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12.0 SUB AREA 2. ‘WIMBLEDON PARK’

12.1 EXTENT AND BOUNDARY REVIEW

12.1.1 This Sub Area includes that part of Wimbledon Park within the London Borough of Merton, the roadways that surround it, the houses and their gardens that are opposite the Park, on the south east side of Home Park Road, and those on the south west side that front the road and/or back onto the Park. The boundary is defined by the District Line railway embankment and Park edge to the east, to the south east by the rear boundaries of houses in Home Park Road, to the west by the rear pavement line on the west side of Church Road, to the north by the boundary with the London Borough of Wandsworth and to the south by the northern boundary of Sub Area 1 ‘The Historic Core’. The London Borough of Wandsworth has prepared a draft character assessment for the Wimbledon North (Wimbledon Park) Conservation Area, within its area.

12.1.2 The houses in Home Park Road are included primarily for the way that they and their gardens form part of the historic, wooded backdrop to Wimbledon Par., and because but many of them are also good examples of quality individual houses from their period.

12.1.3 The western boundary has been drawn to include the entire width of Church Road as this follows the alignment of part of the drive to the Marlborough Manor House, laid out by Capability Brown, and the mature Park Oaks and grass verge along its west side appear as an extension to the Wimbledon Park landscape.

12.2 BUILDINGS WITHIN THE SUB AREA

12.2.1 Buildings within the municipal part of the Park:
Sailing Club
Fitness Centre/Bowls Pavilion
Athletics grandstand and compound
Tennis pavilion
Toilet block
The White Pavilion

12.2.2 Buildings within the remainder of the Park:
Wimbledon Park Golf Club clubhouse
Wimbledon Club clubhouse and out-buildings

12.2.3 Home Park Road:
North west side:
Nos. 106 to 112 and 118 to 126.

South east side:
Nos. 35 42 to 119, 121 to 127.
12.3 OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE SUB AREA

PUBLIC OPEN SPACES:

12.3.1 Home Park Road:
The municipal part of Wimbledon Park, including the lake.
(The public park, the lake and up to a 10 metre wide strip around the lake perimeter are owned by the London Borough of Merton, although the lake perimeter is leased to Wimbledon Park Golf Club.)

PRIVATE OPEN SPACES:

12.3.2 Church Road:
The Wimbledon Club grounds.
The Wimbledon Park Golf Course.

12.3.3 Home Park Road:
The Wimbledon Park Golf Course
(The golf course land, including the Ashen Grove Wood, is owned by AELTC and leased to the golf club.)

12.3.4 Wimbledon Park, including the Golf Course, is included in the London Inventory ‘Historic Green Spaces in Merton’ published by the London Parks and Gardens Trust.

12.4 REGISTER OF PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST

12.4.1 The entire Wimbledon Park, including that part within the London Borough of Wandsworth, is included on the English Heritage Register as Grade II*. The listing description is attached as Appendix 2 of this document. It includes the statement: ‘Brown’s lake, and the lawned and wooded scene round from south-east to north-west, is a remarkable landscape survival within 20th Century London.’

12.4.2 The designation gives no additional statutory controls, but Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 ‘Planning and the Historic Environment’ states that local planning authorities should protect registered parks and their settings.

12.4.3 The Registered area is indicated on Figure 12.1.

12.5 STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS

12.5.1 There are no Statutory Listed Buildings within this sub-area.
12.6 BUILDINGS ON THE LOCAL (NON STATUTORY) LIST OF BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

12.6.1 Home Park Road:
Nos. 103, 121 and 123.

12.6.2 Descriptions of the Locally Listed Buildings are given in Appendix 3. The buildings are indicated on Figure 12.1. Buildings that are recommended to be investigated for possible inclusion on the Local List are identified in 12.22.12 and on Figure 12.1.

12.7 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

12.7.1 Home Park Road:
The Merton (No.248) Tree Preservation Order 1997 '95 Home Park Road’ applied to two willow trees within the front garden. Both have since been removed as they were proved to be causing subsidence to the house.

12.7.2 The area covered by this Tree Preservation Order is indicated on Figure 12.1.
Figure 12.1: Sub-Area 2: Wimbledon Park - Listed Buildings and TPOs
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12.8 ARCHAEOLOGY

12.8.1 The entire Sub Area lies within Archaeological Priority Zone 19 ‘Wimbledon Park House, Garden Archaeology’, which also includes the parts of Arthur Road and Leopold Road within Sub Area 3, as well as extending further out to the south and east. The zone offers opportunities to examine the historic Manor House gardens and their relationships with the sites of the first, third and fourth Wimbledon Manor houses.

Archaeological Priority Zones are indicated in Part One, Figure 7.0.

12.8.2 Archaeological finds:

Home Park Road: No.110. Traces of heavy foundations were found when this property was being built in the 1920’s. These were possibly the entrance to the Lower Court of the 1st Wimbledon Manor House (The Elizabethan Manor House).

No.124 was investigated in 1992: This site lies close to the position of the Elizabethan Manor House, and within the area of the associated terraced formal garden to the south. No direct evidence of the house was found, although several bricks of probable 17th Century date were. It was, however, established that the site occupied part of the garden area of the Manor House, and that the house itself would have been located to the north west. It was also possible to produce a historically coherent picture of the site and to reassess previous evidence relating to the location of the Elizabethan Manor House produced by Higham in 1962.

12.9 NATURE CONSERVATION

Sites of Borough Importance:

Wimbledon Park. Grade I.

12.9.1 The area of Wimbledon Park outside of the municipal park is identified within the London Borough of Merton Unitary Development Plan as a ‘Site of Importance for Nature Conservation’ (Policy NE.6), as is the part of the District Line railway embankment adjoining the park, outside of but adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary.

