

WANDLE VISTAS

JUNE 2018



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Living Wandle
Landscape Partnership



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INTRODUCTION



THE WANDLE VISTAS PROJECT

‘Vistas create context and build appreciation for a wider landscape. They allow people to make connections across fragmented areas to get a sense of the landscape of which they are a part. The Wandle Valley is an area brimming with natural and built heritage and there is a perception that the Living Wandle programme could be improved by celebrating the landscape beyond the river boundaries. There is great opportunity to engender community pride and exert local influence by looking outwards from the river to consider the wider context of the Wandle Basin.’

(Project brief excerpt).

The Wandle Vistas Project was commissioned by Living Wandle Landscape Partnership (LWLP) in May 2017, and was carried out by Untitled Practice and Fiona Fyfe Associates between May 2017 and May 2018. The Steering Group included representatives from LWLP, Wandle Valley Regional Park, the Greater London Authority and the Wandle Valley Forum. The project was commissioned primarily as a legacy project for LWLP. As well as benefitting from the input of organisations represented on the Steering Group, the project was aided by the contributions of a number of local volunteers, and Borough officers. The consultant team would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Steering Group, Borough officers and the volunteers, and to thank them for their time and input to the project.

What is Wandle Vistas?

The following project brief excerpt summarises the rationale behind the project, and its overall aims:

The character and visual amenity of each vista shapes the way we experience the Wandle Basin and its heritage assets. It is therefore important to clarify what constitutes a Wandle Vista and to use this to influence local planning decisions and urban development. This will help to ensure the vistas are protected and the context of the valley’s heritage is not lost.

The overarching aim of the project is to research, locate, investigate and document a range of Wandle Vistas that build context and give identity to the Wandle Basin, and which also increase people’s appreciation of the wider landscape. It is imperative to balance community involvement and learning with the precise requirements of local planning so that the outputs of the project contribute to protecting and enhancing Wandle Vistas in the future.

The context of the Wandle Vistas project is one of rapid change and development within the Wandle Valley and the surrounding areas. The landscape is particularly dynamic, with views constantly changing as new elements appear. It is not the intention of the project to stop this process of change, but to ensure that the Wandle Vistas are recognised, celebrated and afforded some protection.

Understanding the Wandle Valley as a whole is key to understanding the issues which will enable planners and policy makers to address the challenges facing the Wandle Valley. For example, understanding the area’s geology, topography and development is key to developing workable sustainable transport routes, and thereby helping to achieve a modal shift in everyday transport away from private vehicles. The majority of the viewpoints therefore link into the sustainable transport network. Another example is the Wandle Valley’s Green Infrastructure corridors and associated open spaces, which should ideally be connected and multi-functional to achieve benefits for people, wildlife and the wider environment. Again, many of the viewpoints are either within, or have views of, Green Infrastructure corridors.

Who is it for?

It is important to note that the Wandle Vistas Project relates to the Wandle Valley as a whole, and will require cross-Borough cooperation to achieve its aims. It also extends more widely than the LWLP area, with over half of the viewpoints being outside the LWLP boundary.

This report is therefore particularly aimed at planners within the Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth, but in addition other Borough departments with responsibility for the management of open spaces, biodiversity, access, recreation and cultural heritage will find it useful. It is also intended for use by community groups, ‘friends of’ groups etc. associated with the various viewpoints. Other organisations such as the Wandle Valley Regional Park and Wandle Valley Forum will find it a valuable resource in achieving both strategic and local objectives. The report aligns with the visions and objectives of several strategic London Planning documents, as described in section 1.2.

How is the document arranged?

Following this introduction, there is a summary of the planning policy context. Section 2.0 presents the story of the Wandle Valley, providing a background summary of the evolution of the Valley’s landscape and views from geological times to the present day. Section 3.0 explores what is meant by a ‘Wandle Vista’ and describes their key characteristics. Section 4.0 describes where Wandle Vistas can be appreciated and describes the types of views which can be experienced in the Wandle Valley. The project methodology is presented in section 5.0, and explains how the 10 selected Wandle Vistas were identified. Section 6.0 contains a series of detailed profiles, one for each of the 10 selected Wandle Vistas, which describe the vistas and viewpoints using text, photographs and illustrations. The profiles also include an explanation of the specific issues affecting each viewpoint. The general threats to Wandle Vistas are set out in section 7.0, along with a series of general principles to protect and enhance Wandle Vistas, which are intended to be taken forward into Boroughs’ planning policy and Neighbourhood Plans.

Additional outputs to the Wandle Vistas Project are an interpretative map: ‘Wandle Vistas – A Guide to Views in the Wandle Valley’ and a short film, ‘A View to the Future’. These utilise more of the material researched by the project volunteers, and present and interpret the Wandle Vistas to a local community audience. For further details visit wandlevalleypark.co.uk

1.2
PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

London View Management Framework

A precedent for the Wandle Vistas Project is the London View Management Framework (SPG under the London Plan), which identifies and protects key views towards specific landmarks. The London View Management Framework states that Boroughs may also wish to use the principles of this policy for the designation and management of local views. (Policy 7.12 para J-LDF preparation).

London Environment Strategy

The Wandle Vistas Project helps to achieve the objectives of the Draft London Environment Strategy, (August 2017), which states:

AIM: London will be a National Park City where more than half of its area is green; where the natural environment is protected and the network of green infrastructure is managed to benefit all Londoners.

Proposal 5.1.1f The Mayor will back greater community involvement in the improvement and management of London's green spaces and natural environment.

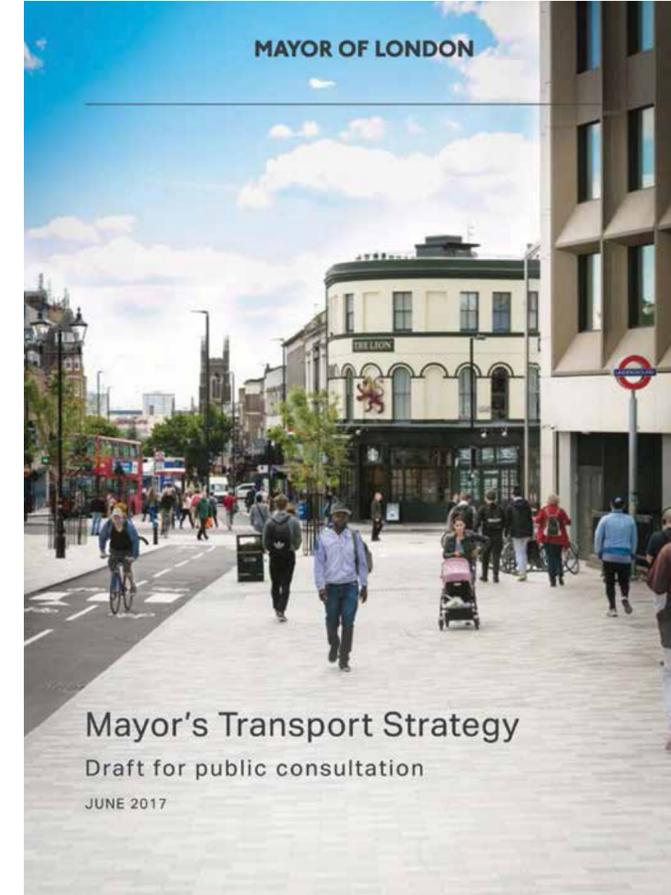
Proposal 5.3.1e The Mayor will work with civil society organisations to develop a series of campaigns that engage Londoners and enable them to enjoy, participate in and contribute to London becoming a National Park City.

Draft Mayor's Transport Strategy

The Draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (June 2017) addresses the need to look at how we can fundamentally change the way people choose to move around our city as the current trends are increasingly causing problems for London... London must become a city where walking, cycling and green public transport become the most appealing and practical choices for many more journeys .

One of the ways of achieving this is to make Londoners more healthy and active; therefore, Policy 1 is for all Londoners to do at least the 20 minutes of active travel they need to stay healthy each day.

The proposals to achieve this include maintenance and expansion of established walking and cycle routes such as the Wandle Valley Trail, Capital Ring, Thames Path and London Loop. Many of the viewpoints identified in the Wandle Vistas project are on such routes. Several of the viewpoints are also on the sustainable transport network and easily accessible from stops on the Croydon Tram.



Key Policy Context documents

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

All London Green Grid

The Wandle Vistas Project report also complements and aligns with the vision and objectives of the All London Green Grid Framework 8: Wandle Valley. By enhancing and promoting the Wandle Vistas, the identity of the Wandle Valley is strengthened. The Wandle Vistas Project helps to achieve several of the Area Strategy Objectives, namely:

- Increase access to open space, the Green Belt and urban fringe
- Conserve landscape and the natural environment, and increase access to nature
- Making sustainable travel connections
- Enhancing distinctive visitor destinations and boosting the wider economy
- Promote healthy living
- Promote green skills and sustainable design, management and maintenance

