

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

1. APPLICATION DETAILS

Reference No: HGY/2015/3141

Ward: Alexandra

Address: Alexandra Palace & Park Alexandra Palace Way N22 7AY

Proposal: Construction and operation of a Go Ape high ropes course

Applicant: Mr Ben Davies Adventure Forest Limited

Ownership: Council

Case Officer Contact: Robbie McNaugher

Site Visit Date: 06/11/2015

Date received: 23/10/2015 **Last amended date:** NA

Drawing number of plans: BW1 532437-14915-220915, BW1 532437-14915-220915, Appendix 1 to 10 inclusive, Desgn Access Statement, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Tree Method statement & Impact on traffic and parking report

1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Sub-Committee because it is on Council owned land and a significant number of objections have been received.

1.2 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle as it would enhance the outdoor recreational, leisure and sports opportunities within the Park.
- It would not harm the openness and would be appropriate development in Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
- The proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the Registered Park and would not harm the setting of the Listed Building
- The proposal is a significant distance from the nearest residential properties so would not have a significant impact on amenity
- The proposal would not generate a significant increase in traffic and there is sufficient car park capacity to cater for the additional parking demand
- The proposal would not harm the existing ecology and would provide ecological enhancements
- The proposal can be installed with minimal damage to the trees

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission and that the Head of Development Management is authorised to issue the planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives set out below.

Conditions

- 1) Development begun no later than three years from date of decision
- 2) In accordance with approved plans
- 3) Hours of operation
- 4) Land restoration
- 5) Ecological mitigation
- 6) Local labour
- 7) Tree protection

Informatives

- 1) Co-operation
- 2) Hours of construction
- 3) Tree works
- 4) Nesting birds

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3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

3.1 Proposed development

- 3.1.1 This is an application for the construction and operation of a 'Go Ape' high ropes course.
- 3.1.2 The physical structures include a tower with access stairs from the ground to the rope course. The course is made up of wooden platforms between which the crossings are strung. The platforms sit on a wooden brace that uses two long bolts positioned either side of the trunk to clamp the wood to the tree. Poles will be used to create loops and obstacles where no trees are available. These will have wooden tree top platforms attached to the poles. The crossings are made of timber, wire and rope and will be arranged in five circuits. None of the cabling or braces come into contact with the trees but are held away from the bark by sacrificial wooden 'full round' battens. As the tree grows it pushes these battens out into the metal cables and braces, which eventually dig into and crush the battens instead of the tree. During annual tree inspections these battens are inspected and can be replaced if necessary. The zip wires landing zones would be constructed of wood and filled with woodchip and they would be surrounded by fencing rails. Details of the equipment are set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.1.3 The proposal includes converting part of an existing cabin to provide a reception, equipment store and office for staff. Half of the cabin is currently used as a store for Deer and the unused part will be converted. The course would operate from 8am until 9pm or dusk whichever is sooner.

3.2 Site and Surroundings

- 3.2.1 The site is an area of some 0.5 hectares located to the north of the Alexandra Palace Park, east and downhill from the boating lake and close to the deer enclosure. The site contains a number of mature trees to the west and the cabin to the east, the remainder of the site is grass and relatively flat.
- 3.2.2 The site is located in the Alexandra Palace & Park Conservation Area and Alexandra Park is designated as a Grade II Registered Park. In addition, the application site falls within land designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and is on land designated of Grade I Borough ecological importance.
- 3.2.3 To the south is Alexandra Palace which is a grade II listed building.
- 3.2.4 The application site is part of a larger site allocation (SA 53) in the emerging Site Allocations DPD. The proposed allocation includes conservation of original facades, while enabling a range of uses, including but not limited to Hotel/restaurant, making use of the natural situation of the site including the protected view to St. Pauls and across London. Opportunities to improve

connections between the Palace and the rest of the Borough will be explored. The pre submission draft of the DPD was considered by the Council at its meeting on 23rd November 2015 and was published for Reg 19 consultation on 8th January 2016

3.4 Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

3.4.1 The Palace and surrounding park have an extensive planning history with a number of applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent. The most recent applications are:

HGY/2014/0559 GTD Alexandra Palace Alexandra Palace Way London Improvement to path network, resurfacing Network Rail access road, installation of new trees and plants, installation of new fence and gates to Campsbourne Nursery playground, installation of new railings along boundary to Newland Road

HGY/2014/0560 GTD Alexandra Palace Alexandra Palace Way London Listed Building Consent for Improvement to path network, resurfacing Network Rail access road, installation of new trees and plants, installation of new fence and gates to Campsbourne Nursery playground, installation of new railings along boundary to Newland Road

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

4.1 The following were consulted regarding the application:

LBH Economic Regeneration
LBH Arboriculture
LBH EHS - Noise & Pollution
LBH Parks
LBH Conservation Officer
LBH Nature Conservation
LBH Transportation
Alexandra Park & Palace Statutory Advisory Committee
Alexandra Palace Residents Association
Alexandra Palace
Alexandra Palace & Park CAAC Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust Park
Natural England
Garden History Society

The following responses were received :

Internal:

1. Transport

No objections

2. Conservation

No objection: From a listed building point of view, the structure would be at a sufficient distance away from the listed building and would be hidden in the trees past the lake, as such it would have no impact on the listed building.

In terms of impact on the conservation area and the historic park, given its nature, the proposed structure would have minimal impact on the openness of the park and the setting of the conservation area. It would facilitate its original recreational use as Park and attract more visitors. This would be considered to enhance its significance and would be acceptable.

Overall, the proposed structure and use are in line with the recreational use of the Park and would have no impact on the setting of the listed building, the conservation area or the registered historic park. It is, therefore, acceptable.