12.9.2 The London Ecology Unit has designated Wimbledon Park Lake, Woods and Golf Course as a site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation, Grade 1.
12.9.3 The most important natural feature of the park today is the large number of old Oak trees, (former Parkland Oaks) providing a continuity of habitat for species of insect typical of old woodland pasture trees. Both Stag Beetle and Lesser Stag Beetle are common in the park, indicating the value of this old wood. The old Oaks also support breeding Nuthatch.

12.9.4 Many of the twenty five oldest trees, which are some 200 years old and therefore probably date from the Capability Brown landscaping, are on the golf course, although two lie within the pavements of Church Road and Home Park Road, and one in the public park near the bowling green. Some 70 trees within the park are about 100 years old.

12.9.5 There are two old woods within the Park which also date back 200 years or more. These are Horse Close Wood (within the London Borough of Wandsworth and therefore outside of the Wimbledon North Conservation Area boundary), and what remains of Ashen Grove Wood, on the eastern shore of the lake next to the municipal park. Ashen Grove Wood may have existed before 1600 and therefore be ancient. It contains Wood Millet, a grass usually indicative of ancient woods, and areas of Elm scrub that mark the position of several Elm trees before Dutch Elm Disease took them in the 1970s.

12.9.6 The lake is the best site in the Borough for wetland birds. Species include Shoveler, Pochard, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Mute Swan, Cormorant and Gulls. There is wetland vegetation at the margins of the lake, including Sweet-flag and Yellow Iris. Carp are the main species of fish in the lake, but there are several others. Several species of bat are also attracted to the lake area.

12.9.7 This is outside of but adjacent to the Sub Area and Conservation Area boundary. The London Ecology Unit has designated the habitats alongside the District line embankment adjacent to Wimbledon Park as a Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation, Grade II. This is quite wooded along the western side, with Sycamore, Ash, Elm, Oak and Birch among the species. Two hedgerows have been planted within the park to extend native woodland onto this edge of the park.

Green Corridors:

12.9.8 The entire Park area, the railway embankment, the rear part of the gardens of houses fronting the east side of Home Park Road and the plot at no. 118 Home Park Rd are identified within the Unitary Development Plan as part of a network of ‘Green Corridors’ (Policy NE.8). These are relatively continuous areas of green space leading through the built environment, which link to each other and larger green spaces. They help to ensure the maintenance and movement of plant and animal species through the Borough.

12.9.9 Areas of nature conservation importance are indicated on Figure 12.1.A.
12.10 OTHER UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATIONS AND PROPOSALS

12.10.1 The entire Park area within this Sub Area is designated in the Merton Unitary Development Plan as Open Space (Policies L5 – L8), Metropolitan Open Land (Policies NE1, NE2), and Green Chain (Policy NE3). A Leisure Walking Route (Policy L2) crosses the Park.

12.10.2 The Park is also identified within the Plan as Site Proposal No.19P, where landscape restoration and re-creation work and enhancement of areas of nature conservation interest are proposed.

12.10.3 These designations are indicated on Figure 12.1.A.
Figure 12.1A: Sub-Area 2: Wimbledon Park - Unitary Development Plan Designations
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12.11  HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Up to the end of the 17th Century

12.11.1 The Park dates from 1576 and focused on the first Manor House built at Vineyard Hill in 1588, later known as the Elizabethan Manor House (See paras. 12.13.1 – 12.13.5 for description of house.) The park was managed as a deer park to provide fresh meat for the Manor of Wimbledon.

12.11.2 By the early 17th Century the Park occupied nearly 400 acres. The Park was dotted with large clumps of trees and small woods where the deer grazed. The eastern part of the estate, where ‘The Grid’ and Wimbledon Park Station now lie, was Ashen Grove Farm. (Also known as ‘Wimbledon Park’ farm.) This was established in 1633 by John Halfhead from Hertfordshire, who cleared a wood there at the time. The western part of the park was laid out formally. Near the Elizabethan Manor House were eight fish ponds, rectangular pleasure gardens with regimented orchards and vine cultivation, and a pheasant garden.

12.11.3 Towards the end of the first half of the 17th Century, the involvement of specialist gardeners, including the French Andre Mollet, (who was also the designer of Greenwich Park and involved in the design of Hampton Court Gardens) brought about many changes to the gardens, including the introduction of orchards, walks and an Orangery. Many trees were brought in from Holland.

12.11.4 During the second half of the century the gardens were refashioned by John Evelyn in the style of a French restoration garden, containing mazes, wildernesses and a great variety of fruit trees.

18th Century

12.11.5 By 1720 the gardens were altered again, becoming more ornamental, and the park was dominated by a Great Avenue leading from the house towards Putney. The Grand Avenue cut across what is now the south-western corner of the golf course. No trace of it remains today.

12.11.6 The Elizabethan Manor House was demolished in 1720 and Belvedere House built. (See Sub Area 4 ‘Belvedere’). The third manor house, Marlborough House, (also later known as The Spencer Manor House) was built in 1732 on what now forms part of the Ricards Lodge and former Park House School playing fields, (see Sub-Area 3 ‘Arthur Road and Leopold Road’). In 1744 the Wimbledon Manor was inherited by the Spencer family, and in 1785 Marlborough House was burned down.
12.11.7 John Rocque’s map of 1741-45 shows the entire park with the Marlborough Manor House to the south. The Grand Avenue runs north west of the house, and another avenue to the north east of the house links the Manor to the main road to London, now Durnsford Road. The map shows that much of the Park was cultivated at that time.

12.11.8 In the 1750s the Park was greatly extended to the north to comprise some 1200 acres. The formal avenue then reached as far as Tibbet’s Corner in Wandsworth.

12.11.9 In 1764 Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown was commissioned by Earl John Spencer to improve the view northward from his mansion at Marlborough House, and over the next twenty years he transformed the
Renaissance gardens into a more natural landscape. Brown cut down some of the long straight avenues of trees, forming wide vistas through thinned woods, and introduced new plantations. Horse Close Wood and Ashen Grove (or Vineyard Hill) Wood were two woodland clumps included in the landscaping. Swampy areas were drained and a dam built near the confluence of two branches of Wimbledon Park Brook, coming down from the higher land to the west, to form a 30 acre (12 hectare) lake.