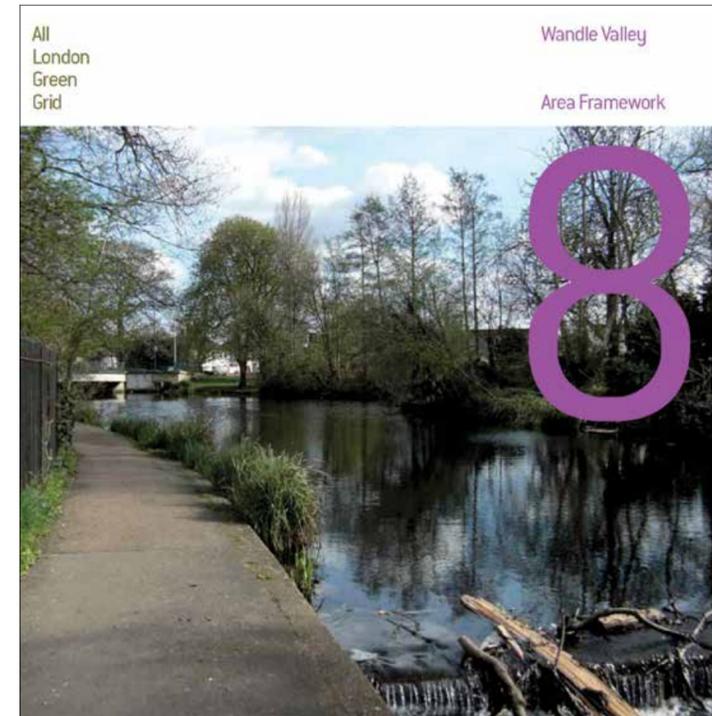
New London Plan

The public consultation draft of the *New London Plan* was published in December 2017. It follows the election of a new London Mayor in May 2016, and aims to accommodate growth in a way that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

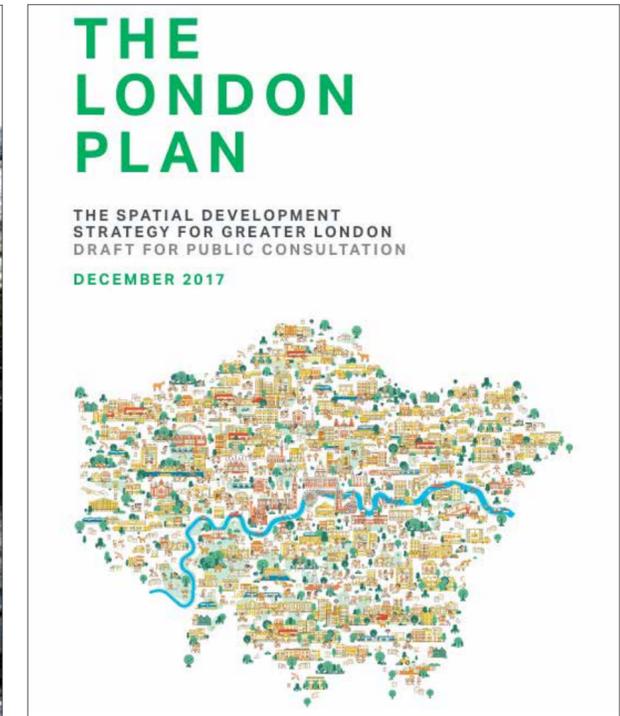
The key policy with regard to the Wandle Vistas project is Policy HC3: Strategic and Local Views, paragraph G: *Boroughs should clearly identify important local views in their Local plans and strategies. Boroughs are advised to use the principles of Policy HC4 London View Management Framework for the designation and management of local views. Where a local view crosses borough boundaries, the relevant boroughs should work collaboratively to designate and manage the view.*

The Wandle Vistas Project will also help to achieve a number of other policies in the *New London Plan*, covering a range of topics relating to open space, biodiversity, accessibility, public health, heritage and sustainable transport. For example:

- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- S4 Play and informal recreation
- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth
- HC3 Strategic and local views (see above)
- HC4 London View Management Framework
- G1 Green Infrastructure
- G2 London's Green Belt
- G3 Metropolitan Open Land
- G4 Local Green and Open Space
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands
- G9 Geodiversity
- SI16 Waterways – use and enjoyment
- SI17 Protecting London's waterways
- T1 Strategic approach to transport
- T3 Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding (Walk London Network)
- T5 Cycling



Key Policy Context documents



2

THE STORY OF THE WANDLE VALLEY



LAND FORMATION

Today’s landscape is the result of thousands of years of natural processes, and human actions. Despite its predominantly urban context, it still contains traces of the many stages of its development.

Geology and Topography

The underlying geology, soils, the shape of the land and the system of rivers are fundamental to later patterns of settlement and land use, and continue to impact on the Wandle Valley (and its views) up to the present day.

The area currently occupied by the Wandle Valley has its origins millions of years ago, under the sea. As different conditions prevailed, different types of rocks were laid down.

The oldest surface rocks visible in the Wandle Valley are the white chalks of the North Downs, which occur in the south of the area. They were formed in the Cretaceous period, in warm, shallow, tropical seas. Several million years later, in the Cenozoic period, the London Clays were created of fine particles laid down in deep sea conditions. Occasional layers of more sandy material were deposited in shallower waters where rivers and coasts had more of an influence. These layers of material were gradually compressed and turned into rock. The layers have different qualities – they may be harder, softer, more or less permeable to water, and have different colours and textures. They also form soils with different characteristics, for example clay soils are sticky, heavy and difficult to plough.

Much later, when sea levels had lowered and the rocks became dry land, rivers began to shape the landform. The River Thames, diverted by glaciers to the north, and carrying large quantities of glacial outwash (sands and gravels) cut through the layers of chalk and clay to create a wide, shallow valley. As sea levels fell it deposited flat fertile river terraces of sand and gravel.

KEY

Bedrock geology

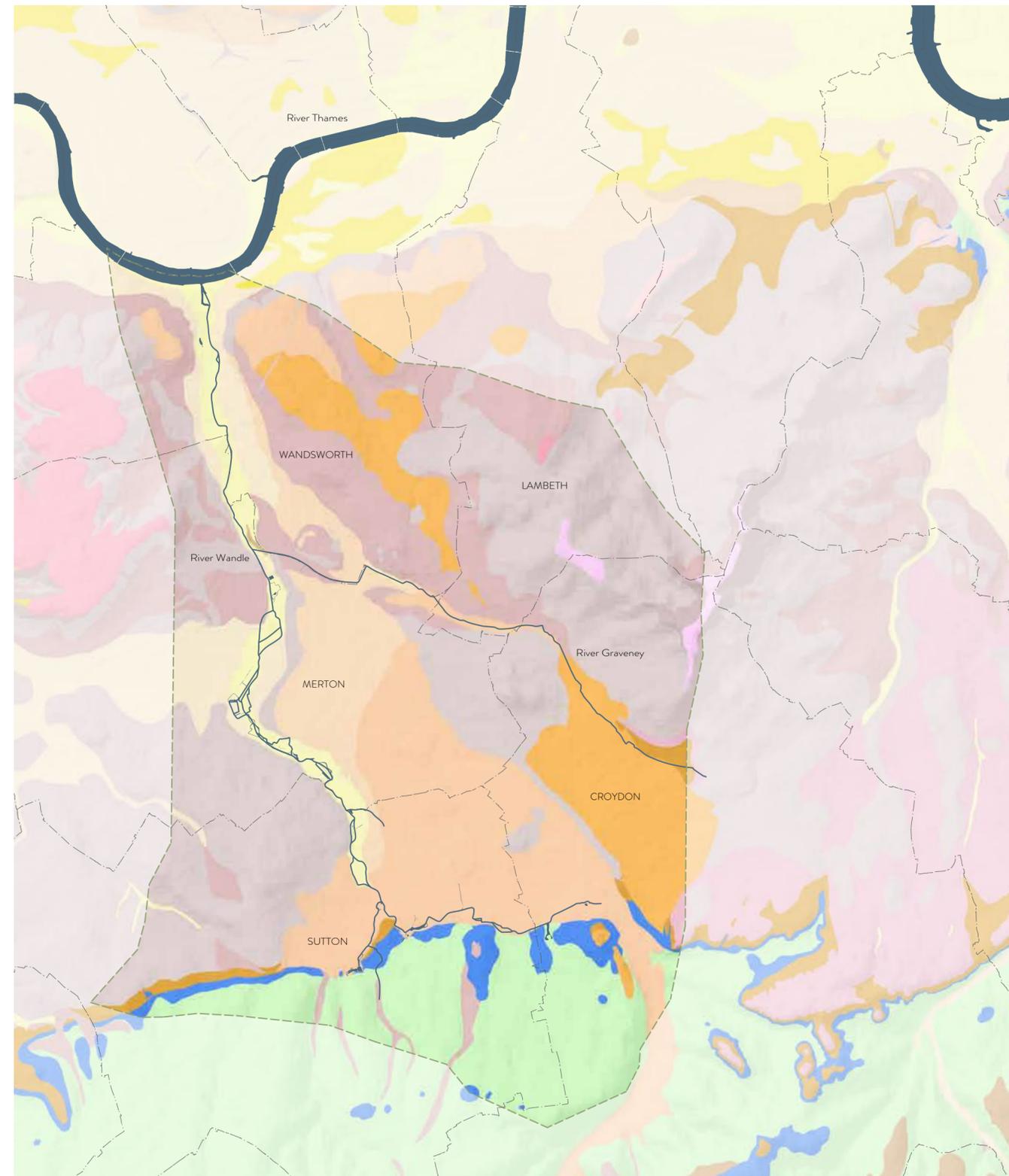
- Claygate member – sand, silt and clay
- Harwich Formation – sand and gravel
- London Clay Formation – clay and silt
- Lambeth Group – clay, silt and sand
- Thanet Foundation – sand
- Lewes Nodular Chalk Foundation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) – chalk

Superficial deposits

- Alluvium – clay, silt, sand and peat
- Alluvium – clay, silt, sand and gravel
- Kempton Park Gravel Member – sand and gravel
- Langley Silt Member – clay and silt
- Hackney Gravel member – sand and gravel
- Lynch Hill Gravel member – sand and gravel
- Taplow Gravel member – sand and gravel
- Boyn Hill Gravel member – sand and gravel
- Black Park Gravel member – sand and gravel
- Head – clay, silt, sand and gravel
- Peat – peat
- River Terrace Deposits (undifferentiated) – sand and gravel
- Sand and Gravel of Uncertain Origin – sand and gravel

- Wandle Valley Green Grid Area
- London Borough Boundary
- Rivers

Note: All geology information and key colours taken from Defra MAGIC mapping tool.