3. Arboriculture

No objection: the Tree Officer is satisfied that the 'Go Ape' rope access system can be installed to minimise any damage to the trees. The annual inspections will ensure trees are monitored regularly and any detrimental impacts can be recorded and mitigated quickly. It is also stated that the annual inspections are to be carried out by John Harraway, who is an experienced and highly qualified Arboricultural Consultant.

4. Economic Regeneration

Request jobs are available to local residents.

5. Nature Conservation

Raises objections as a Phase 2 survey work for invertebrates has not be carried out. Seeks a full and detailed mitigation strategy as a Planning Condition.

External:

6. Historic England

Do not consider that it is necessary for this application to be notified to Historic England under the relevant statutory provisions

7. Natural England

No objections

8. London Wildlife Trust

Believe there will be significant adverse impacts on the habitat functionality for the area and will lead to disturbance particularly during the nesting season. It is likely that this part of the site will no longer support nesting birds, representing a significant impact on the LNR and SINC.

If the Council were minded to grant permission they recommend that an area is identified to provide woodland enhancements so that any habitat impacted by the development is appropriately mitigated for, as a condition of permission.

9. Alexandra Palace's Chief Executive

Support for the proposal.

10. Garden History Society

No comments received.

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The following were consulted:

0 Neighbouring properties
2 Residents Association
1 site notices were erected close to the site

5.2 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: 89
Objecting: 80
Supporting: 9

5.3 The following local groups/societies made representations:

- Alexandra Palace & Park CAAC

5.4 The issues raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application are set out in Appendix 1 and summarised as follows:

- Commercial operation not in keeping with the park
- Will harm the ecology
- Will impact on neighbouring privacy
- Increased noise impact
- Harm to trees
- Parking impacts
- Increased litter

- Security concerns
- Support for the proposal

6 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning issues raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of the development
2. Impact on the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
3. The impact on the Listed Building Conservation Area and Registered Park
4. The impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers
5. Parking and highway safety
6. Design
7. Biodiversity and Trees
8. Local Employment

6.2 Principle of the development

6.2.1 Saved UDP Policy OS4 refers specifically to the Alexandra Palace and Park and states that proposals for Alexandra Park and Palace should:

- a) conserve and enhance the habitat and ecological value of the Park.
- b) preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest and setting of the Palace and the historic form and layout of the park land.
- c) facilitate the restoration of the fabric of the building.
- d) enhance the outdoor recreational, leisure and sports opportunities within the Park, having regard to the needs of a wide range of users including the need for passive recreation.
- e) provide a range of uses for the Palace, which complement the outdoor activities in the Park and complement as far as possible the function of Wood Green Metropolitan Town Centre.
- f) not involve unacceptable levels of traffic that cannot be accommodated on site.
- g) protect the amenity of local residential properties.

6.2.2 The pre submission draft of the Local Plan Site Allocations DPD is currently at pre-submission stage. As such the DPD is considered to be a material planning consideration that can be accorded some, although not the same, weight as the development plan. The document provides site specific guidelines to underpin the delivery of the spatial vision set out in the Local Plan.

6.2.3 The draft Site Allocations DPD designation for Alexandra Palace includes conservation of original facades, while enabling a range of uses, including but not limited to Hotel/restaurant, making use of the natural situation of the site including the protected view to St. Pauls and across London. The Council is seeking to ensure that viable ongoing uses for Alexandra Palace, and that works to enhance the structure, and surrounding parkland are continued.

6.2.4 The principle of the proposal is considered to be in line with these policies by enhancing the outdoor recreational and leisure opportunities available at the palace and therefore the proposal is acceptable in principle subject to detailed considerations.

6.3 Impact on the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

6.3.1 London Plan Policy 7.17 states that the strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Local Plan Policy SP13 'Open Space and Biodiversity' requires new developments to protect and improve Haringey's open spaces and states that all new development shall protect and enhance the borough's Green Belt, designated Metropolitan Open Land from inappropriate development.

6.3.2 Paragraph 90 of the (National Planning Policy Framework) NPPF lists the types of development which are appropriate in the Green Belt and MOL which includes the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation, as long as it preserves the openness of the MOL and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

6.3.3 The proposal is for outdoor recreation and is considered to preserve the openness of the MOL and would not conflict with the purposes of MOL. The proposal would make use of the existing building on the site for reception and management purposes thus only requires the construction of the tower, platforms and ropes course structures. These would be open in their appearance and although tall in height they are not significant in their massing. They would therefore not result in urban sprawl within the MOL and the proposal is appropriate development within the MOL in accordance with paragraph 90 of the NPPF.

6.4 Impact on the Listed Building, Conservation Area and Historic Park

6.4.1 The application site has the potential to impact on a number of designated heritage assets as it lies within the Alexandra Park and Palace Conservation Area and a Registered Park and Alexandra Palace is a Grade II listed building.

6.4.2 There is a legal requirement for the protection of the Listed Building and Conservation Area and Historic Park. The Legal Position on the impact on these heritage assets is as follows, and Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 provide:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of

preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.” Among the provisions referred to in subsection (2) are “the planning Acts”.

- 6.4.3 The *Barnwell Manor Wind Farm Energy Limited v East Northamptonshire District Council* case tells us that "Parliament in enacting section 66(1) did intend that the desirability of preserving listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm, but should be given “considerable importance and weight” when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise.”
- 6.4.4 The *Queen (on the application of The Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council* says that the duties in Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings Act do not allow a Local Planning Authority to treat the desirability of preserving of listed buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas as mere material considerations to which it can simply attach such weight as it sees fit. If there was any doubt about this before the decision in *Barnwell*, it has now been firmly dispelled. When an authority finds that a proposed development would harm the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area or a Historic Park, it must give that harm considerable importance and weight. This does not mean that an authority’s assessment of likely harm to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area is other than a matter for its own planning judgment. It does not mean that the weight the authority should give to harm which it considers would be limited or less than substantial must be the same as the weight it might give to harm which would be substantial. But it is to recognise, as the Court of Appeal emphasized in *Barnwell*, that a finding of harm to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. The presumption is a statutory one, but it is not irrebuttable. It can be outweighed by material considerations powerful enough to do so. An authority can only properly strike the balance between harm to a heritage asset on the one hand and planning benefits on the other if it is conscious of the statutory presumption in favour of preservation and if it demonstrably applies that presumption to the proposal it is considering.
- 6.4.5 In short, there is a requirement that the impact of the proposal on the heritage assets be very carefully considered, that is to say that any harm or benefit to each element needs to be assessed individually in order to assess and come to a conclusion on the overall heritage position. If the overall heritage assessment concludes that the proposal is harmful then that should be given "considerable importance and weight" in the final balancing exercise having regard to other

material considerations which would need to carry greater weight in order to prevail.

- 6.4.6 London Plan Policy 7.8 requires that development affecting heritage assets and their settings to conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale and architectural detail. Haringey Local Plan Policy SP12 requires the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey's heritage assets. Emerging policy DM9 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document (2015) continues this approach.

Impact on the setting of the Listed Building

- 6.4.7 The proposed development would be over 100 metres from the Listed Building and sits much lower than the facade of the building so would not affect the setting of the listed building.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

- 6.4.8 The development is not significant in scale in relation to the surrounding park and the Conservation Area. The Palace itself is considered to be the dominant feature of the Conservation Area and the development would not affect its setting it is considered that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area and would not cause harm.

Impact on the Registered Park

- 6.4.9 English Heritage's designation document for the Registered Park and Garden notes that the main feature in the northern part of the park is the irregular boating lake which lies immediately north of the Palace. This was one of a series of ornamental pools formed by the damming of the stream which originally ran down the western boundary of the site. It notes that although the site has been subject to a number of alterations, the arrangement of the original path system can still be traced in most areas of the park.

- 6.4.10 The proposal is not considered to harm any of the important features of the registered park, it would sit close the boating lake but would not affect the landforms associated with it and would not impact on the setting of the Palace itself within the park which English Heritage note to be the "focus of the park". Therefore the proposal is considered to preserve the special historic interest of the Registered Park.

Conclusion

- 6.4.11 There is no harm to the setting of the Listed Building, the Conservation Area and Registered Park and the proposal would therefore satisfy the statutory duties set out in Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

Areas) Act 1990, and accord with the design and conservation aims and objectives as set out in the NPPF, London Plan Policies 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6, saved UDP Policy UD3, Local Plan Policies SP11 and SP12 and SPG2 'Conservation and archaeology'.

6.5 Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers

- 6.5.1 The London Plan 2011 Policy 7.6 Architecture states that development must not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings. Saved Policy UD3 also requires development not to have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity in terms of loss of daylight, or sunlight, privacy overlooking, aspect and the avoidance of air, water, light and noise, pollution and of fume and smell nuisance. Draft DM Policy Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' continues this approach and requires developments to ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for its users and neighbours.
- 6.5.2 Concerns have been raised from neighbouring residents in relation to increased noise levels and loss of privacy. With regard to noise, the applicant has carried out a noise survey of the existing Go Ape site at Delamere Forest to establish typical noise levels from the use of the course and measured existing background noise levels at the site and nearest neighbouring properties. The report notes that the only apparatus generating significant noise levels was confirmed as the zip lines, from the running noise of the zip wire mechanism and from participants' voices. The acoustic consultant has undertaken an initial noise prediction from the 4 proposed zip lines to the nearest residences in Vallange Road to the west and Alexandra Park Road to the north. These residences range from approximately 80-176m (Vallange Road) and 123-139m (Alexandra Park Road) from the nearest part of the zip wire runs. They have provided a worst-case noise prediction assuming a pessimistically high usage rate of 60 people/hour for each zip line (i.e. 240 per hour in total). They have also assumed that the zip lines will be in simultaneous use. For simplicity, no account has been made of any acoustic screening that may be provided by intervening topography, but which in reality will be present and which will attenuate noise to some degree. They note that in reality, noise levels are likely to be lower than predicted, as distances to residences will be greater to the more distant stretches of the zip wire runs and usage rates are expected to be significantly lower.
- 6.5.3 The report found that the predicted Laeq noise level (equivalent continuous noise level- used as the preferred parameter for all forms of environmental noise) accounting for the worst-case when the site is at capacity is below the pre-existing levels. This would typically result in a worst-case increase in the LAeq ambient noise level of up to 2 dB(A). A change in noise level of 10 dB(A) is generally perceived as a doubling or halving of the original sound level. A change of 3 dB(A) is the minimum change perceptible. The proposed development is therefore predicted to result in an imperceptible change in ambient noise level.

- 6.5.4 The cumulative noise level is predicted at 48 dB at the Vallange Road residences and 47 dB at the Alexandra Park Road residences. This is better than the recommended range of 50-55 dB for residential gardens provided by BS8233. The Council's Environmental Health – Noise Officer is satisfied that the noise levels will not adversely affect nearby residents. The proposal is therefore considered to have no significant noise impact on neighbouring properties. The proposed development will not change the noise character of the area, as Alexandra Park is an established source of recreational and people noise.
- 6.5.5 With regard to the impact on neighbouring privacy the proposed roped course would be some 50 metres from the boundary with the nearest residential property on Alexandra Park Road at the closest point and some 60 metres from the nearest property on Valance Road at the closest point. The proposed platforms would be 12 metres at the highest point. Given the significant distance between the closest platforms and the boundary with residential gardens the proposal would afford very limited views into neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore considered to have no material impact on neighbouring privacy.
- 6.5.6 Overall the proposal is considered to have no material impact on neighbouring amenity.

6.6 Transport and Parking

- 6.6.1 Local Plan (2013) Policy SP7 Transport states that the Council aims to tackle climate change, improve local place shaping and public realm, and environmental and transport quality and safety by promoting public transport, walking and cycling and seeking to locate major trip generating developments in locations with good access to public transport. This approach is continued in Draft DM Policies DM31 and DM32.
- 6.6.2 Concerns have been raised both in relation to quantum of parking provided with concerns that there is both too little and too much parking provided and the impacts on the surrounding highways.
- 6.6.3 The Council's Transportation and Highways Team has been consulted and advises that the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) that ranges from 0 to 5 and is served by Alexandra Palace rail station and the W3 and 184 bus routes. These bus services offer a two-way frequency of 36 buses hour and provide frequent access to Wood Green underground station.
- 6.6.4 The proposal is capable of catering for a maximum of 130 participants at any given time. Participants will have the choice of taking part in one of two courses lasting either 3 hours or 1 hour in duration. The 1 hour experience is primarily designed to cater for children typically between the ages of 6-12 and therefore participants are normally accompanied by others who are not taking part in the activity.

- 6.6.5 The applicant has produced a Traffic and Parking statement in order to support the application. The assumptions within the report are based on survey data taken from operational GO Ape sites within Greater London. The report separates traffic and parking demand for the 3 hour and 1 hour activities in order to capture the total level of traffic generation and parking demand for each of the two courses. For robustness the report assumes that each car will be parked on-site for the duration of the course and will therefore require a parking space. The report therefore links the expected level of traffic generation with parking demand.
- 6.5.6 The survey data for relating to the 3 hour experience suggests that approximately 20% of visitors (2 cars for every 10 customers) travel to the site using private vehicles. Given that the site can cater for 15 participants every 30 minutes, it can be concluded that if operating at full capacity the maximum number of participants for this course is 90. Even taking this worst case scenario into account this element of the business is likely to generate a maximum additional parking demand of 18 spaces based on the above ratio.
- 6.5.7 In relation to the 1 hour experience, The Transportation Team has noted the results based on survey data taken from the most comparable site in Trent Park, London. Although the data suggests that this element of the business would generate a parking demand 12.8 cars, it is accepted that many of the vehicles travelling to the site would have multiple occupants as suggested in the supporting transport statement. Further survey data suggests that 56% of individuals attending the 1 hour course had planned to visit the area regardless of their booking. If applying this percentage it is concluded that this element of the business is likely to generate 6 car visits.
- 6.5.8 There will be a full-time equivalent of 21 members of staff. However, a maximum of just 12 members of staff are likely to be present on any given day. Using a first principle method based on ONS Census data for the borough the proportion of individuals arriving to work by car is likely to be in the region of 13%. Applying this percentage to the maximum number of staff present, it is considered that this element of the business is likely to generate a demand for 1.56 or 2 parking spaces.
- 6.5.9 The Traffic and Parking statement highlights the fact that Alexandra Palace Park benefits from 1200 unrestricted on-site parking spaces. Given that the development would generate a maximum demand of 26 parking spaces during its peak operational hours, which is just 2% of the available spaces. It is therefore considered that the additional parking demand can comfortably be catered for on-site.
- 6.5.10 Given the nature of the activity and the fact that session start times are staggered for each group consisting of up to 15 participants on each course, it is considered

that the operation of the business is unlikely to have any significant impact to the surrounding road network during the AM and PM peak hours. The survey results indicate that the proposal would result in a comparatively low hourly increase in traffic generation and it is considered that there is sufficient car park capacity within Alexandra Palace Park to cater for the additional parking demand. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have a significant impact upon the operation of the highway and transportation network in the local area.

6.8 Biodiversity and Trees

- 6.8.1 The site is designated a Site of Nature Conservation (SINC) Borough Grade I. London Plan Policies and Local Plan Policy 7.19 SP13 and Draft DM Policy DM19 state that where possible, development should make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement, creation and management of biodiversity and should protect and enhance Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- 6.8.2 With regard to trees Saved UDP (2006) Policy OS17 states that the Council will seek to protect and improve the contribution of trees, tree masses and spines to local landscape character by ensuring that, when unprotected trees are affected by development, a programme of tree replanting and replacement of at least equal amenity and ecological value and extent is approved by the Council.

Biodiversity

- 6.8.3 The applicant has provided a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal that comprised a Phase 1 habitat survey, protected species assessment and ground level tree assessment for bats. The assessment found that the the habitats on site largely comprised semi-improved broad-leaved woodland, scattered trees, amenity grassland, semi-improved grassland and scattered scrub. One tree on site (TN1) was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats. This tree will not be impacted under current proposals, therefore further investigation relating to bats is not necessary. □ All other trees within the survey boundary were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. The site had high potential to support breeding birds. The site was considered unlikely to support any other protected species on account. Several ecological enhancement measures are recommended.
- 6.8.4 Natural England has been consulted and raises no objections, the Council's Nature Conservation Officer notes that the appraisal recommends that an outline Ecological Impact Assessment is undertaken and that Phase 2 survey work for invertebrates is conducted. He has raised concern that permitting the development prior to the submission of these documents would pre-empt their findings. This noted, however the applicant's ecologist has advised that any likely impact on invertebrates will not fundamentally impact on the layout or

design of the proposal and will only influence the mitigation works. It is therefore considered acceptable to condition that this work be carried out and the mitigation works take the findings into account.

