

MCC COMMITTEE MEETING – 24th July, 2017

Review of Ground Development - Members' Consultation

Analysis of Members' Questionnaire Responses

Respondents/Process

MCC received 4,710 responses in total to the survey which accompanied the Review. 3,780 of these were received by post and 930 were received on-line. Because it was technically possible for non-Members to complete the survey on-line, it was decided not to include the on-line surveys in the quantitative analysis. The 930 on-line responses were, however, analysed separately and the results were very similar to the postal results, though slightly more in favour of the Updated Masterplan than of the Morley Plan (the average scores were all within 0.5 out of 10 of each other). By not including these results, MCC is a) on completely solid ground in terms of the validity of its results and b) cannot be accused of favouring results which are more supportive of the Updated Masterplan.

MCC received 1,962 individual comments both online and by post from the 4,710 responses i.e. a rate of 42%.

The 3,780 postal responses were processed by the Electoral Reform Services, and were the basis for the quantitative analysis:

- 3,179 (84%) were submitted by Full or Senior Members
- 495 (13%) were from Associates
- 106 Members (3%) did not state their class
- Associate Members are under-represented (they constitute 22% of the entire membership). This may be because they know they cannot vote in the SGM.
- There was negligible difference between the responses of Full and Associate Members, so the combined results should be considered a strong indication of how Full Members would vote.

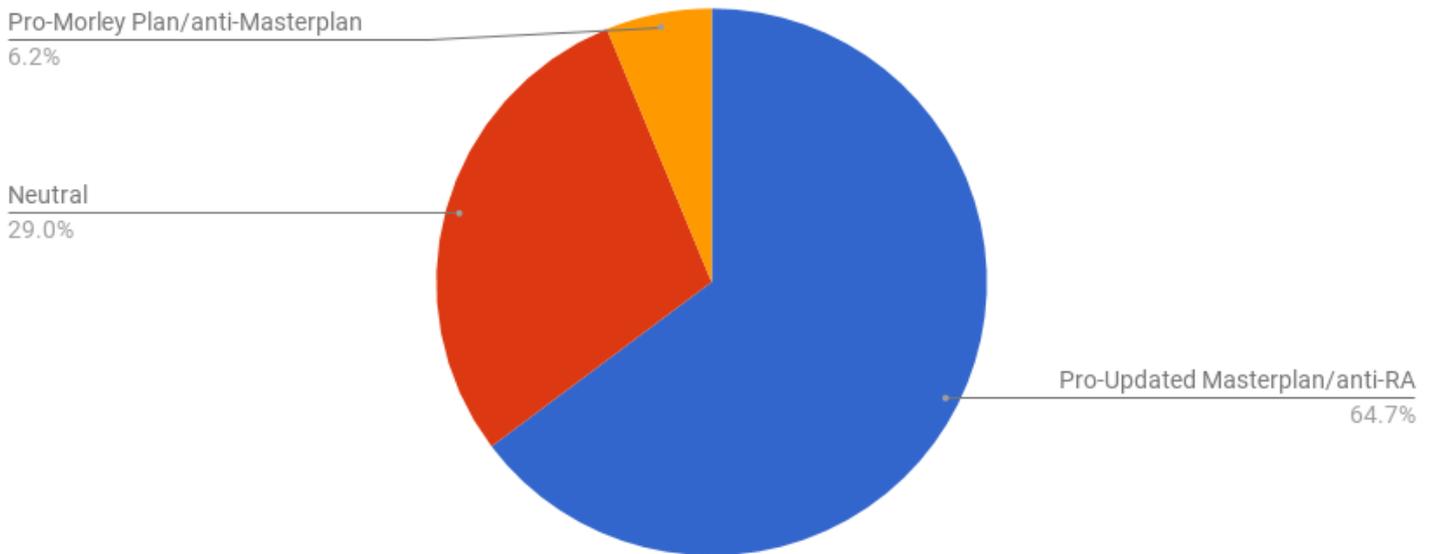
The survey was designed and results analysed by Stewart Lewis, a former Director at Ipsos MORI. He advises that both the response rate for a postal survey and the high level of engagement in terms of the number of freeform comments is exceptionally strong. In a postal survey, a response rate of 10% is par for the course.

