

Merton Council

Cabinet

22 June 2021

Supplementary agenda

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Committee: Cabinet

Date: 22nd June 2021

Wards: Abbey, Colliers Wood, Dundonald, Hillside, Merton Park, Raynes Park, Trinity, Wimbledon Park, Village

Subject: PlanWimbledon's application to be a neighbourhood forum for their proposed neighbourhood area of Wimbledon.

Lead officer: Director for Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee

Lead member: Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency, Chris Lee

Contact officer: Deputy FutureMerton Manager, Tara Butler

Recommendations:

- A. To note the consultation responses to the publication of the PlanWimbledon neighbourhood area and forum applications.
 - B. To refuse PlanWimbledon's application as a neighbourhood forum.
 - C. To decline to determine PlanWimbledon's Neighbourhood Area application because, following the refusal of the neighbourhood forum application, there would be no organisation that is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum in relation to it.
 - D. To encourage and support further dialogue between PlanWimbledon and the business community towards resolving the issues identified in this report.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. A community group called PlanWimbledon applied to be designated as a neighbourhood forum for their proposed neighbourhood area of Wimbledon.
- 1.2. Following Cabinet approval in March 2021, Merton Council carried out a 6-week public consultation between 12th April and 23rd May 2021 which is required under the neighbourhood planning legislation to inform decision-making on designating neighbourhood forums and areas.
- 1.3. Under the neighbourhood planning legislation, the council has 13 weeks from the day after the first date of the public consultation to make a decision whether or not to approve PlanWimbledon as the Neighbourhood Forum for their proposed neighbourhood area of Wimbledon and whether to approve the proposed neighbourhood area, otherwise their proposals have deemed consent. This date expires on 13th July 2021.
- 1.4. Over 1,300 responses were received to the consultation, with approx. 100 either anonymous or duplicates which could not be included. The representations are summarised within the body of this report at XXX, and are illustrated through graphs set out at Appendix 2 to this report. The majority of respondents (c90%) were from residents and supported

PlanWimbledon's proposed area and forum. There were objections to the proposals including from

- Merton Park: consultees either wanted the whole of Merton Park to be within the PlanWimbledon area or outside the area.
- Representatives of the business community, on the basis that the proposed area was too large, that businesses weren't adequately represented in PlanWimbledon, that there was already a plethora of existing planning rules and guidance and an additional layer of Neighbourhood Planning would not lead to greater certainty in decision-making, and that other neighbourhood forums may form for Wimbledon town centre in the next five years.

- 1.5. Officers have considered all aspects of the proposal including the public consultation responses and PlanWimbledon's application against the neighbourhood planning legislation and guidance. PlanWimbledon have also provided correspondence in June 2021 confirming an increase in their membership since the original application; their views on responses to the consultation and their representation of business interests.
- 1.6. Officers recommend that PlanWimbledon does not currently satisfy the criteria that must be taken into account by the council under Section 61F(7)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in that its membership is not considered to be drawn from all places in the specified area or all sections of the community in that area, and further its purpose does not reflect in general terms the character of the entirety of the area. Accordingly the Council is legally required to refuse the application for designation as a neighbourhood forum in relation to the specified area.
- 1.7. Officers considered whether the deficiency in the appropriateness of designating PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum could be addressed through the council designating it as a neighbourhood forum for a smaller area or areas other than specified within its application, however officers felt that these options could not be recommended at the present time. This is set out in more detail in Section 3, "alternative options".
- 1.8. Accordingly officers recommend that the application for designation of PlanWimbledon as a neighbourhood forum is refused. The Court of Appeal has held that where a neighbourhood forum application has been rejected the authority can decline to determine an application by that forum to designate a neighbourhood area on the basis that there will be no organisation that is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum in relation to it. Officers recommend that the council declines to determine the application for designation of the specified area as a neighbourhood area on this basis.
- 1.9. As there will be no designated forum or area at this time, this will give the opportunity to PlanWimbledon and representatives of the business community to work together to resolve the issues set out in this report and will not act as a restriction to revised proposals for designation coming forward. Officers will work constructively and positively with all parties to this end.
- 1.10. This report is structured as follows:
 - Purpose of the report and executive Summary

- Introduction to the application
- Public consultation
- Analysis of the neighbourhood forum application
- Analysis of the neighbourhood area application
- Overall conclusions
- Alternative options

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

- 2.1. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 set out the process by which an application can be made by a local grouping or organisation for designation as a neighbourhood forum and for the designation of a neighbourhood area.
- 2.2. The designation of a neighbourhood area and forum are the first steps in the process of neighbourhood plan preparation. A neighbourhood plan, if brought into force, would form part of the Council's development plan for the Borough. Councillors are not being asked to make any decisions on a neighbourhood plan as part of this report.
- 2.3. The council has two decisions to make:
 - On the application for a Neighbourhood Forum (i.e. the community group who would be allowed to make a neighbourhood plan) and
 - On the application for a Neighbourhood Area (i.e. the geographic boundary over which the forum would be 'authorised to act' and a new neighbourhood plan would apply).

PlanWimbledon's application

- 2.4. The community group which became PlanWimbledon started in 2017 and sought officer advice, firstly in 2018 about preparing a neighbourhood plan for the Wimbledon area.
- 2.5. Following ongoing engagement and advice from council officers to PlanWimbledon, on 19th February 2021 Merton Council received an application from PlanWimbledon to become the Neighbourhood Forum for their proposed Neighbourhood Area of Wimbledon. The proposed Neighbourhood area lies entirely within the London borough of Merton but borders the London Borough of Wandsworth.

Map 1: PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area (section 8.3 of PlanWimbledon's application)

- 2.6. PlanWimbledon's application is available online here: https://www.merton.gov.uk/Documents/PlanWimbledon_Application_for_neighbourhood_forum_designation_April21.pdf and was one of the consultation documents for the public consultation.
- 2.7. Since PlanWimbledon's application was published in early April 2021, PlanWimbledon's membership has increased from around 300 in early April 2021 to over 600 as at 7th June 2021. PlanWimbledon's letter (dated 15th June 2021) confirming this is included as Appendix 6 to this report.

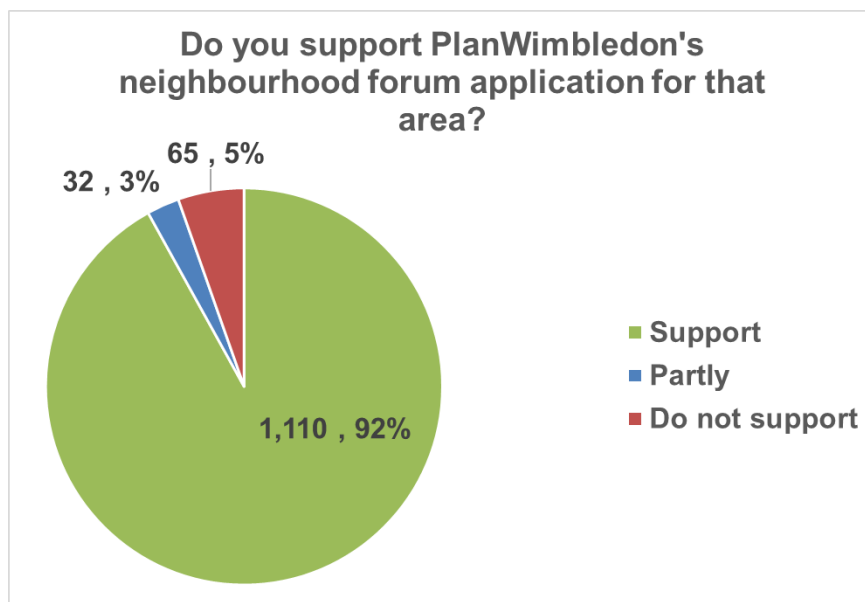
PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 2.8. In line with the legislative requirements and following approval by Cabinet on 22nd March 2021, the council carried out public consultation which started on 12th April 2021 and finished on 23rd May 2021. It was publicised by the council by:
- 2.8.1 Hosting PlanWimbledon's application form, proposed neighbourhood area map and a summary of the consultation details on the council's website <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans> which included a

short online survey to help people to respond (Information is also available on PlanWimbledon's website: <https://planwimbledon.org/>)

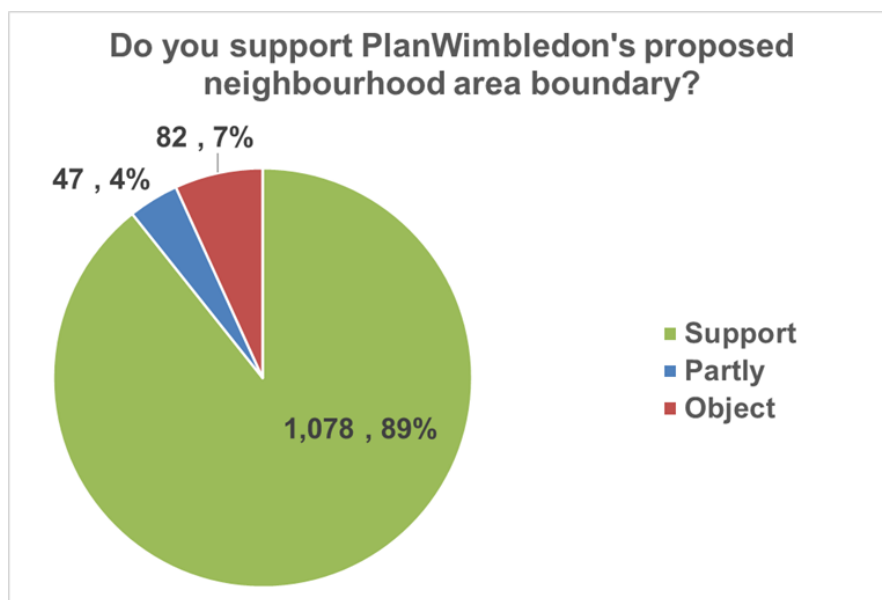
- 2.8.2 Contacting 798 contacts (residents' associations, community groups, landowners, business groups, individuals etc) who had subscribed to the the council's local plan consultation database. Officers considered restricting distribution to only contacts with a Wimbledon postcode but in the end contacted everyone on the consultation database as people or organisations without an SW19 postal address may work, study, avail of services or socialise within the proposed area.
- 2.8.3 Contacting anyone who has subscribed to Merton Council's "get involved" consultation portal, alerting them to the consultation.
- 2.8.4 Facilitating dialogue between PlanWimbledon and organisations referred to in PlanWimbledon's application form (e.g. the All England Lawn Tennis Club; AFC Wimbledon).
- 2.9. PlanWimbledon also promoted the consultation through their membership and channels and met with groups prior to and during the consultation period.
- 2.10. Details of the responses received are all available online here <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans/planwimbledon-consultation-responses/> and are summarised in the body of this report and in Appendix 4 to this report.
- 2.11. Although the consultation ended on Sunday 23rd May 2021 at 11.59pm, 11 responses were received via the online survey after the consultation ended (i.e. on Monday 24th May between 12.05am and 9.49am before the online survey was taken down). Officers recommend that these 10 responses have been included in the consultation results.
- 2.12. 1,227 verifiable responses were received; 1,213 by SurveyMonkey and the remaining 12 by email. Approximately 108 responses were anonymous or duplicates and weren't counted. Consultees were advised on the council's website that anonymous responses couldn't be considered.
- 2.13. **Neighbourhood forum:** of the 1,227 verifiable responses, 1,110 (91%) supported PlanWimbledon to be the neighbourhood forum group, 32 responses partly supported PlanWimbledon and 65 responses objected to PlanWimbledon being the proposed neighbourhood forum. The remainder, 16 respondents, did not directly reply to this question; either leaving it blank or making general statements on neighbourhood planning (e.g. Sport England).

Graph 1 – summary of consultation responses on PlanWimbledon's neighbourhood forum application



- 2.14. **Neighbourhood area boundary:** Of the 1,227 verifiable responses received, 1,078 (88%) supported the area boundary, 47 (4%) partly supported the area boundary and 82 (7%) objected to the proposed area boundary. The remainder of respondents (1%) did not answer the question (for example, Sport England and Natural England sent general statements containing advice on a prospective neighbourhood plan).

Graph 2 – summary of consultation responses on PlanWimbledon's neighbourhood area boundary application



CONSIDERING PLANWIMBLEDON'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM APPLICATION

- 2.15. There are two sets of criteria that a council must consider when assessing a neighbourhood forum application
- 2.16. Firstly, PlanWimbledon's application is considered against the (largely procedural) criteria set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the conditions set out in Section 61F(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These criteria and conditions are examined in Table 1 below

Table 1 – comparison of PlanWimbledon's proposal against the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012

Criteria in the Neighbourhood Planning (general) Regulations 2012	PlanWimbledon's proposal considered against the criteria
a) A map which identifies the area to which the application relates	PlanWimbledon provided a map of their proposed Neighbourhood Area to the council in February 2021. PlanWimbledon and Merton Council worked together to redraw the same PlanWimbledon map with an ordnance survey base which was used for public consultation
b) a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area;	PlanWimbledon provided this statement, which sets out how PlanWimbledon arrived at the proposed neighbourhood area boundary, with a starting point of a mile's radius from the centre of Wimbledon town centre (c15-20-minute walk) and then considering historic, physical and human geography to define the edges of the boundary. Section 6 of PlanWimbledon's statement sets this out, including detailed consultation with different residents' associations and community groups, which helped to shape the details of the outer boundary of PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area. PlanWimbledon's statement demonstrates that their engagement highlighted that some organisations asked to be incorporated within PlanWimbledon's boundary (e.g. Ursuline High School; Friends of Cannizaro Park) and other organisations (e.g. residents associations at North West Wimbledon, Colliers Wood, Residents Association of West Wimbledon (RAWW), Raynes Park Association) considered that they may want to form their own neighbourhood forum in the future and so wished to be outside PlanWimbeldon's boundary at this time. There is more limited information on engagement with businesses and

	business groups on the appropriateness of the proposed neighbourhood area.
<p>A statement which explains how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets the conditions contained in section 61F (5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which are:</p> <p>a) The neighbourhood forum is established for the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area that consists of or includes the neighbourhood area concerned;</p> <p>b) Its membership is open to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Individuals who live in the neighbourhood area concerned, ii) Individuals who work there, and iii) Individuals who are elected members of a county council, district council or London borough council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned; <p>c) Its membership includes a minimum of 21 individuals each of whom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Lives in the neighbourhood area concerned, ii) Works there, or iii) Is an elected member of a county council, district council or London borough council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned; and <p>d) It has a written constitution</p>	<p>PlanWimbledon have provided the necessary information to demonstrate that their proposed neighbourhood forum meets these conditions. Section 7 of PlanWimbledon's statement sets out that the purpose of The purpose of the proposed PlanWimbledon Forum is to:</p> <p><i>"• Promote or improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the neighbourhood area;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Canvass the viewpoints of residents, workers and businesses, bringing common understanding and clarity of local needs and wants</i> • <i>Capture key priorities and crystallise them in the form of a neighbourhood plan, which, subject to referendum, would complement the Merton Local Plan, adding detail and nuance."</i> <p>PlanWimbledon have provided 29 named members in their application (19 residents; 5 councillors; 5 businesses & landowners) and breakdown of their whole membership in their application, which (at the time of submission in April 2021) was of over 300 members. It states that 85% of the total membership are individuals and 15% are businesses, groups and associations (e.g. faith groups). Section 8.4 provides PlanWimbledon's constitution.</p> <p>Following the close of consultation and with encouragement from the council PlanWimbledon have updated their membership to demonstrate that they have attracted more members between early April 2021 (when their application was submitted) and June 2021. PlanWimbledon now have more than 600 members (see Appendix 6 to this report and graphs below)</p>

- 2.17. Secondly, in deciding whether to designate a neighbourhood forum, the Local Planning Authority must have regard, under section 61F(7)(a), to the desirability of designating an organisation or body:
- a) *Which has secured, or taken reasonable steps to attempt to secure, that its membership includes at least one individual falling within the categories set out above;*
 - b) *Whose membership is drawn from different places in the neighbourhood area concerned and from different sections of the community in that area; and*
 - c) *Which has a purpose which reflects (in general terms) the character of the neighbourhood area.*
- 2.18. Furthermore, the Court of Appeal has confirmed that provided the local planning authority does have regard to the desirability of designation in accordance with its duty under s61F(7) it may still refuse an application for designation. In other words it has a discretion.
- 2.19. **a) Has PlanWimbledon secured, or taken reasonable steps to attempt to secure, that its membership includes at least one individual falling within the categories set out above?**
- 2.20. PlanWimbledon's membership breakdown and constitution is contained in their application statement, which was the main public consultation document. It demonstrates that PlanWimbledon has secured at least one individual who lives in the area, works in the area or is a political representative within the proposed area. PlanWimbledon provided updated membership information in June 2021 which does not change this position and demonstrates that membership has increased. Therefore this criterion is met.
- 2.21. **b) Is PlanWimbledon's membership drawn from different places in the neighbourhood area concerned and from different sections of the community in that area?**

PlanWimbledon's membership as it currently stands

- 2.22. As set out in Table 3 below and in appendix 5 to this report, PlanWimbledon's membership at the time of application is detailed in their application form (dated 3rd April 2021), which was subject to public consultation. PlanWimbledon then updated this in June 2021 to reflect their increased membership (see appendix 6 to this report).
- 2.23. PlanWimbledon's membership is predominantly residential, reflecting the very large residential area it covers, but it is considered by officers to be under-represented by the business community relative to the strengths, characteristics and significance of the business and economic community found within the proposed Wimbledon neighbourhood area. This is also reflected in the consultation results, which had low levels of response from the business community and indicated opposition from significant business organisations.
- 2.24. Table 3 below shows a breakdown of membership, extracted from page 13 of PlanWimbledon's application form (appendix 5 to this report) and table 3a

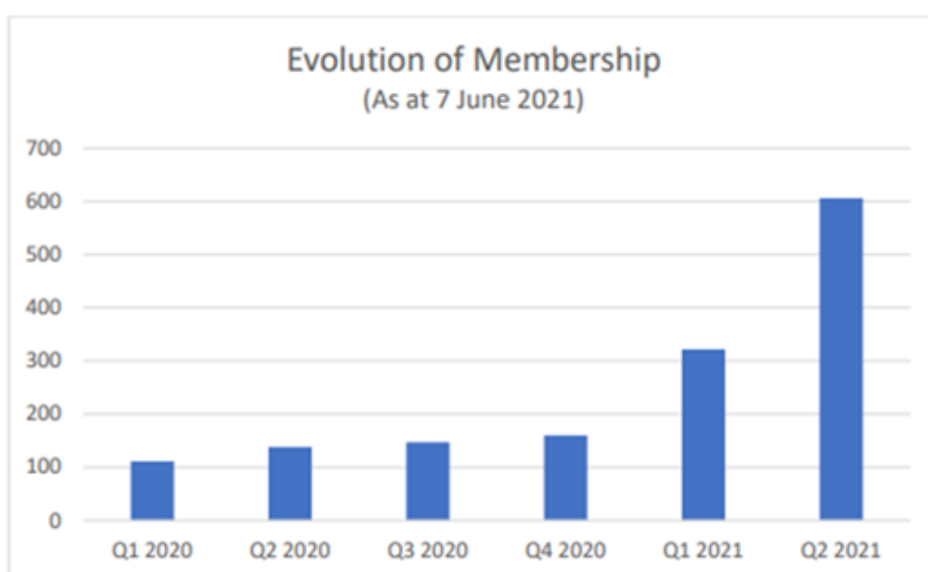
is from the more recent June 2021 correspondence with council officers (appendix 6 to this report)

Table 2: Extract from PlanWimbledon's application p.13 (dated April 2021) with member breakdown

Current membership breakdown by category	Count	%
Individual residents & residents working locally	237	73%
Residents associations	9	3%
Businesses	23	7%
Councillors	17	5%
Individual visitors or working locally (but not resident)	22	7%
Faith groups	8	2%
Other groups	8	2%
Total	324	100%

Table and graph 2a: Graph and table extracted from PlanWimbledon's updated (June 2021) with member breakdown (see appendix 6)

Current membership breakdown by category	%
Individual residents & residents working locally	73%
Individual visitors or working locally (but not resident)	11%
Businesses	8%
Councillors	3%
Residents associations	2%
Faith groups	1%
Other groups	1%
Total	100%



The business community within the specified area – this could set out the ONS data

- 2.25. The assessment of PlanWimbledon’s proposed neighbourhood area later in this report (para 2.67 onwards and particularly Table 5) goes into more detail on the characteristics of that area.
- 2.26. The specified area includes Wimbledon town centre which has a strategic economic importance that reaches across Merton and is recognised in the London Plan designation of Wimbledon as Merton’s only major town centre, with high commercial growth potential, capacity and demand for new speculative office development. It also includes Wimbledon Village, Leopold Road, Wimbledon Chase, Arthur Road and South Wimbledon which are recognised by the local plan to be distinct local town centres; Wimbledon Village is unique in these in having a London-wide visitor catchment. Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road is the borough’s third largest industrial estate and contains a significant number of businesses. Appendix 3 contains a list of more than 550 of the public facing businesses in these areas (as at January 2020). Many of the businesses in Wimbledon town centre, the Strategic Industrial Location and Wimbledon Village are major national or international businesses, including retail, food and beverage, waste management, and financial and professional services.
- 2.27. Following the public consultation, council officers met PlanWimbledon on several occasions in June 2021 and invited further representations from PlanWimbledon to substantiate their view that the proposed forum was representative of all sections of the community within their proposed area given the lack of response and objections from the business community. PlanWimbledon’s most recent letter to officers (received on 15th June 2021) is published at Appendix 6. In it PlanWimbledon provided further information on their business membership (see extracts at Table 3a above).
- 2.28. PlanWimbledon also provide ONS data via Nomis for the Wimbledon Parliamentary Constituency which demonstrates that in 2020 there were a total of 7,215 businesses in the Wimbledon Parliamentary constituency

boundary, of which over 6,600 were micro (0-9 employees) and 100 were either medium (50-249 employees) or large (250+ employees). PlanWimbledon state that the range of business sizes in PlanWimbledon's membership is proportional to their representation across the proposed area.

Table 3 extract from PlanWimbledon correspondence with council officers (15th June 2021), contained in full in appendix 6

Businesses by size in specific constituencies, 2020

	Wimbledon		Mitcham and Morden		UK
	Number of businesses	%	Number of businesses	%	%
Size of businesses					
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	6,690	92.7%	3,915	93.9%	89.6%
Small (10 to 49 employees)	425	5.9%	220	5.3%	8.5%
Medium-sized (50 to 249 employees)	80	1.1%	30	0.7%	1.5%
Large (250+ employees)	20	0.3%	0	0.0%	0.4%
<i>All businesses</i>	<i>7,215</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>4,170</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Source: [ONS, Business activity size and location, 2020, via NOMIS database](#)

- 2.29. The ONS data provided by PlanWimbledon demonstrates that there are far fewer medium and large businesses in the Wimbledon parliamentary constituency than there are SME and micro. However it also clearly demonstrates:
- 2.29.1 The importance of the Wimbledon area to the business base and jobs provision of Merton. Wimbledon has 80 businesses that are medium sized (50-249 employees) whereas the Mitcham and Morden constituency (the only other parliamentary constituency in Merton) has only 30 businesses of a similar size. Wimbledon has 20 large businesses (+250 employees) whereas Mitcham and Morden have none. Wimbledon has over 7,000 businesses in total whereas Mitcham and Morden have just over 4,000, of which 93% are micro businesses (0-9 employees)
 - 2.29.2 That by using the absolute minimum business sizes from the data (i.e. assuming that every one of the 80 medium sized business in Wimbledon only has the minimum number of 50 employees) this data demonstrates that nearly 10,000 people are employed in medium and large businesses in Wimbledon, 1.4% of total businesses in the Wimbledon Parliamentary constituency. That is a significant number of employees just in medium to large businesses in Wimbledon alone.
 - 2.29.3 Further analysis of Nomis data demonstrates that in 2019 60,000 people in Merton were in employment (i.e. employees and self employed) so approximately one sixth of the borough's total

employees and self employed were found in just 100 businesses all in the Wimbledon parliamentary constituency. Some of these 100 medium and large businesses are not within the proposed PlanWimbledon area; the Wimbledon Parliamentary constituency also includes South Wimbledon business area and BID which contains at least one large business; however the majority will be within PlanWimbledon's proposed area in Wimbledon town centre, Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road industrial area and elsewhere. This helps to demonstrate the importance of Wimbledon's 100 medium to large businesses to the economy and jobs for the whole borough.

Representation of the business community within the membership: generally

2.30. In their letter to officers of 15th June 2021, PlanWimbledon

- provide updated membership data, giving a total number of members as “over 600” but not an exact figure.
- state that 8% of their membership are businesses but do not give an exact figure for the total number of business (also set out in Table3a above in this report).
- gives the percentage of PlanWimbledon's SME “business members and supporters” as 18.5% of PlanWimbledon's total business members and supporters” SME businesses area described as being of 10 to 249 employees, a different categorisation from the Office of National Statistics / Nomis data PlanWimbledon provided in their letter of 15th June 2021 (see appendix 6) and in extracted in Table 3 above).
- gives the percentage of PlanWimbledon's large (+350 employees) business members and supporters as being 1.9% of the total number of PlanWimbledon's business members and supporters

Table 4 extract from PlanWimbledon correspondence with council officers (15th June 2021), contained in full in appendix 6

PlanWimbledon is representative of the proposed area's business community

	<u>Wimbledon constituency</u>		<u>PlanWimbledon</u>
	Number of businesses	%	% of business members and supporters
Size of businesses			
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	6,690	92.7%	79.6%
SME (10 to 249 employees)	505	7.0%	18.5%
Large (250+ employees)	20	0.3%	1.9%
<i>All businesses</i>	7,215	100.0%	100.0%

- 2.31. Without knowing the total number of PlanWimbledon membership (described by PlanWimbledon as “over 600”) or the total number of PlanWimbledon’s business members and supporters or what the definition of “business members and supporters” is, it is difficult to accurately ascertain PlanWimbledon’s representation or membership of medium (50-249 employees as described by the ONS) or larger businesses or employers (+250 employees). The named business members in PlanWimbledon’s application form are listed as a local architect, local pharmacist, locksmith owner and a member of a property company. PlanWimbledon state that Wimbledon Village Business Association is a PlanWimbledon member.
- 2.32. Section 6 of PlanWimbledon’s constitution (part of their application form) states that their Steering Group must contain 12 members with at least one “representative of business interests”. A quorum is achieved by at least 5 of the 12 total members, one of whom must be an officer (there are three officers). There is no requirement to have more than one business representative on the Steering Group; there is also no requirement for a business representative to be present for a decision-making meeting to be quorate. Therefore, under PlanWimbledon’s current constitution, it is possible for all decisions to be taken without input from any business representative, despite the proposed Forum covering a significant number and range of businesses and jobs in south London, including Merton’s only major town centre, three smaller town centres, several high streets and one of the borough’s three Strategic Industrial Locations.
- 2.33. Section 6.4 of PlanWimbledon’s application form demonstrates that PlanWimbledon have engaged very thoroughly with resident groups regarding the proposed boundary of their neighbourhood area. Some community groups and organisations asked for the boundary to be extended to cover their area (e.g Ursuline High School, Rydon Mews Residents Association Friends of Cannizaro Park), other residents associations (North West Wimbledon Residents Association; Residents Association of West Wimbledon (RAWW), the Raynes Park Association, Colliers Wood Residents Association) asked that PlanWimbledon’s proposed boundary avoid their area; the main reason given in PlanWimbledon’s application is that the residents associations may want to consider a neighbourhood forum / area for their residential area in the future. Paragraph 7.5.8 of PlanWimbledon’s application form records PlanWimbledon’s business and landowners membership, which is updated in June 2021 (appendix 6) and outlined above. Neither this section nor the extensive earlier sections at 6.4 on drawing the boundary demonstrate how or if dialogue with businesses was taken forward in creating the proposed area boundary and proposed forum, and seeking business representation.
- 2.34. Consideration of the three main business communities within the proposed PlanWimbledon area is taken in turn.

Representation of the business community within the membership: Plough Lane / Weir Road Strategic Industrial Location.

- 2.35. **Plough Lane / Weir Road industrial area** – This is one of the largest extensive business areas in Merton, and a Strategic Industrial Location in

planning terms with London-wide significance. PlanWimbledon do not have any members from this area (including in the June 2021 update) and no responses were received at public consultation. If the applications for the proposed neighbourhood forum and area were acceptable in other respects, officers would have recommended that this area should be removed from the proposed neighbourhood area in order for the proposed area to meet the criterion of having membership drawn from different places and sections in the proposed area.

Representation of PlanWimbledon membership generally: Area north of Somerset Road / Parkside

- 2.36. PlanWimbledon's membership map (original April 2021 and including the June 2021 update) does not show any members to the north of Somerset Road and only two public consultation responses were received from this area. However, other factors that can be considered are that:
- This area is characterised by large homes, usually set in large plots so the population density is lower. The All England Lawn Tennis Club also makes up a significant landholding here.
 - Council officers facilitated contact between the All England Lawn Tennis Club and PlanWimbledon and AELTC have sent a supportive response to the public consultation
 - PlanWimbledon's application states that Parkside Residents Association is a member of PlanWimbledon
- 2.37. Therefore, despite the lower membership illustrated on PlanWimbledon's membership map, there is evidence of support from this area.

Representation of the business community within the membership: Wimbledon Town Centre

- 2.38. PlanWimbledon's application is comprehensive and detailed on how the proposed area boundary was created with input from many different residents' associations and community organisations (e.g. Friends groups within parks). There is far less information on how and when the business community has been engaged and involved since the project started in 2017, even though PlanWimbledon's application is clear that Wimbledon town centre was always at the heart of the proposed boundary. Some of this may be
- 2.39. PlanWimbledon's proposed constitution provides a Steering Committee of 12 members, only one of whom must be a "representative of the business community"; the business representative is not required for a quorate vote and even if they were, with just one representative it would always be possible for the business representative to be outvoted on every issue.

- 2.40. Feedback from the public consultation reflects this; demonstrating that a significant number of businesses are not members of PlanWimbledon and are not generally supportive of PlanWimbledon's proposals to become a neighbourhood area covering Wimbledon town centre.
- 2.41. LoveWimbledon's response to the consultation states that the BID would like to consider becoming a business led neighbourhood area / forum in the future. This is similar to the statements made in PlanWimbledon's application by community and residents groups, including the Raynes Park Association, Residents Association of West Wimbledon (RAWW) North West Wimbledon Residents Association and Colliers Wood Residents Association. PlanWimbledon's engagement with these residents associations helped to guide and inform the proposed area boundary, enveloping the residents associations that said they would like to participate and drawing it away from the residents associations who stated that they would like to consider their own neighbourhood plan in the future. There is no evidence that business groups or the business community were as involved in drawing the boundary, particularly for areas that are wholly or predominantly business in nature such as Wimbledon town centre and Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road strategic industrial location.

Conclusions on this criterion

- 2.42. With over 1,000 respondents supporting both PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area and proposed neighbourhood forum and less than 100 objections for each, the number of those who objected at public consultation is proportionally far fewer than those who are supportive. However notwithstanding this disparity in numbers, the evidence has led officers to conclude that at this current time PlanWimbledon's membership is not sufficiently drawn from all sections within the proposed area. The proposed area covers the Major town centre at Wimbledon, three distinct local centres at Arthur Road, South Wimbledon and Wimbledon Village and the Strategic Industrial Location at Plough Lane / Durnsford Road / Weir Road. There is no evidence presented in PlanWimbledon's application of proportionate membership representing businesses or employers from these areas, particularly larger businesses that are found in Wimbledon town centre and Plough Lane / Weir Road industrial area, nor is there evidence suggesting the businesses / employers in these locations are supportive of the proposed forum and neighbourhood area.
- 2.43. PlanWimbledon have responded to state that once designated it will engage further with business organisations and encourage them to join its membership and participate in its decision-making. This is welcomed. However, as set out above, officers must base their assessment on the membership of PlanWimbledon, as it currently stands, and in light of the representations made during the consultation including from businesses and business organisations, who are largely either silent or are not supportive of the proposed forum. Whilst officers have considered PlanWimbledon's stated aspirations to recruit further members from the business community following designation, they do not recommend that any weight should be given to them as these may or may not come to fruition, and will in any event be challenging in light of confirmed opposition from some business organisations.

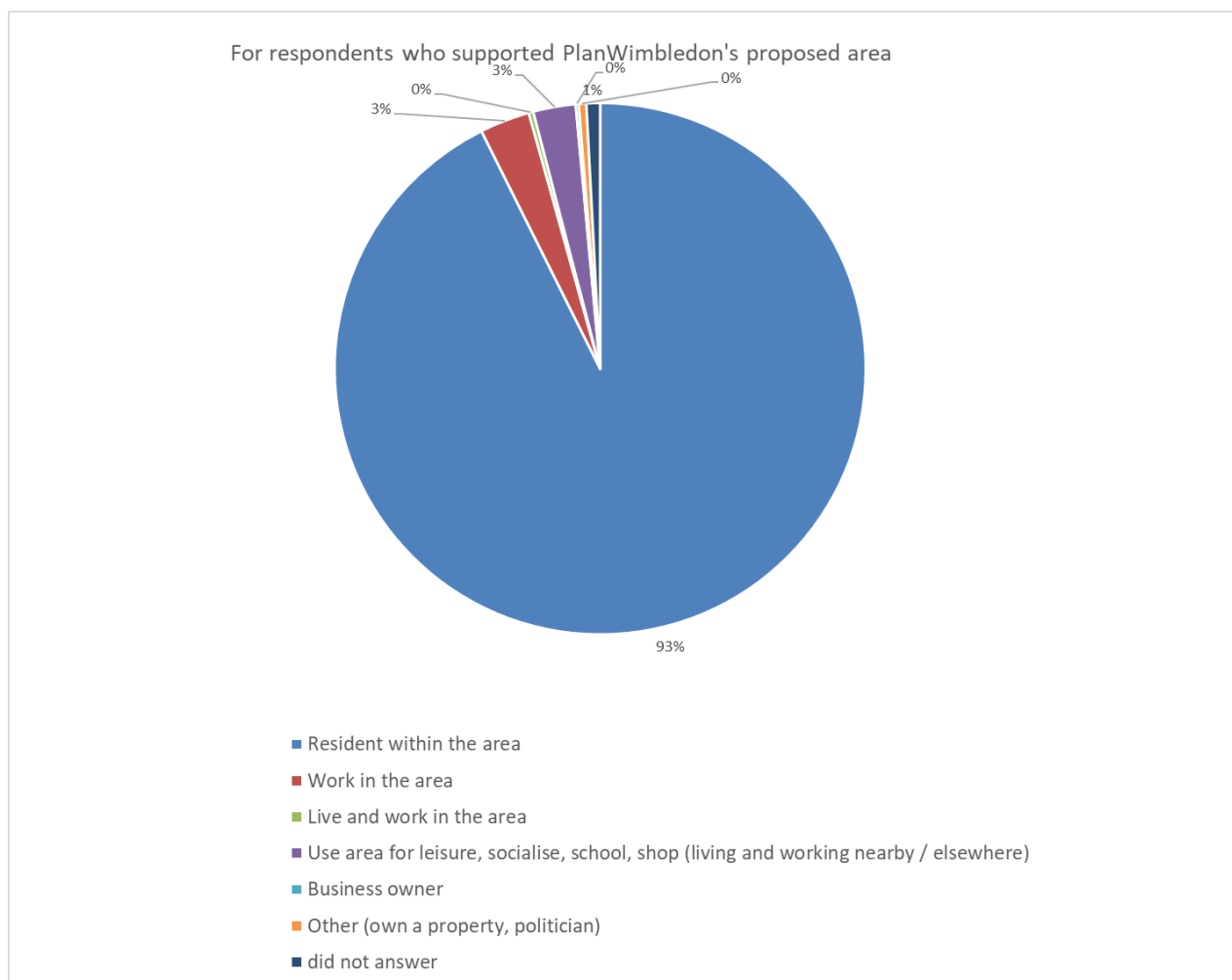
- 2.44. Therefore this criterion is not considered to be met.
- 2.45. **Do PlanWimbledon's proposals have a purpose which reflects (in general terms) the character of the neighbourhood area?**
- 2.46. As set out above, officers consider that PlanWimbledon's application, membership details (in the original application and June 2021 update) and responses to the consultation demonstrate that its proposals are residential led and have strong support from many residents. PlanWimbledon's purpose could be appropriate for the residential areas that PlanWimbledon's proposed area covers and for the high streets and smaller centres that support this area.
- 2.47. However PlanWimbledon's proposed area also intends to cover some of the borough's main business districts, such as Wimbledon town centre and the Strategic Industrial Locations at Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road. For the reasons set out in detail earlier in this report, the purpose of these business areas is not reflected in PlanWimbledon's application, nor in the public consultation feedback. Therefore while Wimbledon town centre and Plough Lane industrial area remains in PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area, this criterion is not considered to be met.

CONSIDERING PLANWIMBLEDON'S NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA APPLICATION

- 2.48. Overall, the vast majority of respondents (1,078 or 88% of responses received) supported PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area. All public consultation responses are available online: [PlanWimbledon Consultation Responses \(merton.gov.uk\)](https://www.merton.gov.uk/consultation/planwimbledon)
- 2.49. 189 respondents gave reasons for support, which included
- That the proposal empowered local people to have their say, that this will enable local community voices to be heard
 - that the neighbourhood area proposed represents Wimbledon,
 - that it will be a positive influence on Wimbledon including the town centre;
 - that it will strengthen planning rules within the character of Wimbledon
 - that Wimbledon has specific needs and this will help to meet them
 - that it makes sense geographically, that the boundary has been carefully considered.
- 2.50. Most of that support came from residents. Of the 1,078 supportive responses for the neighbourhood area, 1,003 (93%) of respondents supporting identified themselves as residents compared to 29 respondents (3% of supporters) who supported the proposals and identified themselves as working in the area and 3 respondents (0.3%) who both lived and worked in the area. Two respondents identified themselves as business owners supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area, and 28 supportive respondents (3% of supporters) described how they lived nearby

or elsewhere, using the area for school, shopping, socialising and leisure activities.

Graph 3 – summary of respondents who supported PlanWimbledon’s proposed neighbourhood area at public consultation



2.51. Organisations who responded to the consultation to support PlanWimbledon’s proposed neighbourhood area include:

2.51.1 The All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) who welcome greater community participation in the planning process on principle and states that should PlanWimbledon be successful in forming a neighbourhood forum, AELTC would welcome further opportunities to engage with the group and discuss AELTC’s future plans and aspirations. AELTC urges PlanWimbledon to support Merton’s emerging Local Plan and continued investment, growth and development within the borough. On the proposed neighbourhood area AELTC states “*The AELTC has no objection to the intended area, however it is unclear why Wimbledon Park has been excluded (where all land and sites adjoining are included)*”. (NB: paragraph 6.4.17 of PlanWimbledon’s application form sets out their reasoning on why the whole of Wimbledon Park was not included within the proposed area).

- 2.51.2 AW Champion – a timber supply business with 10 branches in the south east of England, including one within the PlanWimbledon area on Hartfield Crescent (and another elsewhere in Merton). This respondent supports the proposed neighbourhood forum and area, and added “*we wish to ensure our concerns are addressed when the neighbourhood plan is prepared*”.
- 2.51.3 A resident who runs a business employing 10 people in the who supports both the proposed area (stating “*The boundary is large which will enable the group to have "clout" and deal properly with issues from pollution to planning and beyond*” and the proposed forum (stating “*The group has a broad range of local support.*” “*It is sad that Love Wimbledon opposes the application. Focusing purely on business removes the balance from a vibrant mixed use area*”
- 2.51.4 Merton Conservatives, who state that they wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon, “*this is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is critically important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.*”
- 2.51.5 Transport for London, who note that there is a number of TfL assets including underground stations, tram stops and bus infrastructure in the area, and that the statutory safeguarding of Crossrail2, also in the area, is due to be updated in 2021. TfL states “*we have no objection to the designation of the neighbourhood forum or the proposed area and look forward to constructive dialogue with the forum when it is established.*”
- 2.51.6 The Wandle Valley Forum, who supports 140 community groups, voluntary organisations and local businesses and everyone who shares a passion for the Wandle. The Wandle Valley Forum supports the proposed Area, stating “*This is within the Wandle Valley Regional Park. It has been developed in consultation with relevant local organisations and presents an appropriate expression of the community’s views about the geographic identity of Wimbledon. We welcome the inclusion of the whole of Wandle Meadow Nature Park*” The Wandle Valley Forum go on to say that ideally, the boundary would include land on both sides of the river running north from Plough Lane but understand the rationale for not including land within Wandsworth council jurisdiction given the additional complexity it would bring to neighbourhood planning.
- 2.51.7 The Wandle Valley Forum also support PlanWimbledon’s proposed neighbourhood forum and have provided a written response which is included as Appendix 4.

Part support for the area boundary

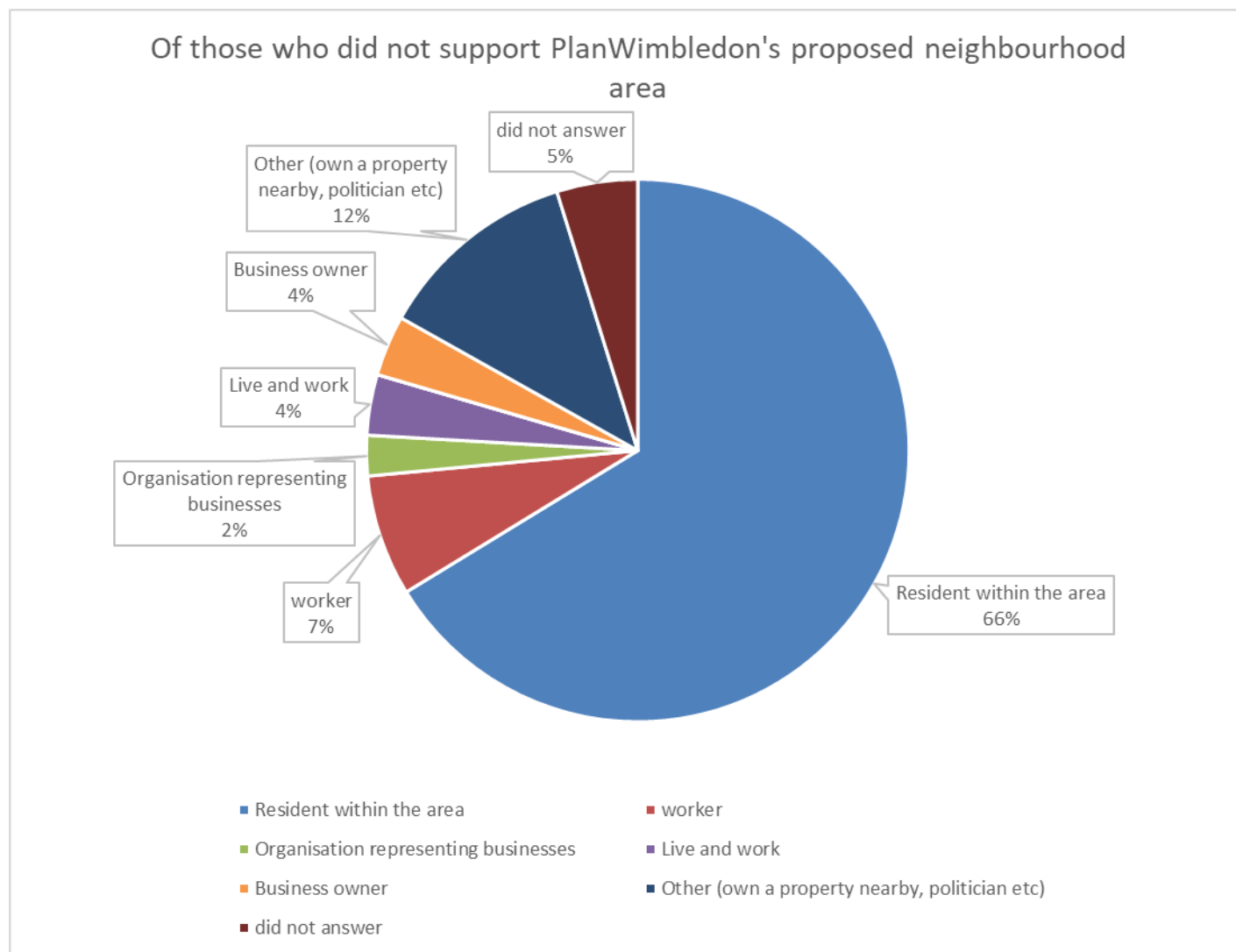
- 2.52. Of the 54 responses that stated that they “partly” supported the boundary, many of these were residents seeking inclusion within the boundary (i.e. they lived beyond the boundary and wanted the boundary redrawn to include their street). This was particularly true of Merton Park, where at least 12 respondents who “partly” supported PlanWimbledon’s area wanted the boundary extended to cover more of Merton Park.

2.53. A business landowner, Eskmuir Group, partly support the proposed Area and have not responded to this question for the Forum. Eskmuir Group owns St George's House at 8-20 Worple Road and 20-26 St George's Road, currently a ground floor supermarket with office space and car parking above, proposed for redevelopment in Merton's local plan. Eskmuir group have provided a written response which is included as Appendix 4. This can be summarised as:

- A great deal of thought has gone into defining PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area
- That PlanWimbledon's four reasons why the proposed Forum should cover the area identified (to encourage community engagement, ensure appropriate growth, deliver a shared vision and drive socio-economic change) are already covered by existing planning policy including the London Plan, Local Plan documents and the FutureWimbledon SPD which have been subject to extensive public consultation
- Eskmuir suggest that PlanWimbledon consider redefining the boundaries of the proposed neighbourhood area to exclude the area already covered by the FutureWimbledon SPD

Objections to the area boundary:

2.54. 84 objections were received to the proposed area boundary.



- 2.55. Of the 84 respondents who objected to the area boundary, 63 were individuals who gave reasons for their objection and at least 19 of these reasons (c25% of all objections received on the proposed area) were from residents who wanted the boundary extended, mainly to cover all of Merton Park but also to cover other areas such as Colliers Wood, Cottenham Park, Raynes Park, South Wimbledon and Wimbledon Park. The remaining c40 resident objections given were from individuals, who gave reasons including the size of the area as being too large, lack of democratic accountability, no knowledge of the group's proposals and not necessary to create further boundaries / planning rules.
- 2.56. 11 respondents who objected identified themselves as working in the area or representing businesses sited within the area. This includes in particular LoveWimbledon, Merton Chamber of Commerce, and F&C Commercial Property, which owns the landholdings in Wimbledon town centre including Morrisons, the piazza and adjacent shops and services.
- 2.57. LoveWimbledon is Wimbledon town centre's Business Improvement District. It has existed for nearly a decade, having been voted for and paid for by certain business ratepayers in Wimbledon town centre in 2012 and again in 2017. The website for LoveWimbledon states that it is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, managed by a Board of Directors made up of

representatives of the local business community. PlanWimbledon acknowledge that LoveWimbledon is an important stakeholder.

- 2.58. LoveWimbledon's response is provided in full in Appendix 4 It states that LoveWimbledon and PlanWimbledon have met several times and engaged over three years on this. LoveWimbledon state that they agree with PlanWimbledon that Wimbledon town centre is vital for accessing local services, shops, workplaces, leisure and travel. LoveWimbledon note the strategic role of Wimbledon town centre as a component of the UK's capital city, an Opportunity Area in the London Plan, and Merton's only Major town centre, home to a thriving retail centre, a large office hub and a national transport centre.
- 2.59. LoveWimbledon are concerned that the proposed area's boundary and scale are inappropriate, that it will fetter progress and development of the central business district and they do not support it. They do not support PlanWimbledon's designation as a proposed neighbourhood forum; they note that PlanWimbledon's constitution and governance structure does not support meaningful business representation or voting rights for individual businesses, property owners, asset managers or bodies such as LoveWimbledon. LoveWimbledon refer to their own business and property owners survey feedback, and state that 85% of businesses with a range of commercial interests in Wimbledon do not support a resident-led neighbourhood plan covering the central business district.
- 2.60. LoveWimbledon consider it is understandable that many people identify with the internationally recognised name of Wimbledon and the SW19 postcode, they state the largest in London, but that this has created a proposed area with an impractically wide and broad scale of diverse interests that is unmanageable. LoveWimbledon also comment on difficulties with engagement and anti-business feedback.
- 2.61. LoveWimbledon propose in the longer term to pursue a business led Neighbourhood Forum and Plan which reflects business and residential issues, would have a balance of business and resident representation to steer it and would require support from both the business and residential community at the referendum stage.
- 2.62. Merton Chamber of Commerce has over 20 years of experience in Merton, and has over 700 members and over 3,000 business customers across the borough. It is affiliated with the London Chamber of Commerce and other Chambers. Following a meeting between PlanWimbledon and Merton Chamber of Commerce Directors on 19th May 2021, Merton Chamber of Commerce responded to the consultation saying:
- Merton Chamber of Commerce values PlanWimbledon's work and supports the concept and purpose of neighbourhood planning as improving social capital
 - The Chamber discussed PlanWimbledon's proposed area and it is their view that the proposed area is too large. In their experience, the different localities within the proposed area (Wimbledon Village, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon town centre, Plough Lane, South

Wimbledon etc) have very different characteristics and don't share a sense of cohesiveness apart from being part of Merton.

- Merton Chamber would be happy to work with PlanWimbledon and be a conduit for their future communications with Merton's business community.

2.63. Clarion Housing Group objected to the large size of the area and it covering the High Path estate, which already is covered by detailed planning guidance in the Estates Local Plan.

Other comments on the consultation results

2.64. No responses were received from the Durnsford Road / Weir Road / Plough Lane industrial areas, which are included in the proposed PlanWimbledon area. Only two responses, one from the All England Lawn Tennis Club (supporting the proposals) were received from the streets to the north of Wimbledon Park bordering Wandsworth.

2.65. Some respondents to the public consultation referred to the potential merits or otherwise of potential future neighbourhood plans, including in relation to existing or future planning policy, should PlanWimbledon's forum and area applications be approved. These are not material considerations to be taken into account at the stage of considering applications for neighbourhood forum and area designation. Government is clear that local planning authorities should not take these matters into account when designating a neighbourhood area. NPPG <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>) Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 41-035-20161116 states

2.66. *When a neighbourhood area is designated a local planning authority should avoid pre-judging what a qualifying body may subsequently decide to put in its draft neighbourhood plan or Order. It should not make assumptions about the neighbourhood plan or Order that will emerge from developing, testing and consulting on the draft neighbourhood plan or Order when designating a neighbourhood area.*

ASSESSMENT OF CONSULTATION RESULTS AND DESIGNATING A NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

2.67. For the reasons stated elsewhere in this report, officers recommend that the application for designation as a neighbourhood forum is refused and furthermore the Council should decline to determine the neighbourhood area application. Nevertheless, the proposed forum and the proposed area raise interrelated issues. Accordingly, this section discusses the area specified in the application as the neighbourhood area, which inform officers overall recommendations on the applications.

2.68. NPPG Paragraph 33 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>) asks "What considerations, other than administrative boundaries, may be relevant when deciding the boundaries of a neighbourhood area?" and states:

2.69. *The following could be considerations when deciding the boundaries of a neighbourhood area:*

- *village or settlement boundaries, which could reflect areas of planned expansion*
- *the catchment area for walking to local services such as shops, primary schools, doctors' surgery, parks or other facilities*
- *the area where formal or informal networks of community based groups operate*
- *the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood, for example buildings that may be of a consistent scale or style*
- *whether the area forms all or part of a coherent estate either for businesses or residents*
- *whether the area is wholly or predominantly a business area*
- *whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary, for example a major road or railway line or waterway*
- *the natural setting or features in an area*
- *size of the population (living and working) in the area*

Electoral ward boundaries can be a useful starting point for discussions on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents".

2.70. Section 6 of PlanWimbledon's application sets out clearly how PlanWimbledon developed their proposed neighbourhood area boundary. PlanWimbledon started with a 1-mile radius circle with the centre point of Centre Court shopping centre (the former Wimbledon town hall at the heart of Wimbledon town centre) as the basis for a 15-minute walking / cycling journey, considered physical features (e.g. roads, parks) then refined the boundary in close consultation with many residents' groups and community organisations.

2.71. PlanWimbledon's application states that they consider the area appropriate for designation, saying "*The boundaries of the proposed neighbourhood area are coherent, consistent and appropriate. They are geographically and historically logical, and often coincide with local government boundaries.*

The people who live or work within these boundaries refer in general terms to the area as "Wimbledon".

They use "Wimbledon" when giving their address or in their response to the questions "where do you live?", "where do you work?" and "where is your shop/office?".

They use the services provided within the area rather than outside, including primary schools; surgeries; library; places of worship/religious meetings; shopping; restaurants and bars; and theatres and cinemas.

Our membership is spread across this fairly wide area because they regard it as "their Wimbledon".

They are economically and/or emotionally strongly invested in the area, and what happens here really matters to them"

- 2.72. The council's assessment of the neighbourhood area against the NPPG Criteria is as follows in Table 5 below.

Table 5: assessment of PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area against the NPPG criteria

NPPG criteria	Assessment of proposed Neighbourhood Area against these criteria
village or settlement boundaries, which could reflect areas of planned expansion	<p>The proposed area contains Wimbledon town centre, as Merton's largest town centre, the location for nearly all of the borough's offices, many of the borough's major businesses and over half the borough's total number of jobs. Wimbledon town centre has a strategic economic importance that reaches across Merton and is recognised in the London Plan designation of Wimbledon as part of an Opportunity Area (with South Wimbledon and Colliers Wood) for homes and jobs, as Merton's only major town centre, with high commercial growth potential, capacity and demand for new speculative office development. A list of over 200 businesses in Wimbledon (as at January 2020) is included as Appendix 3, including multi-national businesses, international and national chains, office headquarters, regional headquarters, retail, leisure, financial services and charities</p> <p>Wimbledon Village, Leopold Road, Wimbledon Chase, Arthur Road and South Wimbledon are all smaller local centres; Wimbledon Village is unique in these in having a London-wide visitor catchment.</p> <p>Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road is the borough's third largest industrial estate and contains a significant number of businesses, including waste management services (Cappagh Group, Reston Waste), builders merchants (Travis Perkins, Selco, Wickes, Topps Tiles), national food delivery depots (Ocado), food production (Vallebona, Mustard Foods, water delivery). Many of the businesses in Wimbledon town centre, the Strategic Industrial Location and Wimbledon Village are major national or international businesses, including retail, food and beverage, waste management, and financial and professional services.</p>
the catchment area for walking to local services such as shops, primary schools, doctors' surgery, parks or other facilities	<p>The area contains at least 14 primary and secondary schools, at least seven parks and open spaces a wide range of other services including healthcare centres, gyms, and town centre services such as two theatres, and cinemas. Although not catchment areas, the proposed area also contains the internationally known All England Lawn Tennis Club grounds, hosts to the Wimbledon</p>

	Championships Grand Slam, and the AFC Wimbledon stadium at Plough Lane.
the area where formal or informal networks of community based groups operate	PlanWimbledon's application demonstrate that there are a large number of formal and informal community based groups operating within the wider Wimbledon area. This is also reflected in some of the consultation responses, which refer to social and community activities within the proposed area. However PlanWimbledon's application also demonstrates that community groups that are also partly defined as "Wimbledon" do not necessarily see themselves as part of the proposed area (e.g. Residents Association of West Wimbledon; North West Wimbledon Residents Association, Wimbledon Common Conservators).
the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood, for example buildings that may be of a consistent scale or style	<p>Merton's draft borough character study analyses characteristics of the whole of Merton, considering various aspects including socio-economic, functional character, environmental and climate change influenced character, community character and built character.</p> <p>The built character analysis demonstrates that there are a wide range of different built characteristics within the proposed area, from Wimbledon town centre, to detached houses with large gardens to suburban terraces to industrial sheds. Appendix 1 contains a map to illustrate this derived from the draft Borough Character Study. There are several different conservation areas that cover different parts of the proposed area; the FutureWimbledon SPD and Merton's Estates Local Plan also analyse the existing character of specific parts of the proposed neighbourhood.</p>
whether the area forms all or part of a coherent estate either for businesses or residents	PlanWimbledon's application and the majority of over 1,000 responses received from residents at the consultation demonstrate that there are views that the Wimbledon" area is coherent. However other responses to the public consultation demonstrate that some people view the area as being made up of distinct districts, estates and neighbourhoods with different characteristics and is too large and diverse to be considered as a single coherent area. This spatial distinctiveness within the area is also reflected in the analysis of the area in Merton's draft Borough Character Study 2021 and other planning documents including conservation area character appraisals, Merton's Estates Local Plan and successive Local Plans.

<p>whether the area is wholly or predominantly a business area</p>	<p>The proposed area contains four designated town centres (Arthur Road, South Wimbledon, Wimbledon Village and Merton's only major town centre at Wimbledon) and many high streets and shopping parades (Leopold Road, Wimbledon Chase, Haydon's Road and others).</p> <p>It also contains one of Merton's three Strategic Industrial Locations at Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road which is the borough's third largest industrial estate and contains a significant number of businesses, including waste management services (Cappagh Group, Reston Waste), builders merchants (Travis Perkins, Selco, Wickes, Topps Tiles), national food delivery depots (Ocado), food production (Vallebona, Mustard Foods, water delivery). Many of the businesses in Wimbledon town centre, the Strategic Industrial Location and Wimbledon Village are major national or international businesses, including retail, food and beverage, waste management, and financial and professional services.</p> <p>Most of Merton's businesses lie within the PlanWimbledon area. The combined business areas of Wimbledon town centre, South Wimbledon, Wimbledon Village, Arthur Road, Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road, Haydon's Road, Leopold Road and other neighbourhood parades have over 550 public facing businesses, from financiers to international banks, City law firms to HQs, branches of international and national retail chains, restaurants (chains and independents) and cafes, regional headquarters, delivery suppliers, food production, waste management, industrial businesses, charities, cafes, beauticians and other leisure activities.</p> <p>As an example of the range of businesses within the area, Appendix 3 lists the public facing businesses in the four town centres (Wimbledon town centre, Wimbledon Village, South Wimbledon and Arthur Road) as well as some of the neighbourhood parades at Leopold Road, Ridgeway and Haydon's Road and some of the businesses within the Strategic Industrial Location at Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road.</p> <p>However, as drawn, the proposed neighbourhood area can't be considered wholly or predominantly a business area as there are +25,000 homes within the area.</p>
<p>whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary, for example a major road or railway line or waterway</p>	<p>The area is crossed by a variety of natural features and infrastructure; PlanWimbledon's application state that these features (e.g. the river Wandle) have been considered in drawing the proposed neighbourhood area boundary.</p>

the natural setting or features in an area	PlanWimbledon's application states and it is possible to see that natural settings and features, including Wimbledon Common and the river Wandle, are used to guide boundaries for the proposed neighbourhood area.
The size of the population (living and working) in the area. Electoral ward boundaries can be a useful starting point for discussions on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents	<p>PlanWimbledon neighbourhood area covers approximately a third of the borough of Merton. It contains 25,519 homes (approximately a third of the borough's homes) accounting for approximately 60,000 residents.</p> <p>In 2018-19 (the last year for which there was data) over 18million entries and exits took place in Wimbledon station</p>

3 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1. PlanWimbledon's application and the majority of consultation responses demonstrates that there are views that the proposed Wimbledon neighbourhood area is coherent and appropriate. More than 1,000 residents identify with the "Wimbledon" area as defined by PlanWimbledon and support PlanWimbledon's proposals to become a neighbourhood forum for that area. PlanWimbledon state that the Wimbledon Village Business Association are a PlanWimbledon member and the council received supportive consultation responses including from the All England Lawn Tennis Club and the Wandle Valley Forum.
- 3.2. However, although there are approximately 25,000 homes and 60,000 residents living within PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area, evidence provided in PlanWimbledon's application form, at consultation responses, in PlanWimbledon's June 2021 correspondence with the council and that is publicly available demonstrates that the specified area is also, in part, characterised by its businesses. Wimbledon town centre is the location for nearly all of the borough's offices, many of the borough's medium and large businesses and over half the borough's total number of jobs. Wimbledon town centre has a strategic economic importance that reaches across Merton and is recognised in the London Plan designation of Wimbledon as Merton's only major town centre, with high commercial growth potential, capacity and demand for new speculative office development. Other distinct town centres within PlanWimbledon's proposed area (Arthur Road, South Wimbledon, Wimbledon Village) compliment this as business

locations in their own rights. Plough Lane / Weir Road / Durnsford Road strategic industrial location is also home to several large national businesses.

- 3.3. Officers analysis of the evidence received by the council and as set out in the report leads to the conclusion that PlanWimbledon's membership is not drawn from different sections of the community in so far as the business community, particularly medium to larger businesses or businesses in certain geographic locations, are not represented in PlanWimbledon's membership. Two of the area's major business groups (Merton chamber of commerce and LoveWimbledon BID) are not supportive of the area and LoveWimbledon does not support the forum. Furthermore, for similar reasons, officers analysis is that the proposed forum does not reflect the character of the specified area, so far as it includes the business community.
- 3.4. Officers overall recommendation is therefore that PlanWimbedon does not meet government's mandatory criteria to be designated as a neighbourhood forum. Accordingly, the Council is under a duty to refuse to designate the proposed forum because the mandatory criteria are not satisfied.
- 3.5. If the council does not designate the proposed forum, it may decline to determine the neighbourhood area application on the basis that there will be no organisation that is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum in relation to it. Officers considered but rejected various alternative options including the designation of a smaller or different area as a neighbourhood area than that specified in the application (see below).
- 3.6. These recommended decisions do not close off the possibility of neighbourhood forums being designated in Merton in future. PlanWimbledon and other organisations, including from the business sector, have stated commitments to work together on neighbourhood planning. PlanWimbledon and other individuals and organisations will have time and opportunities to address the issues outlined in this report, with the continued support of officers, and come together with revised proposals that meets government's criteria for the successful designation in due course of a neighbourhood forum and area, or multiple forums with multiple areas.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. Several alternative options were considered to try and resolve the issues identified in this report. These are set out below.

Extending the time to allow further dialogue

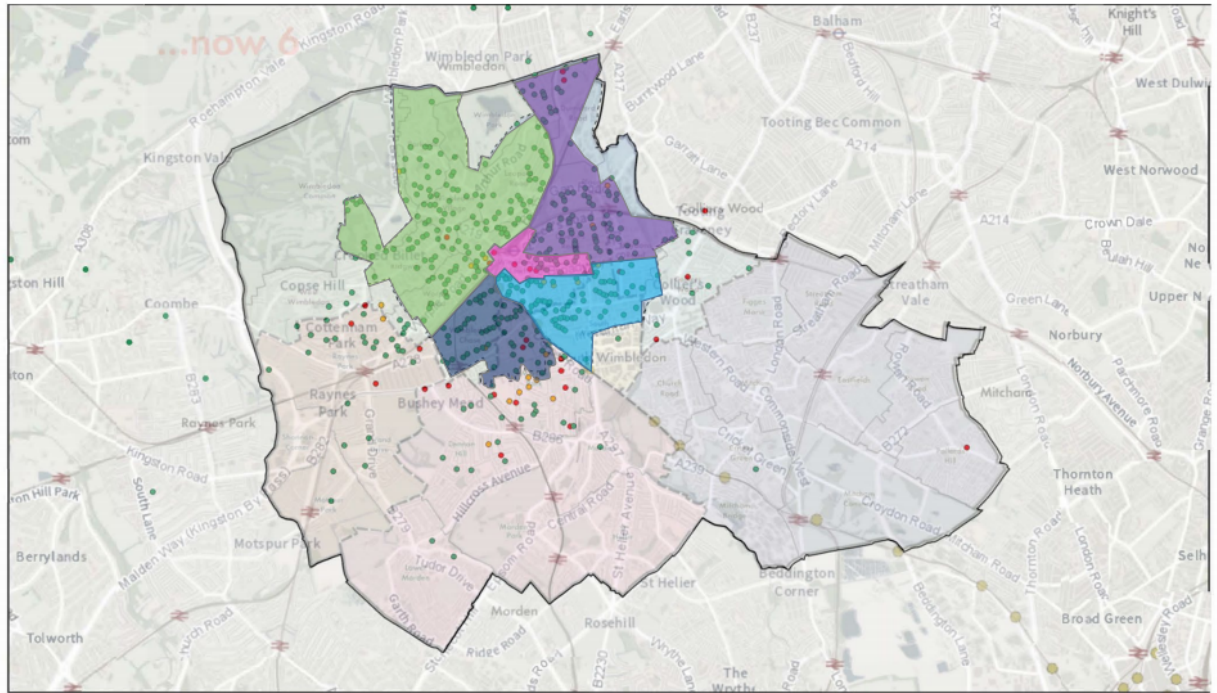
- 4.2. It is clear that there is strong support from many residents for PlanWimbledon's proposed forum and for the geographic boundary. Further dialogue between PlanWimbledon and the business community may be able to resolve the unmet criteria. This is evident from the consultation responses where even those only partly supporting or objecting to the proposals (e.g. Merton Chamber of Commerce, F&C Commercial Property Holdings) stated that they would like to be involved with further dialogue on neighbourhood planning.

- 4.3. Therefore officers considered the alternative option to defer decision-making to allow PlanWimbledon time to try and address the identified issues relating to the Forum and Area application. However government legislation requires councils to make a decision within 13 weeks from the day after the first date of public consultation; this deadline is 13th July 2021. Council meetings are scheduled for 22nd June and 8th July. Therefore this alternative option was not taken forward.

Amending the proposed area boundary

- 4.4. An alternative considered by officers was to recommend that PlanWimbledon's specified area be designated as a neighbourhood area with the exclusion only of the Strategic Industrial Location at Plough Lane / Durnsford Road and also Wimbledon town centre. Officers considered this carefully as it initially appeared that it could address some of the reasons why the neighbourhood area isn't appropriate by reducing the area to focus more on residential areas. It could also potentially address the reasons why the proposed neighbourhood forum isn't appropriate – the neighbourhood forum would not be required to have members drawn from sections of the major business community if the major business locations were no longer part of the proposed neighbourhood area.
- 4.5. However, although officers considered that recommending the removal of the Plough Lane / Durnsford Road Strategic Industrial Location would have still left a coherent neighbourhood area, removing Wimbledon town centre from the middle of the proposed area would have undone the reasoning for establishing the proposed area in the first place, as set out in PlanWimbledon's application. This alternative would have left the neighbourhood area as a very large residential hinterland with the town centre missing. There are cases where neighbourhood areas successfully surround places that are not covered by the same neighbourhood area / forum (e.g. Hampstead), however officers do not consider that removing the major Wimbledon town centre from the rest of the large area would be coherent, particularly in considering the detailed reasoning set out in the original application. It would also be important for such a major change from the original application to be carried out in consultation with residents, businesses, councillors and others. Therefore this proposal is not recommended, at this stage.
- 4.6. Officers also considered whether PlanWimbledon proposed neighbourhood forum could be designated for an area or areas within the wider area specified in its application in respect of which its membership and purpose are more appropriately reflected. This alternative option was not deliverable however: PlanWimbledon's membership is spread extensively across and beyond the proposed neighbourhood areas and the details provided in the application form and the consultation responses means it is not possible to accurately assess whether it meets the criterion of being drawn from different places and different sections of each of the proposed neighbourhood areas within the statutory timeframes for decision-making. Also, PlanWimbledon confirmed in their letter of 15 June 2021 that it was not supportive of designation as the forum in relation to smaller areas.

Plan Wimbledon Alternative Option 1: Town Centre and Neighbourhood Areas



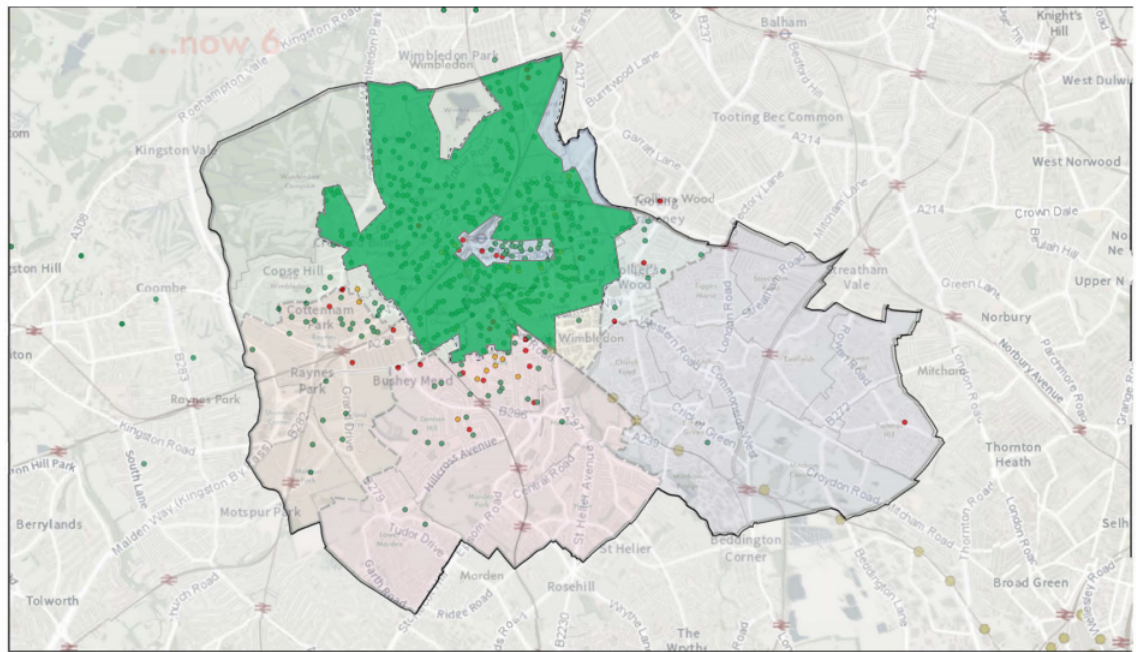
Legend

- Support proposed area
- Do not support proposed area
- Partly support proposed area
- PlanWimbledon Proposed Area


- Wimbledon Village Neighbourhood Area
- Wimbledon Park Neighbourhood Area
- Wimbledon Town Neighbourhood Area
- Wimbledon Chase & Old Merton Park Neighbourhood Area
- South Wimbledon Neighbourhood Area



Plan Wimbledon Alternative Option 2: Wimbledon Residential Neighbourhood Area

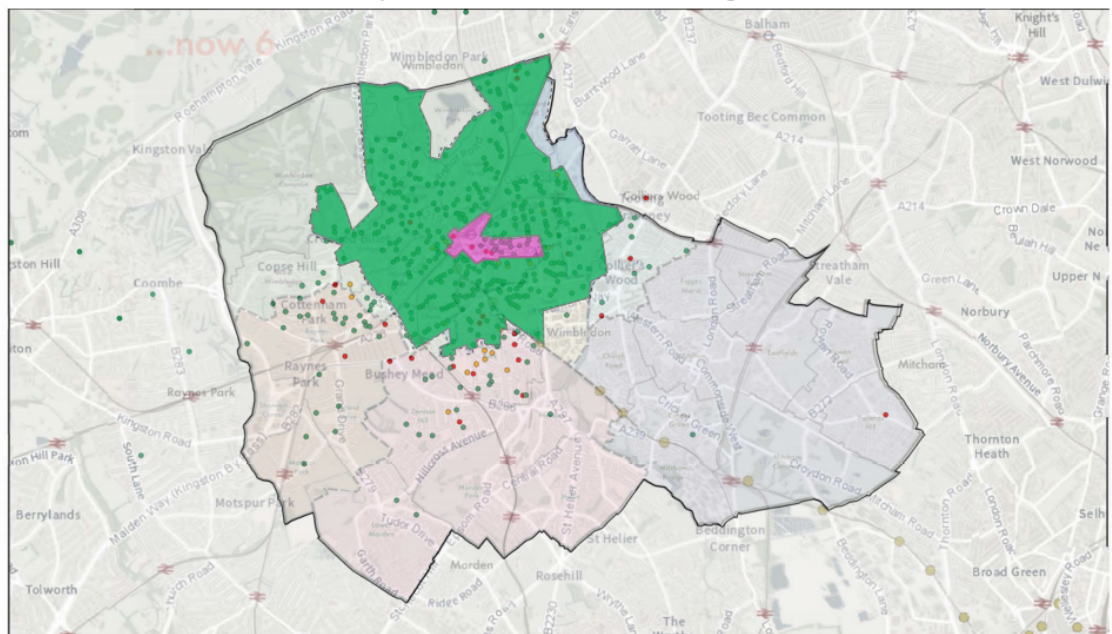


Legend



- Support proposed area
- Do not support proposed area
- Partly support proposed area
- PlanWimbledon Proposed Area
-  Wimbledon Residential Neighbourhood Area



Plan Wimbledon Alternative Option 3: Town Centre and Neighbourhood Areas

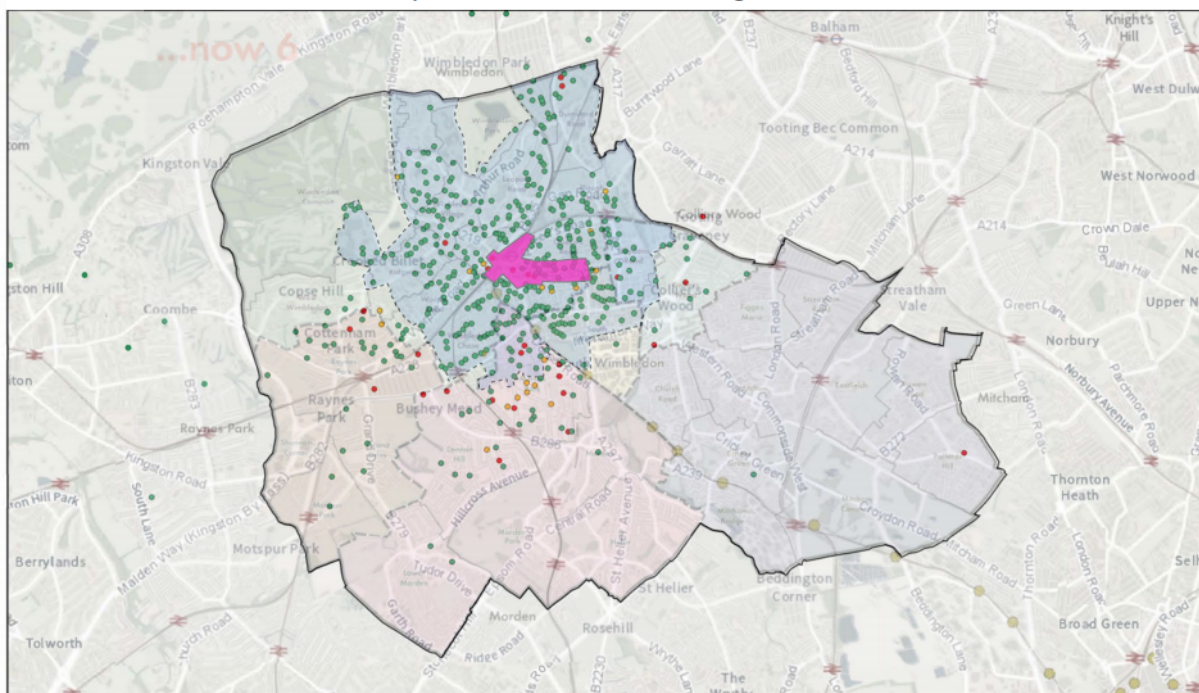


Legend

- Support proposed area
- Do not support proposed area
- Partly support proposed area
- PlanWimbledon Proposed Area
-  Wimbledon Neighbourhood Area
-  Wimbledon Town Centre Area



Plan Wimbledon Alternative Option 4: Town Centre Neighbourhood Area



Legend

- Support proposed area
- Do not support proposed area
- Partly support proposed area
- Plan Wimbledon Proposed Area
- Wimbledon Town Neighbourhood Area



5 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

5.1. As set out in the body of this report.

6 TIMETABLE

6.1. The neighbourhood planning regulations require councils to make decisions on neighbourhood forums / areas within 13 weeks of the first day after public consultation started, otherwise the proposals will receive deemed consent. This date expires on 13th July 2021. Therefore, the proposals will be considered at

- Cabinet on 22nd June
- Council on 8th July

7 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. This report is concerned with applications for the designation of a neighbourhood forum and a neighbourhood area. The making of these designations of themselves can be accommodated within existing staff resources

- 7.2. Local planning authorities may claim for £5,000 from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) following the designation of a neighbourhood area and/or neighbourhood forum.

8 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The relevant law is set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2015, as amended. The criteria under which applications for designation as neighbourhood forums and areas must be considered are set out and analysed above.
- 8.2. The 2015 Regulations introduce prescribed timeframes within which LPAs must determine applications for neighbourhood areas and forums. The prescribed period for the LPA to determine the PlanWimbledon application is 13 weeks, starting from the date immediately following the first day PlanWimbledon's application was first published for consultation by the council
- 8.3. The Court of Appeal in *R (Daws Hill Neighbourhood Forum) v Wycombe DC* [2014] 1 WLR 1362 clarified the approach a local planning authority should take when considering a combined application made by a body for designation as a neighbourhood forum and for designation of the neighbourhood area in relation to which the proposed neighbourhood forum would be authorised to act.
- 8.4. Amongst other things, the Court of Appeal rejected the submission that, in the situation of a combined application where the application for designation of the neighbourhood forum is refused, the local planning authority must nevertheless go on to determine the application for the specified area to be designated as a neighbourhood area or alternatively exercise its power under s61G(5) to secure that some of the proposed neighbourhood area is designated by the council as a neighbourhood area.
- 8.5. The facts of that case were that the local planning authority determined to designate the applicant as a neighbourhood forum but, in exercise of its power under s61G(5), it did so only for part of the neighbourhood area it applied for to the exclusion of two development sites.
- 8.6. Here however officers have recommended that it is not appropriate to designate PlanWimbledon as a neighbourhood forum for the whole proposed area specified within its application for the reasons set out in Section 2 of this report, nor is it appropriate, for the reasons explained in Section 4 "alternative options", to designate the forum for any smaller part or parts of the proposed neighbourhood area.. Accordingly, the council may, pursuant to the guidance from the Court of Appeal, decline to determine the application for designation of the 'specified area' as a neighbourhood area and to consider its power under s61G(5). Officers have recommended that this approach is taken.
- 8.7. This will amount to the determination of the application as required within the prescribed 13 weeks for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, regulation 6A.

9 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Officers have assessed PlanWimbledon's membership (updated as at 15th June 2021, see appendix 6) against the available resident ward data within the proposed PlanWimbledon area for protected characteristics of age and ethnicity.

10 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None for the purposes of this report.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. None for the purposes of this report

12 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

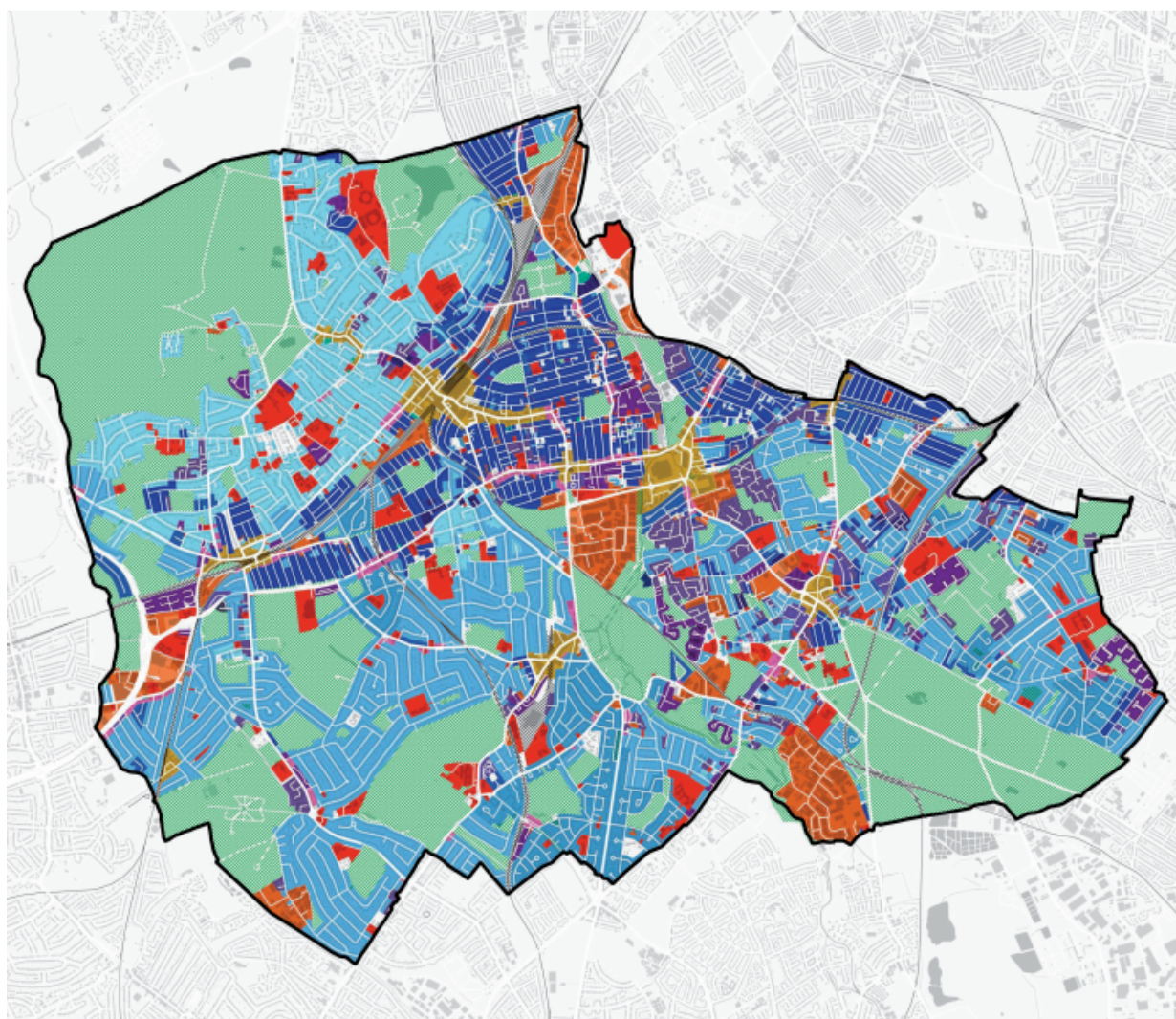
- Appendix 1 – Merton draft Borough Character extract – built character analysis
- Appendix 2 – further analysis of public consultation results
- Appendix 3 list of businesses in the four town centres, high streets and the strategic industrial location (derived from Merton's shopping survey 2020)
- Appendix 4– copies of public consultation results
- Appendix 5 – PlanWimbledon's application (April 2021 version)
- Appendix 6 – PlanWimbledon's correspondence with council officers (dated 15th June 2021)

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

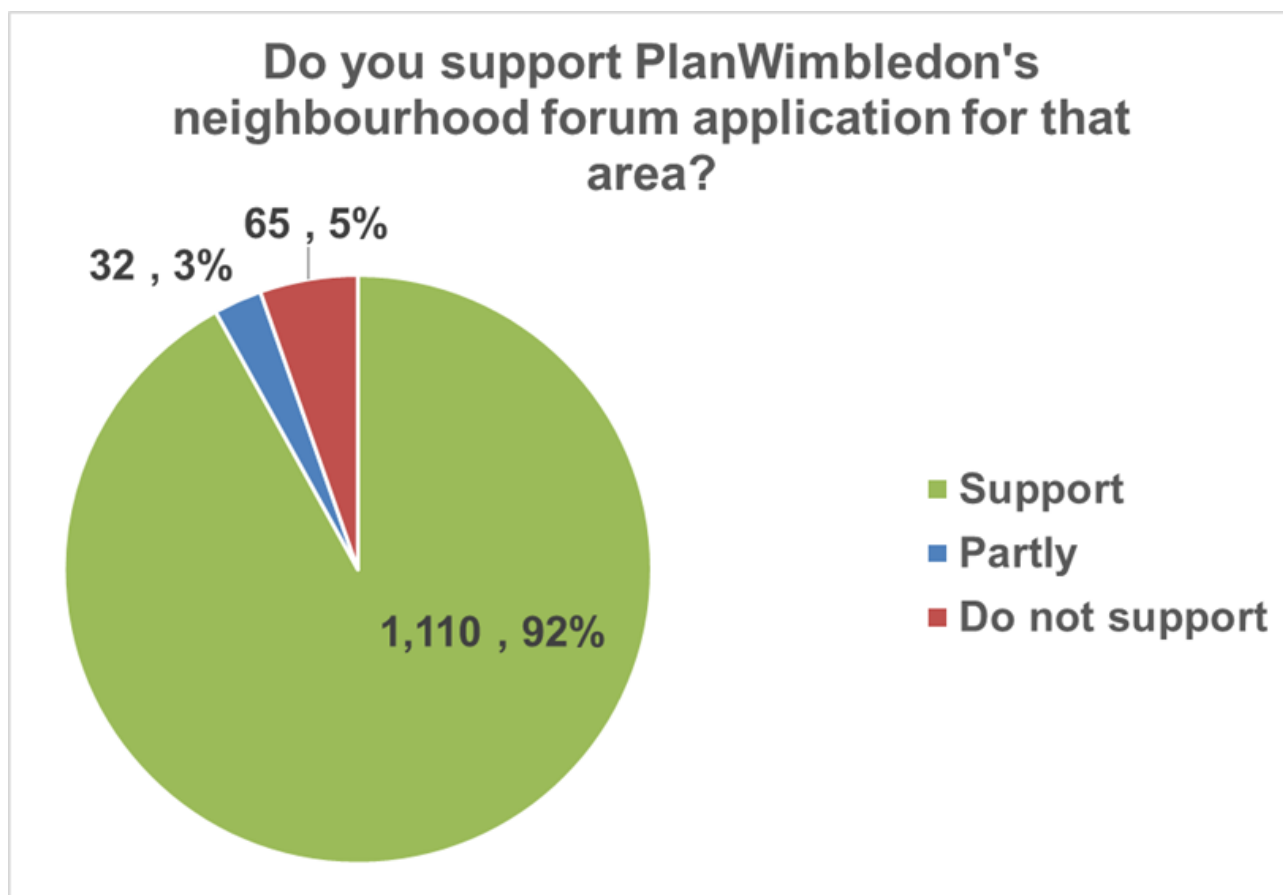
- 13.1. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) – neighbourhood planning <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>
- 13.2. Legislation and regulations as outlined in the report (links found within the NPPG)
- 13.3. Merton's draft Borough Character Study 2021 <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/supplementary-planning-documents/character-study2021#:~:text=This%20study%20has%20been%20prepared,undertaken%20between%202011%20and%202015.>
- 13.4. PlanWimbledon's applications to become a neighbourhood forum and for the of Wimbledon <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans>
- 13.5. Merton's Local Plan including Estates Local Plan <https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan>
- 13.6. Merton data hub <https://data.merton.gov.uk/>
- 13.7. London datastore <https://data.london.gov.uk/>
- 13.8. NOMIS – official labour market statistics provided by the Office of National Statistics <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- 13.9. Merton's shopping survey

13.10. Correspondence from PlanWimbledon to council officers, June 2021

Appendix 1 Merton draft Borough Character Study extract – built character analysis

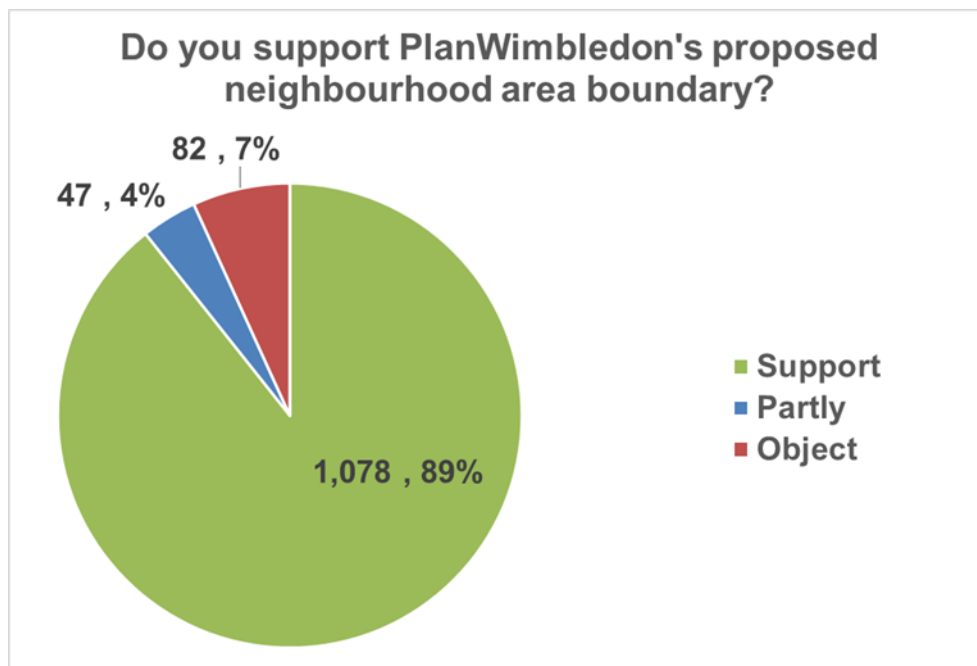


Appendix 2 – further analysis of public consultation results



There were two respondents who said both “yes” and “partly” when asked if they supported PlanWimbledon’s neighbourhood forum application for that area. These have not been included in the graphs.

Yes	Partly	The area is where I live and where I intend to live for the next twenty years. I would like to feel that any decisions that affect my quality of life will be properly considered in future.
Yes	Partly	Vagueness concerns although the Council needs oversight aspect that I think is envisioned in this group



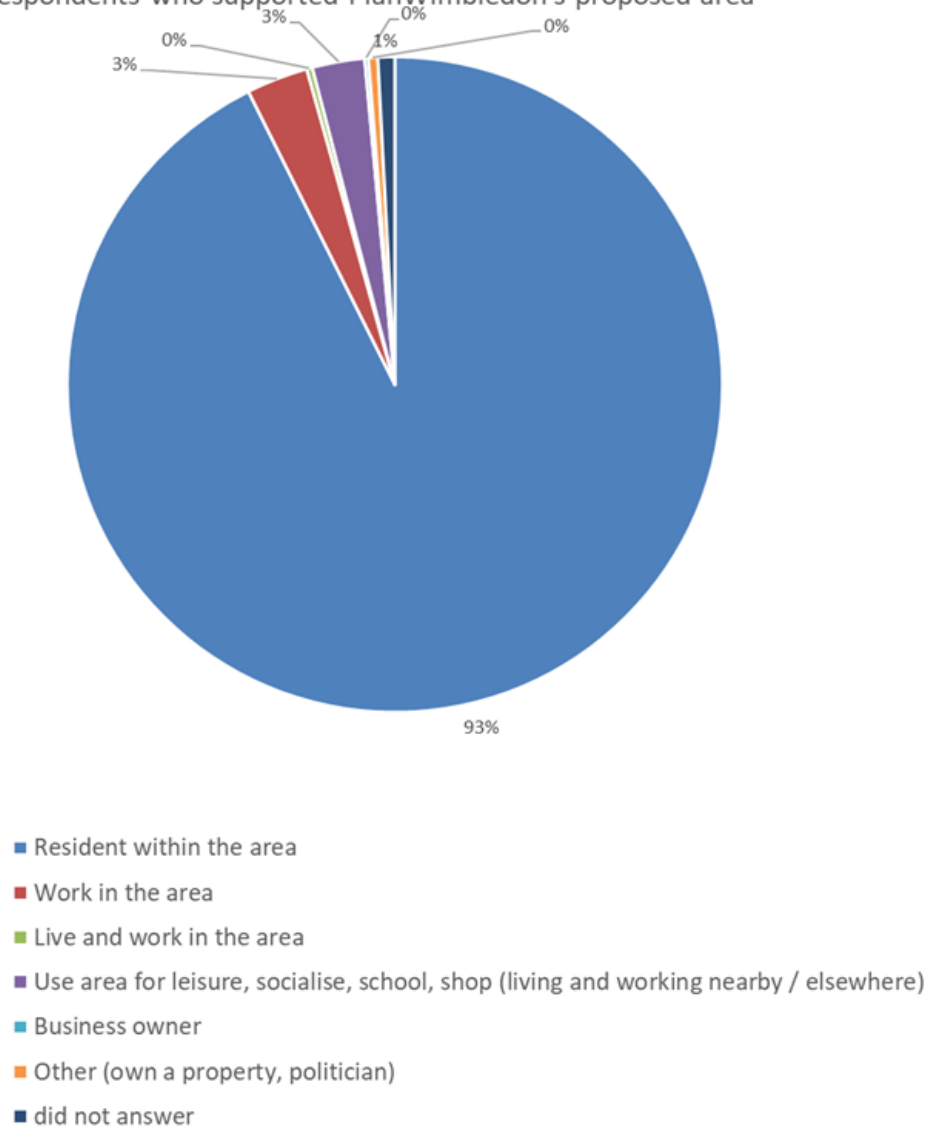
There were two respondents who said “no” and “partly” for the boundary and stated the following. These have not been included in the graphs

No	Partly	It should include all of Merton park or none of Merton park.
No	Partly	All or nothing.
No	Partly	I think SW20 (West Wimbledon) should also be included.

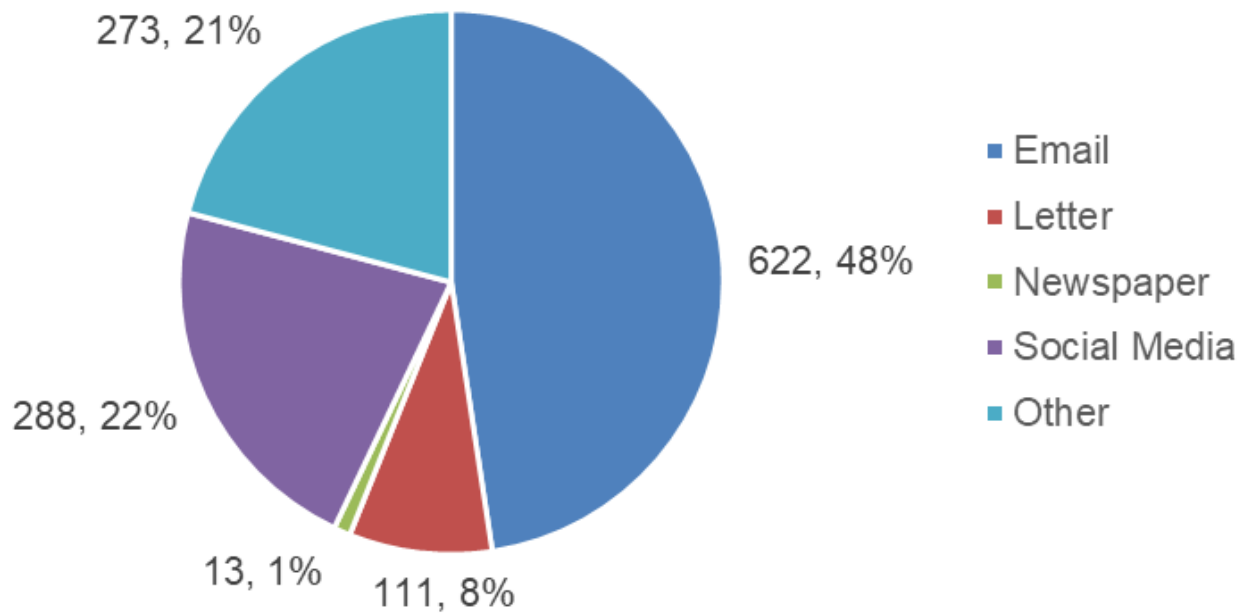
There were five respondents who said “yes” and “partly” for the boundary who stated the following. These have not been included in the graphs

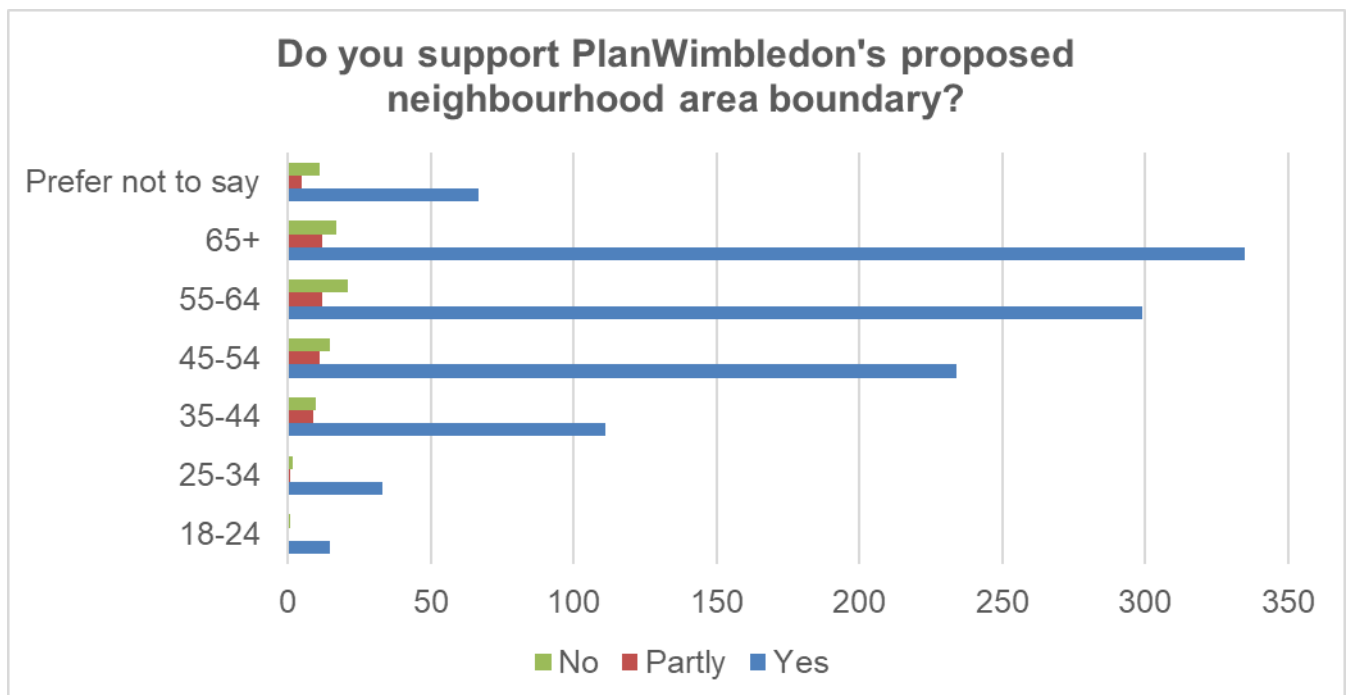
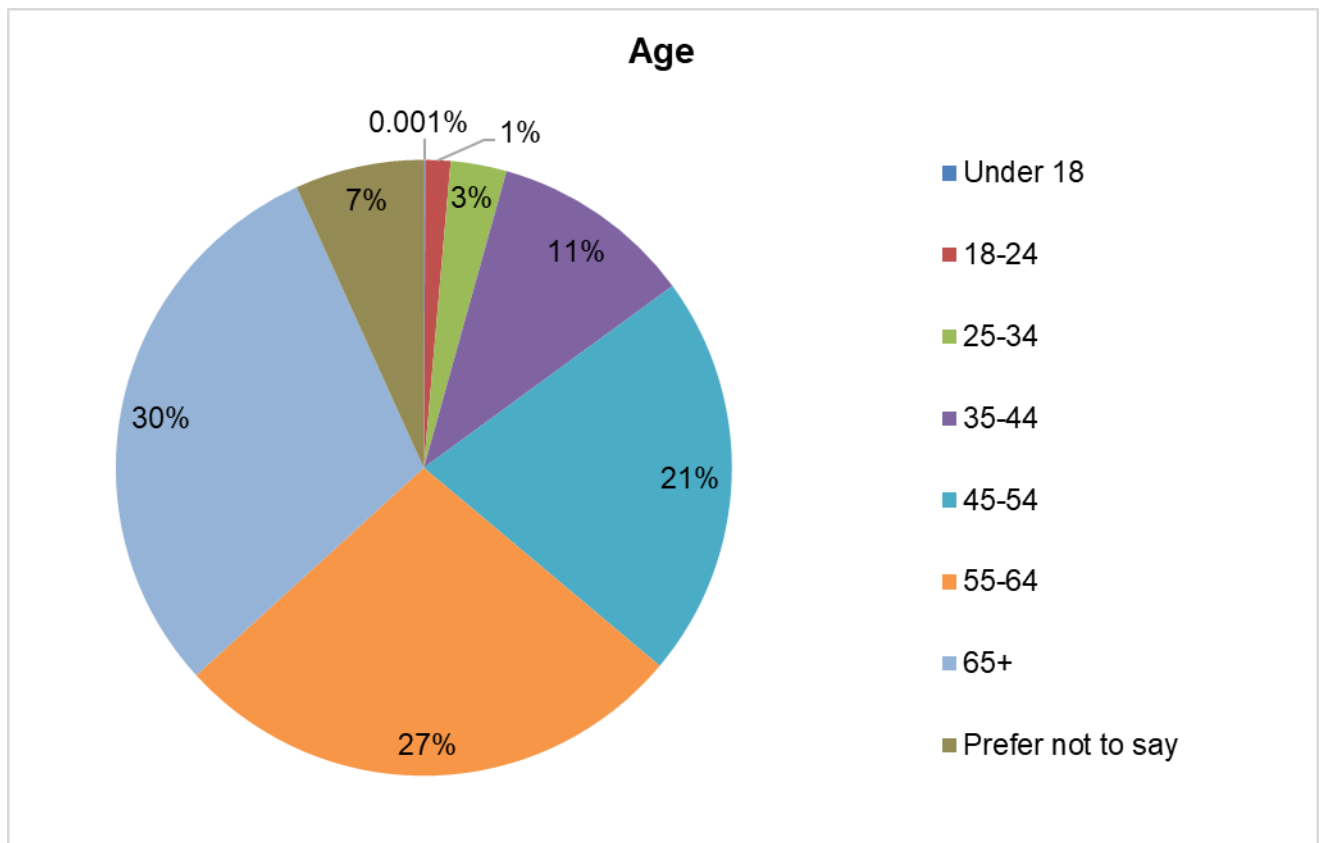
Yes	Partly	I don't fully understand the election process for the plan wimbledon team and how much local residents feelings will be represented.
Yes	Partly	I would like to have seen it more central to Wimbledon town to protect it from overdevelopment from the master plan including the sale of Centre court and future crossrail2 development
Yes	Partly	Southern boundary should not impinge on existing Merton Park residential area south of Kingston Road but can include Nelson Hospital shopping parade.
Yes	Partly	Would prefer West Wimbledon to be included
Yes	Partly	I think it should extend a bit further south in Merton park to take account of the John Innes area of benefit.

For respondents who supported PlanWimbledon's proposed area

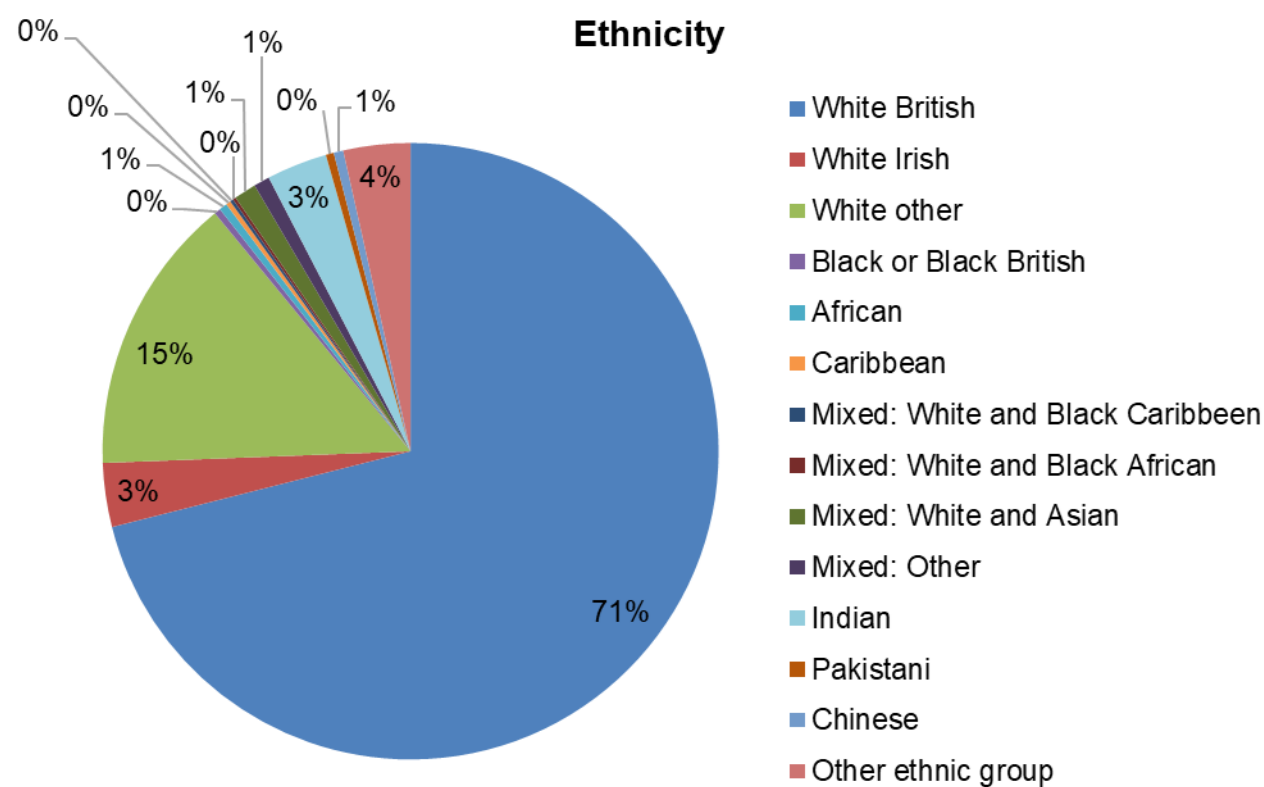
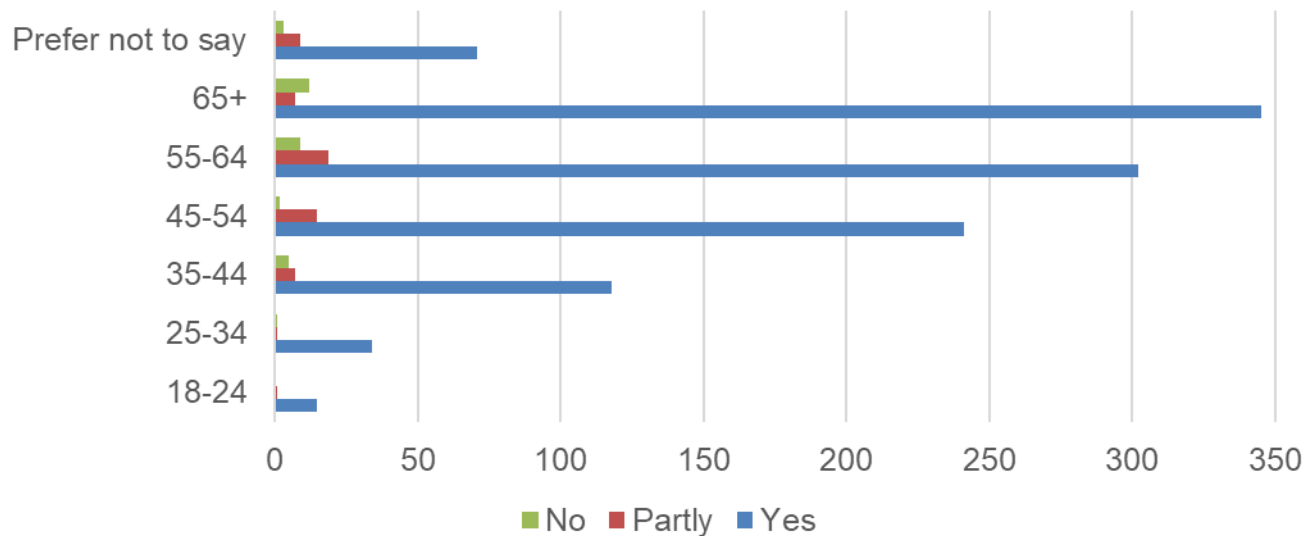


How did you hear about the consultation?





Do you support PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood forum?



Appendix 3 List of businesses in the four town centres, high streets and the strategic industrial location (derived from Merton's shopping survey 2020)

This does not include all businesses. Generally Merton's shopping survey only includes businesses that provide a customer facing service in a shopfront, including a trade counter)

Wimbledon town centre (208 businesses listed)

Tax Assist Accountants	Accountants
Aubergine	Art Gallery
3 Store	Mobile Phone Shop
601 Queens Rd	Bar/Restaurant
A Plan Insurance	Insurance Broker
Accessorize	Fashion Accessories
All Bar One	Public House
Andrew Purnell & Co	Estate Agent
Art Jewels	Jeweller
Auntie Anne's	Café
Aya	Takeaway
Barber	Barber
Berties Wine Bar	Public House
Betfred	Bookmakers
Bills	Restaurant
Blacks	Outdoor Shop
Boots	Chemist
Boots Opticians	Opticians
British Foundation	Charity Shop
Buneos Aires	Restaurant
Café Mori	Restaurant
Café Nero	Café
Cancer Research UK	Charity Shop
Card Factory	Card Shop
Charity shop	Charity shop
Chipotle	Restaurant
Clarks	Shoe Shop
Clementines	Hairdressers
Clinic	Beauty Services
Clinton Cards	Card Shop
Coral	Bookmakers
Costa Café	Café
Creature Company	Pet Store
Crepe Affair	Restaurant
Curry's PC World	Computer Shop
Dexters	Estate Agent
Diba	Takeaway
Dip and Flip	Restaurant
Drink Junction	Off Licence
Ecco	Shoe Shop

Edission White	Estate Agent
Edwards	Public House
EE	Mobile Phone Shop
Eillisons	Estate Agent
Elys	Department Store
Entertainment Exchange	Music Store
Evans Cycles	Bike Shop
Fayre and Square	Gift and Stationary Shop
Fielders	Art & Craft Shop
Five Guys	Restaurant
Flight Centre	Travel Agent
Foxtons	Estate Agent
Franco Manca	Restaurant
G like Gelato	Ice cream parlour
Gap	Clothes Shop
Gap Kids	Baby & Child Store
Gourmet Burger Kitchen	Restaurant
Greggs	Bakers
Grilandia	Restaurant
H & M Teen	Clothes Shop
H&M	Clothes Shop
H&M kids	Clothes Shop
H&M Men	Clothes Shop
Haart	Estate Agent
Halifax	Building Society
Hand and Raquet	Public House
Hawes & Co	Estate Agent
Headmasters	Hairdressers
Health Zone	Health Food Store
Herbal World	Chinese Medicine
HMV Curzon	Music Store
Holland & Barrett	Health Food Store
HSBC	Bank
I&S	Locksmiths
imm Thai Fusion	Restaurant
Itsu	Food shop
Jacks of London	Barbers
Jackson's Estate Agents	Estate Agent
JC Michael	Care services
JD Sports	Sports Shop
Jennings Bet	Bookmakers
Jimmy's World Kitchen	Restaurant/ Bar
Joe & the Juice	Bar
JoJo Momon Belle	Childrens Clothes Shop
Junction Box	Post Office/ Newsagent
Kababji	Restaurant

Kaldi Coffee	Café
Kall Kwik	Printing Services
Kentucky Fried Chicken	Restaurant
Kingleigh Folard & Hayward	Estate Agent
Kingsmere	Dry Cleaners
Krystals	Newsagent
Ladbrokes	Bookmakers
Lakeland Homeware	Homeware Store
Lauristons	Estate Agent
Lebara Mobile	Phone Repairs
Leon	Café
Lidl Uk	Office
Little Waitrose	Supermarket
Lloyd's	Bank
Look Fabulous Forever	Beauty Services
Ludlow Thompson	Estate Agent
Lush	Cosmetics Store
Marks & Spencers	Supermarket
MBL Estates Real Estate	Estate Agent
McDonalds	Restaurant
Melbury House,Offices	Offices
Metro Bank	Bank
Mia Tai	Restaurant
Monsoon	Clothes Shop
Morrisons	Supermarket
Moss & Co	Estate Agent
Mountain Warehouse	Outdoors shop
MW Solicitors	Solicitors
Nando's	Restaurant
Nationwide	Building Society
Natwest	Bank
Neptune	Kitchen Shop
NHS Sutton & Merton	Offices
Nutfield Health Club	Gym
Odeon	Cinema
Office	Shoe Shop
Office Angels	Recruitment Agent
Offices	Offices
Oki	Restaurant
Oliver Bonas	Clothes Shop
O'Neills	Public House
Oxfam	Charity Shop
Paddy Power	Bookmakers
Pandora	Jeweller
Papa Johns	Takeaway
Paperchase	Stationary Store

Patisserie Valerie	Café
Patrica	Fancy Dress Hire
Paverly Bridal	Clothes Shop
Phase Eight	Clothes Shop
Phokas Barbers	Barbers
Pizza Express	Restaurant
Pizza Hut	Takeaway
Post Office	Post Office/ Newsagent
Pret A Manger	Café
Princess Nails	Beauty Services
Redevelopment	Redevelopment
Reflections	Hairdressers
Retail 24	Newsagent
Robert Dyas	Hardware store
Rosy Lea Café & Sandwich Bar	Café
Roxie	Restaurant
Rush Hair Stylist	Hairdressers
Ryman	Stationers
Sabi's Closet	Cab Office
Sainsburys	Supermarket
San Lorenzo	Restaurant
Santander	Bank
Scope	Charity Shop
Sean Hanna	Hairdressers
Sinclair	Jeweller
Smarty	Dry Cleaners
Smash	Pub/club
Smiggle	Childrens toys
Snappy Snaps	Photographic Shop
Specsavers	Opticians
Starbucks	Café
Sticks & Sushi	Restaurant
Stormfront	Mobile Phone Shop
Subway	Sandwich Bar
Superdrug	Chemist
Swan Court	Office
Swarowski	Crystal Shop
Tanning Shop	Beauty Services
Teokath of London	Clothes Shop
Tesco Metro	Supermarket
The Adega	Restaurant
The Alexandra	Public House
The Body Shop	Beauty Services
The Entertainer	Toy Shop
The Fragrance Shop	Perfumery
The Old Frizzle	Public House

The Prince of Wales	Public House
The Stage Door	Restaurant
Timpson	Shoe Repair
TK Maxx	Clothes Shop
Toni & Guy	Hairdressers
Tortilla	Restaurant
Touro Brazilian Steakhouse	Restaurant
Trespass	Outdoor Clothing Shop
Trinity Hospice	Charity Shop
TWM Solicitors	Solicitors
Uni Qlo	Clothes Shop
Urban Beauty	Beauty store
Vaporized	e-cigarettes
Victorian Café	Café
Vision Express	Opticians
Vodafone	Mobile Phone Shop
W.H Smith	Stationery Store
Wafflemeister	Waffle shop
Wagmama	Restaurant
Wahaca	Restaurant
Waterstones	Bookshop
WDS - Wimbledon Dental School	Dental Clinic
Whittards	Tea/ Coffee Retailer
Wibbas Down Inn (Whetherspoons)	Public House
Wilko	Homewares
Wimbledon Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
Wimbledon Library	Library
Winchester White	Estate Agent
Worple News	Newsagent
Yori	Restaurant

Wimbledon Village (128 shopping survey businesses listed)

Chambers	Clothes making shop
Bayee Village	Restaurant
Hamptons & Sons	Estate Agent
RKade	Antiques
Micheal Platt	Jeweller
Joseph Azagury	Shoe Shop
Floor Seasons	Flooring Shop
Le Creuset	Cookery Shop
John D Wood	Estate Agent
Caroline Randall	Clothes Shop
Johnson's	Dry Cleaners
American Dry Cleaning Company	Dry Cleaners

Pellini Uomo Italian Menswear	Clothes shop
Rober Holmes & Co	Estate Agent
Redevelopment	Redevelopment
Holloways of Ludlow	Home fixtures and fittings
Victorian Rugs	Home furnishings
Take Time	Beauty services
Lifetime Shutters and Windows	
Senti	Perfume
Organic Master	Beauty Services
Fire Stables	Restaurant
Illumin8 Beauty	Beauty Services
Helping Hands Homecare	Care agency
Vacant	Vacant
The Wimbledon Village Osteopath	Osteopath
Wimbledon Fine Art	Art Gallery
Restore/ Hoban Design Ltd	Masonry Restoration Service/Office
FPD Savills	Estate Agent
The Hand & Foot Spa	Beauty Services
Cath Kidston	Home Furnishings
Le Pain Quotidien	Café
Hawes & Co	Estate Agent
Nordic Style	Home Furnishings
Cote Bistro	Café
Gail's	Café
Gardenia of London	Florist
Gentlemen's Barbers	Barbers
British Red Cross	Charity Shop
Chango	Restaurant
Eternal	Jeweller
Deborah Beaumont	Clothes Shop
Boho Beach Fest	Clothes Shop
Wimbledon Village Post Office	Newsagent/ Post Office
Traders Antiques	Antiques
Pop-up shop	Shop
Patara	Restaurant
Koing Kitchens	Home Furnishings
Thai Tho	Restaurant
Brew	Restaurant
Evie Loves Toast	Clothes Shop
Eileen Fisher	Clothes Shop
Dog & Fox	Public House
Andrew Scott Robertson	Estate Agent
Carluccio's	Restaurant
Giggling Squid	Restaurant
Sarah Pacini	Clothes Shop

Whistles	Clothes Shop
Reiss	Clothes Shop
Friar Wood	Wine Merchants
The Glass House	Beauty Services
Orlebar Brown	Clothes Shop
Robert Holmes & Co	Estate Agent
Matches Fashion	Clothes Shop
Clarendon Fine Art	Art Gallery
Castrads	Radiator shop
Mary's Living and Giving	Charity Shop
Neom Organics	Beauty Supply Store
Space NK Apothecary	Beauty Services
Pret a Vivre	Home Furnishings
Wimbledon Books and Music	Books & Music Store
Goddard	Vet Clinic
Residential	Residential
N.R. Headley	Dental Clinic
Pet Pavillion	Pet Supplies
Lightcafe	Café
Sweaty Betty	Sports Shop
All Seasons	Grocer/ Off-License
Tridology	Clothes Shop
Hobbs	Clothes Shop
Hemmingways	Public House
Fired Earth	Tiles Store
Baylee & Sage	Supermarket
Petite Bateau	Childrens Clothes Shop
Carat	Jeweller
Joseph	Clothes Shop
David Clulow	Opticians
Computoin Des Cottonners	Clothes Shop
The White Onion	Restaurant
Café Nero	Café
Rkade	Antiques
Masion St Cassien	Café
Rajdoot	Restaurant
Sorverign Travel	Travel Agent
The Ivy Café	Restaurant
SHOW Blow	Hairdressers
Iris	Clothes Shop
Joe & The Juice	Café
Prince	Clothes Shop
Jigsaw	Clothes Shop
Wimbledon Pharmacy	Chemist
Knight Frank	Estate Agent
Revital	Health food shop

Cancer Research UK	Charity Shop
Pizza Express	Restaurant
Piajeh	Clothes Shop
Megan's	Restaurant
Paul	Café
Porcelain Tiles	Tile shop
Andy's Salon	Hairdressers
Farrow & Ball	Paint & Paper
Japan UK Property Ltd	Estate Agent
Oxfam	Charity Shop
Peacock & Co Solicitors	Solicitors
Neal's Yard	Organic Natural Health & Beauty
Fig	Clothing
Expressive Eyes	Opticians
Vacant	Vacant
Nicolson & Freeland	Dry Cleaners
Sajana	Beauty Services
Mathnasium	Education
Skinsmiths	Beauty services
Headcase	Barbers
Lulu Blonde	Hair & Beauty
Wimbledon Tandoori	Restaurant
Black Radish	Restaurant
Headmasters	Hairdressers
ESHO	Beauty Services

South Wimbledon – 67 businesses listed

201 Asian Kitchen	Restaurant
Adams	Takeaway
Aino Health Centre	Alternative Health Centre
Alisha Dry Cleaner	Dry Cleaners
Ariana High Quality Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
AYA	Restaurant
Body Sun	Beauty Services
British Dance Council	Offices
Costa	Café
CRIBBS Estate Agents	Estate Agent
Cruz Hair	Hairdressers
Cut Masters	Hairdressers
Cutdye by Lina	Hairdressers
Cutting Lounge	Barbers
Dallas Chicken n' Ribs	Takeaway
Darren Estate	Estate Agent
Dickson's	Estate Agent

Dylan's Barber	Barbers
Easan & Co./ M Vaikundavasan	Accountants
Eggs Benedict	Restaurant
FM	Dry Cleaners
Fresh Fish & Chips	Takeaway
Grenfell Housing Association	Housing Association
Gusto Café	Café
Hot Pod Yoga	Gym
Johnson Grilly	Solicitors
Kendall Car Rental	Car Rental
Kimico	Beauty Services
Klaudias Hair and Makeup	Beauty Services
Kwik Fit	Car Garage
Lark	Gift shop
Little Brazil	Restaurant
Little Vietnam	Restaurant
Martin & Co.	Estate Agent
Mazar	Takeaway
Merton Kebab House	Takeaway
Merton Minicabs	24 hr Cabs
Mr Clutch	Garage
N. Nahar & Co	Accountants
Nantha & Co	Solicitors
Nest Seekers	Estate Agent
NumberWorks 'nWords	Tuition
Rashid & Rashid Solicitors	Solicitors
Sainsburys	Convenience Shop
Shofar Chuch	Religious Centre
Signature Law	Law firm
Simply Fresh	Supermarket
Spiceway Supermarket	Off Licence/grocers
Stained Glass Studio	Glazers
Sunrise solicitors	Solicitors
Sunrise solicitors	Solicitors
SW19 Café	Café
Takahashi	Restaurant
TCL Estates	Estate Agent
Tennessee Express	Takeaway
Tesco Express	Supermarket
The Bank House	Accountants
The Hair Confidante	Hairdressers
The Kilkenny Tavern	Public House
The South Wimbledon Clinic	Health Centre
Timeless Interior	Antiques Restoration
Vape Cave	Vaping shop
Victoria Corporate	Accountants

Weber Brare	Hairdressers
Wimbledon Food & Wine	Convenience Shop
Wimbledon Solicitors	Solicitors
Wireless Vision	Mobile Phone Shop

Arthur Road – 38 businesses listed

The Tennis Gallery	Art Gallery
"Best One"	Newsagent
"Dr.Parry"	Chemist
"The Kindness"	Takeaway
A1 Cars	Cab Office
Brinkleys	Estate Agent
Burlington Estate Agents	Estate Agent
Café du Parc	Sandwich Bar
Casa Argentina	Café/Restaurant
Co-op	Supermarket
D&S Tailors and Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
Dalchini	Restaurant
Enamour Hair and Body Clinic	Beauty Services
Estella	Restaurant
Frenchman's Creek	Furniture shop
Gallerie Prints	Art Gallery
Gennaro Dell'Aquila	Hair & Beauty
Indigo Projects	Office
James Mens Barbers	Barber
K2	Takeaway
Manuels	Bakers
McGlennons	Solicitors
Mr Sparx	Electrical Supplies and Lighting
Neil Norton	Bespoke Kitchens & Living Spaces
Park Viniters	Wine Merchants
Pasha BBQ and Kebab	Takeaway
Red Brick Oven	Takeaway
Regal Nails	Beauty Services
Saucer + Cup	Café
Seahorse Nursery	Nursery
Thai Spa Boutique	Hair & Beauty
The Cake Parlour	Baking Products
The Glass House	Office
The Park Barber's	Barbers

The Wedding Dress Shop	Bridal Shop
Thom Kirby	Hairdressers
Wimbledon Park Post Office	Post Office
Z Group	Financial Services

High streets including Haydon's Road, Leopold Road and Ridgeway – 99 businesses listed

"Best One"	Off Licence
:a Faroma	Portuguese takeaway
afl Construction	Building services
Ambience	Restaurant/ Cocktail Bar
Ambience express/Meze World	Café
Basilica	Takeaway
Blade Barber	Barbers
Brian Kirby Flowers	Florist
BTL Property London	Building Management
Bugsys Barbers	Barbers
Bumble Bee Day Nursery	Childrens Nursery
Charles Jarman Flooring Ltd	Home Furnishings
Chicken Cottage	Takeaway
City Plumbing Supplies	Home Furnishings
CLE Design Ltd	Offices
Commercial Electronics	Electrical Store
Co-op	Supermarket
Co-operative	Supermarket
Cuddington	Builder Services
Direct Companies Centre	Repairs Houehold and Garden Equipment
Dudey Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
Easyaiportravel.com and Easyaccidentclaim.com	Cab Office/ Insurance
Esente Hair	Hairdressers
Galaxy	Dry Cleaners
Golden House	Takeaway
Good Chef	Takeaway
Good Earth Express	Takeaway
Hallidays Homes and Wares	Home Furnishings
Haydon Late Shop	Newsagent/ Off-Licence
Haydons Cabs	Cab Office
Haydons Café	Café
Haydons Pharmacy	Pharmacy
Hicks Gallery	Art Gallery
Holy Smoke	Restaurant
Home Care Service Provider	Service Provider
Hypnotherapy and Natural Health Centre	Natural Therapy Clinic
J.J Stores	Newsagent

Jaipur	Takeaway
Katja	Clothes Shop
Knox Brothers	Funeral Directors
Kydd & Kydd	Vet Clinic
LA Hairdressing & Inner Beauty	Hairdressers
Leopold News	Newsagent
Light House	Restaurant
Lupo Bros.	Café
Luxury Nails Boutique	Beauty Services
Mc China	Restaurant
Mimo	Hairdressers
Montana Barber Shop	Barbers
Mortgages Financial Consultant	Financial Services
Nails & Co London	Beauty Services
Newport Food and Wine	Grocer
Office	Office
P & P Glass	Glazers
Papa John's Pizza	Takeaway
Period Mirrors	Home Furnishings
Pilates studio	Pilates Studio
Pizza and Pasta Hut	Restaurant and Takeaway
Plum Lettings	Estate Agent
Quality Landrette/ Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
R Clinic	Massage
R Clinic	Massage
Redevelopment	Redevelopment
Ridgeway Dental	Dental Clinic
Ridgway Pharmacy	Chemist
Robert Edwards	Butchers
Robert Kirby	Hairdressers
Rovigo Pizza	Takeaway
Sara Cars	Accountants/Taxis
Secondbyte	Computer Repair
Shivshakti Newsagents	Newsagent
Star Kebab & Chicken	Takeaway
Strength Lab	Fitness Consultants
Thai Charms	Massage Centre
The 1995 Club	Café
The Box	Café
The Hairy Monkey	Hairdressers
The Little White Building Company	Home Improvements
The Patio	Café
The Sampler	Wine store
The Swan	Public House
The Wimbledon Print Company	Printing Services
Thomas James Pharmacy	Chemist

Traditional Babers	Hairdressers
Tree Box	Garden Shop
Trio Hair Studio	Hairdressers
Tucker French Bathrooms	Home Furnishings
Twoj Market Polish Deli	Grocer
Vanity Fur	Dog Grooming
Victory Dental Laboratory	Dental Clinic
Village Dry Cleaners	Dry Cleaners
Vintage Fish Wimbledon	Restaurant/Takeaway
Wacka	Café
William Hill	Bookmakers
Windows Glass	Glazers
Winter Bear: Home	Café
Xin's House	Takeaway
Yalini	Convenience Shop
Z&Z Hair &Beauty	Beauty Services

Appendix 4– copies of public consultation results

Available online here and to be added [PlanWimbledon Consultation Responses \(merton.gov.uk\)](https://www.merton.gov.uk/planwimbledon)

Respondents who gave reasons for supporting PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum

- For the above reason. Merton Council leave a lot to be desired Could we declare UDI?
- This will allow real engagement by the community
- see above
- Although I do not live within the boundary, I am a frequent visitor for leisure & shopping and a member of an arts group based in the town centre. I support the idea of more local input in the planning process.
- Vagueness concerns although the Council needs oversight aspect that I think is envisioned in this group
- Neighborhood involvement in planning issues is to be welcomed.
- A residents forum taking initiative is welcome.
- It should give more influence to locals re their local neighbourhood
- The residents need more representation in determining the future development of Wimbledon in terms of planning decisions.
- We need such a forum
- As I am unhappy with the last 10 years of developments in Wimbledon as they have had a negative impact on the look of Wimbledon. I am also wary of further plans to increase the Wimbledon skyline which risks turning Wimbledon into a mini Croydon.
- Because there have been too many developments within Wimbledon area that do NOT improve the local area for communities. It is vital that local communities have a say (not just a chance to comment on planning proposals, that are then ignored) in what their local neighbourhood looks like and how it develops. No more increasingly ugly and high-rise buildings destroying the look and feel of an essentially Victorian town. A neighbourhood forum with PlanWimbledon would give residents a sense of agency in how their own, incredibly important, community develops, with people at the heart of decisions.
- I believe this organisation will support and take care of the values and heritage of Wimbledon as we all move forward
- Seems to fit the bill for such a group
- Local residents should be allowed to be heard about any future changes to their area.
- Because this plan had the best interests of residents and businesses alike
- I fully support the application for local residents and businesses to be involved in planning matters in keeping with the terms of the Localism Act
- Impartial and local residents are part of it.
- Yes so we have a greater say in the plans of Wimbledon as residents
- Wimbledon is a name known around the world. And also it has great value, character, heritage and meaning to local people - residents and businesses - as well as to the tens of thousands of regular visitors to SW19.
- Because the group contains people with varied interests and experience and relevant qualifications. The information I've seen tells me the group wants to work with all kinds of organisations, businesses etc in order to create the neighbourhood plan.

- It is a democratic way to move forward
- Feels like the only way to get my voice heard
- Because hopefully they will keep an eye on the proposed developments and ensure that Wimbledon is not stripped of its character and over developed as has been the case in Sutton where I lived as a child, and also Kingston and even worse Croydon which looks more like USA than UK.
- Residents' voices, as well as those who use the area need a voice to express their views and a forum to raise issues/challenges as well as positive things. Merton Council need more checks and balances in place, in respect of their plans and proposals and recognise the needs of those who live and work within the boundary proposed.
- As above
- This represents a means to participate and influence new development in my area. Other parties will need to take the comments of the neighbourhood forum seriously. This will mean other parties will not have total power in decision-making as at present. I would like my opinions to be formally represented through a recognised forum in relation to new development in the area in which I live.
- Wimbledon desperately needs a plan for the future; what kind of a place do we want to live? What is going to be done about the overwhelmingly hostile, polluted, noisy, and dangerous roads? How will the council take urgent action to cut traffic, create low traffic residential roads, pleasant & vibrant highstreets which can be safely accessed on foot or cycle? How will it engage with children and other marginalised groups and make the streets safe enough for children to use independently to access schools and parks? How will it restore the common and other green space to the tranquil low traffic areas they used to be?
- It is important for local residents' views to be represented and experience shows that individual views are seldom heard or able to make a difference
- It is a fair way of getting local opinion on the development of Wimbledon
- So Wimbledon can plan building projects with the existing buildings in mind and not create tall high rise buildings in a modern style next to a Victorian building.
- Agree
- It will give more of a voice to specific issues in the respective area that those people either live or work
- It is community led and a credible coalition of local citizens and relevant sectors
- See above - anything that will help to hold the Council to account.
- The group is professionally run and represents a broad cross-section of Wimbledon stakeholders
- Locals' input on any development would be a big help.
- The development of Wimbledon's town centre and surrounding areas needs to be done with residents in mind and meet the needs of residents in the local area.
- Good to have another voice speaking up for residents and smaller businesses
- Much of the major development to date has not been directed with a representative opinion of the residents who will be most directly affected. It is appealing for the community within the delineated boundary to be fully represented and to have a say in how development will impact the quality of their surroundings and amenities going forward.
- See above
- To be involved in the neighbourhood plans and to have our views taken into account in the future development of Wimbledon.

- It is important to have a truly independent neighbourhood forum to coordinate residents' views on buildings proposed to be built in Wimbledon town centre and to make any objections known to the Council with a united voice.
- We need representation to prevent applications and consent passing without our knowledge. This way we will be kept more informed
- As above
- We need some way to be heard.
- The marked out boundary on the map makes perfect sense as an area that can be considered as one.
- because it gives residents and businesses the opportunity to formally engage with the Council on the implementation of the Local Plan, as per the justification in their proposal
- The diverse mix of people in the group make it very representative of the neighbourhood area and thus a compelling voice for the area.
- As above
- Any Wimbledon forum that gives a voice to the community it represents, as long as that community is accurately represented, will be a force for positive change.
- Because the committee is made up of people who have long campaigned for better quality buildings in Merton. Unlike Merton council they have the best interests of Wimbledon and its residents at the heart of what they do.
- We need to be kept informed and have more say in what happens in our area.
- I think community involvement is always excellent .
- As above
- Yes
- to help ensure coherent planning for the area.
- Because we need a strong group representing the needs and wishes of local people which the Council does not at present heed.
- To bring all the disparate ideas together and provide consistent information
- Neighbourhood plans will become more important in determining planning applications if the white paper "Planning for the Future" is enacted into law
- To bring all areas of Wimbledon together for communities to create plans, giving the chance to join forces as a community, in creating the Wimbledon we want in the future.
- Yes because I think it's too cramped and no more houses should be built.
- because they support the views of local residents and businesses
- There are major proposals coming forward in respect of Wimbledon town centre which need examining. Representations should be made in respect of them and PlanWimbledon would be an appropriate body to achieve this.
- Wimbledon is a very special place. People move here, workers and companies come here BECAUSE they understand the value of a tightly knit community that values mutual respect, education, the environment and well being. These things at present do not have a distinct role in planning future Wimbledon.
- To stop over development
- It strengthens the community. Businesses and the local community do feed off each other and need each other to grow.
- Because someone needs to protect Wimbledon from people who have no taste.
- To have a thriving community there needs to be a forum to discuss what the community should do
- My friend told me about it

- Yes, the neighbourhood forum will be able to make an important contribution to planning and development in the area.
- To provide input into development plans for the area.
- Enables the residents to shape the future, encourages democracy in the planning process which seems to be lacking at present, better collaboration across the community
- As above. I support them because of the good and hard work done to consult with other local people, businesses and organisations, so it does feel truly local for Wimbledon.
- We need a politically neutral group.
- Strongly believe we need a greater localisation of planning scrutiny and design in Wimbledon.
- Enhances the ability of our local community to input into local planning and development
- Locals know best. Wimbledon is special and needs to remain so in the eyes of locals and the world alike.
- We need local people involved in planning decisions that affect our community in Wimbledon
- I'm a resident / it's the best chance for continuing to have a pleasant area
- Again important for our residency
- The area has residential plus commercial buildings , need to work together Also rather different needs from other areas in Merton
- This will give those who live and work in the area a greater say in Wimbledon's future development.
- Will bring a stronger voice for residents, businesses and community groups in neighbourhood planning
- Yes it is important local residents and businesses plan
- We need local people planning their futures in Wimbledon to be involved in planning what is there to be used and enjoyed
- See above
- This would be a helpful thing to have access to.
- We need a good neighbourhood forum
- The Committee has a wide mix of people with different areas of expertise to enable them to represent the entire area on the variety of issues that will inevitably crop up.
- So that I will be informed of all plans and proposals that affect life in my area
- We need broadest possible consultation at all levels for future neighbourhood development in Wimbledon area.
- Gives locals more voice in planning and allows us to protect green areas.
- A forum that should have a voice
- See answer to question 1.
- The development plan for Wimbledon has largely been developed to meet external pressures and is not a plan that those within Wimbledon want. Plan Wimbledon is an energetic group which will attempt to produce a development plan which meets the needs of business, residents and employees connected to the town and reconciling these with external pressures.
- Trust in the council planning approval process is at an all time low. Allegations of corruption, lack of consideration of designs fitting in with the integrity of the local area are big issues for residents.
- It is important that residents have a real say in proposed developments
- As above, I care deeply about the area that my family lives in and what happens as the decisions affect us.

- We should have a say for the future of our children and Wimbledon in general as to how it changes / grows and I understand that we have to be forward thinking. We have lost too many local shops and businesses and if we can add any value we should to keep the village more mixed otherwise it will become all restaurants and charity shops which would be a pity. The restaurants are wonderful as are the charity shops but it would be good to have smaller brands which can afford the rent and business rates? May be a business rate break for smaller brands? Only a thought?
- A voice is what is needed for lobbying and funding.
- As the PlanWimbledon's application process progressively comes to an end, I remain hopeful that common sense and good will would prevail above partisan interests and that the spirit of the Localism Act 2011 will be embraced by the London borough of Merton.
- Merton Conservatives wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon. This is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is crucially important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.

Respondents who gave reasons for partly supporting PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum

- Not including surrounding areas
- Only on the basis of altering the boundary definition
- Yes if include South Merton Park area eg Cranleigh Road
- The area is where I live and where I intend to live for the next twenty years. I would like to feel that any decisions that affect my quality of life will be properly considered in future.
- Again because I don't fully understand how much the local residents, like myself, will be represented.
- Change the boundary to include all SW19 postcodes on the southern side and I'll agree wholeheartedly.
- I'd support it if Liberty Avenue were included...
- Only if they amend the boundary as mentioned above
- Only if you extend it to more of the Merton Park Ward
- Yes in theory, I agree there should be a local voice. But what does PlanWimbledon stand for, what are its goals? There will be issues around residential development versus commercial development. What is the vision for Wimbledon Town? I am sure it is different to Wimbledon Village and how can those work together? How will the Forum be managed so that it becomes a fruitful and positive force?
- I do not want part of the council area to have more say on what happens in the borough than other parts. I am worried it becomes a not in my back yard organisation
- I would only support if it includes the whole rather than part of Merton Park. I disagree with Merton Park Residents' Association advice as set out in the documentation associated to this consultation. Dividing the ward could lead to difficult decisions. I do not want to see this happen. As an SW19 resident I identify with Wimbledon rather than Morden.
- Vagueness concerns although the Council needs oversight aspect that I think is envisioned in this group
- If this enables cohesive representation for the area with regard to upcoming plans to increase density in the area, then I think this will be a good thing. However the boundary needs to be adjusted as stated above.

- It concerns me that PW list 'Recession' and 'Climate Change Emergency' as two of it's rationales. I find these aspects overly political.
- The SW19 London postcodes of south Merton Park to Martin Way has to be included as it is an integral part of Merton Park and the whole neighbourhood belong to and have an affinity to Merton Park Ward Residents' Association. There are no ties, attachments or affiliations with Morden and the Surrey SM4 postcode.
- See above
- I'd like to know more about what is planned, it could be amazing. Also if Merton Park is left out of it I worry it will be detrimental to that area.
- If you would explain what your intentions are I may agree wholeheartedly but without a clear indication what you plan to do I cannot agree.
- There are very different requirements for Wimbledon Town compared to the surrounding areas. A large amount of the commercial real estate is not occupied by Wimbledon residents and would potentially be disenfranchised. The neighbourhood forum adds an extra layer of bureaucracy to the planning process, and LB of Merton appears to conduct it well enough at present
- For the boundary reason above. I support the idea of a neighbourhood forum more generally.
- not sure how we would use it.
- Risk it will not be representative, needs to take into account views of majority of residents not just a select few. Although I agree with holding the Council to account. Too many decisions are made without residents opinions being listened to.
- The forum members must be diverse and a reflection of the neighbourhood they represent.
- Only it includes the whole area village, town ,west Wimbledon.
- Though I have issues regarding the representativeness of the steering group
- I support this on the understanding that Merton Park southern boundary will be moved back to where it was originally, the line being drawn at the southern border of Circle Gardens SW19, which is within the one-mile radius and is the common sense boundary for Merton Park. the line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens and other parts of Merton Park within the one mile radius.

Respondents who gave reasons for not supporting PlanWimbledon's neighbourhood forum

- Feel there s sufficient representation rather than setting up a group , led by those who are opposed to Merton per se
- As above. We have councillors who represent us. Plan Wimbledon will not represent us at all
- The area they are attempting to "represent" is far too large for effective communication between all the disparate parts. Merton Park Ward is a tightly-knit community. It has a "village" atmosphere, built around long-standing institutions (schools, church, social and cultutal societies...), in which there is participation from all corners of the Ward. There is very successful Residents' Association but they recognise the problems of listening to and acting on behalf of all the neighbourhood interests.
- The catchment area is too big and it appears the forum is very anti-growth and development. The average age of the consultees is too old to be looking to the future generations. Resident Associations that have 'signed up' have not consulted the community, so this initial consultation is not representative of the local community.

- as above
- Unless you live in my neighbourhood I would argue you do not appreciate the history or atmosphere. Local issues that directly affect me would not necessarily do so to someone in another part of Wimbledon
- This looks like an unelected body over whom residents will have no control and will push their own agenda through. Most people in the area probably don't know about this and it is a highly dangerous precedent to allow such groups to gain any power of this kind
- Who are they and how and by whom were they selected?
- I do not want this group of unknown people called PlanWimbledon taking a lead on neighbourhood developments. I would prefer my elected officials to do that.
- The principal consideration is the fact that any future neighbourhood plan needs to properly comply with the “basic conditions” set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, paragraph 8 (2). The policies and guidance that are relevant include the following: The NPPF follows the provision of section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The relevant NPPF paragraphs in this case relate to: paragraphs 12 and 13 (“the planning system should be genuinely plan led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priority; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”); paragraph 16d (“contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to the development proposals”) and paragraph 16f (“serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area...”). The adopted Core Strategy 2011 establishes clear strategic policies for the regeneration and growth at Wimbledon and this priority remains within the new Merton Local Plan. The new local plan is advancing, having been subject to recent public consultation earlier this year (stage 2a consultation) and with an expected pre-submission plan anticipated for consultation during the coming months which will be examined and then formally adopted. The new local plan has been prepared to comply with strategic, new London Plan policies (as set out in the Mayor’s adopted London Plan 2021) which continues to identify Wimbledon as a Major Centre and an important opportunity area for large-scale development with significant increases in jobs and homes. The vision, key priorities and objectives for Wimbledon are therefore clearly set out in both the recently adopted London Plan and the advanced, new Merton Local Plan. In particular, draft Policy N3.6 contained within Chapter 9 of the new Merton Local Plan identifies the need for promoting Wimbledon as “South west London’s premier location for business, leisure, living and culture” in providing an “example of good quality and sustainable place making” whilst also identifying the need for “driving investment and innovation in work spaces to support the local economy and jobs in the town centre commensurate with Wimbledon’s role as a Major Centre.” It further states that the local plan will “encourage development that attracts businesses, visitors and tourism to the area all year round, including high-quality hotels, conference facilities and cultural activities” with the aim to strengthen the position of Wimbledon as a Major Centre in south London through the redevelopment of identified key sites. The Victoria Crescent site, known as Site Wi11 represents an important, strategic allocation for a mix of town centre uses through comprehensive redevelopment. The new Merton Local Plan when adopted later this year alongside the new London Plan will form the up-to-date statutory planning policy framework for future decisions on applications across the town centre. Further, there exists “Future Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document” recently adopted in November 2020 which outlines all such priorities for Wimbledon town centre in relation to achieving: design quality, public realm, urban greening and sustainability, improving High Street vitality (post-Covid recovery) whilst also considering long-term ambitions.

These priorities are also embedded in draft planning policy to ensure consistency. The adopted town centre SPD has been subject to design and technical evidence and whilst F&C and their advisors have made past representations on it during the consultation process (in relation to inclusion of site Wi11 within the tall buildings cluster given its significance amongst other considerations), it is acknowledged that the SPD will act as guidance to the new Local Plan. The SPD document therefore incorporates guidance on alternative land-use allocation and distribution and other such development parameters particularly in relation to allocated sites having considered some of the constraints and opportunities across the town centre as a whole. The SPD therefore provides the next level of detail in terms of how strategic, identified sites might come forward which has been subject to stakeholder consultation and engagement. This planning policy framework is therefore considered more than adequate in providing the required policy and planning guidance in shaping the regeneration of the town centre and its strategic development sites. The introduction of a neighbourhood plan would result in unnecessary duplication of policy which would need to repeat policy objectives set out in the new local plan and adopted SPD (given it will need to be in compliance) – in turn, questioning at the outset its role and purpose. Such duplication would not meet the “basic conditions” for preparing a neighbourhood plan. Indeed, it would result in an additional layer of statutory plan policy which would create uncertainty in application decision-making given the planning policy framework which will be in place for that very purpose. Again, this would not meet the “basic conditions” tests. More specifically, within Plan Wimbledon’s application (updated April 2021) at paragraph 5.4.2, it is stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing the uncertainty about the future direction of the economy particularly for High Street retailers, hospitality venues and offices as people adapt to different ways of shopping, working and socialising. There is certainly an element of repurposing town centres in adapting to new retail environments. However, the adopted SPD (and the new local plan) already recognise this and it is not considered that preparing a neighbourhood plan will create any further certainty; in fact, the opposite. Indeed, it is now (post-pandemic recovery) when absolute planning certainty is required through adopted policy and guidance in determining strategic development schemes in the short to medium term. Another layer of plan making will only add to planning uncertainty and potentially delay the decision making process for such schemes to the detriment of much needed, town centre regeneration to assist short term economic recovery.

- As above
- I believe we already have elected MP’s and councillors who are representative and accountable, along with credible residents associations and conservation society which represent their residents interests. I am concerned that this new self-appointed group dilutes democracy; is open to entryism from those with their own issues and agenda’s; and may therefore be less representative of the people of Wimbledon in general and Merton Park in particular.
- I do not think these things should be delegated to pressure groups
- See above,
- It's not a democratically elected body.
- No, they should be produced for specific areas including the town centre. I understand others have expressed an interest to produce neighbourhood plans.
- The impact of decisions within the proposed boundary potentially have impacts beyond that impact area. There can be knock on effects beyond the proposed boundary. The effect of decisions and change within the proposed neighbourhood area can create a disadvantaged hinterland that is less prosperous, less safe, less desirable than it is now. In addition a group of self interested with a limited view of what’s best for the wider area

should not be in a position to make decisions that affect others. Democratically elected representatives should make decisions that takes into account the interests of the whole community. Principles of fairness, equalities and non- discrimination are highly likely to be ignored. A group of non- elected, non-representative people should not determine the lives/ fate of the wider community. I don't believe this group will be looking at the long term future of the area, and are not sufficiently qualified or accountable to the public. Who scrutinises these plans and why should I not have the freedom to influence plans for m6 town centre as I do now? No, that is undemocratic.

- Never heard of them. Suspect its another attempt by Merton Council to establish a supposedly representative body to push their climate emergency/cycle campaigning ideology e.g. Merton Residents Transport group which doesnt allow Merton Residents to join and whose definition of Transport starts & ends with a pushbike.
- I think it will be a bunch of Nimbys and will exclude vulnerable and disadvantaged voices.
- It is too large and driven by a background with a residential focus.
- See previous answer
- See answer to 1. Above
- Not either the current border. Need to include all of Merton Park.
- For the reasons above and also I don't think businesses are adequately catered for in the proposal as it stands
- Its simple not required . The current system is democratic and small communities can better represent their concerns in respect of inappropriate planning within their community without being bound by predetermined criteria of such a group. In addition to be stuck with with such a group for a five year period is totally inappropriate.
- Often the public does not understand planning, good design and will vote based on personal preferences rather than the good of the overall community. The people on PlanWimbledon are self appointed are not voted in. It will make the process more cumbersome.
- We do not wish to be labeled Morden
- Because the suggested designated area is too big imo.
- Area is too large with different priorities
- I prefer my area to be run by elected representatives.
- Although they have leafeted my home (in the neighbourhood area they seek) the leaflet asked for positive vote for them, without any invitation to join or without any information about how to join. This makes it look exclusive.
- No unelected body should have a legally binding say in planning decisions.
- Please see my reply to Q1.
- The current neighbourhood groups have shown themselves to be strongly against change and progress. They seem to prefer to see the area ossify is its current state or to chase costly elitist project that will benefit few.
- As above
- No and it should be stopped. It is too big and trying to do too much. Merton as the statutory planning body leads and facilitates. I would be interested in supporting a series of smaller project areas "neighbourhoods" in areas of opportunity/issues. If we are in the era of 15minute cities, why do Plan Wimbledon want to seemingly control and influence such a large and critical part of Merton? For example Love Wimbledon as the BID are the group to articulate issues and opportunities in Wimbledon Town Centre
- Same reason as above
- Too political

Respondents who gave reasons for supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- A manageable area for local interest groups
- Because the area makes sense geographically
- Because I think it's a good idea to have a proper plan that includes people that leave in the area opinion. Instead of politician deciding without any consideration or common sens except political view and personal retribution
- It appears to encapsulate the area of Wimbledon.
- I have been living in Wimbledon for the last 20 years, it is my home town. I care about the future of Wimbledon.
- I love Wimbledon, especially Merton Park, where I live and my home is included in the area.
- Offer greater protection and influence for the local community
- Because we need to protect the conservation areas and stop partisan planning committees. We need to stop overdevelopment and the taking away of flats!
- Contains most important areas
- We need to preserve the few good things we have. Merton is over crowded as it is.
- It is an area of Merton distinct from the others and has different needs
- This is the area that needs the most support and control.
- Because the voices and opinions of our local community should be heard in future.
- Important for local community representatives to have a say in shaping the future of Wimbledon and local area within a 1mile radius.
- To protect the interests of local residents.
- Yes
- Appropriate
- It puts Wimbledon town at the centre; it embraces the three Wimbledon tube stops; it recognises 'natural' boundaries.
- Good to see locals having a say
- To keep Wimbledon town centre as as local an attractive and unique. Not overdeveloped high rise which in turn becomes one massive wind tunnel of high rise buildings without character or care for the area or local residents. There is no need to turn Wimbledon into a Hub like Croydon, which has become large high rise for office space, in which people travel to and from work, but the residential is lost for the sake of so called faceless business.
- It appears to be an appropriate delineation of an area of common interest
- I agree
- Includes the wider areas of Wimbledon which is good
- A genuine effort has been made to develop a sensitive and comprehensive Plan designed to sustain a distinctive locality.
- It's important to involve everyone in the community
- Empowers the local community
- A sensible boundary comprising the core areas of Wimbledon, including those of historic interest
- Exist arrangements ineffective.
- Keeps it local.
- It encompasses the neighbourhood of Wimbledon
- Good thing

- It captures how people relate to the different parts of Wimbledon. The only questionable aspect is leaving out the Wimbledon Park grid.
- Having a 'real' input into the future of the proposed NAB is a vital, democratic and important step in having an active chance to influence any alterations and alleged 'improvements' in the proposed NAB, imposed by Local Government's draconian and undemocratic current procedures. The lack of proper and considered consultations (and the right of a veto), subverts the wishes of those who live and work in the designated area. With the distance between elections, the voice of the electors must be heard and considered.
- It includes not just the town centre but the surrounding area to some extent.
- something needs to be done with Wimbledon or the planner will go wild and raise the 'character' of the place to the ground and replace it with blocks of glass tower blocks. The more rented accommodation there is, the less likelihood the occupants are going to take an interest in the place if they know they're not going to be there very long. Do we need any more offices? There seems to be plenty lying empty at the moment.
- It is good to encompass the whole of Wimbledon Village AND town in one neighbourhood plan and to bring so many interested parties together. I would have preferred Wimbledon Park, or at least the AELTC part of it, to have been included within the boundary, but understand that Plan Wimbledon and the constituent residents' associations interested in the AELTC proposals are already in active dialogue, so for now its omission can be accepted. In the longer term it should be included.
- The area is where I live and where I intend to live for the next twenty years. Anything happening within a mile of where I live is likely to affect my quality of life.
- Merton is a large borough that encompasses too wide an area that we feel doesn't really focus on the individual towns' needs and wants. Having lived here for 14 years, we want to focus on a positive re-emergence of the town and village after the pandemic and regain the community feel, the great shops and be part of local planning rules that affect this area.
- It sounds like a good idea.
- It important to have a shared understanding of boundaries
- Covers the vast majority of a natural community area within Merton, served largely by the same transport, infrastructure and business/shopping services.
- Yes, as it covers the SW19 postcode and what is generally known as Wimbledon proper.
- I like to know all the news of the area, so I think it's a great idea.
- It's a unique area, famous around the world, & needs protecting.
- It defines Wimbledon town and residential areas connected
- To help develop services and planning for the Wimbledon area to help residents and businesses
- Wimbledon is a distinct community and it often feels as if it is smothered within the much bigger Merton borough council.
- The boundary is large which will enable the group to have "clout" and deal properly with issues from pollution to planning and beyond.
- It covers all the parts of the neighbourhood I consider to be Wimbledon from the centre to the boundary
- Good for residents
- Very difficult to decide where the boundary should be but this seems a practical solution to the question "Where do you live?". Further South, if the answer comes back "Wimbledon" that is wishful thinking.
- Don't actually know what the boundary is!

- Wherever the boundaries are drawn someone somewhere will be left out and probably upset. A decision has to be made at some stage otherwise this group won't be able to get off the ground.
- It represents a coherent area.
- It encompasses the people who see themselves as Wimbledonians.
- I think that it is important for local people to have a coordinated input into the determination of planning policies. This group is well organised, seems to cover a broad spectrum and is good at keeping people informed.
- To take care of our local environment and protect it against any adverse construction etc
- This represents the area that I see as Wimbledon
- good idea and fair
- Residents have a right to be involved in the planning of their neighbourhood!
- I believe this to be an appropriate boundary and represents what I consider to be Wimbledon
- I've been living in Wimbledon for more than 12 years now and the sense of community across the proposed area is very strong
- Because I believe it's best for Wimbledon.
- The areas that encompass the boundary include a diversity of places and uses that combine to create the interesting mixture that makes the area a neighbourhood we should be proud of.
- I would welcome a forum to keep us updated and fully aware of proposed planning developments as we do have to protect the over development of Wimbledon and preserve and protect the residential areas many of which are close to the town centre
- It covers the central areas of Wimbledon - town and village - and the adjacent areas. Thus it covers the area where people live and work and use local services, shops and entertainment.
- Have to start (and stop) somewhere!
- Yes as it is a natural hub for Wimbledon
- The line has to be drawn somewhere in Merton Park and I think using the John Innes Conservation area boundary as you have done is a sensible approach. I wouldn't object to pushing a little further, as far as Circle Gardens.
- E
- People must say something about the area where they live
- It makes sense
- Its a great idea to have a formal means to represent the people who reside in the area
- Area represents what I consider a of Wimbledon
- Having been a resident in Wimbledon for over 37 years, I am saddened at how we have been treated. Developers are moving in and the lovely town I fell in love with all those years ago is almost gone. I think it is important that the people who live here should have a more active role and a say in how our neighbourhood is run.
- It seems to include an area that most people identify as Wimbledon.
- I think it's a good first step and I hope that going forward the boundary will be extended
- The right area
- I support the ideas put forward.
- They look right
- This area needs a forum independent from the Council's planners as the voices of residents in this area are very often ignored and valid objections are overridden for party political reasons. Residents of all political views have a right to independent support. and advise

- It's good
- Encompasses the key areas which make up Wimbledon
- Better control
- Important to look after the area carefully and properly for the residents and businesses
- As rate payers it is good to consult residents
- Wimbledon is a thriving town but it could be an even better and more attractive place to live and work with the right planning and foresight. A proper plan would also ensure it retains its current individual character.
- As a small independent business we feel it is important to understand and know about the development of the local area.
- Because it clearly needs it
- To enable us to have a voice
- I live within the designated area and want to have a say on future developments
- It's about time the residents and not the developers and their "friends" in the council who have for years totally ignored and illegally at times breached planning rules and regulations to drive through their own plans against the will of the community.
- Covers all the historic area of Wimbledon, not just the more affluent parts
- We do need a separate residents voice for Wimbledon which is a unique entity. At present decisions concerning civic issues are made by majority of councillors who do not live here.
- Significant part of the borough so good representation of residents interests living close to town centre.
- It will enable planning to take account of local area and its needs
- It encompasses Wimbledon only and not other centres such as Raynes Park
- While not au fait with the technical side of the proposals, I understand the Friends of Wimbledon Town Centre support the proposals and as a member I do too.
- Useful to gauge local views.
- It's important to keep any development within the style or character of its immediate area.
- Because we need to make sure the council agenda is based on the environment rather than profit.
- It makes sense
- Although it was noted that Chase Side Ave and Oxford Ave will form part of the new "Raynes Park" constituency. This was mostly a result of a request from Apostles Residents Association to join Raynes Park and the position within the existing polling district. Since the two roads are not part of The Apostles and not eligible to join Apostles Residents Association. The Apostles Association does include high traffic Kingston Rd among its area of influence so the proposed western extent of the Plan Wimbledon boundary seems sensible.
- Important for local issues to be about a local area not a whole borough which has huge diversity across it.
- I really feel strongly that meton council do a poor job in regulating home owners building standards (materials used, designs etc) Even in conservations areas such as south park gardens. i would really love to help support this. Also dog fouling is an increasing problem on our pavements.
- As town centre plans impact on residential and vice versa
- The local community is what makes Wimbledon so special. Local stakeholders' views need to be respected, and this is a fair way to allow local views to be heard.
- Inside this boundary there is a good mix of the people and organisations who make up Wimbledon.
- I agree. It is the most appropriate area. Why doesn't it include the Causeway too?

- Because I would want whatever developments in mind would not affect the quality of life currently enjoyed by the residents living in Wimbledon town
- Because residents need a say, not just commerce and business
- The creation of a neighbourhood plan offers the prospect of real local influence over the future development of the town centre. It's very important that local residents are involved in all plans for the future of their area.
- The boundary area covered includes my home area where I spend the vast majority of my time. The area covered centres on Wimbledon town centre which is a locally significant and well-known location. I identify with this area and the surrounding mile radius.
- It offers a coherent coverage of the whole Wimbledon area, providing a platform for all sectors of the community to come together to produce a truly democratic neighbourhood plan for the benefit of all.
- It encompasses the heart of Wimbledon but leaves autonomy to other surrounding areas to develop their own criteria and priorities
- It covers the important area
- It is interested in the particular needs of the area it will cover. Their purpose is clear and important for me. I think it balances the needs of residents, green spaces, the arts and business
- Agree
- Feel there will be more awareness to the general public in the area, not just those that have become members
- It would be good to have a more resident driven approach to planning, greening and cleaning Wimbledon. We currently have a planning department that pays lip service listen to residents' reasonable arguments and a Council that lacks vision and refuses to enforce the Veolia street cleaning and refuse / litter contract meaning that Merton's streets are a disgrace and an health hazard.
- Because it makes logical sense and is clearly defined.
- Local framework would help to improve Wimbledon.
- I am resident in this area (Lake Road)
- Because I think it makes sense
- i am fully into my neighborhood
- It is comprehensive in covering key areas of expansion and development that impact on each other in forming the locality and brings together the number of different communities living in each locality.
- Wimbledon needs a Wimbledon- focussed plan because of its historical identity.
- Because community interaction is vital
- Despite not living in within the boundary of the proposed neighbourhood area I feel it is important for all residents of Merton to have a say on how the centre of Wimbledon will look; some of the high rise buildings proposed to be built behind Wimbledon station will be very obtrusive and dominate the otherwise pleasantly low skyline. It would be sad for Wimbledon to end up looking like Croydon with its soulless tower blocks.
- To be safe
- It is important to have a say in how Wimbledon is developed as a locally resident
- To protect the residents from over development
- Seems like a pretty comprehensive covering of the area that I would refer to as Wimbledon!
- Residents need a voice in development and town planning, particularly as the Council seem to want more high-rise buildings in a low-rise neighbourhood. We need to monitor the density new building and of the population in Wimbledon.

- because it includes those areas of Merton that might be considered Wimbledon, as per the justification in their proposal
- The thorough research carried out by the group has resulted in them proposing the most sensible, representative boundary for the Wimbledon neighbourhood.
- To protect and promote local interests and needs
- The boundary appears to have been well considered and devised in conjunction with relevant groups. It seems to accurately reflect the "Wimbledon" area
- Because it's inclusive
- Too many bad decisions affecting my area being made without public knowledge or outcry being ignored.
- It corresponds to my view of Wimbledon. I do wish that the commons were included, particularly the windmill, but I understand the reason for exclusion.
- I think it is important for local people to be involved in plans that effect Their areas
- Because I do
- W
- Because we need a strong group representing the needs and wishes of local people which the Council does not at present heed.
- As far as it affects Merton Park Ward, the adoption of the boundary of the John Innes (Merton Park) Conservation Area for Plan Wimbledon makes sense as an extant, familiar boundary
- Wimbledon is a remarkable locale in so many ways. It needs a coherent voice.
- Because I don't want small business to be demolished and instead more flats being built.
- The boundary is a sensible distance from the Old Town Hall which together with the station can be regarded as the centre of Wimbledon.
- Wimbledon people's voices need to be heard
- I fall within this boundary and it fits with what I consider my locale.
- I do think it represents the centre of Wimbledon including both businesses and residents. It encompasses the 20 minute guidance what the council considers to be local.
- There has to be a designated area. The area proposed seems a good one
- My friend told me about it
- The boundary has been selected with great care and intensive consultation, especially around the edges of the area.
- The area appropriately encompasses the region identifiable as "Wimbledon", focussed on the town centre.
- Provides good coverage of the area I consider to be Wimbledon
- Even though it is a large area, it is difficult to draw narrower natural boundaries
- As I'm a longtime resident of central Wimbledon (Trinity Ward) it makes sense to me, and the PlanWimbledon team have obviously done a lot of work to ensure full consultation.
- It is an accurate definition of the area.
- Fairly reflects the extent of Wimbledon as a zone
- It is a natural area as Wimbledon and a lot of research has gone into defining the precise boundaries
- Better involves our neighbourhood in decision making process
- There appears to be extensive consultation among a varied groups to decide upon the area boundary
- It is the area considered to be Wimbledon
- I'm a resident and it's important for me and my family
- This plan will represent the area everyone lives and works in Wimbledon.

- Has been widely consulted on
- Yes
- Wimbledon is a specific place with a specific demographic and need. It needs to be treated as it's own entity. If supermarkets can profile areas to stock the right food and provisions that will sell in an area, why can't government?
- Defines Wimbledon rather than the amorphous Merton
- It represents my local area.
- Widely thought to be best
- Looks good and will help support the needs of the local community
- S
- The Plan Wimbledon committee have a myriad of skillsets and have consulted very widely on the area boundary. The boundary as drawn makes total sense and includes both Wimbledon Town Centre and Village with all the areas in-between so gives a real sense of the whole community.
- It is important to have a well thought out plan with restrictions so that we always have a sensitive and sustainable area
- so that local people have a say in their future
- Include the voices of people who live in the area more directly in our future
- Includes relevant neighbourhoods.
- Realistically drawn
- Because I believe in the good of Wimbledon
- Includes my residence and business.
- See written submission
- Its good for the longevity of the community.
- Its a coherent area decided by consultation with residents affected.
- Because I care about what happens in the neighbourhood that my family lives in.
- The village and Wimbledon and areas should be involved to be inclusive of all of Wimbledon.
- It seems to be a structured way to reach urbanisation goals over the decades to come.
- I want Wimbledon to be a beautiful fun an supportive place for my daughter as she grows.
- I would like to herewith wholeheartedly second the representation letter from PlanWimbledon by reference and incorporation
- Merton Conservatives wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon. This is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is crucially important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.

Respondents who gave reasons for partly supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- I live in Wimbledon Park, which is included in the boundary, but after reading on Nextdoor that residents of Merton Park are unhappy to be split I cannot agree fully as I don't know the full situation.
- Extend to include more of Merton Park
- It should include all of Merton park or none of Merton park. All or nothing.

- I am concerned that the wider the neighbourhood area boundary the more dilute and generic the policies within it must become - exactly the opposite of a neighbourhood plan, and the problem with the existing Core Strategy/Local Plan
- It should be extended to include all those part of SW19 e.g. drawing a false line through Merton Park or other areas will create confusion and lack of clarity. It neither fits the current definition of Wimbledon or creates a satisfactory alternative.
- I don't fully understand the election process for the plan Wimbledon team and how much local residents feelings will be represented.
- I think SW20 (West Wimbledon) should also be included.
- Would prefer Wimbledon Park to be included in the area as it is our local park.
- I live in Merton Park and would regard myself as a Wimbledon resident. I shop/eat/drink in Wimbledon centre and village, my daughter goes to school in Wimbledon, my husband works within the proposed area and we regularly use Wimbledon Common so don't support the exclusion of Merton Park.
- Seems fairly arbitrary in the Merton Park area
- I would like to have seen it more central to Wimbledon town to protect it from overdevelopment from the master plan including the sale of Centre court and future crossrail2 development
- On the surface it seems fine, although perhaps that is difficult to say, until the neighbourhood starts to discuss and interact, only then will issues of boundary become apparent.
- Why not just follow the constituency boundary. There is a lot of confusion between parliamentary boundaries & Merton council neighbourhoods. A lot of the east of the proposed boundary is part of Merton Council's Colliers Wood neighbourhood despite having no connection with Colliers Wood
- In view of the AELTC now owning the Wimbledon Golf Club land and their recent planning application and what will no doubt end up being 'a site of development' I believe that area should be included.
- I think the coherent entity of "Wimbledon" extends for gger wet state than Lower Downs Rd, eg it would include Arterberry Rd, but not beyond Haydons Rd to the East
- Not sure that calling it Plan Wimbledon is appropriate when it will not include the whole borough and seems to concentrate only on the central town centre.
- Southern boundary should not impinge on existing Merton Park residential area south of Kingston Road but can include Nelson Hospital shopping parade.
- Concept I support but the aim and methods are too vague
- While living just outside the proposed boundary, my family regards Wimbledon (rather than Morden) as our local centre shopping and leisure,so have a vested interest in how the area evolves. (My childrens' former secondary school also falls within the boundary.) I realise the boundary has to be drawn somewhere but am concerned that it may exclude some residents/businesses that have a natural affinity with Wimbledon rather than Raynes Park, Merton Park or Morden.
- Use Durnsford Road as a boundary, ie. do not extend into Somerstown or Earlsfield.
- I think the boundary should include Wimbledon Chase and lower downs, Kingston rd
- I think it is too big - the town and the village are quite different
- I think the lower boundary should be Kenley Road (Mostyn to Circle Gardens) as this is within the 20 minute walk that they state is their guide for the area.
- I don't understand why both Wimbledon common and park are not included in the boundary. I do see that photos of both of these places are used in the website. I also think the path along the wandle between gap road and Earlsfield should be included as it

is now in constant use since lockdown. I think now that people from Wimbledon have been using it so much this will continue.

- I don't fully understand the brief
- Would prefer West Wimbledon to be included
- I think it should extend a bit further south in Merton park to take account of the John Innes area of benefit.
- I believe Wimbledon Park should be included within the plan, particularly given the plans from AELTC for development.
- You appear to omit the whole of Wimbledon Park which I realise could be difficult to include because of joint responsibility between Wandsworth and Merton councils, but it needs protecting.
- I don't understand what this boundary is going to mean for our area. Are you wanting to protect all the green spaces & trees or what is the reason for creating such a boundary?
- The proposed area is unusually large in terms of population.
- Area needs to be extended further toward Morden to include other areas of Merton Park
- why are the houses around the common and the common itself not included? the common is a key asset for Wimbledon.
- Concerned about how this leaves other areas like Colliers Wood, who are less able to put together a plan themselves.
- I see you are including Merton Cricket Club which is on Aylward Road/Cannon Hill Lane and I fail to see why Aylward Road is never contacted or considered to be included in any decisions.
- I would want the boundary to be extended to the junction of the Ridgeway and Cottenham Park Road and down to Worple Road via Pepys Road
- We live in Merton Park but outside the edge of the conservation area, which we understand is the limit to the Plan's boundary. Why is it not the postcode area, SW19, which would then include us?
- The only part I would question is the Southfields grid area running South from Revelstoke Road to Wimbledon Park tube and East towards Earlsfield. To me, these would have more in common with The Grid or Earlsfield and might be better catered for by a different group.
- confused as to its power.
- I would like Arterberry Road included in this area.
- Arbitrary cut off between Morden and Wimbledon along Dorset road, including more expensive houses on one side and excluding those on the opposite side - both equally close to the town hall
- Seems like a logical place to draw a southern boundary line, taking into account the official John Innes Conservation area (rather than the much larger and vaguer John Innes 'area of benefit', which extends into Morden). However, it could be made smaller by just cutting off at the Kingston Road as the lower boundary.
- I support this on the understanding that Merton Park southern boundary will be moved back to where it was originally, the line being drawn at the southern border of Circle Gardens SW19, which is within the one-mile radius and is the common sense boundary for Merton Park. the line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens and other parts of Merton Park within the one mile radius.
- Paraphrase: change boundary to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road, north of Circle Gardens

Respondents who gave reasons for not supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- Include colliers wood
- It should include all of Merton park or none of Merton park. All or nothing.
- Merton park should be fully included rather than split down the middle. A logical boundary to the south would be Erridge Road.
- What skills do these people have to decide on planning matters . This is a self elected lobby group. We have elected bodies to do this .
- Cuts my area in two
- We live immediately outside the area, actually touching the boundary. Our primary focus is Wimbledon and it seems our voice will be ignored.
- What they are proposing is not a natural, socially-cohesive neighbourhood or community. Wimbledon is comprised of many different neighbourhoods and overlapping communities, each with identifiable characteristics and organisations around and through which the life and essence of that area is played-out. I live in Merton Park - the LBM Merton Park Ward constitutes much of the local community; not all of it but ,most of it. It DOES constitute a LOCAL neighbourhood. An arbitrary line on a map should not claim to encompass one living, breathing neighbourhood.
- Does not include South Merton Park area to Martin Way
- I understand that the idea of having a Wimbledon area was to assist with people identifying with their local area. The postcode for Wimbledon is SW19, also made famous worldwide by the Tennis Championship. I disagree most strongly with the recommendation of MPWRA that the ward should be cut in half and that some SW19 postcodes are within the area boundary, and others are not. The Merton Park sub area should not be split in two as this doing so would destroy the unique character of the area, modeled as it is on other garden suburbs in London. If all of Merton Park's SW19 postcodes cannot be incorporated into the new plan boundaries, they should all be excluded.
- Too big not focused on residential areas
- I live on Erridge Road SW19, closer to Dorset Road. The Merton Park Ward Residents Association are a bunch of snobs who only serve themselves. Requesting that the boundary be drawn along the John Innes Conservation area, as "this formed a natural line between Wimbledon and Morden" is both a complete lie and throws me and other neighbours into some horrible no-man's land. Please include ALL the SW19 postcodes and ignore whichever halfwit suggested that ridiculous boundary. P.s. love the proposal though just please change the boundary to include my house!
- I think SW20 (West Wimbledon) should also be included.
- We have enough planning red tape. Residents need to have commercial spaces in this boundary and we need businesses locally to employ residents and our young adults. This forum does not appear to represent the commercial sector, businesses or commercial property owners.
- No idea who these self appointed folk are, nor what they intend to do.
- No prior knowledge of this, not have previously been consulted. Would not wish Arterberry Road, SW20, excluded from any such newly privileged area.
- the area I have chosen to live in is unique and as such I invest time and energy in being involved in community groups that directly enhance this area. I would not be as involved in a larger area

- It needs to include Raynes Park and Cottenham Park or at least the part north of the A298. The current south west boundary is too restricted.
- Please include Liberty Avenue, as it's in SW19 too!
- I do not think unelected groups should be given any official recognition
- It shouldn't cut Merton Park Ward in half - boundary should be extended to include the whole ward
- I have lived in Wimbledon for the last 42 years yet I have never heard of this group and I do not know on what basis they think they represent my neighbourhood. They do not represent me.
- These representations do not object outright to Plan Wimbledon being a designated forum for proceeding with a neighbourhood plan for the wider area; however, the inclusion of Wimbledon town centre within the designated application is subject to objection. F&C Commercial Property Holdings Limited (as advised by BMO Real Estate Partners, as asset managers and Stanhope Plc as development consultants) own Site Wi11 known as Victoria Crescent/Piazza, 39–59 The Broadway, 1–11 Victoria Crescent/Piazza, Wimbledon. The extent of the proposed neighbourhood area is not reflective of a “neighbourhood” but instead it includes many different neighbourhoods of a very extensive catchment. It would be difficult to understand how the neighbourhood plan would encompass focused, concise and detailed policies in achieving the economic growth objectives for Wimbledon as a Major Centre whilst also trying to achieve other different regeneration objectives for residential sub-areas of the identified catchment.
- I live in the Merton Park Ward but outside the planned area. I don't feel I live in Morden (I live on the boundary with John Innes Park) but I do identify with living in Wimbledon, where I can walk to, shop and socialise.
- This seems to be an anti development group with a political agenda
- Unclear why it divides Merton Park
- It seems to cut Merton Park in half
- There is great need to simplify, rather than complicate further the U.K. town planning system.
- It's an arbitrary line drawn up by a few individuals on no clear basis, which would have the effect of excluding a large number of households of people who have always regarded themselves as residents of Wimbledon.
- We have lived in Cranleigh Road for 46 years and feel very much part of Wimbledon/Merton Park Community. Therefore, we would like the boundary to include as much of South Merton Park as possible.
- The proposed area is far too large to address the many different characteristics that exist in parts of Wimbledon.
- South Wimbledon MUST be included
- Mitcham and Colliers Woods should not be included in Wimbledon
- The impact of decisions within the proposed boundary potentially have impacts beyond that impact area. There can be knock on effects beyond the proposed boundary. The effect of decisions and change within the proposed neighbourhood area can create a disadvantaged hinterland that is less prosperous, less safe, less desirable than it is now.
- not large enough and includes all the wealth parts of the neighbourhood
- It excludes parts of Merton Park. The ward should not be divided.
- Because it cuts half way through Wimbledon chase area. Should incorporate end of Worple Rd and to Martin Way.
- Too large and covers a diverse area of residential, retail and office which each have their own needs.

- Should include Wimbledon Park and WPGC which is about to be destroyed by AELTC proposals
- Merton Park is already a well defined residential area with its own residents association and councillors. The Plan Wimbledon boundary splits Merton Park into two. This would make it more difficult for MPWRA to continue to represent the area as a whole. In my view the whole of Merton Park should either be included or excluded from the Plan Wimbledon area, and not split along the John Innes conservation area boundary.
- Many residents have no knowledge of this group. Despite being very active re planning via the OneMerton organisation.
- The JI conservation area runs to the west of the gardens of Poplar Road AND NOT just to the west of the house!! So the gardens of 1 - 33 are not in the conservation area. Please change you map to line up with the map of the Merton Council website https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/0177_john_innes_merton_park_map.pdf
- May not include neighbouring borough residents/businesses who could be impacted by decisions and discussions
- You are putting a border through the centre of Merton Park which is very divisive as this is quite a tight knit area.
- It should include all of Merton Park if the counsellors are on the committee then they need to represent ball of Merton Park, not just bits of it.
- I feel the suggested boundary is to large and covers a number of neighbourhood's which would make it to complex and potentially fail to meet the need of any neighbourhood
- I don't trust Merton council at all
- sw20 0dh - why not included?
- it is too large to meaningfully represent individual areas and their interests . It has no policy for conservation areas one of Wimbledon's greatest assets . Its intentions and objectives are not properly thought out ,lack clarity and contain with meaningless statements . it appears, despite its claims, to be a lobbying group for those that pay its expenses . It attracts business who see it as a way to exert influence on the current system for their personal benefit
- Merton Park will be divided into two.
- Too big to be impactful or meaningful as a neighbourhood forum.
- Because it seems to separate out a small section of Merton Park to be included. As a Merton Park resident I do consider myself part of Wimbledon. I think the shoe of Merton Park should be included, or the whole of Merton Park should be excluded, enabling Merton Park to create their own plan.
- I don't vote to then have a separate group decide what happens in my area.
- Creating another boundary within Merton not really necessary.
- These are very disparate areas with very different concerns. The area selected looks too varied to be representative yet too small to be strategic.
- The boundary is irrelevant as I cannot support PlanWimbledon having a legally binding vote.
- I believe that the area is simply too big and too diverse for it to be possible to reach any meaningful consensus on the Neighbourhood Plan and it is quite possible that the approval of Plan Wimbledon as a Neighborhood Forum for the area that has been included will in fact be an impediment to the essential ongoing development of the CBD and the investment required to provide a vibrant hub particularly for business. The CBD should be excluded from the proposed area. Plan Wimbledon has not demonstrated any vision for the development of the CBD, have not engaged meaningfully with the business community and have launched this consultation at a very difficult time for business in the Town Center as they seek to re-open after an extended period of lockdown. Extensive

consultation has already been undertaken by Merton Council leading to the publication of the Masterplan and Plan Wimbledon have not given any indication as to their view on the Masterplan and subsequent SPD. Most importantly the constitution of Plan Wimbledon does not provide for meaningful and proportionate representation for businesses in it decision making and is therefore not the right forum to propose a Neighbourhood plan that includes the CBD.

- Don't know who they are or what they represent - have they been elected - if so who by?
- This is a large, diverse area. I'm not sure that such a big range should be covered by a single neighbourhood forum. I would think that smaller groups would be closer to the local issues of each area and better able to suggest plans for those areas.
- This is just more bureaucracy in Local Government
- The proposed area is too big. Totally inappropriate. There should be a series of "neighbourhoods". As BID's, Town Centre Management and other area based vehicles have shown, have a manageable area of focus to work on. Key policies then around bringing people together on 1) improvement & development, 2) Brand & Marketing, 3) Management.
- Too far south in Merton Park and towards Wimb Park also which have their own distinct areas
- I don't believe the neighbours of Wimbledon are qualified or reliable to have this amount of power and will stop Wimbledon's progression
- Waste of money which could be spent elsewhere in merton
- It leaves too many small areas. You say you have consulted with various groups but I don't think they've consulted their members. I belong to RAWWcand meAmbers have not been asked.

Appendix 5 – PlanWimbledon’s application (April 2021 version)

Application form [PlanWimbledon Application for neighbourhood forum designation April21.pdf \(merton.gov.uk\)](#)

Map of proposed neighbourhood area:

[https://www.merton.gov.uk/Documents/PlanWimbledon_proposed_neighbourhood_area April21.pdf](https://www.merton.gov.uk/Documents/PlanWimbledon_proposed_neighbourhood_area_April21.pdf)

Appendix 6 – PlanWimbledon’s correspondence with council officers (dated 15th June 2021)

Appendix 4– copies of public consultation results

Available online here and to be added [PlanWimbledon Consultation Responses \(merton.gov.uk\)](https://www.merton.gov.uk/planwimbledon)

Respondents who gave reasons for supporting PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum

- For the above reason. Merton Council leave a lot to be desired Could we declare UDI?
- This will allow real engagement by the community
- see above
- Although I do not live within the boundary, I am a frequent visitor for leisure & shopping and a member of an arts group based in the town centre. I support the idea of more local input in the planning process.
- Vagueness concerns although the Council needs oversight aspect that I think is envisioned in this group
- Neighborhood involvement in planning issues is to be welcomed.
- A residents forum taking initiative is welcome.
- It should give more influence to locals re their local neighbourhood
- The residents need more representation in determining the future development of Wimbledon in terms of planning decisions.
- We need such a forum
- As I am unhappy with the last 10 years of developments in Wimbledon as they have had a negative impact on the look of Wimbledon. I am also wary of further plans to increase the Wimbledon skyline which risks turning Wimbledon into a mini Croydon.
- Because there have been too many developments within Wimbledon area that do NOT improve the local area for communities. It is vital that local communities have a say (not just a chance to comment on planning proposals, that are then ignored) in what their local neighbourhood looks like and how it develops. No more increasingly ugly and high-rise buildings destroying the look and feel of an essentially Victorian town. A neighbourhood forum with PlanWimbledon would give residents a sense of agency in how their own, incredibly important, community develops, with people at the heart of decisions.
- I believe this organisation will support and take care of the values and heritage of Wimbledon as we all move forward
- Seems to fit the bill for such a group
- Local residents should be allowed to be heard about any future changes to their area.
- Because this plan had the best interests of residents and businesses alike
- I fully support the application for local residents and businesses to be involved in planning matters in keeping with the terms of the Localism Act
- Impartial and local residents are part of it.
- Yes so we have a greater say in the plans of Wimbledon as residents
- Wimbledon is a name known around the world. And also it has great value, character, heritage and meaning to local people - residents and businesses - as well as to the tens of thousands of regular visitors to SW19.
- Because the group contains people with varied interests and experience and relevant qualifications. The information I've seen tells me the group wants to work with all kinds of organisations, businesses etc in order to create the neighbourhood plan.

- It is a democratic way to move forward
- Feels like the only way to get my voice heard
- Because hopefully they will keep an eye on the proposed developments and ensure that Wimbledon is not stripped of its character and over developed as has been the case in Sutton where I lived as a child, and also Kingston and even worse Croydon which looks more like USA than UK.
- Residents voices, as well as those who use the area need a voice to express their views and a forum to raise issues/challenges as well as positive things. Merton council need more checks and balances in place, in respect of their plans and proposals and recognise the needs of those who live and work within the boundary proposed.
- As above
- This represents a means to participate and influence new development in my area. Other parties will need to take the comments of the neighbourhood forum seriously. This will mean other parties will not have total power in decision-making as at present. I would like my opinions to be formally represented through a recognised forum in relation to new development in the area in which I live.
- Wimbledon desperately needs a plan for the future; what kind of a place do we want to live? What is going to be done about the overwhelmingly hostile, polluted, noisy, and dangerous roads? How will the council take urgent action to cut traffic, create low traffic residential roads, pleasant & vibrant highstreets which can be safely accessed on foot or cycle? How will it engage with children and other marginalised groups and make the streets safe enough for children to use independently to access schools and parks? How will it restore the common and other green space to the tranquil low traffic areas they used to be?
- It is important for local residents views to be represented and experience shows that individual views are seldom heard or able to make a difference
- It is a fair way of getting local opinion on the development of Wimbledon
- So Wimbledon can plan building projects with the existing buildings in mind and not create tall high rise buildings in a modern style next to a Victorian building.
- Agree
- It will give more of a voice to specific issues in the respective area that those people either live or work
- It is community led and a credible coalition of local citizens and relevant sectors
- See above - anything that will help to hold the Council to account.
- The group is professionally run and represents a broad cross-section of Wimbledon stakeholders
- Locals input on any development would be a big help.
- The development of Wimbledon's town centre and surrounding areas needs to be done with residents in mind and meet the needs of residents in the local area.
- Good to have another voice speaking up for residents and smaller businesses
- Much of the major development to date has not been directed with a representative opinion of the residents who will be most directly affected. It is appealing for the community within the delineated boundary to be fully represented and to have a say in how development will impact the quality of their surroundings and amenities going forward.
- See above
- To be involved in the neighbourhood plans and to have our views taken into account in the future development of Wimbledon.

- It is important to have a truly independent neighbourhood forum to coordinate residents' views on buildings proposed to be built in Wimbledon town centre and to make any objections known to the Council with a united voice.
- We need representation to prevent applications and consent passing without our knowledge. This way we will be kept more informed
- As above
- We need some way to be heard.
- The marked out boundary on the map makes perfect sense as an area that can be considered as one.
- because it gives residents and businesses the opportunity to formally engage with the Council on the implementation of the Local Plan, as per the justification in their proposal
- The diverse mix of people in the group make it very representative of the neighbourhood area and thus a compelling voice for the area.
- As above
- Any Wimbledon forum that gives a voice to the community it represents, as long as that community is accurately represented, will be a force for positive change.
- Because the committee is made up of people who have long campaigned for better quality buildings in Merton. Unlike Merton council they have the best interests of Wimbledon and its residents at the heart of what they do.
- We need to be kept informed and have more say in what happens in our area.
- I think community involvement is always excellent .
- As above
- Yes
- to help ensure coherent planning for the area.
- Because we need a strong group representing the needs and wishes of local people which the Council does not at present heed.
- To bring all the disparate ideas together and provide consistent information
- Neighbourhood plans will become more important in determining planning applications if the white paper "Planning for the Future" is enacted into law
- To bring all areas of Wimbledon together for communities to create plans, giving the chance to join forces as a community, in creating the Wimbledon we want in the future.
- Yes because I think it's too cramped and no more houses should be built.
- because they support the views of local residents and businesses
- There are major proposals coming forward in respect of Wimbledon town centre which need examining. Representations should be made in respect of them and PlanWimbledon would be an appropriate body to achieve this.
- Wimbledon is a very special place. People move here, workers and companies come here BECAUSE they understand the value of a tightly knit community that values mutual respect, education, the environment and well being. These things at present do not have a distinct role in planning future Wimbledon.
- To stop over development
- It strengthens the community. Businesses and the local community do feed of each other and need each other to grow.
- Because someone needs to protect Wimbledon from people who have no taste.
- To have a thriving community there needs to be a forum to discuss what the community should do
- My friend told me about it

- Yes, the neighbourhood forum will be able to make an important contribution to planning and development in the area.
- To provide input into development plans for the area.
- Enables the residents to shape the future, encourages democracy in the planning process which seems to be lacking at present, better collaboration across the community
- As above. I support them because of the good and hard work done to consult with other local people, businesses and organisations, so it does feel truly local for Wimbledon.
- We need a politically neutral group.
- Strongly believe we need a greater localisation of planning scrutiny and design in Wimbledon.
- Enhances the ability of our local community to input into local planning and development
- Locals know best. Wimbledon is special and needs to remain so in the eyes of locals and the world alike.
- We need local people involved in planning decisions that affect our community in Wimbledon
- I'm a resident / it's the best chance for continuing to have a pleasant area
- Again important for our residency
- The area has residential plus commercial buildings , need to work together Also rather different needs from other areas in Merton
- This will give those who live and work in the area a greater say in Wimbledon's future development.
- Will bring a stronger voice for residents, businesses and community groups in neighbourhood planning
- Yes it is important local residents and businesses plan
- We need local people planning their futures in Wimbledon to be involved in planning what is there to be used and enjoyed
- See above
- This would be a helpful thing to have access to.
- We need a good neighbourhood forum
- The Committee has a wide mix of people with different areas of expertise to enable them to represent the entire area on the variety of issues that will inevitably crop up.
- So that I will be informed of all plans and proposals that affect life in my area
- We need broadest possible consultation at all levels for future neighbourhood development in Wimbledon area.
- Gives locals more voice in planning and allows us to protect green areas.
- A forum that should have a voice
- See answer to question 1.
- The development plan for Wimbledon has largely been developed to meet external pressures and is not a plan that those within Wimbledon want. Plan Wimbledon is an energetic group which will attempt to produce a development plan which meets the needs of business, residents and employees connected to the town and reconciling these with external pressures.
- Trust in the council planning approval process is at an all time low. Allegations of corruption, lack of consideration of designs fitting in with the integrity of the local area are big issues for residents.
- It is important that residents have a real say in proposed developments
- As above, I care deeply about the area that my family lives in and what happens as the decisions affect us.

- We should have a say for the future of our children and Wimbledon in general as to how it changes / grows and i understand that we have to be forward thinking. We have lost too many local shops and businesses and if we can add any value we should to keep the village more mixed otherwise it will become all restaurants and charity shops which would be a pity. The restaurants are wonderful as are the charity shops but it would be good to have smaller brands which can afford the rent and business rates? May be a business rate break for smaller brands? Only a thought?
- A voice is what is needed for lobbying and funding.
- As the PlanWimbledon's application process progressively comes to an end, I remain hopeful that common sense and good will would prevail above partisan interests and that the spirit of the Localism Act 2011 will be embraced by the London borough of Merton.
- Merton Conservatives wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon. This is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is crucially important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.

Respondents who gave reasons for partly supporting PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum

- Not including surrounding areas
- Only on the basis of altering the boundary definition
- Yes if include South Merton Park area eg Cranleigh Road
- The area is where I live and where I intend to live for the next twenty years. I would like to feel that any decisions that affect my quality of life will be properly considered in future.
- Again because I don't fully understand how much the local residents, like myself, will be represented.
- Change the boundary to include all SW19 postcodes on the southern side and I'll agree wholeheartedly.
- I'd support it if Liberty Avenue were included...
- Only if they amend the boundary as mentioned above
- Only if you extend it to more of the Merton Park Ward
- Yes in theory, I agree there should be a local voice. But what does PlanWimbledon stand for, what are its goals? There will be issues around residential development versus commercial development. What is the vision for Wimbledon Town? I am sure it is different to Wimbledon Village and how can those work together? How will the Forum be managed so that it becomes a fruitful and positive force?
- I do not want part of the council area to have more say on what happens in the borough than other parts. I am worried it becomes a not in my back yard organisation
- I would only support if it includes the whole rather than part of Merton Park. I disagree with Merton Park Residents' Association advice as set out in the documentation associated to this consultation. Dividing the ward could lead to difficult decisions. I do not want to see this happen. As an SW19 resident I identify with Wimbledon rather than Morden.
- Vagueness concerns although the Council needs oversight aspect that I think is envisioned in this group
- If this enables cohesive representation for the area with regard to upcoming plans to increase density in the area, then I think this will be a good thing. However the boundary needs to be adjusted as stated above.

- It concerns me that PW list 'Recession' and 'Climate Change Emergency' as two of it's rationales. I find these aspects overly political.
- The SW19 London postcodes of south Merton Park to Martin Way has to be included as it is an integral part of Merton Park and the whole neighbourhood belong to and have an affinity to Merton Park Ward Residents' Association. There are no ties, attachments or affiliations with Morden and the Surrey SM4 postcode.
- See above
- I'd like to know more about what is planned, it could be amazing. Also if Merton Park is left out of it I worry it will be detrimental to that area.
- If you would explain what your intentions are I may agree wholeheartedly but without a clear indication what you plan to do I cannot agree.
- There are very different requirements for Wimbledon Town compared to the surrounding areas. A large amount of the commercial real estate is not occupied by Wimbledon residents and would potentially be disenfranchised. The neighbourhood forum adds an extra layer of bureaucracy to the planning process, and LB of Merton appears to conduct it well enough at present
- For the boundary reason above. I support the idea of a neighbourhood forum more generally.
- not sure how we would use it.
- Risk it will not be representative, needs to take into account views of majority of residents not just a select few. Although I agree with holding the Council to account. Too many decisions are made without residents opinions being listened to.
- The forum members must be diverse and a reflection of the neighbourhood they represent.
- Only it includes the whole area village, town ,west Wimbledon.
- Though I have issues regarding the representativeness of the steering group
- I support this on the understanding that Merton Park southern boundary will be moved back to where it was originally, the line being drawn at the southern border of Circle Gardens SW19, which is within the one-mile radius and is the common sense boundary for Merton Park. the line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens and other parts of Merton Park within the one mile radius.

Respondents who gave reasons for not supporting PlanWimbledon's neighbourhood forum

- Feel there s sufficient representation rather than setting up a group , led by those who are opposed to Merton per se
- As above. We have councillors who represent us. Plan Wimbledon will not represent us at all
- The area they are attempting to "represent" is far too large for effective communication between all the disparate parts. Merton Park Ward is a tightly-knit community. It has a "village" atmosphere, built around long-standing institutions (schools, church, social and cultural societies...), in which there is participation from all corners of the Ward. There is very successful Residents' Association but they recognise the problems of listening to and acting on behalf of all the neighbourhood interests.
- The catchment area is too big and it appears the forum is very anti-growth and development. The average age of the consultees is too old to be looking to the future

generations. Resident Associations that have 'signed up' have not consulted the community, so this initial consultation is not representative of the local community.

- as above
- Unless you live in my neighbourhood I would argue you do not appreciate the history or atmosphere. Local issues that directly affect me would not necessarily do so to someone in another part of Wimbledon
- This looks like an unelected body over whom residents will have no control and will push their own agenda through. Most people in the area probably don't know about this and it is a highly dangerous precedent to allow such groups to gain any power of this kind
- Who are they and how and by whom were they selected?
- I do not want this group of unknown people called PlanWimbledon taking a lead on neighbourhood developments. I would prefer my elected officials to do that.
- The principal consideration is the fact that any future neighbourhood plan needs to properly comply with the “basic conditions” set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, paragraph 8 (2). The policies and guidance that are relevant include the following: The NPPF follows the provision of section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The relevant NPPF paragraphs in this case relate to: paragraphs 12 and 13 (“the planning system should be genuinely plan led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priority; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”); paragraph 16d (“contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to the development proposals”) and paragraph 16f (“serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area...”). The adopted Core Strategy 2011 establishes clear strategic policies for the regeneration and growth at Wimbledon and this priority remains within the new Merton Local Plan. The new local plan is advancing, having been subject to recent public consultation earlier this year (stage 2a consultation) and with an expected pre-submission plan anticipated for consultation during the coming months which will be examined and then formally adopted. The new local plan has been prepared to comply with strategic, new London Plan policies (as set out in the Mayor’s adopted London Plan 2021) which continues to identify Wimbledon as a Major Centre and an important opportunity area for large-scale development with significant increases in jobs and homes. The vision, key priorities and objectives for Wimbledon are therefore clearly set out in both the recently adopted London Plan and the advanced, new Merton Local Plan. In particular, draft Policy N3.6 contained within Chapter 9 of the new Merton Local Plan identifies the need for promoting Wimbledon as “South west London’s premier location for business, leisure, living and culture” in providing an “example of good quality and sustainable place making” whilst also identifying the need for “driving investment and innovation in work spaces to support the local economy and jobs in the town centre commensurate with Wimbledon’s role as a Major Centre.” It further states that the local plan will “encourage development that attracts businesses, visitors and tourism to the area all year round, including high-quality hotels, conference facilities and cultural activities” with the aim to strengthen the position of Wimbledon as a Major Centre in south London through the redevelopment of identified key sites. The Victoria Crescent site, known as Site Wi11 represents an important, strategic allocation for a mix of town centre uses through comprehensive redevelopment. The new Merton Local Plan when adopted later this year alongside the new London Plan will form the up-to-date statutory planning policy framework for future decisions on applications across the town centre. Further, there exists “Future Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document” recently adopted in November 2020 which outlines all such priorities for Wimbledon town centre in relation

to achieving: design quality, public realm, urban greening and sustainability, improving High Street vitality (post-Covid recovery) whilst also considering long-term ambitions. These priorities are also embedded in draft planning policy to ensure consistency. The adopted town centre SPD has been subject to design and technical evidence and whilst F&C and their advisors have made past representations on it during the consultation process (in relation to inclusion of site Wi11 within the tall buildings cluster given its significance amongst other considerations), it is acknowledged that the SPD will act as guidance to the new Local Plan. The SPD document therefore incorporates guidance on alternative land-use allocation and distribution and other such development parameters particularly in relation to allocated sites having considered some of the constraints and opportunities across the town centre as a whole. The SPD therefore provides the next level of detail in terms of how strategic, identified sites might come forward which has been subject to stakeholder consultation and engagement. This planning policy framework is therefore considered more than adequate in providing the required policy and planning guidance in shaping the regeneration of the town centre and its strategic development sites. The introduction of a neighbourhood plan would result in unnecessary duplication of policy which would need to repeat policy objectives set out in the new local plan and adopted SPD (given it will need to be in compliance) – in turn, questioning at the outset its role and purpose. Such duplication would not meet the “basic conditions” for preparing a neighbourhood plan. Indeed, it would result in an additional layer of statutory plan policy which would create uncertainty in application decision-making given the planning policy framework which will be in place for that very purpose. Again, this would not meet the “basic conditions” tests. More specifically, within Plan Wimbledon’s application (updated April 2021) at paragraph 5.4.2, it is stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing the uncertainty about the future direction of the economy particularly for High Street retailers, hospitality venues and offices as people adapt to different ways of shopping, working and socialising. There is certainly an element of repurposing town centres in adapting to new retail environments. However, the adopted SPD (and the new local plan) already recognise this and it is not considered that preparing a neighbourhood plan will create any further certainty; in fact, the opposite. Indeed, it is now (post-pandemic recovery) when absolute planning certainty is required through adopted policy and guidance in determining strategic development schemes in the short to medium term. Another layer of plan making will only add to planning uncertainty and potentially delay the decision making process for such schemes to the detriment of much needed, town centre regeneration to assist short term economic recovery.

- As above
- I believe we already have elected MP’s and councillors who are representative and accountable, along with credible residents associations and conservation society which represent their residents interests. I am concerned that this new self-appointed group dilutes democracy; is open to entryism from those with their own issues and agenda’s; and may therefore be less representative of the people of Wimbledon in general and Merton Park in particular.
- I do not think these things should be delegated to pressure groups
- See above,
- It's not a democratically elected body.
- No, they should be produced for specific areas including the town centre. I understand others have expressed an interest to produce neighbourhood plans.
- The impact of decisions within the proposed boundary potentially have impacts beyond that impact area. There can be knock on effects beyond the proposed boundary. The effect of decisions and change within the proposed neighbourhood area can created a

disadvantaged hinterland that is less prosperous, less safe, less desirable than it is now. In addition a group of self interested with a limited view of what's best for the wider area should not be in a position to make decisions that affect others. Democratically elected representatives should make decisions that takes into account the interests of the whole community. Principles of fairness, equalities and non- discrimination are highly likely to be ignored. A group of non- elected, non-representative people should not determine the lives/ fate of the wider community. I don't believe this group will be looking at the long term future of the area, and are not sufficiently qualified or accountable to the public. Who scrutinises these plans and why sho7ld I not have the freedom to influence plans for m6 town centre as I do now? No, that is undemocratic.

- Never heard of them. Suspect its another attempt by Merton Council to establish a supposedly representative body to push their climate emergency/cycle campaigning ideology e.g. Merton Residents Transport group which doesnt allow Merton Residents to join and whose definition of Transport starts & ends with a pushbike.
- I think it will be a bunch of Nimbys and will exclude vulnerable and disadvantaged voices.
- It is too large and driven by a background with a residential focus.
- See previous answer
- See answer to 1. Above
- Not either the current border. Need to include all of Merton Park.
- For the reasons above and also I don't think businesses are adequately catered for in the proposal as it stands
- Its simple not required . The current system is democratic and small communities can better represent their concerns in respect of inappropriate planning within their community without being bound by predetermined criteria of such a group. In addition to be stuck with with such a group for a five year period is totally inappropriate.
- Often the public does not understand planning, good design and will vote based on personal preferences rather than the good of the overall community. The people on PlanWimbledon are self appointed are not voted in. It will make the process more cumbersome.
- We do not wish to be labeled Morden
- Because the suggested designated area is too big imo.
- Area is too large with different priorities
- I prefer my area to be run by elected representatives.
- Although they have leafeted my home (in the neighbourhood area they seek) the leaflet asked for positive vote for them, without any invitation to join or without any information about how to join. This makes it look exclusive.
- No unelected body should have a legally binding say in planning decisions.
- Please see my reply to Q1.
- The current neighbourhood groups have shown themselves to be strongly against change and progress. They seem to prefer to see the area ossify is its current state or to chase costly elitist project that will benefit few.
- As above
- No and it should be stopped. It is too big and trying to do too much. Merton as the statutory planning body leads and facilitates. I would be interested in supporting a series of smaller project areas "neighbourhoods" in areas of opportunity/issues. If we are in the era of 15minute cities, why do Plan Wimbledon want to seemingly control and influence such a large and critical part of Merton? For example Love WImbledon as the BID are the group to articulate issues and opportunities in Wimbledon Town Centre
- Same reason as above

- Too political

Respondents who gave reasons for supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- A manageable area for local interest groups
- Because the area makes sense geographically
- Because I think it's a good idea to have a proper plan that includes people that leave in the area opinion. Instead of politician deciding without any consideration or common sens except political view and personal retribution
- It appears to encapsulate the area of Wimbledon.
- I have been living in Wimbledon for the last 20 years, it is my home town. I care about the future of Wimbledon.
- I love Wimbledon, especially Merton Park, where I live and my home is included in the area.
- Offer greater protection and influence for the local community
- Because we need to protect the conservation areas and stop partisan planning committees. We need to stop overdevelopment and the taking away of flats!
- Contains most important areas
- We need to preserve the few good things we have. Merton is over crowded as it is.
- It is an area of Merton distinct from the others and has different needs
- This is the area that needs the most support and control.
- Because the voices and opinions of our local community should be heard in future.
- Important for local community representatives to have a say in shaping the future of Wimbledon and local area within a 1mile radius.
- To protect the interests of local residents.
- Yes
- Appropriate
- It puts Wimbledon town at the centre; it embraces the three Wimbledon tube stops; it recognises 'natural' boundaries.
- Good to see locals having a say
- To keep Wimbledon town centre as as local an attractive and unique. Not overdeveloped high rise which in turn becomes one massive wind tunnel of high rise buildings without character or care for the area or local residents. There is no need to turn Wimbledon into a Hub like Croydon, which has become large high rise for office space, in which people travel to and from work, but the residential is lost for the sake of so called faceless business.
- It appears to be an appropriate delineation of an area of common interest
- I agree
- Includes the wider areas of Wimbledon which is good
- A genuine effort has been made to develop a sensitive and comprehensive Plan designed to sustain a distinctive locality.
- It's important to involve everyone in the community
- Empowers the local community
- A sensible boundary comprising the core areas of Wimbledon, including those of historic interest
- Exist arrangements ineffective.

- Keeps it local.
- It encompasses the neighbourhood of Wimbledon
- Good thing
- It captures how people relate to the different parts of Wimbledon. The only questionable aspect is leaving out the Wimbledon Park grid.
- Having a 'real' input into the future of the proposed NAB is a vital, democratic and important step in having an active chance to influence any alterations and alleged 'improvements' in the proposed NAB, imposed by Local Government's draconian and undemocratic current procedures. The lack of proper and considered consultations (and the right of a veto), subverts the wishes of those who live and work in the designated area. With the distance between elections, the voice of the electors must be heard and considered.
- It includes not just the town centre but the surrounding area to some extent.
- something needs to be done with Wimbledon or the planner will go wild and raise the 'character' of the place to the ground and replace it with blocks of glass tower blocks. The more rented accommodation there is, the less likelihood the occupants are going to take an interest in the place if they know they're not going to be there very long. Do we need any more offices? There seems to be plenty lying empty at the moment.
- It is good to encompass the whole of Wimbledon Village AND town in one neighbourhood plan and to bring so many interested parties together. I would have preferred Wimbledon Park, or at least the AELTC part of it, to have been included within the boundary, but understand that Plan Wimbledon and the constituent residents' associations interested in the AELTC proposals are already in active dialogue, so for now its omission can be accepted. In the longer term it should be included.
- The area is where I live and where I intend to live for the next twenty years. Anything happening within a mile of where I live is likely to affect my quality of life.
- Merton is a large borough that encompasses too wide an area that we feel doesn't really focus on the individual towns' needs and wants. Having lived here for 14 years, we want to focus on a positive re-emergence of the town and village after the pandemic and regain the community feel, the great shops and be part of local planning rules that affect this area.
- It sounds like a good idea.
- It important to have a shared understanding of boundaries
- Covers the vast majority of a natural community area within Merton, served largely by the same transport, infrastructure and business/shopping services.
- Yes, as it covers the SW19 postcode and what is generally known as Wimbledon proper.
- I like to know all the news of the area, so I think it's a great idea.
- It's a unique area, famous around the world, & needs protecting.
- It defines Wimbledon town and residential areas connected
- To help develop services and planning for the Wimbledon area to help residents and businesses
- Wimbledon is a distinct community and it often feels as if it is smothered within the much bigger Merton borough council.
- The boundary is large which will enable the group to have "clout" and deal properly with issues from pollution to planning and beyond.
- It covers all the parts of the neighbourhood I consider to be Wimbledon from the centre to the boundary
- Good for residents
- Very difficult to decide where the boundary should be but this seems a practical solution to the question "Where do you live?". Further South, if the answer comes back "Wimbledon" that is wishful thinking.

- Don't actually know what the boundary is!
- Wherever the boundaries are drawn someone somewhere will be left out and probably upset. A decision has to be made at some stage otherwise this group won't be able to get off the ground.
- It represents a coherent area.
- It encompasses the people who see themselves as Wimbledonians.
- I think that it is important for local people to have a coordinated input into the determination of planning policies. This group is well organised, seems to cover a broad spectrum and is good at keeping people informed.
- To take care of our local environment and protect it against any adverse construction etc
- This represents the area that I see as Wimbledon
- good idea and fair
- Residents have a right to be involved in the planning of their neighbourhood!
- I believe this to be an appropriate boundary and represents what I consider to be Wimbledon
- I've been living in Wimbledon for more than 12 years now and the sense of community across the proposed area is very strong
- Because I believe it's best for Wimbledon.
- The areas that encompass the boundary include a diversity of places and uses that combine to create the interesting mixture that makes the area a neighbourhood we should be proud of.
- I would welcome a forum to keep us updated and fully aware of proposed planning developments as we do have to protect the over development of Wimbledon and preserve and protect the residential areas many of which are close to the town centre
- It covers the central areas of Wimbledon - town and village - and the adjacent areas. Thus it covers the area where people live and work and use local services, shops and entertainment.
- Have to start (and stop) somewhere!
- Yes as it is a natural hub for Wimbledon
- The line has to be drawn somewhere in Merton Park and I think using the John Innes Conservation area boundary as you have done is a sensible approach. I wouldn't object to pushing a little further, as far as Circle Gardens.
- E
- People must say something about the area where they live
- It makes sense
- Its a great idea to have a formal means to represent the people who reside in the area
- Area represents what I consider a of Wimbledon
- Having been a resident in Wimbledon for over 37 years, I am saddened at how we have been treated. Developers are moving in and the lovely town I fell in love with all those years ago is almost gone. I think it is important that the people who live here should have a more active role and a say in how our neighbourhood is run.
- It seems to include an area that most people identify as Wimbledon.
- I think it's a good first step and I hope that going forward the boundary will be extended
- The right area
- I support the ideas put forward.
- They look right

- This area needs a forum independent from the Council's planners as the voices of residents in this area are very often ignored and valid objections are overridden for party political reasons. Residents of all political views have a right to independent support. and advise
- It's good
- Encompasses the key areas which make up Wimbledon
- Better control
- Important to look after the area carefully and properly for the residents and businesses
- As rate payers it is good to consult residents
- Wimbledon is a thriving town but it could be an even better and more attractive place to live and work with the right planning and foresight. A proper plan would also ensure it retains its current individual character.
- As a small independent business we feel it is important to understand and know about the development of the local area.
- Because it clearly needs it
- To enable us to have a voice
- I live within the designated area and want to have a say on future developments
- It's about time the residents and not the developers and their "friends" in the council who have for years totally ignored and illegally at times breached planning rules and regulations to drive through their own plans against the will of the community.
- Covers all the historic area of Wimbledon, not just the more affluent parts
- We do need a separate residents voice for Wimbledon which is an unique entity. At present decisions concerning civic issues are made by majority of councillors who do not live here.
- Significant part of the borough so good representation of residents interests living close to town centre.
- It will enable planning to take account of local area and its needs
- It encompasses Wimbledon only and not other centres such as Raynes Park
- While not au fait with the technical side of the proposals, I understand the Friends of Wimb Town Centre support the proposals and as a member I do too.
- Useful to gauge local views.
- It's important to keep any development within the style or character of its immediate area.
- Because we need to make sure the council agenda is based on the environment rather than profit.
- It makes sense
- Although it was noted that Chase Side Ave and Oxford Ave will form part of the new "Raynes Park" constituency. This was mostly a result of a request from Apostles Residents Association to join Raynes Park and the position within the existing polling district. Since the two roads are not part of The Apostles and not eligible to join Apostles Residents Association. The Apostles Association does include high traffic Kingston Rd among its area of influence so the proposed western extent of the Plan Wimbledon boundary seems sensible.
- Important for local issues to be about a local area not a whole borough which has huge diversity across it.
- I really feel strongly that meton council do a poor job in regulating home owners building standards (materials used, designs etc) Even in conservations areas such as south park gardens. i would really love to help support this. Also dog fouling is an increasing problem on our pavements.
- As town centre plans impact on residential and vice versa
- The local community is what makes Wimbledon so special. Local stakeholders' views need to be respected, and this is a fair way to allow local views to be heard.

- Inside this boundary there is a good mix of the people and organisations who make up Wimbledon.
- I agree. It is the most appropriate area. Why doesn't it include the Causeway too?
- Because I would want whatever developments in mind would not affect the quality of life currently enjoyed by the residents living in Wimbledon town
- Because residents need a say, not just commerce and business
- The creation of a neighbourhood plan offers the prospect of real local influence over the future development of the town centre. It's very important that local residents are involved in all plans for the future of their area.
- The boundary area covered includes my home area where I spend the vast majority of my time. The area covered centres on Wimbledon town centre which is a locally significant and well-known location. I identify with this area and the surrounding mile radius.
- It offers a coherent coverage of the whole Wimbledon area, providing a platform for all sectors of the community to come together to produce a truly democratic neighbourhood plan for the benefit of all.
- It encompasses the heart of Wimbledon but leaves autonomy to other surrounding areas to develop their own criteria and priorities
- It covers the important area
- It is interested in the particular needs of the area it will cover. Their purpose is clear and important for me. I think it balances the needs of residents, green spaces, the arts and business
- Agree
- Feel there will be more awareness to the general public in the area, not just those that have become members
- It would be good to have a more resident driven approach to planning, greening and cleaning Wimbledon. We currently have a planning department that pays lip service listen to residents' reasonable arguments and a Council that lacks vision and refuses to enforce the Veolia street cleaning and refuse / litter contract meaning that Merton's streets are a disgrace and an health hazard.
- Because it makes logical sense and is clearly defined.
- Local framework would help to improve Wimbledon.
- I am resident in this area (Lake Road)
- Because I think it makes sense
- i am fully into my neighborhood
- It is comprehensive in covering key areas of expansion and development that impact on each other in forming the locality and brings together the number of different communities living in each locality.
- Wimbledon needs a Wimbledon- focussed plan because of its historical identity.
- Because community interaction is vital
- Despite not living in within the boundary of the proposed neighbourhood area I feel it is important for all residents of Merton to have a say on how the centre of Wimbledon will look; some of the high rise buildings proposed to be built behind Wimbledon station will be very obtrusive and dominate the otherwise pleasantly low skyline. It would be sad for Wimbledon to end up looking like Croydon with its soulless tower blocks.
- To be safe
- It is important to have a say in how Wimbledon is developed as a locally resident
- To protect the residents from over development
- Seems like a pretty comprehensive covering of the area that I would refer to as Wimbledon!

- Residents need a voice in development and town planning, particularly as the Council seem to want more high-rise buildings in a low-rise neighbourhood. We need to monitor the density new building and of the population in Wimbledon.
- because it includes those areas of Merton that might be considered Wimbledon, as per the justification in their proposal
- The thorough research carried out by the group has resulted in them proposing the most sensible, representative boundary for the Wimbledon neighbourhood.
- To protect and promote local interests and needs
- The boundary appears to have been well considered and devised in conjunction with relevant groups. It seems to accurately reflect the "Wimbledon" area
- Because it's inclusive
- Too many bad decisions affecting my area being made without public knowledge or outcry being ignored.
- It corresponds to my view of Wimbledon. I do wish that the commons were included, particularly the windmill, but I understand the reason for exclusion.
- I think it is important for local people to be involved in plans that effect Their areas
- Because I do
- W
- Because we need a strong group representing the needs and wishes of local people which the Council does not at present heed.
- As far as it affects Merton Park Ward, the adoption of the boundary of the John Innes (Merton Park) Conservation Area for Plan Wimbledon makes sense as an extant, familiar boundary
- Wimbledon is a remarkable locale in so many ways. It needs a coherent voice.
- Because I don't want small business to be demolished and instead more flats being built.
- The boundary is a sensible distance from the Old Town Hall which together with the station can be regarded as the centre of Wimbledon.
- Wimbledon people's voices need to be heard
- I fall within this boundary and it fits with what I consider my locale.
- I do think it represents the centre of Wimbledon including both businesses and residents. It encompasses the 20 minute guidance what the council considers to be local.
- There has to be a designated area. The area proposed seems a good one
- My friend told me about it
- The boundary has been selected with great care and intensive consultation, especially around the edges of the area.
- The area appropriately encompasses the region identifiable as "Wimbledon", focussed on the town centre.
- Provides good coverage of the area I consider to be Wimbledon
- Even though it is a large area, it is difficult to draw narrower natural boundaries
- As I'm a longtime resident of central Wimbledon (Trinity Ward) it makes sense to me, and the PlanWimbledon team have obviously done a lot of work to ensure full consultation.
- It is an accurate definition of the area.
- Fairly reflects the extent of Wimbledon as a zone
- It is a natural area as Wimbledon and a lot of research has gone into defining the precise boundaries
- Better involves our neighbourhood in decision making process
- There appears to be extensive consultation among a varied groups to decide upon the area boundary

- It is the area considered to be Wimbledon
- I'm a resident and it's important for me and my family
- This plan will represent the area everyone lives and works in Wimbledon.
- Has been widely consulted on
- Yes
- Wimbledon is a specific place with a specific demographic and need. It needs to be treated as it's own entity. If supermarkets can profile areas to stock the right food and provisions that will sell in an area, why can't government?
- Defines Wimbledon rather than the amorphous Merton
- It represents my local area.
- Widely thought to be best
- Looks good and will help support the needs of the local community
- S
- The Plan Wimbledon committee have a myriad of skillsets and have consulted very widely on the area boundary. The boundary as drawn makes total sense and includes both Wimbledon Town Centre and Village with all the areas in-between so gives a real sense of the whole community.
- It is important to have a well thought out plan with restrictions so that we always have a sensitive and sustainable area
- so that local people have a say in their future
- Include the voices of people who live in the area more directly in our future
- Includes relevant neighbourhoods.
- Realistically drawn
- Because I believe in the good of Wimbledon
- Includes my residence and business.
- See written submission
- Its good for the longevity of the community.
- Its a coherent area decided by consultation with residents affected.
- Because I care about what happens in the neighbourhood that my family lives in.
- The village and Wimbledon and areas should be involved to be inclusive of all of Wimbledon.
- It seems to be a structured way to reach urbanisation goals over the decades to come.
- I want Wimbledon to be a beautiful fun and supportive place for my daughter as she grows.
- I would like to herewith wholeheartedly second the representation letter from PlanWimbledon by reference and incorporation
- Merton Conservatives wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon. This is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is crucially important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.

Respondents who gave reasons for partly supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- I live in Wimbledon Park, which is included in the boundary, but after reading on Nextdoor that residents of Merton Park are unhappy to be split I cannot agree fully as I don't know the full situation.

- Extend to include more of Merton Park
- It should include all of Merton park or none of Merton park. All or nothing.
- I am concerned that the wider the neighbourhood area boundary the more dilute and generic the policies within it must become - exactly the opposite of a neighbourhood plan, and the problem with the existing Core Strategy/Local Plan
- It should be extended to include all those part of SW19 e.g. drawing a false line through Merton Park or other areas will create confusion and lack of clarity. It neither fits the current definition of Wimbledon or creates a satisfactory alternative.
- I don't fully understand the election process for the plan wimbledon team and how much local residents feelings will be represented.
- I think SW20 (West Wimbledon) should also be included.
- Would prefer Wimbledon Park to be included in the area as it is our local park.
- I live in Merton Park and would regard myself as a Wimbledon resident. I shop/eat/drink in Wimbledon centre and village, my daughter goes to school in Wimbledon, my husband works within the proposed area and we regularly use Wimbledon Common so don't support the exclusion of Merton Park.
- Seems fairly arbitrary in the Merton Park area
- I would like to have seen it more central to Wimbledon town to protect it from overdevelopment from the master plan including the sale of Centre court and future crossrail2 development
- On the surface it seems fine, although perhaps that is difficult to say, until the neighbourhood starts to discuss and interact, only then will issues of boundary become apparent.
- Why not just follow the constituency boundary. There is a lot of confusion between parliamentary boundaries & Merton council neighbourhoods. A lot of the east of the proposed boundary is part of Merton Council's Colliers Wood neighbourhood despite having no connection with Colliers Wood
- In view of the AELTC now owning the Wimbledon Golf Club land and their recent planning application and what will no doubt end up being 'a site of development' I believe that area should be included.
- I think the coherent entity of "Wimbledon" extends for gger wet state than Lower Downs Rd, eg it would include Arterberry Rd, but not beyond Haydons Rd to the East
- Not sure that calling it Plan Wimbledon is appropriate when it will not include the whole borough and seems to concentrate only on the central town centre.
- Southern boundary should not impinge on existing Merton Park residential area south of Kingston Road but can include Nelson Hospital shopping parade.
- Concept I support but the aim and methods are too vague
- While living just outside the proposed boundary, my family regards Wimbledon (rather than Morden) as our local centre shopping and leisure,so have a vested interest in how the area evolves. (My childrens' former secondary school also falls within the boundary.) I realise the boundary has to be drawn somewhere but am concerned that it may exclude some residents/businesses that have a natural affinity with Wimbledon rather than Raynes Park, Merton Park or Morden.
- Use Durnsford Road as a boundary, ie. do not extend into Somerstown or Earlsfield.
- I think the boundary should include Wimbledon Chase and lower downs, Kingston rd
- I think it is too big - the town and the village are quite different
- I think the lower boundary should be Kenley Road (Mostyn to Circle Gardens) as this is within the 20 minute walk that they state is their guide for the area.

- I don't understand why both Wimbledon common and park are not included in the boundary. I do see that photos of both of these places are used in the website. I also think the path along the wandle between gap road and Earlsfield should be included as it is now in constant use since lockdown. I think now that people from Wimbledon have been using it so much this will continue.
- I don't fully understand the brief
- Would prefer West Wimbledon to be included
- I think it should extend a bit further south in Merton park to take account of the John Innes area of benefit.
- I believe Wimbledon Park should be included within the plan, particularly given the plans from AELTC for development.
- You appear to omit the whole of Wimbledon Park which I realise could be difficult to include because of joint responsibility between Wandsworth and Merton councils, but it needs protecting.
- I don't understand what this boundary is going to mean for our area. Are you wanting to protect all the green spaces & trees or what is the reason for creating such a boundary?
- The proposed area is unusually large in terms of population.
- Area needs to be extended further toward Morden to include other areas of Merton Park
- why are the houses around the common and the common itself not included? the common is a key asset for Wimbledon.
- Concerned about how this leaves other areas like Colliers Wood, who are less able to out together a plan themselves.
- I see you are including Merton Cricket Club which is on Aylward Road/Cannon Hill Lane and I fail to see why Aylward Road is never contacted or considered to be included in any decisions.
- I would want the boundary to be extended to the junction of the Ridgeway and Cottenham Park Road and down to Worple Road via Pepys Road
- We live in Merton Park but outside the edge of the conservation area, which we understand is the limit to the Plan's boundary. Why is it not the postcode area, SW19, which would then include us?
- The only part I would question is the Southfields grid area running South from Revelstoke Road to Wimbledon Park tube and East towards Earlsfield. To me, these would have more in common with The Grid or Earlsfield and might be better catered for by a different group.
- confused as to it's power.
- I would like Arterberry Road included in this area.
- Arbitrary cut off between Morden and Wimbledon along Dorset road, including more expensive houses on one side and excluding those on the opposite side - both equally close to the town hall
- Seems like a logical place to draw a southern boundary line, taking into account the official John Innes Conservation area (rather than the much larger and vaguer John Innes 'area of benefit', which extends into Morden). However, it could be made smaller by just cutting off at the Kingston Road as the lower boundary.
- I support this on the understanding that Merton Park southern boundary will be moved back to where it was originally, the line being drawn at the southern border of Circle Gardens SW19, which is within the one-mile radius and is the common sense boundary for Merton Park. the line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens and other parts of Merton Park within the one mile radius.

- Paraphrase: change boundary to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road, north of Circle Gardens

Respondents who gave reasons for not supporting PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area

- Include colliers wood
- It should include all of Merton park or none of Merton park. All or nothing.
- Merton park should be fully included rather than split down the middle. A logical boundary to the south would be Erridge Road.
- What skills do these people have to decide on planning matters . This is a self elected lobby group. We have elected bodies to do this .
- Cuts my area in two
- We live immediately outside the area, actually touching the boundary. Our primary focus is Wimbledon and it seems our voice will be ignored.
- What they are proposing is not a natural, socially-cohesive neighbourhood or community. Wimbledon is comprised of many different neighbourhoods and overlapping communities, each with identifiable characteristics and organisations around and through which the life and essence of that area is played-out. I live in Merton Park - the LBM Merton Park Ward constitutes much of the local community; not all of it but ,most of it. It DOES constitute a LOCAL neighbourhood. An arbitrary line on a map should not claim to encompass one living, breathing neighbourhood.
- Does not include South Merton Park area to Martin Way
- I understand that the idea of having a Wimbledon area was to assist with people identifying with their local area. The postcode for Wimbledon is SW19, also made famous worldwide by the Tennis Championship. I disagree most strongly with the recommendation of MPWRA that the ward should be cut in half and that some SW19 postcodes are within the area boundary, and others are not. The Merton Park sub area should not be split in two as this doing so would destroy the unique character of the area, modeled as it is on other garden suburbs in London. If all of Merton Park's SW19 postcodes cannot be incorporated into the new plan boundaries, they should all be excluded.
- Too big not focused on residential areas
- I live on Erridge Road SW19, closer to Dorset Road. The Merton Park Ward Residents Association are a bunch of snobs who only serve themselves. Requesting that the boundary be drawn along the John Innes Conservation area, as "this formed a natural line between Wimbledon and Morden" is both a complete lie and throws me and other neighbours into some horrible no-man's land. Please include ALL the SW19 postcodes and ignore whichever halfwit suggested that ridiculous boundary. P.s. love the proposal though just please change the boundary to include my house!
- I think SW20 (West Wimbledon) should also be included.
- We have enough planning red tape. Residents need to have commercial spaces in this boundary and we need businesses locally to employ residents and our young adults. This forum does not appear to represent the commercial sector, businesses or commercial property owners.
- No idea who these self appointed folk are, nor what they intend to do.

- No prior knowledge of this, not have previously been consulted. Would not wish Arterberry Road, SW20, excluded from any such newly privileged area.
- the area I have chosen to live in is unique and as such I invest time and energy in being involved in community groups that directly enhance this area. I would not be as involved in a larger area
- It needs to include Raynes Park and Cottenham Park or at least the part north of the A298. The current south west boundary is too restricted.
- Please include Liberty Avenue, as it's in SW19 too!
- I do not think unelected groups should be given any official recognition
- It shouldn't cut Merton Park Ward in half - boundary should be extended to include the whole ward
- I have lived in Wimbledon for the last 42 years yet I have never heard of this group and I do not know on what basis they think they represent my neighbourhood. They do not represent me.
- These representations do not object outright to Plan Wimbledon being a designated forum for proceeding with a neighbourhood plan for the wider area; however, the inclusion of Wimbledon town centre within the designated application is subject to objection. F&C Commercial Property Holdings Limited (as advised by BMO Real Estate Partners, as asset managers and Stanhope Plc as development consultants) own Site Wi11 known as Victoria Crescent/Piazza, 39–59 The Broadway, 1–11 Victoria Crescent/Piazza, Wimbledon. The extent of the proposed neighbourhood area is not reflective of a “neighbourhood” but instead it includes many different neighbourhoods of a very extensive catchment. It would be difficult to understand how the neighbourhood plan would encompass focused, concise and detailed policies in achieving the economic growth objectives for Wimbledon as a Major Centre whilst also trying to achieve other different regeneration objectives for residential sub-areas of the identified catchment.
- I live in the Merton Park Ward but outside the planned area. I don't feel I live in Morden (I live on the boundary with John Innes Park) but I do identify with living in Wimbledon, where I can walk to, shop and socialise.
- This seems to be an anti development group with a political agenda
- Unclear why it divides Merton Park
- It seems to cut Merton Park in half
- There is great need to simplify, rather than complicate further the U.K. town planning system.
- It's an arbitrary line drawn up by a few individuals on no clear basis, which would have the effect of excluding a large number of households of people who have always regarded themselves as residents of Wimbledon.
- We have lived in Cranleigh Road for 46 years and feel very much part of Wimbledon/Merton Park Community. Therefore, we would like the boundary to include as much of South Merton Park as possible.
- The proposed area is far too large to address the many different characteristics that exist in parts of Wimbledon.
- South Wimbledon MUST be included
- Mitcham and Colliers Woods should not be included in Wimbledon
- The impact of decisions within the proposed boundary potentially have impacts beyond that impact area. There can be knock on effects beyond the proposed boundary. The effect of decisions and change within the proposed neighbourhood area can create a disadvantaged hinterland that is less prosperous, less safe, less desirable than it is now.
- not large enough and includes all the wealth parts of the neighbourhood

- It excludes parts of Merton Park. The ward should not be divided.
- Because it cuts half way through Wimbledon chase area. Should incorporate end of Worple Rd and to Martin Way.
- Too large and covers a diverse area of residential, retail and office which each have their own needs.
- Should include Wimbledon Park and WPGC which is about to be destroyed by AELTC proposals
- Merton Park is already a well defined residential area with its own residents association and councillors. The Plan Wimbledon boundary splits Merton Park into two. This would make it more difficult for MPWRA to continue to represent the area as a whole. In my view the whole of Merton Park should either be included or excluded from the Plan Wimbledon area, and not split along the John Innes conservation area boundary.
- Many residents have no knowledge of this group. Despite being very active re planning via the OneMerton organisation.
- The JI conservation area runs to the west of the gardens of Poplar Road AND NOT just to the west of the house!! So the gardens of 1 - 33 are not in the conservation area. Please change you map to line up with the map of the Merton Council website https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/0177_john_innes_merton_park_map.pdf
- May not include neighbouring borough residents/businesses who could be impacted by decisions and discussions
- You are putting a border through the centre of Merton Park which is very divisive as this is quite a tight knit area.
- It should include all of Merton Park if the counsellors are on the committee then they need to represent ball of Merton Park, not just bits of it.
- I feel the suggested boundary is to large and covers a number of neighbourhood's which would make it to complex and potentially fail to meet the need of any neighbourhood
- I don't trust Merton council at all
- sw20 0dh - why not included?
- it is too large to meaningfully represent individual areas and their interests . It has no policy for conservation areas one of Wimbledon's greatest assets . Its intentions and objectives are not properly thought out ,lack clarity and contain with meaningless statements . it appears, despite its claims, to be a lobbying group for those that pay its expenses . It attracts business who see it as a way to exert influence on the current system for their personal benefit
- Merton Park will be divided into two.
- Too big to be impactful or meaningful as a neighbourhood forum.
- Because it seems to separate out a small section of Merton Park to be included. As a Merton Park resident I do consider myself part of Wimbledon. I think the shoe of Merton Park should be included, or the whole of Merton Park should be excluded, enabling Merton Park to create their own plan.
- I don't vote to then have a separate group decide what happens in my area.
- Creating another boundary within Merton not really necessary.
- These are very disparate areas with very different concerns. The area selected looks too varied to be representative yet too small to be strategic.
- The boundary is irrelevant as I cannot support PlanWimbledon having a legally binding vote.
- I believe that the area is simply too big and too diverse for it to be possible to reach any meaningful consensus on the Neighbourhood Plan and it is quite possible that the approval of Plan Wimbledon as a Neighborhood Forum for the area that has been

included will in fact be an impediment to the essential ongoing development of the CBD and the investment required to provide a vibrant hub particularly for business. The CBD should be excluded from the proposed area. Plan Wimbledon has not demonstrated any vision for the development of the CBD, have not engaged meaningfully with the business community and have launched this consultation at a very difficult time for business in the Town Center as they seek to re-open after an extended period of lockdown. Extensive consultation has already been undertaken by Merton Council leading to the publication of the Masterplan and Plan Wimbledon have not given any indication as to their view on the Masterplan and subsequent SPD. Most importantly the constitution of Plan Wimbledon does not provide for meaningful and proportionate representation for businesses in its decision making and is therefore not the right forum to propose a Neighbourhood plan that includes the CBD.

- Don't know who they are or what they represent - have they been elected - if so who by?
- This is a large, diverse area. I'm not sure that such a big range should be covered by a single neighbourhood forum. I would think that smaller groups would be closer to the local issues of each area and better able to suggest plans for those areas.
- This is just more bureaucracy in Local Government
- The proposed area is too big. Totally inappropriate. There should be a series of "neighbourhoods". As BID's, Town Centre Management and other area based vehicles have shown, have a manageable area of focus to work on. Key policies then around bringing people together on 1) improvement & development, 2) Brand & Marketing, 3) Management.
- Too far south in Merton Park and towards Wimb Park also which have their own distinct areas
- I don't believe the neighbours of Wimbledon are qualified or reliable to have this amount of power and will stop Wimbledon's progression
- Waste of money which could be spent elsewhere in Merton
- It leaves too many small areas. You say you have consulted with various groups but I don't think they've consulted their members. I belong to RAWW and members have not been asked.

Q1. Do you support PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area boundary? *Yes, but with the vital exception detailed below*

Q2. Do you support PlanWimbledon's application to become a neighbourhood forum for that area? *YES, with the small additional area detailed below*

I support this on the understanding that the Merton Park southern boundary will be moved back to where it was originally, the line being drawn at the southern border of Circle Gardens SW19, which is within the one-mile radius and is the common sense boundary for Merton Park.

The line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens, and other parts of Merton Park within the one-mile radius

Connected to Survey Response 12586927425

I believe we already have elected MP's and councillors who are representative and accountable, along with established residents associations and conservation society which credibly represent their residents interests. I am concerned that this new self-appointed group dilutes democracy; is open to entryism from those with their own issues and agenda's; and may therefore be less representative of the people of Wimbledon in general and Merton Park in particular.

Kindest Regards

I would like to herewith vote in my personal capacity to PlanWimbledon's designation consultation as follows:

Question 1. Do you support PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area boundary? I VOTE YES

Question 2. Do you support PlanWimbledon's application to become a neighbourhood forum for that area? I VOTE YES

As the consultation provides for free-text comments:

1. I would like to herewith wholeheartedly second the representation letter from PlanWimbledon by reference and incorporation.

2. As the PlanWimbledon's application process progressively comes to an end, I remain hopeful that common sense and good will would prevail above partisan interests and that the spirit of the Localism Act 2011 will be embraced by the London Borough of Merton.

The advice of the Merton Park Ward Independent Residents' Party – aka the Merton Park Ward Residents' Association - and the John Innes Society (two organisations whose management committees overlap) may, in my opinion, have been tainted by politics.

My understanding from a meeting convened by PlanWimbledon is that the discussions about the boundary for PlanWimbledon coincided with a fight to retain three seats for the above political party when the Boundary Commission wanted to reduce the size of the ward and the number of Council seats to two. It makes sense that it was politically expedient to showcase the significance of the Conservation Areas north and south of the Kingston Road. The boundary of the Conservation Area was thus given undue emphasis.

In actual fact, people living north of Circle Gardens see Wimbledon as their Town Centre whether they are wealthy enough to live in the Conservation Area or not. It is as easy – and far more pleasant – for us to walk or cycle into Wimbledon as it is to Morden, and we choose Wimbledon. If you ask anyone living north of Circle Gardens where they go to the library, hairdresser, gym, food shops, restaurants, take-aways, pubs, clubs, entertainments and the rest, they will say they go to Wimbledon. If you ask people living south of Circle Gardens, they will say Morden, due to convenience. IF MERTON PARK RESIDENTS HAD BEEN ASKED, THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN CLEAR. Social media posts by members of PlanWimbledon apologise profusely for the fact that the pandemic severely restricted consultation. SOME SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO DO NOT OWN OR USE COMPUTERS (POORER PEOPLE, ELDERLY PEOPLE) HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY EXCLUDED FROM VIEWING ANY PROPOSED BOUNDARY.

There has been no possibility of canvassing neighbours during lockdown.

In the northern part of Merton Park, we care very much what happens to Wimbledon Town Centre and want to have a say in its future development. If asked where we live, we would always say “Wimbledon” or “SW19”. Those of us who live north of Circle Gardens would never say “Morden”.

It is important that the Council gets this right. The battle with the Boundary Commission has been fought and lost, and the MPWIR Party will be down to two seats at the next election.

The impact of PlanWimbledon on Merton Park residents will long outlive that political battle. The line of the Conservation Area is not relevant to PlanWimbledon and there is no reason to retain it as a boundary except if politicians want to defend an entrenched position. Surely the advice about the southern Merton Park border must be ruled out, given that political interests may have been involved and there was no consultation about where the boundary should be.

The line can easily be put back to include Kenley Road and Poplar Road north of Circle Gardens, and other parts of Merton Park within the one-mile radius

I have gone through the SurveyMonkey questionnaire and endorsed the neighbourhood area proposed by PlanWimbledon. Although I was persuaded to be one of the named members on the application which led to the PlanWimbledon consultation going live - for the designation of a neighbourhood area and forum - I will leave the formal Yes vote about whether to endorse PlanWimbledon, as the suitable body for designation as a neighbourhood forum, to those people who are being allowed to see the decision-making processes of the PlanWimbledon SteerCo (steering committee) during the six months that led up to the application being made.

If the PlanWimbledon SteerCo has been working together on the application to become a designated neighbourhood forum without being dominated by one or two voices, however well-meaning they might be, then PlanWimbledon deserves to be endorsed and designated as the neighbourhood forum. If the PlanWimbledon SteerCo has accepted the help of anyone wishing to get involved, regardless of whether that person is the "right sort", then PlanWimbledon deserves to be endorsed and designated as the neighbourhood forum. If the PlanWimbledon SteerCo has the positive mindset that "members care", then PlanWimbledon deserves to be endorsed and designated as the neighbourhood forum - the organisation or body responsible for creating a neighbourhood plan.

Whether all those PlanWimbledon members elected to serve on the SteerCo are listened to equably - with their collective decisions, on behalf of ordinary members, being made in a fair and democratic fashion - is not something I am in a position to judge because there is no open door policy for ordinary members to attend SteerCo meetings and ordinary members of PlanWimbledon are not able to see PlanWimbledon SteerCo meeting minutes, for reasons I struggle to understand but which must be respected.

Merton Planning Officers, who are able to see PlanWimbledon SteerCo meeting minutes, are better placed to form an opinion of PlanWimbledon's competence and also form a view about the structure of the numerous PlanWimbledon SteerCo meetings that have been held.

It was good to learn during the consultation, from a member of the PlanWimbledon SteerCo, that "The Steering Committee has already decided that minutes of the Neighbourhood Forum Steerco meetings would be published, following designation." This is a very good sign in the context of the many responses I have received from other neighbourhood planning groups with regard to openness.

I hope you are able to find reasons to justify endorsing the application being made by PlanWimbledon for designation as the neighbourhood forum for the Wimbledon area proposed.

Dear Sir/Madam

I write on behalf of the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) in response to the current consultation on the PlanWimbledon Neighbourhood Forum Proposals.

As a principle, the AELTC welcomes greater community participation and involvement in the planning process. Should PlanWimbledon be successful in forming a Neighbourhood Forum, the AELTC would welcome further opportunities to engage with the group and discuss our future plans and aspirations.

Again, if successful, it will be important for PlanWimbledon to support continued investment, growth and development within the Borough. We also urge the group to support the direction of the London Borough of Merton's emerging new Local Plan.

Finally, we note the geographical extent of area proposed for the new Neighbourhood Forum. The AELTC has no objection to the intended area, however, it is unclear why Wimbledon Park has been excluded (where all land and sites adjoining are included).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss the AELTC's position in greater detail.

Kind regards,

Director

Rolfe Judd

Architecture **Planning** Interiors

21 May 2021

**Future Merton
London Borough of Merton**

The Savills logo, consisting of the word "savills" in a red, lowercase, sans-serif font, positioned within a yellow rectangular background.

By email to future.merton@merton.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

**PlanWimbledon proposed Neighbourhood Area consultation
Representations on behalf of Clarion Housing Group.**

On behalf of Clarion Housing Group (Clarion) we write to make representations on the PlanWimbledon proposed Neighbourhood Area consultation.

Clarion is one of the London Borough of Merton's (LBM) preferred Registered Providers of affordable housing. It owns and manages around 10,000 homes in the Borough, including the High Path Estate in South Wimbledon where it is engaged in a major investment programme to provide additional good quality new homes.

Construction of Phase 1 to provide 134 new homes at High Path is nearing completion. Outline planning permission has been granted for the regeneration of the remainder of the Estate to deliver over 1,500 more homes alongside new employment and community spaces, and new open space. Reserved Matters approval for Phase 2 has also been secured. Policies addressing the regeneration of the Estate are contained within the Estates Local Plan (ELP) (2018) and we understand these policies will be saved as part of the new Local Plan.

It is understood that PlanWimbledons' strategy for defining the Neighbourhood Area was initially informed by setting a one mile radius around Wimbledon's former Town Hall. The boundary was then adjusted to reflect physical geography, people's perceptions of the extent of Wimbledon, and responses from various parties that had been engaged with.

Despite the approach taken it is clear that the proposed area is very large (about a third of the borough). To put this into context, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that "*electoral ward boundaries can be a useful starting point for discussions on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents*".¹ In contrast, the Application by PlanWimbledon outlines that the proposed area spans 7 wards with an adult population of 40,000. Another consideration relevant when deciding the boundaries of neighbourhood areas can be the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood. The difficulty with the extensive area proposed is that it encompasses a very diverse range of townscapes. For instance, the area around the former Town Hall has a very different architecture and character from the High Path Estate and even, arguably, South Wimbledon. This will make it very challenging for any future Neighbourhood Plan to be focussed in its policy intent. In this regard, it is also noted that: the Councils 2021 Character Study which is proposed to be adopted as a SPD, identifies South Wimbledon as a district character area from the rest of the Wimbledon area (which itself is comprised of several neighbourhoods). The draft Local Plan also identifies South Wimbledon as a distinctive neighbourhood in its own right and confirms that local residents consider South Wimbledon as a neighbourhood with its own distinctive character.

The Application document by PlanWimbledon identifies four reasons why the Neighbourhood Forum should cover the area identified, these being to encourage community engagement, ensure appropriate growth, deliver a shared vision, and drive socio-economic change.

¹ Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 41-033-20140306

Whilst these aspirations are well understood, the existing local and regional planning policy context does this already for the High Path Estate through policies contained within the New London Plan (adopted in March 2021), the Core Strategy and Site and Policies Plan, and the Estates Local Plan (ELP) (adopted 2018). The emerging Local Plan also includes a chapter on South Wimbledon which includes the High Path Estate.

All of these documents have been subject to extensive public consultation, have been informed by a robust evidence base and where adopted have undergone Examination in Public. Specifically, the ELP was developed with the specific intent of bringing forward the optimum regeneration development proposals for the Eastfields, Ravensbury and High Path Estates with several site-specific policies devoted to each neighbourhood. The evidence base and community engagement carried out in preparing the ELP was prepared at a local level. As a result it sets out a very clear vision of how the High Path Estate may be developed.

Bearing the above in mind we suggest that PlanWimbledon and the Council consider re-defining the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Area so that it excludes the High Path Estate.

We would be grateful for confirmation that this letter of representation has been received. Should you have any questions regarding its contents please do not hesitate to contact myself or Samruti Patel at these offices.

Yours faithfully,

14 April 2021

VIA EMAIL
FUTURE.MERTON@MERTON.GOV.UK

Planning Policy
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX

Dear Sir / Madam,

PLANWIMBLEDON FORUM / AREA CONSULTATION

COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF ESKMUIR GROUP

On behalf of our client, Eskmuir Group ("Eskmuir"), Savills is instructed to make representations in response to the ongoing consultation on the proposal by PlanWimbledon to designate a Neighbourhood Forum for Wimbledon.

Eskmuir is the freehold owner of the property at 8-20 Worple Road & 20-26 St George's Road within Wimbledon Town Centre which comprises a ground floor supermarket with office space and car parking to the upper floors. As the London Borough of Merton will be aware, Eskmuir is considering various options for the redevelopment of their site, as reflected in its mixed use allocation within the Draft Local Plan.

From the "Application to Become a Neighbourhood Forum and Neighbourhood Area in Merton" document prepared by PlanWimbledon it is evident that a great deal of thought has gone into defining the area to be included within the Neighbourhood Forum with the strategy for defining the area initially informed by setting a one mile radius around Wimbledon's former Town Hall before adjusting these boundaries to reflect physical geography, people's perceptions of the extent of Wimbledon, and responses from various parties that had been engaged with.

The "Application to Become a Neighbourhood Forum and Neighbourhood Area in Merton" document published by PlanWimbledon identifies four reasons why the Neighbourhood Forum should cover the area identified, these being to encourage community engagement, ensure appropriate growth, deliver a shared vision, and drive socio-economic change. Whilst these aspirations are well understood, Eskmuir is of the view that the existing local and regional planning policy context does this already for Wimbledon Town Centre through policies contained within the New London Plan (which was adopted in March 2021), the Core Strategy and Site and Policies Plan (which are soon to be replaced by the New Local Plan), and the Future Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') (which was adopted in November 2020).

All of these documents have been subject to extensive periods of public consultation, set visions for their specific geography, and strive to deliver growth in the right way. The best example of this is the Future Wimbledon SPD which in many ways has a similar scope to that of a Neighbourhood Plan albeit it is focussed on Wimbledon Town Centre. The Future Wimbledon SPD provides a clear spatial and visual framework for Wimbledon under a series of visions and in many ways identifies broad areas for redevelopment and the design considerations.

With that in mind, it is suggested that PlanWimbledon consider re-defining the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Area so that it excludes the area already covered by the Future Wimbledon SPD given the scope of that

document and to reflect its very recent adoption. Alternatively, if such an approach is not taken by PlanWimbledon and the extent of the neighbourhood area is retained as proposed at present, Eskmuir suggest that a 'light touch' approach is taken for Wimbledon Town Centre to reflect the provisions of the Future Wimbledon SPD.

I trust these comments are helpful. I would be grateful if you could please notify us of any further consultations in respect of the Neighbourhood Forum.

Yours faithfully,

PLAN WIMBLEDON'S APPLICATION FOR A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF F&C COMMERCIAL PROPERTY HOLDINGS LIMITED IN RESPONSE TO ONLINE SURVEY (submitted via LBM's portal on 19/05/2021)

- 1.1 These representations do not object outright to Plan Wimbledon being a designated forum for proceeding with a neighbourhood plan for the wider area; however, the inclusion of Wimbledon town centre within the designated application is subject to objection.
- 1.2 F&C Commercial Property Holdings Limited (as advised by BMO Real Estate Partners, as asset managers and Stanhope Plc as development consultants) own Site Wi11 known as Victoria Crescent/Piazza, 39–59 The Broadway, 1–11 Victoria Crescent/Piazza, Wimbledon.

Do you support Plan Wimbledon's proposed neighbourhood boundary?

- 1.3 The extent of the proposed neighbourhood area is not reflective of a "neighbourhood" but instead it includes many different neighbourhoods of a very extensive catchment. It would be difficult to understand how the neighbourhood plan would encompass focused, concise and detailed policies in achieving the economic growth objectives for Wimbledon as a Major Centre whilst also trying to achieve other different regeneration objectives for residential sub-areas of the identified catchment.

Do you support Plan Wimbledon's application to become a neighbourhood forum for that area?

- 1.4 The principal consideration is the fact that any future neighbourhood plan needs to properly comply with the "basic conditions" set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, paragraph 8 (2).
- 1.5 The policies and guidance that are relevant include the following:
- 1.6 The NPPF follows the provision of section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The relevant NPPF paragraphs in this case relate to: paragraphs 12 and 13 (*"the planning system should be genuinely plan led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priority; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings"*); paragraph 16d (*"contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to the development proposals"*) and paragraph 16f (*"serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area..."*).
- 1.7 The adopted Core Strategy 2011 establishes clear strategic policies for the regeneration and growth at Wimbledon and this priority remains within the new Merton Local Plan. The new local plan is advancing, having been subject to recent public consultation earlier this year (stage 2a consultation) and with an expected pre-submission plan anticipated for consultation during the coming months which will be examined and then formally adopted. The new local plan has been prepared to comply with strategic, new London Plan policies (as set out in the Mayor's adopted London Plan 2021) which continues to identify

Wimbledon as a Major Centre and an important opportunity area for large-scale development with significant increases in jobs and homes. The vision, key priorities and objectives for Wimbledon are therefore clearly set out in both the recently adopted London Plan and the advanced, new Merton Local Plan.

1.8 In particular, draft Policy N3.6 contained within Chapter 9 of the new Merton Local Plan identifies the need for promoting Wimbledon as “*South west London’s premier location for business, leisure, living and culture*” in providing an “*example of good quality and sustainable place making*” whilst also identifying the need for “*driving investment and innovation in work spaces to support the local economy and jobs in the town centre commensurate with Wimbledon’s role as a Major Centre.*” It further states that the local plan will “*encourage development that attracts businesses, visitors and tourism to the area all year round, including high-quality hotels, conference facilities and cultural activities*” with the aim to strengthen the position of Wimbledon as a Major Centre in south London through the redevelopment of identified key sites. The Victoria Crescent site, known as Site Wi11 represents an important, strategic allocation for a mix of town centre uses through comprehensive redevelopment.

1.9 The new Merton Local Plan when adopted later this year alongside the new London Plan will form the up-to-date statutory planning policy framework for future decisions on applications across the town centre.

1.10 Further, there exists “Future Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document” recently adopted in November 2020 which outlines all such priorities for Wimbledon town centre in relation to achieving: design quality, public realm, urban greening and sustainability, improving High Street vitality (post-Covid

recovery) whilst also considering long-term ambitions. These priorities are also embedded in draft planning policy to ensure consistency.

1.11 The adopted town centre SPD has been subject to design and technical evidence and whilst F&C and their advisors have made past representations on it during the consultation process (in relation to inclusion of site Wi11 within the tall buildings cluster given its significance amongst other considerations), it is acknowledged that the SPD will act as guidance to the new Local Plan. The SPD document therefore incorporates guidance on alternative land-use allocation and distribution and other such development parameters particularly in relation to allocated sites having considered some of the constraints and opportunities across the town centre as a whole. The SPD therefore provides the next level of detail in terms of how strategic, identified sites might come forward which has been subject to stakeholder consultation and engagement.

1.12 This planning policy framework is therefore considered more than adequate in providing the required policy and planning guidance in shaping the regeneration of the town centre and its strategic development sites. The introduction of a neighbourhood plan would result in unnecessary duplication of policy which would need to repeat policy objectives set out in the new local plan and adopted SPD (given it will need to be in compliance) – in turn, questioning at the outset its role and purpose. Such duplication would not meet the “basic conditions” for preparing a neighbourhood plan. Indeed, it would result in an additional layer of statutory plan policy which would create uncertainty in application decision-making given the planning policy framework which will be in place for that very purpose. Again, this would not meet the “basic conditions” tests.

1.13 More specifically, within Plan Wimbledon's application (updated April 2021) at paragraph 5.4.2, it is stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing the uncertainty about the future direction of the economy particularly for High Street retailers, hospitality venues and offices as people adapt to different ways of shopping, working and socialising. There is certainly an element of repurposing town centres in adapting to new retail environments. However, the adopted SPD (and the new local plan) already recognise this and it is not considered that preparing a neighbourhood plan will create any further certainty; in fact, the opposite. Indeed, it is now (post-pandemic recovery) when absolute planning certainty is required through adopted policy and guidance in determining strategic development schemes in the short to medium term. Another layer of plan making will only add to planning uncertainty and potentially delay the decision making process for such schemes to the detriment of much needed, town centre regeneration to assist short term economic recovery.

Other Comments

1.14 The application contains very limited representation from business interests and reflects very much the ambitions of the neighbourhood plan to be resident led. This does not sit comfortably with the commercial objectives essential for bringing forward short, medium and long-term economic growth within Wimbledon as a Major Centre.

1.15 Should the application be approved, before proceeding with the neighbourhood plan, F&C and their advisors would want to be fully involved and engaged in the process in order to assist in providing a balanced representation of important business interests to ensure delivery of key regeneration sites.

21st May 2021

**Love Wimbledon Business Improvement District's formal response
to Plan Wimbledon's proposal for designation as a Neighbourhood Forum**

Love Wimbledon BID is supportive of neighbourhood planning in urban areas, but we have significant concerns about the neighbourhood planning boundary being proposed by Plan Wimbledon and the adopted constitution of the proposed Forum. In particular we are very concerned about the inclusion of Wimbledon Town Centre, as the Central Business District (CBD) within the designation application. To formulate our response, we have sought professional advice on Neighbourhood Planning and consulted with businesses and property owners of Wimbledon on the Plan Wimbledon proposal.

Existing situation and current regulations

There is a lack of clarity in the proposal about the aims and aspirations of PlanWimbledon with regard to the Town Centre. There is no reference to, or therefore a clear understanding of, the approach or relationship with the existing SPD adopted in November 2020 that has been developed through 8 years of extensive consultation, or indeed the recent consultation on the update to the Local Plan.

Since the launch of Future Wimbledon in 2013, Love Wimbledon BID has invested significant effort to widely consult and influence the development of the masterplan and subsequent SPD. Whilst we don't consider the masterplan to be perfect, we understand the SPD guidance, together with the Local Plan policy framework for the centre, namely policies CS.6, CS.7, CS14 and CS18-20 which are all *strategic* policies and therefore provide a strong statutory basis for planning purposes, with which any neighbourhood plan would have to be in conformity. Yet these current and strategically important documents are not referred to within the PlanWimbledon proposal.

Wimbledon Town Centre is designated as a Major Centre in the London Plan and indeed is Merton's only Major Centre. It is also designated as a GLA Opportunity Area with Colliers Wood and South Wimbledon in the emerging London Plan. Its role, as a CBD therefore is significant beyond Wimbledon. Having invested so much time and effort relating to the centre's strategic as well as our local role, Love Wimbledon wants to build on what is already there in terms of the SPD Guidance and emerging Local Plan Policies.

Proposed area and size

Love Wimbledon BID welcomes and supports the view of Plan Wimbledon that the Town Centre is vital for accessing local services, shops, workplaces, hospitality, and as a key transport hub. Whilst there is no theoretical limit to the size of a neighbourhood planning area, with over 100 Forums now established in the GLA area, we note that most are in the 10-20,000 population bracket. There are exceptions such as Mill Hill (27,000), Finsbury Park and Stroud Green (30,000), Isle of Dogs (28,000), but these do not include centres of the same planning status as Wimbledon.



The proposed physical boundary and resulting population is of a large 'town' rather than a 'neighbourhood' size & larger than any other neighbourhood area of which we are aware. Whilst populations of 40,000 are more common outside of metropolitan areas – for example in market towns, these are mostly led by Town Councils with a long track record of engagement and delivery.

We have met with the group to discuss our concerns several times. We have been told that Bracknell provides a good precedent for a Wimbledon Neighbourhood Plan. Physically, Bracknell is very different from Wimbledon as a stand alone 'new town' with a purpose built retail/commercial heart surrounded by concentric residential area, a less diverse demographic mix (85% White British), and mobility/transport reliance on the car. It has a Town Council and sits within a unitary authority.

Wimbledon in contrast is part of a national capital, has a distinct CBD with a strategic 'national' transport hub, a large office hub as well as a thriving retail centre which serves Wimbledon and beyond. It has both a town centre AND a village centre and a vastly different demographic across the borough with high density housing adjoining the CBD, a lack of commercial office supply to meet the demand, which is crucial to the footfall of the retail offer for both locals and visitors. Wimbledon also has an established Business Improvement District.

We are aware of no neighbourhood plan designations of the size proposed within a metropolitan borough which have included a major centre with an up to date planning framework. We are aware of smaller retail centres in London boroughs being included but the inclusion of larger centres have been initiated by either business led qualifying bodies (e.g. Central Ealing, Soho, Mayfair) or qualifying bodies with significant business and real estate interests represented (e.g. Hyde Park and Paddington, Finsbury Park and Stroud Green). We are concerned therefore given the present make-up and governance structure of Plan Wimbledon, the boundary and scale is inappropriate and crucially prevents the BID forming a business led qualifying body to progress a neighbourhood plan for the CBD area in the future.

Within the Plan Wimbledon proposed area, representing around a third of the borough of Merton, there is a large disparity of businesses within the area as well as a diverse demographic group of residents. SW19 is the largest postcode in London and the name Wimbledon has international recognition, so it is understandable that people far and wide identify with the name, but the proposed bloated area will create an impractically wide and broad scale of diverse interests to meaningfully consult with, let alone reach agreement and we believe will result in the dilution of meaningful conversations and resultant policies.

Governance

The Plan Wimbledon constitution explains that businesses can join, as single entities but they do not appear to have a vote on the plan as businesses per se. There also appears to be no recognition of property owners or asset managers, which we find surprising given that the proposition to include a major metropolitan centre, but once again most likely relates to the unwieldy size of the proposed area. There is no indication of how the business representation would be meaningful in terms of the governance structure of the proposed forum and Love Wimbledon BID, as a business representative organisation could join only as an associate member, with no voting rights.

Love Wimbledon has been meeting with various representatives of this group over the past three years and have experienced significant anti-BID and anti-business rhetoric, in public meetings, in person and feedback from businesses after representations have been made to them by members of this group. This negativity inevitably brings into question the true agenda of the forum and demonstrates their lack of commitment to full stakeholder engagement and their competency in being able to host an open consultation where all parties are valued and listened to.

Timing of consultation

This six-week consultation launched on April 12th 2021, a not insignificant day for many businesses across England as they re-opened after 4 months of lockdown. Many hospitality businesses have only re-opened

this week, not allowing for a meaningful consultation with these important stakeholders in the town. If Plan Wimbledon were serious about involving members of the CBD area, this timing should have been adjusted to take this into account.

Feedback received by Love Wimbledon

Love Wimbledon has undertaken its own consultation with businesses and property owners and the feedback we have received is resoundingly negative to this proposal.

85% of businesses with a range of commercial interests in Wimbledon do not support a resident led neighbourhood plan covering the CBD area and verbal feedback from a Strategic Leaders Forum yesterday also supported this evidence. We have received statements such as:-

"There is adequate planning control exercised by LB Merton. Further layers of control will add to an already lengthy process and will make Wimbledon a less attractive place in which to invest."

"There is already in place a planning framework, it may not be perfect but it is fair and provides the local neighbourhood an opportunity to put forward their concerns."

"....the existing local and regional planning policy context does this already for Wimbledon Town Centre through policies contained within the New London Plan (which was adopted in March 2021), the Core Strategy and Site and Policies Plan (which are soon to be replaced by the New Local Plan), and the Future Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') (which was adopted in November 2020). All of these documents have been subject to extensive periods of public consultation, set visions for their specific geography, and strive to deliver growth in the right way. The best example of this is the Future Wimbledon SPD which in many ways has a similar scope to that of a Neighbourhood Plan albeit it is focussed on Wimbledon Town Centre. The Future Wimbledon SPD provides a clear spatial and visual framework for Wimbledon under a series of visions and in many ways identifies broad areas for redevelopment and the design considerations. With that in mind, it is suggested that PlanWimbledon consider re-defining the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Area so that it excludes the area already covered by the Future Wimbledon SPD given the scope of that document and to reflect its very recent adoption."

"I've been a business owner in Wimbledon since 2000 and believe Love Wimbledon has been a great support and behind all the good things that go on in Wimbledon. They are the organisation who will be best for the future of not only the businesses but also the residents"

Customer facing businesses are also reporting to us disingenuous communications and representations about what Plan Wimbledon is and what they are trying to achieve.

Relationships

In spite of the negativity, as mentioned above Love Wimbledon has continued to meet representatives of the group throughout this time and attended public meetings in an effort to keep communications open, however in a recent meeting with members of the steering committee they objected to our independent adviser, someone with long experience of neighbourhood planning attending a meeting.

Love Wimbledon's Proposition

We are determined, working with Merton Council, property owners, businesses, service providers and residents, to maximise our influence over the future spatial development of the Town Centre (i.e. Love Wimbledon BID's agreed boundary) and how the existing 2020 masterplan develops out. Hence it is our longer term aim to pursue a business-led Neighbourhood Forum and Plan which truly reflects business as well as residential issues.

A business-led Neighbourhood Forum and Plan, proposed by Love Wimbledon BID would need support from both residents and businesses in a referendum. The current proposition would not require this, and businesses could only have a say via their employees if they lived locally and, significantly, would not incorporate the views of the real estate property owners. Many existing business-led Neighbourhood Forums have a balance of business and resident representation on their steering groups (e.g. Hyde Park and Paddington, Central Ealing, Mayfair, Spitalfields). We also feel, as an existing community organisation, and

through our extensive business network, that Love Wimbledon is very well placed to facilitate a dynamic dialogue between residents, businesses, and real estate interests.

Love Wimbledon will be seeking advice on the non-strategic policies design, transport, environment and social policies any neighbourhood plan might be able to bring forward in relation to the CBD area to further develop our thinking on this.

Conclusion

In summary, Love Wimbledon cannot support the proposal for Plan Wimbledon's designation as a Neighbourhood Forum with its current structure and a proposed boundary that will include the CBD and BID area. We believe the size of the area is unmanageable, the consultation has been unprofessional and carried out under dubious circumstances, the proposed governance will not be representative of all stakeholders and the implementation of this proposal will fetter progress and development of the CBD.

The Directors of Merton Chamber of Commerce have reviewed the proposals set out by Plan Wimbledon and held a meeting with them on 19th May. I am responding on behalf of our Directors with the following comments:

Merton Chamber of Commerce values the work undertaken by Plan Wimbledon over the last 3 years and we support the concept and purpose of Neighbourhood Plans and the additional social capital they bring to the local area.

One of the areas we discussed with Plan Wimbledon was the designation of the area, the rationale for this is set out in their Plan. In summary, the designated area should be cohesive, that people and businesses should have a sense of belonging to it and recognize the importance of “20 minute neighbourhoods” as set out in Merton Council’s draft Local Plan.

It is our view that the proposed designated area is too large. The Chamber of Commerce has over 20 year’s experience working with businesses in the whole of Merton and recognises that there are very different characteristics between the localities embraced by the proposed boundary – examples are Wimbledon Village and broader area, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon town centre, South Wimbledon, Wimbledon Chase, Plough Lane and Weir Road and Colliers Wood. We believe that many of these areas do not share a sense of cohesiveness, apart from being part of Merton borough.

We therefore are not able to support the proposal for the size of the designated area. We would be very happy to work with Plan Wimbledon and be a conduit for their communications in the future with Merton’s business community.

Signed on behalf of the Directors of Merton Chamber of Commerce.

Diana Sterck
Chief Executive
Merton Chamber of Commerce

Please find the Conservative Group's response to the PlanWimbledon consultation below:

Merton Conservatives wholeheartedly support PlanWimbledon, this is an important community initiative that will ensure that the views of local people are heard during the planning process. It is crucially important that the character and feel of Wimbledon is preserved and having input from the local community will be important in achieving this.

Future Merton
C/o Paul McGarry and Tara Butler

Sunday 23 May 2021

Re: PlanWimbledon designation consultation – representation from PlanWimbledon

Dear Paul, dear Tara,

As the consultation on our application for designation draws to a close, PlanWimbledon are submitting this letter as our own representation.

Since PlanWimbledon's application was submitted in February, we have made tremendous progress from an already strong base, as the understanding of the benefits that neighbourhood planning offers our whole community gathers momentum. We are confident and excited at the prospect that the consultation votes will underpin our designation as neighbourhood forum for the proposed Wimbledon area.

We would like to make the following observations from our experiences and learnings to date. In particular, we wish to correct some of the misconceptions which have come across:

- **There is a strong and growing appetite for neighbourhood planning across the neighbourhood**

We are thrilled by the accelerating level of support and enthusiasm for neighbourhood planning across the area. Latterly, the Covid pandemic has driven both a greater sense of community and the desire to have a say in the future development of our home and work environments.

- **We have strong cross-sectional support from the local community**

This is reflected in our membership which now stands at over 550, representing an uplift of more than 100% since we applied for designation back in February. New members have come from across the proposed territory of the plan and across the spectrum of demographics, as well as from businesses, residents and landowners, and a wide variety of associations. (Please note that we count each association as only one member). Our social media presence has encouraged younger members to sign up to PlanWimbledon.

- **The Wimbledon area has been rigorously defined and reflects a cohesive view from the local community**

The proposed area for the Wimbledon neighbourhood forum has been determined by an extensive engagement programme with the local community, with inputs from a wide range of stakeholders. The proposed area reflects the local community's opinion of what is appropriate for the neighbourhood plan.

The size of the proposed area of Wimbledon is a testament to the strong feeling of belonging that the community has, and of the history of the town and its diversity. While each sub-area has its own individual characteristics, everyone identifies strongly with the town centre as Wimbledon's anchor and community heart. The town centre is a focus common to all the neighbourhood's constituent communities.

- **The proposed area is not 'too large'**

It is important to note that there is no maximum recommended size of area for neighbourhood planning. While the overall size of the proposed Wimbledon area has attracted concern from certain quarters, it is not the largest neighbourhood forum area.

In Bracknell, the whole town (including its high street and train station) has successfully created a neighbourhood plan, which is to be submitted for referendum shortly. Bracknell Town Centre has 55,000 adults and a geographical area twice that of Wimbledon (16 km² for Bracknell, compared to 8 km² for Wimbledon). Like Wimbledon, Bracknell includes a train station, art spaces and protected green spaces.

Merton has the potential to become a trailblazer among London boroughs. There is enough talent, expertise and enthusiasm within our proposed boundary to prepare a very successful neighbourhood plan.

- **PlanWimbledon is pro-development**

We have received some feedback that PlanWimbledon are perceived as being opposed to development and progress. This is a complete misconception. The group is dedicated to ensuring that Wimbledon continues to be an attractive and vibrant location for people to live, work and visit. This can be achieved only by fostering a strong local economy which is resilient to, and takes advantage of, the radical and fundamental social and economic changes being wrought.

We recognise how important it is that Wimbledon draws in visitors to spend money and support the local economy. As a more advantaged area in the borough, Wimbledon needs to work hard for Merton as well as for those who work or live here.

PlanWimbledon is legally bound to operate within the framework of the Local Plan. We look forward to working in partnership with Future Merton in developing effective and beneficial policies which will build on and enhance the current planning framework.

- **PlanWimbledon has a strong relationship with the business community**

From the outset, we have been determined to make neighbourhood planning in Wimbledon a creative collaboration between all the area's community constituents: business, residential, faith, arts, education, health, care and all the other stakeholders, including councillors and Future Merton.

We are particularly delighted by the many businesses who have joined us across the area. Here, too, the diversity and depth of the support is considerable: from local convenience stores to nationwide food and drink chains; from interior design stores to charity shops; from wellbeing practitioners to arts and crafts; and from landowners to individual local workers and business owners.

We have found that many businesses relish the opportunity to join an organisation that connects them with their local customers and the local community in a matter of mutual interest and support.

The Wimbledon Village Business Association is one of our members, as are numerous individual businesses and landowners of all kinds and sizes across our proposed area, including many in Wimbledon town centre. Just last week we had a productive meeting with the Chamber of Commerce, who will be discussing their potential PlanWimbledon membership with their Board. We also had a very constructive meeting with Romulus, the new owners of Centre Court, where we found many synergies in our aims. We look forward to collaborating with them.

- **Our relationship with Love Wimbledon**

We have had several meetings with Love Wimbledon, the BID currently covering Wimbledon town centre. Unfortunately, they have chosen not to support PlanWimbledon's designation for the proposed area during the consultation period, and have stated that they 'are considering applying for a separate neighbourhood forum' which would cover the town centre only. We are deeply concerned about this for the following reasons:

1. Planning does not fall within Love Wimbledon's remit.
2. Love Wimbledon have stated several times that they are not interested and do not have the resource to create a neighbourhood plan. Neighbourhood planning is, by its very nature, not remunerated.
3. The severing of the town centre from the surrounding areas would remove the connective tissue from the neighbourhood, and would create strong resentment from PlanWimbledon's supporters.
4. Taken to its logical conclusion, this would mean that the town centre would not be guaranteed to have a neighbourhood plan. The result of that would be that Wimbledon town centre would not be able to benefit from the many advantages a neighbourhood plan would deliver, thus undermining the town centre's future growth.

We are committed, once designated, to build a constructive working relationship with Love Wimbledon.

- **PlanWimbledon is not a lobbying or campaigning group**

PlanWimbledon is a non-partisan, not-for-profit group. We are donating our time, energy and talent and have no financial interest. We conduct ourselves with full respect for other community stakeholders and their interests. Our remit as the designated forum would be to create a neighbourhood plan. To keep that focus, and to ensure high standards of governance, PlanWimbledon operates under an approved constitution with a steering committee elected by its members annually. We have Wimbledon at heart.

We greatly appreciate the help and advice you have given us throughout the whole process. We know that organising a completely new consultation is time-consuming, but we hope that this process has prepared you for the many potential future neighbourhood forum applications which we have found are being considered within the borough.

At our half-way meeting with you, knowing that over 600 overwhelmingly positive responses had been received in the first couple of weeks gave us the confidence that we are spearheading something which people really want in Wimbledon.

Next steps

PlanWimbledon are organising a General Meeting in June to report our progress to our membership, and to start the planning process for the next stage of our journey.

We look forward to meeting Future Merton again after the consultation has ended to discuss the results.

Many thanks.

On behalf of PlanWimbledon,

Suzanne Grocott, Chair

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above neighbourhood plan.

Government planning policy, within the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, identifies how the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Encouraging communities to become more physically active through walking, cycling, informal recreation and formal sport plays an important part in this process. Providing enough sports facilities of the right quality and type in the right places is vital to achieving this aim. This means that positive planning for sport, protection from the unnecessary loss of sports facilities, along with an integrated approach to providing new housing and employment land with community facilities is important.

It is essential therefore that the neighbourhood plan reflects and complies with national planning policy for sport as set out in the NPPF with particular reference to Pars 96 and 97. It is also important to be aware of Sport England's statutory consultee role in **protecting playing fields** and the presumption against the loss of playing field land. Sport England's playing fields policy is set out in our Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document.

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy

Sport England provides guidance on **developing planning policy** for sport and further information can be found via the link below. Vital to the development and implementation of planning policy is the evidence base on which it is founded.

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#planning_applications

Sport England works with local authorities to ensure their Local Plan is underpinned by robust and up to date evidence. In line with Par 97 of the NPPF, this takes the form of **assessments of need and strategies for indoor and outdoor sports facilities**. A neighbourhood planning body should look to see if the relevant local authority has prepared a playing pitch strategy or other indoor/outdoor sports facility strategy. If it has then this could provide useful evidence for the neighbourhood plan and save the neighbourhood planning body time and resources gathering their own evidence. It is important that a neighbourhood plan reflects the recommendations and actions set out in any such strategies, including those which may specifically relate to the neighbourhood area, and that any local investment opportunities, such as the Community Infrastructure Levy, are utilised to support their delivery.

Where such evidence does not already exist then relevant planning policies in a neighbourhood plan should be based on a proportionate assessment of the need for sporting provision in its area.

Developed in consultation with the local sporting and wider community any assessment should be used to provide key recommendations and deliverable actions. These should set out what provision is required to ensure the current and future needs of the community for sport can be met and, in turn, be able to support the development and implementation of planning policies. Sport England's guidance on assessing needs may help with such work.

<http://www.sportengland.org/planningtoolsandguidance>

If **new or improved sports facilities** are proposed Sport England recommend you ensure they are fit for purpose and designed in accordance with our design guidance notes.

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/>

Any **new housing** developments will generate additional demand for sport. If existing sports facilities do not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand, then planning policies should look to ensure that new sports facilities, or improvements to existing sports facilities, are secured and delivered.

Proposed actions to meet the demand should accord with any approved local plan or neighbourhood plan policy for social infrastructure, along with priorities resulting from any assessment of need, or set out in any playing pitch or other indoor and/or outdoor sports facility strategy that the local authority has in place.

In line with the Government's NPPF (including Section 8) and its Planning Practice Guidance (Health and wellbeing section), links below, consideration should also be given to how **any new development**, especially for new housing, will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. Sport England's Active Design guidance can be used to help with this when developing planning policies and developing or assessing individual proposals.

Active Design, which includes a model planning policy, provides ten principles to help ensure the design and layout of development encourages and promotes participation in sport and physical activity. The guidance, and its accompanying checklist, could also be used at the evidence gathering stage of developing a neighbourhood plan to help undertake an assessment of how the design and layout of the area currently enables people to lead active lifestyles and what could be improved.

NPPF Section 8: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-communities>

PPG Health and wellbeing section: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

Sport England's Active Design Guidance: <https://www.sportengland.org/activedesign>

(Please note: this response relates to Sport England's planning function only. It is not associated with our funding role or any grant application/award that may relate to the site.)

If you need any further advice, please do not hesitate to contact Sport England using the contact details below.

Yours sincerely,

Planning Administration Team
Planning.south@sportengland.org



Sport Park, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, Leicester, LE11 3QF

Sent: 16 May 2021 10:29

To: Future Merton

Cc:

Subject: FW: Have your say on PlanWimbledon's proposed neighbourhood area/forum

Thank you for consulting Transport for London (TfL). We note that the proposed neighbourhood area includes a number of TfL assets including London Underground stations, tram stops and bus infrastructure. There is also statutory safeguarding in place for Crossrail 2 which is expected to be updated in 2021. We have no objections to the designation of the neighbourhood forum or the proposed area and look forward to constructive dialogue with the forum when it is established.

Best wishes

Tfl Planning Transport for London



APPLICATION FOR WIMBLEDON NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AND FORUM
A response to Merton Council by Wandle Valley Forum
May 2021

1. Wandle Valley Forum provides support and an independent voice for 140 community groups, voluntary organisations and local businesses and for everyone who shares a passion for the Wandle.
2. We have considered the proposals to designate PlanWimbledon as the neighbourhood forum to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the proposed neighbourhood area in the context of the Wandle Valley Forum Charter (<http://bit.ly/27Yal2m>). This seeks to *“strengthen the role of local communities in the Wandle’s future”* and to *“support local groups’ work to influence planning and development decisions”*. We have seen the benefits of this being taken forward through neighbourhood planning at Hackbridge and Beddington Corner which completed one of the first neighbourhood plans in London. We are also supportive of the Tooting Bec and Broadway neighbourhood forum and area as designated by Wandsworth Council and are in discussions with those considering the potential of neighbourhood planning for the lower Wandle.
3. We support PlanWimbledon as a neighbourhood forum. It is broadly based and has an appropriate constitution. We have had the opportunity to inform its development.
4. We support the proposed neighbourhood area. This is within the Wandle Valley Regional Park. It has been developed in consultation with relevant local organisations and presents an appropriate expression of the community’s views about the geographic identity of Wimbledon. We welcome the inclusion of the whole of Wandle Meadow Nature Park.
5. Ideally, the boundary would include land on both sides of the river running north from Plough Lane. This would minimise the risks of the Wandle being treated as the edge of the neighbourhood area. Nevertheless, we understand the rationale for the boundary not crossing the boundary with Wandsworth given the added complexity this could bring to the neighbourhood planning process. This also helps to support the rationale for not including Wimbledon Park.
6. We look forward to participating in the work of PlanWimbledon once designated.

General enquiries: wandlevalleyforum@gmail.com
Web site: www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk
Twitter: [@WandleForum](https://twitter.com/WandleForum)

Please respond to Chair, Wandle Valley Forum, c/o 43 Bramcote Avenue, Mitcham CR4 4LW



Application to become a neighbourhood forum and neighbourhood area in Merton

18 February 2021

(Updated 6 April 2021)

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1. Name of the proposed neighbourhood forum

The name of the proposed Neighbourhood Forum is PlanWimbledon.

2. Name of the proposed neighbourhood area to which the application relates

The name of the proposed Neighbourhood Area to which the application relates is Wimbledon.

3. Contact details

(will be made publicly available and used as a single point of contact for the forum)

Name:	Suzanne Grocott
Address:	22, The Quadrant, SW20 8SP
Email:	chair@planwimbledon.org
Telephone:	07768 362370

4. Proposed named members and their interests

	Name	Resident	Business / Landowner	Councillor	Post Code	Interests
1	Dan Holden			X	SW19 3	Hillside Ward Councillor
2	Paul Kohler			X	SW19 8	Trinity Ward Councillor
3	Peter Southgate			X	SW19 3	Merton Park Ward Councillor / School Governor of Merton Park Primary School
4	Edward Foley			X	(undisc.)	Merton Park Ward Councillor / Chair of School Governors of Ricards Lodge
5	Nigel Benbow			X	SW19 1	Abbey Ward Councillor
6	Paresh Modasia		X		SW19 7	Local Pharmacist
7	Marcus Beale	X	X		SW19 7	Local Architect
8	Clive Hilton	X			SW19 4	Chair of Wimbledon Union of Residents Associations and Westside Common RA
9	Gabriel Bennett-Powell	X			SW19 8	Secretary, Friends of Wimbledon Town Centre
10	Susan Cusack	X			SW19 7	Chair, Belvederes Residents Association
11	Rev. Mark Eminson	X			SW19 1	Team Rector, Holy Trinity Church
12	Arun Velautham	X			SW19 3	Representative, the Shree Ghanapathy Temple
13	Chris Goodair	X			SW19 4	Chair, Wimbledon Society Planning & Environment Committee
14	Catherine Nelson	X			(undisc.)	Chair, The Friends of Cannizaro Park
15	Ian Murray		X		SW19 4	Owner I&S Locksmiths
16	Andrew Badrudin		X		SW19 4	London Property Holdings Limited
17	Barry O'Donnell	X			SW19 4	Property Consultant with interest in Environment / Conservation
18	Suzanne Grocott	X			SW20 8	Steering Group / School Governor of Wimbledon Chase Primary School
19	Augustin Bataille	X			SW19 1	Steering Group / South Wimbledon Resident
20	Alan Maries	X			SW19 8	Steering Group / Trustee, Sustainable Merton
21	Deborah Crosby	X			SW19 8	Steering Group / South Park Resident
22	Lynne Gordon	X			SW19 7	Steering Group / Chair, Wimbledon East Hillside Residents Association
23	Regina Denton	X			SW19 3	Steering Group / Dundonald Resident
24	Rob Cowan	X			SW19 8	Steering Group / Officer, Friends of Wimbledon Town Centre
25	Mark Morgan	X			SW19 5	Steering Group / Committee Member, Belvederes Residents Association
26	Nigel Headley	X	X		SW19 5	Steering Group / Member, Wimbledon Village Business Association
27	Sue Hale	X			SW19 7	Steering Group / Hillside Resident
28	Tim Day	X			SW20 9	Steering Group / Merton Park Resident
29	Jonathan Parker	X			SW19 4	Resident Artist

5. Why we want to establish a neighbourhood forum

5.1. Encourage local democracy in the planning process

- 5.1.1. PlanWimbledon is applying to be designated as a neighbourhood forum for the Wimbledon neighbourhood area in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The Government is encouraging local communities to lead and influence decision-making because it makes a real difference to their locality. It is a means to change a neighbourhood for the better in cooperation with the local planning authority.

5.2. Ensure appropriate growth

- 5.2.1. Part of the proposed neighbourhood plan area has been identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan¹ and is forecast to grow significantly.
- 5.2.2. There is an urgent need for high quality and sustainable development, ensuring that Wimbledon continues to prosper, enhancing the standing of our town, and enabling local businesses to thrive sustainably.
- 5.2.3. We believe in growth which is positive and creative. We have a vision of a balanced, prosperous, sustainable neighbourhood where residents love to be, where businesses thrive and grow, and to which visitors are attracted. The PlanWimbledon Neighbourhood Forum will harness local knowledge, skills and imagination to ensure that Wimbledon grows in a way that respects its distinctive character.

5.3. Community collaboration towards a shared vision

- 5.3.1. Once designated, PlanWimbledon will lead and coordinate the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for Wimbledon, working with stakeholders and Merton Council, bringing together the interests of residents, workers and businesses within the designated area.
- 5.3.2. Merton Council is redrafting its Core Planning Strategy and Sites and Policies Local Plan (the “Local Plan”) to comply with the revised adopted London Plan 2021 (the “London Plan”). A neighbourhood plan can help to provide the council with a strong evidence base for setting out policies to shape sustainable development to meet a shared vision – such examples of ‘trickle-up’, whereby local policy can benefit from evidence gathered and policies developed at a neighbourhood level, are very common across the country. A neighbourhood plan will be of direct benefit for Merton Council and the community in that it can provide additional benefit and detail (that would be too resource intensive for the council to gather itself) which can help the Council more effectively to serve the local community.²

5.4. Social and economic change in Wimbledon

- 5.4.1. Wimbledon is a highly attractive neighbourhood with excellent transport links, outstanding schools, a wide range of shops, a popular hospitality sector, cultural activities, green spaces, and a safe environment. Wimbledon’s desirability as a place to live and work has fostered a strong local economy.

1 Clause 2.1.27 Adopted London Plan 2021.

2 In the recent Characterisation Study Consultation, 155 people from Wimbledon took part in the survey (Local Plan).

- 5.4.2. But social and economic change is rapid and affecting our community. The Covid-19 pandemic is increasing the uncertainty about the future direction of the economy, particularly for high-street retailers, hospitality venues and offices as people adapt to different ways of shopping, working and socialising. Green spaces are treasured more than ever, and people may become much less tolerant of crowds. The safety of our streets cannot be taken for granted.

6. Neighbourhood area

6.1. How we defined the boundary

- 6.1.1. We took as our starting point Wimbledon's former Town Hall, a historic building that has been incorporated into the Centre Court shopping mall. This is adjacent to Wimbledon Station, the central hub for the area's transport network.
- 6.1.2. A widely spread community of people consider Wimbledon to be their place, and are proud of Wimbledon being an internationally recognised brand. Agreeing that we should predominantly focus on the human scale, we began by considering an area within a one-mile radius (see 'vector map' in Appendix 8.1) of the former Town Hall. One mile is a distance that most people can easily walk in 15/20 minutes and is equivalent to a five-minute bike ride. This focus aligns with the recognition of the importance of 20-minute neighbourhoods in Merton Council's draft local plan³.
- 6.1.3. Both physical and human geographical factors were considered when taking a virtual tour of the perimeter. These included the River Wandle and its tributaries, pathways, roads, railways, open spaces, and ward and borough boundaries. The task of drawing a precise line to create a boundary was tackled by consulting with a wide range of bodies, including residents' associations, schools, community groups, sports clubs and housing associations which are located at the edges of the area. The map was revised many times as the consultation progressed (see section 6.4 Proposed Boundary).
- 6.1.4. We have consulted widely with interested parties around the edges of the area and reflected their views on where the Wimbledon neighbourhood begins and ends.
- 6.1.5. We gradually contacted all local councillors representing the seven wards that are covered in the proposed neighbourhood forum area. They know the demographics of specific polling districts and they were able to introduce us to more residents who might be interested in neighbourhood planning. Progress was made in setting up meetings and a set of guidance notes was compiled. Encouraging people to join the group formally as members provided a tangible demonstration of the degree of support neighbourhood planning could have (see Members' dot map in appendix 8.2). The dialogue was helpful in agreeing the logical extent of the area and where the boundary should lie.

6.2. Area metrics

- 6.2.1. The total adult (aged 18 and over) population of the proposed forum area is estimated as 40,000 using data obtained from the Merton data website <https://data.merton.gov.uk/> (Borough Preferred Option data). We have taken coverage to be 100% of three wards (Hillside; Wimbledon Park; Trinity); 75% of Dundonald ward; 50% of Village and Abbey wards; and 25% of Merton Park ward.

³ "20-minute neighbourhoods are places where communities can access most of their daily needs within a 20-minute (about 800 metres) return walk from home". Local Plan consultation 2a "Good Growth Strategy".

- 6.2.2. The proposed forum boundary encloses an area of 8.48 square km, which consists of areas of natural beauty (see 6.1.3) in which the population frequently walks or cycles.
- 6.2.3. Wimbledon is a green, affluent area with 70% of the area being in the top two least deprived quartiles.⁴ However, there are pockets of deprivation, including the only travellers' site in Merton.
- 6.2.4. Merton has the third highest economic activity rate amongst all the London boroughs, after the City of London and Lewisham. There are 13,220 active businesses (2019 data) of which 93% are considered micro (0-9 employees).⁵ Wimbledon is the largest site of economic activity in Merton, having the borough's only major town centre and being the heart of its successful economy.⁶

6.3. Why we consider this area appropriate for designation

- 6.3.1. The boundaries of the proposed neighbourhood area are coherent, consistent and appropriate. They are geographically and historically logical, and often coincide with local government boundaries.
- 6.3.2. The people who live or work within these boundaries refer in general terms to the area as "Wimbledon".
- 6.3.3. They use "Wimbledon" when giving their address or in their response to the questions "where do you live?", "where do you work?" and "where is your shop/office?".
- 6.3.4. They use the services provided within the area rather than outside, including primary schools; surgeries; library; places of worship/religious meetings; shopping; restaurants and bars; and theatres and cinemas.
- 6.3.5. Our membership is spread across this fairly wide area because they regard it as "their Wimbledon". They are economically and/or emotionally strongly invested in the area, and what happens here really matters to them.

6.4. Proposed boundary

- 6.4.1. A map of the proposed neighbourhood area (coloured orange) is shown in Appendix 8.3, and set in the context of the Wimbledon Parliamentary constituency boundary (coloured blue) and the Merton borough boundary (coloured red).

A web-based version of this map on the Google Maps platform is also available at www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1phaVTu0KR6lyEhpshHlfGxC7aV1TBWZv&usp=sharing.

We will be working with the council to prepare a map which conforms to the required format for consultation.

- 6.4.2. The area boundary has been drawn in a way that indicates whether one or both sides of roads are included. The following 'route map', setting out anticlockwise in a westerly direction, provides justification for delineating the proposed boundary. Justification for the chosen area and boundary is shown in *[italics]*.

4 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. The IMD ranks every small area (Lower Super Output Area) in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived). The domains are: Income; Employment; Education; Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing Services; Living Environment. Each domain is given a weighting and is based on a basket of indicators.

5 All data taken from the Merton data website <https://data.merton.gov.uk/>

6 Local Plan 2a consultation draft 09 Wimbledon 3.6.1

- 6.4.3. Starting from the point where Parkside meets the borough's northern boundary at the junction with Queensmere Road, turn south down Parkside, bearing left along The Green and proceeding south west down Southside Common. Turn northwards up West Side Common past The Fox and Grapes public house and around West Place, North View, Camp View and Camp Road, avoiding Wimbledon Common.
[Following discussions of the boundary with the Wimbledon and Putney Common Conservators, we have agreed not to include the green parts of the Common.]
- 6.4.4. Continue southwards, including Cannizaro Park and House.
[The Friends of Cannizaro Park has asked for the park to be included, and Westside Common Residents Association has asked us to include the Sycamore/Chester Road areas.]
- 6.4.5. Turn east along Cannizaro Park's southern boundary to exclude the Wool Road area.
[North West Wimbledon Residents Association asked us to remove the Wool Road area as it might wish to create its own neighbourhood forum covering Wool Road Conservation Area in the future.]
- 6.4.6. Turn south west down Woodhayes Road, then turn east along Ridgway.
[Rydon Mews Residents Association wished to remain inside the area. NWWRA and the Residents Association of West Wimbledon considered that, given their footprints, they were really more akin to Raynes Park and wanted to be free to join any future neighbourhood forum for Raynes Park. RPA, NWWRA, RAWW and the RMRA have each agreed on the final boundary.]
- 6.4.7. Turn south beyond Lansdowne Road to include properties along the west side of The Downs.
[The planned boundary was originally planned to run up the middle of The Downs, but in discussion with Ursuline School – who describe themselves as a Wimbledon school – the boundary was amended to take in both sides of The Downs.]
- 6.4.8. Beyond Worple Road, keep east of Lower Downs Road and Kingston Road.
[The Raynes Park Association were very supportive but wished to have their own forum sometime in the future, and therefore agreed that the boundary between Raynes Park and Wimbledon should run down the back of Lower Downs Road. It was pointed out at a PlanWimbledon general meeting that the new council ward boundaries will place Chaseside and Oxford Avenue in Raynes Park. However, we felt that since Wimbledon Chase is included, it was still right to include these two roads.]
- 6.4.9. On reaching Bushey Road, turn east along Kingston Road passing Cannon Hill Lane, then turn south into Manor Gardens so as to include the Nelson Health Centre and Rutlish School grounds.
- 6.4.10. Follow the John Innes Conservation Area southern boundary to Dorset Road.
[Merton Park Ward Residents Association requested that the boundary be drawn along the John Innes Conservation area, as this formed a natural line between Wimbledon and Morden.⁷]
- 6.4.11. Turn north east along Dorset Road to reach Sheridan Road. Cross over the Tramlink line and turn south east to follow the tracks to Parkleigh Road.
[The Wilmore End Residents Association is pleased to be included in the neighbourhood area.]
- 6.4.12. Turn north up Merton Road and then east along Merantun Way to reach the River Wandle, turning north along its left bank (so as to exclude the Wandle Valley Regional Park) to reach Merton High Street, thereby skirting Colliers Wood Ward.
[We met with the Colliers Wood Residents Association and agreed that the boundary should run along the ward boundary with Colliers Wood. They did not consider themselves part of Wimbledon and may wish to form their own neighbourhood forum in the future.]

⁷ On the day of this document update, we have been made aware by MPWRA of their internal reconsideration of the PlanWimbledon boundary, following the confirmation of the new ward boundaries.

- 6.4.13. Turn north up the west bank of the River Wandle to the south west corner of the Wandle Meadow Nature Park. Then turn east along its boundary to include the entire park in our area, and continue eastwards to run north of properties on Boundary Road.
[The Wandle Valley Forum asked us not to run our boundary down the middle of the river, where we understand that the western boundary of the Tooting Bec and Broadway Neighbourhood Forum (currently dormant) runs. We have therefore decided to keep our boundary to the west bank of the river. In addition, although the southernmost part of the Wandle Meadow Nature Park is technically in Colliers Wood, the Wandle Valley Forum also asked us to extend our boundary to take in the whole of the park. We have confirmed with the Colliers Wood Residents Association that they are in agreement with this.]
- 6.4.14. Turn north behind houses on Kimble Road to reach the Thameslink railway, then turn west along the tracks to follow the borough boundary to the east of Waterside Way, continuing past Plough Lane along Summerstown.
- 6.4.15. Turn west along Riverside Road, then south before reaching St Martin's Way, following the borough boundary around the Stadium to reach the River Wandle.
[We are actively trying to contact AFC Wimbledon to discuss the boundary with them.]
- 6.4.16. Turn north along the boundary fence of the left bank of the River Wandle to the west of the borough boundary but rejoin the borough boundary as it leaves the river past Trewint Street.
[The Wandle Valley Forum is supportive of PlanWimbledon's endeavour and understands why the neighbourhood area is not crossing the local authority boundary around Garratt Park and Garratt Mills, resulting in them not to be included.]
- 6.4.17. Before reaching Ravensbury Road, turn west to include properties to the north of Haslemere Avenue. At Acuba Road, turn north, then immediately west again to include properties to the south of Ravensbury Avenue. Continue following the Merton borough boundary along Revelstoke Road, including properties only to the south, to reach the gate into Wimbledon Park. Follow the southern boundary of Wimbledon Park along Home Park Road, turning west to reach Church Road, then turning north up it.
[Wimbledon Park Residents Association had asked that we extend our area into Summerstown and also include all of Wimbledon Park. The Friends of Wimbledon Park also requested that we take in parts of Wandsworth and the Wandle Valley. However, as we were reluctant to cross the borough borders, they then agreed that we take the whole of Wimbledon Park out of our area to leave it free to become part of a future wider Lower Wandle Valley green space area.]
- 6.4.18. On reaching Bathgate Road, turn west to continue within the borough, turning north west along Queensmere Road, following the borough boundary back to the starting point on Parkside.
[The Parkside Residents Association is a member of PlanWimbledon and is pleased to be included in the neighbourhood area. We have reached out to the AELTC and plan to start discussions with them soon.]

7. PlanWimbledon organisation and values

7.1. Purpose

- 7.1.1. The PlanWimbledon Forum is applying to be the relevant body for designation as a neighbourhood forum for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 7.1.2. The purpose of the proposed PlanWimbledon Forum is to:
- Promote or improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the neighbourhood area.

- Canvass the viewpoints of residents, workers and businesses, bringing common understanding and clarity of local needs and wants.
- Capture key priorities and crystalise them in the form of a neighbourhood plan which, subject to referendum, would complement the Merton Local Plan, adding detail and nuance.

7.2. Evolution

- 7.2.1. PlanWimbledon started life in 2017 as the “Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group”. At first a handful of individuals met regularly in local cafes to discuss the idea of creating a neighbourhood forum and the area that it might cover.
- 7.2.2. Initial meetings were fairly informal, with interested people being on an email distribution list to which an open invitation to monthly meetings was extended. Venues for those meetings included the manager’s office at Centre Court Shopping Centre, Wimbledon Hill Church, Wimbledon Arts Space, Wimbledon Library, Dundonald Congregational Church and upstairs at Starbucks, San Lorenzo and Chimichanga restaurants.
- 7.2.3. Advice was initially sought from Tony Burton, a volunteer convener of www.NeighbourhoodPlanners.London who is also an independent examiner on neighbourhood plans. An application to Locality for AECOM to provide pre-designation support was accepted and we continue to receive valuable advice from them.
- 7.2.4. The inauguration of the Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group (as it then was) in January 2020 saw an elected Steering Committee being formed under an initial constitution. It focused on formalising procedures, agreeing the boundary, expanding membership and preparing the application for designation. The group has been meeting weekly since that time.
- 7.2.5. The constitution (see Appendix 8.4) details our objectives and working methods. The current constitution is available to view on the PlanWimbledon website www.planwimbledon.org. The PlanWimbledon Constitution meets the conditions outlined in section 61F(5) of the 1990 Act (as amended).

7.3. Governance

- 7.3.1. The Steering Committee is represented by up to 12 members, elected at the AGM, and includes three officer positions and at least one business representative.
- 7.3.2. During 2020, the Steering Committee reviewed how it was working. It conducted a skills audit to ensure it knew its individual and group capabilities, and it reached out to the wider membership to fill gaps in the skills base. Several new members were recruited and co-opted to the committee as and when people stepped down.
- 7.3.3. The restructured committee defined its mission, devised its strategy and developed an outreach programme to engage and consult with local people (see Section 7.7. Community Engagement and Communication Plan). In addition to explaining the background to the initiative and its aims, the committee made a priority of consulting broadly with those on the fringes of our boundary. Necessary revisions to the map of our neighbourhood area were made as we received feedback (see section 6.4 Proposed Boundary), providing confidence to apply for designation.
- 7.3.4. We rebranded the proposed forum PlanWimbledon (shorter, snappier and more memorable than Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group), defined our values (Sustainability, Prosperity, Community), developed a visual identity and redesigned our website under the new name (www.planwimbledon.org) and colour palette. We plan to use our website to keep our membership informed and to encourage active participation.

- 7.3.5. At an open general meeting on 14 December 2020, attended by 39 members, the following were voted on:
- PlanWimbledon was adopted as the new name to replace Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group, which had served as an interim vehicle for the prospective neighbourhood forum since 25 January 2020.
 - An amended constitution was considered and voted on after being reviewed by the members.
- 7.3.6. At the first AGM of PlanWimbledon on 15 February 2021, attended by 50 members, the following were voted on:
- Three officers (chair, treasurer and secretary) and a further seven Steering Committee members were nominated and elected unanimously.
 - Minor amendments to the constitution were considered and voted on. The PlanWimbledon Constitution meets the conditions outlined in section 61F(5) of the 1990 Act (as amended).
 - The decision that we should submit our application for designation was unanimously supported.

7.4. Membership classification

- 7.4.1. To achieve its objectives in line with its constitution and values, PlanWimbledon is continuously seeking to involve the whole Wimbledon community. We are open to and welcome all stakeholders in our area: individuals, businesses, groups and associations, educational establishments, campaigners, workers, and others.
- 7.4.2. Our outreach plan assigns specific responsibilities to each Steering Committee member and enables us to track progress. The outreach plan is continuously evolving and expanding as we identify new businesses, associations and other organisations within the proposed forum area (see Section 7.7 - Community Engagement and Communications Plan).
- 7.4.3. Each existing or potential member is recorded according to the following classification:

Group membership category

BIZ	Businesses, retail (including charity shops), professional services, etc.
LAND	Real estate developers and landowners specifically
RA	Residents associations and housing associations
ASSOC	Associations, groups, campaigning groups, country and language groups, social groups, help centres, charities, etc.
PARK	Parks, friends of park / recreation grounds, Wandle Valley Forum, etc. (if relating to a specific green space)
WELLB	Sport, healthcare and medical (physical and mental) etc., including medical practices, pharmacies, meditation groups, yoga, pilates etc.
ART	Performing arts, culture, art, music, crafts, etc.
FAITH	Religious and faith groups and buildings
EDU	Educational establishments (nurseries, schools, colleges, etc.)

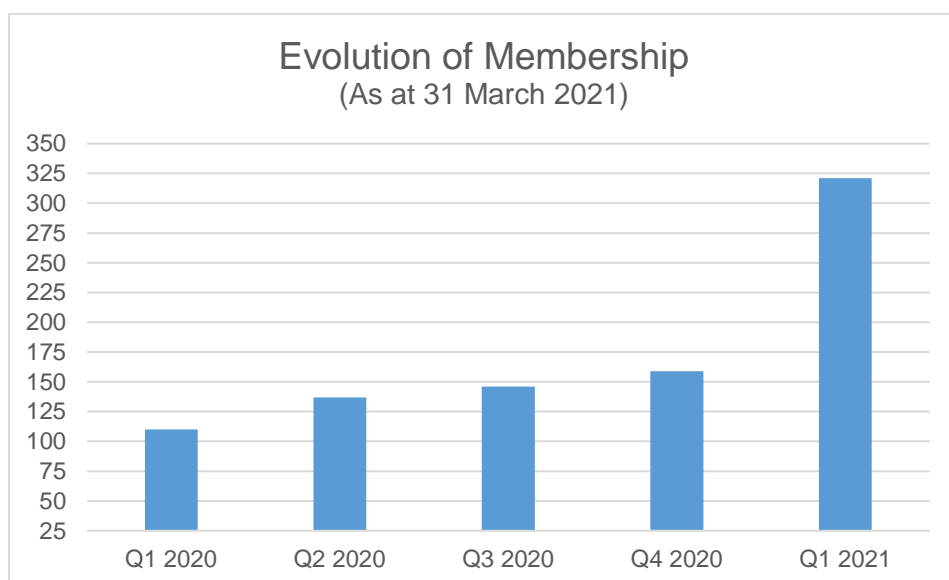
Individual membership category

IRES	Individuals who live in the area
IWL	Individuals who work (but don't live) in the area
IRESWL	Individuals who live and work in the area
IVIS	Individual "visitors" who don't live or work in the area, but with a material and ongoing interest in the area (e.g. social, economic, cultural)
CLLR	Elected members of Merton Council, any part of whose ward falls within the area (these are ex officio members)

- 7.4.4. While the vast majority of members are assigned to only one membership category, a handful of individuals are in our database both in their individual capacity and in their capacity as the named representative of a group.
- 7.4.5. As part of our outreach plan, we have initially prioritised residents associations and business associations in order to give our outreach immediate scale. The initial focus on residents associations was also a key input in defining the boundary of our proposed neighbourhood area.
- 7.4.6. The first Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, which struck some six weeks after our inauguration, has severely affected the lives of many, and has rendered most of the traditional outreach methodologies to expand our membership almost impossible. It has also changed the perspective of the individuals, families and businesses who have experienced shifts in priorities and in their time availability. Fortunately, people are now growing more at ease with online contact, opening greater opportunities which we are seizing.
- 7.4.7. The PlanWimbledon Steering Committee has leveraged our relationships, informal networks, friends and family, work and community colleagues, as well as modern technologies and Merton Council listings to build our membership base.
- 7.4.8. This membership building process and the engagement with the local community and stakeholders are fundamental and ongoing activities of PlanWimbledon throughout our existence.
- 7.4.9. As a result of these efforts, PlanWimbledon has already achieved a sizeable and engaged membership base that is large, diverse and very supportive.

7.5. Neighbourhood area membership

- 7.5.1. PlanWimbledon's membership is now well in excess of 300 and is continuing to grow steadily, as can be seen from the chart below. The chart shows all members of all categories combined (individuals and associations are each counted as one member). It reflects the tremendous effort that PlanWimbledon is deploying to grow its membership, validate the proposed forum area boundary and engage with the local community and stakeholders.



- 7.5.2. The enclosed membership distribution map covering the proposed neighbourhood area shows our current membership coverage (Appendix 8.2 Membership Distribution Dot Map)
- 7.5.3. 29 members who have agreed to support the application are listed in section 4. All have agreed and confirmed by email to have their name, post code and status accompany the application, to be published on the council website. These are listed, including name, street address (provided separately to the local authority) and local interest, confirming widespread support from across the neighbourhood area. The members include representatives of a range of local interest groups, residents and local businesses.
- 7.5.4. Stephen Hammond, Member of Parliament for Wimbledon, is fully supportive of PlanWimbledon and our application. He hopes that the establishment of the forum will lead to the preparation of a neighbourhood plan which attracts widespread support.
- 7.5.5. Our membership can be broken down further as follows.

Current membership breakdown by category	Count	%
Individual residents & residents working locally	237	73%
Residents associations	9	3%
Businesses	23	7%
Councillors	17	5%
Individual visitors or working locally (but not resident)	22	7%
Faith groups	8	2%
Other groups	8	2%
Total	324	100%

Current membership breakdown by type	Count	%
Individuals (IRES, IRESWL, IVIS, IWL, CLLR)	276	85%
Businesses, groups & associations	48	15%
Total	324	100%

7.5.6. **Individual residents:** Individual residents account for 73% of our membership base. Representation amongst local residents is even more significant once the number of people in residents associations and other groups are taken into account.

7.5.7. **Residents associations:**

- a) PlanWimbledon has identified 37 residents associations that partly or wholly fall within our proposed boundary. As at 31 March 2021, 27 of them have been reached out to, most of which now have an ongoing dialogue with us. Nine residents associations have joined PlanWimbledon to date. Those residents associations, while they account each for a single member in our database, represent a large number of residents and a significant geographic footprint of support from the local population.
- b) The engagement with residents associations has been the key source of input into refining the shape of our PlanWimbledon boundary area (see Section 6.4 Proposed Boundary).
- c) Every residents association we have been in touch with is supportive of neighbourhood planning. None of those residents associations that fall within our boundary area has refused, in principle, to join PlanWimbledon. Several are currently going through the necessary process of consulting their whole membership base before joining as a society.
- d) Those residents associations that have declined to join have done so either because they did not consider that they “belonged” to the “Wimbledon” area (and the proposed boundary has been adjusted accordingly), or because they have ambitions to create their own neighbourhood plan. Again, we have agreed where the future boundaries should meet and look forward to sharing learnings with them.

7.5.8. **Businesses and landowners:**

- a) The PlanWimbledon Area includes Wimbledon town centre in addition to several significant commercial high streets and shopping parades which are distributed throughout the area.
- b) We have identified the following business areas to date:

Wimbledon town centre
Wimbledon Hill Road Conservation Area shopping parade
Wimbledon village
Leopold Road Conservation Area shopping parade
Arthur Road Conservation Area shopping parade
Wimbledon Chase station shopping parade
Nelson Hospital shopping parade
Kingston Road shopping parade
South Wimbledon station shopping parade
Merton High Street
Morden Road
Haydons Road station shopping parade
North Road
Weir Road, Gap Road and Plough Lane area

- c) In terms of business associations, the whole area is served by the Merton Chamber of Commerce, Wimbledon town centre by the Love Wimbledon Business Improvement District, and Wimbledon village by the Wimbledon Village Business Association. The smaller high streets do not seem currently to have any active business associations.
- d) As part of our outreach plan to businesses, we have initially prioritised business associations in order to give our outreach immediate scale.

- e) Wimbledon Village Business Association has already joined us, and we have an ongoing dialogue with the other business associations. We are very enthusiastic about more of them joining us, as channeling the voice of the businesses they represent is one of their core missions.
 - f) The pandemic is severely restricting the interactions we are able to have with individual businesses. It not only drastically reduces our available communication channels with them, but also results in businesses being less receptive, with many of them being currently fully or partially closed, and those that are open having limited capacity to interact with us.
 - g) Nevertheless, our continued effort in building relationships with businesses is paying off. Not only are businesses the second largest member category, accounting for 7% of our membership base, but we are also seeing growing momentum, with new business memberships accounting for 9% of new 2021 registrations to date.
- 7.5.9. **Councillors:** Our neighbourhood area includes seven wards (complete or partial), represented by a total of 21 local councillors. Of these, 17 are already signed-up members. Each ward is represented by at least one councillor who is a member of PlanWimbledon.
- 7.5.10. **Faith groups:** At present, six different faiths are represented by seven establishments, a pleasing reflection of PlanWimbledon's openness and inclusivity. There are ongoing dialogues and outreaches for more to join us.
- 7.5.11. **Visitors and local workers:** Wimbledon attracts individuals who are not resident in the neighbourhood area but who come to work locally or who are "visitors" (see definition above).
- 7.5.12. **Other groups:** The PARK, ASSOC, ART, WELLB and EDU categories together account for 2% of our membership base. We have reached out and have ongoing dialogues with more groups and associations, which we expect to come to fruition once common projects, dedicated workshops and opportunities provide input, crystallising how they can contribute to the preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

7.6. Membership classification metrics

- 7.6.1. Membership is recorded and tracked under a separate and confidential database. When applying for membership, individual residents are asked to supply a range of classification data so we can monitor the diversity of our members. This is, of course, voluntary and not all individual members provide these details, but we have collected as much such data as is reasonably possible. Only individuals aged 18 or over can formally be members.
- 7.6.2. Gender classification metrics

Individual Residents - Gender			
	PlanWimbledon Membership		PlanWimbledon Area*
	Count	%	%
Male	97	42%	49%
Female	121	52%	51%
Other	1	0%	-
Not available	12	5%	-
Total	231	100%	0%

7.6.3. Ethnicity classification metrics

Individual Residents - Ethnicity			
	PlanWimbledon Membership		PlanWimbledon Area*
	Count	%	%
White	186	81%	79%
Others	16	7%	21%
Not available	29	13%	-
Total	231	100%	100%

7.6.4. Age classification metrics

Individual Residents - Age			
	PlanWimbledon Membership		PlanWimbledon Area*
	Count	%	%
18 - 24	0	0%	6%
25 - 34	7	3%	25%
35 - 44	26	11%	26%
45 - 54	45	19%	16%
55 - 64	58	25%	11%
65 - 74	43	19%	8%
75+	17	7%	7%
PNTS**	4	2%	-
N/A	31	13%	-
Total	231	100%	100%

* Note: PlanWimbledon Area is a weighted average of Merton Council's classification data for residents in those wards which partly or wholly fall in the PlanWimbledon area as follows: Abbey 50%, Dundonald 75%, Hillside 100%, Merton Park 25%, Trinity 100%, Village 50%, Wimbledon Park 100%. PlanWimbledon Area age metrics rebased excluding 0 – 17 population.

** Prefer Not To Say.

7.7. Community engagement and communication plan

- a) Our community engagement and communication plan is articulated around each stage of the neighbourhood planning cycle.

Stage 1: Preparation of our application for designation: During this stage, we are engaging with as many communities as possible during lockdown across the area to agree a boundary, and grow as diverse and geographically spread membership as possible. Growing and maintaining a large and diverse membership will remain a key task throughout the existence of PlanWimbledon.

Stage 2: Consultation: We will generate publicity and engage more broadly with people across the entire neighbourhood to create awareness and understanding of our aims, and flag the forthcoming consultation process to be undertaken by the council on the proposed area.

Stage 3: Post-designation: We will conduct widespread consultation and discussion on what people and stakeholders within the area see as important priorities, before moving on to consulting on the resulting content of the neighbourhood plan, ensuring that all groups are involved.

Stage 4: Referendum: We will combine our efforts with those of the council to create awareness of and engagement with the referendum on the neighbourhood plan, which will be undertaken by the council.

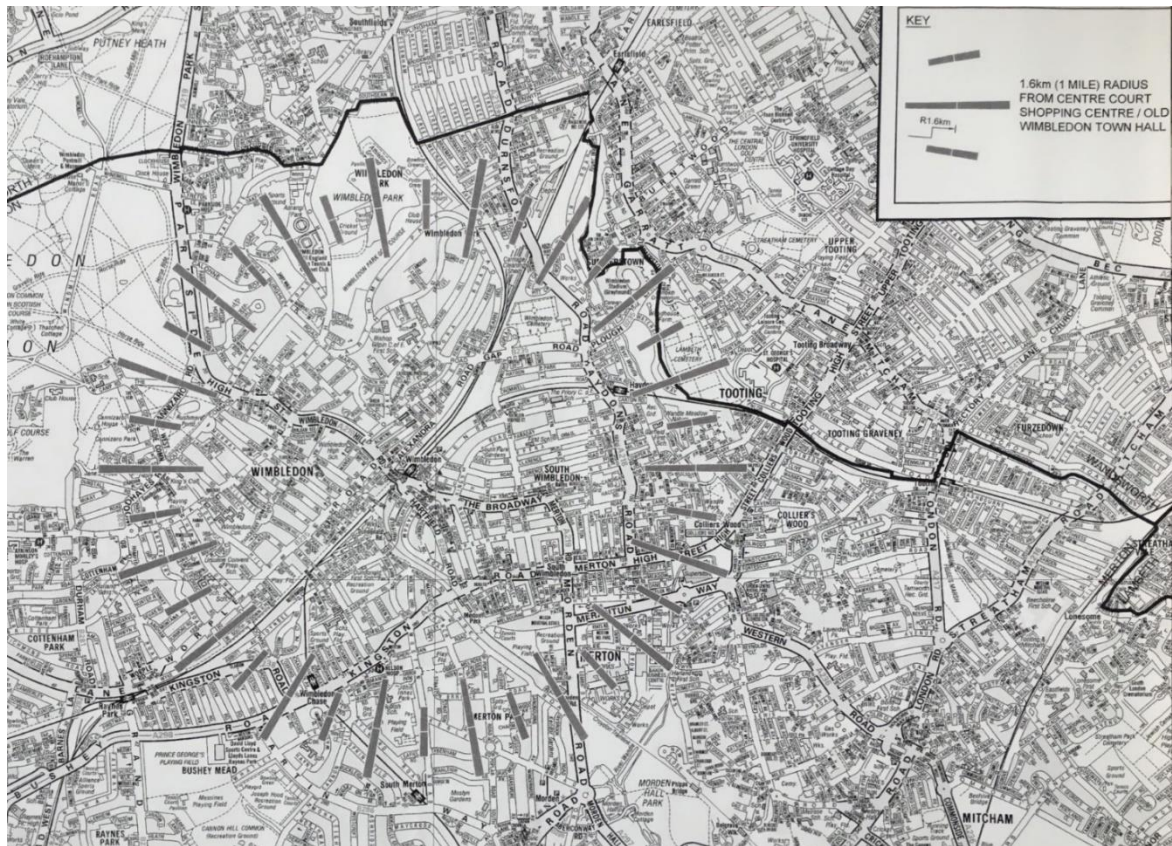
Stage 5: Neighbourhood plan effectiveness and progress: Once our neighbourhood plan is in effect, we will continue involving the whole community in monitoring its effectiveness and we will review the need for updates.

- b) At each stage, the communications to and engagement with the community will be underpinned by
- **Clear objectives:** such as creating awareness and encouraging engagement and voting.
 - **Defined targeted audiences:** such as businesses, landowners, residents, younger people and children, people with disabilities, and associations.
 - **Key messages:** such as bringing the community together, leveraging local knowledge, and enabling people to have their say.
 - **Communication channels to be used for each target market and message:** such as local media, social media, leaflets and workshops.
- c) With an anticipated relaxation of Covid-19-related restrictions, we expect to have a broad array of **communication and engagement channels** at our disposal, including the following:
- **Local media:** Wimbledon Times, Time and Leisure, Darling, etc.
 - **Social media:** Twitter [@plan_wimbledon](#), Instagram, Facebook Groups (e.g. Wimbledon Village Live, South Wimbledon News and Views), Nextdoor, etc.
 - **Our website:** www.planwimbledon.org
 - **Our members' own databases:** such as the membership lists of residents associations, business associations and local associations (while respecting data protection restrictions).
 - **Merton Council's contact mechanisms:** such as My Merton and email lists (if available) and community forums
 - **Webinars and Q&A sessions**
 - **Surveys**
 - **Leafleting**
 - **Community engagement and targeted workshops**
 - **Stalls and other on-the-ground presence**
- d) As we progress, these channels will enable us to engage further with specific target groups, such as the younger population. Not only might social media reach a larger audience of young adults, we also anticipate holding workshops in collaboration with schools and other associations that will reach a broader spectrum of the younger population.
- e) Throughout our continued engagement with the local community, we anticipate that focus groups and workshops targeted, for example, at local businesses, would help identify the range of planning needs specific to particular groups.

- f) On the social media front, we have laid the foundation of a professional approach and strengthened our brand by renaming ourselves as PlanWimbledon and upgrading our visual identity. This will enable us to have a consistent and recognisable presence across all media types. We have already collected support from community actors which have a social presence and have offered to relay our communication among residents and businesses alike.
- g) Finally, the PlanWimbledon Steering Committee has already considered and discussed an internal organisation matrix to structure and coordinate the action of sub-groups and sub-committees in order to ensure our effectiveness in involving all parts of our community in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan.

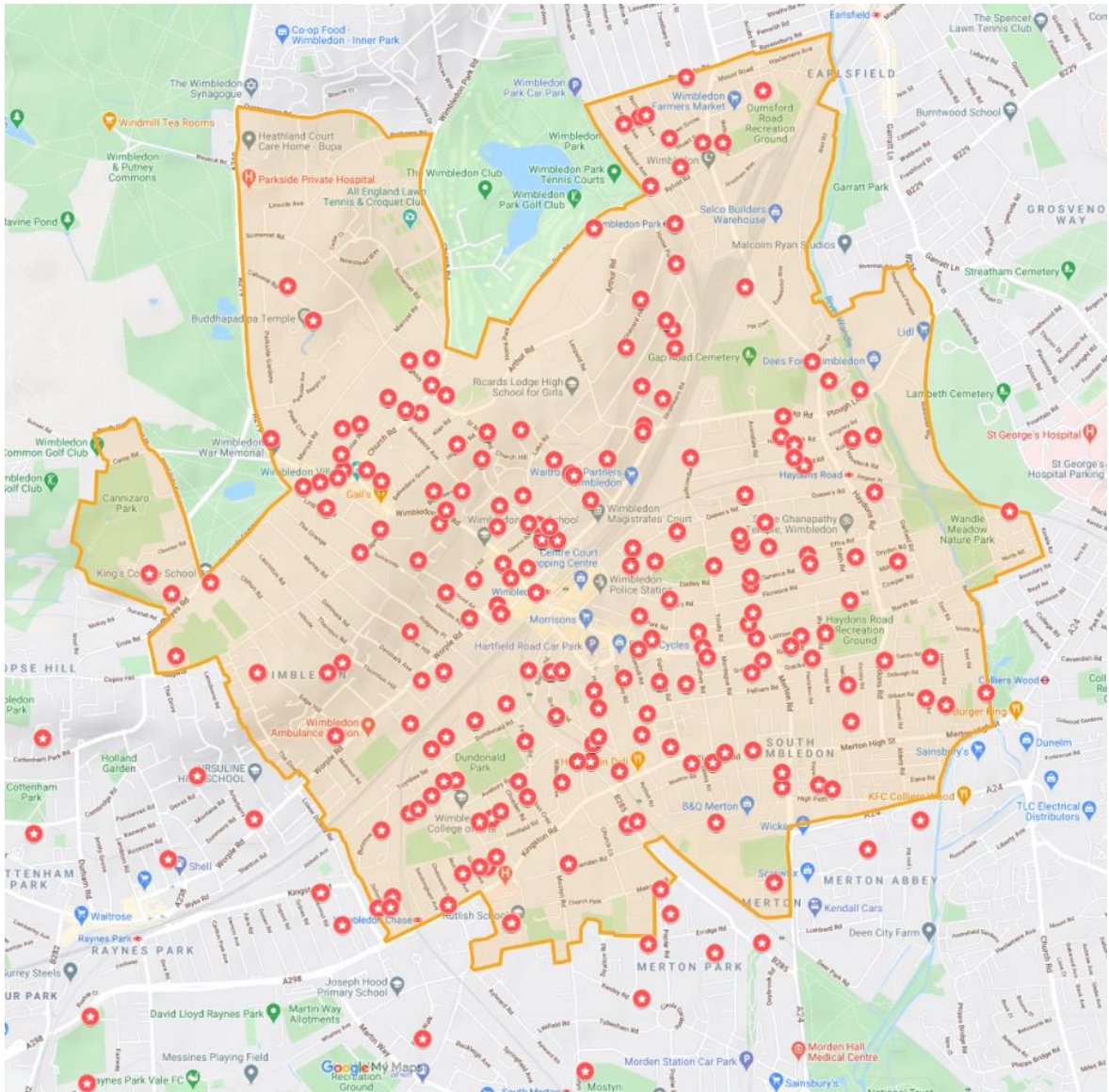
8. Appendices

8.1. Initial one mile radius vector map



Appendices

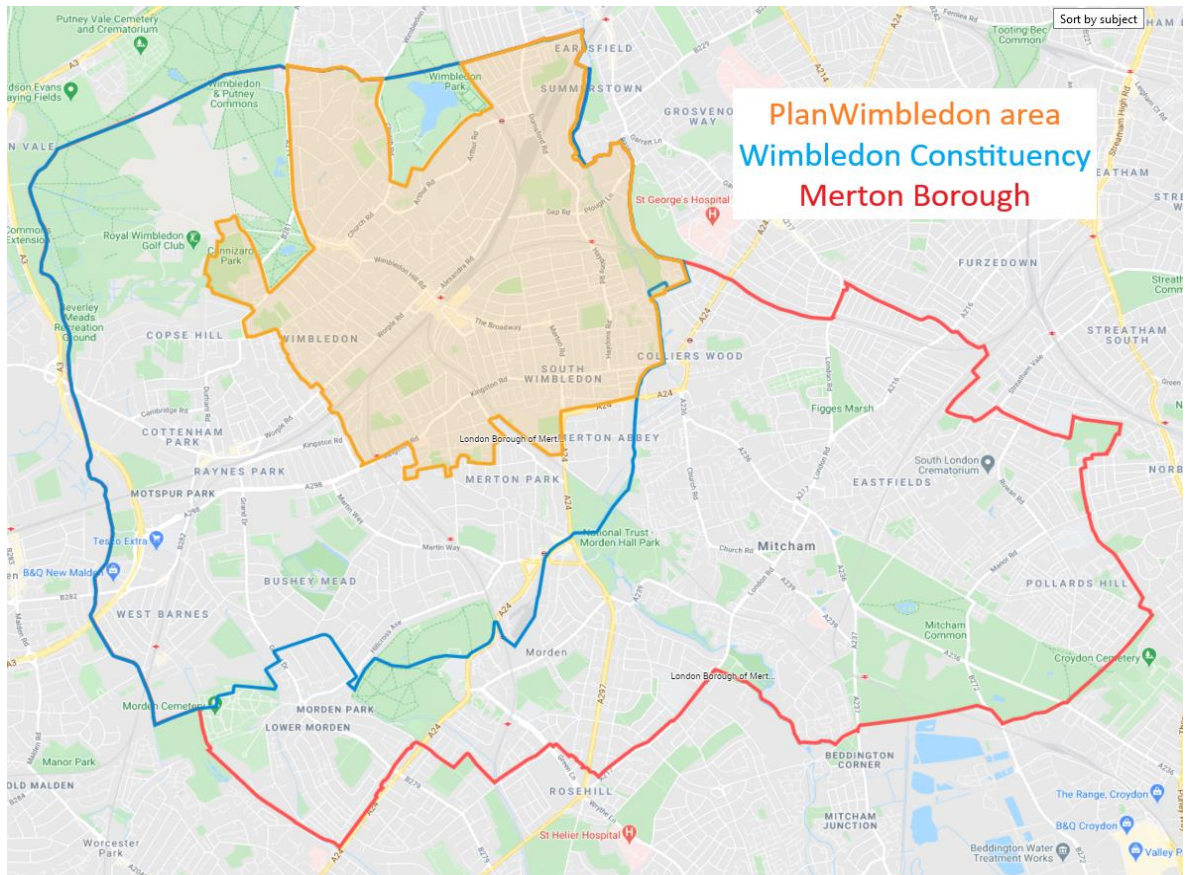
8.2. PlanWimbledon Area with Members



Note: As at 3 April 2021.

Appendices

8.3. PlanWimbledon area, Wimbledon Constituency, Merton Borough



Appendices

8.4. Constitution



Constitution of PlanWimbledon

(formerly known as **Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group**)

The name of the Group shall be **PlanWimbledon**

1. DEFINITIONS:

In this document certain word(s) shall have the meaning ascribed to them as below:

1.1 **"Group"** means PlanWimbledon (formerly known as the Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group).

1.2 **"Neighbourhood Plan"** and **"Neighbourhood Forum"** have the meanings ascribed to them in the Localism Act 2011, Schedule 9 Neighbourhood Planning.

1.3 **"The Wimbledon Area"** and **"Area"** is the proposed area for which the Group will develop a Neighbourhood Plan post designation.

1.4 **"General Meeting"** is a meeting of members properly arranged as described in this constitution.

1.5 **"Conflicts of interest"** A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties because of their duties to more than one person or organisation.

2. OBJECTIVES:

2.1 The Group is established with the key objective to form an authorised Neighbourhood Forum which would prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the Wimbledon Area. The aims of this are:

- To promote / improve the balance of the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the Area
- To ensure full community involvement, from all sections of the community.

- To provide opportunities for local people to inform and influence local decisions.
- To improve democratic participation by local people.
- To establish all necessary sub-groups to enable progress on and completion of all sections of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To make necessary arrangements for the publication of the Neighbourhood Plan, including publicising the Plan.
- To liaise with the Local Authority, its relevant Committees, and its representatives on preparation of specific aspects of the Plan.
- To establish a process to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan

3. AFFILIATIONS, OPERATIONS, AND INDEPENDENCE:

3.1 The Group shall be politically independent.

3.2 All members of the Group shall act in the best interests of the Group and the Area and shall follow the good governance guidelines set out in the attached guidance (and any subsequent updates): <http://www.goodgovernancecode.org.uk>.

3.3 The Group shall also act in accordance with best practice in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and in accordance with Government guidance for such preparation and shall seek to work collaboratively with the Local Planning Authority to achieve this.

4. MEMBERSHIP:

4.1 Membership of the Group shall be open to all who are interested in actively furthering the purposes of the Group, specifically, those who live or work in the Wimbledon Area. The composition of the Membership should reflect the scope and character of the geographical Area covered by the Group and also the different sections of the community. The Group shall operate without distinction or discrimination on the grounds of sex, disability, sexual orientation, race, or of political, religious, or other opinions.

4.2 A Member is someone who has provided the necessary information to the Secretary and has been accepted as a Member to attend General Meetings, by submitting satisfactory evidence of eligibility along with contact details which may be used by the Group for its lawful purposes.

Only members over the age of 18 are permitted to vote at Meetings. Members must declare any conflicts of interest. An individual can only exercise one vote. There shall be a minimum of 21 Members.

4.3 Full Membership shall be open to:

- i. individuals who live in the area.
- ii. individuals who work in the area.
- iii. community organisations which operate in the area, through their duly nominated and appointed representative.
- iv. businesses, educational establishments or other entities which operate in the area, through their duly nominated and appointed representative.

4.4 Associate Membership shall be open to:

i. individuals who are elected members of Merton Council, where any part of the ward they represent falls within the Area.

ii. organisations of residents and businesses may join as Associate Members.

iii. associate members will be ex officio members i.e. attending but non-voting members

4.5 New members may join by applying via the website.

4.6 The decision to accept an application of new individual membership is the responsibility of the Officers, to be determined by majority vote. Refusal to accept an application for membership must be given to the applicant, along with a full and valid reason.

4.7 The Secretary shall be responsible for the maintenance of an up-to-date list of membership.

4.8 Lists of members and contact details are the sole ownership of the Group.

5. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:

The Group has the right not to accept an individual or organisation into Membership and may terminate the Membership of any Member whose behaviour is not in the best interests of the Group. Any such decision to terminate a Membership shall be taken by the Steering Committee and there shall be a right of appeal at a General Meeting.

6. STEERING COMMITTEE:

6.1 The Steering Committee shall consist of all Officers and not more than eight other Members, at least one of whom must be representative of business interests in the Area and shall be responsible for running the affairs of the Group and may take decisions on its behalf. A decision to consult or to submit a Neighbourhood Plan shall be taken by a General Meeting.

6.2 A quorum for Meetings of the Steering Committee shall consist of five Members, one of whom must be an Officer. In the event of an equality in the votes cast on any issue to be decided, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. In the event that the Chair (and Vice Chair) are not able to attend a Meeting of the Steering Committee, its Members shall agree a Chair for the Meeting.

6.3 Nominations for election to the Steering Committee shall be made at or before the Annual General Meeting. They must be supported by a seconder and require the consent of the proposed nominee. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place in such manner as the Chair of the Meeting may direct.

6.4 The Steering Committee shall have the power to co-opt further members (who shall attend in an advisory and non-voting capacity). The consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained.

7. OFFICERS:

7.1 The Group will include the following official positions, hereinafter referred to as “the Officers”, with the roles set out below: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to be elected annually by simple majority vote.

7.2 The Officers’ role descriptions are as follows:

i. Chair.

- Shall be the principal presiding officer and chairperson for the Group and meetings.
- Shall possess a casting vote on occasions where voting is tied.
- Shall lead the Group in all communication and business with external organisations and individuals, including being the Forum's spokesperson.
- Shall have the power to take urgent decisions for the interim in between meetings on the Group. These will then be reviewed at the next Forum meeting.
- Shall enforce the Constitution.

ii. Secretary:

- Shall be responsible for maintaining all records and notes.
- Shall be responsible for all correspondence with Group members.
- Shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date list of members.

iii. Treasurer:

- Shall be responsible for keeping all budgeting records.
- Shall be responsible for monitoring expenditure.
- Shall be responsible for the publication of a statement of accounts.
- Shall be responsible for applying for available grants.

Officers shall be determined from time to time at a General Meeting of the Group.

7.3 Nominations for the election of Officers shall be made at, or before, the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations shall be supported by a seconder and require the consent of the proposed nominee who must be present at the General Meeting. The election of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of Members to form the Steering Committee.

7.4 All Officers and Steering Group members shall relinquish their office every year and shall be eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting. If a vacancy is not filled at a General Meeting or becomes vacant during the course of the year, the Steering Committee shall have the power to elect a Member, or Members, to fill such position(s). The consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained.

7.5 The Officers may co-opt further officers to assist them in carrying out their duties. These co-opted officers should have clear, agreed job descriptions.

7.6 The Steering Group will elect a Vice Chair from amongst their number.

8. GENERAL MEETINGS:

8.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held each year to receive and approve the Steering Committee's report, the audited accounts and to elect Officers and other Members to form the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall decide when General and other Meetings of the Group shall be held and shall give at least 14 days' notice of such meetings to all Members. The Secretary shall compile the minutes of such Meetings which will be made available to all Members, after approval by the Steering Committee.

8.2 Ten Members, personally present, including at least one of the Officers of the Group, shall constitute a quorum for a General Meeting of the Group.

8.3 Meetings can take place either in person or online. Members attending a meeting online shall be deemed to be attending in person.

9. FINANCES:

9.1 The Group may raise such funds as may be necessary to carry out its activities, from donations, grants and other appropriate sources. The Group shall have its own Bank Account post designation. The Group will not own any premises.

9.2 The Officers of the Group, on behalf of the Steering Committee shall, out of monies received by the Group, pay all proper expenses of administration and management of the Group. After the payment of the administration and management expenses and the setting aside to reserve of such sums as may be deemed expedient, the remaining funds of the Group shall be applied, by the Steering Committee, in furtherance of the purposes of the Group.

9.3 The Treasurer will present an annual report of income and expenditure to the Annual General Meeting.

10. CONFLICT RESOLUTION WITHIN THE GROUP:

At all times, the Group will recognise the primary need to encourage community involvement in, and support for, the Neighbourhood Plan. If it proves not possible for the Group to reach agreement during any stage of preparing the Plan, every effort shall be made by the membership of the Forum to resolve the difference by negotiation. Where this does not resolve the situation, the Group will ensure that the alternative view is included in the relevant stage of community engagement.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY:

It is understood, and agreed to, that the disclosure of confidential information may provide certain information that is, and must be kept, confidential. To ensure the protection of such information and to preserve any confidentiality necessary, it is agreed that all committee members will adhere to the specific confidentiality guidance notes which will be issued by the Steering Group from time-to-time.

12. AMENDMENTS:

The terms of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds of Members present voting in favour at a General Meeting, provided that 14 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all Members.

13. NOTICES:

Any notice required to be given by these Rules shall be deemed to be duly given if left at, sent by prepaid post, addressed, or emailed to the address of that Member, last notified to the Secretary

14. DURATION:

When designated as a Neighbourhood Forum, the Group shall endure for five years unless renewed. If the group wishes to renew then prior notice of at least one year should be given.

15. DISSOLUTION:

In the event of the winding-up of the Group, the available funds of the Group shall be transferred to such one or more bodies having objects similar, or reasonably similar, to those herein before declared as may be chosen by the Steering Committee and approved by the Meeting of the Group at which the decision to dissolve the Group is confirmed.

January 2021

Appendices

8.5. Minutes from the inaugural meeting of 25th of January 2020

MINUTES FROM THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE WIMBLEDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP ON THE 25TH OF JANUARY 2020 AT HILLSIDE CHURCH, 37, WORPLE ROAD, SW19 1EL

1. List of Attendees: (56 in total)

2. Opening Business:

- Agenda attached
- Presentation from Tony Burton attached and notes from Rob Cowan and Suzanne Grocott and Jonathan Parker attached.
- Link to proposed area attached
- Questions were raised on the cohesion of the area given its size and how the Forum would relate to other local groups such as Friends of Wimbledon Town Centre and local Residents' Associations

3. Official Business:

- The Draft Constitution was adopted – copy attached
- The following officers were elected:
 - (i) Chair: Vince Harris
 - (ii) Secretary: Jonathan Parker
 - (iii) Treasurer: Suzanne Grocott
- The following members were elected to the Steering Committee:
 - (i) Rob Cowan
 - (ii) Tim Day
 - (iii) Regina Denton
 - (iv) Lynne Gordon
 - (v) Sara Sharp
 - (vi) Leigh Terrafranca
 - (vii) Deborah Crosby
 - (viii) Ghigo Berni - Business member

4. Closing Business

VH closed the meeting. He thanked everyone for coming and encouraged all to register as members of the group so they could be kept informed of progress.

5. Next Meeting:

tbc

Appendices

8.6. Minutes from the general meeting of 14th of December 2020



Plan Wimbledon - Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group ("WNPG") - General Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, 14th of December 2020, *remotely via Zoom. 8pm*

Chair: Suzanne Grocott (SG) Minutes: Lynne Gordon (LG)

Attendees: 39

Chair's Welcome:

SG welcomed everyone. She reported that there had not been a meeting for all members of the group since the inaugural AGM held on the 25th of January 2020. Covid had impacted the progress of the group as it had limited its ability to consult widely, nevertheless a great deal of work had been taking place which would be detailed at the meeting.

SG reported that several people had left the Steering Group since its inauguration and several people had been co-opted for assigned tasks, this was to be expected in a volunteer group as people's personal circumstances change. She thanked everyone for their contribution, in particular, Jonathan Parker who had been the driving force behind achieving inauguration.

Planning Overview:

Rob Cowan gave an overview of what the new Government White Paper means for planning and the key developments outlined in Future Merton's draft Local Plan for Wimbledon (presentation attached).

PlanWimbledon: An Overview of Developments in 2020:

Purpose/Strategy/Area/Membership map/Name/ Logo/Team/The Path to Designation (presentation attached)

Approval of the New Constitution:

LG explained that as the group progresses towards designation, it will require a more detailed constitution, therefore, a new draft constitution for the group had been circulated with the invitation to the meeting. There had been feedback on three points:

1.1: Greater clarity on definition of the new name

4.8: Giving access to the group's membership list would contravene GDPR guidelines so this would need to be removed

11.0: The confidentiality clause was felt to be too draconian and this would be replaced by a code of conduct which could be updated on a regular basis.

LG would circulate a revised constitution in the next few days and would ask for approval from members.

Getting Involved:

AM made a call for help from members. In particular, help was urgently needed in the following areas:

Database Development and Management: Software; Digital Mapping; Social Media; Legal; Financial; Community Liaison (several); Online Surveys.

Questions:

Following the presentation, the following points were made/ questions were asked:

1. Clarification on the London Plan proposals for the various areas of Wimbledon. Wimbledon Town Centre was earmarked for more office/business development with housing development being centred on South Wimbledon, Colliers Wood.
2. There was concern about current proposed building heights, notably the Centre Court sales brochure and those in Colliers Wood.
3. Level of membership required to achieve designation. It was explained that there was an absolute minimum of 21 but many more would be needed for an area of our proposed size. Members also need to be spread across the whole area and represent the diversity of the area. The final plan will be subject to a referendum, so awareness and support of the process/plan needs to be high.
4. The plan should encompass as wide a number of issues as possible e.g., the South West Waste Plan since these impact greatly on planning within the area
5. It would be good to bring together all the planners who are active within the various RAs and community groups to provide a central resource and prevent duplication of effort. The Wimbledon Society should be part of this.
6. Since the Neighbourhood Plan has to be in line with the Local Plan, what could it add? This needs to be explored further as the new proposals are just being published but it was thought that it could add much more detail / determine precise standards on design codes, building standards; sustainability etc.
7. Timetable for Designation: It was hoped that the group would apply for designation by the end of March, the LBM Planning Department would then have a three-month consultation period and, if successful, would probably go to Full Council in September and we would get their decision by November.
8. Several members present congratulated the group on the progress made and many offered their help and active support in the future.
9. Jonathan Parker asked if "when the Group applies to the Council for designation, in order to show competence to the planning officers being asked to endorse the application, will this year's SteerCo meeting minutes be made available?" It was confirmed that the SteerCo minutes would be available for inspection by the Council if required during the designation process.

Next Meeting:

This would be the AGM scheduled for the end of January 2021. Date and time tbc.

Future Merton
C/o Paul McGarry and Tara Butler

Tuesday 15 June 2021

Re: PlanWimbledon designation consultation results – PlanWimbledon representation letter

Dear Paul and Tara,

Thank you sharing with us the results of the public consultation about PlanWimbledon's application to be designated as a neighbourhood forum, which closed on 24 May 2021.

IN A NUTSHELL

We are delighted by the extremely strong participation from the community, with more than 1,300 responses cast and over seven hundred separate comments provided. The overwhelming support from around 90% of the responses for both the proposed neighbourhood plan area and for PlanWimbledon to be designated as a neighbourhood forum sends an unequivocal message: the local community wants PlanWimbledon to go ahead in line with its application.

PlanWimbledon has fulfilled all the criteria for the London Borough of Merton (LBM) to designate us as a neighbourhood forum for our proposed area. We would like to highlight the key criteria as follows:

- ✓ PlanWimbledon's membership includes at least one individual who lives, who works and is an elected member. PlanWimbledon has fulfilled this criterion since before the public consultation.
- ✓ PlanWimbledon's membership is drawn from different parts of the area.
As per our application prior to the public consultation and further through the updated membership metrics in appendix, this criterion was already fulfilled by PlanWimbledon prior to the public consultation.
- ✓ PlanWimbledon's membership is drawn from different sections of the community in that area.
This criterion was already fulfilled by PlanWimbledon in its application prior to the public consultation.
- ✓ PlanWimbledon's purpose reflects the character of that area.
PlanWimbledon's ultimate purpose is the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for the area which will complement the Merton Local Plan. Our mission is "to shape a better, more

sustainable Wimbledon to enhance the lives of future generations of residents, businesses, workers and visitors”. We will be doing so with our three core values at the heart of our work:

Sustainability: PlanWimbledon’s work will be consistent with LBM’s and the UK’s declared climate emergency.

Prosperity: We love Wimbledon and are excited to see it grow and evolve. Our mission can be achieved only by fostering a strong local economy. We support Wimbledon’s growth and relentlessly seek to bring the businesses, the local authority, residents and local associations together to achieve our mission.

Community: By nature, a neighbourhood forum brings people together to work on a common project. As per our mission statement, we seek to provide benefits for all communities and businesses within the area.

CONSULTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The consultation results show that there is overwhelming support for both the proposed neighbourhood plan area and for PlanWimbledon to be designated as a neighbourhood forum.

Nonetheless there are a few important matters raised in the consultation responses which we are compelled to address unambiguously below.

1. The democratic nature of PlanWimbledon

A handful of individual comments were received querying such matters as our legitimacy, constitution, representativeness, and transparency. Having such a handful of comments is inevitable given the complexity of the process of neighbourhood planning and we’ll keep engaging with the local community further on this matter.

There is an overwhelmingly larger number of positive consultation responses supportive of PlanWimbledon as a neighbourhood forum, including specific references to our democratic nature. To select just a few:

- *I think it’s great to get the community helping shape the future development of the place we live and work in. A proper democratic voice.*
- *Because the group contains people with varied interests and experience and relevant qualifications. The information I’ve seen tells me the group wants to work with all kinds of organisations, businesses etc in order to create the neighbourhood plan.*
- *It is community-led and a credible coalition of local citizens and relevant sectors.*
- *The group is professionally run and represents a broad cross-section of Wimbledon stakeholders.*
- *The diverse mix of people in the group make it very representative of the neighbourhood area and thus a compelling voice for the area.*
- *The Committee has a wide mix of people with different areas of expertise to enable them to represent the entire area on the variety of issues that will inevitably crop up.*

It is important to note that:

- Our legitimacy as a neighbourhood group comes from the Localism Act 2011.
- Our constitution has been drawn up with AECOM's independent advice.
- Anyone living, working or being a regular visitor to and around the proposed area who would like to participate in a neighbourhood plan benefit from our open policy membership and can become a member of PlanWimbledon at no cost.
- We hold regular general meetings.
- All members of the Steering Committee, including its named officers, must stand for election or re-election each year at the AGM. Any member can put themselves forward as a candidate for a Steering Committee position.
- We are committed to publishing minutes and reports from our committees and working parties via our website once we are designated as a neighbourhood forum.

Finally, it is worth reiterating that PlanWimbledon is a non-partisan, not-for-profit group. We are not a lobbying or campaigning group. We are donating our time, energy, and talent, and have no financial interest. We conduct ourselves with full respect for other community stakeholders and their interests. We have Wimbledon at heart.

2. The proposed area is an appropriate and workable size

The PlanWimbledon proposed area has been determined through wide consultation with all stakeholders around the edges of the area and within it. The area is the will of the community, reflecting their views on where the Wimbledon neighbourhood begins and ends.

The area is cohesive, and it conforms to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. People and businesses have asserted their belonging to it.

The purpose of the Localism Act 2011 and neighbourhood planning are to empower the local community to have a say on how their area develops. The local community has spoken and fundamentally validated the appropriateness of the area by giving overwhelmingly positive support in the public consultation.

Making a judgement about the size of the area is therefore a very subjective exercise that should not play a role in the designation process. Moreover, it is important to note that there is no maximum recommended size of area for neighbourhood planning. While the overall size of the proposed Wimbledon area has attracted some concern from certain quarters, it would not be the largest neighbourhood forum area.

BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR PLANWIMBLEDON

We understand from our conversation of Friday 11 June that Future Merton is satisfied that all criteria for designation of the proposed neighbourhood area have been met.

While Future Merton has acknowledged that the proposed area is predominantly residential in nature, we understand that Future Merton is currently looking further into PlanWimbledon's representativeness as the potential neighbourhood forum for the area. In particular, the question was raised about whether our business membership and support are representative of all three key business categories (Micro, SME, Large).

We would like to provide you with the following further evidence to demonstrate that we are adequately representing business for the purpose of our designation as neighbourhood forum for the proposed area.

1. PlanWimbledon's area is overwhelmingly characterized by micro and SME businesses, which are well represented in PlanWimbledon's membership.

For the avoidance of doubt, PlanWimbledon has applied for the proposed neighbourhood area as a whole. Our application should therefore be assessed against the whole area. We have investigated publicly available data on business, using Wimbledon constituency 2020 ONS data as the best proxy available.

Businesses by size in specific constituencies, 2020

	<u>Wimbledon</u>		<u>Mitcham and Morden</u>		<u>UK</u>
	Number	%	Number	%	%
	of businesses		of businesses		
Size of businesses					
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	6,690	92.7%	3,915	93.9%	89.6%
Small (10 to 49 employees)	425	5.9%	220	5.3%	8.5%
Medium-sized (50 to 249 employees)	80	1.1%	30	0.7%	1.5%
Large (250+ employees)	20	0.3%	0	0.0%	0.4%
<i>All businesses</i>	<i>7,215</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>4,170</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Source: [ONS, Business activity size and location, 2020, via NOMIS database](#)

The data demonstrates that businesses based in Wimbledon are overwhelmingly (~99%) classified as Micro (0-9 employees) and Small (10-49 employees). There are only 100 Medium-sized (50 to 249 employees) and Large (250+ employees) businesses based in Wimbledon (we are assuming that all of these are within the PlanWimbledon area).

The table below shows our assessment of PlanWimbledon's current business members.

PlanWimbledon is representative of the proposed area's business community

	<u>Wimbledon constituency</u>		<u>PlanWimbledon</u>
	Number	%	% of business members
	of businesses		and supporters
Size of businesses			
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	6,690	92.7%	79.6%
SME (10 to 249 employees)	505	7.0%	18.5%
Large (250+ employees)	20	0.3%	1.9%
<i>All businesses</i>	<i>7,215</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The range of business sizes in PlanWimbledon's membership is proportional to their representation across the proposed area.

2. Business representation letters have demonstrated that businesses would be ready to work with PlanWimbledon once designated.

The figures in the above table represent only those businesses that have signed up as members of PlanWimbledon. We have spoken to hundreds of other businesses, of all sizes, and some landowners (not represented in the numbers above) who have verbally told us that they would be happy to work with PlanWimbledon once designated but would prefer to remain neutral for now, particularly given the publicly unsupportive stance of Love Wimbledon.

Indeed, even the representation letters that you did receive from Eskmuir Group and F&C Commercial Property Holdings Ltd (F&C) conclude by saying they would work with us if designated.

- In their representation letter dated 19 May 2021, F&C state:
"Should the application be approved, before proceeding with the neighbourhood plan, F&C and their advisors would want to be fully involved and engaged in the process in order to assist in providing a balanced representation of important business interests to ensure delivery of key regeneration sites."
This statement clearly demonstrates F&C Commercial Property Holdings Ltd's willingness to contribute their opinions towards the preparation of a neighbourhood plan and to work with us. Furthermore, as indicated, PlanWimbledon has already engaged with them.
- In their representation letter dated 14 April 2021, Eskmuir Group state:
"Alternatively, (...) Eskmuir suggest that a 'light touch' approach is taken for Wimbledon Town Centre to reflect the provisions of the Future Wimbledon SPD."
This statement clearly demonstrates Eskmuir Group's willingness to contribute their opinions towards the preparation of a neighbourhood plan upon PlanWimbledon's designation. Furthermore, as indicated, PlanWimbledon has already engaged with them.
- In their (undated) representation letter, Merton Chamber of Commerce has written:
"We would be very happy to work with Plan Wimbledon and be a conduit for their communications in the future with Merton's business community."
This is an unambiguously supportive statement in favour of PlanWimbledon as a neighbourhood forum. We value our engagement to date with them very much and look forward to our continued collaboration.

3. PlanWimbledon is committed to bringing all stakeholders together from across the area

Business interests are fully represented and have considerable potential for becoming fully engaged and actively contributing to the preparation of a neighbourhood plan.

PlanWimbledon has been and continues to be committed to work with all stakeholders within the community after designation. This will include businesses, both individually and with their groups and associations.

The governance of PlanWimbledon is flexible enough to provide a balanced representation.

- Every employee of a local business may be member of PlanWimbledon and so be able to put themselves forward as a member of the Steering Committee.

- Every business and employee will have a vote in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan even prior to it being submitted to referendum. In this way, the preparation of the plan itself will benefit from the input of businesses and local workers.
- We commit to reviewing our constitution, once we are designated, to ensure that we have an effective Steering Committee with broader representation of various stakeholders. We will structure PlanWimbledon's working groups to ensure that everyone's voice is heard during the preparation of the plan.

UPDATED MEMBERSHIP METRICS

Please find in appendix updated PlanWimbledon membership metrics.

FINAL REMARKS

We understand that Love Wimbledon BID is supportive of neighbourhood planning but that their short-term focus will be on their re-application for BID status. PlanWimbledon would certainly be happy to pause any plan preparation work, post-designation, to allow Love Wimbledon to complete this process and collaborate effectively with us thereafter.

During that time, we will look into further engagement with businesses and the wider community, continuing to build up our membership and updating our governance so that we are fully equipped for the work that lies ahead.

PlanWimbledon looks forward to our designation to start a fresh and fruitful friendship with Love Wimbledon.

We hereby call on the Cabinet to recognise that there is an overwhelming groundswell of support for PlanWimbledon as a forum and for the proposed area, that PlanWimbledon has satisfied the legal requirements laid down by Central Government and to designate us wholeheartedly as the neighbourhood forum for the entire proposed area.

Many thanks.

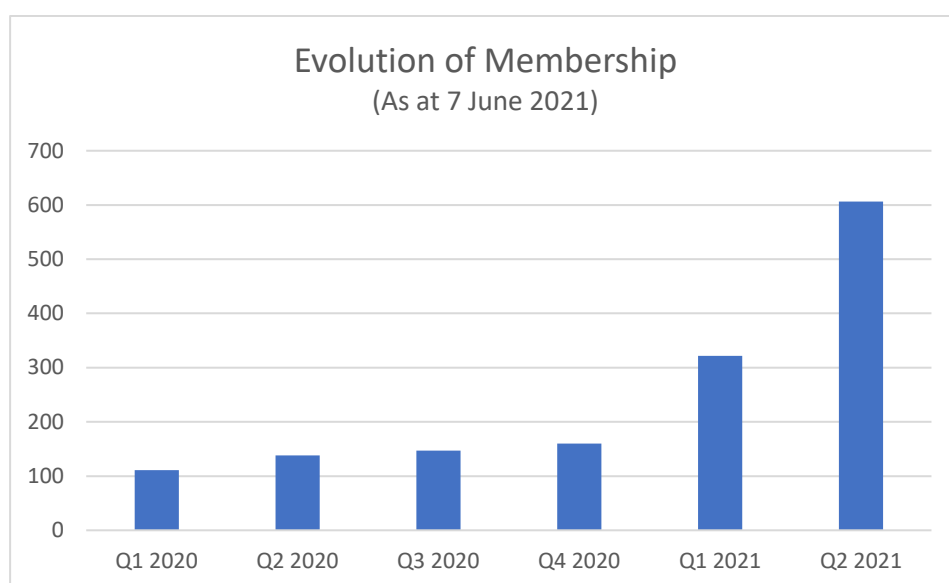
On behalf of PlanWimbledon,

Suzanne Grocott, Chair



Appendix – Updated membership metrics

PlanWimbledon has strong cross-sectional support from the local community across the area. This is reflected in our membership, which stands at over 600 and is continuing to grow. Please note that we count each association as only one member and that they are represented by a single dot on the map. Map dots are also consolidated by addresses and postcodes. With 13% of our members being business, groups and associations, some of them with several thousand members, we have a very broad and diverse representation.



Current membership breakdown by category	%
Individual residents & residents working locally	73%
Individual visitors or working locally (but not resident)	11%
Businesses	8%
Councillors	3%
Residents associations	2%
Faith groups	1%
Other groups	1%
Total	100%

Individual Residents - Gender

	PlanWimbledon Membership	PlanWimbledon Area*
	%	%
Male	41%	49%
Female	55%	51%
Other	0%	-
Not available	4%	-
Total	100%	100%

Individual Residents - Ethnicity

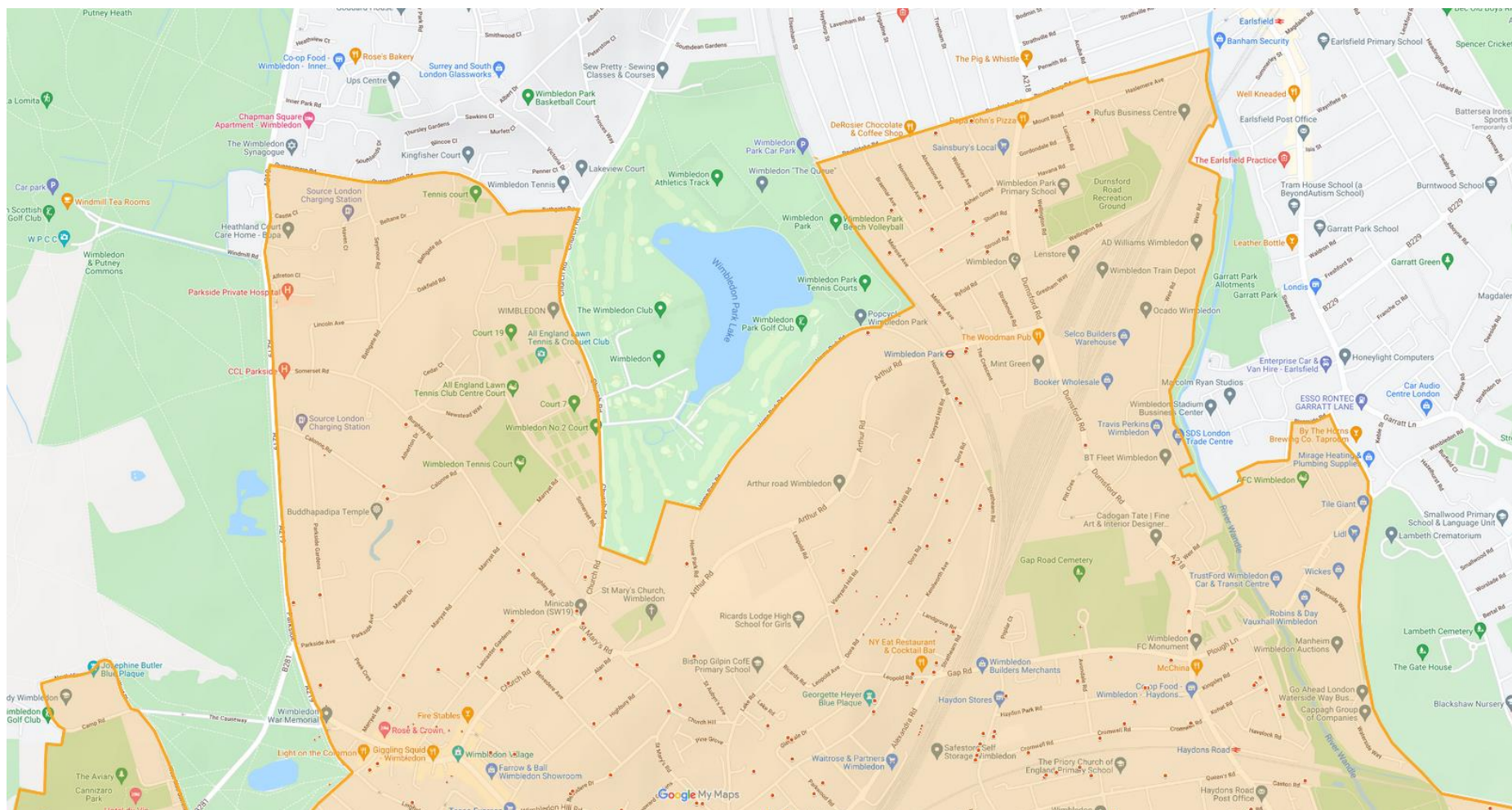
	PlanWimbledon Membership	PlanWimbledon Area*
	%	%
White	81%	79%
Others	10%	21%
Not available	9%	-
Total	100%	100%

Individual Residents - Age

	PlanWimbledon Membership	PlanWimbledon Area*
	%	%
18 - 24	1%	6%
25 - 34	5%	25%
35 - 44	13%	26%
45 - 54	24%	16%
55 - 64	23%	11%
65 - 74	17%	8%
75+	6%	7%
PNTS**	3%	-
N/A	7%	-
Total	100%	100%

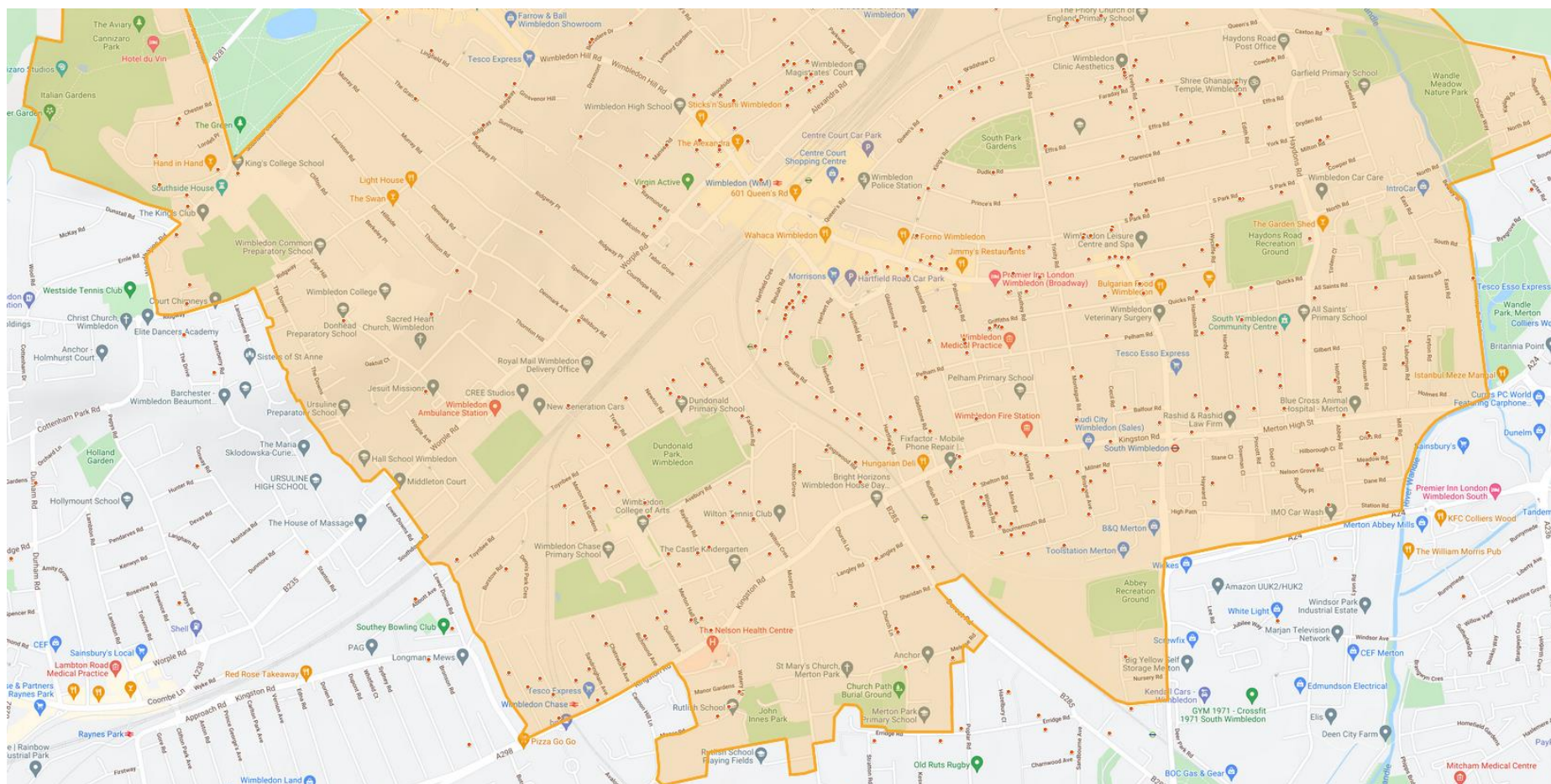
* Note: PlanWimbledon Area is a weighted average of Merton Council's classification data for residents in those wards which partly or wholly fall in the PlanWimbledon area as follows: Abbey 50%, Dundonald 75%, Hillside 100%, Merton Park 25%, Trinity 100%, Village 50%, Wimbledon Park 100%. PlanWimbledon Area age metrics rebased excluding 0 – 17 population.

** Prefer Not To Say.



Dots represent members of PlanWimbledon, in their approximate location.

One dot may represent more than one member. One dot may represent one group or association, sometimes representing many people in the area.



Dots represent members of PlanWimbledon, in their approximate location.

One dot may represent more than one member. One dot may represent one group or association, sometimes representing many people in the area.

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 22 June 2021

Agenda item:

Wards:

Subject: Expansion of Merton Medical Education Services and future of Lavender Nursery

Lead officer: Jane McSherry, Director of Children, Schools and Families

Cabinet Member: Eleanor Stringer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Education

Contact officers: Tom Procter, Head of Contracts and School Organisation

Allison Jones, Head of Early Years, Family Wellbeing and Early Help

Recommendations:

- A. To note the significant number of objections in the consultation to expand Merton Medical Education Services by moving into Lavender (London Road) Nursery and that, for the reasons outlined in this paper, the Lavender (London Road) Nursery building remains the only affordable option to house Merton Medical Education Services and provide sufficient provision for the borough's growing number of children with medical needs.
 - B. To engage stakeholders on two options to implement from January 2022: The first, to continue with the council's proposal as per the January 2021 consultation proposal. The second, to proceed with an augmented option that will provide a continuation of the Lavender Nursery full-time day care provision in other Children, Schools and Families building(s) in Lavender Ward in addition to re-providing the sessional places for children aged 2, thus maintaining the service in alternative premises within reasonable proximity to the current site.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. From 25 January to 22 February 2021 the council undertook a consultation to expand Melbury Medical provision into Lavender Nursery, and so move the existing provision from this site and to no longer provide fee paying full-time day care at Lavender Nursery. This report outlines the consultation responses and proposed next steps.
- 1.2. There was opposition to this plan, but the advice of officers remains that there are enough fee paying early years childcare/early education places, and sufficient spare nursery capacity in the school sector to provide for any growth in demand. There also remains no alternative option to provide for children with medical needs without prohibitive costs for the council of building on a new site or a substandard and unequal offer for these children, such as relying on home tuition.
- 1.3. The consultation showed there is a preference from some parents for the council to have a dedicated council fee paying nursery for working parents. Officers looked at alternative options to house the Lavender fee paying nursery provision and propose that the council consults stakeholders on an

augmented proposal that will provide some full daycare places nearby in addition to re-providing the sessional places for children aged 2. Since the strategic aim of the council is to provide for families most in need this should have an admissions policy based on working household income and presenting need i.e. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

2 DETAILS

2.1. Background to the consultation

Need for additional places for children with medical needs

- 2.2. Part of Melbury College, Merton Medical Education Services offer high quality, bespoke education provision for highly vulnerable students who live in Merton and who are unable to attend mainstream school because of medical and/ or mental health needs.
- 2.3. Students can be referred by their mainstream school if they have, or will have 15 days of absence from school because of their medical condition based on medical evidence from a hospital consultant or CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) professionals.
- 2.4. Merton Medical Education Services offer home tuition, in-community provision, on-line learning, a placement at its specialist provision (previously Canterbury Road campus) or a combination of some/all of these, depending upon the individual needs of the student. SENDIS (Special Education Needs Integrated Service) also refers students with EHCP's if they are in Key Stage 4 (national year groups 10 and 11), as the most suitable provision to support these vulnerable pupils.
- 2.5. The number of pupils referred to Merton Medical Education Services has increased year on year. Last year, 63 students benefitted from the services. However, the limited accommodation at the Canterbury Road campus only allows up to 20 students to be accommodated at any one time, with pupils requiring the support of small class groups of no more than 10. There has therefore needed to be an over reliance on home tuition, and only KS4 pupils on site. Numbers are forecast to increase, both as the general secondary age population increases, and the increase in children with mental health needs that are unable to remain in mainstream secondary school.
- 2.6. Due to lack of space at Canterbury Road, Merton Medical Education Services temporarily moved to Worsfold House, Church Road, Mitcham, in September 2020. However, this is not suitable as a permanent location. The building is too large and unsuitable beyond the short term, and the site has been earmarked by the council for housing, including affordable housing, thereby generating a capital receipt that would support the provision of services and minimise future services cuts.
- 2.7. Alternative site solutions for medical provision
- 2.8. Officers have considered the potential sites currently within Children, Schools and Families management that could provide for additional SEND provision.

- 2.9. There are only two buildings currently not in permanent use. Firstly, Whatley Avenue, SW20 (former Adult Education building recently used temporarily by Harris Academy Wimbledon). This has been earmarked to provide specialist provision, catering for children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), for approximately 80-90 pupils. Secondly, Worsfold House. However, as referenced in paragraph 2.6 this is not suitable as a permanent location and would have a significant impact on the council's future finances.
- 2.10. There are primary schools with surplus places but it would be challenging to have a distinct area that could be a provision operated by another provider, and especially to provide for secondary aged children on a primary school site. However, there is space to consider expanding nursery places/provision according to need, where there are schools with surplus accommodation
- 2.11. The network of Children's Centre buildings and Youth Centres have been considered but had to be discounted as too small. However, the exception identified was Lavender (London Road) Nursery, a local authority run childcare setting that is a discretionary service. While it was discounted for Special Educational ASD provision as being too small for the size of school needed, it is suitable to be considered for the medical provision.
- 2.12. Lavender Nursery could be adapted to provide for at least 60 children for the medical provision at a fraction of the cost compared to any other option.
- Lavender Nursery
- 2.13. Lavender Nursery opened in 2004 as part of Children's Centre provision under the government's Sure Start programme. It was opened with Lavender Steers Mead, which provides the main Children's Centre activities, support services and co-location with Merton's Community Health provider, with Lavender Nursery providing early education and childcare for 2 – 5 year olds. In response to new statutory duties over the past 15 years, the early education and childcare provision, including delivery of free early education places, across the borough has developed and expanded significantly during this time.
- 2.14. Lavender Nursery (London Road) currently provides up to 80 part-time, term-time only places for 2-year-olds who are eligible for free early education, and up to 48 full-time all-year-round places for children aged 2, 3 and 4 for fee-paying families
- 2.15. Based on the current roll for fee paying families (May 2021 figures), from September 2021 there will be:
- 31 children who will go to school reception class in September 2021 – i.e. would be leaving by the end of August 2021
 - 20 children who would have ordinarily had the option to remain at Lavender
- 2.16. Analysis prior to consultation identified that provision could be provided through other means as follows:
- the private, voluntary, or independent sector, where within a 1 mile distance there are 9 private all-year-round full day care nurseries with good or outstanding Ofsted inspections, or waiting for their first inspection

- nursery classes in primary schools, where within a 2 mile distance there are 14 primary schools with nursery classes, some offering 30 hour funded places for 3 and 4-year-olds. The council would continue to work with schools wanting to offer the 30 hours (extended entitlement) to meet the needs of families, as well as support schools to expand or set up wrap around provision around the school day and in the holidays.
 - the childminding sector where, within a mile there are 20 to 25 childminders
- 2.17. It was recognised that there are generally fewer places available via the free childcare scheme for eligible 2-year-olds, and the council would be able to relocate the existing council-run 80 places to the following three designated children centre sites, whilst continuing to support sufficiency across the whole childcare market:
- Lavender Steers Mead Children's Centre CR4 3HL
 - Acacia Children's Centre CR4 1SD
 - Abbey Children's Centre SW19 2JY.
- 2.18. The council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report shows that the population of Merton's under-fives has decreased in recent years and the forecast from the GLA demography unit is for it to continue to decrease over the next five years. This is likely to reduce the demand for childcare. However, the secondary aged population has increased substantially and is forecast to still modestly increase over the next five years
- 2.19. The impact of Covid on supply and demand of childcare and early education for under 5s remains unclear, however, headcount data in the local PVI sector shows a small reduction in the take up of funded places across all free entitlements between January 2020 and January 2021.

Council consultation

- 2.20. Based on the above, the council undertook a public consultation from 25 January 2021 to 22 February 2021 with the following proposals:
- Expand Merton Education Services into Lavender (London Road) Nursery, thus increasing the capacity to at least 60 places,
 - Close the Lavender Nursery provision (full working day, fee-paying provision (i.e. 48 full-time places)
 - Re-provide the 80 part-time, term-time free places for eligible 2-year-olds currently at Lavender (London Road) to Lavender Steers Mead, Acacia and Abbey Children's Centres

Summary of consultation responses

- 2.21. 240 responses were received, of which 19 were supportive of the proposal and 221 were not supportive/opposed the proposal.
- 2.22. A summary of all 240 responses is provided in appendix 1 to this paper. The paragraphs below outline all the issues raised.

Specific concerns raised by parties opposing the proposal

2.23. The Lavender Nursery Parents Association [LNPA] is a group of parents and carers of children at the Nursery, former pupils, and children on the waiting list. They provided a 13 page response outlining that the LNPA is unanimously opposed to the proposal – it believes the council’s proposal was poorly argued, lacked evidence, and it would be short-sighted and reactionary of the council to close a highly effective, safe, purposeful, happy and affordable Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) childcare service, with experienced staff, which would subsequently leave insufficient, inadequate provisions for those that the area intends to attract over the next few years. They state that the current Lavender Nursery site, was a purpose-built award winning site designed specifically for the under 5’s. The single-storey premises currently comprised 4 separate rooms, 4 bathrooms all designed with low level accessibility facilities specifically for young people. The substantial outdoor space lends itself to allow children to fully develop in accordance with the EYFS curriculum

2.24. The full response is provided in appendix 1 to this paper.

2.25. The specific points can be separated into four key categories, plus ancillary points.

2.26. ***The alternative childcare options proposed by Merton Council were not comparable to that offered by Lavender.***

The LNPA response stated:

- The view that working families required full-time childcare from 7.45-6pm and all year round – alternative options did not provide for this, especially for 2-3 year old children
- Nursery classes within primary schools were only for children aged 3-4 years, with no options for the children aged 2-3 years currently provided by Lavender Nursery. Places were not available until the term after the child turns 3. Lavender Nursery is open from 7.45-6pm providing parents with the ability to work a standard full-time working day, while their child is at nursery
- There were a number of childminders in the area, however the services provided by childminders vs nurseries were not comparable
- Of the proposed locations Steers Mead Children’s Centre was the only one within walking distance of Lavender (10mins walk). Acacia Children’s Centre (20mins walk) and Abbey Children’s Centre (30mins walk) were too far for families to travel by foot given the round trip journeys would be between 40-60 minutes from Lavender.
- The requirement to fill 80 funded places could not be met by the proposal. Acacia and Abbey offered 24 and 20 places respectively and were currently full. Steers Mead would need to be fully refurbished in order to function as a nursery and would only have the capacity for an additional 29 spaces
- The quality of EYFS childcare provision and the suitability of the settings offered was not comparable to that offered by the Lavender Nursery and therefore the local authority would not be fulfilling the consultation’s requirements to support families in sourcing alternative suitable childcare provision

- The LNPA highlighted that there were around 40 children on the waiting list and more who would be unable to join this waiting list when it was closed in November 2020
- 2.27. ***The alternative childcare options would charge higher fees*** - The LNPA response stated that families would be forced into financial difficulty as a result of high fees charged by independent nurseries and childminders and impact of uprooting those children to alternative childcare providers. While the LNPA acknowledged there are other nurseries within 1 mile of Lavender they viewed there were many reasons why parents had chosen to send their child/children to Lavender and not those nurseries. Key factors within this were price and location. A table was included showing the fees at Lavender for under 3s, at £1,174 a month, were about £500 less than some other nurseries in the area.
- 2.28. ***There would be demand now and in the future for Lavender*** - The LNPA response stated that in November 2020 there were 40 families on the formal waiting list, it then closed due to Covid, but LNPA estimated there could be potential for approximately 80-100 waiting families. The council's proposal in its view failed to take into account the continued demand for spaces at Lavender Nursery. In the LNPA's view the council's Childcare Sufficiency in Merton Annual Report [2019 & 2020] clearly identified that there was already a deficit of funded early education for 2-year-olds, within the wards surrounding the nursery - although the council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report shows that the population of Merton's under-fives is decreasing, the LNPA believed that this would be unlikely to be the case given the council's commitment to regeneration in the local area, and anecdotal evidence of a Covid 'baby boom' on the horizon
- 2.29. ***There would be no justification in the group's view for the expansion of the MMES provision should also require the closure of the Lavender Nursery service*** - Whilst the LNPA appreciated the council's position in needing to find an alternative site for MMES, it did not understand why this must come at the enormous cost of the closure of Lavender Nursery service; in its view the council's consultation document failed to detail adequate information on alternative sites for the relocation of Merton Medical Educational Services e.g. a viability report, and specifically why not use Whatley Avenue – this had been allocated for SEN but only for 90 places, and the LNPA believes it has enough capacity for both SEN and MMES.
- 2.30. ***Ancillary issues*** – In the group's view, the proposal consistently contravened the borough's Statement of Community Involvement [SCI] June 2020 and it was LNPA's belief that the council had been undermining the financial viability of the nursery by cutting back the intake of the nursery in previous years, in order to be able to justify its closure now. Tamworth Recreation ground playground in its view lent itself well to its location next to Lavender Nursery. The LA's commitment to providing safe outdoor space for all might in its view be compromised by the repositioning of MMES to the Lavender Nursery site
- 2.31. The council also received 219 individual responses against the proposal including from current parents, past parents, prospective parents and staff. Each one is summarised in appendix 1 to this paper. Most covered the same

issues as The LNPA response summarised above. The following additional points were made by respondents:

- Some respondents stated that there was a high percentage of children with SEN that were recommended to attend due to the strategies that were put in place to help these children
- A respondent stated that the proposed centre would bring more trouble to the area and hanging around the play park – less than ideal for many local residents
- Some respondents stated that the building was funded by Sure Start to provide early years intervention for 25 years and was only in its 17th year. They said it was a legacy of the previous Labour government's work towards eliminating child poverty
- Some respondents states that without access to early years childcare some parents might lose their jobs
- The paper to the Scrutiny Panel indicated that an Equality Impact Assessment had not been carried. Some respondents argued that the proposals should be suspended until this had been done.
- Some respondents stated that closure could affect up to 80 children as the 48 figure quoted was full time (equivalent) places and some children attend part time. They cited limited alternative options, unsettling for children, long waiting list, amazing staff and good SEN provision
- Some respondents suggested it would minimise disruption to children by delaying the changes for an academic year or looking for an alternative site for MMES
- Some respondents suggested that given the concerns of parents and local community re the closure of the nursery, could the nursery be located elsewhere in the local community, e.g. a nearby school with a falling roll?

2.32. Siobhain McDonagh MP raised objections regarding the proposals, stating that she supported MMES expansion but not at the cost of another excellent children's service. She said it was a highly valued service with extremely skilled staff, consistently recommended by parents whose children attended the nursery, as demonstrated by the waiting list. She argued that the vast majority were from local families and she was concerned the proposal would exclude most of the children from any council run scheme and would force those families to access childcare that is notably more expensive. She cited new research from City Hall that she said revealed that almost two-thirds of nurseries were at risk of closure in the next year due to the financial impact of the pandemic. She believed it would be inconceivable, in light of this research, to consider closing such a well-loved and high performing nursery in an area with such high demand for this service. She asked the Council to reconsider, keep the nursery open and review alternative accommodation for the proposed MMES service.

2.33. Two ward councillors for Lavender Fields suggested the council look at alternative sites for MMES, e.g. Whatley Avenue, Phipps Bridge Youth Centre. They argued it was the last remaining council-maintained nursery in Merton and provided affordable, all-year-round EYFS services to children in

Mitcham with no comparable alternatives. In their view, it provided a community service that was accessible to a wide mix of families and that it would be short-sighted to close the only council nursery when lots of private nurseries may themselves close.

2.34. **Support**

2.35. The 19 supportive responses were generally from people who had used or were involved with the Merton Medical Education Services (MMES). A good example was a parent who stated that MMES provided a lifeline for her daughter who struggled with anorexia and depression for 2 years and where mainstream school has made her feel suicidal.

2.36. The responses stated:

- How MMES students were extremely vulnerable and in need of intensive support and care from different agencies to help them to reconnect and find a place in the community. They needed a safe, permanent, inviting environment with an outdoor space. Current facilities were temporary and not fit for purpose, in respondents' views.
- The number of pupils who could not manage in mainstream schools was increasing and it was essential that a permanent and safe building with outdoor space was found.
- Lavender was a safe and ideal building to house a medical support school. It had the right facilities to enhance the quality of support and experiences offered by this service, which was vital to the whole community.

Response from the council to the consultation and the proposed way forward.

2.37. The proposal from the council demonstrated strong feelings that the council was taking away a facility that was valued. However, the council has a responsibility to provide for its most vulnerable children and young people. This section of the report therefore addresses the four key points made by Lavender Nursery Parents Association:

- Its view that alternative options to house MMES should be considered
- Its view that alternative childcare options being proposed by Merton Council were not comparable to that offered by Lavender
- Its view that the alternative childcare options would charge higher fees
- Its view that there would be demand now and in the future for Lavender

2.38. **Review of alternative options to house Merton Medical Education Services**

2.39. Three questions arose from the consultation on alternatives to Lavender Nursery:

- Could MMES be located at Whatley Avenue, in addition to the planned special school provision?
 - Could MMES stay where they are at Worsfold House, either permanently or for an extended period, of circa two years?
 - Could MMES be located at Phipps Bridge Youth Centre?
- 2.40. Appendix 2 provides the original site search and reviews these options and their viability. In summary:
- 2.41. *Whatley Avenue:* The case to use Whatley Avenue for a special school with a specialism to provide for ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) children was agreed by the council's Corporate Management Team in March 2020, but progression of the project was delayed by the Covid period. A report is presented to this Cabinet on 22 June 2021.
- 2.42. The case for additional special school provision is outlined in the Cabinet report and summarised in appendix 2. The Whatley Avenue special school project is key to providing as many state special school places as possible to provide local provision.
- 2.43. It is clear that the council can, and needs to fill the Whatley Avenue building as a special school. In addition to the benefits of providing good quality local special school provision, the cost avoidance from 80 maintained places compared to the alternative of placement in the independent sector is circa £1.6 million per annum, so £8 million over 5 years.
- 2.44. Whatley Avenue has a relatively small amount of space for outside play for a special school, and to enable sufficient space it will be necessary to dismantle a temporary building at the site. There is not the site space to add a building on the site for another purpose e.g. MMES.
- 2.45. *Worsfold House:* Using the Worsfold House site permanently has been discounted for the following reasons:
- 2.46. The Worsfold House site has been identified as a site for housing, with a capital receipt attached to its sale. If it is kept by the council, this capital receipt would be lost and the council would need to find offsetting savings from other services, including Children, Schools and Families, as would the offsetting savings from the provision of any affordable housing provided at the site, which would no longer be achieved.
- 2.47. The Worsfold House building was considered for school use (for Cricket Green) a few years ago and design consultants put significant effort into trying to make it work. However, the building is built as offices with only a small number of classroom sized spaces. The conclusion then was that it realistically needed to be knocked down and re-built for permanent school use. This remains the case.
- 2.48. While the DVS valuation has to remain confidential, the council can say in an open paper that the total cost of this option in new build construction and lost capital receipt is £5-10 million.
- 2.49. The building was converted at a low cost for a short period and provides a poor quality environment in what is essentially a disused office block with

toilets liable to flooding, an outdated and unreliable lighting system, windows without safety glass and inadequate heating system.

- 2.50. The building was converted to only provide for 40 pupils and cannot be easily extended to 60 children to meet demand expected following the Covid period
- 2.51. It should also be recognised that a new build option would take considerable time to design and build, and so would delay the Merton Medical Education Service requirements by approximately two years.
- 2.52. *Phipps Bridge Youth centre* – This building is substantially too small to house the provision required for MMES and is an open youth centre providing support for young people.

The alternative childcare options being proposed by Merton Council are not comparable to that offered by Lavender

The alternative childcare options charge higher fees

There is demand now and in the future for Lavender

- 2.53. With regard to 2-year old funded places the consultation offered the same number of part time places (80) at Lavender Steers Mead Children's Centre CR4 3HL (40), Acacia Children's Centre CR4 1SD (20) and Abbey Children's Centre SW19 2JY (20). Half the places are 9 minutes' walk from London Road and, based on the current intakes, parents with children accessing 2-year old funded places will generally not need to travel significantly further under this change. Some existing parents are due to move to new local provision as their child becomes 3, most commonly to school nurseries.
- 2.54. With regard to full-time childcare places it is acknowledged that Lavender Nursery charges lower fees than some alternative providers in the local PVI (private and voluntary and independent) sector. This is only possible because Lavender (London Road) nursery is subsidised both directly and indirectly by the council. Lavender nursery is an exception in the council in providing subsidised childcare for a very small number of parents yet its admissions policy is not based on affordability.
- 2.55. There are a number of central government sources of help for parents with their childcare costs, and these are mostly based on household income. For the many Merton parents accessing childcare services across the mixed market of providers some will be eligible for this financial support and as such this reduces the overall costs to the parents (hence they will not be paying the full amounts on the published fees). In Merton, fees do vary, broadly with higher costs in the west and towards the north of the borough and lower costs in the east and towards the south of the borough. The nurseries in Colliers Wood, which are within a mile of Lavender, are significantly more expensive than the nurseries in the other neighbouring wards, also within a mile.
- 2.56. The local nurseries in Merton (and there are also additional nurseries in the neighbouring borough of Wandsworth) are comparable in terms of delivering free funded early education, following the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (the standards that school and childcare

providers, including childminders, must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5) and registering and being inspected by Ofsted under the EYFS framework.

- 2.57. Of the 9 full day care nurseries in the Mitcham area, 2 are outstanding, 4 are good and 3 are yet to be inspected. All are open for a minimum of 10 hours. Lavender nursery is graded as good, and is open for 10 hours and 15 minutes a day.
- 2.58. It remains the case that, due to the decrease in the 0-3 child population over the past 5 years, there are significant surplus places in Merton primary schools, and there is physical capacity to provide for demand as required. It is understood that some families need more than the 30 hours some schools currently offer, however some schools do already offer wraparound for breakfast, after schools and holidays, which is often at an affordable rate in comparison to private day nurseries, and at a comparable rate with Lavender nursery.
- 2.59. A school nursery place can be used with wraparound care provided by a childminder or through an after-school provision. In this instance the total cost to parents is more comparable with Lavender nursery fees for 3 and 4 year old places.
- 2.60. The council has a duty to secure, as far as reasonably practicable, sufficiency of childcare across the borough, working in partnership with all providers. The statutory duty allows councils to provide the childcare themselves if there is no other provider willing to do so or the council considers in all the circumstances, that it is appropriate to do so. The current market mix of available places and access to the range of providers across the local area, indicates that there are alternative providers willing (and able) to deliver full day care places for families. Based on existing analysis, officers consider that it is currently appropriate to provide sessional childcare/early education for children who are more vulnerable to poor early years outcomes based on eligibility criteria for the government funded 2 year old free nursery places.
- 2.61. However, the strength of feeling from the consultation is recognised, and particularly in relation to parents with existing children in Lavender Nursery.

Can parents' concerns be resolved in other ways?

- 2.62. Officers have therefore considered whether there are other ways to provide childcare options comparable to the Lavender Nursery service, with similar fees, to satisfy demand in this neighbourhood. The simplest solution would be to retain the existing Lavender Nursery service, its staff and its intake, in other premises in close proximity. Officers have therefore investigated the option of providing a nursery service in another building. This would be smaller, to recognise a more realistic projection of demand within the priority cohort (24 FTE rather than the present 48 FTE), and can be provided at either Lavender Steers Mead or Bond Road Centre, which are both in Lavender Fields ward and a 10 minute walk from the current site. Given that these buildings were already providing services for young children, the buildings can be adapted for a relatively small cost, especially in relation to

the costs that would otherwise be needed for MMES. The issues in relation to these two alternatives are as follows:

- 24 FTE and 40 PTE nursery places at Lavender Steers Mead – some services currently at Steers Mead) could be relocated
- 24 FTE and 40 PTE nursery places at Bond Road Centre – Planned office areas for the Family Wellbeing Service are converted for nursery use and staff are able to use other office facilities in the council including Children's Centres under the new approaches to field working for Council staff in response to Covid 19

- 2.63. Under either option the nursery would aim to provide for existing children at Lavender Nursery and those on the waiting list (depending on patterns of take up etc). However, for separate reasons already outlined, in the future, full day care places will be prioritised toward lower income working households with families that are eligible for 2 year funding under working household income criteria and those eligible due to other criteria i.e. working families whereby children are looked after, children who have left care and are in particular circumstances, and SEND (all aged 2 – 3).

It is therefore recommended that the option of providing a 24 FTE nursery provision at either Bond Road Centre or Steers Mead is discussed with parents currently at Lavender Nursery, or on the waiting list. Staff and unions will also be kept informed prior to any decision and formal consultation in line with the council's HR policy.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The main body of this paper has considered the options and the reasons for them. These are broadly (1) the status quo (2) As per the January 2021 consultation, or (3) A new option to provide a smaller full day care provision. The recommendation of this paper is that Cabinet give further consideration to options 2 and 3.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. A consultation was undertaken in January/February 2021. It is proposed that there is now further discussion with stakeholders as outlined above.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The original consultation proposed changes from 1 September 2021. It is now proposed that the Lavender (London Road) Nursery site moves from its current provision at the end of December 2021, with the replacement provision starting in January 2022.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Officers report that the cost of moving MMES into Lavender (London Road) Nursery and adapting its use and changes to other provision to re-house Lavender Nursery Services can be undertaken within the £600,000 contained in the council's capital programme. The report outlines that any alternative that can provide a good quality building for MMES would require a new build and the loss of a capital receipt, The DVS valuation information to the council has to remain confidential, but in this open Cabinet report it

can be stated that the total cost of this option at Worsfold House in new build construction and lost capital receipt is within the band of £5-10 million.

- 6.2. The council's ongoing expenditure on Lavender Nursery is greater than the income received. The proposal from February 2021 could therefore have contributed to council savings although, if the proposal were to have gone ahead, redundancies would have been anticipated, with the associated costs for this. The revised option of retaining a full day care nursery at a nearby site would mean an ongoing council subsidy will still be required, and fewer redundancy payments as the majority of the nursery places will be re-provided elsewhere. The specification staffing implications will be set out in the staffing consultation after Cabinet agrees the final option.
- 6.3. While DfE grant was used to build the original Sure Start centre, the experience of councils who have re-purposed buildings is that no money is clawed back if it is continued to be used for Education purposes.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The Council has a duty under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.
- 7.2. Lavender Nursery is provided as part of the Sure Start/children's centre provision made by the Council under the Childcare Act 2006. The Council has duties under the Act to make arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need (section 5A). The Council also has a duty under section 6 of the Act to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare (whether or not by them) is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them to take up, or remain in, work, or to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.
- 7.3. Under section 5D of the Childcare Act, a local authority must secure that such consultation as they think appropriate is carried out before any significant change is made in the services provided through a children's centre; and before anything is done that would result in a children's centre ceasing to be a children's centre. A change in the manner in which, or the location at which, services are provided is to be treated as a change in the services for this purpose.
- 7.4. In discharging its duties in relation to children's centres, the Council must have regard to statutory guidance. This advises that
- “The consultation should explain how the local authority will continue to meet the needs of families with children under five as part of any reorganisation of services. It should also be clear how respondents' views can be made known and adequate time should be allowed for those wishing to respond. Decisions following consultation should be announced publically. This should explain why decisions were taken.”
- “A local authority should not close an existing children's centre site in any reorganisation of provision unless they can demonstrate that, where they decide to close a children's centre site, the outcomes for children,

particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected and will not compromise the duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need. The starting point should therefore be a presumption against the closure of children's centres; and should take into account the views of local families and communities in deciding what is sufficient children's centre provision."

- 7.5. It is considered that the consultation in January/February 2021 together with the further proposed engagement of stakeholders meets the requirements for consultation under section 5D of the Childcare Act. As with any consultation, the Council must consult when proposals are at a formative stage; sufficient information must be given to enable intelligent consideration and response by consultees; adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals. In making a decision, the Council must conscientiously consider the outcome of consultation that has taken place and its duties under the Equality Act. The Council is required by the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' under the Act and those who do not share a protected characteristic. A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Act as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council must also ensure that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004.
- 7.6. The DfE is able to claw back funding when an asset funded wholly or partly by the DfE Sure Start programme is disposed of, or the asset is no longer used to meet the aims and objectives consistent with the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant (SSEYCG). However, the council can seek approval from the DfE, and subject to this prior approval the claw-back may be waived or deferred where an asset continues to be used for a similar purpose consistent with the aims of the grant.
- 7.7. The Lavender Nursery site's land is a charity trust and Merton Council is the Trustee. The proposals for the change of use for this building does not change any issues in this respect. However, there are historic issues in relation to the nursery use or any other education use in compliance with this Trust that are currently being considered.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. An Equality Analysis is provided as appendix 3. The summary is as follows:
- 8.2. The purpose of the proposal is because site searches showed that the displacement of Lavender Nursery was the only affordable and timely means to provide for some of the most vulnerable children in Merton with protective characteristics and for whom we have a statutory duty to provide education. Providing for these children is a key council priority to help vulnerable groups

to achieve. The negative impact is displacing the Lavender Nursery including people with protective characteristics consistent with the area it serves.

- 8.3. The council's proposals, including changes after the consultation, do much to mitigate the potential impact from displacing Lavender Nursery by directly providing childcare in other locations in the local area. However, parents and children including BAME, women and on a low income will need to move sites for their nursery provision and there are fewer full time day-care provision places for those who pay.
- 8.4. The plan seek to mitigates these issues by ensuring the smaller number of places will have an admissions policy giving priority to lower income groups and SEND, and to ensure the transformation to the new arrangements is handled as professionally as possible to ensure no one is displaced and there are few if any compulsory redundancies and if so efforts are made to find alternative jobs in the sector, with a specific Equality Analysis undertake at this time.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. No specific implications. It is not considered an issue that a small number of secondary age children will be passing a playground on their way to their provision.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The greatest potential risk of this proposal is that there will be insufficient nursery places, and the council not therefore meeting its sufficiency duty. However, as outlined in the main body of the report, officers view is that there is sufficient provision and there is substantial spare capacity in school nurseries to meet any unforeseen increase in need in addition to the PVI sector.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix 1 – Consultation responses
- Appendix 2 – Site search
- Appendix 3 - Equality analysis

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel paper 10 February 2020

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Appendix 1 – Consultation responses

Lavender Nursery / MMES Consultation

Support = 19

Oppose/against proposal = 221

	Respondent	Comments	Support / Oppose
1		Provides an essential service to working families, nearest nursery aren't not accepting any more placements, alternative private provision is 1.5 times more expensive, BAME or white European households disproportionately affected, no equality impact assessment has been made available on the site, council should be advocating affordable childcare not closing it.	Oppose
2	Past parent	Dismayed at proposed closure. It is an essential source of safe and carefully regulated nursery care of local community. Lack of local high quality children at an affordable price. Will cause massive disruption to the families of the 100 children who attend each day.	Oppose
3		One of the best services Merton Council provides in the area and it should not be sacrificed for the benefit of another. Provides high-end affordable childcare and gives children a great start to succeed. More than 150 children plus new joiners in September will be without a place.	Oppose
4		Reconsider decision – it is an excellent community resource that will be sadly missed. Excellent childcare in outstanding premises.	Oppose
5		Provides valuable and affordable care for local children. Find an alternative site.	Oppose
6	Staff	Worked here for 11 years. It was purpose built to provide childcare for a minimum of 25 years and initially funded by Surestart to support early intervention with families and this still takes place. High percentage of children with SEN that are recommended to attend due to the strategies that are put in place to help these children. Outdoor space is beneficial to the wellbeing and development of the children as many live in flats and bedsits. Nursery is full with a full waiting list of new and existing families.	Oppose
7	Current parent	Disappointed for the wonderful staff. Huge loss for local communities. Difficult to find such a professional childcare place with experienced staff.	Oppose
8	Current parent	Huge loss for community. Hard to find affordable and quality childcare. Alternative private providers are expensive, have long waiting lists, and don't offer the same opening hours. Support the need to create more space for the secondary students but not at the cost of nursery aged children. Devastated son may have to leave the nursery as he has grown	Oppose

		in confidence and learned so much in the 5 months he has been attending.	
9		Nursery is amazing and the setting perfect for the children (outdoor area and location). Shocking that you want to close it. Was bad enough closing the under 2 years' service. Can't you find an alternative space or build an extra floor on top with an independent entrance as a last resort?	Oppose
10		Great that you want to expand the secondary provision but can't you find an alternative without closing the nursery? It is a great nursery.	Oppose
11		The building was designed and built as a Surestart Centre for children under 5. Change of use would deprive the very young children of a unique facility. Have worked in hospital and mental health education and know the emphasis is on encouraging young people to reintegrate into mainstream education as quickly as possible. It is therefore often possible and indeed beneficial to use for e.g. public libraries and other council spaces to work with young people.	Oppose
12	Current parent	Devastating news for families like mine who need quality, affordable, full-time childcare. It was and still is the best Nursery in the area. Could you not close an underperforming one instead?	Oppose
13	Prospective parent	The nursery is outstanding with fantastic facilities, great curriculum as well as professional and caring staff. It prepares children well for primary school. Area lacks quality nurseries so long waiting lists and children will have to travel further for childcare. Understand MMES needs to expand but can't you look elsewhere for suitable accommodation?	Oppose
14		Disappointed at plans. It is a purpose build nursery that has won awards for design and layout. Not only a loss to current but also future parents and children. If anything the nursery should be expanding to offer care to 12 months old. It provides quality and affordable childcare.	Oppose
15	Ursuline High School	Fully supports the additional provision to provide places for students in need of support for their health and wellbeing. There is a great need for expansion and as there are places for children at the nursery at alternative venues then this is the right decision.	Support
16	Current parent	Nursery has an excellent reputation and son has developed extremely well there. Don't want to put him through the stress of settling into another nursery as he was very anxious and nervous when he joined due to the lockdown. Asks how the consultation will work in terms of votes, views etc?	Oppose
17	Previous & prospective parent	Excellent quality and affordable childcare and felt lucky that daughter got a place there. If it closes will not be able to find affordable care for our younger child and would affect our ability to work.	Oppose
18	Current parent	Daughter has benefited immensely from attending. Nursery has provided consistency and normality during this pandemic. Closure would cause more stress and heartache in these	Oppose

		difficult times. It is by far the best nursery in the area. Impact of closure will be catastrophic to staff and children.	
19		Together with the recent closure of Funky Owls parents will have limited nursery options. Could cause problems if they have older children and multiple drop-offs.	Oppose
20	Prospective parent	The suggested alternative childcare places are unlikely to be in a suitable location especially now Funky Owls has moved and the Lavender baby room closed. Please reconsider – understand the important MMES needs to be located somewhere but it should not be at the expense of an existing, much needed facility.	Oppose
21	Previous parent	Saddened by closure but appreciate the need for a site for youngsters with medical and health needs. (Also concerned for some personal reasons)	Oppose
22		Disappointed and angry. Nursery and surrounding area provides important facilities for local families. Building was funded by Sure Start to provide early years intervention for 25 years and is only in its 17 th year. Implication is that the MMES is more important and has a higher need. Proposal underestimates the need for childcare in the area and the affect it will have on working families and the current staff. Proposed centre will bring more trouble to the area and hanging around the play park – less than ideal for many people.	Oppose
23	Resident	Nursery provision in Mitcham is insufficient and I have only heard good things about his nursery.	Oppose
24		It is a purpose built nursery with wonderful indoors and outdoors provision for toddlers. Older children can be taught in another space not specifically designed for toddlers.	Oppose
25	Prospective parent	Disappointed at proposal as daughter is on the waiting list. Are the council going to consider objections to this proposal or provide an alternative?	Oppose
26		Excellent example of what a nursery should be like. Purpose built and surrounding environment is exemplary and best suited to the needs of pre-schoolers not older students. Completely underestimated in the care it provides. Increase capacity (use the empty rooms) and raise fees as an alternative to how it is operating now which will increase the desirability of young families to settle in the area.	Oppose
27	Past parent	Son attended 10 years ago and I was impressed with the level of affordable care and exemplary staffing provided. Ideal location and unsure where current standards are provided locally. It is an integral part of the community and is there any guarantee the grounds will not be affected? What will be the impact on security and safety of residents and playground users with teenagers ‘hanging’ around?	Oppose
28	Current parent	Deep concern – it is the best nursery in Merton and there is bigger demand than the nursery can offer. It is exceptional due to its facilities and purpose build design. It should be extended not closed.	Oppose

29		An alternative site should be found for MMES. There is a lack of full-time, full-day care provision for working parents in Merton, especially the Eastfields area. This will affect working parents returning to the city to work after lockdown.	Oppose
30	Resident	Suggests unused space at St George's hospital or other buildings in Merton that could be used. Staff will lose their jobs and parents will have to give up work to look after their children.	Oppose
31		It is already hard to find childcare locally. Why not improve one of the many unused buildings instead.	Oppose
32		Understand the need for the other service but don't believe closing the nursery is a suitable move. I have to travel to Streatham for childcare there are such few options.	Oppose
33		Look for an alternative site. This is a well-established nursery that contributes to child development unlike any other nursery in the area.	Oppose
34	Past parent.	It is a fantastic resource and easily accessible by bus. Excellent design and wonderful staff who picked up son's special education needs and arranged additional support for him. It is very affordable and would be a huge loss to local families.	Oppose
35	Past parent	Level of care was outstanding and all members of staff were excellent. No other nursery came close to the standard, look and space that Lavender offered. Important to give children the best start in life which is what Lavender did. Please look at alternative solutions.	Oppose
36		It is a custom built nursery, set back from the road, safe and away from pollution. For many families there are no other local facilities within a non-drivable distance. It is affordable and offers 8am-6pm provision. It is an asset to the area.	Oppose
37	Past & Prospective grandparent	Saddened by closure as granddaughter thrived at the nursery and the level of care was impressive. Surprised that consultation is called an 'expansion' when it will be reducing nursery provision. Fully support expanding the older provision but not to the detriment of nursery provision. If it is just a financial issue, please be honest, but investing in the education of children at this time should be a local government priority.	Oppose
38	Resident	Support the closure to help older vulnerable children with special needs, despite the positives of the nursery and that the closure will affect low-income families.	Support
39	Current parent	Best nursery in the area.	Oppose
40		Shortage of nursery spaces in the area and others are expensive. Helps working mums and gender equality. Could you not look at an alternative space, e.g. community centre in Taylor Road?	Oppose
41	Current Parent	Amazing staff and daughter has improved greatly since attending.	Oppose
42	Current parent	Wonderful staff, daughter enjoys attending.	Oppose

43	Current parent	Excellent nursery, closure would create a vacuum in local, affordable, reliable and Ofsted rated child care provision in the area. Understand difficulty in expanding MMES provision but it should not be to the detriment of younger children.	Oppose
44	Resident	Object to closure.	Oppose
45	Current parent	Nursery is excellent in both facilities and staff – provides language intervention sessions for son. No other nurseries nearby. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
46	Resident	It provides a vital service at a reasonable price.	Oppose
47	Ricards Lodge High School	Totally support the proposal as a site for MMES. Current provision cannot provide the capacity required for the increasing need resulting in many children unable to access education.	Support
48	Nursery provider	Lack of nursery places in an area with a higher level of deprivation and this would mean more higher level 2 year funded children without a nursery place.	Oppose
49	Rutlish High School	This provision as a permanent site if very much needed to support the many young people in need of specialist education services.	Support
50	Current grandparent	The nursery is a fantastic asset for the community.	Oppose
51		The nursery is a vital asset to the local community.	Oppose
52		High demand for nursery places in this area. It is in a suitable location, has ideal facilities and has a fantastic reputation.	Oppose
53		Provides excellent childcare services.	Oppose
54	Past parent	Huge part of community and essential to early year's provision. Only local option for affordable childcare and supports SEN.	Oppose
55		An alternative site should be found for MMES. It is a vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare/early years education in one of the most deprived areas of Merton. Young children need stability and the closure may impact their development.	Oppose
56	Current grandparent	Grandson has thrived there. Purpose built nurseries are in short supply.	Oppose
57	Prospective parent	Ideal setting next to Tamworth Rec. Shortage of alternative places at the same rate and locally.	Oppose
58	Past parent	Will be a great loss to local families.	Oppose
59		Nursery is a fantastic local asset with excellent staff and childcare/early year's education. Can't you find an alternative location for MMES? Disappointed younger daughter will lose out on attending. No other local affordable options. Concerned re staff and their potential job loss.	Oppose
60		Closure would put many local families in a difficult position at an already unsettled time and deprive them of a lifeline. Merton Council has a duty of care to all its constituents.	Oppose
61		The nursery is a vital asset and affordable. Many staff will lose their jobs.	Oppose
62	Current parent	Without access to early years childcare many parents may lose their jobs. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose

63	Current parent	It is a vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and EYs education to approx. 100 children.	Oppose
64		It has excellent SEN facilities and there are limited alternative places.	Oppose
65	Current parent	Exceptional purpose build design and SEN interventions. Concerned primary school nurseries do not provide same opportunities and environment. Staff are highly professional and caring.	Oppose
66		Have sent numerous complaints about how staff treat the children when they are outside.	Support
67	Resident	This facility will be beneficial for Merton residents as it is a much needed resource.	Support
68		It will provide excellent facilities and the necessary space for the MMES students as their numbers grow.	Support
69	Teacher	Great that suitable accommodation has finally been found to create some stability and a safe environment for these vulnerable children struggling to attend school.	Support
70	Teacher	Struggling with lack of space at current MMES temporary facility. The outdoor space will be of huge benefit to the children.	Support
71	Nursery staff	Nursery was purpose built with DfE funding for the setting to remain as a nursery for 25 years. It is a big asset to the local community and we have remained open throughout the 3 lockdowns. Staff receive regular training and we support many children with SEN that have been turned away from private nurseries.	Oppose
72	MMES staff	MMES students are extremely vulnerable and need a safe, permanent, inviting environment with an outdoor space.	Support
73	MMES teacher	Current facilities are temporary and not fit for purpose. Pupil numbers are increasing and it is essential that a permanent and safe building with outdoor space is found.	Support
74		Building was built and funded for use as a nursery. Concerned re the high crime rate in Figgs Marsh and the impact on vulnerable pupils. Nursery has excellent SEN provision. Closure would have negative impact on local area, vulnerable young children, and nursery staff and drive young families away. No similar purpose built premises nearby. Financial implications for only providing funded places.	Oppose
75	FOI person	Detrimental effect on significant number of ethnic minority female staff and parents. The Equality Act requires you to consider the Public Sector Equality duty in everything you do (Impact Assessment). The paper to the Scrutiny Panel indicates that an Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried. Request proposals are suspended until this has been done.	Oppose
76	Past parent	Essential community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and EYs education. Risk to development of children, access to childcare, deficit of funded early education for 2 year olds within the local wards and long waiting lists elsewhere. Purpose built facility so concerned re suitability for	Oppose

		older children and safeguarding concerns. Loss of jobs for staff. Look for an alternative site.	
77	Current parent	Fantastic, unique, affordable nursery with talented staff.	Oppose
78	Current parent	Wonderful nursery where children thrive. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
79	Prospective parent	Nursery is highly recommended. Look for alternative options.	Oppose
80		Lovely nursery. Great early year's hub with access to outdoor areas.	Oppose
81	Past grandparent	Purpose built and closure will be a loss to Mitcham and the wider community. Consider the negative impact on generations to come as it is a rare affordable childcare support. Look for an alternative site.	Oppose
82	MMES teacher	Numbers of vulnerable young people increasing so need a building and safe outdoor space to support them all.	Support
83	MMES teacher	Need a bigger building with a safe outdoor space to accommodate the increasing number of students accessing MMES services.	Support
84		Nursery is valued part of the community in an ideal setting for a nursery (on-site parking and outdoor space).	Oppose
85	MMES Tutor	The site will be a life line to an already overstretched service where the number of vulnerable students who cannot manage in mainstream are increasing.	Support
86		Removing an affordable childcare provision will have an adverse effect on the community.	Oppose
87		Huge demand for affordable childcare in the area.	Oppose
88		Nothing but praise for this extremely affordable provision in a purpose built building.	Oppose
89		It is an essential asset for children in Merton and neighbouring boroughs. Purpose built building, wonderful staff, affordable price an ideal location. Find an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
90	Prospective grandparent	Loss would have a devastating impact on local families. Lack of alternative provision, high quality care and experience staff, community hub. Risk to early years development. Most affordable nursery in the area. Purpose built building that has been running under capacity for years. Safeguarding concerns regarding MMES students and young children in the playground. Look for an alternative site.	Oppose
91	MMES parent	MMES has provided a lifeline to my daughter who has struggled with anorexia and depression for 2 years and where mainstream school has made her feel suicidal. This site would enhance the quality of support and experiences this service offers and also increase capacity where there is a growing need.	Support
92		Unsettling for children and inadequate alternative provision.	Oppose
93		Understand the need for the other service but not at the cost of another. Nursery has good reputation. Please look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
94		Expansion of MMES should not be to the detriment of the nursery. It is one of the best nurseries in the area. Asks	Oppose

		questions from points raised at the scrutiny meeting re future demand for places, alternative sites, safeguarding concerns of young children from MMES pupils and re-deployment of staff.	
95		Lack of good quality and affordable childcare in the area – more impact on women who may have to give up their jobs to look after their children. Look at alternatives. If viability is an option, take children younger than 2.	Oppose
96	Nursery Manager	Nursery has been part of the community for 15 years. It is purpose built and offers exceptional care and education. Closure could affect up to 80 children as the 48 figure quoted is full time places and some children attend part time. Limited alternative options, unsettling for children, long waiting list, have amazing staff and good SEN provision. Look for an alternative site.	Oppose
97	Nursery staff	Building was opened and funded as a surestart centre to serve the community for 25 years. It plays a vital part in the local community and supports and develops children so they thrive. Closure will affect many families in the local area.	Oppose
98	Resident	Negative impact on local families and betrayal of children. It is a vital service in a purpose built for early year's education.	Oppose
99		Provides vital childcare support for local families in a beautiful building and local landscape. Not enough space to build a secondary school in this place.	Oppose
100	Ex-member of Nursery staff	Not a viable option to close. Purpose built to provide high quality and affordable childcare for the community. Staff will lose their jobs and parents may not be able to afford higher fees elsewhere.	Oppose
101	Prospective parent	It is a vital community asset that we plan to send our children to in the future.	Oppose
102	Current parent	Chose to live in the area due to the high quality, affordable childcare the nursery offers. It is a vital community asset. No alternative full-time all year round provision in the area. Support the need for MMES but not at the sacrifice of a much loved nursery.	Oppose
103	Past parent	Vital resource for the area – wonderful and affordable (only one providing government funded places in the area).	Oppose
104		Great provision and benefits low income families. Building and location is lovely for children.	Oppose
105	Parent	Expansion of MMES should not be to the detriment of the nursery. It provides a vital community resource and staff are caring, kind and go above and beyond their duties. Significant risk to crucial early year's development and lack of alternative funded early education locally. Purpose built and most affordable in the area. Safeguarding concerns of MMES pupils near the playground. Staff job losses.	Oppose
106		Look for another site to build a new school – what about the old Harris Wimbledon site?	Oppose
107	Past & prospective parent	Provides excellent childcare and important community resource. Impact of closure on staff and lack of suitable full time childcare locally. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose

108	Past & prospective parent	Provides excellent childcare and important community resource. Impact of closure on staff and lack of suitable full time childcare locally. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
109		It is an essential and well regarded community resource in a safe and relatively easily accessible location. It is a legacy of the previous Labour government of eliminating child poverty and unacceptable that a Labour controlled council wants to roll back the gains made. What are the local alternative childcare options? No justification for expanding one provision at the expense of another.	Oppose
110	Prospective parent	Has good reviews and lovely facilities.	Oppose
111		It is an asset to the local community.	Oppose
112	Prospective parents	Attracted to area because of the nursery. It provides the largest space, closest to greenery, good to outstanding Ofsted as well as SENCO – other alternatives do not compare. Consultation period too short. Closure will accelerate the decrease of the childcare population due to limited choice of childcare.	Oppose
113	Current parent	No suitable alternative provision. Affordable, vital to the community, historical value of good provision and purpose built. Staff will lose their jobs and children will be impacted emotionally. Suggest minimise disruption to children by delaying the changes for an academic year or looking for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
114		Expansion of MMES should not be to the detriment of the nursery. It provides a vital community resource and staff are caring, kind and go above and beyond their duties. Significant risk to crucial early year's development and lack of alternative funded early education locally. Purpose built and most affordable in the area. Safeguarding concerns of MMES pupils near the playground. Staff job losses.	Oppose
115		Understand need for MMES but not to the detriment of early year's provision. Lack of alternative and affordable providers.	Oppose
116		Good reputation, safe and good quality of care. Excellent service.	Oppose
117		Attracted to area because of the nursery. It provides the largest space, closest to greenery, good to outstanding Ofsted as well as SENCO – other alternatives do not compare. Consultation period too short. Closure will accelerate the decrease of the childcare population due to limited choice of childcare.	Oppose
118		Attended excellent baby and toddler sessions there which were invaluable.	Oppose
119	Current parent	Amazing, supportive staff in a prime location. Many lives would be affected by the closure.	Oppose
120	Grandparent	Excellent nursery. Family will suffer financially as a result of its closure. Lack of alternative provision.	Oppose
121	Parent	Highly skilled and committed staff. Unrivalled quality of EYFS curriculum and preparation for school. No suitable alternative provision exists in the area.	Oppose

122	Siobhain McDonagh MP	Support MMES expansion but not at the cost of another excellent children's service. It is highly valued with extremely skilled staff, consistently recommended by parents whose children attend the nursery, as demonstrated by the waiting list. Vast majority are from local families and concerned proposal to close will exclude most of the children from any council run scheme and will force those families to access childcare that is notably more expensive. Meanwhile new research from City Hall has worryingly revealed that almost two-thirds of nurseries are at risk of closure in the next year due to the financial impact of the pandemic. It would be inconceivable, in light of this research, to consider closing such a well-loved and high performing nursery in an area that has such high demand for this service. I hope the Council will reconsider, will keep the nursery open and will review alternative accommodation for the proposed additional service.	Oppose
123		It is an asset to both the local community and local authority. Nursery has been decimated by the closure of the baby room. Look for an alternative site for MMES. Is there adequate alternative provision for 2 year olds? Nursery has an excellent and vital SEN provision and 40 places for vulnerable 2 year olds. Purpose built. LBM will lose highly skilled and qualified staff. What about the suggestion of Steers Mead for the 2 year olds? Is there money available for alterations and equipment?	Oppose
124		Excellent nursery and loss would be hugely detrimental to the area. Believe number data is out of date and concerned re families that move into the area in the future. What alternative sites have been looked at for MMES?	Oppose
125		It is vital to the local community and closing it will have a detrimental effect on the local and wider community.	Oppose
126		Acknowledge need for MMES but not at the detriment of a purpose built nursery offering top quality childcare in one of the most deprived communities in Merton. Significantly affordable, and prepares children well for primary school. Is it sensible to have vulnerable MMES pupils in an area with a high crime rate? What about other sites?	Oppose
127		Concerned – not properly considered. Closure will impact many families and area will suffer.	Oppose
128		Purpose built with Surestart money offering the best facilities in the borough at an affordable price. Need a longer consultation period. London Mayor's report re closing of nurseries in the future. Look at alternative site for MMES. Long waiting list	Oppose
129		It is one of the best nurseries in the area and an alternative site should be found for MMES. 2018 Merton Annual report - Childcare Sufficiency – showed that Lavender Fields have a higher number of under 5s.	Oppose
130	Nursery staff	Shocked and distressed by potential closure after working throughout the pandemic. Please keep this service open for the greater good and benefit of the children, families and staff.	Oppose

131		Support a long-term site for MMES but not at the expense of the nursery which is a valuable asset to the community.	Oppose
132	Current parent	Nursery has been supportive to my family and my son when he was diagnosed with autism – without it I do not think we would have been able to carry on. Keep the nursery open in its current location and don't lose the staff.	Oppose
133		Nursery provides high quality childcare. Staff are very good, professional and trustworthy.	Oppose
134		Provides affordable and essential care for working families from 7.45am to 6pm. No alternative spaces nearby. Staff are excellent. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
135	Resident	One of the best structures in the area and has a positive impact on our community. Perfect and safe location for young children. Look for an alternative site.	Oppose
136		Object to closure.	Oppose
137		Will increase the already high demand for places in the area. Supportive of need for a site for MMES, but look for an alternative. Prepared to make a one-off donation to keep the nursery open.	Oppose
138	Prospective parent	Appreciate need for SEN provision but not at the expense of other provisions. It is the only council nursery in Merton that provides until school age and is vastly cheaper than other local provision. Other nurseries are unaffordable for my family. Look at alternative sites. Mayor of London is aware that many private nurseries are struggling financially and may close, leading to higher prices and increased waiting lists.	Oppose
139		Reconsider decision and look for an alternative site. Parents already struggle finding childcare and this will add more pressure to their lives.	Oppose
140		Look for an alternative. The nursery is doing well and helping a good number of families.	Oppose
141	Wandsworth resident	Not enough nurseries in the area already and private options are very expensive. Don't like the idea of older children hanging around in the playground. Look for an alternative site.	Oppose
142	Staff member	Object to closure.	Oppose
143		Support the nursery, do not wish it to close.	Oppose
144		Outraged at planned closure. Amazing childcare facility.	Oppose
145	Prospective parent	Recognise need for MMES but not at the cost of this affordable nursery provision. Shortage of alternative affordable childcare in the area. Hope another location can be found for MMES	Oppose
146		The nursery is a brilliant service that has been running for years with an amazing team. Should find an alternative for MMES, not the nursery. Built as a Sure Start service for 20 years. No alternative in local area that is affordable, provides wrap-around care and with vacancies. High quality preparation of children for school. Look for an alternative site for MMES that does not impact on the emotional and financial stress of an outstanding service.	Oppose

147		Support the council looking for a long term site for MMES but not at the detriment of the nursery. It provides safe, impactful childcare to over 100 children.	Oppose
148	Current Parent	Strongly say no to the proposal. The nursery provides an excellent service with long serving staff. Please consider other options.	Oppose
149		Strongly oppose closure and ask council to look for an alternative solution. Provides full time childcare which other provisions do not.	Oppose
150	Current grandparent	Strongly oppose closure and think an alternative location should be found. Staff are exceptional and children well cared for. No other childcare providers with reputation as good as Lavender.	Oppose
151	Current grandparent	Strongly oppose closure and think an alternative location should be found. Staff are exceptional and children well cared for. No other childcare providers with reputation as good as Lavender.	Oppose
152	Merton school governor	Aware of statutory responsibility and importance of providing the MMES service. However given the concerns of parents and local community re the closure of the nursery, could the nursery be located elsewhere in the local community, e.g. a nearby school with a falling roll?	Oppose
153		Disapprove plans for a secondary school to replace the nursery. It is purpose built and provides a safe haven for children. Plans will have a negative impact on the area, the new building will encroach on the allotment plots and create problems for commuters.	Oppose
154	Current parent	Believe the report was inaccurate and misleading – there is in fact a shortfall of full time, year round nursery places in the area. Nursery is popular, purpose built, has exceptional facilities, wonderful staff, is highly regarded and most affordable provision in the area. Already a deficit of places in the area. Closure will impact on my ability to work and staff will lose their jobs.	Oppose
155		Oppose closure but support the council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Closure will have a detrimental impact on local area and financial hardship for parents as it is the most affordable nursery in the area. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
156		Oppose closure but support the council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Closure will have a detrimental impact on local area and financial hardship for parents as it is the most affordable nursery in the area. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
157		Strongly oppose closure – look for an alternative site for MMES. Not enough full time provision elsewhere – impact on working parents.	Oppose

158		Strongly oppose closure – look for an alternative site for MMES. Nursery is an important asset to Merton providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare.	Oppose
159		Oppose closure but support the council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Closure will have a detrimental impact on local area and financial hardship for parents as it is the most affordable nursery in the area. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
160		Both services are needed and should not close one to the detriment of the other. Nursery provides high-end, affordable childcare – it is one of the best nurseries in the area. Alternative sites are not close enough.	Oppose
161		Object to closure but support council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Moved to this area due to the outstanding and affordable childcare it offered. Closure will have a detrimental impact on local area and financial hardship for parents as it is the most affordable nursery in the area. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
162	Previous and prospective grandparent	Object to closure but support council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Provides safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Excellent staff who will be forced into redundancy.	Oppose
163	Previous and prospective parent	Object to closure but support council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Provides safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Excellent staff who will be forced into redundancy.	Oppose
164	Past parent	Disappointed at proposal. It is an essential facility providing outstanding care with plenty of outdoor space.	Oppose
165	Current & prospective parent	Object to closure but support council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Provides excellent care and is a vital community hub. Most affordable in area.	Oppose
166		Keep it open to help low income families and protect the staff who work there.	Oppose
167		It is a successful and thriving nursery that provides excellent pre-school care.	Oppose
168		It is vital to our community.	Oppose
169	Current & prospective parent	Understand need for MMES but not to the detriment of closing the nursery. Alternatives are full or more expensive. Staff risk losing their jobs.	Oppose
170		Plays an important part in children and parents lives. A safe and secure environment.	Oppose
171		Strongly oppose closure but support council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose

172		Alternatives suggested are either far away, too expensive or don't offer full time care.	Oppose
173	Current & prospective parent	Support finding additional MMES provision but not to the detriment of the nursery, suggests Whatley Avenue or Worsfold House. Lack of alternative affordable full time childcare. Purpose built building providing excellent care. Scrutiny panel on 10 Feb was unfair and unprofessional.	Oppose
174		Little alternative provision in the area.	Oppose
175		Strongly oppose closure – look for a different site for MMES. Many of the alternative options for childcare places offered full time care. Look at ways to increase profitability of the nursery.	Oppose
176	Current & prospective parent	Strongly oppose closure but support a long term solution for MMES. Would have a devastating impact on local families. Contradicts the London Council's 5 point plan for early year education post COVID, specifically Point 5.	Oppose
177	Lavender Nursery Parents Association	Unanimously opposed to closure. Alternative options provided by the council (e.g. primary schools) do not allow children aged 2-3 to attend and are unsuitable for full time working parents. Decrease in demand is unfounded and many of the council's policies contradict this. Consultation document fails to detail adequate information on alternative sites for MMES, e.g. Whatley Ave and timescale is unreasonable in light of the pandemic. Request to see the Authority Monitoring Report. Concerned re significant social and economic impact, educational impact, impact on staff and the suitability of locating MMES to this location.	Oppose
178	Parent	It is a highly skilled, affordable and vital childcare provider. Contravenes the council's duty and goes against the Local Plan. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
179	Parent	Strongly oppose closure and an alternative site for MMES should be found. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
180		Concerned families will be put at risk financially due to closure. Amazing staff.	Oppose
181		Strongly oppose closure and an alternative site for MMES should be found. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
182	Prospective parent	Strongly oppose closure. Nursery and building is amazing and gives children an excellent start in life. Difficult to find alternative childcare providers in the area.	Oppose
183		Object to closure although understand the need for the MMES facility. It is considered to be the best Nursery in the area.	Oppose

		Building is purpose built, staff are considerate and long serving. Most affordable in the area and provides all year round care. Do not understand prediction that birth rates are falling.	
184		Purpose built, provides full day care, and has highly trained staff who are a massive part of the community. Area poses a risk to vulnerable MMES pupils – Merton census data (2020) Figgs Marsh has the highest crime rate.	Oppose
185		Saddened and mortified at closure. Purpose built, family hub that provides affordable childcare.	Oppose
186	Current parent	Strongly oppose closure and support the search for an alternative site for MMES. Grateful for outstanding care daughter has received here. No comparable, affordable local alternatives. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
187		Affordable and provides a valuable service to families and closure would have a devastating negative impact on many families. Proposed alternatives are more expensive and oversubscribed.	Oppose
188		Object but support the council in looking for an alternative site for MMES. Own children had a fantastic experience at the nursery. Concerned re the sensory room in memory. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
189		Keep it open for the positive and vital contribution it provides to our community.	Oppose
190		Look for an alternative site for MMES. Nurseries should be protected not closed. Is thriving and offers crucial government funded childcare.	Oppose
191	Current parent	Purpose built, high quality and affordable nursery serving needs of local community. Closure would be detriment to young children.	Oppose
192		Has a good reputation and is a much need facility for local families. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
193		The expansion of MMES should not come at the expense of the nursery. Nursery is purpose built and in a perfect setting. Despite less number of children under 5, the nursery still has a waiting list. Demand may increase due to the extra residential homes being built in the area.	Oppose
194		Purpose built nursery with unparalleled facilities. Concerned location is unsuitable for MMES. Look for an alternative solution.	Oppose
195		Asks what alternative sites were considered and why was Lavender the preferred option? Why is secondary school	Oppose

		numbers increasing and under 5's decreasing and will this eventually result in reduced secondary numbers and less demand for MMES? How and will the alternative provision match Lavender and will they have the same capacity?	
196	Current parent	Provides brilliant care and only affordable option in the area. Concerned re level of care other nurseries provide. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
197	Current parent	Not enough nursery provision of a similar high standard and affordability in the area. Funded from Surestart designed to bring affordable high equality early years provision to deprived areas. Currently oversubscribed. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
198	Prospective parent	Disappointed at decision. Children need more places like Lavender to avoid mental health needs in the future. Hope council will reconsider.	Oppose
199	Prospective parent	Incredible shame for it to close. Staff are truly exceptional and provides affordable and excellent childcare. It is an incredible resources.	Oppose
200		Deeply saddened as so many families in our community rely on this service and will be adversely affected by its closure.	Oppose
201		Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive. It is purpose built with unparalleled facilities. What is the impact on demand for places due to the Eastfields Regeneration programme?	Oppose
202	Current parent	Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Lovely place, highly experience caring and loving staff.	Oppose
203		Closure would result in lack of quality affordable childcare in the area and a huge loss.	Oppose
204	Current parent	Probably the best thing in the neighbourhood and children are growing happily there. A lot of families rely and depend on it.	Oppose
205		Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. MMES needs a permanent purpose built building, a not the Lavender building as a temporary fix. It provides a valuable service and closure will have detrimental impact on local children. Alternative facilities are not comparable or affordable. Look at other provisions e.g. Chaucer Centre.	Oppose
206	Ward Councillor for Lavender Fields	Should look at alternative sites for MMES, e.g. Whatley Avenue, Phipps Bridge Youth Centre. It is last remaining council-maintained nursery in Merton and provides affordable, all-year-round EYFS services to children in Mitcham with no comparable alternatives. It provides a community service that is accessible to a wide mix of families. Seems short-sighted to	Oppose

		close only council nursery when lots of private nurseries are predicted to close.	
207		Strongly oppose closure.	Oppose
208	Current parent	Strongly oppose closure. Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Only nursery that meets my need for full time childcare and is affordable. Offers high quality care from experienced staff.	Oppose
209		Has and still is providing learning and growth for many children and support to their parents. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
210	Current parent	Saddened by proposal. Provides exceptional provisions for early childcare, staff are outstanding and highly experienced. Limited services in area that meeting these standards and facilities.	Oppose
211		Early Years provision has been and remains a valuable asset to Mitcham. Provides full time provision. Preposterous to consider closure during a pandemic due to the impact it has had on children's wellbeing and development. This may have increased the need for MMES's provision so a premises larger than Lavender may be required in the future. Also moving pupils from MMES into a new premises after the disruption from COVID could be detrimental and should be delayed.	Oppose
212	Prospective parent	Object and saddened by proposal. Run by an exceptional team with excellent on site facilities and is most affordable childcare option in the local area. It is a vital resource for the local community and its closure would be a huge loss.	Oppose
213	Current parent	Strongly oppose closure. Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. It is essential for the local community providing safe, well controlled and highly sufficient childcare. Most affordable in area and provides full time care. Purpose built building with a playground close by. New housing developments nearby may increase demand. Concerned re staff losing their jobs.	Oppose
214		Alternatives are not suitable replacements.	Oppose
215		Strongly oppose closure.	Oppose
216	Related to staff member	Devastated at proposal. Mother works there and is not only a means of providing for her family, but also her passion and commitment to help children. Has a good reputation as an educational establishment. Many adults rely on its services to enable them to do their day jobs.	Oppose
217		Reconsider the proposal.	Oppose
218	Councillor for Lavender Fields Ward	Share same sentiments as other Councillor. It was a purpose built, award nominated facility to provide a deprived community with a vital resource to promote diversity and inclusivity with universally accessible places. Most children attending are average families from the local area struggling to make ends meet, not middle class families. Main concern from residents is the affordability of childcare. Lavender is not just a nursery it is a little community across the whole ward.	Oppose

219		Supports proposal. The capacity of MMES should be increased as more young people are becoming vulnerable to mental health difficulties. For many years it has been one of the most effective arms of Melbury College providing opportunities for success to some very vulnerable students despite being housed in temporary accommodation. Moving to a permanent and purpose-adapted home will allow the service to improve even further.	Support
220	Current parent	Daughter attends and has grown in confidence and developed beautifully as a result of the hard work of the amazing staff members. It has also played a pivotal role in the upbringing of multi-cultural Merton children.	Oppose
221	Staff member	Best interest for children for the site to remain open. Setting is excellent and has had a great impact on children's physical and learning development. Most impacted will be fee paying parents. Our nursery is very specialist and caters for children with special needs. Any change to routine may have a detriment effect on children.	Oppose
222	Current parent	Strongly oppose closure. Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Vital community hub providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and has around 40 children on the waiting list. Alternatives are full or more expensive.	Oppose
223		Oppose closure due to: no information provided on other sites; why can't Whatley Ave accommodate them – it has been allocated for SEN but only 90 places, it has enough capacity for both; alternative settings are not applicable to vast majority; predicted decrease in numbers is unfounded and short-sighted; it is an extremely popular, high quality nursery.	Oppose
224	Current parent	Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. As a parent cannot speak highly enough about the nursery staff. Council has also grossly underestimated the demand for places at Lavender.	Oppose
225	Current & prospective grandparent	Lovely nursery with excellent staff who provide a very good education. Also the most affordable.	Oppose
226	Current parent	It is a magnificent establishment.	Oppose
227		Would have a detrimental effect on nursery provision in the local area in terms of quality of education and affordability. Excellent nursery, brilliant staff in a purpose build building.	Oppose
228	Current parent	Staff are caring, dedicated, committed and patient. Prepares children for school. Reduced demand for places in inaccurate as more families are moving to Mitcham as it is more affordable than neighbouring areas/boroughs. Eastfields is also being regenerated so population may increase. Alternative providers are more expensive and do not offer the same experiences or full time care.	Oppose
229	Current & prospective grandparent	Look for an alternative site for MMES. It is a fantastic nursery. There are no other nurseries nearby and affordable for younger grandchild to attend.	Oppose

230		It is purpose built and excels in meeting its purpose. Provides high quality, affordable, full time childcare with high demand.	Oppose
231	Current parents	Challenging to find a nursery place in the area. Staff would be made redundant. Look at alternative sites for MMES. Eastfields regeneration will encourage more young families to the area increasing demand for places.	Oppose
232		Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Already lack of nursery provision (let alone affordable options) within local area . It is an excellent, well run nursery where children thrive.	Oppose
233		Protest against the closure. It is a vital asset for children in a purpose built building that will deprive low income families of 80 government funded places. It will also lead to excessive traffic in the area – site is not set up for a secondary school.	Oppose
234	Current parent	Object and in fact support an expansion of early year's services. Convenient location for commuting into London and affordable. Concerned re detrimental impact on staff. Council should be investing in services required by young professionals like myself and not closing them. The scrutiny meeting was biased towards Melbury College as two councillors were chairs there. Also question viability of report presented at the meeting. Unclear what other buildings have been considered and questionable if a setting with a playground for young children in front of it is the best location for anxious students.	Oppose
235	Current parent	It has an excellent reputation and am extremely happy with the childcare my child receives there. Anticipate an increase in demand for childcare resulting from the Eastfields regeneration project.	Oppose
236	Current & prospective parent	Son has thrived at the nursery and we are grateful for the level of care. The closure will have a negative effect on the staff. 2019 report identified an undersupply of places for 2 year olds – this will only get worse if Lavender closes. Look for an alternative site for MMES.	Oppose
237	Past parent	Support the council in looking for long-term site for MMES but not to the detriment of Lavender Nursery. Nursery provides huge value to local families. It is more than just a service facility, it creates a sense of family. (For specific reasons) am truly grateful for the support we received from Lavender. Also concerned re the suitability for MMES of the location, the increased demand for childcare places due to the Eastfields regeneration and staff redundancies.	Oppose
238	Past MMES parent	There is no other provision in our borough that supports children with their mental health issues or who are unable to manage mainstream education. There is such a need for this provision and it needs to be recognised for the work they do and the need for it to be in place in an appropriate setting, to be able to fully support their children in a safe and nurturing environment like they did for my child. Children are struggling more and more in mainstream and they are just not equipped to care and nurture these children and that is why we need the MMES in place.	Support

239	Past MMES parent	The children in the school are vulnerable and in need of intensive support and care. They require lots of input from different agencies to help them to reconnect and find a place in the community. Lavender is a safe and ideal building to house a medical support school. It has the right facilities and is vital to the whole community.	Support
240	Past MMES parent	MMES is an important facility with excellent staff. It is therefore so important that MMES have the right space and facilities to be able to nurture these wounded children back to good mental health - now more than ever in light of Covid.	Support

Lavender Nursery Parents Association Consultation Response

Summary

The Lavender Nursery Parents Association [LNPA] is a group of parents and carers of children at the Nursery, former pupils, and children on the waiting list. We have considered the current proposal put forward by Merton Council and have concluded that we are unanimously opposed to the proposal to close Lavender Nursery, London Road, Mitcham, in August 2021.

Merton Council's proposal to close Lavender Nursery shows a clear misunderstanding of the requirements of childcare for local parents and the suggested alternatives are not applicable to the vast majority of the children. The local authorities admission criteria does not allow children aged 2-3 years old to attend nursery classes within primary schools, which is where we understand the majority of the vacancies outlined in Merton Council's proposal are highlighted to be (and even when they turn 3 they cannot attend until the term after their third birthday). Additionally these nursery places are unsuitable for working families who require childcare from 7.45-6pm and all year round [school nurseries are only available term time only]. Although some schools provide wrap around & holiday care, the majority of these are not available for the 3-4 years age group. The council's proposal also fails to consider the financial, logistical, emotional and environmental impact of uprooting those children to alternative childcare providers, for which this report evidences an average 30% increase on childcare costs as a result of this displacement.

The LNPA have found that the suggested decrease in demand for affordable, safe, purposeful, and forward thinking Early Years childcare is unfounded and in fact many of the council's policies [The Local Plan, Childcare Sufficiency in Merton (2020)] contradict the proposal to reduce the number of Early Year childcare places in the local area. Merton Council's continued regeneration ambitions, in particular to encourage young people to move to the area, will inevitably require enhanced Early Years education facilities and whilst the LNPA recognise the validity in the need for young people's medical educational services, it is very likely that an increase in the young family population will demand a higher ratio of EYFS childcare, over that required to support the number of pupils across the local area with medical educational needs. It is the LNPA's opinion that the council's proposal is, in this case, short sighted and fails to future-proof the local area and its own budget requirements.

The council's consultation document fails to detail adequate information on alternative sites that have been explored for the relocation of Merton Medical Educational Services [Canterbury Road Campus]. Merton Council note in their proposal, that MMES 'have outgrown their previous accommodation at the Canterbury Road campus, Morden. They are currently in temporary provision but require a permanent, suitable home'. However it is evident from the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on Wednesday 10th February 2021, that Merton Council have failed to fully consider alternative sites within the borough, including the Whatley Avenue site. Whatley Avenue is currently unoccupied, having most recently been utilised as a temporary site for Harris Academy Wimbledon for its 360 students. The LNPA understand that Merton Council propose to use this site for specialist SEN provision for up to 90 pupils and therefore the LNPA suggest the site has enough capacity to house both this SEN provision and the requirements of MMES, while still ensuring appropriate segregation of the two services and their individual needs. This also leaves space for both these provisions to grow in future years, unlike the current Lavender Nursery site. Merton council's solution to the rehousing of MMES will subsequently deplete and disperse a fully functioning, highly in demand and successful Early Years childcare facility which serves its own residing families. It is not clear from the current proposal what other alternative sites have been analysed for the relocation of MMES and therefore why the proposal is to relocate

MMES some 2.5 miles across the Borough. It would be reasonable to assume that this drastic relocation will inevitably have an impact on its current families who will be required to incur additional upheaval in transportation to get to the Lavender Road, London Road site, should the proposal go ahead.

In addition and in light of the current global pandemic, the LNPA believe Merton council has been unreasonable in the time scale provided for this consultation, given the gravity of the impact of the nursery's closure on families and its own staff. The LNPA believe that the council have deliberately failed to effectively inform other groups that are directly impacted and, more generally the wider community, of the consultation proposal, assuming this will be a matter affecting only those families currently on-roll. Again this approach is short-sighted and divisive, excluding parents who were previously on the waiting list, who may well be expecting their child to attend and have Lavender Nursery earmarked as their local nursery, as well as all those families whose children have received the wonderful care and education provided at Lavender Nursery, who will be personally affected.

Whilst the LNPA appreciates the councils position in needing to find an alternative site for MMES, we fail to understand why this must come at the enormous cost of the closure of Lavender Nursery and how the council have justifiably arrived at the position that the only alternative site across the entire borough is a hugely in demand, incredibly successful and vital early years childcare provider.

The LNPA urges the council to reconsider its position on targeting Lavender Nursery as the only appropriate site for Merton Medical Education Services.

Introduction

This response is written on behalf of the LNPA with regards to the recent proposal and consultation for the closure of Lavender Nursery [London Road] to allow for the expansion of Merton Medical Education Service provision.

Firstly, we would like it noted that the approach and timing of this consultation period by the Local Authority feels much like an 'afterthought'. Lavender Nursery is a vital community hub, providing safe, regulated and highly impactful childcare and Early Years Education to approximately 100 children of Merton borough. It does appear from the short natured and short sighted approach to this consultation, that the importance of the nursery's impact on its local community has been neglected by the Local Authority and it is the LA's intention to forcibly escalate this matter without due care and consideration on the impact this poses to its own community.

Formal consultation should in any case, allow open, unbiased discussions for all affected parties and as such we expect that this response is given appropriate consideration when reaching a decision.

Consultation Concerns

The LNPA have noted that your consultation was published on Monday 24th January 2021 and is due to close on 22nd February 2021. This allows, in a time of national lockdown, for 30 days in which families have to receive, digest, understand, research alternatives, collate and respond to your consultation. This is assuming that all those impacted are in fact able to access the resources required to take the aforementioned steps. It is highly likely that there are very many within the groups impacted by this proposal who may be the vulnerable, clinically shielding, those for whom English is not their first language or those from deprived households with little access to the current platforms used for this consultation [internet and email correspondence], they will have less opportunity or may find it difficult to respond to the

consultation. The only people in the local wards who have been directly contacted about the consultation are the parents & carers of Lavender Nursery, the consultation could have been better promoted by the Council through ward Councillors or the local MP as there may be many other people who will be impacted who are unaware .

In addition, and most concerning, we understand there to be a number of legal documents that have been omitted from the consultation. We request to see the Authority Monitoring Report [AMR] as a matter of urgency and understand this is a legal matter that must be adhered to before any decision can be made on this consultation. It is also noted that the published Merton Council Local Plan, held on your website was out of date until part way through the consultation window. Given the proposed changes are to buildings and that this is a planning matter, we are extremely concerned that the proposal consistently contravenes your borough's Statement of Community Involvement [SCI] June 2020. Your SCI states its agenda to;

Be transparent in the way that consultations are carried out.

We would argue that the short natured timeframe to the consultation suggests that the council's perspective on this consultation is one merely of formality and is not in the true 'spirit' of a consultation. One which protects and promotes the community's voice and allows for feedback to be received and given and for true consideration be applied at senior level to the points raised. Our feeling is that the LA will not have sufficient time within the current timeframe [22nd February 2021] in which to demonstrate they have fairly considered all of the objections points raised in this document and by those received from the wider community.

Be clear and helpful in guiding people through the process

The consultation documents were emailed to parents of the nursery on Monday 24th January. Parents were informed that they should email any thoughts to a generic consultation email address. As previously stated, the LA have made an assumption that families will all have access to the resources which will allow them to respond to the consultation appropriately. No adjustments or adaptations have been made to ensure that all families will be able to access the consultation documents. More worrying is the council's short sighted approach in failing to share this with the other groups who may be impacted and more generally to the wider community. Whilst it is the case that the families currently on role at the nursery are acutely affected, we are aware of an overwhelming number of young families in the area who had anticipated sending their younger children to the nursery when they reached appropriate age or when the nursery had availability to take them. This document details the number of families who have expressed an interest in attending Lavender Nursery since the nursery was sadly forced to close its under 2 year old provision in 2018 and subsequently closed its waiting list to all other class groups since November 2020.

Seek views at the earliest possible stage and throughout the consultation

The LNPA would argue that the short turn around for the consultation feedback suggests that the LA are merely carrying out the consultation as a matter of course. It is felt that that the LA have made the deadline unreasonably short as this was either a part of the planned MMES 'take-over' of the Lavender Nursery site that was forgotten entirely or was strategically left to the last minute to ensure that there were as few responses as possible. Either way, we would argue that this approach entirely contravenes the borough commitment to its own SCI. Those impacted could also have been involved at an earlier stage, before the formal consultation started.

Section 9.9 of the borough's SCI stipulates;

'For such consultation to be meaningful, it should be held towards the beginning of the pre-application process, while there is still a realistic opportunity for the local community to help shape proposals before they are submitted as a formal application. If consultation is held just

before submitting the application, the designs are likely to be more fixed and there are fewer opportunities for community engagement to influence the proposals.'

The current proposal suggests that the LA intend to close Lavender Nursery with effect from August 2021. This suggests that a planning proposal has already been submitted and therefore no such pre-application consultation has taken place.

Social & Economic Impact

The LNPA believes there would be a significant social and economic impact from closing the nursery. Closure of the Lavender Nursery will leave up to 120 families currently on roll, without adequate access to early years childcare, which the LNPA believe would cause an insurmountable strain on the ability of parents to work. Merton Council's Childcare Sufficiency in Merton Annual Report 2019, states;

"Sufficient, high quality childcare is not only a vital component of the local economy and can support regeneration, but ensures that families can access the right type of childcare to meet their needs that enables them to seek work or maintain their employment. In addition, a market that can offer high quality, accessible and affordable childcare has the potential to contribute to the reduction of child poverty. Evidence shows that high-quality Early Years provision has a positive and lasting effect on children's outcomes, future learning and life chances - regardless of the economic circumstances of their parents. Therefore, high quality childcare supports the Local Authority in its role to improve the wellbeing of young children and reduce inequalities between them."

The Department for Education's "Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local authorities, states:

"Parents are able to work because childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and are delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings. To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities are required by legislation to: secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14"

Working families require full-time childcare in order for them to continue meeting the demands of running and maintaining their household in London. The part time hours currently offered as funded places do not provide sufficient hours for parents to work the hours full-time jobs demand. Adequate childcare facilities have become particularly crucial during the uncertain times of the global pandemic, which continues to cause job losses. The Merton Council proposal fails to appreciate the importance of enabling people back into work and for working parents to continue to be able to work their full hours. The cost of alternative nurseries in the area is notably higher than Lavender Nursery (see Alternative Childcare Providers below), which would cause significant financial strain on its current families and could result in parents being unable to work, with no choice but in to provide childcare at home, forcing families in to a situation of further financial difficulty. This increase in cost for alternative childcare is particularly relevant for Lavender nursery given that it is in Lavender Fields ward, noted as one of the poorest in the borough. Stripping this affordable childcare provision would be particularly damaging to low income families.

LNPA believes the financial viability of the nursery has been impacted by its own downsizing in previous years. Fee paying parents keep nurseries viable. In 2018 Lavender Nursery closed the 'baby room' resulting in a significant decrease in the number of fee paying families. This meant that the natural flow of children from the "baby room" up to the "preschool room" was interrupted, which will inevitably have resulted in a decrease in profit to the nursery.

Many parents require their child to attend a nursery from much younger than the age of 2 and so regrettably they have been forced to find alternative arrangements, which would then make them hesitant to move their child back to Lavender Nursery when they reached the age of 2 years. As such, many current Lavender Nursery families are forced to send their siblings to two different nursery settings, resulting in two nursery 'commutes' and missing out on the nursery sibling discount.

It is LNPA's belief that the council has been undermining the financial viability of the nursery by cutting back the intake of the nursery in previous years, in order to be able to justify its closure now. By increasing and supporting the fee paying children in the nursery by reopening the "baby room" and maintaining fee paying places in older classes (and if required increasing the fees to prevent the nursery being loss making) the LNPA believe's the nursery would be revenue generating again. As it stands there is a significant waiting list with around 40 families on the list at the time Lavender Nursery was forced to close its waiting as a result of the global pandemic. We are informed that the nursery receives daily enquiries from prospective parents looking for a range of childcare, from 6 months to 5 years.

Lavender nursery is notable in the area for its diversity. The mix of full time paid for places with government funded places supports the local area's diverse demographic, enabling children from different backgrounds to mix. This was a particular feature of the Sure Start programme, under which the facility was built. The Sure Start programme focused on areas of high deprivation that would benefit from the early years facility but with universally accessible places, ensuring that the children who received funding were able to mix with fee paying children promoting diversity and inclusivity. Closing Lavender Nursery would take this away, sending the children from more deprived families to facilities only offering funded places and children from other families to paid for facilities elsewhere.

The Childcare Sufficiency in Merton Annual Report [2019 & 2020] clearly identifies that there is already a deficit of funded early education for 2-year-olds, within the wards surrounding the nursery.

	Variance in availability of 'funded places available' to 'eligible children'	
	2019	2020
Colliers Wood	-13	-14
Figges Marsh	-47	-45
Graveney	-38	-14
Lavender Fields	18	-12
	-80	-85

The report states that the Figges Marsh ward currently has: "significantly fewer places in the ward than there are eligible children". These families are forced to source alternative childcare providers outside of the ward in which they live.

We believe one of these places noted is Lavender Nursery and by removing this facility there would be further strain on available places. It must also be noted Lavender would be the second local nursery to close, following the closure of the independently run Funky Owls, St Barnabas Hall, Gorrington Park Avenue, CR4. Although the council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report shows that the population of Merton's under-fives has decreased in recent years and suggests that this is expected to continue to decrease over the next five years, the

LNPA believe that this is unlikely to be the case given the council's commitment to regeneration in the local area, thus increasing the number of children being born. There is anecdotal evidence of a Covid 'baby boom' on the horizon which would bring further need for nursery places.

Alternative Childcare Providers

There are 2 key considerations for alternative childcare arrangements for the children who are currently at Lavender and who were on the waiting list and expecting a future place.

1. The proposed alternative arrangements for funded places for eligible 2-year-olds (part time, term time, free provision)

Of proposed locations Steers Mead Children's Centre is the only one within walking distance of Lavender (10mins walk). Acacia Children's Centre (20mins walk) and Abbey Children's Centre (30mins walk) are too far for families to travel by foot given the round trip journeys would be between 40-60 minutes from Lavender. This will prevent these nurseries being an option for some families or require those families to travel by car to the locations which is impractical (no parking facilities at the nurseries) but also adds to the pollution in the borough which Merton has pledged to reduce. This also goes against the councils Good Growth Strategy which includes the 20-minute neighbourhood policy ("The council will seek to create 20 minute neighbourhoods where feasible - 20-minute neighbourhoods are places where communities can access most of their daily needs within a 20-minute (about 800 metres) return walk from home.)

The requirement to fill 80 funded places could not be met by the current proposal. Acacia and Abbey offer 24 and 20 places respectively and are currently full. Steers Mead will need to be fully refurbished in order to function as a nursery and will only have the capacity for an additional 29 spaces.

2. Places for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds for fee paying families (full time places)

Although there are other nurseries within 1 mile of Lavender there are many reasons why parents have chosen to send their child/children to Lavender and not those nurseries. Key factors within this are price and location. This is summarised below:

Nursery	Distance from Lavender (as crow flies)	Walking time	Round trip time (walking)	Ward	Avails	Fees: Under 3s	Fees: Over 3s	Fees: Over 3s inc 15-hour funding	Fees: Over 3s inc 30 hours funding
Lavender Nursery				Lavender Fields		£1,174.00	£1,140.00	£935.00	£697.00
Flourish Day Nursery	0.63 miles	21min	42min	Colliers Wood	Yes	£1,625.00		£1,411.25	£1,197.00
Funky Owls	0.69 miles	20min	40mins	Colliers Wood	Yes	£1,776.00		£1,495.00	£1,256.00
Nursery on the Green (Colliers Wood)	0.72 miles	21 mins	42mins	Colliers Wood	Yes	£1,517.00	£1,300.00	£1,001.00	£702.00
Love Lane Day Nursery	0.81 miles	20min	40mins	Cricket Green	Yes	£1,517.00	£1,473.00		
Kingswood Daycare Nursery	0.81 miles	24mins	48mins	Cricket Green	Yes	£1,540.00	£1,430.00		
Jigsaw Day Nursery	0.82 miles	22mins	44mins	Cricket Green	No	£1,457.00			
Nursery on the Green (Mitcham)	0.82 miles	25mins	50mins	Cricket Green					
Haslemere House Day Nursery	0.86 miles	22 mins	44mins	Cricket Green	Yes	£1,170.00	£1,126.00		
Kiddies Kottage	0.87 miles	30 mins	60mins	Longthornton		£1,213.00	£1,083.00		
Lucky Beans (Wandsworth)	0.58 miles	12 mins	24mins		No	£1,531.00	£1,336.00		
Woodlands (Wandsworth)	0.66 miles	15 mins	30mins		Yes	£1,627.00	£1,411.00	£1,223.00	£942.00
Average price						£1,497.30	£1,308.43	£1,282.56	£1,024.25
% higher than Lavender						27.54%	14.77%	37.17%	46.95%

It is clear from the above that Lavender is significantly cheaper than all but one of the other local nurseries, which is a significant distance from the current Lavender Nursery setting. The council's proposal for the above nurseries to be regarded as suitable alternatives, is unreasonable due to the added impact of the commute to the nursery settings, as well as the incomparable fees the families will be forced to pay, in a time where many families' budgets are stretched. This could result in many children being forced out of suitable childcare provision.

The practicalities of journeys to nursery must also be considered, to ensure journeys are taken on foot rather than by car (to prevent further pollution) the distance to and from nursery is key. The data above clearly shows that many of the nurseries would not be practical to walk to and from and this would be a significant factor in whether parents can use these nurseries in place of Lavender.

Nursery classes in primary schools have been given as an alternative to full time places, however this is not a comparable option. Nursery classes within primary schools are only for children aged 3-4 years, with no options for the children aged 2-3 years currently provided by

Lavender Nursery. Places are not available until the term after the child turns 3 (or in some local Wandsworth schools we've enquired at, they are only available the September after they turn 3). This is critical to considerations of appropriate alternatives, if a child turns 3 on the 1st April (and onwards) they would not be able to start at a school nursery until the following September, thus requiring a further 6 months of childcare elsewhere. Lavender Nursery is open from 7.45-6pm providing parents with the ability to work a standard full-time working day, while their child is at nursery. The provision within primary schools does not cover the full day and more worryingly not all primary schools offer wrap around care to the nursery age group. The LNPA believes that nursery classes within primary schools are not a like-for-like viable option.

There are a number of childminders in the area, however the services provided by childminders vs nurseries are not comparable. This is particularly key in the pre-school age group where social and emotional development is core to the EYFS and therefore being in a nursery setting with a larger number of children and getting prepared for the school environment is critical. Nursery and childminder provisions cannot be compared to nursery settings, as the parents who chose nursery do so because they are looking for full rounded childcare which supports the research on early years development.

In addition to travel and cost implications of choosing Lavender Nursery, parents note that they chose Lavender Nursery for its setting. Lavender Nursery provides a purpose built building for EYFS with unparalleled facilities (nominated for 2006 Better Public Building Award) including floor-to-ceiling windows offering natural light in all rooms, large separate rooms for all age groups, a huge, secure, well equipped garden and is set back from the main road. No other council run or private nurseries in the area offer comparable facilities, which were specifically designed with young people in mind. The high quality care and experience of the staff, many of whom have been with the nursery for many years, results in excellent relationships between the children, parents and staff which fosters the high quality learning experience across the nursery. Within the local community Lavender Nursery is consistently recommended by parents to future parents as is demonstrated by the waiting lists for places.

Educational Impact

The council's "Children & Young People Plan" agreed to *"continue to provide good or outstanding nursery provision and actively promote access to 2 year-old funding"*. The report states;

'by removing this provision all parents in full time work who cannot use the reduced hours of the 15/30 hours funding will have the nursery provision taken away from them and despite the offer of relocating the funded places there will still be many parents who are unable to use those sites due to their location and as such are also having the option of funded places removed from them.'

The council's 'Childcare Sufficiency in Merton' report 2020 notes;

Evidence shows that high-quality Early Years provision has a positive and lasting effect on children's outcomes, future learning and life chances - regardless of the economic circumstances of their parents. Therefore, high quality childcare supports the Local Authority in its role to improve the wellbeing of young children and reduce inequalities between them.

Given this evidence the LNPA believes the closure of Lavender Nursery would lead to significant risk to the development of local children. This is particularly important in the most deprived areas of Merton. In the council published document: Merton Wards Health Profile - Lavender Fields it states only *"55% of children in Lavender Fields are "school ready" by the age of 5"*.

This is far fewer than the borough, London and national averages and so closing Lavender nursery within this ward will only impact this further

The LNPA highlighted that there are around 40 children on the waiting list and more who were unable to join this waiting list when it was closed in November 2020. These children may now find it difficult to find places at other nurseries as many in the local area are already over subscribed and could be left without a nursery place or have to wait longer than planned before starting nursery. These children have spent a significant portion of their young lives in isolation during the Covid pandemic and without access to baby classes or socialisation the developmental importance of joining a nursery is even more critical.

Ancillary Concerns

The LNPA have raised concerns regarding the suitability of the location of MMES at the Lavender Nursery site. Lavender Nursery is situated on London Road, the entrance to which is adjacent to Tamworth Recreation. Tamworth Recreation ground is a playground owned and managed by Merton LA. It's equipment and play space are suitable for and attract children under the age of 10 years old. As such the playground lends itself well to its location next to Lavender Nursery. The play space is a shared community space where families of all social and economic backgrounds convene together in a safe and calm environment.

The proposal for MMES to relocate to the Lavender Nursery site raises real concerns about the uptake and usage of Tamworth Recreation Ground. The suitable footfall will be drastically reduced in and around the recreation ground area, due to the reduction in the numbers of young children [under 10's] accessing the playground on a daily basis. This could well render the playground a wasted community space, which will require greater long term upkeep and expense by the LA. It is also possible that in its significantly reduced state, Tamworth Recreation ground could become a space inappropriately used by those demonstrating anti-social behaviour, as is the case for some neighbouring outdoor space such as Edenvale. The playground and splash park can also get particularly busy during the summer and this may not be suitable for anxious or high risk children to have to pass through to enter or leave the facility.

We believe that the LA's commitment to providing safe outdoor space for all may be compromised by the repositioning of MMES to the Lavender Nursery site.

Future-proofing the community

The current Lavender Nursery site, was a purpose-built award winning site designed specifically for the under 5's. The single-story premises currently comprises 4 separate rooms, 4 bathrooms all designed with low level accessibility facilities specifically for young people. The substantial outdoor space lends itself to allow children to fully develop the EYFS curriculum and development. For many families who attend the nursery without their own personal outdoor space at home, the access to large, purposeful and safe outdoor learning space will be a lifeline for personal development.

The LNPA feel that Merton council overlooks the very fact that the space was specifically identified and designed and built at much expense, following the needs assessment of its' community and local area and that the local authority is deliberately disguising the continued level of demand and in fact the likely increase in demand for affordable nursery in the local area, given the mass scale residential development and regeneration that is detailed in Merton Councils local plan. LNPA understand that Merton Council's Local Plan sets out the following;

1.2.10

Good quality housing could encourage young professionals into Mitcham bringing increased spending power. More people using the town centre will have knock on social and environmental effects, including greater support for existing local businesses, allowing them to expand and create new jobs.

1.2.11

In order to accommodate the significant increase in new housing in Mitcham and the surrounding neighbourhood, in particular from large key development sites, we will also ensure that community services such as education and health meet the needs of existing and new residents.

The LNPA understands that the current Eastfields Regeneration programme proposes 800 new homes, many of which will be targeted towards the council's 'local plan' of encouraging young professionals to the area. As such we anticipate an increase in the demand for nursery places, as young professionals and couples start families. Whilst the LNPA recognise that there may be a small increase in demand for medical education services, the ratio of demand for this type of service is heavily outweighed by the likely demand for 'mainstream' affordable, safe and purposeful childcare, which supports the council's current Local Plan, it's economical objectives of increased income to the area and its environmental agenda 'Good Growth Strategy' of creating a minute-community - where communities can access most of their daily needs within a 20-minute (about 800 metres) return walk from home).

The council's current proposal suggests one of the alternative sites for the deposition of Lavender children, will be Acacia Nursery. However given its proximity to the Eastfield Regeneration site, the likely increase in demand for places on the waiting list as a result, will mean fewer places available for those families dispersed from Lavender Nursery. It is also possible that with such demand for Acacia Nursery, the LA could chose to impose a 'catchment' area to the nursery, which would force those previously attending Lavender Nursery even further down a waiting list, rendering them without any alternative childcare option, other than the cripplingly expensive independent options. It is very clear from the fee structure's evidence in this document, that independent nurseries do not currently offer a like-for-like alternative to local authority run nurseries. It is LNPA feeling that the proposal entirely fails to take into account the additional and significant financial burden these types of settings would place on young families. Naturally, this would only lead to further marginalising of families on the income spectrum, with only those from more wealthy income households able to continue to access childcare.

The council's proposal papers suggest that approximately 120 families will be affected by the nursery closures proposal. The short-sighted nature of this implies a deliberate attempt to undervalue the importance and demand for Lavender Nursery. The LNPA understands that, regrettably, Lavender Nursery was forced to close their formal waiting list for new children in November 2020 as a result of the global pandemic, at which time the nursery had 40 families on the formal waiting list, with interest across all age groups. We are aware that since closing its formal waiting list, the nursery continue to be contacted via telephone and/or on a daily basis by new families in need of quality childcare and so we anticipate that should the waiting list have remained open, this figure of 40 families would see a 100% increase, with approximately 80-100 waiting families. The council's proposal fails to take into account the continued demand for spaces at Lavender Nursery, which we would suggest would impact a higher proportion of local families, than is currently in demand for MMES places. In addition, since the closure of the "baby room" in 2018 there are a significant number of families who would seek to put their child into nursery care from a younger age who have now had to find care elsewhere, there could be a significant increase in attendance if this room were to be reopened.

The council should now seriously consider its commitment to its own Local Plan of encouraging young professionals to the area, ensuring that it thoroughly 'future-proofs' its education provision. The LPNA believes it would be short-sighted and reactionary of the council to close a highly effective, safe, purposeful, happy and affordable EYFS childcare setting, which will subsequently leave insufficient, inadequate provisions for those that the

area intends to attract over the next few years. It should be recognised that young families will also take into account factors such as access to childcare provisions, transportation, ease of commute around childcare, when choosing to move to a new area. The lack of quality nursery will undoubtedly render Mitcham a less desirable area than its counterparts. As such, Mitcham will continue to see a decrease in its external income and local spend and will continue to demand more financially to support its maintenance and regeneration proposal, and this will be a financial and time consuming burden to Merton Council.

A recent study carried out by the Early Years Alliance in collaboration with Ceeda, suggests that 64 percent of nurseries and 56 percent of childminders consider their services to be at immediate risk of closure or to be facing potential closure in the next 12 months. 70 percent of nurseries in disadvantaged areas of London class themselves as 'struggling' compared with 59 per cent in more affluent areas. In a press release from the London Mayor Sadiq Khan's office, Neil Leitch, Early Years Alliance chief executive, said;

"It is deeply concerning to see that, despite the crucial role that nurseries, pre-schools and childminders in London have played supporting local children and families throughout the pandemic, an ongoing lack of adequate government support - combined with years of underfunding - means the majority will struggle to survive the next 12 months. What's more, given that we know early education is crucial to ensuring that all children are given the best possible start in life, it is particularly worrying that providers in more disadvantaged areas are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing financial difficulties than those in more affluent areas".

In light of the above considerations, the LNPA would strongly argue that the proposed closure of Lavender Nursery presents 'false economy' in the long term and does not seek to future-proof itself economically, socially or environmentally.

Impact on Staff

The LNPA understands that the impact on the staff at Lavender Nursery is a legal matter and that there is a full process of separate consultation required, which will impact on at least a third of the staff being forced into involuntary redundancy. The LNPA would like to note however, that in a time of national lockdown, there is an inevitable challenge for finding re-employment and as such any consultation of redundancy should take reasonable steps to support its staff in offering an acceptable level of time for staff to be consulted on the proposal. It is the LNPA's feeling the local authority should consider allowing additional time for the consultation period, in order to reasonably support the re-employment of its workforce in any way possible. The LA will be aware that failure to follow the due consultation process may result in a legal challenge, through an Employment Tribunal.

It is entirely regrettable that the local council has chosen a time of such employment uncertainty to force a third of the Lavender Nursery workforce into a situation of unemployment. The council and those reading this report, of which many will be parents themselves, will know that the single most important resource to the success of any education setting is its staff. The staff at Lavender Nursery are among the highest calibre of educators and childcare providers that any parent could ask for, any OFSTED inspector could assess and any child would wish to be cared for by. Many of the staff have been with the nursery since it opened in 2005 and many families have had all their children attend, some of whom are now at secondary school age and still hold such close regard for the staff at Lavender Nursery.

The LNPA have been astounded by the numbers of ex-families in the community who have reached out to support the objection to the consultation and this is a testament to the long term impact that the staff at Lavender Nursery have had on their children and families. The community support to oppose the closure of Lavender Nursery is evident in the numbers of

the local community, who have been in contact with the LNPA and with the consultation team directly. It is entirely remiss of Merton Council to regard the staff at Lavender Nursery as 'dispensable'.

Since the pandemic and national lockdown, the team at Lavender Nursery have so gracefully supported the local families, by ensuring the children are able to continue to attend the nursery setting that they love so much. The team have continued to put themselves on the front line, they have maintained consistency and stability when it is certain many families would have been left turned upside down in their personal lives. The children of LNPA truly love their nursery. It is no exaggeration to say that the staff provide a life-line for families to continue, not just in a time of global pandemic, but have done since the Lavender Nursery opened its doors to the community in 2005.

Conclusion

The LNPA believes the council's proposal is poorly argued, lacks evidence, and is short-sighted in its attitude to the local community (both currently and in attracting new families to the area). There is no justification that the expansion of the MMES provision should also require the closure of Lavender Nursery. The impact of this closure on the families and children of Lavender Nursery (both current and future) has been ill considered and undervalued. The alternative childcare options being proposed by Merton Council are not comparable to that offered by Lavender. Families will be forced into further financial difficulty as a result of high fees charged by independent nurseries and childminders. The quality of EYFS childcare provision and the suitability of the settings offered is not comparable to that offered by Lavender Nursery and therefore the local authority is not fulfilling the consultations requirements to support families in sourcing alternative suitable childcare provision. The council have failed to provide a detailed viability report on the alternative options for the relocation of the MMES site, which calls into question the integrity of this consultation.

We therefore urgently require and expect that the timescale is extended for more detailed consultation and that Councillors are involved in this. A number of questions have been raised in this document, and we await a detailed response to them, including addressing the needs of those who use the nursery but for whom English is not their first language, who are currently confused and anxious (in a time where mental health problems are increasing).

Source List

Merton Council, Local Plan

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning/local-plan/newlocalplan>

Childcare Sufficiency in Merton [2020]

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/Documents/Childcare%20Sufficiency%20Report%202020%20FINAL.pdf>

Statement of Community Involvement [June 2020]

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Statement%20of%20Community%20Involvement%202020.pdf>

Children & Young People Plan [2019-23]

<https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/documents/s28508/Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Plan%202019-23%20Final.pdf>

JSNA & Health of the Borough Merton Health Profile
Merton Data – JSNA and health of the borough

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/healthy-living/publichealth/jsna/health-profiles#:~:text=An%20overview%20of%20health%20and,as%20main%20causes%20of%20mortality>.

Good Growth Strategy

https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Stage2_2_GoodGrowthStrategy_FINAL.pdf

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/two-thirds-of-londons-nurseries-risk-closure>

[12th February 2021]

The Business Support Needs of London Early Years Sector and How They can Be Met, Early Years Alliance and Ceeda [November 2020]

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_business_support_needs_of_londons_early_years_sector_and_how_they_can_be_met.pdf

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Site solutions for Melbury Medical provision

Summary

This report copies the site search completed in December 2020 and then further reviews options outlined in the consultation undertaken in January/February 2021

Site search in December 2020

Current position and expansion on existing site

- 1.1 Due to a rise in the secondary age population and rising needs, especially in mental health, numbers have increased year-on-year. Last year, 63 students benefitted from the services. However, the limited accommodation at the Canterbury Road campus only allows up to 20 students to be accommodated at any one time, with pupils requiring the support of small class groups of no more than 10. There has therefore needed to be an over reliance on home tuition, and only KS4 pupils on site. Numbers are forecast to increase, both as the general secondary age population increases, and the increase in children with mental health needs that are unable to remain in mainstream secondary schools.
- 1.2 The default position in the capital programme is to increase the on-site provision at the Canterbury Campus to 40 pupils, funded from the £900,000 agreed in the capital programme.
- 1.3 For a temporary period only, the provision has moved to Worsfold House providing for up to 40 pupils.
- 1.4 There are issues with the default position of moving back to an expanded Bungalow on the Canterbury Campus. Expansion to 40 pupils may not be sufficient in the medium term and there is a risk that a further project would be required in the near future. Moving to a new site with a larger building would meet the growing need with a much more teaching time and a rounded offer. It could facilitate access to a broader curriculum, rather than 1:1 home tuition, and access to specialist on-site facilities such as food technology, Art, Design Technology, PE and Computing.
- 1.5 Should Merton Medical Education Services move from the Canterbury Campus the space released will provide opportunities for the Pupil Referral Unit, where, with the growth in the general secondary school population, there is also growing demand and the need for additional accommodation, especially in the KS3 cohort and those more vulnerable PRU pupils who may struggle in the larger PRU building
- 1.6 The brief is therefore to identify a site that will provide for 6 classroom spaces plus supplementary accommodation, with access to an outside space. The site will need to have good public transport accessibility for secondary age children. Any design of the building will need to take into account safeguarding risks for the children i.e. potential for self-harm etc.

Option for Melbury Medical to move permanently to a new site

- 1.7 The most recent site search report was completed in March 2020 in relation to additional SEND provision and Whatley Avenue, SW20 (former Adult Education building being used by Harris Academy Wimbledon up to November 2020) has been earmarked to provide ASD SEND places for approximately 80-90 pupils.
- 1.8 Reviewing the options from this previous review:
- 1.9 **Battle Close** – the site is much larger than required and would require a new build at the cost of circa £3 million so the combined build and opportunity loss is over [REDACTED] million
- 1.10 **Worsfold House** – the site is of sufficient size (circa 6,500m²) but it has been identified by the DVS as having a value of up to circa [REDACTED] million. Feasibility studies dating from the recent Cricket Green School expansion shows it is not practical to adapt to be a SEND school, and this would include medical school with for 6-7 classes. Therefore it requires a new build at circa £3 million, so the combined build and opportunity loss is over [REDACTED] million
- 1.11 **Former Merton Adult Education, Whatley Avenue** – this was earmarked as the preferred site for SEND provision for a pupil capacity 80-100 places. It is considerably larger than the identified need for medical provision, and so would not surpass the SEND need.
- 1.12 **Chaucer Centre** - The Chaucer Centre has a similar a GIFA to Whatley Avenue and so is also considerably larger than the identified need for medical provision. It would require the Merton council staff training centre to close and lettings on first floor to be re-located.
- 1.13 The site is larger (6,300m², 1.55 acres excluding parking area between SMART centre and Chaucer Centre) and based on the indicative DVS value of [REDACTED] million per acre for housing land in Mitcham and Morden this provides a value of [REDACTED] million.
- 1.14 Realistically to be suitable it would need to be new build. Based on an estimated cost of £3 million, the combined build and opportunity loss is [REDACTED] million.
- 1.15 In terms of separating the more vulnerable medical needs children and the main PRU, using this site would be only marginally better than the current position of the medical provision being immediately adjacent to the main PRU.
- 1.16 **50 Montgomery Close, Pollards Hill** - This would be considerably too small; it is 20% of the size of Whatley Avenue.
- 1.17 **Schools with surplus places** – the same issues as for SEND would apply in terms of separating provision for secondary age children and therefore not an option.
- 1.18 **Children's Centres (including with Nursery provision) and Youth Centres** - As for SEND provision, these are too small for the need with the exception of **Lavender London Road Nursery** which provides nursery places but does not have the status of a maintained nursery school.

- 1.19 While it was discounted for SEND ASD provision as being too small for that need, it has been considered for the medical provision. The building has 7 potential classroom spaces so could be easily adapted. Due to it being on charity land it also has no potential for housing.
- 1.20 Lavender Nursery could be adapted to provide for up to 60 children for the medical provision at a fraction of the cost in the capital programme compared to extending at Canterbury Road.
- 1.21 However, it would be closing a nursery developed under the Sure Start programme in the early 2000s providing nursery places and the council would need to be satisfied that it was still meeting its childcare sufficiency duty
- 1.22 It is noted that other children's centres and primary schools listed in the SEND school provision site report do have surplus places. If there is a sufficiency need without Lavender Nursery, then this could provide this provision.

Conclusion in December 2020:

- 1.23 All options except Lavender Road nursery would require new build and would therefore require extensive capital building costs plus loss of opportunity cost in capital receipt.

Review in June 2020

Background

The consultation on the proposal to move Merton Medical Education Services (MMES) to Lavender Nursery (London Road) ended on Monday 22 February 2021. Two specific questions arose from the consultation on alternatives to Lavender Nursery:

- Could MMES be located at Whatley Avenue, in addition to the planned special school provision?
- Could MMES stay where they are at Worsfold House, either permanently or for an extended period, of circa two years?

Review of Accommodation requirement for MMES

MMES works with the most vulnerable students in the borough, aged 5-16, many of whom come from areas of extreme deprivation within Mitcham. These pupils are physically unwell, many undergoing chemotherapy, or mentally unwell and struggling to overcome psychosis, suicidal ideation, self-harm, depression, extreme attachment disorders and anxiety.

The brief for MMES is to provide accommodation for 60 children, generally organised in group sizes of around 10 children. Therefore a building is required to provide 6 classroom spaces plus supplementary accommodation, with access to an outside space. The site will need to have good public transport accessibility for secondary age children. Any design of the building will need to take into account safeguarding risks for the children i.e. potential for self-harm etc.

Planned special school provision at Whatley Avenue

The case to use Whatley Avenue for a special school with a specialism to provide for ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) children was agreed by the council's Corporate Management Team in March 2020, but progression of the project was delayed by the Covid period. A report is now going to Cabinet on 22 June 2021.

The plan is for the new provision to be primarily for children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) managed by Melbury School and to open in September 2022 with capacity for 80 pupils. There are a number of advantages to this approach, one of which is that it is the quickest means to deliver the places.

The case for additional special school provision is very clear in the Cabinet report:

- Further significant increases in EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) and demand for specialist SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) places clarifies there is demand for more places than previously perceived
- National data based on SEN2 council returns confirms that Merton has a deficiency of state SEND places compared to comparative council areas and has almost the highest percentage of pupils with EHCPs in independent schools
- The council has a significant deficit in its 'High Needs' Dedicated Schools Grant budget, mostly due to the high cost of specialist school placements
- There is a particular need for more provision for children with ASD with slightly higher functioning than currently placed at Cricket Green School

With Independent day school provision averaging £45k per placement, and maintained schools for this type of need £25k per placement, increasing maintained schools provision is a vital part of addressing Merton's Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs budget deficit.

The Whatley Avenue special school project is therefore key to providing as many places state school places as possible.

It is clear that the council can, and needs to fill the Whatley Avenue building as a special school. The cost avoidance from 80 maintained places compared to independent is circa £1.6 million per annum, so £8 million over 5 years.

Whatley Avenue has a relatively small amount of space for outside play for a special school, and to enable sufficient space it will be necessary to dismantle a temporary building at the site. There is not the site space to add a building on the site for another purpose e.g. MMES.

Worsfold House

MMES is currently temporarily housed in Worsfold House providing 4 classrooms for up to 40 children, along with a primary age Melrose School class in a separate area whilst the expansion of Melrose School is being completed. Approximately half the building is being occupied. Plan 1 overleaf shows the current configuration.

Using the Worsfold House site permanently has been discounted for the following reasons:

1. The Worsfold House site has been identified as a site for housing, with a capital receipt attached to its sale. If it is kept by the council, this capital receipt would be lost
2. The Worsfold House build was considered for school use (for Cricket Green) a few years and design consultants put significant effort into trying to make it work. However, the building is built as offices with only a small number of classroom sized spaces. The

conclusion then was that it realistically needed to be knocked down and re-built for permanent school use. This remains the case.

The issues raised in the December 2020 land search report remain the case.

Worsfold House – the site is of sufficient size (circa 6,500m²) but it has been identified by the DVS as having a value of up to circa [REDACTED] million. Feasibility studies dating from the recent Cricket Green School expansion shows it is not practical to adapt to be a SEND school, and this would include a medical school for 6-7 classes. Therefore it requires a new build at circa £3 million, so the combined build and opportunity loss is over [REDACTED] million

While the DVS valuation has to remain confidential, the council can say that the total cost of this option is £5-10 million:

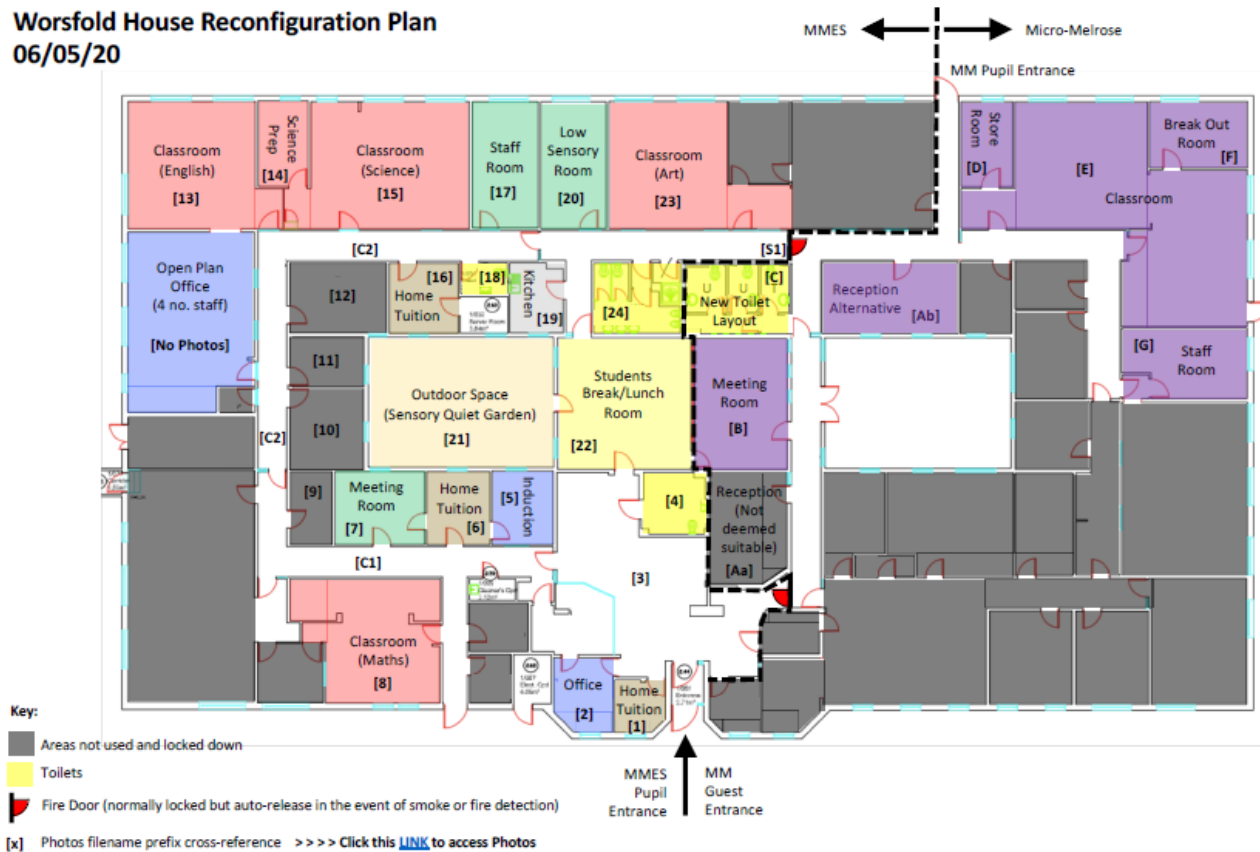
Continuing to use Worsfold House for a period

Since Worsfold House is being used by MMES temporarily, it could be considered that this temporary use could be extended, for two years or so while other options are considered. However, this presents the following issues:

- The building was converted at a low cost for a short period and provides a poor quality environment in what is essentially a disused office block with toilets liable to flooding, an outdated and unreliable lighting system, windows without safety glass and inadequate heating system
- The building was converted to only provide for 40 pupils and cannot be easily extended to 60 children and so to meet demand expected following the Covid period
- There aren't likely to be alternative options in two years

Plan 1

Worsfold House Reconfiguration Plan
06/05/20



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