12.11.10 Brown also laid out a new winding drive from the Portsmouth Road to the Manor House. This was entered past a lodge at Tibbets Corner in Wandsworth, and followed the line of part of the present day Church Road. (And of the adjacent present day Victoria Drive within the Borough of Wandsworth).

12.11.11 Capability Brown’s landscape, particularly the lake and the lawned and wooded scene around it, is still evident today. Many of the parkland Oaks also date from that time, as does Horse Close Wood to the north (within the Borough of Wandsworth), and the remnant of Ashen Grove Wood, close to the Home Park Road frontage, which once formed part of the backdrop to the lake.

12.11.12 The Park was used for garden parties, boating, fishing and shooting.

19th Century

12.11.13 The fourth Manor House, Wimbledon Park House, was completed in 1802 for Earl Spencer, again on what is now former school grounds to the south east of Arthur Road. (See Sub-Area 3, ‘Arthur Road and Leopold Road’ for more information.)

12.11.14 In 1846 the entire estate was sold by the fourth Earl Spencer to John Augustus Beaumont, a property developer, for 85,000 pounds. A process of steady erosion of the park began, starting in 1850 with the development of its northern boundaries, now within the London Borough of Wandsworth.

12.11.15 The 1865 Ordnance Survey Map, reproduced in ‘Part One’ of this document, shows the estate still nearly intact, with the woods at Ashen Grove (or Vineyard Hill) and Horse Close Wood. A cottage, known as Day’s Cottage is shown on the site of today’s bowling pavilion. Day was an employee of Beaumont.

12.11.16 Much of today’s built landscape of Wimbledon was shaped by Beaumont. In 1872 he sold Wimbledon Park House and its immediate grounds, and laid out Lake Road, Leopold Road, Arthur Road and Home Park Road, where he wanted to develop a site for villa dwellers with no rival in England. The house then became separated from what remained of the park by urban development. Beaumont died in 1886, leaving his estate to his daughter, Augusta, who later became Lady Layne.
In 1889 the embankment of the London and South West Railway (now the District Line) encroached the eastern boundary of the Park.

Lady Layne was keen to dispose of the estate. Land around the lake was leased to sports clubs, including the Wimbledon Park Golf Club when it was first formed in 1890, and the Wimbledon Hockey Club in 1891. The Wimbledon Club purchased their current, central site in 1899, and in 1909 the Wimbledon Park Bowls Club commenced.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1896, reproduced in ‘Part One’ of this document, shows that there was just one house within Home Park Road. This was a substantial dwelling in large grounds on the north west side of the road, where Nos. 118 to 126 are today.

20th Century

In 1914 the Wimbledon Corporation Act was passed, in order to prevent further losses of the Park to development. This enabled the purchase of the remaining 122 acres of park in Merton and 33 in Wandsworth from Lady Layne. The present boundary between the existing golf course and public Park was then formalised.

During the First World War a piggery was established in the Park, and most of the land between Horse Close Wood and the lake was given over to allotments.

After the war, erosion of the Park did, nevertheless, continue. In 1922 the area adjacent to Church Road and Somerset Road was sold to the All England Club, and in 1925 the northern, wooded slopes of Vineyard Hill, to the south east of Home Park Road and known as Banky Field, were controversially sold to developers. This sale was to finance new park facilities close to the Home Park Road entrance, including the tennis courts and bowling green which remain today.

The 1934 Ordnance Survey Map, reproduced in ‘Part One’ of this document shows the development of Banky Field with houses adjacent to Home Park Road, the tennis courts and other public facilities. It also shows that part of the lake has been filled in to the south to provide more land for the golf course.

Most of the houses which exist today on the south east side of the road are shown. Exceptions include nos. 51 to 61, as the land here was still part of Vineyard Hill Wood, later known as Cherry Tree Wood. The houses on the north west side, at nos. 106 to 112 are also shown.

The existing Wimbledon Park Golf Club clubhouse building was erected in 1944, although it has been extended since. In 1948 the rockery waterfall outfall to the lake was constructed.
12.11.25 After the Second World War the public facilities of the Park were
slowly further developed: In 1952 a pavilion was erected between the
tennis courts and the bowling green, and the athletics track opened,
while in 1956 the playground and paddling pool were built.

12.11.26 *It was also in the 1950s that the original houses at nos. 118 to 126, on the
north west side of Home Park Road, were built. Cherry Tree Wood on
the south side survived until the mid 1950s. It is still shown on the
1954 Ordnance Survey Map, but the houses here were soon to be built.
They and the pair of houses at Nos. 105 and 109, and the recently
demolished house at No.125, are all shown on the 1962 Ordnance
Survey Map.*

12.11.27 In 1993 the freehold of the golf course was sold by Merton Council to
the All England Lawn Tennis Club, with the lake edge retained in
Borough ownership. The tennis courts were upgraded and new
floodlighting installed by AELTC in partnership with Merton Council,
and a replacement park pavilion erected.

12.11.28 The Wimbledon Club has a new pavilion, erected in 1997, while the
Wimbledon Park Golf Club was extended in 1998.

21st Century

12.11.29 The wider valley landscape continues to change, most dramatically with
development at the All England Lawn Tennis Club in Church Road.

12.11.30 Restoration and renovation works are taking place within the public
park.

12.11.31 *There is pressure for the demolition of individual houses, particularly
within Home Park Road, and their rebuilding with larger houses that
occupy a greater part of the plot. Recent developments at Nos.87, 115,
125, 127 and 122 are examples. The building at No. 127, on former*
Arthur Road rear garden land, indicates a further pressure to develop open land between and around existing buildings.