Chapter image on preceding pages – Roundshaw Open Space view

Fig 01 – Wandle Valley Bedrock and Surface Geology

WATER ACTION

KEY

- █ River Thames
- Other Rivers
- Wandle Valley Green Grid Area
- Underground Rivers
- River Wandle Catchment



Waterbodies

The Wandle (and its tributary the Graveney) is just one of many tributary rivers and streams which flow down the sides of the Thames Basin into the River Thames. They too have carved out their own channels through the underlying rock, and laid down sediments on the valley floor parallel to the river. The Wandle and Graveney originate as springs which occur at the junctions between porous sandstone or chalk and impermeable clay. Water percolates down through the porous rocks, but cannot continue downwards once it reaches impermeable clay, so it comes to the surface in the form of springs. The Wandle flows for 19km (12 miles) from its source to the Thames, and is one of the finest examples of a chalk stream in London. In its natural state, the River Wandle would have become braided near its confluence with the Thames, with several shifting, shallow channels.

There are also a number of pools and lakes, particularly on the impermeable London Clay. Many of these result from the extraction of clays, sands and gravels (such as those in Mitcham Common and Beddington Farmlands). Others (such as Wimbledon Park Lake and Carshalton Ponds) were either artificial or artificially extended as part of later landscaping schemes.

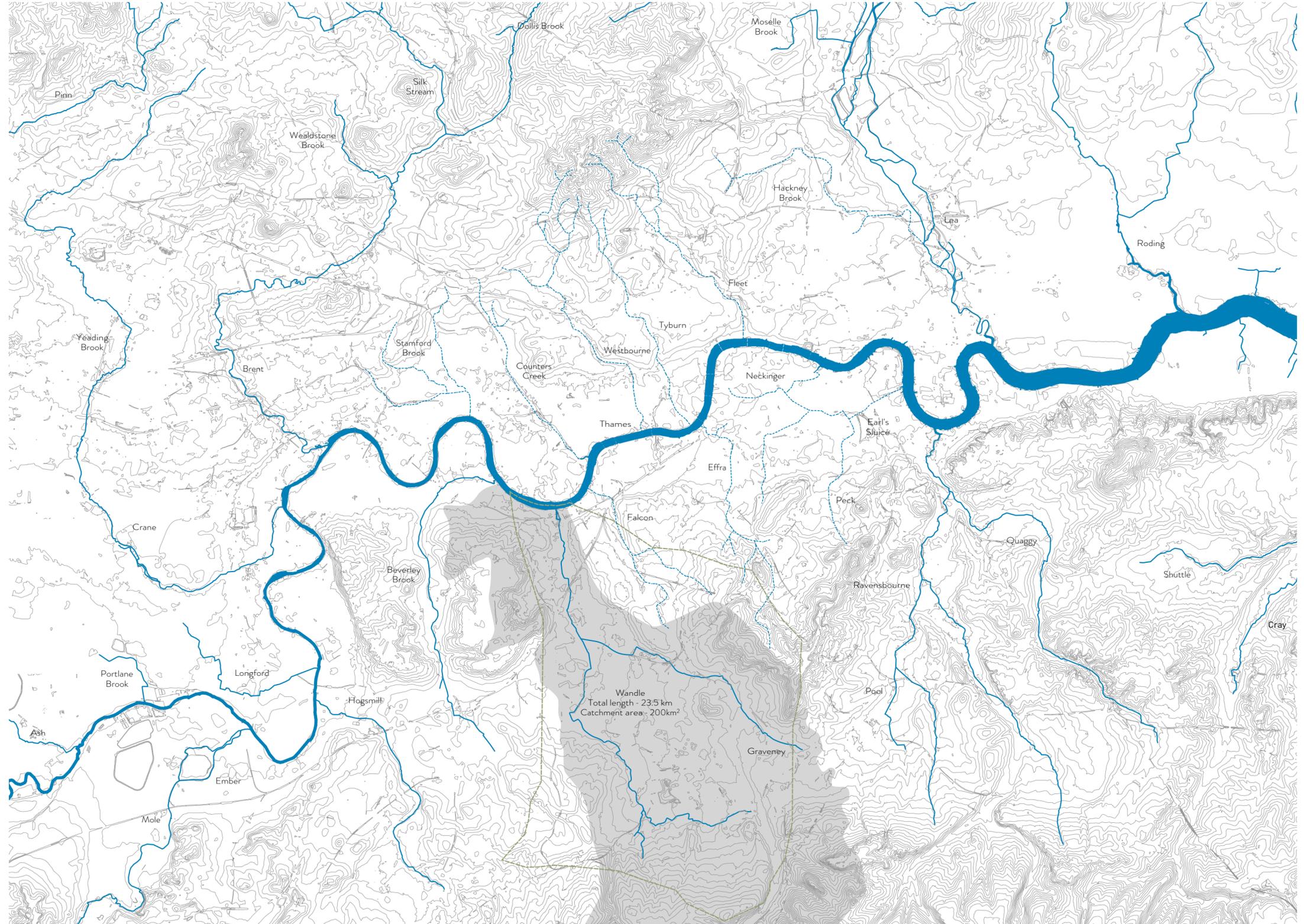


Fig 02 – Wandle Valley Contours, Waterbodies and Wandle Valley catchment

2.3 SETTLEMENT AND OCCUPATION

Pre-history

Following the end of the last ice age (approx. 10,000 years ago), the natural vegetation of the area became established – a mixture of deciduous forests, wetlands (particularly on valley floors) and open grassland areas. Some of the earliest human remains have been discovered from this time, including Palaeolithic flint tools found in the Thames gravel terraces, and around St Anne’s Church in Wandsworth. It is likely that the natural oak forest survived in the form of the Great North Wood, which extended from the Thames to Croydon. It was heavily managed in the Middle Ages, and survived until the late 18th Century. Pockets of woodland still remain, as do many associated placenames, such as Norwood and Pollard’s Hill.

Mesolithic flint tools have been found in the headwaters of the River Wandle, including at Waddon, Beddington and Carshalton, and at a hunter-gatherer campsite identified at Orchard Hill. The Neolithic period saw a move towards a more settled and less nomadic lifestyle. It is likely that some clearance of woodland took place, and that the Wandle Valley, with its clear water and easily-ploughed river terraces was a good location for settlement. Pottery from this period (made from locally-dug clay) has been found at Mitcham.

Evidence for Bronze Age occupation of the Wandle Valley includes tools found at Beddington and Carshalton, and weapons dredged from silts at the confluence of the Wandle and the Thames. Iron Age encampments have been found at Beddington, Carshalton, Wallington and Wimbledon Common, and there is a possible Iron Age earthwork at Pollard’s Hill.

Roman

Londinium was founded by the Romans soon after their occupation of Britain, and a network of roads was constructed to link Londinium with other towns. Two such roads are known to have used the Wandle Valley: Stane Street to Chichester (which crossed the Wandle at Collier’s Wood) and a road between London and what is now Brighton, which crossed the Wandle slightly further upstream. Roman finds have been discovered at the crossing points, and a Roman Villa and bath house has been excavated at Beddington (now a Scheduled Monument). Pollard’s Hill may have been the location of a Roman signal station above the Brighton road.

Saxon

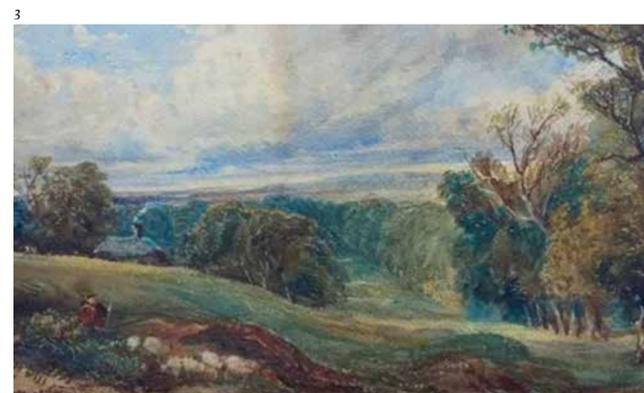
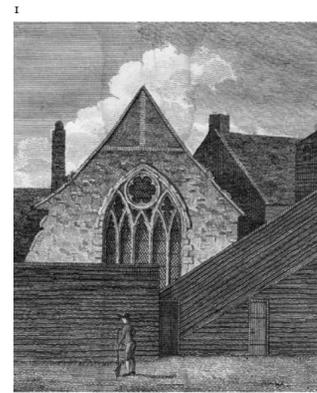
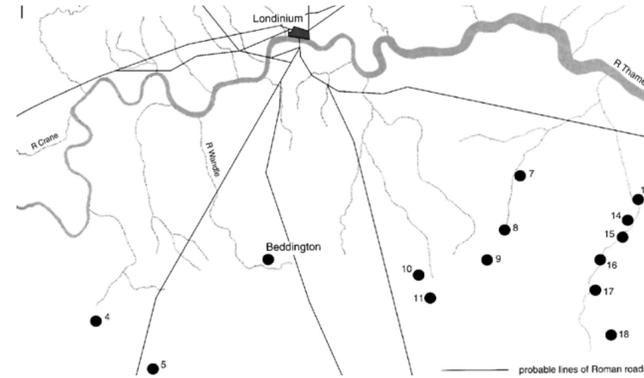
A number of the settlements in the Wandle Valley have Saxon place-names which relate to landscape features (particularly water sources), including Carshalton (enclosure near a spring (caerse was added later in reference to watercress beds); Merton (settlement by the pool); Mitcham (large homestead or large hemmed-in land), Croydon (saffron / crocus valley) and Wimbledon (Wynnmann’s hill). Saxon domestic archaeology is notoriously ephemeral, but as well as place names, other landscape features from the Saxon period, such as the locations of parish churches, and the patterns of parish boundaries, are often still in place today. The Battle of Merton is recorded as taking place in 871, when King Ethelred of Wessex was mortally wounded, and a Saxon cemetery has been found near the River Wandle at Mitcham which may be related to this battle. The Domesday Book (1086) records the villages and landowners of the Wandle Valley. It also records 13 mills on the river, indicating early industrial use.

