
Dear Sirs,

On behalf of Parkside Residents' Association I attach a self explanatory submission to this Consultation.

Yours faithfully

Chairman

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

PARKSIDE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Wimbledon
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Future Merton
London Borough of Merton
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21 March 2021

By Email

Dear Sirs

Merton Character Study – Consultation Response

This Association's Membership Area is bounded by Parkside (between the junctions with Calonne and Marryat Roads), Marryat, Burghley and Calonne Roads. For the purposes of the Character Study our area would appear to fall primarily within the section of "Parkside" but some roads may also be within the boundaries of the section "Wimbledon Village" which are both referenced in Chapter F of the Study (it is difficult to see the precise boundaries on the maps).

Context

Our Membership Area boundary follows the boundaries of the former Wimbledon House Estate which was laid out by the Wimbledon House Estate Company in the early 20th Century following the demolition of Wimbledon House. The Company built roads and sold plots of generous size imposing strict requirements (reinforced with legal status as restrictive covenants) for their development by the purchasers. These included density (usually 1 house per plot), design standards (prior approval of plans) building lines to ensure generous set backs from the road, and minimum value of the completed house. Apart from a small development in the 1960s providing detached family homes in a central part of the Estate which was formerly garden land belonging to several mansions and the site of a large ornamental lake, the original Estate layout is largely unchanged today.

The majority of our Membership Area is also within the Wimbledon North Conservation Area, specifically Sub Area 6 – Wimbledon House, for which a detailed Character Study, referencing every road, has already been carried out. This is a comprehensive and important document and the research behind it is impressive. It is a widely used reference resource for both developers and planners. The relevant sections of the Merton Character Study which overlap this document do not incorporate the same level of detail and should not therefore be viewed as a replacement. It is worth noting that the Conservation Area Character Study highlights the open spacious character of this part of the Conservation Area, the low density of development, generous spacing between houses and the "green" impression through large numbers of trees, some of which date back to the gardens of the original Wimbledon House, both in the area's streets and in private gardens.

Comments are referenced to the headings in the Merton Character Study (with suggested additional wording to the Study text in italics):

1. Parkside: Distinctiveness – heritage and key features

1.1 Highlight the open character and low density.

The open spacious character and low density of development in the area should be expressly acknowledged: E.g.

- “Loosely structured *low density* suburban development...”
- “Large plots with large front gardens and set backs from the street, *buildings well spaced with generous gaps, mature trees in streets and gardens and planting creating an open, spacious and green character*”
- “Parkside forms a *spacious corridor* on the eastern boundary of the common.....”

2. Parkside and Wimbledon Village: Key issues / opportunities

2.1 Emphasise protection of trees

There should be greater emphasis upon the protection etc of trees, both in the street scene and those in private gardens which are visible from the public domain. E.g

- “Sense of former landscaped estates – value of trees and planting *both within the street scene or visible from the public domain* should be protected and enhanced”

2.2 Omit reference to “intensification”

PRA members value the quality of their built environment and see maintaining the present low density of development as a key issue to be promoted. On that basis, the statements in both the Parkside and Wimbledon Village sections of the Study: “Opportunities for design guidance for appropriate and sensitive intensification of the area through extensions, rear garden development, conversions and redevelopment of larger plots” is a concern. In our view this statement is far too broadly drawn; “intensification” is likely to undermine these key characteristics of the area and encourage speculative development. The statement should therefore be omitted from both sections of the Study. Specifically:

- The original layout of the Wimbledon House Estate ensured that generous plots could accommodate gardens of appropriate scale for the house to be built. Undeveloped garden land makes an important environmental contribution to the area, its hydrogeology, flood risk management and its “green character”, particularly in providing space for trees to flourish. It should not be characterised as potential development space; building over it should be actively discouraged. Planning policy already discourages paving over of front gardens and requires basement excavations under gardens to leave at least 1 metre of soil depth above the basement roof.
- Conversions of large houses into flats invariably result in smaller dwelling units unsuitable for families and reduce the supply of family homes in the Borough’s overall housing stock. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of garden/outdoor space for households but, with conversions, access to such space cannot always be provided for each unit. Parking/garaging requirements for multiple occupancy buildings also significantly reduce the area of garden/outdoor space available for allocation in any event.
- “Redevelopment of larger plots” typically results in infills which inevitably compromise the open spacious character of the area, reducing gaps between buildings and the available garden and open space and often generate amenity issues for neighbours. Also, few such schemes are achieved without the loss of mature trees and/or planting which make such an important contribution to the green character of the area.

2.3 No physical traffic calming on Parkside

We do not support the proposal noted both in the Parkside and Wimbledon Common sections for physical traffic calming measures along Parkside as this is not a suitable place for them given its status in the road hierarchy and volume of use. Both the Parkside and Wimbledon Village areas have 20mph speed limits, but enforcement remains an issue. Parkside is the A219, a London Distributor Road carrying very high volumes of daily traffic

including buses and there are already cameras installed at intervals along its length. These, along with flashing speed signs ought to be more widely installed and signposted to control speed. Physical traffic calming measures such as humps, speed tables or width restrictors are not appropriate for such a high traffic volume location; their use should be restricted to selective locations elsewhere in the area where there are no other options to control excessive speeding. We suggest this statement is revised in both sections as follows:

- *Speed control signage* and public realm improvements along Parkside to enhance the sense of driving carefully “through the character of the Common”

3. Appendix 1 Maps - Locally Listed Buildings

Omissions

It is difficult to see from the Map on p37 of this Appendix which properties are Locally Listed, but assuming the dark dots are the markers, the map appears to omit a large number. For example, there are 19 locally listed properties on Parkside alone whereas just 6 appear to be marked and in Parkside Gardens which has 16, only 3 are shown. Correction is required and will be particularly important for the Parkside and Wimbledon Village areas in highlighting the very high quality of the built environment.

Yours faithfully

Chairman