12.11.32 Negative issues relating to the historic character of the Park landscape are summarised in 12.21.1.
Figure 12.2: Sub-Area 2: Wimbledon Park - Age of Buildings
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12.12 EXISTING PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Wimbledon Park

12.12.1 Wimbledon Park Lake is the focus of an historic, designed, valley landscape which forms the core of this Sub Area. The development of the Park spans four centuries and reflects the changing cultural tastes in park design as well as the pressure for encroachment and development.

12.12.2 The lake is the largest body of water in the Borough and one of the largest in south London. It is a registered reservoir. The Park grounds extend around the lake and include both public and private recreation facilities. The Park is mainly open space, including extensive areas of grass, divided by belts and clumps of mature trees, but does include a scattering of 20th Century buildings, all ancillary to the recreation use.
12.12.3 The north eastern part of the park between the railway line and the lake is in municipal use. The southern part of this, close to Home Park Road, is an intensive recreation area, including tennis courts, two playgrounds, a paddling pool, a bowling green and sailing centre at the lake edge. North of this is an open parkland area and athletics stadium which cross the boundary with the adjacent London Borough of Wandsworth.

![Part of intensive recreation area close to Home Park Road](image)

12.12.4 Part of the west side of the lake and central part of the Park are occupied by The Wimbledon Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club, a private sports club.

12.12.5 The remainder of the Park is in use as a private 18 hole golf course, (The Wimbledon Golf Club), which occupies 73 acres (29.5 hectares).

**Church Road**

12.12.6 The sinuous alignment of Church Road (together with that of Victoria Drive in the London Borough of Wandsworth) formed part of the drive to the third Wimbledon Manor House, (Marlborough House), within Capability Brown’s landscape (see para. 12.11.9 – 12.11.11). Church Road now forms the western edge of this part of the North Wimbledon Conservation Area.
12.12.7 The alignment of Home Park Road was laid out in the 1870s by John Augustus Beaumont, and initially formed a route through the Park. Most of the houses within Home Park Road were built in the 1920s, on the rising, well planted, and then south-eastern most part of the Park, known as ‘Banky Field’. These houses and their gardens, together with those on the north west side of Arthur Road (within sub area 3, ‘Arthur Road and Leopold Road’), now form a prominent, raised and wooded backdrop to the Park when viewed from the north and west.
The houses on the south east side of Home Park Road are aligned in a row, curving away from the Park frontage to both the north and the south. In the main, there is with a fairly uniform and modest set back from the road. They are built on plots are rectangular plots and of varying length, and the houses are mainly substantial, detached, and of individual, traditional styles. Between them are gaps of various sizes, that allow views through, from within Home Park Road and beyond, to the mature planting within the long rear gardens. Some of these gaps are modest and/or above single storey side additions, others are larger, especially that between the two Locally Listed Buildings at nos. 121 and 123. Development at the north east end of the road is more dense, with smaller buildings on smaller plots, and with a narrower set back from the road edge.

The curving south western end of Home Park Road rises steeply to the south, where it forms a junction with Arthur Road. On the western side of the road, and backing onto the golf course within the Park, is a rectangular pocket of land, occupied by mainly large, detached houses, again of a variety of traditional styles, dating from around 1920 to the present day. The arrangement of plots is irregular here, though most are rectangular in shape. The mostly large, wide plots within the northern-most part of this group extend from the Park to the road frontage, and are occupied by the earlier buildings. To the south is a large backland plot behind smaller, but still substantial, plots fronting the road. The land falls from the road to the north and west, so the houses here are positioned lower than the road. This allows views over the rooftops, as well as through the often substantial gaps between the buildings, to mature trees within the rear gardens, to the Park behind, and beyond.

The frontage to the eastern side of this southern end of the road, close to the junction with Arthur Road, is formed partly by the fenced rear boundaries of the rear gardens of houses in Arthur Road, which rise
behind, and partly by the two recent developments at Nos. 125 and 127 Home Park Road, erected on what was formerly mostly rear garden land.

12.12.11 Despite much recent infill development, there remains a strong sense of rhythm in the residential layout of Home Park Road, emphasised by the landscaped gaps that help blend the built development and the formal landscape of the historic parkland, together with a sympathetic relationship between development and the natural contours of the ground.

12.12.12 The main elements described in this section are indicated in a graphic form on Figure 12.3 ‘Character Analysis’.

12.12.13 Negative issues relating to the pattern of development are summarised in 12.21.3.
12.13 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS (and relevant further historic details)

12.13.1 Locally Listed Buildings are identified on Figure 12.1, and their descriptions are given in Appendix 3. Buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and/or are suggested for inclusion in the Local List are identified on Figure 12.1 and in Section 12.21 of this document.
Negative issues relating to building types and materials are summarised in 12.21.3.

The lost Elizabethan Manor House:

12.13.2 This first manor house was built for Thomas Cecil, lord of the manor and courtier to King Henry VIII, to the east of the Parish Church and The Old Rectory House in 1588. It looked north over the then extensive Wimbledon Park, on what is now gardens, roadway and some houses near the top of Home Park Road. It was then known as Wimbledon Palace. It had extensive gardens, of a conventional layout for the period, a series of blocks arranged without obvious symmetry or reference to the house.

12.13.3 The location of the house was determined in 1962 by the late Mr Charles S.S. Higham, and confirmed by the Museum of London in 1992 (See para. 12.8.2). It is as indicated on Figure 12.3 ‘Character Analysis’.

12.13.4 The building is said to have been exceptionally interesting, with elaborately terraced forecourts, a symmetrical front, and a plan which included the progressive feature of a ground floor hall with great chamber above. It was altered in the 1640s by Inigo Jones and Nicholas Stone, involving the reconstruction and extension of the west wing. The garden was also enlarged and given a simplified and more symmetrical layout. Later in the 17th Century the garden layout was changed further, involving a large semi-circle feature to the rear of the house. An early 18th Century plan of the house and gardens

12.13.5 The Elizabethan Manor House was instrumental in the village of Wimbledon becoming one of the social centres of Elizabethan and Stuart England. It was used to hold the Manor Court, visits were made to it by Queen Elizabeth in the 1590s, and it was later owned by the wife of King Charles I, Queen Henrietta Maria.

