

Friends of Wimbledon Park

Friendsofwimbledonpark.org.uk



**Delivering Wimbledon Park from the
'At Risk Register'**

Delivering

2

Wimbledon Park

from

Historic England's

'At Risk Register'

For the next century and more!

3

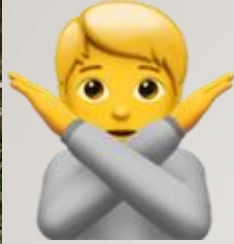
Initialisms & Acronyms

- 1) **AELTC – All England Lawn Tennis Club.**
- 2) **CMP – Friends of Wimbledon Park Conservation Management Plan.**
- 3) **FOWP – Friends of Wimbledon Park.**
- 4) **HE – Historic England.**
- 5) **LBM – London Borough Merton.**
- 6) **LBW – London Borough Wandsworth.**
- 7) **TfL – Transport for London.**
- 8) **TWC – The Wimbledon Club.**
- 9) **TCBS – The Capability Brown Society**
- 10) **WPP – Wimbledon Park Project (AELTC planning application).**

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Not here!



Is there public access?



- 1) A private sports company and similar organisations will change personnel and ownership from time to time.
- 2) Objectives change as new boards are appointed or change of ownership comes from sale or takeover

Protection for public access in simplistic terms is provided by:

- 1) Permitted access but this can be withdrawn at the whim of the owner.
- 2) S106 conditions can be undone by S106a regulations.
- 3) A Covenant can be extinguished
 - a) by special circumstance (with Wimbledon Park Very Special Circumstances) arguments
 - b) by agreement between the parties.
- 4) Public right of way access needs agreement from the public to change the conditions.

So, the aim must be for public right of way access



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What is the local Community?

Ian Hewitt (Chairman) in AELTC Community Newsletter February 2023 wrote:

- We are a proud member of the local community and take great responsibility in stewarding our environment

FOWP Conservation Management Plan (CMP) 2016

- **Community** is a self-organized network of people with a common agenda, cause, or interest, who collaborate by sharing ideas, information, and other resources.
- Importantly this includes volunteering.



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Our local Community

The Park's community includes a broad range of interests, groups and individuals from across the region and beyond. This ranges from statutory governmental bodies, people who use the Park or venues within it, those with particular interest like sports or wildlife, and those who represent certain groups of users or people. It also includes the employees who work in the park and support workers. Examples include Individuals, Clubs, Coaches, Schools & students, Residents Associations, Park staff, Owners, Commercial organisations, Charities, Politicians, Groups both informal and formal and organisations providing social prescription services.

Community provides a sense of ownership and a strong base for volunteering. We can say:

- The Park is first and foremost a place of enjoyment; a resource for people to use and take pleasure from. It is also an area that can deliver positive benefits to a diverse range of individuals and communities.
- Such enhanced wellbeing can have encouraging results on individual, social and community behaviour:
 - ❖ reducing physical and mental problems
 - ❖ building stronger community relationships
 - ❖ reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
 - ❖ developing skills, knowledge and local pride

Structured activities usually have an area set aside for their purpose whilst informal activities have to share their space with other activities. Every valid activity in the park can detract from the enjoyment of others (boating scares off birds, dogs off the lead can frighten children, cyclists can threaten pedestrians, children enjoying the waterfall may cause damage that requires remedy). Multiple uses involve compromise, wear and tear is natural, and others will not necessarily share personal prejudices.

Consultation and discussion on ideas and projects within the Friends of Wimbledon Park Forum facilitate the sorting and solving of problems.



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‘Sport for Stronger Communities’

Mayor of London

Extracts

- A.** Lots of us have heard, and genuinely believe, that sport brings people together. It does - although it doesn't happen by magic! When used with purpose and clear intent for positive outcomes, it can truly make a difference to individuals and communities.

- B.** “Bottom-up” investment is an approach that allows investment decisions and priorities to be shaped and influenced by local people and communities who work on the ground, delivering services directly to people . It ensures that funding decisions are informed by specific intelligence about local circumstances and the issues that individual communities themselves identify as challenges and opportunities.



