

Officer's Report

Application Number	HGY/2022/4381
Type	Consent to display an advertisement
Location	Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way, Wood Green, London, N22 7AY
Proposal	Advertisement Consent for installation of variable message signs and parking tariff information signs at Alexandra Park & Palace, as part of the introduction of a new parking management system.
Case Officer	James Mead
Valid Date	31/12/2022
Applicant Agent	Ms Louise Johnson

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

GRANT ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT, subject to conditions.

2. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- LBH Conservation Officer: Insufficient information has been provided regarding the contribution the site makes to the CA and the setting of the identified heritage assets. No existing plan has been provided showing what, if any, signage exists on site. As such, it is not possible to fully assess the impact of the proposals on designated heritage assets or assess any potential cumulative impacts. Furthermore, no information regarding the posts and bollards have been provided. Should signs be fixed to existing infrastructure, details of this should be provided. Additionally, details of the height of the signs are required to assess the impact on the views to and from the designated heritage assets. Notwithstanding the above, and taking into account the requirement for managed car parking, the quantity of signs appears excessive. This would result in visual clutter that would detract from the listed building and would have an adverse visual impact on the designated heritage assets. As such, the proposals are considered to constitute a scheme that would result in less than substantial harm to the listed building. The proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
- Alexandra Park & Palace Conservation Area Advisory Committee: No objections. It is regretful that such notices and infrastructure are to be installed, which will inevitably have a negative visual impact on the park and the setting of the palace. However, the need for these is recognised as a consequence of the decision to charge for car parking and it is further recognised that the proposal commendably attempts to strike a balance between prominence and over-proliferation.

3. REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 The application has been publicised by way of 2 site notices displayed in the vicinity of the site. 0 representations were received in response to notification and publicity of the application.

4. REASONS FOR GRANTING ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT

4.1 The application site encompasses all of the land at Alexandra Park, which includes extensive parkland, recreational facilities, car parks and several buildings. Alexandra Park is open to the public and is used for recreational, cultural and entertainment purposes. The park itself is a grade II listed Historic Park & Garden, which was originally opened in 1863. Alexandra Palace sits on the northern side of the park and is a grade II listed building of substantial cultural and historic significance. The palace is currently used as an entertainment venue that hosts: concerts, exhibitions, sporting events, banquets and conferences. In addition, the palace contains an ice rink and a public house/bistro. The full extent of the park, including the palace, is designated as the Alexandra Park & Palace Conservation Area (CA). Furthermore, the land is also designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

4.2 The planning history of the site has been taken into account when coming to this decision.

4.3 Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations (2007) outlines that a Local Planning Authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and (b) any other relevant factors. Similarly, Paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety.

4.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that factors relevant to 'amenity' include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. The effect on the visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood should be considered.

4.5 The PPG notes that 'public safety' is not confined to road safety and includes all considerations which are relevant to the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians).

4.6 Therefore, the main planning considerations for this proposal are:

- Amenity;
- Public Safety; and
- Heritage Balance.

Amenity

4.7 DM DPD Policy DM3 requires new advertisements to be high quality and sensitive to the visual appearance of the surrounding street scene, especially in the case of listed buildings and conservation areas. This policy also notes that unsightly proliferation or clutter of signage in a vicinity should be avoided. DM DPD Policy DM1 outlines that developments should contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The public realm should be well-designed, safe, accessible, inclusive, attractive, well-connected, well-related to local and historic context, and easy to understand, service and maintain, in accordance with London Plan D8.

4.8 In regard to heritage assets (Historic Park & Garden, CA & listed building), London Plan Policy HC1, Local Plan Policy SP12 and DM DPD Policy DM9 require proposals to conserve and enhance the significance and settings of heritage assets. The Council should have regard to the preservation of original or historic form, function and character of an asset, in accordance with DM DPD Policy DM9.

4.9 There are three main areas where new signage is proposed. Firstly, there is a car park and a lay-by to the south-west of Alexandra Palace (Car Park 1). Some distance to the south of Alexandra Palace, close to Alexandra Palace Garden Centre, there is a further car park (Car Park

2). Lastly, directly to the north-east of Alexandra Palace are the main car parking areas within the park (Car Park 3).