Medieval

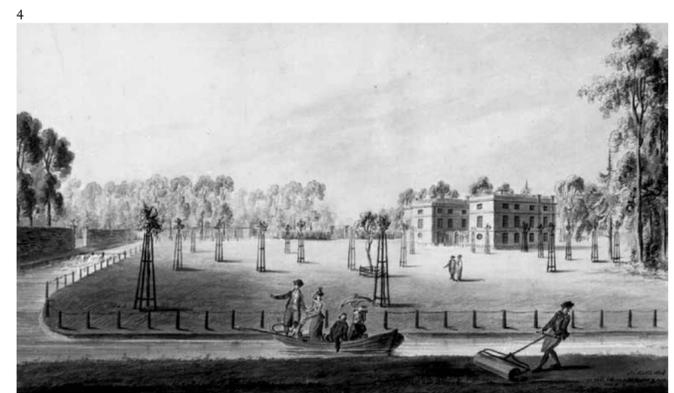
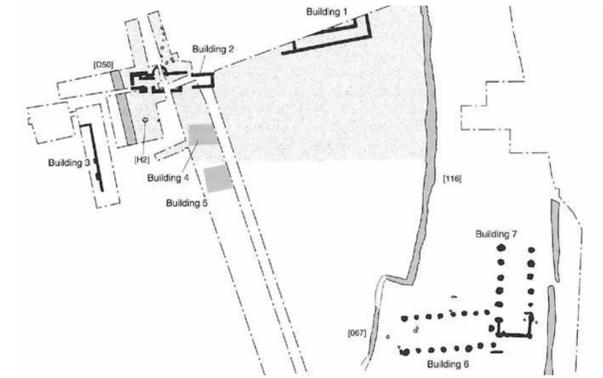
The medieval period saw the development and establishment of a number of estates and manors owned by the church and by individuals, and many of these influenced the landscape for subsequent centuries. For example, Merton Priory was founded in 1117 on land adjacent to the river, and Morden Hall was owned by Westminster Abbey. Both sites were sold following the Dissolution in 1538.

There were a number of Medieval deer parks in the Wandle Valley, including Carew Manor deer park which covered the area now occupied by Mitcham Common, Beddington Farmlands and Beddington Park. The villages remained small farming communities supplying produce to London including flour, vegetables, herbs and watercress. Development of stronger ploughs made cultivation of the clay soils possible, but there would still have been extensive areas of woodland and wetland.

Common land was used by villagers for the grazing of animals. Other ‘commoner’s rights’ included the gathering of deadwood for fuel, bracken for animal bedding, and small branches for building repairs or tool making. Some commons survive as open spaces today, including Mitcham Common and Streatham Common.



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1. Roman roads and villas (Museum of London Blog)
2. Roman villa at Beddington (Museum of London Blog)
3. Merton Priory, etching c.1800 (©London Borough of Merton)
4. Walter Winas on the Running Deer Range, Wimbledon Common, 1888 (Thomas Blinks)
5. Streatham Common, 1851 (David Cox)
6. Morden Hall drawing (©London Borough of Merton)

COUNTRY HOUSES AND INDUSTRIALISATION

Post-medieval

In 1606 the River Wandle was made a Royal Preserve because of the quality of the water and the brown trout which it supported. The pure water was also used in the production of calico fabric and the growing of watercress. Cultivated land throughout the Wandle Valley continued to provide produce for the London market. The Wandle Valley also became a popular location for country houses, away from the squalor and disease of London.

Numerous country retreats were built within the Wandle Valley, often surrounded by designed parklands or other ornamental grounds. Some of these involved the manipulation of the River Wandle and its tributaries. Perhaps the best known of these estates was Wimbledon Park, landscaped by 'Capability' Brown for Earl Spencer in the mid-18th Century. Part of his scheme (including the lake) survives today. Other examples include Morden Hall Park (now owned by the National Trust), which includes canalised sections of the Wandle) and Eagle House in Merton, which was constructed in 1705 as a retreat for the Portuguese doctor Fernando Mendes, physician to the wife of Charles II. The house can still be seen today, complete with roof-top viewing cupola. The 'grand riverside house' of Culvers, near Merton, was occupied for a short time by Admiral Nelson. Today, many of these affluent properties have disappeared completely. In others the house has gone but the grounds remain, often as public parks or open spaces.

18th and 19th Centuries

The 18th and 19th centuries saw increasing industrial demands on the River Wandle, with a consequent deterioration in water quality. Industries using the Wandle as a water and / or power source included paper making, leather manufacture, gunpowder and oil mills, snuff milling and copper pressing. In 1805 the Wandle was described as 'The hardest-worked river for its size in the world'. Wharves were constructed at Wandsworth (still a village at this time) at the confluence of the Wandle and the Thames, to allow export of manufactured goods. The structures changed the natural form of the river mouth, creating a permanent channel rather than dynamic braided streams. The number of mills, weirs and obstructions on the river meant that it was no good for transport, so in 1803, the horse-drawn plate way was opened along the Wandle Valley between the River Mouth and Croydon. It was the first public railway in the world and part of its route across Mitcham Common is now used by the Croydon Tram.

The decline in water quality was exacerbated by a rapid increase in population and lack of effective sewerage treatment. By 1860 the Wandle was the most polluted river in London, and also suffered from low water flows because of the amount of water being abstracted. The mid-19th Century saw a large and sudden increase in population, largely driven by the improved transport connections, including railway lines into central London. The Wandle Valley became an expanding urban area, with new developments centred around the railway stations. However, other land uses in the valley continued, including market gardening and herb growing (lavender and Mitcham mint being examples). The river remained an industrial focus, with William Morris opening a textile and glassware factory at Merton in 1881.



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1. Wimbledon Park House, 1813 (Woolnoth)
2. Morden Hall Academy for Boys (©London Borough of Merton)
3. Watercress cultivation, 1952, Beddington (©London Borough of Merton)
4. Harvesting lavender, Mitcham (©London Borough of Merton)
5. Merton Abbey Snuff Mills on the River Wandle c.1859 (©London Borough of Merton)
6. Block printing William Morris chintzes, Merton Abbey Mills c.1890 (Fairclough, Oliver and Emmeline Leary, Textiles by William Morris and Morris & Co)

SUBURBAN EXPANSION

The Twentieth Century

The 20th century saw further rapid development of the Wandle Valley. Open land near Croydon was used for WW1 aerodromes (later Croydon Airport), and the open areas adjacent to the River Wandle, which had been used for drying cloth or growing watercress became sites for industrial estates. The greatest expansion though was with suburban housing. Improvements in both public and private transport led to massive surges of residential building on former farmland, woodland, common land and private estates. The former individual villages began to join up into an almost continuous urban area.

In addition to housing, supporting infrastructure had to be provided, including power stations, pylons, gasometers, shops, civic buildings, sewage farms, schools, recreation grounds and hospitals. In the midst of this expansion, attempts were made to provide open land and parks for the residents of the suburbs. Some of these (eg. Norwood Grove) were the designed grounds of earlier country houses, others were areas of common land (eg. Mitcham Common), and others (eg. Pollards Hill) were hill tops with good views, which were donated to Local Authorities for public benefit. The post-WW2 Green Belt legislation was intended to restrict further urban sprawl, and parts of the Wandle Valley within LB Sutton and Croydon are within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Today

Today, there is still tremendous demand and pressure for growth in the Wandle Valley. The landscape is constantly changing in response to new developments. One of the most prominent is the 43-storey Saffron Tower in Croydon, with purple and orange panels reflecting the colours of the crocuses historically grown here. Transport links are also being improved, with the Croydon Tram a new element within the Wandle Valley, even though parts of its route have been in place for over 200 years.

In recent decades, much has been done to improve the water quality and ecology of the River Wandle, to re-unite local communities with the river and surrounding landscape, and to protect surviving sites that are important for their natural or cultural heritage, or for the value of their open spaces. The natural and cultural heritage designations, and open spaces within the Wandle Valley, are outlined in the following sections. They make very important contributions to the landscape and views of the Wandle Valley.



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1. WWII structures, Mitcham Common, 1961 (©London Borough of Merton)
2. 'Hengist' post plane at Croydon Airport, c.1930 (Croydon Local Studies Library & Archive)
3. Construction of new houses, Pollards Hill Estate, 1950 (©London Borough of Merton)
4. Aerial view of Pollard's Hill Estate, 1956 (©London Borough of Merton)
5. Aberconway Road, St. Helier Estate, 1955 (©London Borough of Merton)
6. Civic Society, Eagle House Cupola (©London Borough of Merton)

NATURAL HERITAGE

Fig 03 shows the Natural Heritage Designations within the Wandle Valley, which include:

National Designations	
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A site designated by Natural England as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Ancient Woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD.
Local Designations	
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	A site that is locally-important for wildlife, geology, education and enjoyment (without disturbing wildlife). LNRs must be controlled by the local authority through ownership, lease or agreement with the owner. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally.
Wildlife Sites	These sites, which may be given various titles such as... Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)... are defined in local and structure plans under the Town and Country Planning system and are a material consideration when planning applications are being determined. [JNCC]
Regionally Important Geological or Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) or Local Geological Sites (LIGS)	The most important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as SSSI. Sites are selected...according to their value for education, scientific study, historical significance or aesthetic qualities. [JNCC]
Definitions taken from the Historic England website, unless stated otherwise	

In addition, there are a number of Borough-specific natural heritage designations, including:

- Area with Nature Conservation Interest (LB Sutton)
- Green Corridors (LB Sutton and LB Merton)
- Land Safeguarded for Wandle Valley Regional Park Policy (LB Sutton)
- Metropolitan Green Chains (LB Sutton and LB Merton)
- Wandle Valley Regional Park (LB Merton)

KEY

- Wandle Valley Regional Park
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Ancient Woodland
- Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS)
- Locally Important Geological Site (LIGS)
- SINC
- SSSI
- Wandle Valley Green Grid Area
- London Borough Boundary
- Rivers

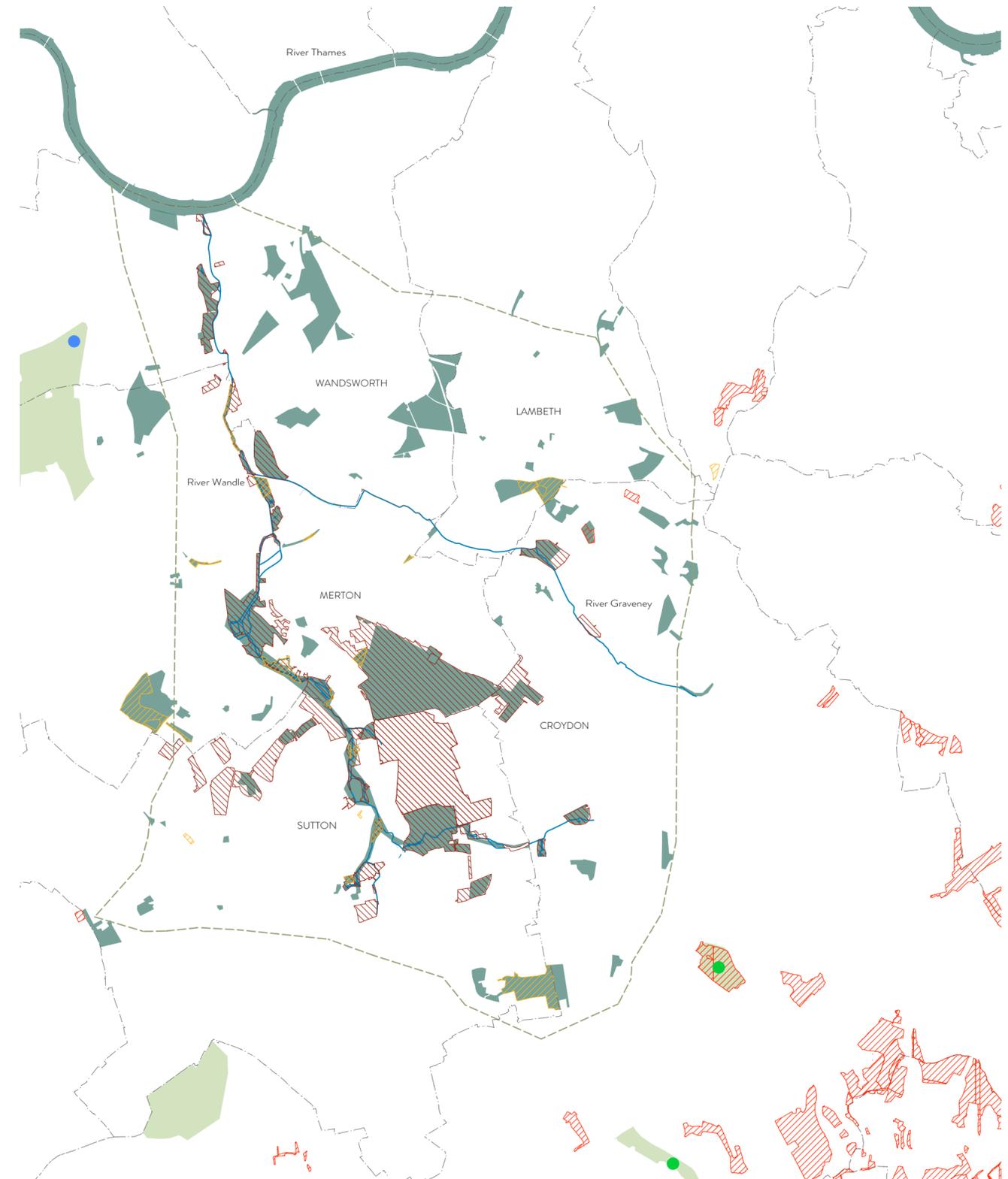


Fig 03 – Wandle Valley Natural Heritage

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fig 04 shows the Cultural Heritage Designations within the Wandle Valley, which include:

National Designations	
Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (RPG)*	Sites included on the register of gardens and other land...appearing to English Heritage to be of special interest. Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.
Scheduled Monuments (SM)*	Any monument which is for the time being included in the schedule compiled and maintained by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

Local Designations	
Conservation Areas (CA)*	An area 'of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Listed Buildings (LB)*	A building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under this section, and... Any object or structure fixed to the building; Any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Greater London Archaeological Priority Areas (APA)	Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) are areas where there is significant known archaeological interest or potential for new discoveries. APAs are used to help highlight where development might affect heritage assets.
Definitions taken from the Historic England website, unless stated otherwise * 'Designated Heritage Assets' under the National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	

In addition, there are a number of Borough-specific cultural heritage or recreation designations, including:

- Area of Special Local Character (LB Sutton)
- Croydon Panorama (LB Croydon)
- Landmark (LB Croydon)
- Local Areas of Special Character (LB Croydon)
- Local Designated View (LB Croydon)
- Locally-listed Historic Parks and Gardens (LB Croydon)

KEY

- Registered Historic Parks (RPG)
- Scheduled Monuments (SM)
- Conservation Area (CA)
- Archeological Priority Areas (APA)
- Listed Building
- Wandle Valley Green Grid Area
- London Borough Boundary
- Rivers

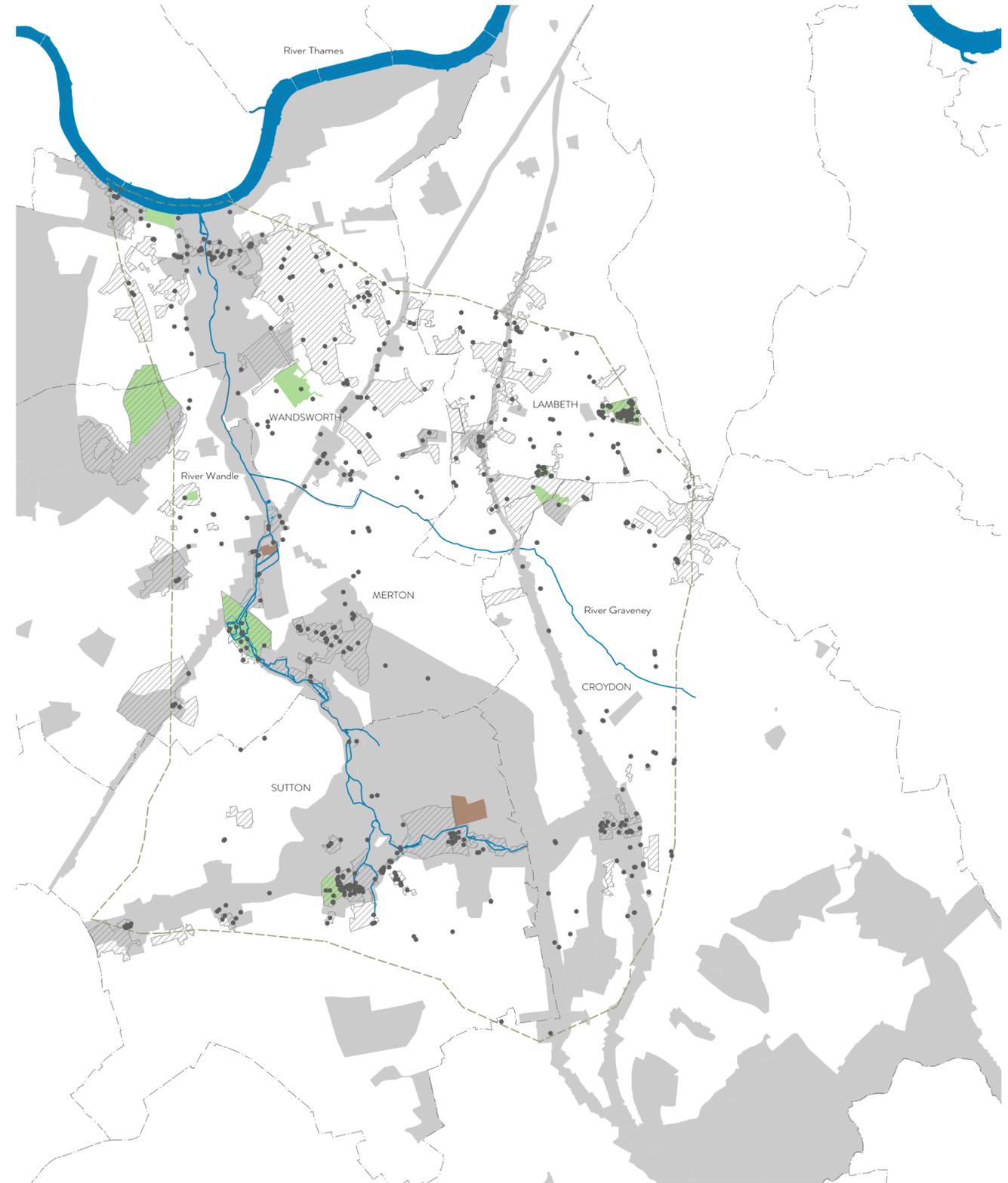


Fig 04 – Wandle Valley Cultural Heritage

2.8 OPEN SPACE

Fig 05 shows the Open Space Designations within the Wandle Valley, which include:

National Designations	
Green Belt	Defined in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. [NPPF]
Local Designations	
Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)	A designation relating to Greater London. MOL has the same level of protection as Green Belt. To be designated as MOL, land must meet 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. [GLA]

In addition, there are a number of Borough-specific open land designations, including:

- Local Open Land (LB Croydon)
- Open Space (LB Merton)
- Other Large Protected Open Spaces (LB Wandsworth)
- Public Open Space (LB Sutton)
- Urban Green Space (LB Sutton)

KEY

- Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
- Other Open Spaces
- Green Belt
- Wandle Valley Green Grid Area
- London Borough Boundary
- Rivers

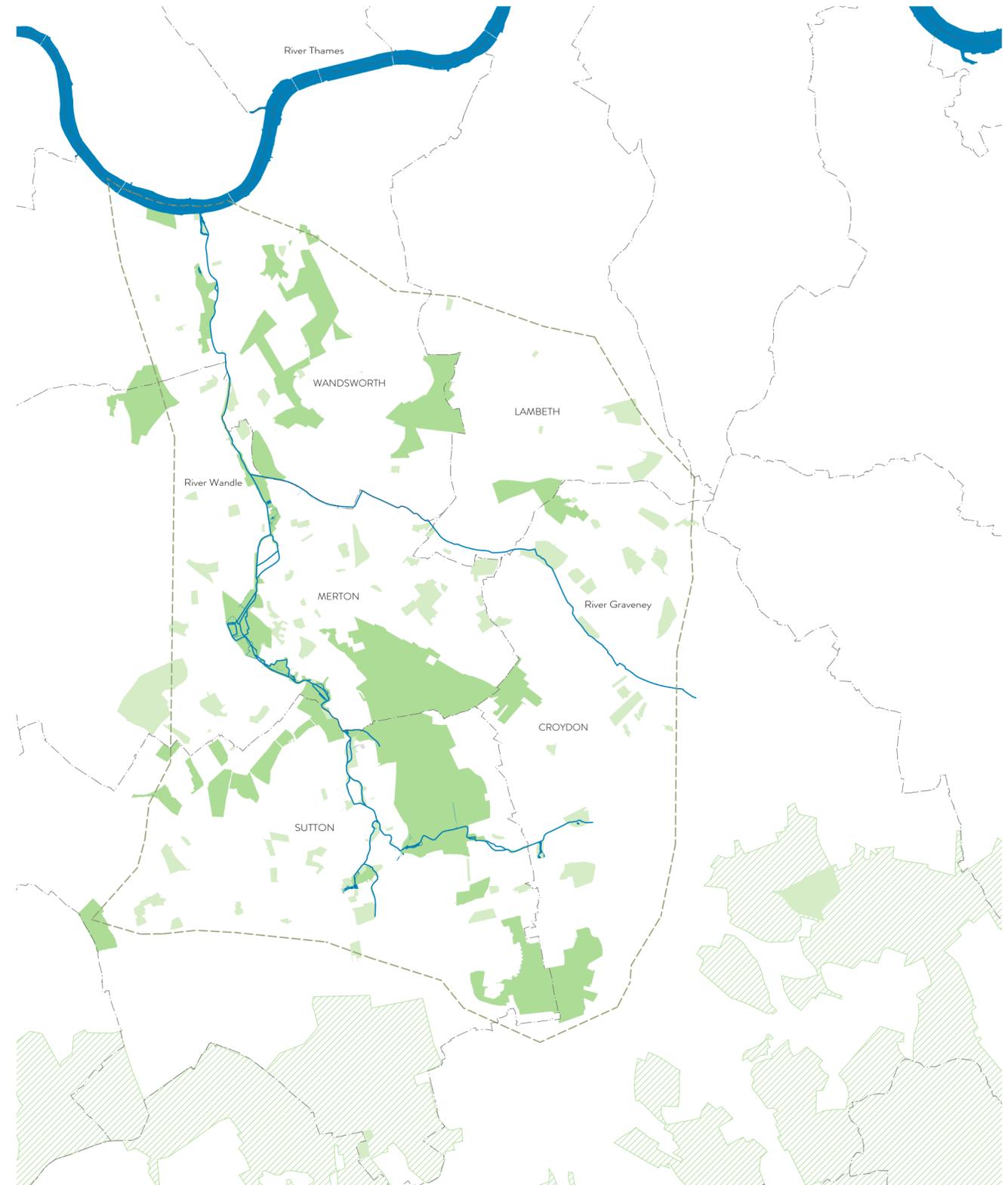


Fig 05 – Wandle Valley Open Spaces

3

WHAT IS A WANDLE VISTA?



WHAT IS A WANDLE VISTA?

The Oxford Dictionary describes a ‘vista’ as ‘A pleasing view’. The word originated in the Mid 17th Century from Italian, and means literally ‘view’, from visto ‘seen’.

Describing Wandle Vistas

Within garden design, a vista is considered to be a deliberately created or controlled view, perhaps framed by trees or determined by landform, with a focal point. Vistas may occur in grand formal gardens (eg. Versailles) or in a naturalistic landscape garden where objects appear and reappear unexpectedly in a circuit of ‘hide and reveal’. In contrast, an open, panoramic view without a particular focal point is referred to as a ‘prospect’.

However, for the purposes of this project, the less technical definition of a ‘vista’ (ie. a *pleasing view*) will be used, as there are very few deliberately created or controlled views within the study area, and many of the views are technically ‘prospects’ rather than ‘vistas’. Types of views which can be experienced within the Wandle Valley are discussed in the following sections.

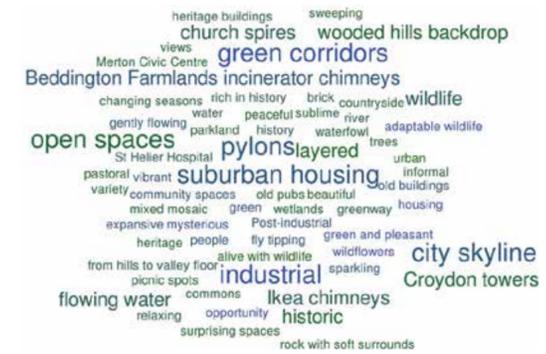
Part of the challenge of this project is to identify what makes a ‘Wandle Vista’ unique. What gives a view in the Wandle Valley its special ‘sense of place’? And how does experiencing views of the Wandle Valley affect people’s emotions?

Key Characteristics of Wandle Vistas

Project volunteers were asked to complete questionnaires to record the words which they associate with views of the Wandle Valley, and how views within the Wandle Valley make them feel. The results are shown in ‘word clouds’ (the larger the word, the more times it appeared in responses).

The questionnaire responses, combined with our own fieldwork have helped to define the key characteristics of Wandle Vistas (although it should be noted that not all characteristics are visible from all viewpoints).

- **A well-treed skyline.**
- **Awareness of topography**, particularly the sloping valley sides, river terraces and floodplain.
- **Presence of water / river.**
- **Landmarks within the Wandle Valley**, which provide a sense of place and orientation: IKEA chimneys (formerly Croydon Power Station); Saffron Tower Croydon; St Helier Hospital; Merton Civic Centre; Beddington Incinerator; church towers (including St Mary’s Wimbledon). Pylons also run the length of the valley.
- **A balance of development and open spaces** with trees.
- **Distant landmarks on horizons**, including The Shard and buildings in Central London; Crystal Palace transmitters; the distant wooded ridges of the North Downs.



3

Chapter image on preceding pages
– St Marks Road Car Park view

1. ‘Word cloud’ describing the qualities people associate with views of the Wandle Valley.
2. ‘Word cloud’ describing how the views of the Wandle Valley make people feel.
3. Roundshaw Open Space with local and wider London landmarks

4

VIEWPOINTS AND VIEWS IN THE VALLEY



VIEWPOINTS

Current Named Views / Viewpoints

The Wandle Valley is full of amazing views. Some viewpoints are destinations in their own right, whilst others are unmarked, but nevertheless offer opportunities to pause and to soak up the view. This section describes the places within the Wandle Valley where views can be experienced.

There are two viewpoints within the Wandle Valley marked on the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map. These are at Addington Hills and Pollards Hill. Addington Hills has a viewing platform, but the interpretative metal plaques have been removed by vandals. Pollards Hill has a toposcope provided by the local residents association.

Buildings

Some of the best views can be experienced from public and private buildings. There is a long history of appreciating the views from buildings – Eagle House in Mitcham was built in 1705 with a viewing cupola on the roof; today the view can be appreciated from the top deck of the nearby multi-storey car park in St Mark's Road. There are several prominent buildings within the Wandle Valley, including Saffron Tower in Croydon, St Helier Hospital and Merton Civic Centre, which offer spectacular elevated views across and along the Wandle Valley.

Transport Routes

Roads and other transport corridors offer opportunities to appreciate views of the Wandle Valley. For drivers these views can only be glimpsed, but for passengers and those on public transport, there are more leisurely opportunities to appreciate the views. The big difference between views from roads / transport corridors and other viewpoints is that they are not static. Rather, they are constantly changing. Landmarks may be seen in sequence during a journey, sometimes channelled by roads. Views appear suddenly, for example on cresting a hill, and can disappear equally quickly. Often the extra height on the top deck of a bus enables different views to be experienced. Railway and tram routes offer a different experience of the Wandle Valley, as the need for gentle gradients means that the route must work with the topography. These views are therefore often dominated by the valley floor with views looking up the valley sides.

Open Spaces

There are several long distance paths and cycle routes within and around the Wandle Valley, with many opportunities to relax and appreciate views at leisure. They include the Wandle Trail; London Loop; Capital Ring; Vanguard Way; Sutton Countryside Walk and the Nelson Trail. Many of these routes connect open spaces from where views can be seen.