- 6.8.5 The London Wildlife Trust has also raised concerns around the loss of bird nesting habitat. To offset the loss of nesting habitat the condition relating to mitigation will specifically require replacement nesting areas. Therefore subject to a condition requiring the applicant to follow the recommendations of its ecological appraisal and also provide bird nesting habitat the proposal is considered to make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity and the SINC.

Impact on trees

- 6.8.6 In relation to the impact on trees the applicant has provided a method statement which sets out that the platforms are secured to the trees by means of a brace with a platform sitting on top rather than nailed or screwed to the trees. Protective battens are installed between the wire ropes and the trees to ensure these do not damage the trees. These can also accommodate trees growth and be adjusted accordingly.

- 6.8.7 The Council's tree officer is satisfied that the 'Go Ape' rope access system can be installed to minimise any damage to the trees. The annual inspections will ensure trees are monitored regularly and any detrimental impacts can be recorded and mitigated quickly. It is also stated that the annual inspections are to be carried out by an experienced and highly qualified Arboricultural Consultant. A condition can be imposed to ensure that works are carried out and monitoring in accordance with the method statement. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with policy and is acceptable in this regard.

6.10 Local Employment

- 6.10.1 A condition has been attached requiring that Go Ape works with the Council to ensure that employment and training opportunities are provided by the construction process and post occupation to assist the local employment aims for the area. This is supported by London Plan Policy 4.12, Local Plan 2013 policies SP8 and SP9.

6.11 Conclusion

- 6.11.1 The proposal is acceptable in principle as it would enhance the outdoor recreational, leisure and sports opportunities within the Park. The proposal is considered to be appropriate within the MOL as it would not impact on the openness of the MOL or result in urban sprawl and is unlikely to impact on protected species and through proposed mitigation measures is considered to

make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity and the SINC.

6.11.2 The proposal would not impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents nor have an adverse impact on the surrounding transport network. The proposal will provide employment and training opportunities during the construction process and post occupation which in partnership with the Council's Economic Development Team will improve the opportunities for unemployed local residents.

6.11.3 Overall the proposal is considered to comply with the Local Development Plan and National Planning Guidance. Therefore, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions the planning application is recommended for approval.

6.11.4 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION

6.12 CIL

The increase in internal floor area would not exceed 100 sq.m. and therefore the proposal is not liable for the Mayoral or Haringey's CIL charge.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

Applicant's drawing No.(s) BW1 532437-14915-220915, BW1 532437-14915-220915, Appendix 1 to 10 inclusive, Desgn Access Statement, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Tree Method statement & Impact on traffic and parking report

Subject to the following condition(s)

- 1) The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2) The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and specifications:

Reason: In order to avoid doubt and in the interests of good planning.

- 3) The use hereby permitted shall not be operated before 08:00 hours or after 21:00 hours at anytime.

Reason: This permission is given to facilitate the beneficial use of the premises whilst ensuring that the amenities of adjacent residential properties are not diminished consistent with Saved Policy UD3 of the Haringey Unitary Development Plan 2006.

- 4) Should the Go Ape operations cease on site the structures must be removed (and the land restored to its former condition) by or within three months of the cessation of operations.

Reason: To restore the site back to its original appearance, in the interest of a tidy site within this historic park and conservation area, to accord with Local Plan Policy SP12.

- 5) No development shall take place until an Ecological Impact Assessment phase 2 survey work for invertebrates has been conducted and a full and detailed mitigation strategy (in accordance with the findings of the survey work and the ecological appraisal report) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme as approved shall be implemented and permanently retained thereafter. The mitigation shall include habitats for breeding birds and an educational resource such as interpretation panels and a schools pack highlighting the value of the trees as a habitat.

Reason: To ensure that the development will make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement, creation and management of biodiversity and protect and enhance the adjoining Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in accordance with London Plan Policies Policy 7.19 and Local Plan Policy SP13.

- 6) Go Ape shall commit a named individual to participate in the Jobs for Haringey Initiative by working in partnership with the Assigned Officer to meet the requirements of the Jobs for Haringey Initiative during the operation of the development to ensure that employment and training opportunities including jobs and apprenticeships arising from the Development post will be available to residents of the administrative area of the Council.

Go Ape shall will designate a named contact to liaise with the Haringey Employment and Recruitment Partnership's lead contact to ensure efficient management and supply of local Council residents for employment and training opportunities post Implementation of the Development and the Haringey Employment and Recruitment Partnership will provide and prepare said Council residents for all employment and training opportunities and will be the sole conduit for any recruitment assessment screening testing and application support arrangements.

Reason: In order to ensure that the scheme provides employment opportunities within the Borough and for the local community.

- 7) The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the Method statement – ‘Attaching the Go Ape Course to Trees’ and retained and monitored thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that the development will not harm the health or longevity of the existing tree on the site in accordance with Saved UDP (2006) Policy OS17.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: In dealing with this application, Haringey Council has implemented the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012 to foster the delivery of sustainable development in a positive and proactive manner.

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.

INFORMATIVE: All tree works shall be undertaken by a qualified and experienced tree surgery company and to BS 3998:2010 Tree work - Recommendations.

INFORMATIVE: Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The applicant is advised that a tree may provide a habitat for plants and wildlife protected under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 especially where trees are dead or dying or if works are carried out during the nesting season.

Appendix 1 Consultation Responses from internal and external agencies

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
INTERNAL		
Conservation Officer	<p>No objection: From a listed building point of view, the structure would be at a sufficient distance away from the listed building and would be hidden in the trees past the lake, as such it would have no impact on the listed building.</p> <p>In terms of impact on the conservation area and the historic park, given its nature, the proposed structure would have minimal impact on the openness of the park and the setting of the conservation area. It would facilitate its original recreational use as Park and attract more visitors. This would be considered to enhance its significance and would be acceptable.</p> <p>Overall, the proposed structure and use are in line with the recreational use of the Park and would have no impact on the setting of the listed building, the conservation area or the registered historic park. It is, therefore, acceptable.</p>	Noted
Trees Officer	<p>No objection: the Tree Officer is satisfied that the 'Go Ape' rope access system can be installed to minimise any damage to the trees. The annual inspections will ensure trees are monitored regularly and any detrimental impacts can be recorded and mitigated quickly. It is also stated that the annual inspections are to be carried out by John Harraway, who is an experienced and highly qualified Arboricultural Consultant.</p>	Noted

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>The application site is located within Alexandra Palace Park, which caters for a number of leisure uses. The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) that ranges from 0 to 5 and is served by Alexandra Palace rail station and the W3 and 184 bus routes. These bus services offer a two-way frequency of 36 buses hour and provide frequent access to Wood Green underground station.</p> <p>The proposal involves the creation of a high rope adventure course, which is capable of catering for a maximum of 130 participants at any given time. Participants will have the choice of taking part in one of two courses lasting either 3 hours or 1 hour in duration. The 1 hour experience is primarily designed to cater for children typically between the ages of 6-12 and therefore participants are normally accompanied by others who are not taking part in the activity.</p> <p>The applicants have produced a Traffic and Parking statement in order to support the application. The assumptions within the report are based on survey data taken from operational GO Ape sites within Greater London. The report separates traffic and parking demand for the 3 hour and 1 hour activities in order to capture the total level of traffic generation and parking demand for each of the two courses. For robustness the report assumes that each car will be parked on-site for the duration of the course and will therefore require a parking space. The report therefore links the expected level of traffic generation with parking demand.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>The survey data for relating to the 3 hour experience suggests that approximately 20% of visitors (2 cars for every 10 customers) travel to the site using private vehicles. Given that the site can cater for 15 participants every 30 minutes, it can be concluded that if operating at full capacity the maximum number of participants for this course is 90. Even taking this worst case scenario into account this element of the business is likely to generate a maximum additional parking demand of 18 spaces based on the above ratio.</p> <p>In relation to the 1 hour experience, we have noted the results based on survey data taken from the most comparable site in Trent Park, London. Although the data suggests that this element of the business would generate a parking demand 12.8 cars, it is accepted a many of the vehicles travelling to the site would have multiple occupants as suggested in the supporting transport statement. Further survey data suggests that 56% of individuals attending the 1 hour course had planned to the visit the area regardless of their booking. If applying this percentage it is concluded that this element of the business is likely to generate 6 car visits.</p> <p>There will be a full-time equivalent of 21 (FTE) members of staff. However, a maximum of just 12 members of staff are likely to be present on any given day. Using a first principle method based on ONS Census data for the borough the proportion of individuals arriving to work by car is likely to be in the region of 13%. Applying this percentage to the maximum number of staff present, it is considered that this element of the business is likely to</p>	

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>generate a demand for 1.56 or 2 parking spaces.</p> <p>The Traffic and Parking statement highlights the fact that Alexandra Palace Park benefits from 1200 unrestricted on-site parking spaces. Given that the development would generate a maximum demand of 26 parking spaces during its peak operational hours, which is just 2% of the available spaces. It is therefore considered that the additional parking demand can comfortably be catered for on-site.</p> <p>Given the nature of the activity and the fact that session start times are staggered for each group consisting of up to 15 participants on each course, it is considered that the operation of the business is unlikely to have any significant impact to the surrounding road network during the AM and PM peak hours. The survey results indicate that the proposal would result in a comparatively low hourly increase in traffic generation and it is considered that there is sufficient car park capacity within Alexandra Palace Park to cater for the additional parking demand.</p> <p>We have therefore concluded that the proposed development would not have a significant impact upon the operation of the highway and transportation network in the local area. Therefore, the highway and transportation authority does not wish to object to the proposal.</p>	
Economic Regeneration	Seek a commitment to work with our Haringey Employment and Skills Team on recruitment to the vacancies identified in the application form.	Noted a condition has been attached to ensure jobs a secured for local people.
Nature Conservation	The application form submitted with this proposal (dated	Noted, although it is recommended that

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
<p>Officer</p>	<p>01/10/15) fails to identify under section 13 Biodiversity & Geological Conservation that there is a reasonable likelihood of protected and priority species, and designated sites, important habitats or other biodiversity features being affected adversely or conserved and enhanced within the application site and on land adjacent to or near the application site. This is despite the applicant having commissioned and received a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated 01/06/15 which identifies the site as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The report also states that the site has high potential to support breeding birds and that all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</p> <p>The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal recommends that an outline Ecological Impact Assessment is undertaken and that Phase 2 survey work for invertebrates is conducted, neither of these reports has been submitted with the Planning application. It is my opinion that until these surveys have been conducted and subsequent reports submitted that the application should be refused. To permit the development prior to the submission of these documents would pre-empt their findings.</p> <p>Whilst the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal recommends both mitigation and ecological enhancements the proposals are currently insufficient in scale and detail particularly with regard to the likely impact to habitat for breeding birds, and they cannot of course include any necessary proposals regarding invertebrates as the</p>	<p>further survey work be carried out the impact on invertebrates will not fundamentally impact on the layout or design of the proposal and will only influence the mitigation works. It is therefore considered acceptable to condition that this work be carried out and the mitigation works take the findings into account.</p>

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>recommended survey work does not appear to have taken place.</p> <p>However, should the proposal be approved a full and detailed mitigation strategy needs to be produced in agreement with the Council's Nature Conservation Officer as a Planning Condition. This needs to include signed agreements with the Manager of Alexandra Park detailing long term management commitment and responsibilities for both the duration of the course construction and its period of operation. This will ensure compliance with Haringey Council's Strategic Policy SP13 Open Space and Biodiversity.</p> <p>Preliminary discussions highlighted the need to provide an educational resource such as interpretation panels and a schools pack highlighting the value of the trees as a habitat in line with LNR principals and SINC criteria and should be incorporated into the proposals.</p>	
EXTERNAL		
Historic England	<p>On the basis of the information provided, we do not consider that it is necessary for this application to be notified to Historic England under the relevant statutory provisions, details of which are enclosed.</p>	Noted.
Natural England	<p>Statutory nature conservation sites – no objection Based upon the information provided, Natural England advises the Council that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.</p> <p>Protected species We have not assessed this application and associated documents for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published Standing Advice on</p>	Noted.

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>protected species.</p> <p>You should apply our Standing Advice to this application as it is a material consideration in the determination of applications in the same way as any individual response received from Natural England following consultation. The Standing Advice should not be treated as giving any indication or providing any assurance in respect of European Protected Species (EPS) that the proposed development is unlikely to affect the EPS present on the site; nor should it be interpreted as meaning that Natural England has reached any views as to whether a licence is needed (which is the developer's responsibility) or may be granted.</p> <p>Priority Habitat as identified on Section 41 list of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006</p> <p>The consultation documents indicate that this development includes an area of priority habitat, as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.'</p> <p>Local sites</p>	

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>If the proposal site is on or adjacent to a local site, e.g. Local Wildlife Site, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site (RIGS) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) the authority should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact of the proposal on the local site before it determines the application.</p> <p>Sites of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires local planning authorities to consult Natural England on “Development in or likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest” (Schedule 4, w). Our SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS dataset designed to be used during the planning application validation process to help local planning authorities decide when to consult Natural England on developments likely to affect a SSSI. The dataset and user guidance can be accessed from the data.gov.uk website</p>	
<p>London Wildlife Trust</p>	<p>We want to alert you to the habitat impacts of the proposal for a new High Ropes Course. We would object to any works that are likely to damage the interest and/or reduce the functionality of any wildlife habitat, given the site is a statutory Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation.</p> <p>We believe, from the submitted documentation, there will be significant adverse impacts on the habitat functionality for the area subject to the proposal. Operation of the high ropes course, planned principally from spring to autumn, will lead to disturbance particularly to during the</p>	<p>Noted, the Council’s Nature Conservation Officer does not raise concerns around the impact on birds. Ecological enhancements are proposed although none specifically relate to birds this can be part of a condition requiring mitigation and enhancement.</p>

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>nesting season. It is likely that this part of the site will no longer support nesting birds, representing a significant impact on the LNR and SINC.</p> <p>We recognise that Natural England have not objected to the proposal, although this is based on their scope of comments in respect of statutorily designated sites – and doesn't reflect the local nature conservation importance of the Park. We – and the applicant – recognise that habitat and species it supports will be damaged as part of this application. We believe the Council, under Strategic Policy 13 Open Space and Biodiversity (Haringey Local Plan, 2013), has grounds to reject the application.</p> <p>If, however, the Council were minded to grant permission London Wildlife Trust recommends that an area within Alexandra Park be identified to provide woodland enhancements so that any habitat impacted by the development is appropriately mitigated for, as a condition of permission. This should be based on the Park's existing management plan objectives, with reference to the borough's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>In addition site preparation and construction would need to accord to legislation, especially the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), to prevent disturbance to nesting birds and roosting bats. Appropriate surveys would need to undertaken at the appropriate time prior to commencement of works to ensure the site is not in us by such species.</p>	

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>We also recommend that efforts are undertaken by the applicant to ensure that managers of the rope course are required to raise awareness about the importance of the Park's wildlife habitats and Local Nature Reserve functions.</p>	
<p>Alexandra Palace- Chief Executive</p>	<p>Consider the activities offered by Go-Ape are in keeping with the purpose of the charitable assets and range of recreational activities that we have provided in the past and continue to provide.</p> <p>Are confident that the impact of this facility has been design to have minimal impact on the Park's habitat and ecology.</p> <p>Feel that the level of noise impact from the activity is in keeping with the rest of the parkland's activities and its suburban environment.</p> <p>We listened to a range of opinions before making our decision which resulted in the plans being adapted to take into account the opinions of our own experts and wider stakeholders.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Garden History Society</p>	<p>No comments</p>	
<p>NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES</p>		
	<p>Impact on the Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in-keeping with the park • A commercial venture is not appropriate for the park and will change its nature • Increase visitor levels will result in noise and litter 	<p>As set out under heading 6.2 the proposal is in accordance with Development Plan Policy for the site.</p> <p>Policy seeks to increase visitor numbers, litter will be a management issue for the</p>

