



THE CAPABILITY BROWN SOCIETY'S REVIEW OF AELTC'S FURTHER SUBMISSION

Date: 29th May 2024

This submission is a further response by the Society to AELTC's adjustment of their application to grant additional permissive public access to two parcels of land at the north and south of their application site.

The new application offers only 0.3ha of additional permissive public access to the southern park giving access to only 7.8ha of land in the southern park and not the 9.4ha that is stated. There are still no public facilities offered in the southern parkland and no significant additional public benefit. The majority of the restricted "ecological area" is retained with no public access, but more importantly the proposed central maintenance hub is retained in one of the more important hillside locations with no public access, a location that commands important views of the lake aligned on the historic vista from the former grounds of Marlborough House and which should be accessed for public benefit in any conservation of the historic landscape.

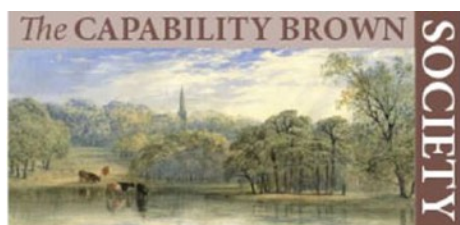
The 1.7ha northern proposed permissive park area does open up the northern Wimbledon Park entrance to the public park but it retains the very dominant large paved plaza area and does little to contribute any significant benefit in providing open access public parkland other than an improved entrance. Additional proposals in the northern area are shown in the public park outside the red line application site which have not been discussed with the community and do not take into consideration proposals for the public park currently tabled by the community and set out in Merton's park masterplan. WC facilities are shown not to be provided on AELTC land and vehicle access arrangement are contrary to what the Friends of Wimbledon Park have published. The very disruptive Queue for the Championship access continues in the public park, which should really not continue to be necessary on public land.

Both proposals tinker with same existing masterplan and do not address fundamental issues namely:

- * This is a commercial entertainment proposal that is not for public recreation, a use not granted under national planning policy on MOL (Green Belt land). Granting approval would set a very dangerous precedent.
- * AELTC have failed to set out any very special circumstances that might justify the significant harm that this application will cause to this Grade II* Historic England registered landscape.
- * The proposed roofed stadium is huge, too high at 24-28m and is harmful and intrusive extending above the height of mature trees and particularly visible across the lake in winter. It will obstruct historic views to the lake and across the valley. It is also submitted as an outline design and not detailed as required in a Conservation Area. Its use may vary from the outline proposals set out.
- * Lack of permanent public access to all the land (which was possible when the municipal golf course was available to all who paid and played, not just those golf club members).

- * Permissive access may be withdrawn.
- * No public access around the lake is provided as required under the 1993 Covenant agreed on purchase of the land when golf ceased to be played.
- * Significant harm to the design of Capability Brown's lake will be caused by an inappropriate boardwalk which would cause ecological damage and interrupt the visual interaction of historic views of the lake margins designed as a serpentine configuration framed by trees.
- * There will be a significant loss of biodiversity (details are discussed by Dr David Dawson)
- * Over 9.4km length of serpentine paths and roadways are proposed on the parkland, land designed by Capability Brown as an open pastoral informal landscape.
- * Many hub buildings, mostly surrounded by high fencing, will contribute to loss of openness as will temporary paraphernalia placed around the courts and grounds for much of the summer months.
- * Historic views to the lake from the public domain are obscured by inappropriate boundary planting and buildings.
- * The maintenance hub building is unfortunately located (as discussed above)
- * Extensive regrading, levelling and re-soiling is proposed to dramatically alter the profile of the land in a manner completely out of character with a Capability Brown landscape.
- * Concrete aprons are proposed around all 38 grass courts.
- * Car parking is proposed during the championship on managed meadowland stated to have significant ecological benefit but to be unnecessarily damaged in the peak grass growing season.
- * AELTC have not properly considered reasonable alternatives as legally obliged under the terms of the required Environmental Impact Assessment focusing only on the same capacity stadium options on their main site rather than considering development elsewhere which may have better economic advantages or that may promote tennis to a wider audience, or to consider a lower capacity stadium, or a land swap with other landowners of the heritage parkland.
- * AELTC have included the access drive to The Wimbledon Club within their application red line, but have no access over this land which to date has not been granted and would impact on the deliverability of their proposal.
- * AELTC have failed to modify their plans at any time to accommodate concerns and aspirations raised by the local community.

For all the above reasons this application should be refused



'Capability Brown's Wimbledon Park'
19th Century Water Colour Circa 1870 by an Unknown Artist

In Heritage Wimbledon Park:

To promote opportunities for the study, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of Wimbledon Park through the conservation and enhancement of its landscape, natural beauty and cultural heritage and to promote and provide facilities for sports activities and wellbeing, for the benefit of local residents, schools and the wider Community.

Elsewhere in the country:

To promote nationally the opportunities for the study, appreciation and enjoyment of the special qualities of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown's landscape designs through the conservation and enhancement of their natural beauty and cultural heritage and to promote and provide facilities for visitors, sports activities and wellbeing for the benefit of local residents, schools, club and the wider community surrounding Capability Brown's landscape designs wherever they may be located.

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