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Masterplans & Visions

- 1) In 1998 LBM published Wimbledon Park Restoration Proposals by Glasspoole Thomson for the 61ha park
- 2) In 2018 LBM published their Masterplan for the 27ha they owned which includes the 9ha lake.
- 3) In 2021 The Capability Brown Society (TCBS) published their Vision for the 61ha park.
- 4) In 2021 AELTC submitted a planning application for their Wimbledon Park Project (WPP) on the 30ha they own and also for the LBM owned 9ha lake.
 - a) This WPP is estimated to take 8 years as shown in next slide.

9 Estimated 400 HGVs and 200 LGVs arrivals per month (1200 vehicle movements per month) but with wide variations as shown in Fig.2 over 8 years

Design Note (Buro Happold)

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Project Wimbledon Park Project

Subject Construction Traffic – Estimated Vehicle Movements

Project no 0044623

Date 21 October 2022

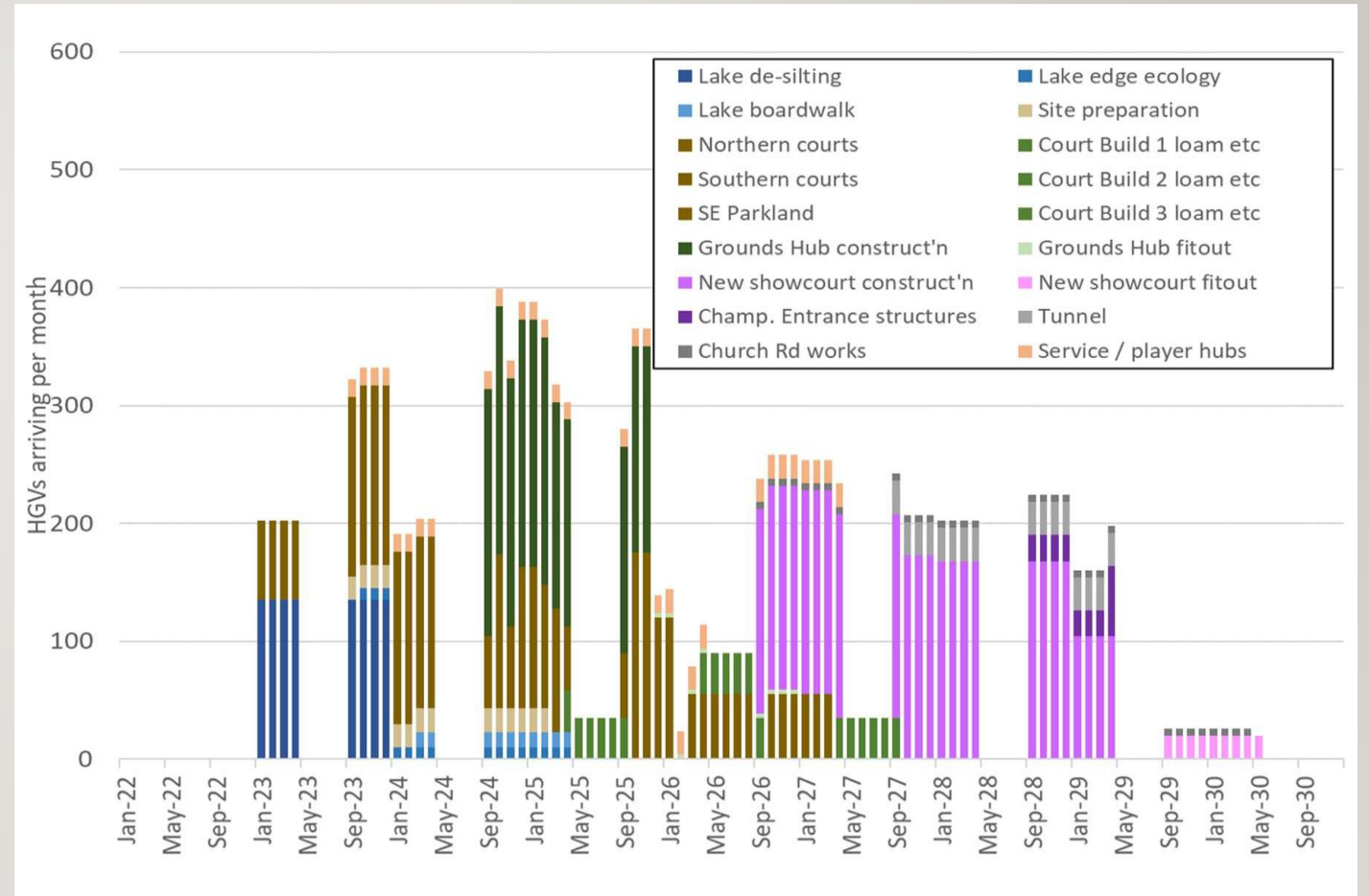
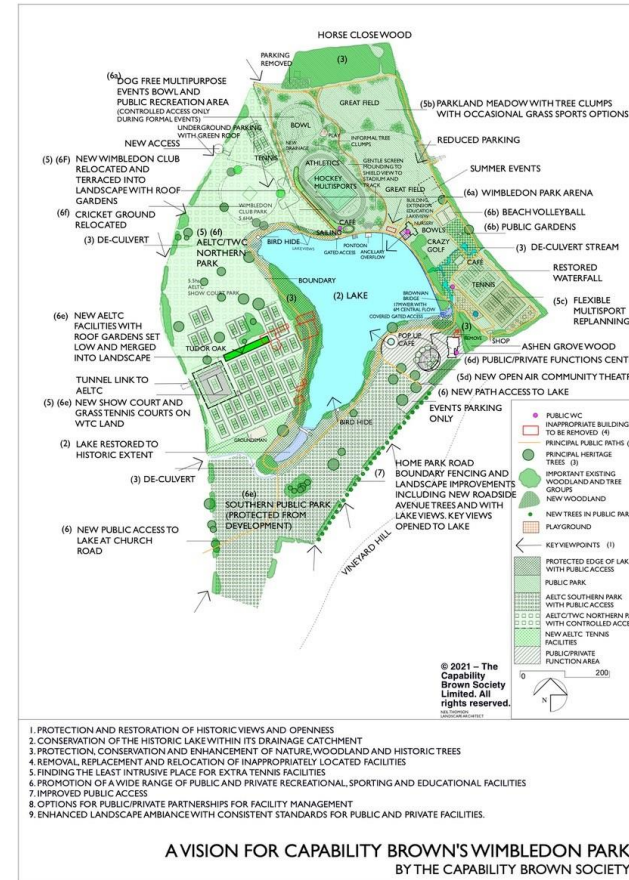
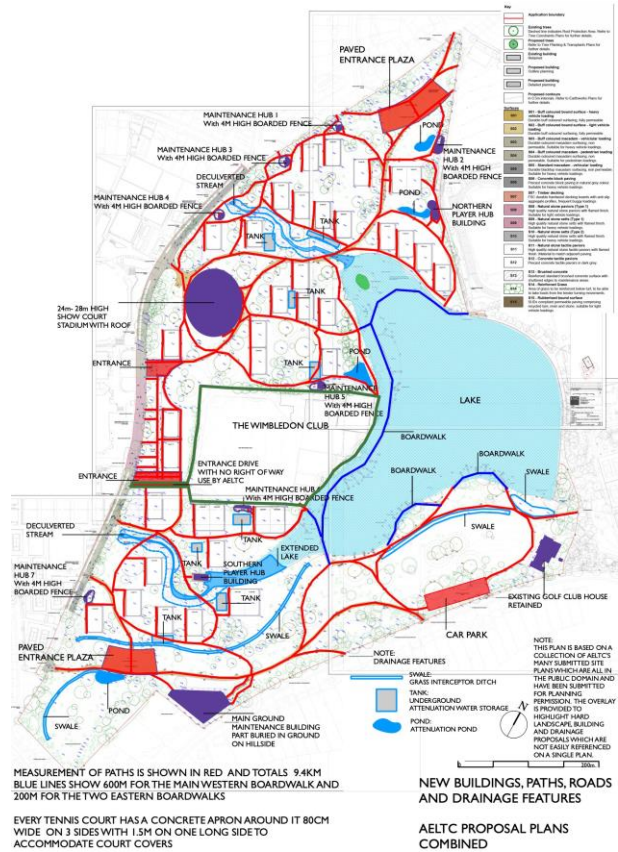
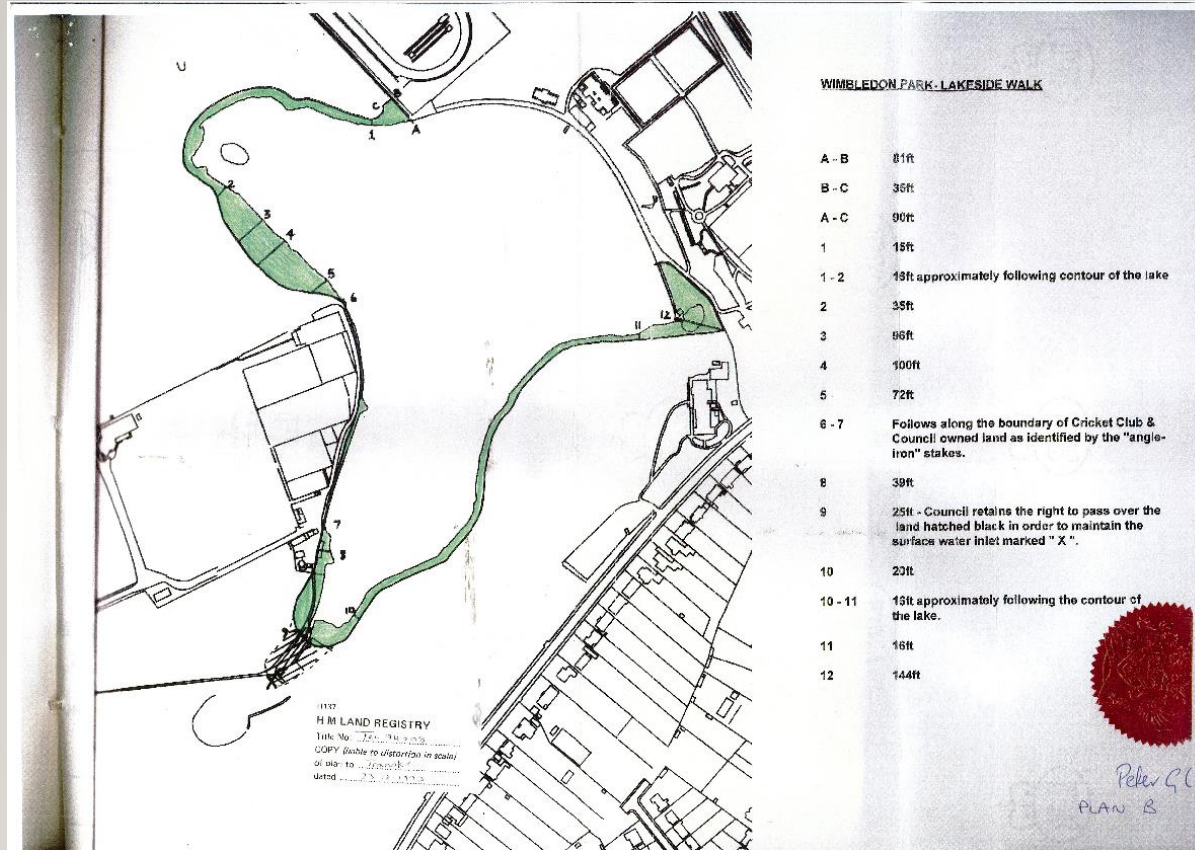


Figure 2 Planning Addendum Construction Traffic Flow Estimate (HGVs)

WPP for 30ha and the 9ha lake and the alternative TCBS Vision for the 61ha park





Plan of the
Wimbledon Park
public lakeside walk
from the
1993 covenant
between
AELTC & LBM.

Note: The Wimbledon Club (TWC) are not
party to this covenant.

Under the 1993 covenant when golf ceases to be played the transferee will dedicate a public walkway around the lake.

The Third Schedule

3.1 This covenant will not take effect in relation to any part of the area shown coloured green on plan B annexed hereto ("the dedication land") until the lease or any continuation or renewal thereof ceases to subsist.

3.2 subject to paragraph 3.1 above as soon as practicable after golf ceases permanently to be a use on any part of the dedication land (a "relevant part") **the transferee or its successors in title will dedicate that relevant part as a public walkway** provided always that the transferor shall have the right to defer the said dedication of the relevant part on giving the transferee 28 days notice in a writing to a date which may be nominated by the transferor ("the deferred date") subject to giving the transferee 28 days prior written notice of the deferred date.

The fourth schedule

3 If at any time the whole or any part of the area shown coloured green on plan b is dedicated as a public walkway at the transferor's cost to fence the boundary of the said walkway to the minimum specification shown on the plan annexed hereto marked plan c within one year after the date of the said dedication

Golf ceased to be played on January 1st 2023

Question to AELTC

- With golf ceasing to be played in Wimbledon Park from January 2023 the Community are looking forward to the implementation of the promise given between LBM and AELTC in 1993 for a dedicated public walkway around the lake.

Reply from AELTC

- ❖ *You will note from the extract that the covenant to designate the part of “the Dedication Land” is subject to paragraph 3.1 and therefore does not apply until the 1986 Wimbledon Park Golf Course lease ceases to subsist. I can confirm the lease continues to subsist.*

14 Explanation on why AELTC are retaining the lease which ends in 2041 rather than ending it now.

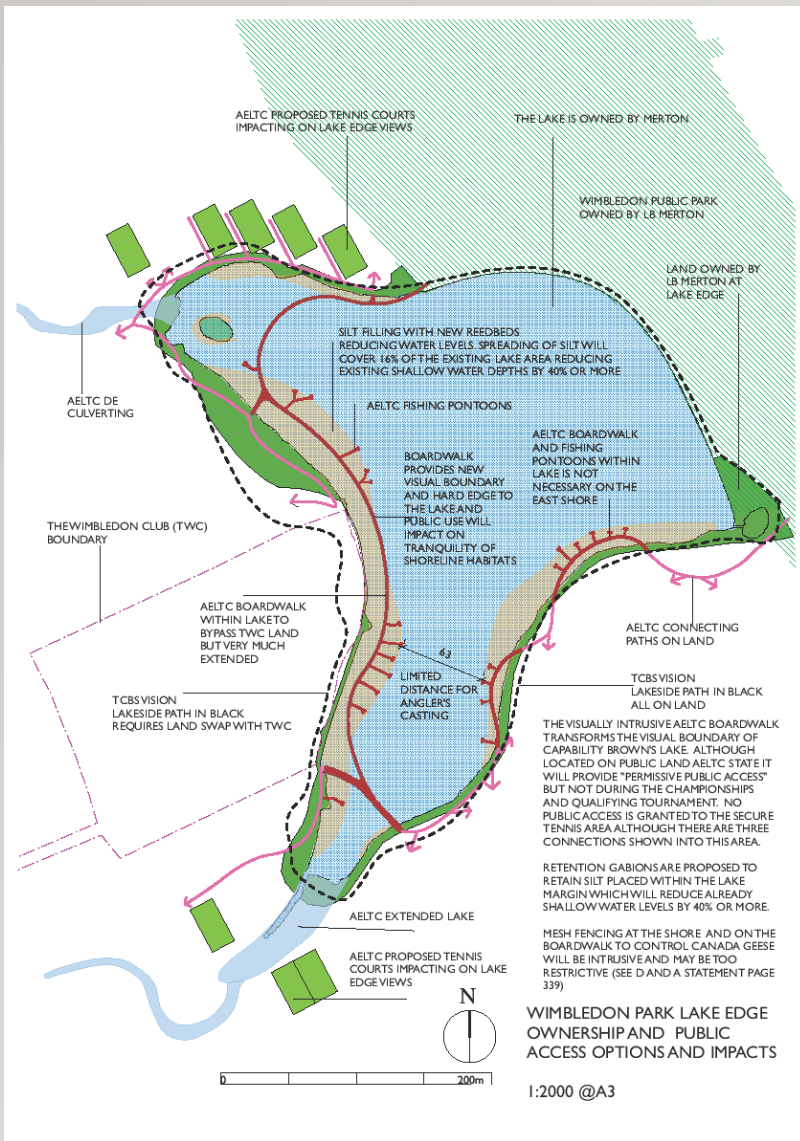
When the freehold and leasehold interests in a property/land are owned by the same person they can apply to the land registry to have the titles merged i.e. Close the leasehold title so they are just left with the freehold.