12.13.6 The Elizabethan Manor House was demolished in 1720 by its then owner, Sir Theodore Janssen. He had some of its bricks used to build the second manor house, on the crest of Vineyard Hill, on what is now known as the Belvedere Estate, with long views to the north across the historic park. (For Belvedere House see Sub Area 4, ‘Belvedere’.)
Buildings within Wimbledon Park:

12.13.7 The White Pavilion

Built in 1925, close to the Home Park Road entrance, this was originally intended as a tea pavilion, and was to have a pitched roof with chimneys, but was prevented by restrictions on sales so close to a public road. The resultant, flat, asphalt roof now forms a distinctive upper level viewing terrace across the public park. The building itself is also of a distinctive appearance, with painted concrete walls and balustrade and metal windows. It appears run down at present, and suffers from graffiti, but the building does make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Park. It is suggested that the building be investigated for possible inclusion on the Local List, as an example of park architecture from its period.

12.13.8 Toilet block near playground

A small, rendered building with pitched roof and minimal, high level windows. It is of utilitarian appearance and does not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Park.

12.13.9 Fitness centre/bowls pavilion

A pre-war building of a symmetrical design, constructed of brick with replacement concrete roof tiles on a hipped, pitched roof. It has a small central clock tower, and a large dormer within the front roof slope. It is located approximately on the site of a 19th Century lakeside cottage. (Then known as ‘Day’s Cottage and used by Day, an employee of J.A Beaumont.) It turns its back to the lake and faces north-east over the bowling green and open grassed area.
The building is of a design typical of park pavilions of it’s time, and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Park. It is suggested that it be investigated further for possible inclusion on the Local List. There is scope to enhance it’s appearance, particularly when viewed from around the lake. The yard storage compound with high chain link fencing and corrugated iron sheds, between the pavilion and the lake, is harmful to it’s setting.

12.13.10 Athletics Compound
The compound is surrounded by a two metre high concrete post and timber panel fence, and by a high screen of Conifers and mature Lombardy poplars. The grandstand on its west side dates from the 1948 opening of the athletics track. It has a profiled metal roof on a painted steel cantilever structure, with painted brick walls and a concrete tiered seating area.
The compound fence is unsightly and the grandstand rather shabby in appearance, while the linear tree screen is a very dominant and alien feature within the historic landscape of the Park.

12.13.11 Sailing Club
This lake side building is of concrete and brick construction, with glazed panels and a boxy central tower feature. It was built around 1970 by the Greater London Council. It is of a bulky, rather brutal, modern design and is harmful to the historic character and appearance of the Park, particularly because of its very prominent location within the historic landscape.

12.13.12 Tennis Pavilion
Built of timber in 1992, this has a steep ridged roof with gable ends and a distinctive perimeter veranda. It is located between the putting green and tennis courts, on the same site as two previous pavilions, both of which were burned down. It includes a cafe. This is an attractive, suitably located building.

12.13.13 The Wimbledon Golf Club clubhouse

A large two storey building with clay tile hipped roof with projecting gable features.

12.13.14 The Wimbledon Club clubhouse
A large, part two storey, part single storey brick building with hipped roof and central clock tower feature. The building is discreetly located at the rear of the club grounds. There is also a large shed-like building with ridged roof, prominent at the lake edge.
Home Park Road:

The following paragraphs describe the predominant characteristics of the buildings and materials used.

There is repetition of strong design elements in differing house types within the road, and a flow of horizontal features, which create a sense of harmony within the established street scene. Building characteristics common to many of the original houses include the use of: clay tiled hipped roofs; often symmetrical or near symmetrical front elevation designs; front gable projections; bay windows; tall chimney stacks; balustrades, (mainly at first floor level); and often attached garages. Second floor elements are traditionally mostly contained within the roofspace, resulting in the use of dormer windows, sometimes at the front.

Many of the buildings are good examples of quality houses from their period. Several are quite similar in design and external appearance, while others are more individual in style. Those at nos. 93 – 95 are wider and taller than most houses in the road, occupy wide plots and have several front dormer windows. The group at nos. 73 – 77 are notable for their large depth and staggered building footprint, while the more recent buildings at nos. 47 – 61 exhibit a greater mix of building styles, including ridged roofs with gable ends.

Materials include brick, (sometimes painted), render, tile hanging and the use of timber detailing.

Several of the houses are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (see Fig.12.1 and para. 12.21.0). These are of both individual and group value, but regrettably the appearance of some has been compromised by unsympathetic alterations over time.
Some Home Park Road Houses
12.14 **TOPOGRAPHY**

12.14.1 The land drops quite steeply from the south within Church Road and from both the south and the east within Home Park Road, down from the ridge of Arthur Road. It falls more steadily to the north and east within the Park to reach it’s lowest level in the entire Conservation Area. Contours are indicated on Figure 6.0 in ‘Part One’ of this document.

12.14.2 The ridge of Arthur Road offers a lush backdrop to the Park as well as a skyline of rooftops and chimneys amongst mature trees. Within Home Park Road the contours have influenced the relationship of development with the ground. The topography allows views within, into and out of the Sub Area.

12.15 **VIEWS**

12.15.1 There are several historic views in the Sub Area, including those within, into and out of the Park that give an impression of the Capability Brown landscape. The mature trees and planting contribute to the quality of views throughout the Sub Area.

From Home Park Road:

12.15.2 Views over the golf course to the lake and beyond can be had from much of the length of road. Two viewing points with benches have been installed. Aspects include the historic view on the alignment with both The Elizabethan Manor House and Marlborough Manor House (also known as the Spencer Manor House), and that from the latter towards the lake and Horse Close Wood with Central London beyond.

