of the Upper Morden Conservation Area. There is a concentration of statutory and locally listed buildings in this area.

The park consists of formal parkland around Morden Park House and the open sports ground to the north. It is an extensive park with mature trees grouped in copses and a continuous belt around the edges which enclose the space. It has an undulating topography comprising of formal green space, playing fields and a variety of habitats such as woodland, meadows and scrub. A distinctive 40ft mound situated within woodland is believed to be a Romano-British burial mound. A focal point is the Morden Park House, this is a Grade II\* listed fine 1770 house. It is 2

storey building with 5 window front in brown brick with parapet. It has arched windows at ground floor with yellow brick arched recesses. It has a grand entrance which is a Venetian doorway with demi columns and pediment. In close proximity is Morden Park Pool which is a stark structure of concrete, glazing and cladding, it is an awkwardly sited addition to the park, its appearance and positioning detracts from the area.

Off London Road is the focal point of the former village, St Lawrence Church which is a statutory listed building, it is of a late Gothic style, and is made of red brick, with stone quoins and dressings. Features include "Gothic" style windows with stone tracery, a tower with castellated parapet and clock face. There is a lych gate at the entrance to the church, it is constructed of oak, the hipped and gabled roof is covered with timber shingles. Close to the Lych gate are ornate tombs and tombstones which are statutorily listed. At the junction a cluster of buildings provide strong historical cues and retain the former village characteristics such as the much altered locally listed Manor House in red stock brick with some painted brickwork and tile hangings. Also locally listed is the

### Criteria Based Assessment

The qualitative attributes of each character area are assessed by using the following criteria:

- Identity**
- Urban Layout**
- Movement**
- Architectural Interest**
- Built Form**
- Public Realm**
- Trees**
- Landscape Features**
- Economic Vitality**

Each criteria point is scored according to whether the contribution made to the character area is good, moderate or poor. The total score defines whether an area is an:

- 1) Area of established high quality
- 2) Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- 3) Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity

Character area assessment sheets with breakdown of score and neighbourhood assessment map are located at the end of this chapter.

Overall Score: **65**

**Area type:**  
Area with scope to reinforce the existing character



Woodland habitat around the edge of the parkland

# 3 Morden Park Character Area

## Assessment

Church Farm Cottage, a weatherboarded building dating back to c1813, survives from the old Church Farm; it is a small cottage of two storeys. It has a hipped roof of slate, with red hip and ridge tiles. Across London Road are two buildings which contribute to the former village cluster. The primary school is a low red brick school from the inter war period. Its most notable feature is a cupola with weathervane and bell, which can be seen from several of the surrounding streets. It occupies a prominent position within a conservation area. The Old School House is a brown brick 18th century school cottage located on the corner of Central Road and Green Lane. Later extensions to the School House include Hall Cottage and the Parish Hall.

Further along London Road is the George Inn currently a 'Harvester', a much altered coach house rebuilt in the 1930s which still retains some of its original symmetry and includes features such as Doric columns, pilasters and multi-paned timber sash windows. Adjacent to which is a the 1980s built Travelodge which is a basic red/brown brick structure set back from the road behind carparking forecourt, it does not make a architectural contribution to the area.

The parking forecourt and the visual clutter of the signage bears more of a relationship with the road and detract from the area.

In proximity to the church is the locally listed Merton Campus of South Thames College which was refurbished in 2009 and has a contemporary façade onto London Road. It is a series of rectangular 3 storey blocks in yellow brick with cladding, glazing and a central raised circular entrance. It backs onto the park, is set back from the road behind established trees and a well defined boundary. The 3 storey building creates a sense of enclosure around the dual carriageway in proximity to the former village and as such makes a positive contribution along London Road

This area has some rural characteristics, it comprises a large expanse of attractive open space, with an informal arrangement of historic and contemporary buildings to the east. The eastern boundary of the park is dominated by London Road which diminishes pedestrian accessibility to the park. To the north of the park, access points are poorly defined, boundary treatments have deteriorated and tennis courts are derelict.



View of Morden Park House Road behind the undulating topography of the pitch and putt course



Churchyard of St. Lawrence Church

# 3 Morden Park Character Area

## Issues & Guidance



Morden Park House



View of Morden Park

### Issues

#### Public Realm:

- Accessibility into Morden Park is poorly defined, fragmented appearance of hardstanding and boundary treatment around entrances to the north.

#### Built Form:

- There have been later building additions along London Road which have not been sympathetic to the historic buildings in the area.

### Guidance

#### Public Realm:

- Improve accessibility and paths across park for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Enhancement of boundary treatments and entrances into park.

