

██████████
Director of Regeneration
London Borough of Bromley

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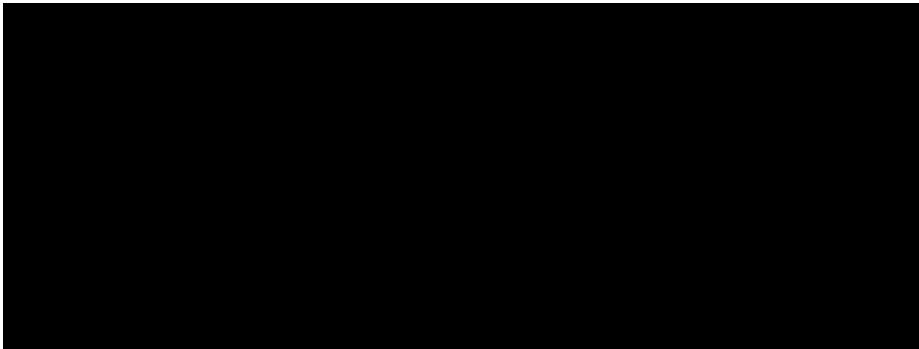
20th December 2017

Dear ██████████,

London Review Panel: Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan (Outline Planning Application)

Please find enclosed the London Review Panel report following the assessment of LB Bromley's proposed Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan for Outline Planning Application on 30th November 2017. On behalf of the panel, I would like to thank you for your participation in the review and reiterate the panel's enthusiasm to remain involved in a supportive capacity as the scheme's design develops.

Yours sincerely,



Mayor's Design Advocate

cc.

All meeting attendees

Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Fiona Fletcher-Smith, Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment, GLA

**Report of London Review Panel meeting
Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Plan: Outline Planning Application**

30th November 2017
The Lodge at Crystal Palace, SE19 2BB

London Review Panel

[REDACTED] (chair)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Attendees

[REDACTED]

Director of Regeneration, London Borough of Bromley
London Borough of Bromley
Crystal Palace Shadow Board
Crystal Palace Shadow Board
AECOM
Philip Meadowcroft Architects
AECOM
AECOM
Philip Meadowcroft Architects
GLA
GLA
GLA
GLA (panel manager)
Frame Projects (panel support)

Report copied to

Fiona Fletcher Smith
Jules Pipe

GLA
Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Summary

The London Review Panel thinks that a stronger strategy is needed for the regeneration of Crystal Palace Park, to meet the challenge of transforming one of London's great parks, to serve local, regional, national and international visitors. The park benefits from panoramic views across London, a rich historic context, with a wealth of architectural eccentricities, and a broad range of programming opportunities. The panel appreciate the complex land ownership and political boundary context, and the need to create a scheme that is deliverable within this context. The intention of the team to respect the principles of the 2007 Masterplan was noted. However, it was felt that these and other principles needed to be better articulated to justify the design and heritage interventions that were being proposed. The panel also recognise there are not yet clear plans for the National Sports Centre (NSC), and this poses a challenge in creating a plan that integrates this important part of the site.

While sympathetic to this context, the panel think further work is needed in creating and communicating an aspirational shared strategy for the site. Budgetary constraints make a strong strategy essential to guide future complex delivery. However, the panel noted that with the estimated budget it should be possible to achieve a significant impact on the landscape and facilities of the park. Setting priorities for investment will require a clear understanding of the needs and aspirations of both current users and audiences it could attract. Site programming and cultural partnerships should play a central role in creating a strategy for the park and could in turn be an important revenue stream supporting the park's business plan.

The panel recognised that the park's surrounding localities have evolved and grown since Joseph Paxton's great landscape plan. The panel recommend further work to explore how routes through the park link to surrounding neighbourhoods and stations. It suggests that current and future movement patterns should be balanced with the reinstatement of the historic 'Paxton's axis'. These comments are expanded below.

Establishing a clear strategy

- The panel encourage a bold, shared strategy for the park, that recognises the local, regional, national and international significance of the site and its potential to visitors across these scales.
- A strategy is especially important, given the long timeframe for implementation, to ensure a common thread of purpose is maintained when the detail of project delivery inevitably changes over time.
- The strategy should: firstly, clearly communicate a high-level hierarchy of intention for the regeneration plan; secondly, provide a framework of projects to achieve this intention; and thirdly, communicate a plan that prioritises and phases these projects to best achieve the overall vision, given its complexity and funding restraints.
- The strategy should also assert who the park's audience is by identifying reasons for visiting, recognising the park's value as a destination, as well as part of its local neighbourhood.
- The panel recognise that there are multiple opportunities for programming the site including the visitor centre, museum, concert platform, cultural building and community centre. The strategy should set out the offer of each attraction, their interrelation, and avoid duplication of programming and consider delivery partners and providers.
- Further consideration should be made to the primary access points to the park including the relationship with Crystal Palace railway station.

Visitors and audience

- The panel recommend further work to explore how the park can be successful as a destination, of regional, national or international significance, as well as a facility for local people.
- For example, it may be that different people use different parts of the park – and developing narratives about a range of visitors, and how they might experience the park, could help with setting priorities and making design decisions.
- The panel noted that people rarely visit a destination for a single reason – for example, they might visit the park to meet friends, use play facilities and also a café.

Routes through the park

- The panel questions the emphasis currently placed on Paxton's Axis, and thinks that further work is needed to analyse current and future movement. This should include diagrams showing routes through the park in its local, regional and city context.
- The hierarchy of routes that have been identified by the project team, from primary access points to secondary connections, and how these relate to patterns of use, should be more clearly communicated in order to show how proposals improve on the existing network of routes.
- The panel questioned the project team's assumption that removal of the podium link through the National Sports Centre was necessary to reintroduce a stronger manifestation of the Paxton Axis.
- Routes through the park should be informed by links to surrounding neighbourhoods, and with local stations including Crystal Palace Station.
- Plans for the park should also consider 'loops' that visitors might follow to enjoy the landscape and visit attractions and facilities.

Character areas

- Crystal Palace Park includes various zones, of distinct character and use, including: the Crystal Palace terraces and Paxton axis; the lower lakes and palace dinosaurs; and the NSC sports facilities.
- The regeneration plans should include analysis of the character and use of different areas, including a clearer strategy for how these will be enhanced, and how this contributes to the overall park experience.
- Character areas could also provide a framework for prioritising investment, and planning phased regeneration of the park – recognising the limits of current funding.

Park programming

- The presentation did not go into detail on this aspect, but the panel considered it important for the future of the park, and part of the regeneration plan.
- With a wide range of existing and proposed buildings in the park, there is a risk of duplication of programming, and each element being seen as discrete.

- Given the potential of the park, the panel queried what consideration had been given to third party partnerships / cultural institutions as an anchor. It was felt considerable ambition could pay off in this regard, both in raising the status of the park and attracting funding.

Housing sites

- The panel broadly support, in design terms, the project team's proposal to progress enabling development.

Heritage assets

- The current scheme proposes substantial investment in reconstruction of a retaining wall between the lower and upper terrace of the historic Crystal Palace. Whilst the panel understands the desire to reveal the presence of the lost Palace in the park, it questions whether this is the best use of available funds.
- It was noted that in many ways the Crystal Palace was the first modern building, and need not be treated as ancient archaeology.
- The panel thought it was important to consider the spirit and emphasis of the original Crystal Palace exhibition, including the contents of the exhibition and how this could be reinterpreted in the regeneration plan for example through the showcasing of contemporary technology, horticulture, diverse cultures and modern industry.

National Sports Centre

- The National Sports Centre (NSC) at the centre of Crystal Palace Park is leased to the Greater London Authority (GLA).
- The role of the NSC has changed, since construction of the stadium in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The GLA is currently at an early stage in considering the future of the NSC.
- The panel would encourage the London Borough of Bromley to collaborate with the GLA and to integrate the NSC's long term regeneration plans as part of a cohesive strategy for the park.
- Whilst it may be that redevelopment plans for the NSC would not be delivered as part of the first phase of improvements to Crystal Palace Park – there remains a need for the future of this substantial sporting facility to be integrated into the strategy for the park as a whole.

Next steps

- The panel would like to help support the aspirations for the site across the range of projects coming forward over the coming years, including ongoing engagement with NSC plans.
- The aim of the London Review Panel is to support projects throughout their development. A project of this size and strategic importance could benefit from ongoing engagement. Support could come in the form of future review but also through workshop sessions focusing on particular project topics or design issues.
- The panel could also assist in the consideration of how best to programme and resource the development of detailed designs for elements of the regeneration plan as they are developed.