12.15.3 Regrettably, some views are partly obscured by the concrete wall to the boundary of the golf course, and/or are marred by course tree **and other** planting which has no reference to the historic landscape.

![View from Home Park Road towards lake with woods beyond](image-url)
There are views south towards the prominent spire of St. Mary’s Church along the length of the road, and several views through the gaps between buildings to garden land and mature tree planting behind.

From Church Road:
This part of Church Road follows the alignment of part of Capability Brown’s drive to the Marlborough Manor House. It therefore offers historic views, including that from the top looking north towards Central London and that from the south to St. Mary’s Church and ridge. There are also views west towards Wimbledon Park lake, and a series of further views south towards the hilltop St. Mary’s Church and Old Rectory House.

These views are regrettably also partly obscured by the concrete wall to the boundary of the golf course.
View from south of Church Road towards St. Mary's Church

Views from Church Road west towards Golf Course and Lake
12.15.7 From within the Park:
There are panoramic views across the golf course and lake from the lakeside. These include the view to the south east towards the hillside ridge, where the Home Park Road houses and their sloping, wooded, gardens rise towards the ridge of Arthur Road beyond, forming a wooded backdrop to the Park, and the view south towards St Mary’s Church and the Old Rectory House.

View to south east across lake towards hillside ridge

View to south across golf course to St. Mary's Church

12.15.8 Views are indicated on Figure 12.3.

12.15.9 Negative issues relating to views are summarised in 12.21.2.
12.16 OPEN SPACES

Wimbledon Park

12.16.1 The open spaces of Wimbledon Park are listed in Section 12.3 and briefly described in paragraphs 12.12.1 – 12.12.5. The extract from the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, attached as Appendix 2, gives more detailed information. Further information is also contained in Section 12.9, Nature Conservation, as part of the Park is a Grade 1 Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation. Wimbledon Park, including the Golf Course, is also included in the London Inventory ‘Historic Green Spaces in Merton’, published by the London Parks and Gardens Trust.

Other Spaces

12.16.2 Many of the houses in Home Park Road are set in spacious plots and gardens. These offer spaces between and around the buildings which make an important contribution to the spaciousness of the Sub Area, and can also be important for nature conservation. (See 12.9.8 ‘Green Corridors’.) They also blend the built development with the landscape, and offer a raised backdrop to the Park.

12.17 TREES AND GREENERY

12.17.1 The mature Capability Brown park landscape, as described in 12.11.9-12.11.11, 12.9 ‘Nature Conservation’, and the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, (attached as Appendix 2) makes a major contribution to the character and appearance of the Sub Area.

12.17.2 The gardens of the houses in Home Park Road contain much informal, mature planting, including mature trees, (many remaining from when the area was open parkland), shrubs and hedges. This is often within both front and rear gardens as well as alongside highway boundaries. The sloping gardens and mature planting contribute to the historic wooded backdrop to the Park, when viewed from the north and west.

Some garden greenery in Home Park Road
12.17.3 *The impressive, irregularly spaced, mature Parkland Oak street trees within the wide grass verge alongside the AELTC grounds in Church Road, together with some more recent planting here, continue the style of the parkland landscape across this road. These, as well as the two historic Parkland Oak street trees on the east side of Church Road and within Home Park Road, make a major contribution to the historic interest and leafy appearance of the Sub Area.*

![Green verge and trees, Church Road](image1)

![Old Park Oak tree, Church Road](image2)

![Old Park Oak tree, Home Park Road](image3)

12.17.4 The mature trees and planting throughout the Sub Area also make a major contribution to the quality of views into, out of and within it.

12.17.5 Negative issues relating to trees and greenery are summarised in 12.21.4.
12.18 HIGHWAY BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

Home Park Road:
The south east side:

12.18.1 Most of the buildings on the south east side of the road have low front boundary treatments. Many of these are original walls, about 1 metre high and of concrete, moulded to imitate stone work and sometimes painted, concrete block walls of about 1 metre in height, which may be contemporary with the houses, others are of brick, and there are a few low railings and fences. Most have some greenery, which helps to soften their appearance.

![Typical front boundary wall, Home Park Road](image1.jpg)

12.18.2 There is a different treatment at the boundary to the locally listed buildings at nos. 121 and 123, where there is a higher red brick wall with panels and detailing, which steps down to follow the slope of the road, and has a tall hedge behind.

![Locally Listed Buildings and their highway boundary](image2.jpg)

12.18.3 At the most southern part of the road, where the rear gardens of houses in Arthur Road abut the highway, the frontage is formed by
high timber fences with planting behind.

The north west side:

12.18.4

The front boundaries to the houses on the north-west side of the road are traditionally a mix of hedge or other planting and timber fencing, usually a little higher than those on the south east side of the road, although there are a few very low brick walls with greenery behind. It is noticeable that there are usually no gates to the vehicle accesses. Taken together, these boundaries offer a lush appearance. A new, more formal, and therefore less compatible element, (at least until planting becomes established), has recently been introduced by the use of high railings and gates at new developments at nos. 122 and 124.

Lush boundary treatments to houses on north west side of Home Park Road

Concrete wall to golf course boundary

12.18.5

The remainder of this side of the road abuts Wimbledon Park. Alongside the golf course the boundary is formed by a rather ugly and incongruous, 1.2 metre high, concrete post and panel wall, topped with barbed wire and some greenery, with trees behind. Viewing points
12.18.6 Alongside the public park the boundary is formed by metal railings and gates, again with greenery and mature trees behind.

**Church Road:**

The east side alongside golf course:

12.18.7 This boundary is also formed by the rather ugly and incongruous, 1.2 metre high, concrete post and panel wall, topped with barbed wire, with greenery, including mature trees, behind.