Some of these open spaces (for example Wimbledon Park) were originally designed as private parks. Some of these parks contain vistas in the technical sense of the term – where views are channelled towards focal points, such as the spire of St Mary's Church on the ridge above Wimbledon Park Lake. However, many of the parks have changed significantly since they were originally laid out – trees and other focal points have been lost, and new trees have been planted (or self-seeded) in different locations. Subsequent built development may also mean that designed vistas are less apparent today than they were when first laid out.

Other open spaces within the Wandle Valley have never been designed, and the views from them are serendipitous rather than deliberate. Examples of non-designed open spaces with good views are common land (eg. Mitcham Common and Streatham Common) and former industrial areas, such as the site of Croydon Aerodrome (now Roundshaw Open Space) and former cloth-drying areas on the banks of the Wandle.

Valley Floor

Views from the Wandle Valley bottom are often dominated by water, and riparian vegetation. Sometimes open spaces alongside the river form the foreground of the view. In some views local landmarks (for example the IKEA chimneys or Beddington Incinerator) may appear on the horizon, and sometimes the treed ridges that frame the valley are visible in the distance, but this depends on the local topography, and whether or not they are screened by intervening buildings or trees. Generally, more distant landmarks are not apparent in views from the valley floor unless the viewpoint is elevated.

Valley Sides

From the sides of the Wandle Valley it is possible to appreciate its topography, particularly in panoramic views, although it is not always possible to see beyond the Wandle Valley. Often more than one of the local landmarks will be visible (eg. St Helier Hospital, Saffron Tower, Merton Civic Centre etc.), with their relative positions dependent on the location of the viewpoint and the direction of the view. These landmarks provide an immediate sense of place and orientation. Treed ridges, including the Crystal Palace Ridge, form the backdrop to these views. The Wandle itself (or its tributary the Graveney) is rarely visible, but can often be picked out as a green corridor of trees and open spaces on the valley floor. The valley side views tend to include both urban areas and open spaces, reflecting the area's development pattern.

Valley Ridges

From high land, the Wandle Valley can be seen in its wider landscape context, with views extending northwards across the Thames Basin and up onto the ridge on the north side of the Thames. Tall buildings in the City of London, Docklands, St George Wharf, Battersea Power Station and the Wembley Stadium Arch can be seen (in varying combinations), which provide further context and a stronger sense of being close to London. In some views, the full length of the Wandle Valley can be appreciated, and many of the local landmarks can also be seen. One of the most striking things in these views is how green the Wandle Valley appears, largely due to the number of trees in gardens, streets and open spaces.

1. Addington Hills viewpoint with Saffron Tower to background
2. Pollards Hill view across Wandle Valley with IKEA chimneys and valley ridgeline to background
3. Eagle House from St Marks Road Car Park with Wandle Valley pylons to background
4. Merton Civic Centre across Mitcham roofscape from St Marks Road car park
5. IKEA chimneys from Valley Floor at Waddon Ponds
6. Saffron Tower from Valley Floor at Wandle Park
7. Crystal Palace ridge on Valley Side from Mitcham Common
8. Beddington Incinerator, St Helier Hospital and wooded ridgeline from Valley Side at Pollards Hill
9. Green landscape of Wandle Valley, and City of London skyline, from Valley Ridge at Ruffett & Big Wood
10. River Wandle glimpsed view from train



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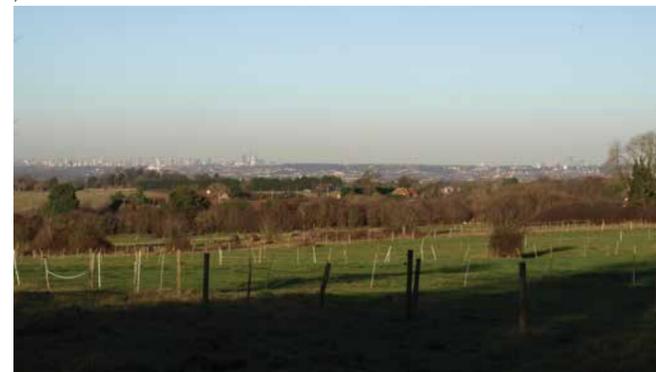
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4.2
VIEWS

Panoramic

The majority of the views within and across the Wandle Valley are panoramic, ie. sweeping views over a wide area. These views often contain numerous landmarks and features characteristic of Wandle Vistas, but don't usually have a single focal point. The panoramic views are usually appreciated from high land (eg. Addington Hills), local summits (eg. Pollards Hill) or tall buildings (eg. St Mark's Road car park), but they can also occur on lower land with wide horizons, such as Mitcham Common.

Framed

Some framed views can be seen along roads or between trees, creating or highlighting landmarks. An example is the framing of the IKEA chimneys by the trees along Purley Way.

Linear

In an urban context such as the Wandle Valley, most linear views are seen along roads, especially where they are lined by trees or buildings. Glimpsed views of landmarks between buildings can create a similar effect. Linear views can also occur along (or across) rivers, such as at the confluence of the Wandle and the Thames.

Designed

There are very few designed vistas surviving within the Wandle Valley. The best example is 'Capability' Brown's vista across Wimbledon Park Lake towards the spire of St Mary's Church on the horizon. This is a carefully composed view, using the elements of water, trees, sky and spire to create a deliberately pleasing composition.



- 1. Panoramic expansive view from Addington Hills
- 2. Panoramic urban view from St Marks Road car park
- 3. Framed view of IKEA chimneys along Purley Way
- 4. Linear view along Wandle at confluence with Thames
- 5. Designed view across the lake at Wimbledon Park by Capability Brown

5

IDENTIFYING WANDLE VISTAS



5.1 THE LONGLIST

This section describes the methodology used to identify the ten selected Wandle Vistas through a process of consultation, longlisting and shortlisting. The first stage of the process was to identify, map and visit as many potential viewpoints within the Wandle Valley as possible. The suggested potential viewpoints came from a wide range of sources, as follows:

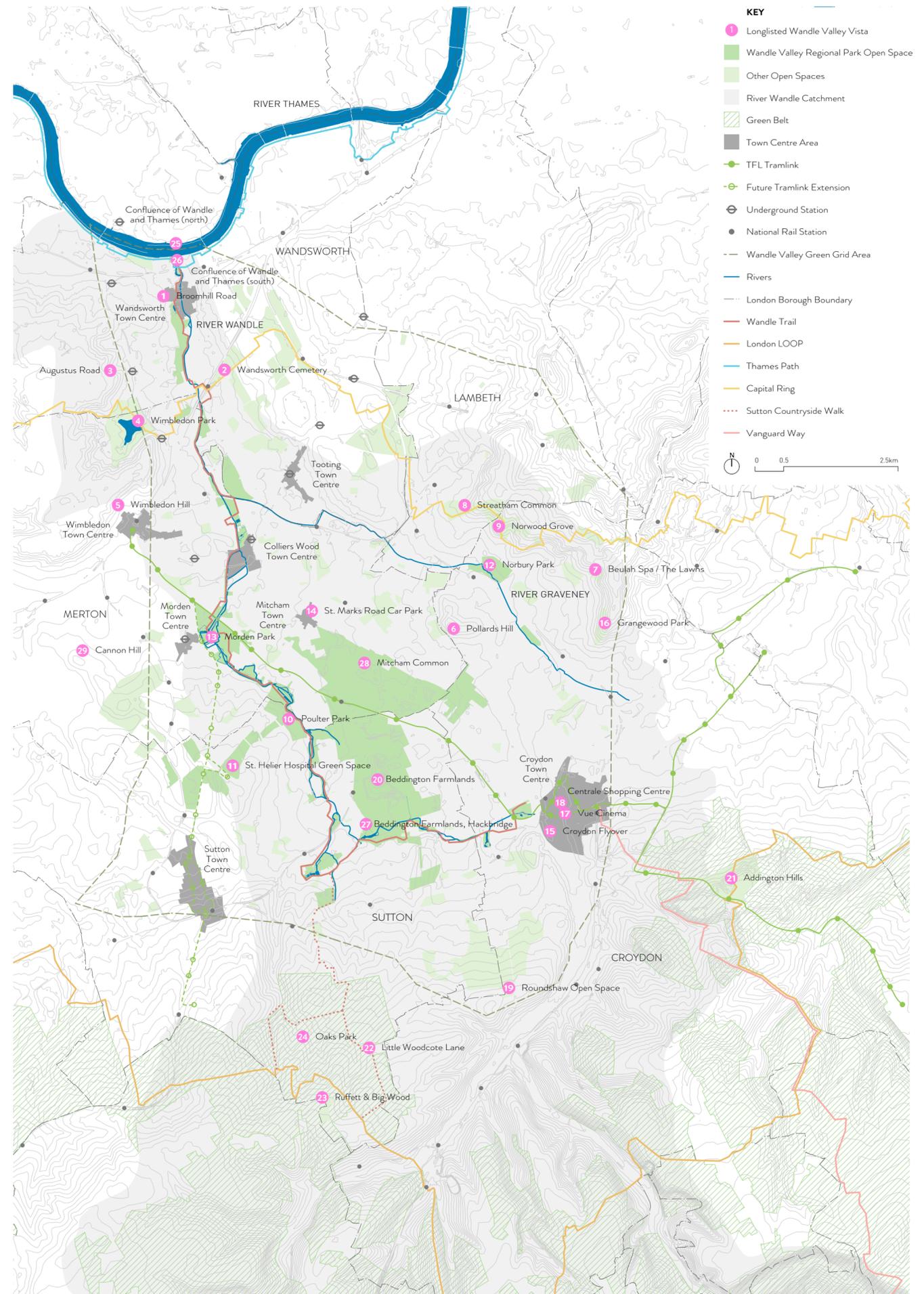
- An initial list of viewpoints provided by Living Wandle Landscape Partnership.
- The favourite views of project volunteers identified through questionnaire surveys and opportunities to mark-up maps.
- Information from the Friends of Wimbledon Park on 'Capability' Brown vistas.
- Members of the Project Steering Group.
- Borough Council officers engaged in the project.
- Our own fieldwork and desk studies.

It is important to note that despite a rigorous process, we cannot guarantee that all potential viewpoints were identified at this stage. Therefore, the longlist below cannot be considered to be fully comprehensive, and there will be other viewpoints within the Wandle Valley which have not been included. It should not be assumed that any viewpoints not included in the longlist are any less important.

The longlist of viewpoints is shown on Fig o6, and includes:

All the longlisted viewpoints were visited by the consultants, and photos of the view were taken. In a small number of cases this was not possible because the view was from a private building (or one which it was necessary to pay to enter) or because it was simply too dangerous to access the viewpoint on foot. Photos of the views were printed as postcards and used in public consultation exercises at various Living Wandle Landscape Partnership events and in volunteer workshops.

No.	Location	Borough
1	Broomhill Road	Wandsworth
2	Wandsworth Cemetery	Wandsworth
3	Augustus Road	Wandsworth
4	Wimbledon Park	Merton / Wandsworth
5	Wimbledon Hill	Merton
6	Pollards Hill	Croydon
7	Beulah Spa / The Lawns	Croydon
8	Streatham Common	Lambeth
9	Norwood Grove	Croydon
10	Poulter Park	Sutton
11	St Helier Hospital Green Space	Sutton
12	Norbury Park	Croydon
13	Morden Park	Merton
14	St Marks Road Multi-Storey Carpark, Mitcham (top deck)	Merton
15	Croydon Flyover	Croydon
16	Grangewood Park	Croydon
17	Vue Cinema, High Street	Croydon
18	Centrale Shopping Centre	Croydon
19	Roundshaw Open Space	Croydon / Sutton
20	Beddington Farmlands	Sutton
21	Addington Hills	Croydon
22	Little Woodcote Lane	Sutton
23	Ruffett & Big Wood	Sutton
24	Oaks Park	Sutton
25	Confluence of Wandle and Thames as seen from Thames north bank	Hammersmith & Fulham
26	Confluence of Wandle and Thames as seen from 'The Spit' (south bank)	Wandsworth
27	Beddington Farmlands Railway Bridge, Hackbridge	Sutton
28	Mitcham Common	Merton
29	Cannon Hill	Merton



Chapter image on preceding pages – Wimbledon Park view

Fig o6 – Wandle Valley Vistas Longlist, approx. 1:55,000

5.2 SHORTLISTING TO TEN

The next stage was to reduce the longlist down to a shortlist of ten viewpoints for in-depth analysis and potential protection and enhancement. The selection of shortlisted viewpoints was made jointly by the consultants and the project steering group, and took into account the following factors:

- A range of locations covering the length of the Wandle Valley.
- Different directions of view.
- A range of elevations, including valley floor, valley side and elevated viewpoints.
- A mix of already-known and new viewpoints.
- Designed and non-designed views.
- A selection of views which can tell the story of the Wandle Valley from geological times to the present day.
- Viewpoints which are easily accessible on foot or by public transport, and which ideally link into existing routes such as long-distance footpaths or trails.
- Potential for enhancement / raised awareness of the viewpoint as a Living Wandle project legacy.

The ten shortlisted viewpoints were re-visited, and in-depth analysis of each view was carried out by the consultants, and also (for several viewpoints) by volunteers. The volunteers also researched the history of the area containing their viewpoint, and its contribution to the landscape story of the Wandle Valley.

Fig 07 shows the shortlisted viewpoints, which are also described in the following table. The viewpoints are ordered chronologically by theme, so they tell the story of the Wandle Valley.

The following section contains a series of profiles, one for each viewpoint, which present the results of this analysis. The profiles contain descriptions of the viewpoints, photos, analysis drawings of the foreground, middle ground and background of the view, and notes of its history and contribution to the story of the Wandle Valley. Each of the viewpoints is unique, although all contain combinations of elements which make them 'Wandle Vistas', as described in section 3.o.

Further information on the viewpoints, forming the basis for interpretation materials, is provided in Section 8.

No.	Name, Direction, (Elev)	Grid Ref	Themes	Links	Borough
1	Addington Hills W-N-NE (135m asl)	TQ 35200 64450	Geology & Topography	London Loop Tramlink (Coombe Lane)	Croydon
2	Pollards Hill S-E-NW (65m asl)	TQ 30293 68822	Early Inhabitants & the Great North Wood	National Rail (Norbury)	Croydon
3	Mitcham Common 360° panorama (38m asl)	TQ 28808 68142	Common Land	Tramlink National Rail (Mitcham Junction)	Merton
4	St Marks Road Car Park 360° panorama (20m asl, plus building height)	TQ 27895 69132	From Rural Retreat to Urban Centre	National Rail (Mitcham Eastfields)	Merton
5	Wimbledon Park S-W (18m asl)	TQ 24811 72446	Designed Views & Capability Brown	Capital Ring Underground (Wimbledon Park)	Merton / Wandsworth
6	Norwood Grove SW-W-NW (65m asl)	TQ 31132 70577	Suburban Development	Capital Ring National Rail (Norbury)	Croydon
7	Wandle Delta E-S-W (3m asl)	TQ 25363 75542	Industrial History of the Wandle	Thames Path Wandle Trail Underground (Parsons Green)	Hammersmith & Fulham / Wandsworth
8	Roundshaw Open Space NW-NE (93m asl)	TQ 31303 62677	Croydon Aerodrome & Chalk Grassland	National Rail (Purley)	Croydon / Sutton
9	Ruffett & Big Wood NW-N-NE (135m asl)	TQ 28165 60630	Green Belt & Horticulture / Smallholdings	London Loop Sutton Countryside Walk National Rail (Woodmansterne)	Sutton
10	Beddington Farmlands from Hackbridge NW-N-NE (28m asl, plus bridge ht)	TQ 28600 65800	New Landscapes	Thameslink Southern Rail (Hackbridge)	Sutton

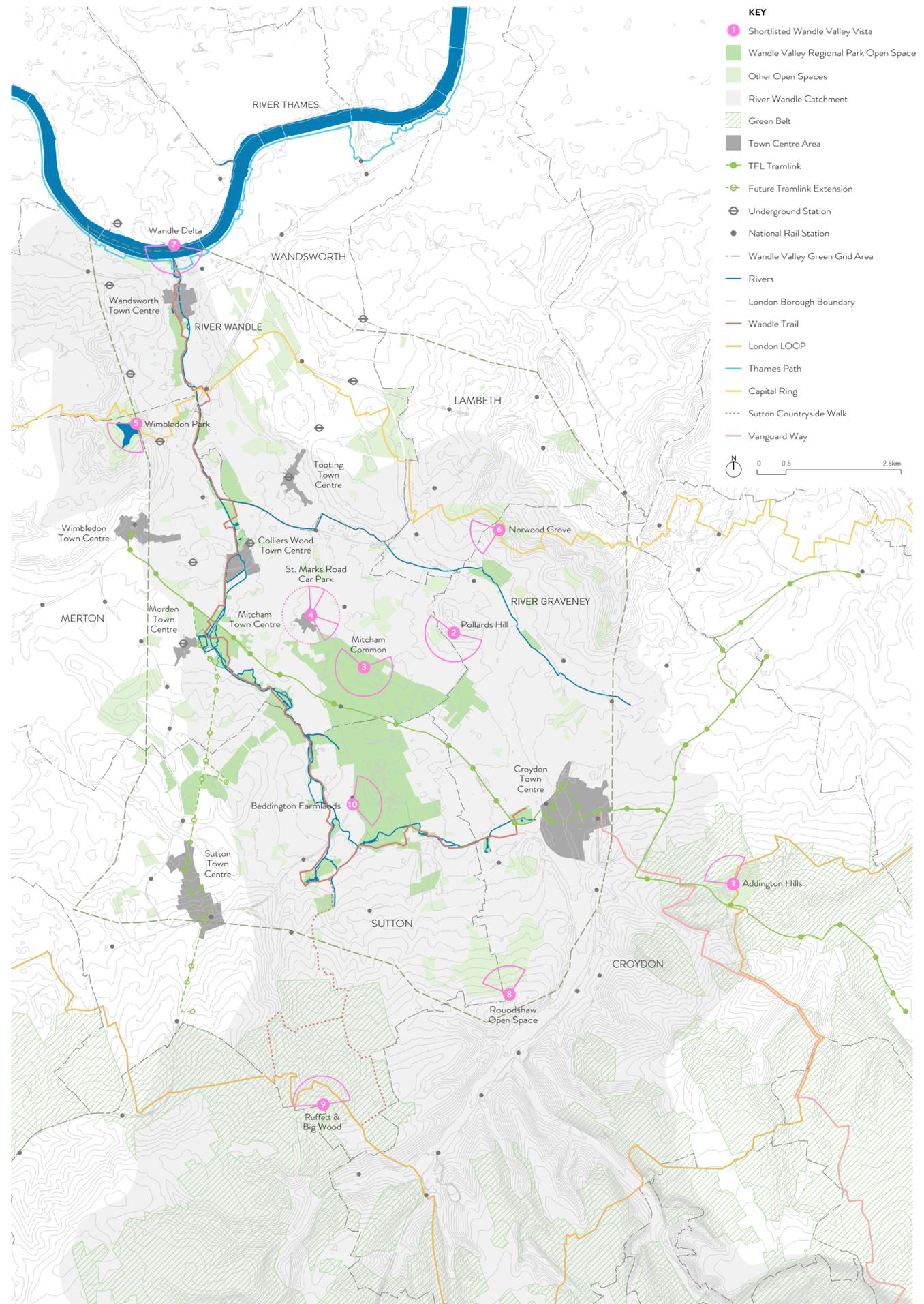


Fig 07 – Wandle Valley Vistas Shortlist, approx. 1:55,000