

Appendix 4

Proposals to improve parking facilities in selected borough parks - Written representations for call meeting on 11th October 2017

Friends of Haydon's Road Recreation Ground

I and my colleagues at FoHRRG have now had a chance to review the content of this report and it has been agreed that I will not be attending this meeting. It would seem that the report has taken into account most of our comments which we do appreciate. We too have concerns that there may be teething problems with implementation of these proposals and suggest that they are accepted in relation to Haydon's Road Recreation Ground and implemented as quickly as possible so that the car park (currently closed on weekdays) can be fully reopened and available for public use 7 days a week. I suggest a condition is added to acceptance of this recommendation that there is a further review by Merton Council after 12 months of operation so that any problems identified during this time can be remedied. That of course would be best practice in any case.

Merton Senior's Forum

- I am led to believe that this consultation was originally put forward in 2011. So one cannot say that it was not thoroughly consulted
- My members questioned residents using cars to go to the park. Why don't the public walk to the park.
- Having visited the Haydon's road car park noted most of the vehicles were vans and those come for MOT test at the local garage.
- I have been also informed that at times the car park is full but cannot see any public movement in the park. This could I assume lead to commuter parking.
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Battersea Ironsides Cricket Club

1 Battersea Ironsides Cricket Club have been hiring the Cricket Facilities and dressing rooms at Abbey Rec on Summer Saturdays for 20+ years. We have two teams using Abbey Rec and our season runs May-September incl.

2 The Club participates in the Surrey Championship Cricket League. Start times for games will be from 12.00 midday - 1.00pm and are scheduled to finish by 7.30pm.

3 Whilst a number of our players make their way to the ground by public transport, some do have cars and "cricket teas" have to be taken to the Ground as no catering facilities on site. In addition our oppositions will travel to the ground in cars, so car parking is important.

4 At Abbey Rec there is a Barrier Gate in place which is usually locked and does mean the car park is often not accessible and thus a deterrent to all that might want to use the overall facilities at the Park

5 The current proposals for Abbey Rec are a reasonable compromise. Car Park open on weekdays, but with parking charges, with car park open on weekends but free to use. A deterrent for commuter users, but access for Park/Rec users, including weekend users of the Sports facilities.

Friends of Wimbledon Park

Representations on the proposed introduction of car parking charges at the Revelstoke Road Car Park, Wimbledon Park. Prepared by Dr D.G. Dawson.

I speak on behalf of the Friends of Wimbledon Park.

The Friends of Wimbledon Park represents park users, notably those residing in the nearby suburbs, which lie in the London Boroughs of Merton and Wandsworth. Founder members include three Residents' Associations adjoining the park.

The Friends of Wimbledon Park (FOWP) care about the future of this historic and beautiful green space, which for many of us is the heart of our community.

Our aim is to make sure Wimbledon Park is protected and enhanced – and that residents and users have a say in what happens to it. We want to restore the lake, develop the sports facilities and look after the trees, the wildlife and the views.

Here, we comment only on the proposal for the Revelstoke Road Car Park, Wimbledon Park, as we have little knowledge of the other Merton Parks. We make our representation in bold, below. This is followed by the reasons for this representation.

In 2012, the Friends successfully opposed a proposed car park extension adjacent to the Revelstoke Road car park, because of the loss of open space involved and the harm it would have caused to historic landscape character and amenity. Rather, we sought to reduce parking by discouraging discretionary vehicle journeys and use by vehicles for purposes other than visiting the park. So, we advocated charging for parking. We held that this would encourage sustainable transport, reduce congestion in Revelstoke Road and have consequential health benefits, both through reduction in air pollution and through the encouragement of walking and cycling. Given that the park is accessible by public transport, we did not accept that its popularity for sports use justified the encouragement of travel there by car. We continue strongly in support of the introduction of charges at this car park for these reasons.

However, we consider that the current proposals would not solve the worst problems with vehicular access to, and car parking in, Wimbledon Park.

- 1. The proposed rate of charge for visits of up to four hours is so low, in comparison with charges in nearby streets, that it is unlikely to deter those making discretionary journeys or parking for other than recreational visits to the park.**
- 2. The days and hours that the charge would apply would not solve the greatest problems: those that occur on sunny, holiday weekends.**
- 3. As other car parking spaces in Wimbledon Park are not to have charges introduced, people could park there and subvert the reasons for the charge.**
- 4. The proposals also fail to cater adequately for those with special need to travel by vehicle, or who choose to travel by bicycle, in that there is minimal provision for such modes.**
- 5. We support charging, but the proposals should be changed, so that they regulate all parking places at Wimbledon Park, not just that at the Revelstoke Road car park. This provision should have ample facilities reserved to encourage disabled use and cycles. The charge for any remaining spaces should apply also to the hours and days when a disincentive is most needed: including weekends and early evening hours and be at least as high as that applying in nearby suburbia.**

The problem:

At present, Wimbledon Park, although recognised for its heritage value, is compromised by having too much provision of ugly and intrusive, free car parking space. Travel to the park by private vehicle is encouraged by the free parking. Some of the existing spaces are occupied by those commuting from the nearby tube stations, working in nearby suburbia, or in the park itself, or visiting the local shop, rather than by park users. Those with special needs cannot always depend upon a space being available to park. Use by vehicles kept off the road for longer periods is only occasional and is not the main cause of over-use (although we accept that enforcing this can be costly to the Council). Use for discretionary recreational visits to the park is greatest problem. This is especially so on sunny weekends and school holiday times, when use can be great and continues into early evening hours. It is then that there have been significant problems with shortage of space, congestion and air pollution, with discretionary users in competition with those who are disabled.

