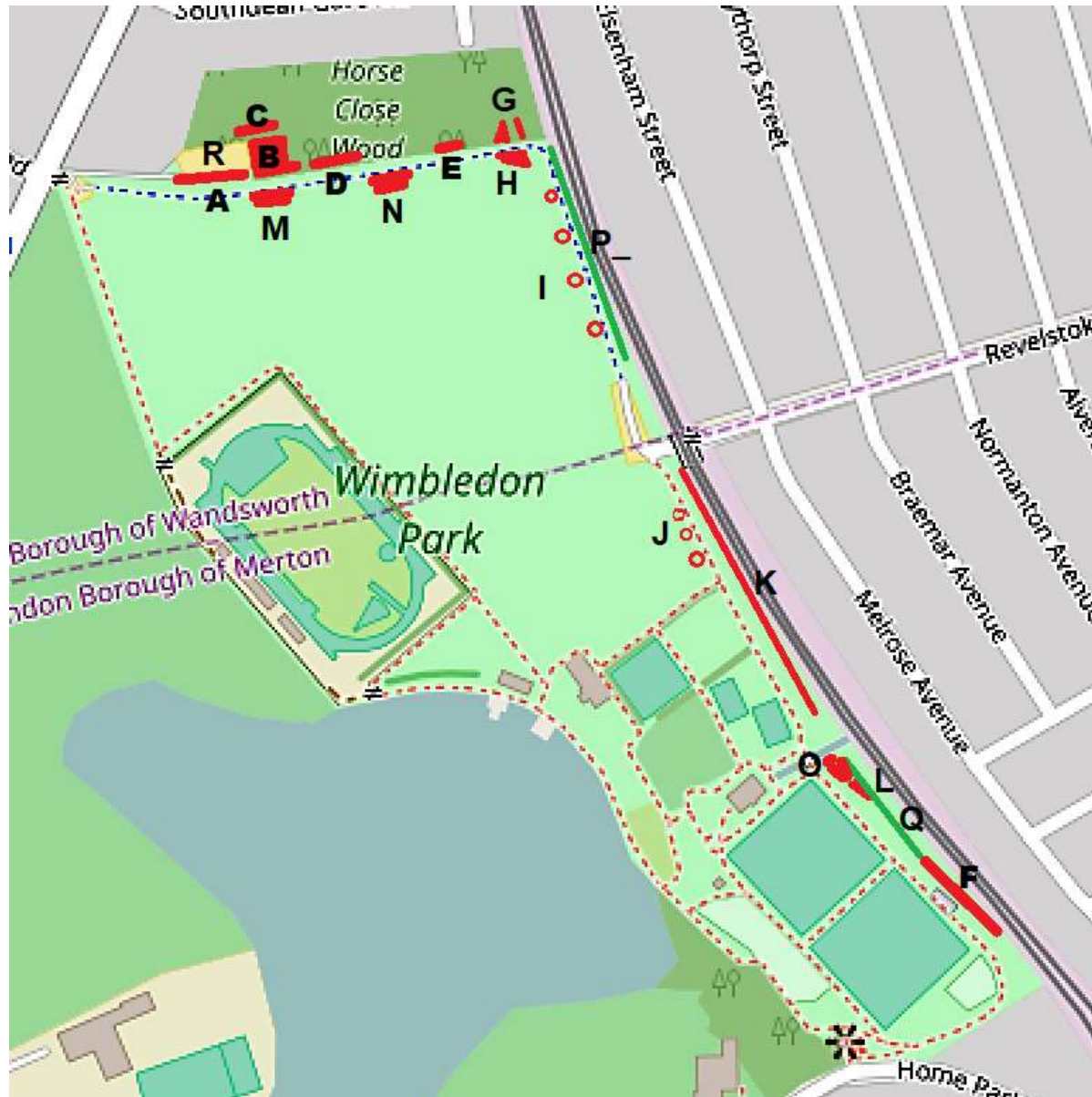


Tree planting areas 2022.

This note outlines the existing, proposed and possible free planting areas in Wimbledon Park, following a walk-over on 25th Jan 2022. We outline the history first and then future proposals in approximate priority order.



History.

Two old hedgerows are well-established. These are shown in green on the plan. Area P was planted by local school children around 1990, and L by LB Merton soon afterwards.

Areas A to F on the accompanying plan were planted with small trees and shrubs (whips) by volunteers from the Friends of Wimbledon Park and Tree Wardens Merton. A & B in Feb 16, the southern edge of B and C in Feb 17, D & E in Feb 18 and F in Feb 20.

Standard Hornbeams were planted to replace losses in the avenue of Railway poplars in areas I & J in Feb 19.

A “copse” with standard trees over *Cornus* was planted just south of the brook in area O in Feb 19.

Replacements in priority order

F. Many of the whips in this area have failed. Perhaps because of the very wet conditions in February 2020 and a desire line access into the existing hedgerow to the north (Q). Some 50-75, mainly Hawthorns, are proposed to fill in the gaps, half of which are for the short northern section which needs most replacements.

E. Some 25 replacement whips are needed in a patch to the west and to replace losses to desire lines to the east.

D. Here the area behind the seat needs about 10 replacement whips.

I. Some 4-5 further Hornbeams are needed to fill gaps in this avenue.

J. Some 2-3 further Hornbeams are needed to replace two lost to vandalism and to fill a gap in the poplar avenue.

Possible new planting areas in priority order.

