

From: Clive Hilton < >
Sent: 05 September 2021 17:48
To: Future Merton <Future.Merton@merton.gov.uk>
Subject: New Local Plan Publication Stage 3

WIMBLEDON UNION OF RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Future Merton 5th September 2021
London Borough of Merton
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London Road
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By email to: future.merton@merton.gov.uk

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<https://www.merton.gov.uk/Documents/09%20Wimbledon%20Merton%20Local%20Plan%20Reg19%20July21.pdf>

Dear Sirs

New Local Plan Publication Stage 3

Comments for forwarding to the appointed Inspector

The Wimbledon union of Residents' Associations has been in existence for some 20 years. It comprises some 20 residents' associations around Wimbledon village. It therefore has representation and influence for potentially some 6,000 households.

Having reviewed the content of the final draft (Stage 3) of Merton's Draft Local Plan, and in particular the Site Allocations, we object to the proposed inclusion within Site Allocation Wi3 (**see Ch 09 pp282-285 inc**) of the AELTC's landholding in Wimbledon Park on the eastern side of Church Road, currently in use as the Wimbledon Park Golf Course and the terms upon which it is included. The purpose of Site Allocations in a Local Plan is to identify sites with opportunities for development. In our view, the inclusion of this area within this Allocation is inappropriate as this conflicts with National, London and Merton's own local planning policies as well as policies applicable to historic sites such as this with significant Heritage status.

Wimbledon Park and the land previously operated as Wimbledon Park Golf Club are Metropolitan Open Land. They have supreme protection under the law and the designation cannot be changed unilaterally against the wishes of the council's ratepayers and residents.

This is a blatant attempt to change the designation of this important open space to allow a private club to carry out unmerited commercial development for private gain.

The whole of the Grade II* Listed Wimbledon Park has been on the Historic England (HE) "At Risk" register since 2016

Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Policy 190 states: *Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.*” In our view, the designation in Site Allocation Wi3 of the AELTC owned section of the parkland as suitable for development is not consistent with the “positive strategy” envisaged by **NPPF Policy 190** and will do little if anything to bring HE’s “At Risk” designation to an end.

Any development proposal for protected MOL/Green Belt land must be subject to a full assessment of harm, to be weighed against the evaluation of any benefits which may be offered. By offering the proposed designation in Wi3 in this final Draft of the Local Plan, Merton appear to be looking to avoid their current responsibilities as planning authority to make that evaluation. This should not be permitted.

Yours faithfully

Clive Hilton

Chair

Wimbledon Union of Residents’ Associations