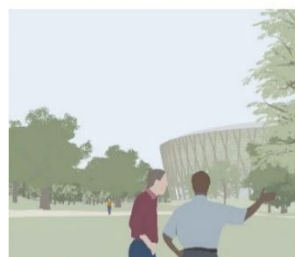




## AE LTC (All England Lawn Tennis Club) PROPOSALS FOR WIMBLEDON PARK

The Planning Applications (PAs) for the AELTC proposals are still being scrutinised by Merton & Wandsworth. It seems likely that these PAs will not be formally considered/decided by the council Planning Application Committees until after the local council elections on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.



SGCARA has tried hard to present issues connected with the AELTC proposals in a balanced way. Many of us have been pleased & proud to have The Wimbledon Championships on our doorstep, but the mood since the huge proposals were revealed is that AELTC has just *'gone too far'*. As more information comes to light, aspects of the proposals, & the justifications provided with them, become deeply troubling. There is too much information on the AELTC plans to include in *'Reaching out to Residents'*. We now have an *'AELTC'* page on the SGCARA website for those who would like to read in more depth. SGCARA hopes that this information will give residents reason to consider Objecting to the PA, (or submit an additional Objection). The recent Community Open Days and Newsletters suggests that the AELTC has become aware how much it is alienating so many in the local community."

Email your comments to BOTH council Planning Depts at:  
[Planning.representations@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.representations@merton.gov.uk)  
[Planning@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@wandsworth.gov.uk)

**(Quote Application Number: 21/P2900  
 (Quote Application Number: 2021/3609**

The proposed 8000-seater Show Court (stadium) is a very controversial part of the plans. The above visuals from AELTC's own July 2021 '3<sup>rd</sup> Consultation' presentation, give an indication how the Show Court would dominate views across Wimbledon Pk, (*much more so in winter with no leaf-cover*). AELTC's claims for their proposals *'revealing the historic views'* appear indefensible. Wimbledon Pk is Metropolitan Open Land – urban Green belt & *'very special circumstances'* have to be demonstrated to allow building on it. The Greater London Authority (GLA) interim Report on AELTC's proposals (Nov 2021) concludes that the current proposals do not fulfil that requirement.

**(GLA full Report on the SGCARA website AELTC page).**

**Dr Dave Dawson** is a highly-respected local Ecologist, previously joint head of the GLA Environment Section, working on biodiversity for London Boroughs & monitoring Wimbledon Pk for some 33 years. His own assessment casts serious doubt on the adequacy of the AELTC-commissioned surveys, the lake de-silting proposals, & claims that their plans will enhance bio-diversity.

**(Dave Dawson's full report on the SGCARA website AELTC page)**

**The veteran Oak Trees** are a much-loved & valued feature of Wimbledon Pk, some dating from Capability Brown's time (mid 18<sup>th</sup>C) & one right back to Tudor times. The Show Court would be at the centre of a group of these veteran oaks. At 100+ feet high, this building would introduce substantial shading to these precious trees. AELTC does not appear to be aware of the highly detrimental effect of deprivation of light on these sensitive trees.

**Dave Lofthouse**, Merton's own Arboricultural Manager (Greenspaces), has commented on this, also appearing to question the adequacy of other protections for these veteran oaks in the Show Court plans. AELTC also proposes transplanting some semi-mature trees. The indication is that this is only successful in 50% of cases. The risk of losing or irreparably damaging any of these precious trees, on top of the 296 others ear-marked for felling in the plans, surely seems unacceptable **(Dave Lofthouse's comments on the SGCARA website AELTC page which also includes a response to the 'Myth-busters' in AELTC's website & newsletters.)**

The Wimbledon Park Golf Course site was purchased by AELTC from Merton Council in 1993. To appease the considerable public opposition & outcry to the sale of this land, AELTC & Merton agreed, in a legally-binding Covenant, not to allow the erection of any "permanent buildings" on this land, amongst other restrictions.

In 2021, AELTC Chairman Ian Hewitt is reputed to have responded to a question about the 1993 Covenant as follows:

*'...As to the assurances made in 1993, I am sure you can appreciate that the requirements of the club & the community have developed in the resulting 28 years & that the AELTC has needed to work to ensure that The Championships remain a preeminent tennis tournament...'*

In other words, it appears it may no longer be 'convenient' for AELTC to wish to abide by the Covenant." Living as we are in a period when keeping promises & abiding by the letter & spirit of the law in public life are hot topics, this is deeply troubling.