![Incongruous concrete walls to both sides of Church Road](image)

12.18.8 The west side

There is a similarly ugly and incongruous 1.8 metre high concrete post and panel wall, topped with barbed wire, extending along part of the All England Lawn Tennis Club boundary. This has been replaced in part: at the northern end by high, black painted railings, in places above a low brick wall, and in places with planting behind; and at the southern end by a high, honey coloured brick wall. The railings allow views into the Club grounds, but have an austere appearance where there is no rear planting. There are formal iron gates to the Club’s entrance openings.

12.18.9 To the far north, between the Tennis Club and the boundary of the Bathgate Road Conservation Area, the boundary is a mix of timber fences above low walls, mostly with mature planting behind, and a high hedge obscuring chainlink fencing. Gates are mainly of timber. This stretch of boundary treatments offers a rustic appearance.

12.18.10 Negative issues relating to highway boundaries are summarised in 12.21.7.
12.19 HIGHWAY SURFACE TREATMENTS AND STREET FURNITURE

12.19.1 Home Park Road:
The road surface is tarmac. The footway is tarmac with a central strip of paving slabs, apart from alongside the edge of the Park, where it is all tarmac. Kerbstones are mainly wide and of granite, except within the southern most part of the road, where they are narrow and of concrete. The granite kerbstones sometimes return across the footway to edge vehicular entrances, which are sometimes delineated by granite setts to the road edge.

12.19.2 There are traffic management markings on the highway. These include parking bays and restrictions and a width restriction outside the gates to the public Park.

12.19.3 There are benches facing across the Park on the north west side of the road, and a prominent red pillar box halfway along its length. Street lamps are conventional, although green painted, making little reference to the historic landscape.

Church Road:
12.19.4 The road surface is tarmac. The pavement on the east side is narrow and of tarmac with a low, narrow granite kerb. Some entrance drives here are
delineated by granite setts to the road edge, some partially covered by tarmac.

12.19.5  *On the west side, alongside the All England Lawn Tennis Club boundary and beyond, a wide grass verge with irregularly spaced mature trees lines the road edge, with a tarmac footpath behind. The kerb is again low, narrow and of granite, and in places returns across the footway to edge vehicular entrances. Towards the southern end there are some simple timber posts close to the road edge. The trees and grass verge make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, appearing as an extension to the Wimbledon Park landscape opposite.*

Highway surface treatments, Church Road

12.19.6  Street lamps are again green painted, but make little reference to the historic park landscape.

12.19.7  Negative issues relating to surface treatments are summarised in 12.21.7.
CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE: A SUMMARY

12.20.1 Many of the factors and features described in this chapter combine together to contribute to the character and appearance of this Sub Area of the Conservation Area. This section is an attempt to define the significant factors but it may not be exhaustive, and is not intended to put forward any order of importance.

12.20.2 The development of the area over time:
A summary of the history of the Sub Area is given in section 12.11.

12.20.3 The influence of Capability Brown and other landscape designers:
Wimbledon Park is one of few remaining landscapes in London designed by Capability Brown. Details of his influence, including the large lake and the lawned and wooded scene around it, are given in paras. 12.11.9 – 12.11.12, while that of other designers is outlined in paras. 12.11.3 – 12.11.5.

12.20.4 The historical and archaeological significance of the site of the First Manor House and its gardens:
See Section 12.8 and paras. 12.13.1 – 12.13.5.

12.20.5 Topography:
This is described in Section 12.14.

12.20.6 The many views within, into and out of the Sub Area:
See Section 12.15.

12.20.7 Spaciousness:
There is a sense of spaciousness within the Sub Area, created by the open landscape of the Park, and by the pattern of residential development, as described in Section 12.12.

12.20.8 The Existing Pattern of Development:
This is described in section 12.12 of this document.

12.20.9 Building Types and Materials:
These are described in section 12.13 and Appendix 3.

12.20.10 Trees and Greenery
The mature Park landscape together with the planting within private gardens, the distinctive mature street trees, and the grass verge in Church Road, combine to offer a lush appearance. (See Section 12.17.)

12.20.11 Ecological value:
See section 12.9 ‘Nature Conservation’.

12.20.12 The strong emphasis on sport and recreation:
The wide range of outdoor activities is described in paras. 12.12.3 – 12.12.5.
12.20.13 **Highway Boundary and Surface Treatments:**
The established boundary and surface treatments, as described in sections 12.18 and 12.19.

12.20.14 Figure 12.3 presents an indication of the character of the Sub Area in a graphic form.
Figure 12.3: Sub-Area 2: Wimbledon Park - Character Analysis
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12.21 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES

Positives:

12.21.0 The main positive features are those described in the previous paragraphs re. this Sub Area. Buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area but are not on the Local List of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest, are identified on Figure 12.1. They are:

Within Wimbledon Park: The White Pavilion; Fitness Centre/Bowls Pavilion; Tennis Pavilion; The Wimbledon Golf Club clubhouse.


It is recognised that the appearance of some of these buildings has been compromised by insensitive alteration over time.

Negatives:

12.21.1 Issues relating to the historic character of Park landscape:
- Conifer screen and mature Lombardy Poplars to perimeter of athletics compound dominate park landscape
- Sailing club building detrimental to critical visual location at the lake edge
- Insensitive tree and other planting on golf course
- Partial infilling of original lake to south
- Unsightly carpark at Revelstoke Road.
- Poor condition of some Park buildings eg. The White Pavilion
- Unsightly appearance of some Park buildings and structures eg. Storage compound to bowling pavilion, fence to athletics compound
- Pressure to diminish the historic wooded backdrop to the Park through redevelopment, and to remove historic street trees

12.21.2 Issues relating to views:
- Conifer screen and mature Lombardy Poplars to perimeter of athletics compound obstructs historic view lines across lake
- Appearance and location of sailing club building obstructs historic view lines across lake
- Concrete fence to golf course and AELTC obstructs views
- Insensitive tree and other planting on golf course obstructs views
- Pressure to diminish the historic wooded backdrop to the Park through redevelopment, and to remove historic street trees
- Pressure to diminish the gaps between buildings, that allow views of mature trees and gardens beyond
- Golf club car parking close to Home Park Road frontage detracts from the natural appearance and views.

