



Consultation Report

Alexandra Palace

July 2012

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1. Introduction

1.1 PPS Group

PPS Group has reviewed and analysed the consultation undertaken by Alexandra Palace and provided a report on the responses that have been received.

PPS is an independent communications company that specialises in community consultation relating to planning applications and has over twenty years of experience of working with communities up and down the country.

It was one of the first companies to promote the benefits of consultation on planning applications and is expert at developing specific programmes to ensure that community consultations contribute positively to the planning process.

PPS is an accredited member of the Consultation Institute, which helps all those engaged in consultation to absorb best practice, promotes the highest standards of public and stakeholder engagement and provides training to its members.

Most PPS account handling staff have obtained the Consultation Institute's Certificate of Professional Development and have been trained in the Institute's 'Consultation Charter' which sets rigorous standards for undertaking consultation programmes. The CPD qualification recognises the individual's skill and knowledge in consultation services and techniques.

PPS is one of the Institute's Registered Practitioner Partners. This means that the Institute has undertaken an audit of our work and recognises that PPS is a consultancy that will deliver best practice consultation programmes.

PPS also adheres to ethical standards as set out by the Association of Professional Political Consultants.

1.2 Tomorrow's Ally Pally: Consultation Programme

Alexandra Palace is an iconic North London venue that has a rich history of hosting various music, sport and other entertainment based events. It has undertaken a public consultation programme to invite the views of visitors and the local community on a six-pronged master plan for regeneration of the Palace. The programme – "Tomorrow's Ally Pally" – has encouraged all people to respond with the call to action "Have your say".

The online presence of the campaign has been substantial, with a devoted section of the main *Alexandrapalace.com* website located at *alexandrapalace.com/regen* operating as a hub of information about the regeneration plans in a comprehensive and interactive manner. Members of the public were able to explore the full detail of the plans and have their say through an online survey or by printing and returning the survey made available online. The consultation section of the site received in excess of 14,000 views over the consultation period and over 50% of all visitors to the site viewed the full plans. This was further strengthened as the average view per person was over two minutes.

In addition to the website-based online presence, Alexandra Palace utilised their existing social media channels and email contacts to reach out and promote the consultation programme. The social media channels were rebranded and regular encouragements for people to “have their say” were made and an e-shot (email “mail shot”) was distributed all consumer, business and diversity agency contacts on the database. A total of 8,813 people received the e-shot, with 4,720 opening it and 746 clicking through to the regen website.

Offline activity was equally comprehensive. The set piece of the consultation consisted of a six week showcasing of the plans in the form of a public exhibition held at the Palace itself. The exhibition was open to the public every day from 9am to 6pm between Friday 18th May and Friday 29th June 2012. The exhibition stands were manned at peak times such as event days and at the weekends and attendees were encouraged to fill out and return the feedback surveys. To encourage turnout at the exhibition street banners were installed along Alexandra Palace Way to increase awareness and encourage responses to the six consultation questions.

North London was particularly targeted for responses. A total of 21,000 survey books were proactively distributed across the area, with 1,900 books and letters mailed to surrounding residents of the Palace; 900 circulated via Haringey Council’s internal mail and to libraries; 7,500 mailed to residents in the postcode areas N8, N10 and N22 and the remainder made available across a range of outlets in the Palace and Park precinct.

Further still, professional “street teams” were positioned at selected key areas across North London to proactively encourage people to have their say through the surveys. Over 800 surveys were completed through this method.

2. Consultation Results

2.1 How often do people visit Alexandra Palace?

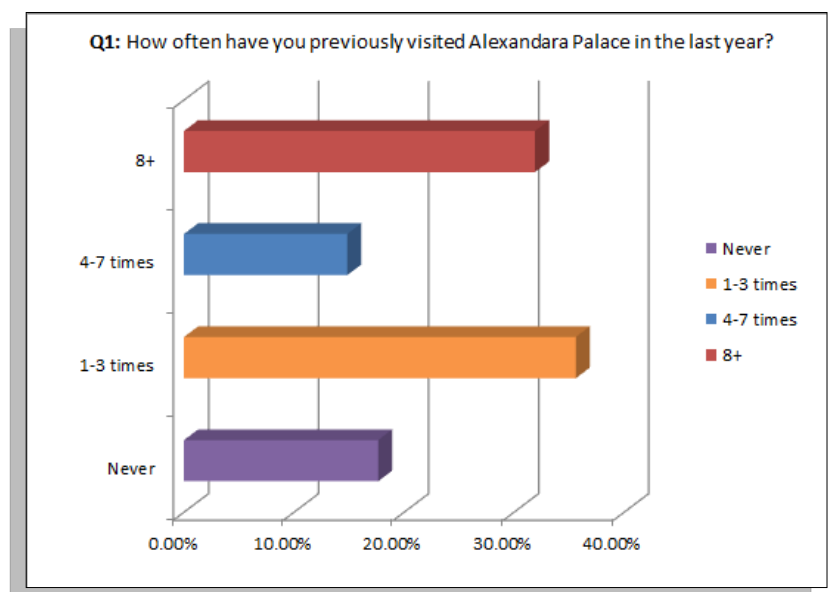
The opening question sought to understand how often people have visited Alexandra Palace in the past year. The data demonstrated that a significant percentage of respondents were frequent visitors, with 32% having visited more than eight times in the last year.