- 1) However there is no obligation on the owner to do this and they can just carry on as owners of the leasehold and freehold titles.
- 2) There can be reasons why it would be in the owner's interest not to merge the two titles. For example, the leasehold title may include rights over other land which would be lost if the leasehold title was closed.
- 3) Unfortunately, the reason given by AELTC is another example of why it would not be in AELTC's interest to merge the two titles.
- 4) The obligation to **dedicate** the public walkway around the lake only comes into effect when the leasehold interest ceases to exist. By not applying to the land registry to have the two titles merged the AELTC are delaying their obligation to **dedicate** the walkway until the term of the lease expires. It is not a question of still paying the rent as the AELTC can waive its collection.
- 5) AELTG now owns both the freehold and leasehold, so if they continue to keep the lease separate they will avoid their obligation to dedicate the walkway.

The Public Lakeside Walk

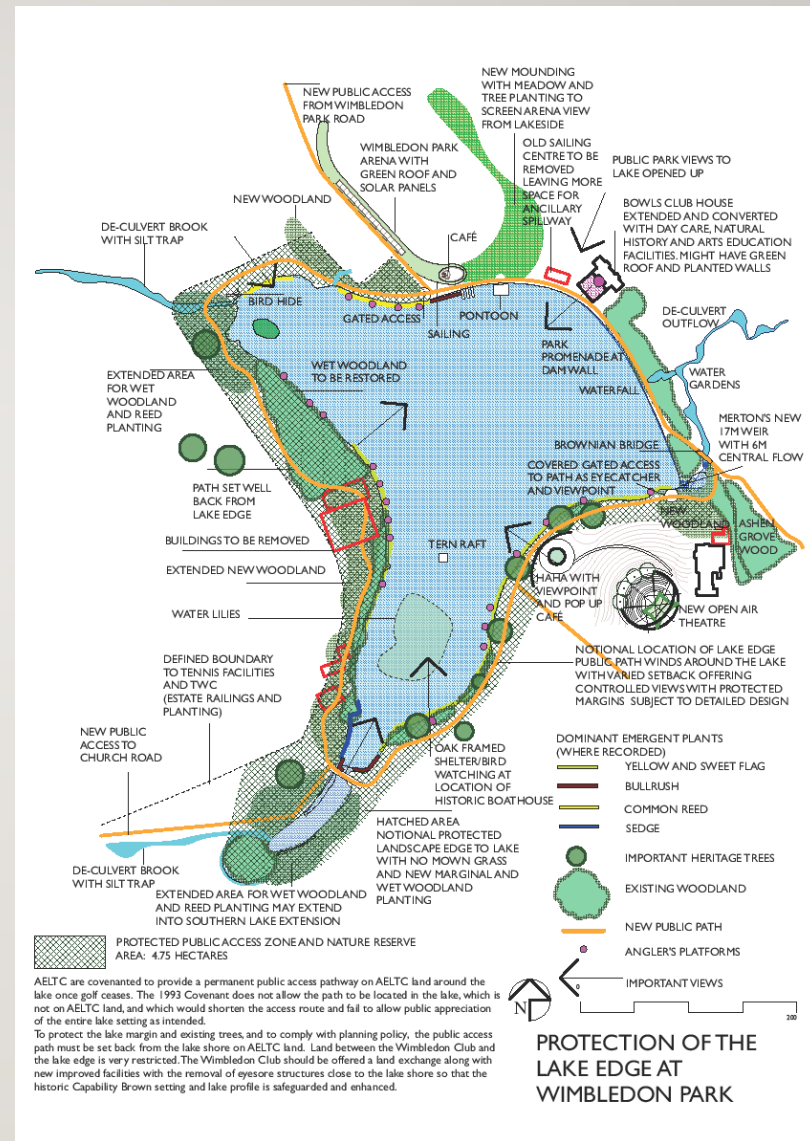
- 1) The edge of the lake provides the most diverse wildlife habitat in the heritage park. It is a place for protecting important wildlife habitats and priority species and improving access to nature.
- 2) Public access to the lake edge is currently restricted to the dam promenade in the public park and there is, as a result, a poor perception by the public of the rich habitats on two thirds of the lake perimeter, except perhaps by more privileged anglers and golf players. With the discontinuation of the golf course, public access on a new path around the lake would therefore be very welcome with a high Wellbeing factor but it presents a challenge if the lakeside habitats are to be protected and enhanced.
- 3) Currently, there is a strip of land on the lakeside of the golf course which will become a public walkway once golf ceases, but this is impossibly narrow in places. It would therefore be incumbent on the three landowners to prioritise the protection of important habitats and adopt a flexible approach to the siting of any new public access path. Ideally the path should be designed to have generous setbacks from the lake edge, approaching the water's edge only in limited locations for important views.
- 4) The five blots on the lakeside landscape need to be relocated. These are the LBM water sports building and boat storage, the TWC sports hall and the 6 monthly tennis dome, and the AELTC Greenspaces buildings.
- 5) The next slide illustrates what could be achieved in consultation with the 3 owners of Heritage Wimbledon Park. This is compared with AELTC's offer of a permitted boardwalk in the lake on land owned by LBM.





A permitted boardwalk on LBM land

Part of AELTC WPP application. Blots on lakeside landscape remain.



Need to reach agreement with the 3 owners. Blots on lakeside landscape are relocated.

A public lakeside walk within a 4.75 ha nature reserve.

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Delivering Wimbledon Park from Historic England's 'At Risk Register'

From AELTC Community Newsletter Autumn 2022

- The new public park will not only be a valuable asset to the community but will significantly increase the biodiversity of the site by restoring important habitats and represents the best chance of resolving its 'at risk' status, as identified by Historic England.

This was also mentioned at the Examination of LBM's Local Plan.

- Our response was to say the Friends of Wimbledon Park have a better plan and for the whole park. The Capability Brown Society's Vision was submitted to all the Owners prior to AELTC's Wimbledon Park Project application. It is the result of many years of observation, evidence gathering and extensive consultations.

What have the Friends achieved since 2012?

After writing our Conservation Management Plan, Our achievements include:

- 1) installing blue plaques at each of the five main entrances in the Tercentenary of Capability Brown in 2016,
- 2) planting over 2500 trees since 2016,
- 3) fencing off the veteran tree by the Old Bowling Green,
- 4) writing a booklet on heritage sports in Wimbledon Park (2016),
- 5) carrying out a bat survey in 2017,
- 6) intervening into solutions for the pollution spillages in the lake and
- 7) obtaining planning approval for the improvement of Revelstoke Road entrance.

Our intent

- 1) We (Friends of Wimbledon Park) will work with the local community, LBW, HE, and the owners[#] of the Historic Park, which is a Grade II* listed site, to prepare a Masterplan to guide the future of the Historic Park.
- 2) This will secure the future of the park, taking full account of **alternative** ways of achieving its heritage, amenity, biodiversity, play, sports, informal recreation and economic potential.
- 3) We will ensure consistency with existing covenants and heritage, employ rewilding, retain ancient and heritage features, views and soils, enhance landscapes, remove the listed park from the **“At Risk Register”**, conserve and increase priority species, priority habitats and tree cover and enhance free public access.

[#] Owners are AELTC; TWC; LBM and TfL who own the land under Revelstoke Road bridge

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Impaired vistas or blots on the Landscape

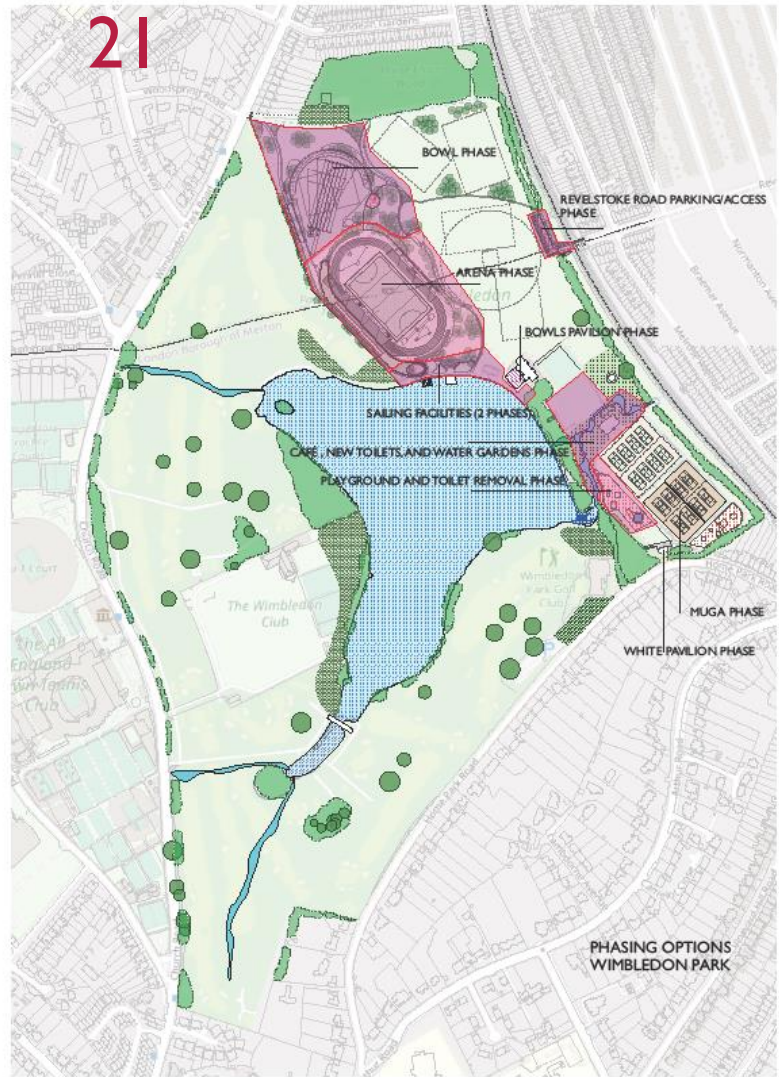
Looking west from dam



Looking east to dam



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The previous slide showed the blots on the lakeside landscape. These problems are resolved by taking a holistic approach to the 61 ha park with landscape, biodiversity and habitat being prime considerations and identify solutions for the whole area.

Once this has been completed a phased approach can be taken and the plan opposite shows how this can be achieved mainly in the public park.

Revelstoke Road entrance improvements is an example where planning permission has been obtained from LBM and LBW. The two landowners concerned are LBM and TfL. As the majority of the work was in LBW they were the lead planning authority.

The next slide illustrates the aforementioned public lakeside walk within a 4.75ha nature reserve and an outline proposal for café landscape providing an increase in free to use space within a water garden and enlarged café. This will need agreement from the 3 owners, LBM, AELTC and TWC.

