

Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/1411
Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Address:	Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way, Wood Green, London, N22 7AY
Proposal:	Listed building consent for the installation of infrastructure to create a new aerial visitor experience called Skywalk Adventure at Alexandra Palace including alterations to non-original concrete stairs with scaffold pole railings for building regulation compliance, addition of metal walkways below the rose window and at roof level, WC facilities and associated works.
Case Officer:	Gareth Prosser
Valid Date:	13/04/2023
Applicant:	Louise Johnson
Agent:	Faye Davies

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to conditions

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

This is an application for Listed building consent for the installation of infrastructure to create a new aerial visitor experience called Skywalk Adventure at Alexandra Palace including alterations to non-original concrete stairs with scaffold pole railings for building regulation compliance, addition of metal walkways below the rose window and at roof level, WC facilities and associated works.

Site and Surroundings

The application site relates to the Grade II listed Alexandra Palace (NHLE 1268256). The listing includes the former International Exhibition Hall and the former Alexandra Palace Station building. The former International Exhibition Hall was constructed in 1868-73 by John Johnson and Alfred Meeson. It was rebuilt in 1873-5, following fire damage, by the same architects. The building was restored in the 1980s, following a second fire. The former Alexandra Palace Station building dates to 1873 and stands immediately to the north of the Palace.

The application site is located within the Grade II Alexandra Palace Registered Park and Garden (NHLE 1001253) and the Alexandra Palace and Park Conservation Area.

The site is within Metropolitan Open Lane.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

None relevant to this application.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The application has been publicised by way of press and site notice displayed in the vicinity of the site. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 1

Objecting: 0

Supporting: 1

The following local groups/societies made representations:

Internal

- LBH Conservation Officer: No objections. Proposal will provide the public with greater legibility of the historic development of Alexandra palace and an enhanced experience of its heritage character.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed in the vicinity of the site. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses (1):

- Alexandra Park and Palace CAAC

Summary of comments (which are relevant to this application):

- The CAAC was consulted over this proposal last year and agreed to the idea in principle. We have reviewed the detailed proposal and give it our support. The scheme does not damage or impair the historic fabric of the building and on the positive side, it should enhance experiences of the Palace and the Park for more adventurous visitors.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development is the impact on the significance of the listed building. Due to the small scale and nature of the proposals, relating to the rooftop skywalk including alterations to non-original concrete stairs with scaffold pole railings for building regulation compliance, addition of metal walkways below the rose window and at roof level, WC facilities and associated works, there will be no impact on the significance of the Grade II listed Alexandra Palace Registered Park and Garden and the Alexandra Palace and Park Conservation Area.

Design and impact on the significance of the Grade II listed building

As noted above the host property forms part of a Grade II listed building and as such, there is a legal requirement for its protection. The primary legislation relating to the conservation of historic environment is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The 1990 (LBCA) Act requires local planning authorities to “have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest”.

The requirements of Local Plan policy SP12 ‘Conservation’ and Development Management Policy DM9 apply in this case and state that it is required that alterations and extensions to listed buildings:

- Do not lead to substantial harm or total loss of their significance;
- Retain and repair existing features and fabric, or, if missing, replace them in a sympathetic manner;
- Do not harm the structural integrity or stability of the building or that of adjoining buildings or structures; and
- Extensions are restricted to less significant parts of the building, relate sensitively to the original building and do not adversely affect the internal or external appearance or character of the listed building, curtilage or its setting.

The proposed Skywalk Adventure experience will be accessible via the South Portico beneath the rose window, either side of the external lobby entrance to the Great Hall. In this area, both identical entrances to the east and west are currently inaccessible to the public, and used as storage and maintenance. Whilst the shell of these areas are 1875 historic fabric, the internal spaces and fabric consist of non-original concrete stairs with scaffold pole railings currently used as maintenance access to the roof gantry.

The proposal will unlock these currently deteriorating spaces for public admission, upgrading the non-compliant staircase and balustrade for safe public access whilst supplying the necessary WC and staff facilities. APPCT will offer guided and harnessed tours up to the rose window balcony, continuing up the staircase and over the roof to a newly positioned platform set discreetly behind the Angel of Plenty Statue, showcasing views over Alexandra Palace Park grounds and beyond. Visitors will then continue the circular route back down to the adjacent stair core.

The current Great Hall External lobby contains arched entrances to the South West and South East of the South portico leading to store rooms. The SW and SE staircases are accessed internally via the Great Hall. The proposed layout will rip out modern internal partitions (deemed to be of neutral/ detrimental significance) to reconfigure the internal staircase providing access to WC facilities and roof via the Great Hall External lobby off the South Terrace. The existing baby change facility and WC in the west lobby will be reconfigured, maintaining access from the Great hall lobby, with an additional WC fitted and accessible from the new stair lobby.

The most prominent aspect of the proposal is the addition of a new viewing platform at roof level, behind the existing ‘Angel of Plenty’ statue, which tops the central pediment of the palace. At 1540mm wide, the platform will be largely concealed by the statue from the South Terrace. Both the platform walkway on the rose window balcony, and the main flat roof section are set back from the existing parapets, limiting their visual impact to the south elevation. The main stair route to the roof platform is a retrofit of the existing maintenance stair, fitting balustrades, set further back from the South Portico gable end.

The small-scale size and scale of the proposed additions are considered sensitive to the character of the Palace and the wider park. The Council's Conservation Officer has not raised any objections to any of the features described above, stating that from the heritage conservation perspective, the proposed works will unlock public access to currently deteriorating spaces and will provide the public with greater legibility of the historic development of Alexandra palace and an enhanced experience of its heritage character. Historic England were also consulted. No objections to the proposed works have been received.

As such, it is considered that the proposed skywalk and associated works would not harm the significance of the heritage assets and their respective settings and would lead to positive impacts including the ongoing viability of the Palace and Park.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of its impact on the significance of the listed building. As such, it is considered that listed building consent may be granted subject to conditions.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. The details of the decision are set out in the

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to conditions.

Conditions:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than 3 years from the date of this consent. Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 All new works and works of making good to the retained fabric, whether internal or external, shall be finished to match the adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building consistent with Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021, Policy SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017 and Policy DM9 of The Development Management DPD 2017.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday
8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday
and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.