G. Now that National Grid no longer have active underground cables, this entrance to the glade in Horse Close Wood can be narrowed with whips both West and East of the path, about 30 in total.

H. This corner of the great field is already separated off by the “wildflower meadow” plots from the rest of the field and often has standing water. We propose a triangular area of mainly wet woodland species, such as shrub willows, Alder and Aspen.

K. A beech hedge along this edge would screen off the railway security fence.

M & N. Clumps south of the perimeter path.

R. The Horse Close Wood car park would be restored to woodland.

Done

Areas P, Q, and A to C are well-established, requiring no more planting.

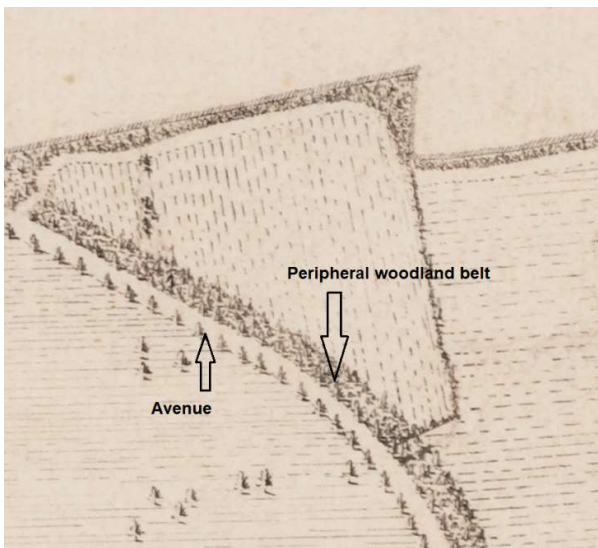
The planting mix

Unfortunately, the TCV tree packages are poor, making it difficult to obtain trees and shrubs suited to the soils, woodlands and history of the park. The existing old woodlands of the heritage landscape fit National Vegetation Classification W8d, indicative of moist, fertile, base-rich soils characterised here by a canopy of Oak and Ash with a sub-canopy of Elm. Other trees and shrubs appropriate here include Field maple, Hazel, Hawthorn, Bramble, Dog rose and Elder. Ash, Hawthorn, Bramble and Elder self-seed readily in the park, so are less needed in the mix. The existing confirmed tree order for March 2022 comprises 100 whips: 32 Oak, 20 Silver birch, 18 Aspen, 10 Beech, 6 Alder, 6 Hornbeam, 4 Rowan and 4 Goat willow. This is deficient in spiny shrubs, so it's proposed to obtain a “wildlife shrubs” pack with 10 each of Hawthorn, Grey willow, Dog rose, Hazel and Spindle and two packs of 50 Hawthorns to overcome this. The thorns are needed particularly in areas D & E where a prime function is to protect existing large woodland-edge Oaks, but will also provide an understory where used elsewhere. The existing avenues of Hornbeams in areas I and J are standard trees, but it is proposed to trial replacements with single whips, each set in a flower bed. Given the history of this part of the park, it is suggested that a cornfield annuals seed mix be employed in these beds.

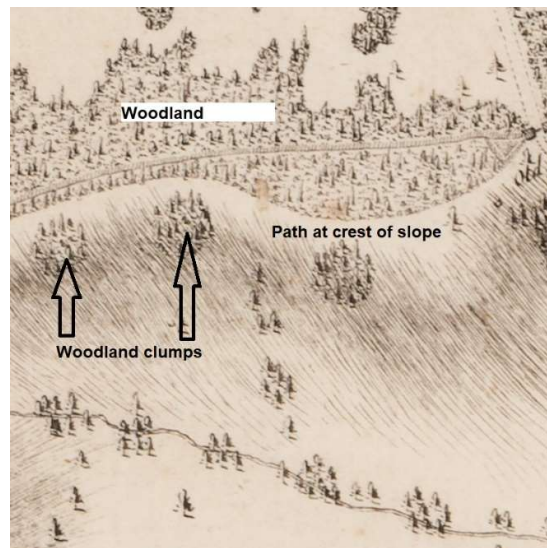
Design principles

The heritage landscape is the surviving remnant of Capability Brown's Wimbledon Park, and our work aims to reflect Brown's design as far as is possible in a modern, multiple-use open space. The selection of species reflects Brown's practice, in that it employs a good range of tree and shrub species known to have been used by Brown, but we have restricted the range to native species, to help deliver access to nature.

The disposition of the planting can also reflect Brown's design. The principles here are illustrated by excerpts from the Montreal map of the 18th century park, which is accepted as the completed Brown design.



Brown's peripheral avenue



Brown's path in and out of woodland

Three principles are followed:

1. *Peripheral woodland belts delimiting the Spencers' private park.* This is followed today with peripheral hedgerows and woodlands throughout the remnant heritage landscape.
2. *Peripheral carriageway delimited by an avenue.* This is followed today by the hedgerows beside the tube line embankment and avenues of Railway poplars on the inside, being replaced by Hornbeams.
3. *Peripheral path with views between tree clumps.* This is proposed beside the perimeter path south of Horse Close Wood.

Also, it is proposed to replace losses, where possible. The loss of part of Horse Close Wood for a car park should be reversed to restore the historic form of the wood.

Compensatory tree planting is expected to result from the damage to the ancient Ashen Grove Wood through the construction of a new lake outfall to keep the dam safe. The details of this compensation have yet to be negotiated, but should follow these principles.