The proposed times and costs:

The Cabinet Member decision is for charging Monday to Fridays, between 08:00 and 16:00 only. The charge for the first four hours is to be low (30p an hour, so £1.20 for four hours), then escalating to £10.80 for times between 4 and 8 hours and higher thereafter. There would be no charge at weekends, nor after 16:00 on any day. It's sensible for there to be a much higher cost for parking longer than four hours during the working week, to deter commuter and other long-term parking, and we welcome this. However, long-term parking is not the only, or main, problem at this car park. We are concerned mostly with discretionary car parking at popular times, most of which occurs outside the proposed charging times. It's this that causes most

congestion and pollution, competition with disabled users and pressure for increased provision. In this context, the proposals would allow paying a minimum amount (up to £1.20) on weekdays for parking beginning after 12:00 and continuing into the late afternoon or early evening. It's because of this mismatch of the charging times and the timing of the problems that we seek charging every day of the week and later in the afternoon.

To deter discretionary use and use for other than a recreational visit to the park, the cost of using the car park should be somewhat greater than that applying in nearby streets, especially at times when congestion is problematic. Otherwise, there would still be a financial incentive to use the Revelstoke Road car park.

Car parking is generally free in nearby LB Wandsworth (their zone S3), so a sufficient charge for the car park could displace parking onto any spaces available in Wandsworth streets. An exception, however, is that parking in zone S3 is restricted to residents for one hour (13:30-14:30) on Mondays to Fridays. There would remain a strong incentive to use the Revelstoke Road car park at those times, which, fortunately, are not times of great demand.

The nearby parts of LB Merton (zone P2) have no car parking charge at weekends nor outside the hours 11:00 to 15:00 on weekdays. At those times (08:00 to 11:00 and after 15:00) a sufficient charge could displace parking onto any available spaces in Merton streets. However, on week days between 11:00 and 15:00 the charge on the streets is four times that proposed in Wimbledon Park (£1.20 per hour, compared with the proposed 30p an hour), so there would remain a strong incentive to use Wimbledon Park for any visit overlapping those times, both to use the park and for other reasons. This is why we ask that the proposed charge for the first 4 hours be at least £1.20 per hour.

Location of the proposals and consultation:

Wimbledon Park straddles two London Boroughs and attracts users predominantly from those two. The car park concerned lies largely within LB Wandsworth, but it appears that neither LB Wandsworth Council, nor residents of Wandsworth, were consulted on the proposals. Wimbledon Park is a District Park in the London Open Space hierarchy and so is expected to have a large catchment. The sole notice advertising the proposals was displayed beside the tiny part of the car park that lies within LB Merton.

Sustainable travel and special needs:

The adopted policies of LB Merton's Local Plan identify the need to promote sustainable travel, including the discouragement of travel by private vehicle. Similar considerations stem from the National Air Quality Strategy. We welcome the acknowledgement of this in sections 2.1 and 13.3(c) of the Delegated Report, however we find that the rest of the report fails to give adequate weight to such considerations, rather seeking to promote sport by ready access to parking, even using the word "maximise". Wimbledon Park is well provided with public transport, with two nearby Underground Stations and bus stops in Wimbledon Park Road and

Durnsford Road. Most park users arrive by one or more sustainable mode: public transport, cycling or walking. Some groups arrive in a mini-bus, which again is more sustainable than private vehicles. We welcome the proposals to the extent that they further these sustainability policies, however little. But, the other side of the coin is that the proposals should give priority to those who are unable to use these more sustainable modes. Yet, there are only three disabled bays proposed and no reference to any other arrangement for those with special need to park close to their destination in Wimbledon Park. Further, it's discriminatory to have special free parking for Merton Blue Badge holders, but not for those coming from other places. Also, although pedal cycles are named in the schedule as a class of vehicle permitted in the parking spaces, no special provision for pedal cycles is indicated on the plan. Cycles need such special provision.

Present provision at Wimbledon Park:

There are two main car parks in Wimbledon Park: only one of which is subject to this proposal. The other, off Wimbledon Park Road, is not proposed for charging. Other parking occurs every day at the Watersports Base, Bowls Pavilion, and Café, averaging around eight vehicles, and occasionally at the Stadium. At busy times, some drivers have used paths leading to other parts of the park and parked on the open grassland. Existing barriers are not employed to prevent this, nor are there any notices prohibiting it. We consider that charging at Revelstoke Road alone is likely to exacerbate the existing problems in those other areas. To the extent that the proposals work, parking will be pushed out of the Revelstoke Road car park into other formal and informal provision elsewhere in Wimbledon Park, where there is no enforcement proposed.

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