The highest single response was recorded by those who have visited Alexandra Palace between one and three times in the last year. Visitors attending between four and seven times a year – on average once every two months – registered the lowest percentage.

A significant number of respondents had not visited Alexandra Palace in the last year, or potentially, at all.

The responses indicate that Alexandra Palace is somewhere people like to return to and there is a strong contingent of regular visitors.

The Palace, however, continues to attract first time visitors and this broad mix provides a sound sample for the broader questions that followed. This opening section also established the spread and type of consultee was sufficiently mixed to provide a comprehensive response to the consultation.



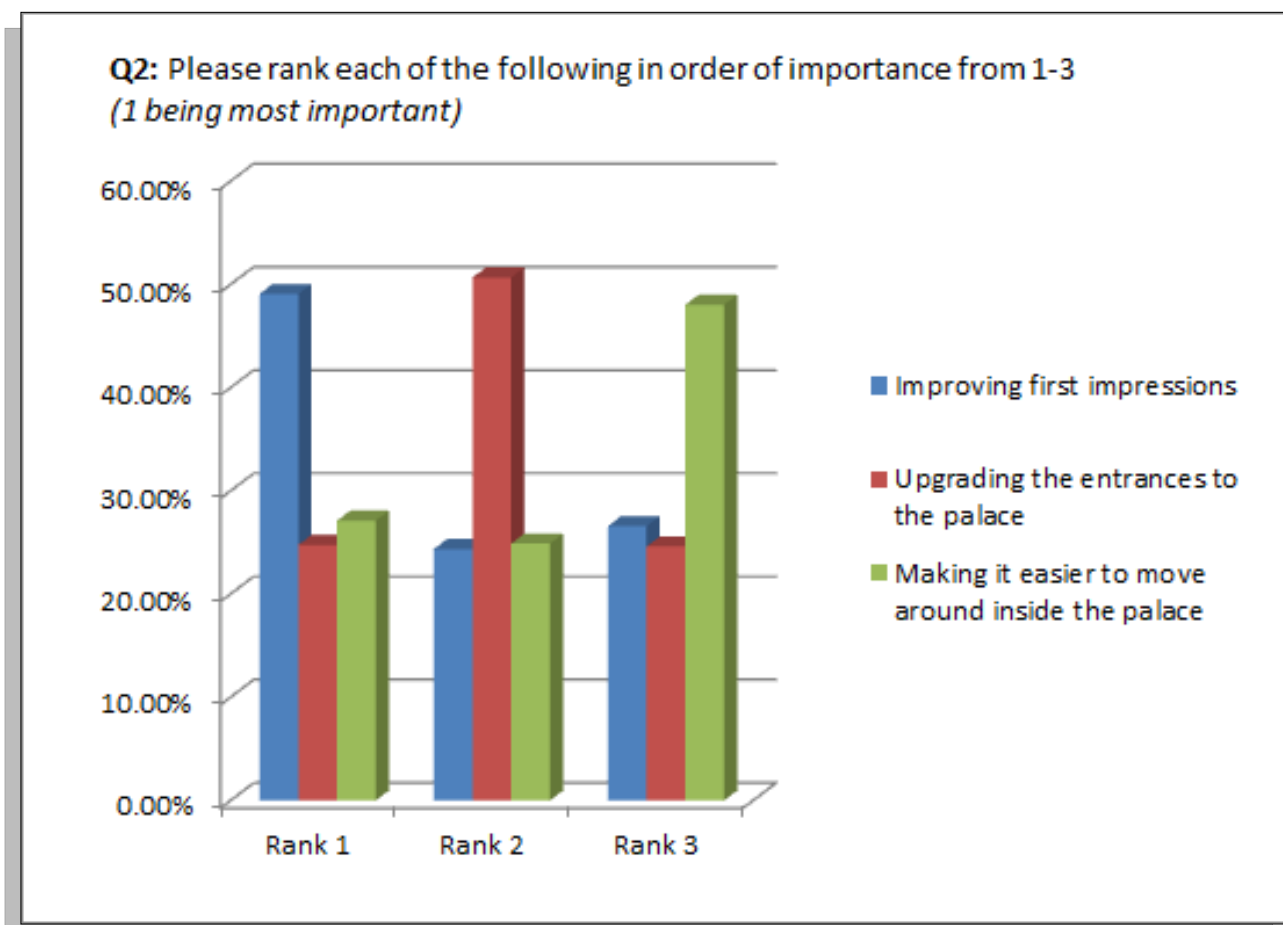
2.2 Ranking the broader areas of importance for improvement

The following question asked respondents to rank the importance of three broad categories essential in the future improvement of Alexandra Palace.

Please rank each of the following in order of importance to you from 1 – 3:

1. Improving first impressions
2. Upgrading the entrances to the Palace
3. Making it easier to move around the Palace

Nearly half of all respondents ranked ‘Improving first impressions’ as the most important aspect in the development of a more comprehensive masterplan. Similarly, around half of respondents ranked ‘Upgrading the entrances to the Palace’ as the second most important consideration and approximately half identified ‘Making it easier to move around the Palace’ as the third and final area to review and consider.



However, this conclusion provides a basic analysis of the most important areas for Alexandra Palace to consider as the masterplan starts to move forward. There were also significant numbers of respondents who identified points 2 and 3 as the most important consideration.

The broad mix of results reflects the fact that all three areas are important to local people. The appearance of the Palace to visitors is an essential starting point and the importance of people movements throughout the building follows on from this in terms of importance.

2.3 Ranking the detailed areas of importance for improvement

The third section of the feedback form sought to understand how important visitors felt a number of more detailed elements of the emerging masterplan.

Please rank each of the following in order of importance to you from 1 –5:

1. Upgrading the main halls
2. Building a hotel in the Palace
3. Opening up the theatre
4. Opening up the BBC Studios
5. Opening up the basement

The initial ranking of the number of first preferences – those people who listed one of the five options as the most important to them – produces the following list:

1. Upgrading the main halls
2. Opening up the theatre
3. Opening up the BBC Studios
4. Opening up the basement
5. Building a hotel in the Palace

This does provide an initial review of those areas considered to be most important. However, it does not, on its own, fully reflect the top priorities of respondents. A more detailed review of the responses to assess the proportion of higher ranked preferences also needs to be undertaken.

Further analysis was therefore carried out on three sets of combined rankings – ranks 1 and 2, ranks 3 and 4 and rank 5. The results of this analysis produce a slightly different response, although largely adhere to the first preferences set out above. The only difference was that the option for ‘Opening up the theatre’ was ranked by more respondents as of importance (ranks 1 and 2) than ‘Upgrading the main halls’.

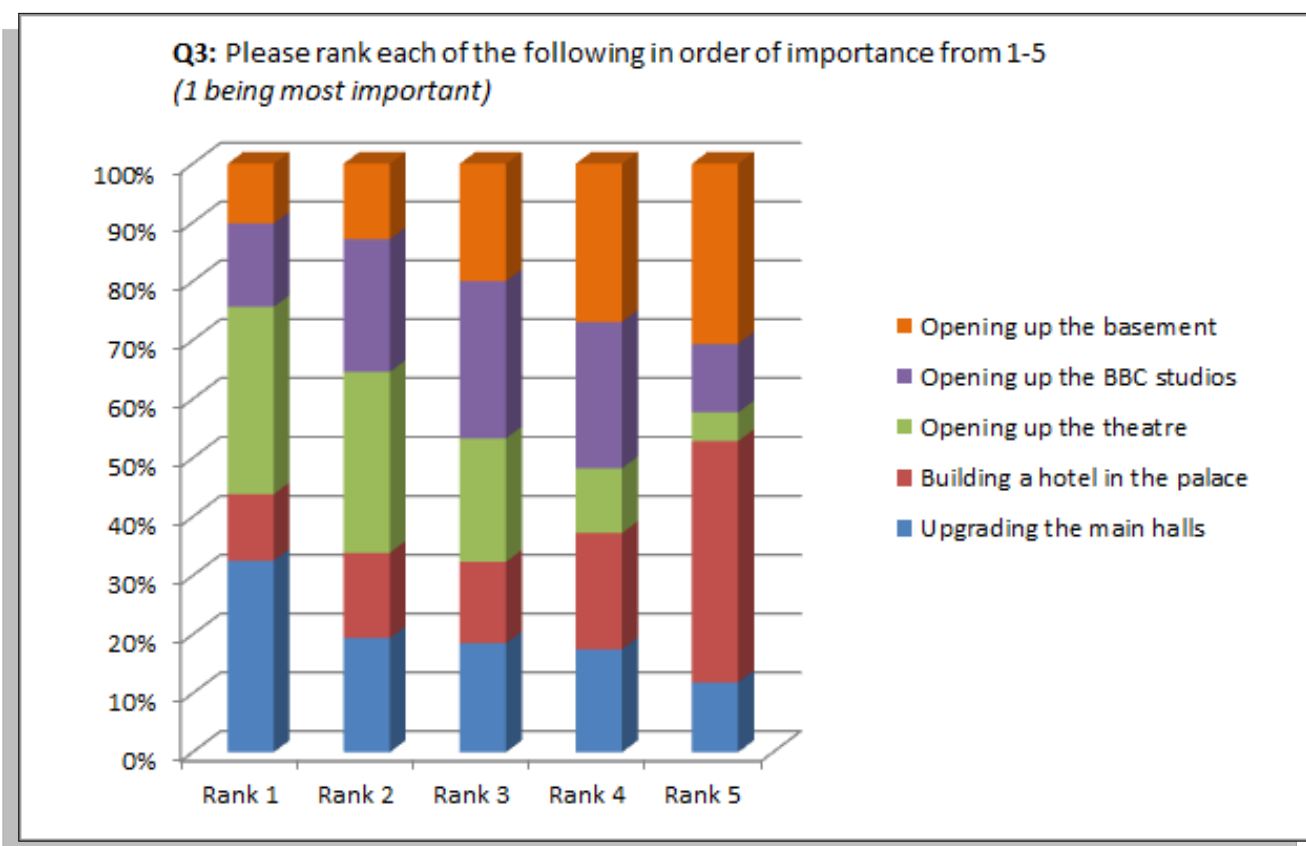
This more detailed analysis helps reaffirm the general weight of importance attached by respondents to each area. The most important considerations therefore are:

- Upgrading the main halls
- Opening up the theatre

There two options that follow in both sets of analysis are:

- Opening up the BBC Studios
- Opening up the basement

The option that ranked least in importance throughout is ‘Building a hotel in the Palace’.



In the general comments section, the area of improvement which was most frequently referenced was the theatre. Overall the theatre ranked as the third most commonly mentioned theme in the open ended section, coming after generally supportive comments and comments about transport improvements.

Even though upgrading the main halls was identified on the tick box survey as being very important, it seems that the proposals for the theatre caught the imagination of respondents more than upgrades to the main halls, with very limited references to the main halls in the comments section (under 20 specific comments). The theatre received 84 specific supportive comments.

The comments also correlate to the results of the tick box questionnaire in regard to building a hotel in the Palace, which was ranked overall as the least important. There were around 70 comments made generally opposed to proposals for a new hotel and despite there being around 60 comments in support, it is still the most contentious of all the issues.

There were relatively few comments made about opening up of the basement (31), with some respondents not even knowing it existed. Its low ranking therefore is most probably due to a lack of existing knowledge and what it could be used for in future.

2.4 Support, funding and the potential impact of the proposals on visitor numbers

The fourth question was split into three parts and sought feedback from respondents on the view towards the Alexandra Palace proposals, how the Trust should fund any future regeneration programme and whether the improvements would encourage respondents to visit more frequently.

Question 'A' asked respondents to provide their view on the following statement:

'Overall, I am supportive of the Alexandra Palace Proposals'
Strongly agree; Agree; Neither; Disagree; Strongly disagree

The response to this question was clear cut. Nearly 87% either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, emphasising strong support from people for the proposals to regenerate Alexandra Palace.

Only 3% (68 respondents) either strongly disagreed or disagreed. The analysis of the general comments of these 68 respondents (i.e. those who stated they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the overall proposals) were analysed in order to better understand the reasons for their negative response to Question A.

This cohort of 68 respondents singled out the more explicitly commercial aspects of the proposals for criticism. The most frequently criticised aspect was the hotel proposal, which of the 68 respondents, 42 referenced in their comments. Many of these comments displayed outright opposition to a hotel, whilst others noted unease about the commercial nature of it.

This anti-commercialisation feeling was evident elsewhere in the comments section too, with people feeling the arrival of shops and cafés such as Starbucks would spoil the tranquillity of the public realm as it stands. One reference to it having to remain as the "People's Palace" seemed to accurately reflect the mood of this group of respondents. There were other criticisms from this group in relation to traffic and noise from mass attended events, although these were less frequent.

Question 'B' asked respondents to provide their view on the following statement:

'The Trust should look to fund the regeneration programme from a variety of possible sources including public, private and non-profit institutions'

Strongly agree; Agree; Neither; Disagree; Strongly disagree

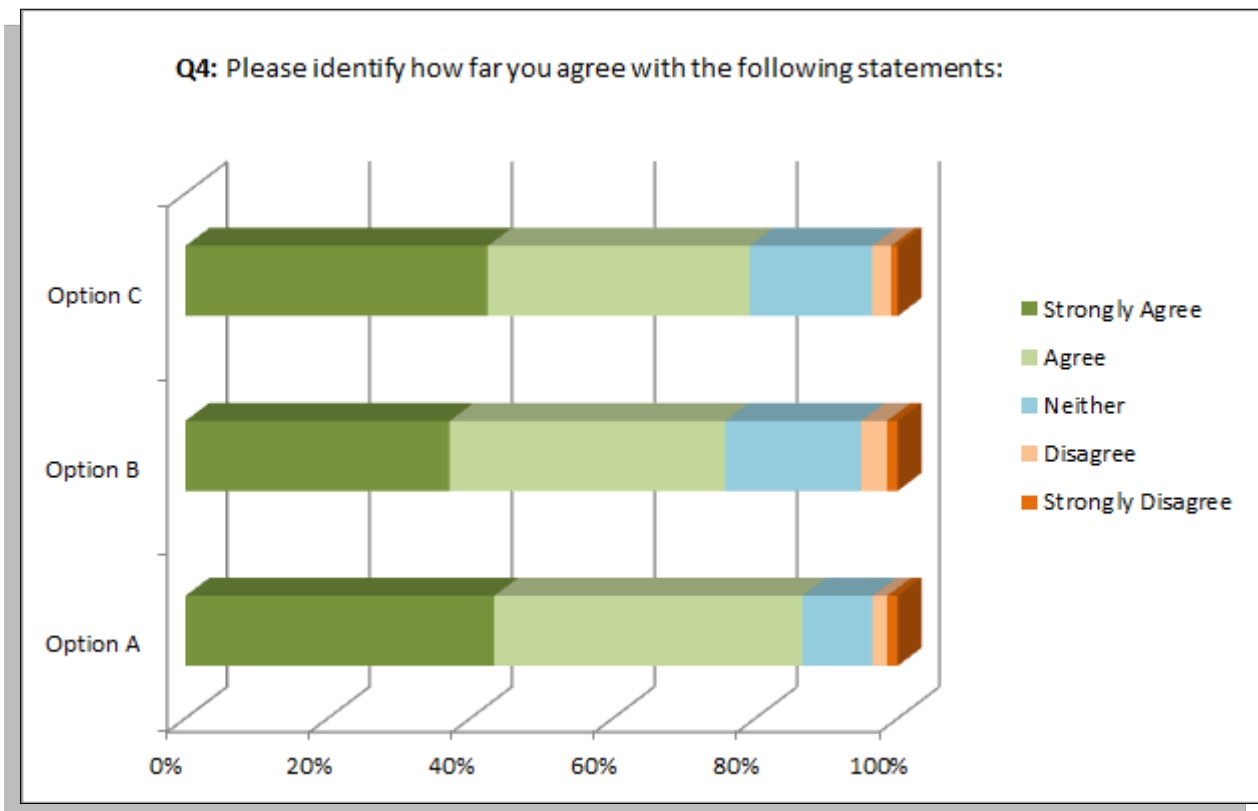
The response to this question also elicited a high percentage of agreement with the statement, with 75% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. This clearly demonstrates a acceptance amongst people responding to the consultation that funds need to be secured from a variety of sources to help progress the proposals.

Question 'C' asked respondents to provide their view on the following statement:

'Once the proposals are realised, I am likely to visit Alexandra Palace more frequently'

Strongly agree; Agree; Neither; Disagree; Strongly disagree

A large percentage of people strongly agreed or agreed that they would attend more frequently if the proposals are realised.



2.5 Demographic data

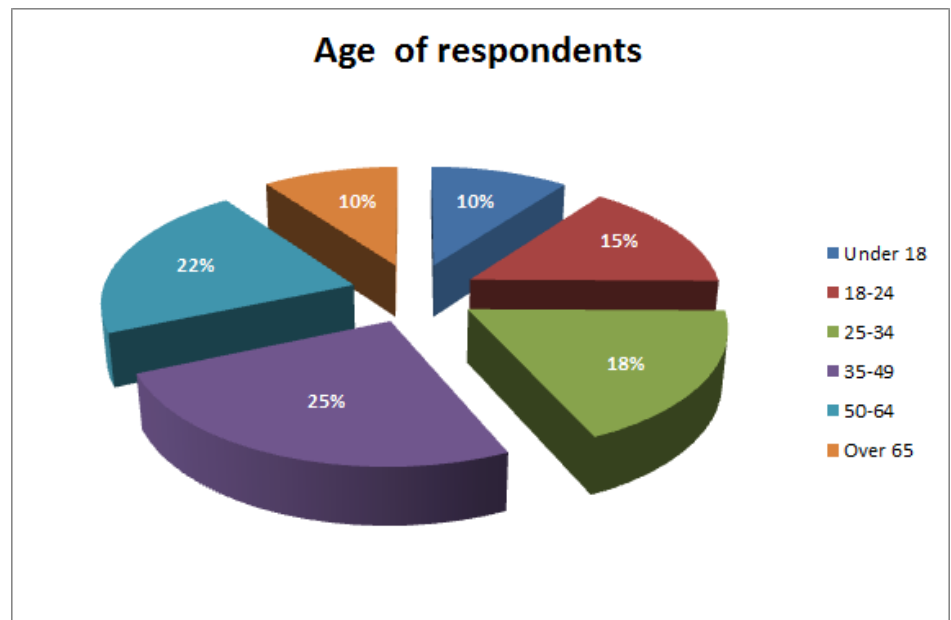
The feedback form provided scope for respondents to leave demographic data. This is important in ensuring that the consultation reached a representative audience and reflected the diversity of the Palace’s visitors.

Age

The respondents to the consultation were asked to provide their age cohort. The data analysis confirms that respondents came from a broad range of age categories, with 44% below the median age range of 35 and 56% above.

Young people, a target group usually poorly represented in consultation programmes, were relatively well represented with 25% under the age of 24.

The largest single age range represented in the feedback was between 35 and 49, with around a third of respondents over the age of 50. The chart gives a clear breakdown of the age groups represented in the consultation responses.



Disability

The consultation also sought to ensure that people with disabilities were accurately represented. The number of disabled respondents was roughly 10%, which is broadly in line with the national proportion.

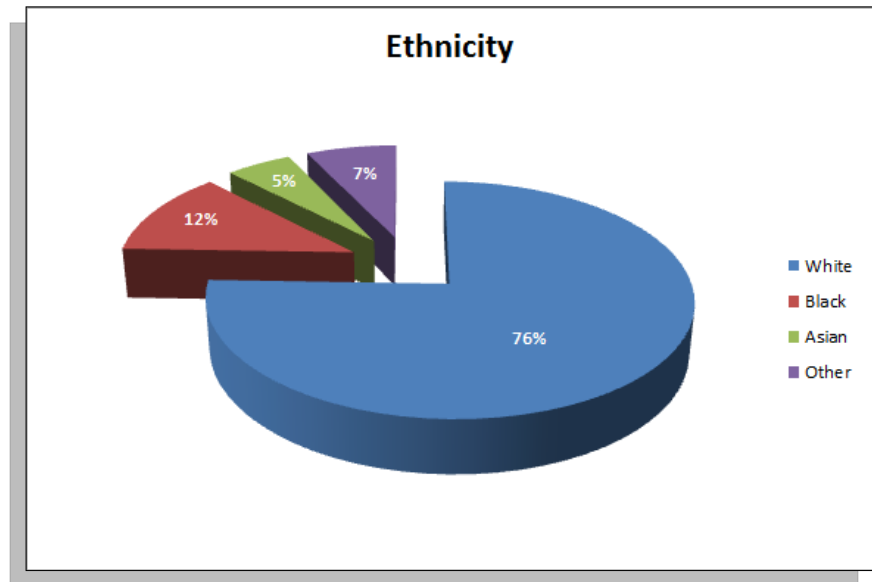
Gender

Similarly the gender balance is fairly representative, with a 3:2 ratio in favour of female respondents. The number of females is slightly higher than average at 58%, potentially pointing to the fact that the Palace is used during day time by mothers and their children.

Ethnicity

An analysis of the ethnicity groups that took part in the consultation is also broadly reflective of the London wide-average.

60% of respondents were White British and a total of 75% of respondents identifying themselves as White. A total of 12% identified as Black, 5% as Asian and 7% as members of another ethnic background.



Ethnic minority representation was significant and this is reflected in the graphs opposite.

2.6 Postcode data

The consultation also asked respondents to leave their postcode data so that Alexandra Palace could identify where visitors and participants in the process travelled from to take part in the process.

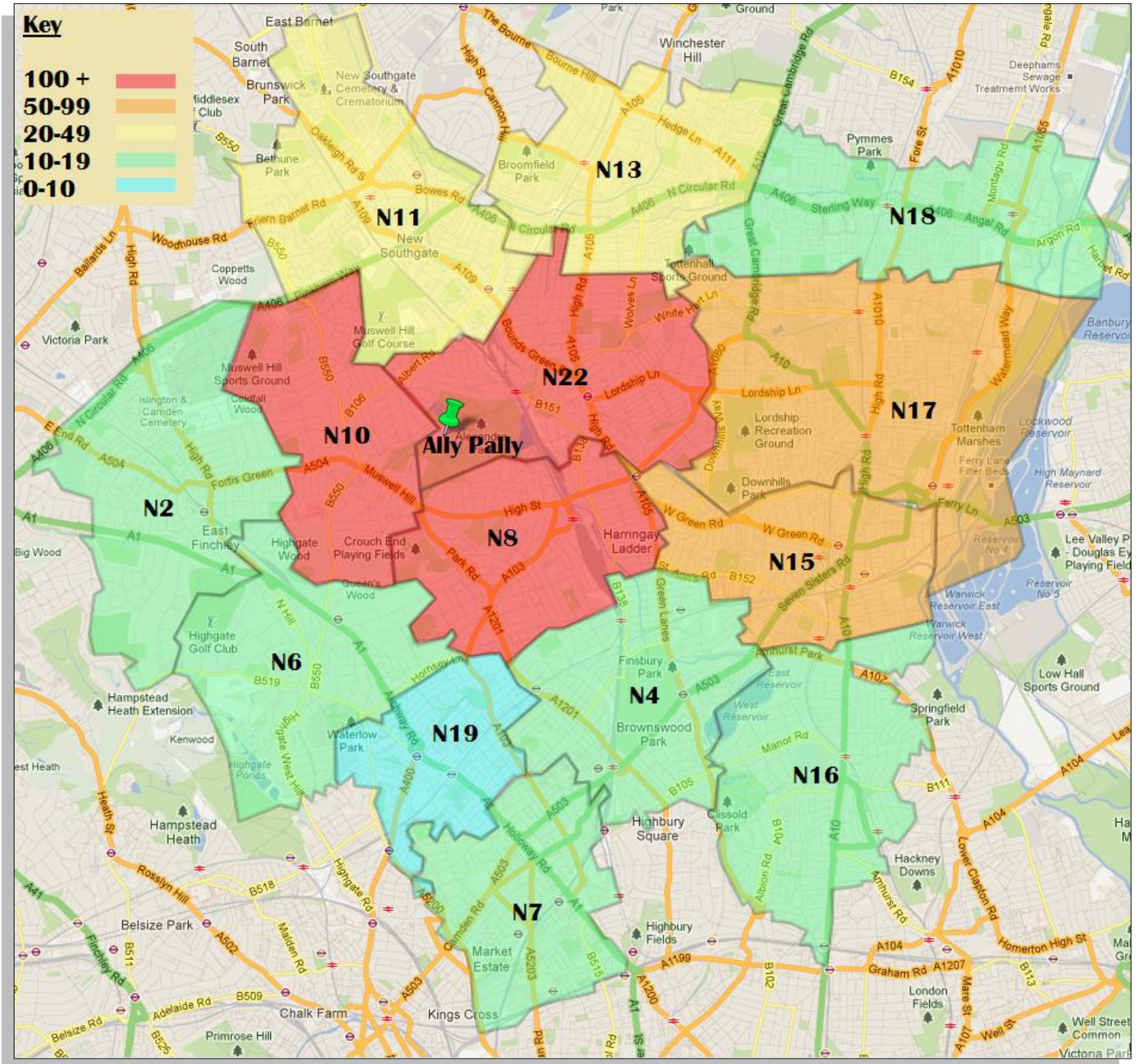
Not all respondents left their postcode, but a significant majority did. This has been analysed to provide a snapshot the origin of consultees.

Total number of Postcodes: 961

1. North London – 848
2. Outside London – 61
3. East London – 27
4. South London – 15
5. West London – 10

The main areas of concentration were in North London, with particularly high levels of participation in the postcodes in and around the Palace itself.

The map below demonstrates how many respondents hailed from the most heavily concentrated postcodes:



2.7 Wider comments on the proposals

The feedback form allowed all respondents to leave general comments on the proposals. Every comment has been reviewed and a total of 1,249 comments were logged. This represents nearly two-thirds (65%) of the total survey respondents.

A detailed review and analysis of the comments produces the following headline points:

- Respondents were pleased to see that regeneration was being considered because the building is not being used to its full potential and needs restoring. Supportive comments were the most frequent comments received.
- The second most popular area of comment was about transport and parking. Respondents felt that public transport links need to be improved as well as general accessibility and car parking provision.
- The third most common comment was in support of proposals to bring the theatre back into active use.
- Respondents also liked the idea of having better restaurant/eating/café facilities.
- Many people were unsupportive or unsure about proposals for a hotel with 69 comments against. However, there were also 61 comments received in support.
- Another popular idea was the BBC TV museum.
- In terms of concerns, a number of people used the form to complain against noise or to request that the proposals address noise issues in future.

A detailed spreadsheet that identifies qualitatively the number of times an area or issues was raised in the comments section is included in the appendix.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

The consultation undertaken by Alexandra Palace on emerging proposals for a masterplan to redevelop the area has been comprehensive and robust.

The results demonstrate that this is the case. The consultation respondents included regular attendees to the Palace through to first time visitors. The age, disability and ethnic background of respondents are all broadly representative of the local and national average. In terms of location, local people in the postcodes around Alexandra Palace and in North London were most heavily represented, but all parts of London and from areas outside of London also participated.

3.1 Using the analysis to inform the development of the masterplan

In response to specific questions about the emerging masterplan and the broader principles of re-development, the following conclusions can be reached:

The question that sought responses on the priority in terms of the initial starting point for wider development, all three options were clearly considered important. However, the analysis suggests that the key is to rejuvenate the first impressions and entrance halls, before concentrating on the movement of people through the Palace.

1. Improving first impressions
2. Upgrading the entrances to the Palace
3. Making it easier to move around the Palace

Moving on to a more detailed review of specific elements, the two clear preferences were for upgrading the main halls and opening up the theatre. This was followed by the potential to open up the BBC Studios and the basement. The proposals for building a hotel were ranked as the lowest importance. This less than positive view towards a hotel was also something that was reflected in the general comments section.

1. Upgrading the main halls
2. Opening up the theatre
3. Opening up the BBC Studios
4. Opening up the basement
5. Building a hotel in the Palace

The section dedicated to seeking views on the support the proposals has, the funding and the impact the plans could have on visitor's numbers was clear cut. There is overwhelming support for the Alexandra Palace proposals, a majority in favour of making use of all avenues to secure funding and people would be encouraged to visit more frequently if the proposals were realised.

The comments section raised a number of other suggestions, including comments on the consultation, the commercial nature of such a scheme, transport issues and comments focused on a specific area, for example the basement. The qualitative assessment shows that the most commonly raised issues were support for the plans and transport considerations.

3.2 Next Steps

The analysis should be reported to those who have been consulted, highlighting the key issues to emerge. Further rounds of consultation will need to review and consider more detailed elements.

Appendices

1. Questionnaire response table

Results							
Q1	Never	1-3 times	4-7 times	8+	Total		
	339	684	285	613	1921		
	17.65%	35.61%	14.84%	31.91%	100.00%		
Q2	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Totals			
Improving first impressions	929	461	503	1893			
	49.08%	24.35%	26.57%	100.00%			
Upgrading the entrances to the palace	468	958	465	1891			
	24.75%	50.66%	24.59%	100.00%			
Making it easier to move around inside the palace	512	470	907	1889			
	27.10%	24.88%	48.01%	100.00%			
Q3	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Totals	
Upgrading the main halls	628	375	353	331	224	1911	
	32.86%	19.62%	18.47%	17.32%	11.72%	100.00%	
Building a hotel in the palace	217	279	262	371	768	1897	
	11.44%	14.71%	13.81%	19.56%	40.48%	100.00%	
Opening up the theatre	614	594	400	209	92	1909	
	32.16%	31.12%	20.95%	10.95%	4.82%	100.00%	
Opening up the BBC studios	273	435	508	469	219	1904	
	14.34%	22.85%	26.68%	24.63%	11.50%	100.00%	
Opening up the basement	195	247	379	507	576	1904	
	10.24%	12.97%	19.91%	26.63%	30.25%	100.00%	
Q4	StAgree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	StDisagree	Totals	
A	833	831	189	39	29	1921	
	43.36%	43.26%	9.84%	2.03%	1.51%	100.00%	
B	713	743	366	70	29	1921	
	37.12%	38.68%	19.05%	3.64%	1.51%	100.00%	
C	816	706	330	51	18	1921	
	42.48%	36.75%	17.18%	2.65%	0.94%	100.00%	
Age	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	Over 65	Totals
	125	182	222	308	261	123	1221
	10.24%	14.91%	18.18%	25.23%	21.38%	10.07%	100.00%
Disabled	Yes	No	Total				
	111	1003	1114				
	9.96%	90.04%	100.00%				
Sex	Male	Female	Total				
	430	602	1032				
	41.67%	58.33%	100.00%				

Ethnicity	Number	p/c (%)	Subtotal
[White]			
White British	732	59.51%	
White Irish	57	4.63%	
White Other	140	11.38%	75.53%
[Black]			
Black African	72	5.85%	
Black Caribbean	63	5.12%	
Black Other	14	1.14%	12.11%
[Asian]			
Asian Indian	39	3.17%	
Asian Pakistani	12	0.98%	
Asian Other	13	1.06%	5.20%
[Other]			
Mixed	60	4.88%	
Chinese	15	1.22%	
Other	13	1.06%	7.15%
TOTAL	1230	100.00%	100.00%

2. Comments analysis

Themed Comments	Frequency of Comment	%	Overall Ranking of Comment
Suggestions			
Art - Possible exhibition space at the palace /provision for artists	20	1.52%	
Hotel - as revenue stream to support art initiatives; boost economy	61	4.64%	6th
Transport - links need to be improved; improved parking; improve road; improved public transport; shuttlebus; cable car; improved signage; lights; accessibility	138	10.49%	2nd
Bigger skate park	6	0.46%	
Focus on the derelict places first/ open it up	7	0.53%	
Theatre - history shows; open it up	84	6.39%	3rd
Ice rink - is too expensive and new skates needed; to be improved	25	1.90%	
Main Hall - Develop/Be similar to O2 so that big artists come	18	1.37%	
Club	14	1.06%	
Swimming pool	18	1.37%	
Restaurant/eateries/café	70	5.32%	4th
Dancing hall	2	0.15%	
Cinema - potentially open air	23	1.75%	
Skaters to get more publicity	1	0.08%	
Gym/sports facilities	40	3.04%	Joint 10th
Skating shop	3	0.23%	
Provide areas for community uses/connection with community	28	2.13%	
Sustainable features/measures	4	0.30%	
Markets/street food	7	0.53%	
A bridge over the great hall	1	0.08%	
BBC TV Museum	55	4.18%	7th
Litter bins	3	0.23%	
Guided tours	2	0.15%	
City Farm and riding stables	1	0.08%	
Better pub/bar/cocktail bar	11	0.84%	
Petting zoo	4	0.30%	
Better floors	5	0.38%	
Better acoustics	3	0.23%	
Better marketing	1	0.08%	
Make grounds available for private hire/weddings	3	0.23%	

Bookshop	1	0.08%	
Youth Hostel	5	0.38%	
Bring back under 18's party	2	0.15%	
Open up the entrance	3	0.23%	
Additional toilet facilities	5	0.38%	
Retail	15	1.14%	
Upgrade the boating lake	3	0.23%	
Better cycle facilities	2	0.15%	
Restore the organ	6	0.46%	
Improved disabled access	5	0.38%	
Crazy golf	1	0.08%	
Businesses/offices	2	0.15%	
Educational	5	0.38%	
Cheaper tickets/low entry cost	15	1.14%	
Terrace Area/Viewing Platform	30	2.28%	
Better marketing	30	2.28%	
Basement Specific			
General	10	0.76%	
Dance studio/music studios	7	0.53%	
Art gallery	8	0.61%	
Paintballing	2	0.15%	
Park Specific			
Would like to see the park updated/exercise park	3	0.23%	
Would like to see more in park - Racing, golf, football	6	0.46%	
Should be no loss of green space/remain open to public/untouched	34	2.59%	
Event suggestions			
Family oriented events; family space & facilities/childrens play	54	4.11%	8th
More concerts and music festivals	40	3.04%	Joint 10th
Positive			
Pleased to see regeneration considered, will be good thing, fully support, needs restoring	150	11.41%	1st
About the consultation			
Good first step at communicating plans	5	0.38%	
Interesting info but not sure it is consultation. Consultation should focus on impact of regeneration. Not just look at palace in isolation. Not good consultation	4	0.30%	

Would like to be involved in the plans	1	0.08%	
This is an appalling questionnaire	2	0.15%	
Please consult with London Cycling Campaign	1	0.08%	
Comment box too small	4	0.30%	
Please ask the children - not just adults	1	0.08%	
Concerns			
Would object to it being sold or sub-let to private organisations	4	0.30%	
Noise - would like to see noise reductions, especially late night	43	3.27%	9th
Heritage/character must be retained and safeguarded and not replaced with ugly buildings	17	1.29%	
Wildlife habitats protected/enhanced	3	0.23%	
Concern about detracting from rural feel	3	0.23%	
Hotel would be a bad idea/not sure/want more info	69	5.25%	5th
No club	6	0.46%	
Concern about generic, corporate/commercial overdevelopment	27	2.05%	
Don't turn football field into a carpark	1	0.08%	
Don't build a casino	4	0.30%	
Don't change the icerink	1	0.08%	
Do not like the proposals/don't change anything	10	0.76%	
Litter	7	0.53%	