#### Built Form:

- New developments should be creatively designed to be sympathetic in terms of massing, materials and details to the historic buildings in the area.
- Ensure the continued preservation of the distinctive historic buildings in this area.

### Enhancement Project

**MOP1:** Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility into the park.

**MOP2:** Work with Greenspaces Team to investigate the enhancement of park and facilities.



Church Farm Cottage



Morden Park Sports Ground



South Thames College  
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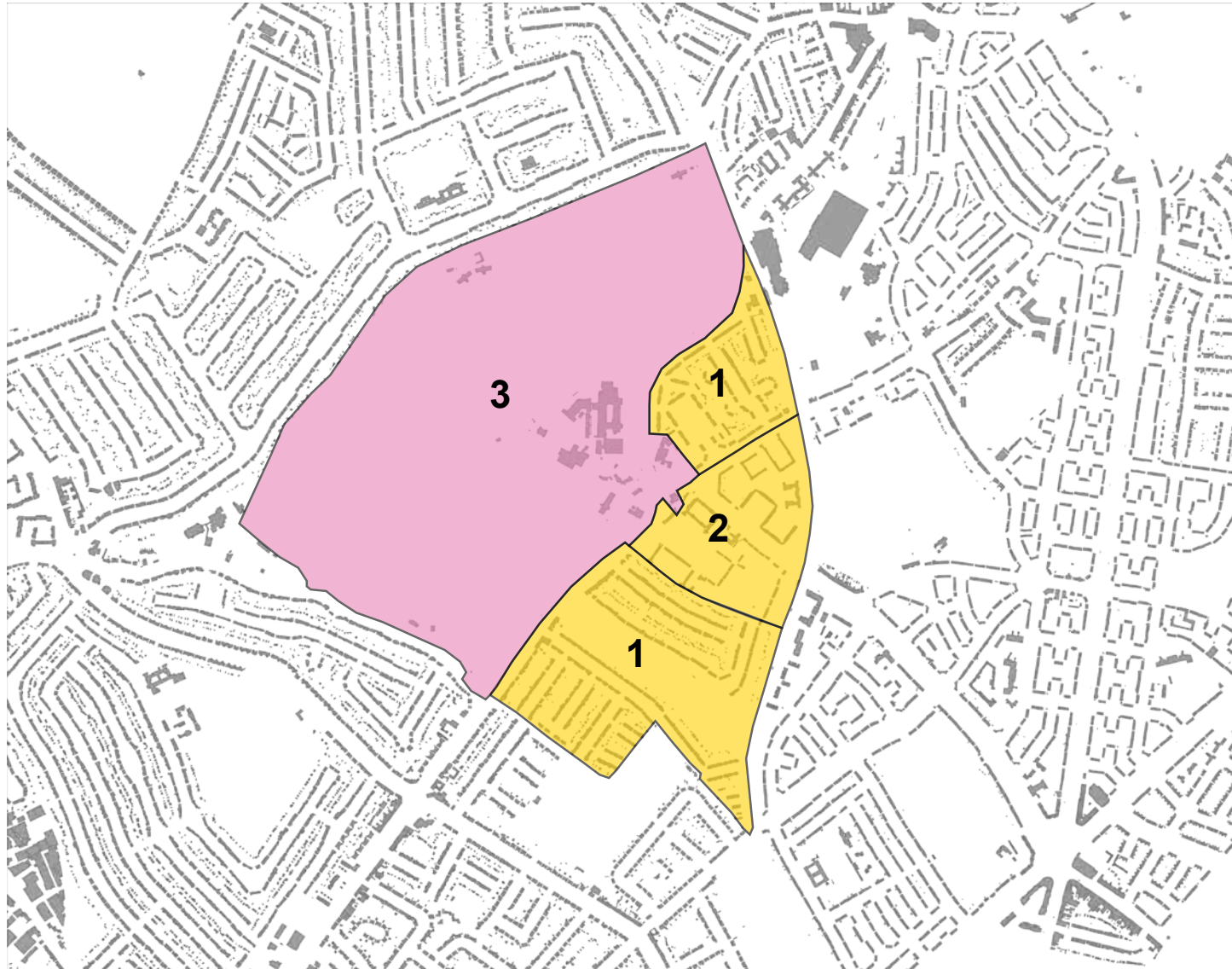


Cricket Pitch



# Morden Park Local Neighbourhood

## Character Area Assessment



- 1 Rosdene Avenue
- 2 Green Lane
- 3 Morden Park
- Area of established high quality
- Area with scope to reinforce existing character
- Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity