

Committee: Council

Date: 7 February 2024

Subject: Petitions

Lead officer: John Scarborough, Managing Director South London Legal Partnership

Lead member: Leader of the Council, Councillor Ross Garrod

Contact officer: Amy Dumitrescu, Head of Democracy Services

Recommendation:

1. That Council receive petitions (if any) in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.
 2. That Council notes the response provided to the petition submitted at the meeting held on 15 November 2023.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report invites Council to receive petitions in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 18.1 of the Council's Constitution.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 15 November 2023 the petition listed below was submitted and the response is set out below. Any petitions received by Council are referred to respective departments with responsible officers asked to advise the presenting member in each case of the way in which the petition is to be progressed.

Petition

A petition signed by 1685 persons was submitted by Councillors Hall, Reiss and MacArthur stating "The All-England Lawn Tennis Club's planning application to build a new 8,000 seater stadium, 38 more competition tennis courts and 10 additional buildings on part of Wimbledon Park has recently been passed by Merton's planning committee.

When the Council sold the freehold of the Wimbledon Golf Club site to AELTC in 1993 they gave public assurances that they would never build on the land, backed up with a legally enforceable covenant in the sale agreement.

We, the undersigned demand that Merton Council enforce the legal covenants agreed to by AELTC and Merton Council to keep their promises to the people of Wimbledon".

Officer Response

In October 2023, our planning committee voted to approve the application made by the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) for expansion of its site at Wimbledon.

Following the London Borough of Wandsworth's planning committee's decision to refuse permission, the Mayor of London has the power to direct that he will become the local planning authority for the application. In addition, AELTC has a right of appeal to any ultimate refusal of the Wandsworth element.

Separately to the planning process, the land in Merton earmarked for development remains subject to covenants. Our Council Leader has written to the All England Lawn Tennis Club to seek clarity on how it intends to address these covenants. AELTC have responded saying they will consider this once the planning process has completed. A motion at Full Council in February 2022 noted that 'covenants over this land held on behalf of the residents of Merton will need to be respected henceforth.

2.6 Members are invited to present petitions at this meeting, and a copy of the response will be provided to the next ordinary Council meeting in July 2024.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. None for the purpose of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. None for the purpose of this report.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None for the purpose of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None for the purpose of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None for the purpose of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purpose of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11 APPENDICES

11.1. None

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None.