Executive Summary

Faced with a choice between the Updated Masterplan and RA's Morley Plan, MCC Members have a clear preference for the Masterplan:

- The overwhelming majority of Members – 95% – consider it very important that MCC maintains the special “feel” of Lord's, with many comments clearly demonstrating their view that residential accommodation would harm the character of the Ground;
- Two-thirds of Members give a high priority to MCC developing Lord's from its own resources (compared to less than a quarter saying the same about obtaining RA's funding);
- Among the nearly 2,000 Members who took the opportunity to express views in their own words, those in favour of the Masterplan and/or against RA's Morley Plan outnumber those favourable to the residential option by more than ten to one as illustrated in the pie-chart below:

Tone of Open Comments



Even in the scenario where MCC only hosts one Test p/a rather than its usual two, 53% of Members said it would make no difference to their preference, and 33% said they would be more inclined to the Updated Masterplan. Just 14% state they would be more inclined to RA’s Morley Plan.

Results in detail

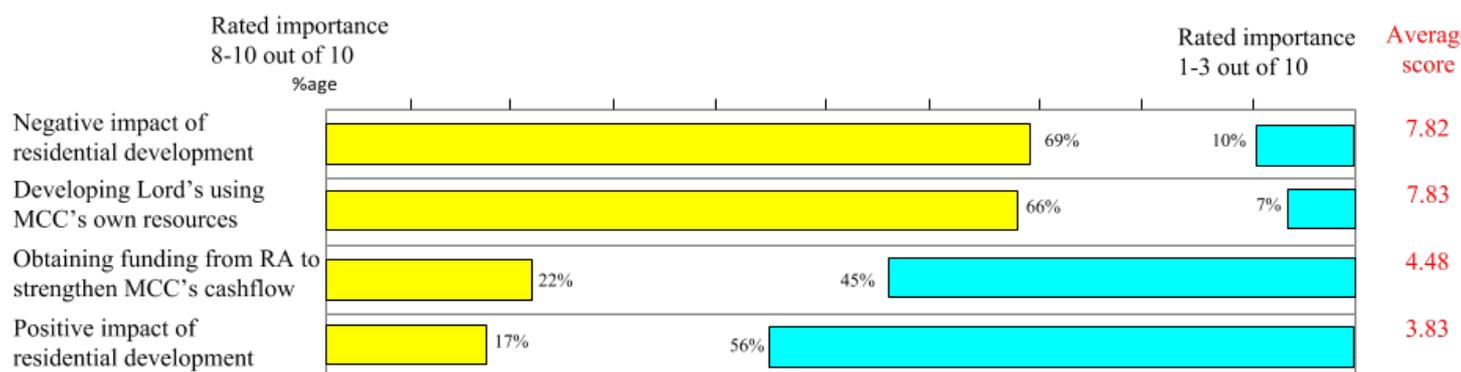
Members were asked to rate the importance of eleven different factors. Of these, two were overtly favourable to the Updated Masterplan and two to RA’s Morley Plan, in order to enable the Club to see a clear illustration of Members’ preferences on the key issues of the impact of residential, and of financial independence.

The chart below illustrates feelings at both ends of the spectrum – the percentage that gave each element an importance rating of 8-10, or 1-3, out of 10. Average importance scores are also provided.

Developing Lord’s with MCC’s own resources is a far higher priority to Members than obtaining funding from RA. Two-thirds – 66% – of Members consider it highly important that MCC develops Lord’s itself, using its own resources; very few rate it unimportant. In contrast, 22% ascribe high importance to obtaining RA funding, but nearly half – 45% – say it is unimportant. This clear difference is reflected in the average ratings for each proposition: 7.8 and 4.5 respectively. It is also reflected in the freeform comments, with a strong recurring tone of “we can do it ourselves/we don’t need the money/we must retain control”.

More than two-thirds of Members think residential development will have an important negative impact on the Ground, and 56% think any positive impact is unimportant:

Members' responses to Ground Development Survey - importance placed on two pro-Masterplan and two pro-Morley Plan factors



The other seven factors were more “in principle” considerations, to understand what Members consider important and, possibly, some potential areas where greater explanation or advocacy is needed e.g. the need to increase the capacity of the Ground.