4.10 Minimal signage is proposed to be installed in Car Park 1 and its immediate surroundings. As such, there would not be an over proliferation of signage in this car park. Furthermore, all the signage would be of modest size, and therefore would not appear overly large or bulky. The appearance of the signage would be typical of that expected for parking signs and would not incorporate unduly bright colours. Consequently, the signage would not appear incongruous or out of keeping within the setting of heritage assets. The signage in Car Park 1 would be of acceptable design, with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the CA not adversely impacted. The proposals would not detract from the setting of the Historic Park & Garden or the setting of the grade II listed Alexandra Palace. The special interest of all heritage assets would be preserved.

4.11 A considerable number of signs are proposed to be erected in Car Park 2. However, the modest size of the signage would ensure that it would not result in the car park appearing overly cluttered. Furthermore, Car Park 2 is enclosed by dense vegetation and trees meaning that there are limited views into this car park. This minimal visibility means that the addition of the signage would not visually impact the wider character of the CA or the Historic Park & Garden. Car Park 2 is also a notable distance from Alexandra Palace, and due to this there would be a neutral impact on the setting of this heritage asset. The signage in Car Park 2 would be typical of that expected for parking signs, and as such would not appear alien in this locality. The signage in and around Car Park 2 would be of acceptable design, with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the CA not harmed. There would be a neutral impact on the setting of the Historic Park & Garden and the listed building. The special interest of these heritage assets would be preserved.

4.12 In Car Park 3 it is proposed to install a significant number of parking signs. Again, the appearance of these signs would be typical of parking signage and the individual signs would not be unduly bulky. However, the Conservation Officer has raised concern that the quantity of signs would visually clutter the setting of Alexandra Palace and other designated heritage assets. There is currently a minimal amount of signage in this car park. Noting this, and given the high visibility of Car Park 3 within the Historic Park & Garden, as well as the proximity to the listed building, it is considered that these proposals would visually clutter the setting of these heritage assets. Whilst this is noted, the minimal size of the new signage means that the visual impact on the setting would be limited. Nonetheless, the cluttering impact would equate to less than substantial harm to the setting and special interest of the listed building, the Historic Park & Garden and the CA. Therefore, the proposals in Car Park 3 would be contrary to London Plan Policy HC1, Local Plan Policy SP12 and DM DPD Policies DM3 & DM9.

4.13 Two variable message signs are proposed to be installed, one on the South Terrace to the north-east of Alexandra Palace, and the second close to Car Park 2. These variable message signs would be of similar size and appearance to existing road signs within the park. Therefore, these signs would not appear alien or incongruous within the setting of the park. These signs would be of acceptable design, with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the CA not harmed. The setting and special interest of the Historic Park & Garden and the listed building would be preserved.

4.14 The Conservation Officer has also outlined that there is insufficient information regarding the existing contribution the site makes to the CA and the setting of other heritage assets. These comments are noted, however a Heritage Statement and a Design & Access Statement have been provided in support of this application. Officers consider that these documents are sufficient to inform these proposals, particularly as the scheme does not physically impact the fabric of Alexandra Palace. The Conservation Officer has also questioned whether sufficient information has been provided regarding the siting and height of the signs. Further information has been

provided by the applicant and officers are content with the height/siting specified. However, a condition is attached to this consent restricting the height of any new posts, so to limit the visual impact of the proposals.

4.15 The Heritage Statement is clear in that no illumination would be incorporated into the signage. This is considered appropriate in this sensitive historical location. To ensure that illumination is not incorporated at a later date, a condition is attached.

Public Safety

4.16 DM DPD Policy DM3 outlines that all new advertisements should contribute towards a safe environment and should not cause a hazard to pedestrians or road users. In addition, DPD Policy DM2 requires the protection of safe and accessible pedestrian and cycling routes. Proposals should not impede pedestrian and cycling permeability. London Plan Policy T4 notes that proposals should not increase road danger.

4.17 None of the new signs would be sited in positions to obstruct pedestrians using footways or vehicles on roads. The submitted Heritage Statement notes that none of the signs would be illuminated, and therefore a distraction to drivers would not result from the proposals. Overall, public safety would not be adversely impacted by the proposals.

Heritage Balance

4.18 This report has noted that the addition of signage to Car Park 3 would visually clutter this part of the park, resulting in an adverse impact on the character and setting of the CA, the Historic Park & Garden and the listed building. While this is noted, the minimal size of the new signage means that the adverse impact would not be substantial. Instead, the harm to the special interest of heritage assets would be 'less than substantial'. In these circumstances, paragraph 202 of the NPPF outlines that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing optimum viable uses.

4.19 The proposals would facilitate the introduction of a parking management system within the park. This parking management system would generate funds for the charitable purposes of the Alexandra Palace & Park Charitable Trust. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) notes that the revenue would be used for investment back into the park and palace. Firstly in terms of the park, the revenue would be utilised to maintain, preserve and improve the environment of Alexandra Park in the long-term. Alexandra Park is open for use by members of the public, and as such the preservation and enhancement of the park would directly benefit residents who use the park. This is clearly a public benefit that weighs in favour of the proposal.

4.20 In regard to the palace, the Heritage Statement notes that significant maintenance works are required every year to this listed building. The revenue created from the parking fees could be used for these maintenance works, ensuring that the historic and architectural quality of the listed building is protected in the long-term. These maintenance works would support the operational requirements of Alexandra Palace meaning that it remains useable for existing uses. Therefore, the creation of the funds would assist in protecting viable uses in the long-term. Furthermore, the SCI explains that the money generated would go towards bringing more spaces in the palace back into use. As such, the parking fees would directly support the Alexandra Palace & Park Charitable Trust in securing viable uses for the existing spaces within the palace. The finance created would assist in ensuring that the optimum viable uses are secured and obtained for Alexandra Palace in the long-term. This also weighs in favour of the proposal.

4.21 The proposed parking management system and the associated parking tariffs would also be likely to reduce car travel to the park and palace, with visitors instead more likely to use sustainable modes of transport. This would assist in reducing impacts on climate change, and as such is also a public benefit that weighs in favour of the proposal.

4.22 Overall, the adverse impact to the character and setting of the CA, the Historic Park & Garden and the listed building would only be minimal. On the other hand, there are several positive public benefits that weigh in favour of the proposals. The adverts would enable funds to be generated that would be utilised to preserve the park and the palace in the long-term, ensuring that these heritage assets can continue to be used by members of the public. Furthermore, the revenue created would assist in ensuring viable uses for Alexandra Palace are obtained and secured in the long-term. The scheme would also be likely to reduce car travel to the Alexandra Park, promoting more sustainable modes of travel. In this instance, these benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh the minor harm to the setting of heritage assets. As such, the 'less than substantial harm' to designated heritage assets would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals.

Conclusion

4.23 Overall, the proposals are considered acceptable. The signage would result in some minor harm to the setting of heritage assets (CA, Historic Park & Garden and listed building). However, this harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals (preservation of the parkland, preservation of heritage assets, support for viable uses for listed building and promotion of sustainable transport). Therefore, in terms of amenity, the advertisements are considered acceptable. The adverts would also not adversely impact public safety.

4.24 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Advertisement consent should be granted for the reasons set out above.

GRANT ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT, subject to conditions.

Conditions:

- 1
 - A. That the display of the advertisement (s) shall be permitted for a period of five years from the date of this decision.
 - B. Any advertisements displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
 - C. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
 - D. Where any advertisement is required under these regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
 - E. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
 - F. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air, or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway or aerodrome (civil or military).

Reason: The conditions are imposed by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

- 2 The approved plans comprise drawing nos: A3 misc (Location Plan), 3201-SIGN-10-01 Revision 01, 3201-SIGN-11-01 Revision 01, 3201-SIGN-12-01 Revision 01 and 3201-SIGN-30-01 Revision 01. The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans except where conditions attached to this planning permission indicate otherwise or where alternative details have been subsequently approved following an application for a non-material amendment.

Reason: In order to ensure the works are carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.

- 3 None of the new posts required for parking signage (parking charges signs, parking tariff boards, disclaimer signs and blue badge bay signs) hereby approved shall exceed 3 metres in height, measured from the ground level.

Reason: To limit the visual impacts of new signage and to preserve the character of heritage assets, in accordance with Policies D3 & HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP11 & SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017) and Policies DM1, DM3 & DM9 of the Development Management DPD (2017).

- 4 No illumination shall be installed on the signage hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the character, setting and special interest of heritage assets is preserved, in accordance with Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP11 & SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan (2017) and Policies DM1, DM3 & DM9 of the Development Management DPD (2017).

Informatives:

- In dealing with this application the Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our pre-application advice service and published development plan, comprising the London Plan 2021, the Haringey Local Plan 2017 along with relevant SPD/SPG documents, in order to ensure that the applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably.