



Friends of Wimbledon Park

Waterfall Area Consultation

Opened in Autumn 2010



- ▶ Repairs to the steps and other sections are required, it is unsafe, and it has been closed for some time.
- ▶ What to do about this feature is examined in this pdf.



Waterfall Area Consultation Considerations

- 1) The waterfall area is a designed feature of Wimbledon Park, much appreciated by visitors and has fallen into disrepair. In particular, the steps are beyond repair and the waterfall is often turned off during summer.
- 2) A rethink is needed, and this should:
 - a) Conform to Capability Brown design principles.
 - b) Aim to increase biodiversity and provide a feature for visitors that can be enjoyed and studied.
 - c) Take account of the extension of Ashen Grove Wood and its rehabilitation.
 - d) Incorporate the re-landscaping of the Brook, creating a more natural character with meanders and improved riparian habitat with areas acting as flood storage.
 - e) Assess costs & management plans.

A site visit Friday 19th April 2024

(LBM, idverde & FOWP)

- 1) Options outlined were:
 - a) Retain, repair and improve existing feature.
 - b) Reduce size of feature.
 - c) Remove feature entirely.
- 2) Considering:
 - a) the dam works,
 - b) the deculverted brook,
 - c) the extension of Ashen Grove Wood,
 - d) re-landscaping of the brook with ponds
 - e) no water flow during dry periods
 - f) costs and ongoing management plans.
- 3) Removal of the feature was the best option.
- 4) This would be Stage 1 of the greater project shown on the next slide.

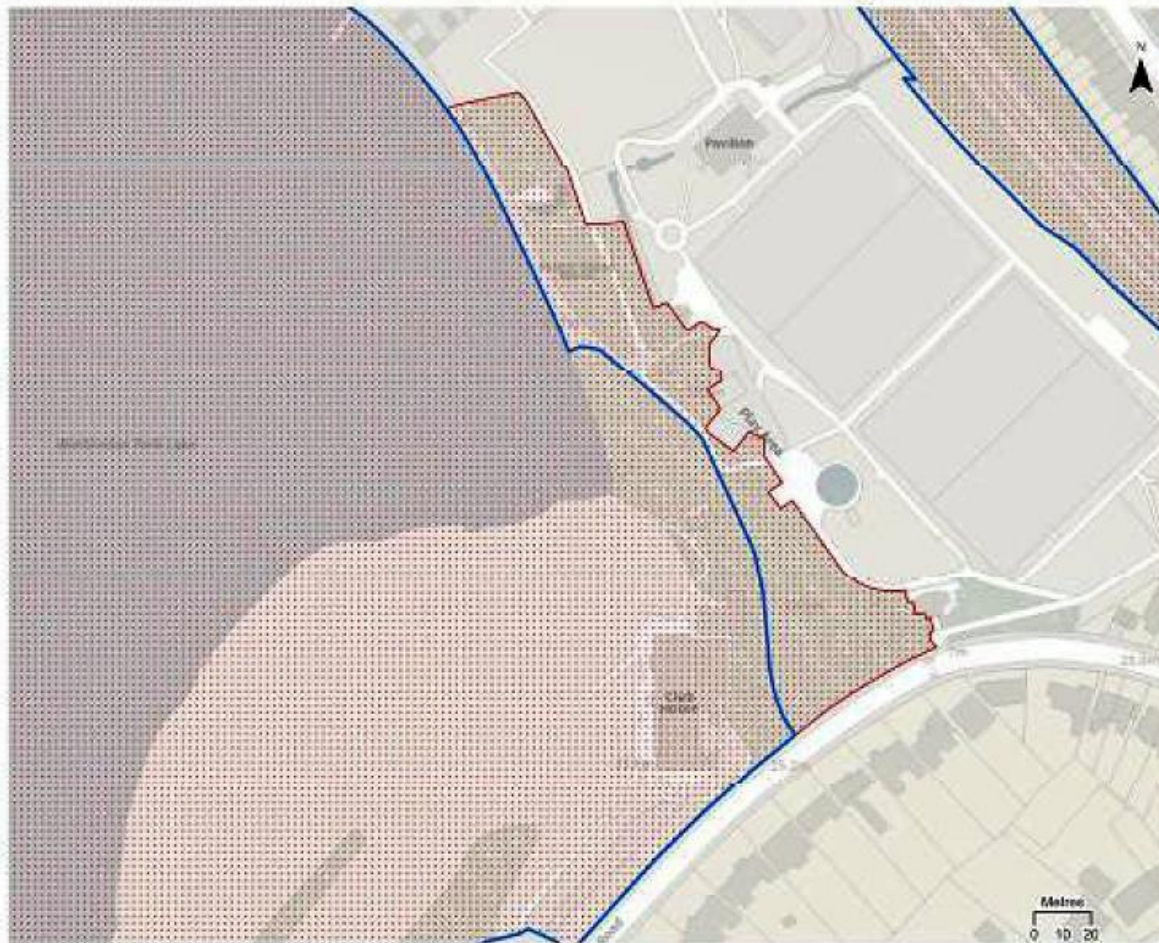
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Conclusion

- 1) Taking a holistic approach the waterfall feature should be removed whilst retaining some of the rocks (those removed should be stored for brook relandscaping).
- 2) Not so far mentioned but relevant is the need to deliver Wimbledon Park from Historic England's 'At Risk Register'.
- 3) More details of Ashen Grove Wood (ancient woodland) are detailed in the next 3 slides.
 - a) *Note: Ancient woodland takes hundreds of years to establish and is defined as an irreplaceable habitat. It's any area that's been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It is a material planning consideration for local planning authorities (LPAs).*
 - b) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions>
- 4) Comments should be made to:
 - ▶ <https://www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org/contact>

MM-SINC-Map-05



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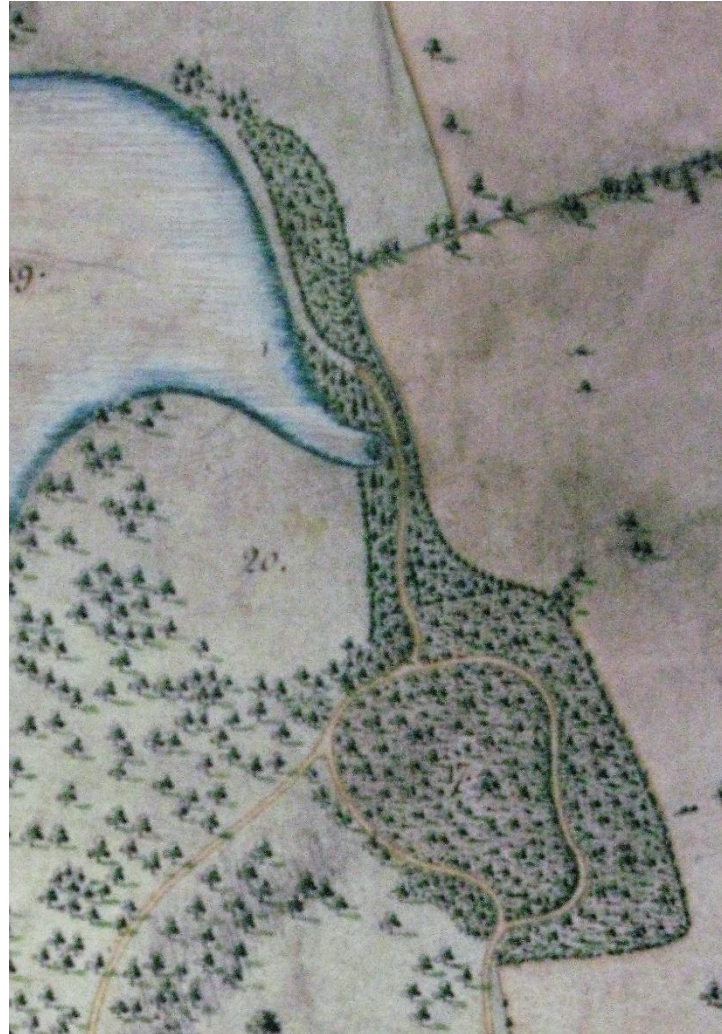
The Local Plan revisions agreed in March 2022.

The draft Local Plan was in error in omitting from the Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation the part of Ashen Grove Wood that still lies in the public park: the bit west of the main path through the children's play area.

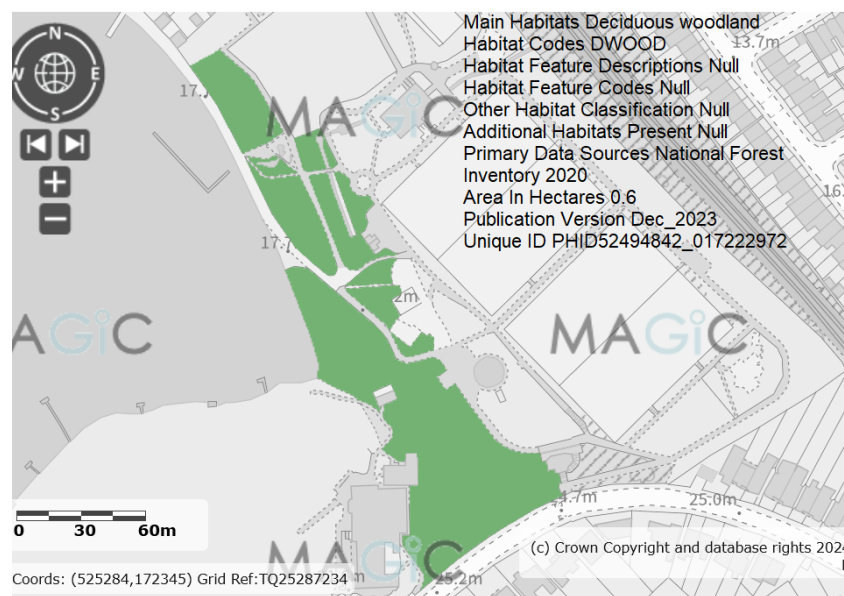


**An excerpt from
Richardson's 1768 plan of
the park as newly
landscaped by Lancelot
Brown**

- ▶ One can see that Brown retained the part of Ashen Grove Wood that extended north of its present extent.
- ▶ It once ended in the vicinity of the present-day Watersports building.
- ▶ This northern part of the wood was degraded over the years and finally lost when the public park was developed 100 years ago.



This plan is from DEFRA's "MAGIC" website of important biodiversity and landscape features in England.
The area on this website was based upon the National Forest Inventory



- So, areas all around the waterfall were once Ashen Grove Wood and retain tree cover, much of it dating back to arboretum planting in previous decades.
- Much of the arboretum planting is not thriving and I would advocate replacing losses with species appropriate to the historic Ashen Grove Wood (Ash, Oak, Field Maple, etc).
- The species mix employed in our recent plantings in Horse Close Wood.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_NVC_community_W8.
- This, of course, would perpetuate the present shady conditions either side of the waterfall.