The qualitative freeform comments help give “colour” to the quantitative tick-box answers. For example, we know how much Members value maintaining the special “feel” of Lord’s and it is reasonable to deduce, given the comments, that many Members consider the Morley Plan to be detrimental to this special “feel” of the Ground.

MCC also held five roadshows, which were attended by 519 Members, of which 84 individuals made contributions. The tenor of the roadshows reflected that of the survey responses, although one topic – the provision of affordable housing within the Morley Plan – that was a major issue raised at each roadshow, did not feature significantly in the survey responses.

Ranking of important factors

Members consider “Maintaining the special “feel” of Lord’s” to be of paramount importance – 95% gave it an 8, 9 or 10 out of 10 for importance. The next most important factors were MCC retaining control of operations within the estate (88% ranked it 8-10), and security (79% ranked it 8-10).

Control, in general, is a key theme – not just of the estate as it is currently, or future planning/construction processes, but of the ground in the future. It is both emotional and practical. Securing long-term ownership of the leasehold is deemed very important (8-10/10) by 68% of Members, and many of the comments encouraged the Club to try to buy it back now, at almost any cost.

These results, coupled with the tenor of the freeform answers to the survey, give a clear indication that the mood amongst the membership is against residential development at Lord’s. Many Members made simple statements along the lines of “I do not want to see residential accommodation at Lord’s”, irrespective of the scale, location or design.

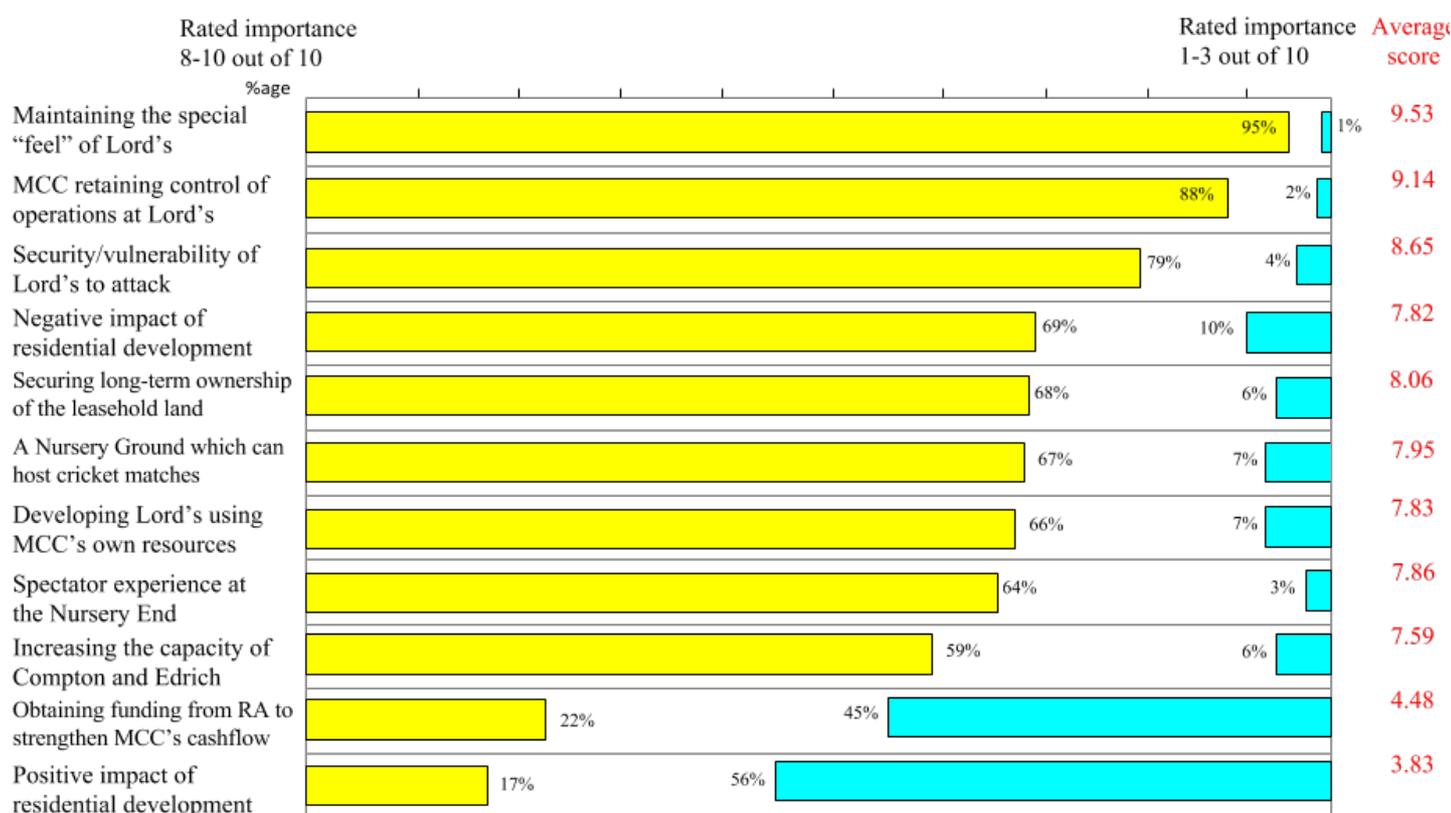
While the Committee will be pushing at an open door if it rejects residential development and prioritises security and control, it may have to fight a harder battle on convincing Members of the necessity of spending £38m to increase the capacity of the Compton and Edrich stands by 2,000. The arguments against this are two-fold: some Members cite the Oval’s proposals and the Olympic Stadium and think Lord’s must go larger; others consider a capacity increase for c.10-12 match days a year as money badly spent. Clearly there are strong arguments against these (planning restrictions, full grounds, incremental income) but they need to be argued and not just assumed. It could also be noted that it will be the building of new Compton and Edrich stands, and a new East Gate Building that would prevent the residential being built on the leasehold land for

the duration of the lifespans of those developments – unless, in future, it was considered acceptable to reduce the size of the Nursery Ground.

The Club should also take the opportunity to emphasise the need to improve the spectator experience at the Nursery End (sightlines/comfort of stands, congestion, facilities provided) in the SGM film/documentation. Many Members’ pride in their Ground spills over into a complacency that Lord’s is already the best, and does not need to overly concern itself with improving. This is, no doubt, partly due to an ignorance about how this area of the Ground works on a major match day, if Members largely stay at the Pavilion End.

Finally, 67% of Members think it highly important that the Nursery Ground can host cricket matches – as opposed to just practice. Both schemes kept a Nursery Ground of at least its current size, although Populous advised that it would be impossible for Morley to develop larger stands and keep the Nursery Ground.

Members’ responses to Ground Development Survey - importance placed on key factors

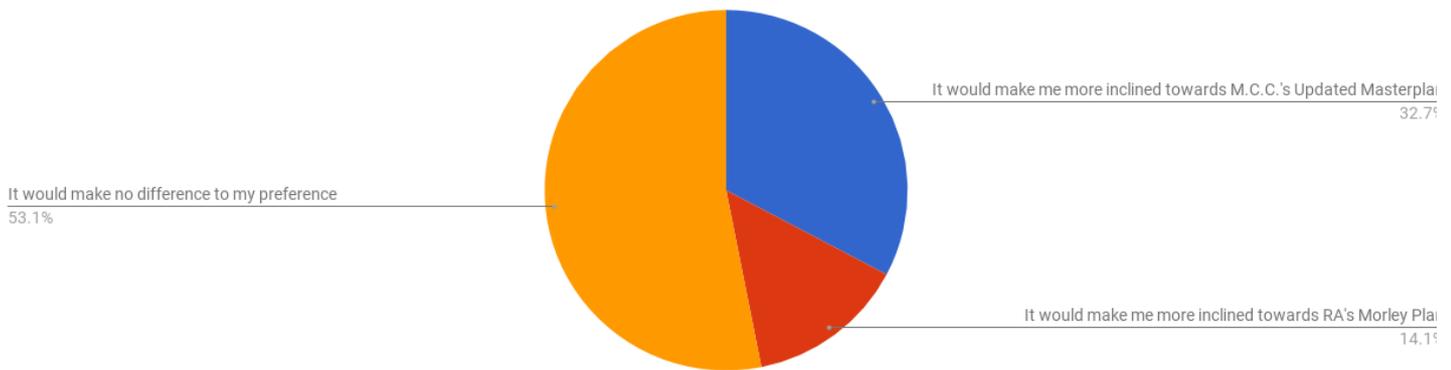


One Test Scenario

At first glance, the most surprising result is Members’ preference if MCC only secures one Test p/a. Just over half – 53% – say it would make no difference to their preference, but 33% say it would make them *more* inclined to MCC’s Updated Masterplan, and just 14% say it would make them more inclined to RA’s Morley Plan. While this seems counter-intuitive, there are clear themes in favour of:

- Redeveloping the Ground using MCC’s own resources
- MCC being in control of the process to react to changes in the world game, economy, planning etc.
- MCC not needing RA money – “the Club can stand on its own two feet”, and
- Taking more time to redevelop if that’s what the finances dictate.

If MCC only got one Test a year from 2020 onwards would it affect your preference



“Dogs That Didn’t Bark”:

Several issues which might have been expected to be raised did not actually emerge to any significant degree. These included:

- Confirmation of the major match allocation before making a decision: essentially there seems to be a belief that the Club won’t undertake to build things it can’t afford, and that if times change for the worse, the pace of construction will slow down;
- Doing nothing: there is widespread acceptance, even amongst those that think Lord’s is already outstanding, that standing still is not an option;
- Building the South-Western Project first: but MCC should still emphasise the benefits of incremental income and meaningful capacity increase at the Nursery End;
- Gubby Allen’s trees: almost no mention of the fact both schemes substantially reduce the views of trees;
- Seat row depth: was raised at a roadshow, but not otherwise;
- What happens if things go wrong: several Members actually put forward the potential for using the membership for more funding. Again, few seem worried about plugging funding gaps in hard times.

How Members Might Vote