12.21.3 Issues relating to the existing pattern of development, spaciousness and building types and materials:
- Cumulative effect of increased building bulk and diminished spaces around buildings leading to erosion of spaciousness, loss of planting, loss of views eg. new houses at Nos. 122, 124, 125, 127
- Pressure to diminish the historic wooded backdrop to the Park through redevelopment
- Incongruous design of some buildings in Home Park Road eg. Nos. 57, 87
- Pressure to introduce prominent buildings that present a contrast to their neighbours.

Incongruous design at No.87 Home Park Road. The prominent building at No.87 presents a contrast to its' neighbours

- Extensions often insensitively designed, not subordinate and with
inappropriate detailing, eg. two storey side extension at No.51, front dormer extensions at Nos 81 and 85

- Other insensitive alterations to buildings, eg. replacement fenestration, application of paint/render, infill/removal of balustrades
- Pressure to erode the traditional harmonious relationship between development and the natural contours of the ground.

12.21.4 Trees and Greenery:
- Need to protect and maintain historic tree planting, including street trees and the wooded backdrop to Park
- Cumulative loss of trees and greenery, particularly through the erection of new development, extensions and creation of hardstanding areas
- Installation of harsh hard landscaping eg. front garden treatments at Nos. 63 and 79
- Conifer screen and mature Lombardy Poplars to perimeter of athletics compound dominate park landscape
- Insensitive tree and other planting on golf course

12.21.5 Ecological Issues:
- Ashen Grove Wood neglected
- Cumulative effect of diminished green spaces around buildings, leading to reduced movement of plant and animal species

12.21.6 Issues relating to recreational use and character:
- Lack of public access to Ashen Grove Wood and private club lands
- Partial infilling of original lake to south

12.21.7 Issues relating to highway boundaries and surface treatments:
- Need for Church Road and Home Park Road to appear as extensions to the Park landscape
- Poor appearance of concrete fence to golf course and part of AELTC boundaries
- The erosion of the grass verge alongside AELTC, due to works traffic
- Poor appearance of traffic management scheme in Home Park Road at Park entrance
Road narrowing, Home Park Road

- Poor appearance of road closure scheme at junction of Church Road and Somerset Road
- The introduction of incongruous front boundary treatments eg. *high wall and gates at No.51*
- Poor condition of some highway surfaces, including covering of granite setts with tarmac

12.21.8 Other Issues:
- The impact of Wimbledon fortnight on the appearance of the area

12.22 OPPORTUNITIES:

12.22.1 Prepare Design Guide to appropriate development

12.22.2 Promote historical importance of Wimbledon Park, including the influence of Capability Brown and other landscape architects

12.22.3 *Promote location of the Elizabethan Manor House and its gardens*

12.22.4 Seek the identification and protection of historic trees and other trees of significant amenity value throughout the Sub Area, and consider a programme for their renewal and replanting as appropriate.

12.22.5 Seek restoration of the historic shape of the lake

12.22.6 Seek the enhancement, restoration and preservation of historic views to and across the lake, and of the landscape setting around the lake

12.22.7 Seek to refurbish and maximise use of run down and possibly underused
good Park buildings

12.22.8 Seek to remove or enhance the appearance of unsightly buildings and structures within the Park as appropriate

12.22.9 Seek better management of Ashen Grove Wood and other management opportunities to increase the ecological interest of the park. (If necessary LBM to exercise its legal right to retain Ashen Grove Wood and bring it under their management.)

12.22.10 Seek more appropriate traffic management measures

12.22.11 Seek improvements to the condition of highway surfaces

12.22.12 Investigate the possibility of adding The White Pavilion and the Fitness Centre/Bowls Pavilion to the Local List

12.22.13 The preparation of a Conservation Area Management Plan will provide an opportunity to address issues raised by this Character Assessment.

12.23 ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONTROLS NEEDED:

12.23.1 Many alterations, such as the removal of boundary treatments, the installation of replacement windows and doors, and the removal of chimneys, are ‘Permitted Development’ and can be carried out without the need for Planning Permission. It is suggested that some Permitted Development rights be removed, in order to help preserve the character and appearance of the Sub Area. This is done by means of placing an Article 4(2) Direction on residential properties. The alterations suggested to be brought under planning control through the making of an Article 4(2) Direction are:-

12.23.2 The demolition and erection of boundary treatments fronting the highway up to 1.0 metre in height, including gates. To ensure appropriate boundary treatments.

12.23.3 The removal of hedges fronting the highway. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.

12.23.4 The formation of hardstanding areas. To ensure the retention of soft landscaping in gardens that contributes to the character and appearance of the area and in the interests of nature conservation.

12.23.5 Alterations to windows and external doors. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.

12.23.6 The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.

12.23.7 The painting of masonry including brickwork. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
12.23.8 The removal and replacement of roofing materials. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.

12.23.9 The proposed Article 4(2) Directions will be subject to the procedures set out within the Town and Country Planning (General Procedures) Order 1995.

12.24 SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS/ PLANNING CONDITIONS

12.24.1 These could be used in appropriate circumstances to ensure the fulfilment of Opportunities identified in 12.22 above, and/or those identified elsewhere within this Character Appraisal.

12.25 ADJACENT AREAS OF QUALITY

12.25.1 The following adjacent areas should be surveyed to consider possible Conservation Area or Area of Distinctive Quality status.

All England Lawn Tennis Club grounds.

The adjacent area close to Wimbledon Park Station, including the mostly higher density houses at the north east end of Home Park Road.
Wimbledon North Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Sub Area 2: Wimbledon Park
Post-Consultation Draft
November 2006