The Club asked Stewart Lewis to predict how Members might vote at the SGM, based on the analysis of this questionnaire. There are several factors which could affect the result, which should be considered as caveats:

- a) One would expect more Members to vote than take part in the consultation exercise;
- b) Members have not been asked a direct question about how they would vote;
- c) Members do not yet know what the Committee will recommend or the results of the consultation i.e. the feelings of their fellow Members;
- d) They will receive brochures openly advocating the merits of both the Masterplan and RA’s Morley Plan with their SGM documents, whereas the Review set out to present simply facts;
- e) We do not yet know the wording of the SGM Resolution.

In Stewart Lewis’ estimation, one would expect few Members to vote for the Morley Plan if they gave an importance rating of less than 8 out of 10 to obtaining funding from RA. That suggests a maximum of 22% for the RA/Morley option.

On the other side, anyone who gives a rating of 8 or more out of 10 to developing Lord’s with MCC’s own resources can be considered highly likely to vote for the MCC Masterplan. That gives a minimum of 66% for the Masterplan.

Taking into account also the negativity towards residential and the balance of freeform answers, an educated guess is that in a straight fight the MCC Masterplan would win by at least 75%-25%, and quite possibly by a more decisive margin.

Conclusion:

The key themes that emanate from the consultation are that Lord's is a cricket ground not a site for development, that MCC must retain as much control of possible of the site and any development process, and that the Club should develop Lord's as it has done for years – in its own time with its own money.

The major advantage of the RA proposal – the injection of £100m to help fund developments – was assigned high importance by under a quarter of Members. There was also significant resentment of the £15m “disturbance” payment – often characterized as a bribe.

Of the two significant drawbacks of RA's Morley Plan – the impact of residential and the structure of the deal – it is primarily the impact of residential which Members reject, to the extent it probably does not matter how much RA had offered, or how many flats were involved or what they looked like. Specific facets of the deal that have exercised both execs and non-exec's over many months – the land value share, the structure, the control in choice of developer etc. – barely registered with the Members. The response was often emotional and passionate (and if the Club tries to develop Grove End Road in the future, it can expect significant opposition to that too).

However, aside from the negative comments about the Morley Plan, there was significant support for the Updated Masterplan. It is not seen as the best of a bad bunch, but appears to enjoy widespread active support as the best approach to developing the Ground.

*Stewart Lewis
21st July 2017*