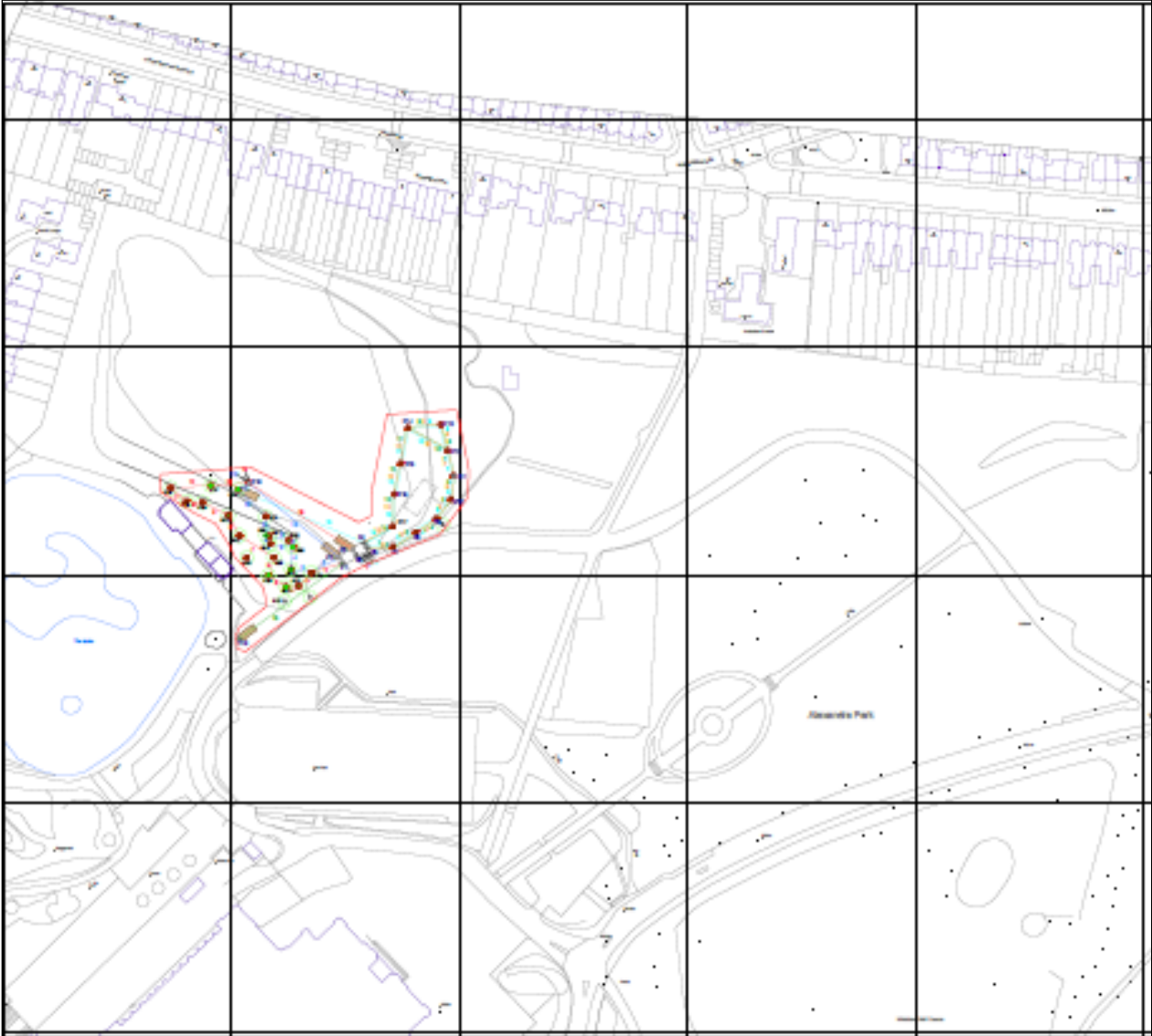
Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park should be protected from building • The proposal will remove a safe and secluded area • The site one of the remaining tranquil areas of the park • Alexandra Park Road is already under pressure • The proposal will impact on others enjoyment of the park <p>Impact on trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The baton system would still cause harm to trees • The proposal involves felling trees which are a health and safety risk which is unacceptable • The trees are not mature enough to make the ropes course <p>Impact on neighbouring properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will provide views into neighbouring properties harming privacy • The site does not have sufficient trees to protect privacy • Noise will impact on neighbouring properties • The 12.5 metre high platforms will enable views into the surrounding gardens and windows <p>Ecology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will disturb the deer and wildlife • The habitat survey cannot guarantee there are no bats in other trees • The proposal will impact on the wildfowl which use 	<p>park to address</p> <p>The proposal does not propose new buildings and is in accordance with policy in relation to Metropolitan Open Land Local Plan Policy seek to increase activity throughout the park while preserving neighbouring amenity and biodiversity of the park this proposal is considered to comply with these policies.</p> <p>Officers are satisfied that the proposal provide adequate protection to the trees on site.</p> <p>The impact on neighbouring properties is addressed under hearing 6.5</p> <p>The impact on ecology is considered under heading 6.8. Subject to suitable mitigation the impact is considered acceptable. Works</p>

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<p>the boating lake including a small Pochard population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to hedgehogs <p>Noise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting evidence for the noise assessment is not submitted <p>Other concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in traffic will impact on road safety • The proposal can only be used by those who can afford to pay • Little or no income will go to the community • Will the owners ensure that people are unable to access the structure once closed? • Neighbours were not notified • This proposal was not included in public consultation on future uses of the park • Lack of waste storage • There are no toilets or rest facilities <p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will enhance the appeal of the park • The investment is overdue and welcome • The current amenities are outdated • Go Ape are a considerate and responsible company who will add to the local area 	<p>will be carried out in accordance with other legislation in relation to protected species.</p> <p>The noise report have been considered by the Council's Environmental Health Officer and considered acceptable.</p> <p>The impact on traffic and parking is set out under heading 6.7</p> <p>This is not a material planning consideration This is not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>The proposal includes measures to ensure it cannot be used outside of operating hours Notification was carried out in accordance with the Council's SOCI, site notices and press adverts were posted.</p> <p>This is not a material planning consideration This is a management issue for the park to address. Facilities are available in the Palace.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

Stakeholder	Question/Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will generate more visitors to the park and revenue to the neighbourhood • Would love to see Go Ape in Alexandra Palace • The site is well supported by transport links • Go Ape is a brilliant idea and does not obstruct public access to the area underneath 	
Alexandra Palace & Park CAAC	<p>Do not object and do not welcome it. Concern that there is a risk of an adverse impact on the conservation area A temporary consent should be given and reviewed after 1 year</p>	Noted

Appendix 2 Plans and Images

Location Plan



Existing site – Looking south west along the path towards the Palace



Existing site – Looking south west towards the Palace



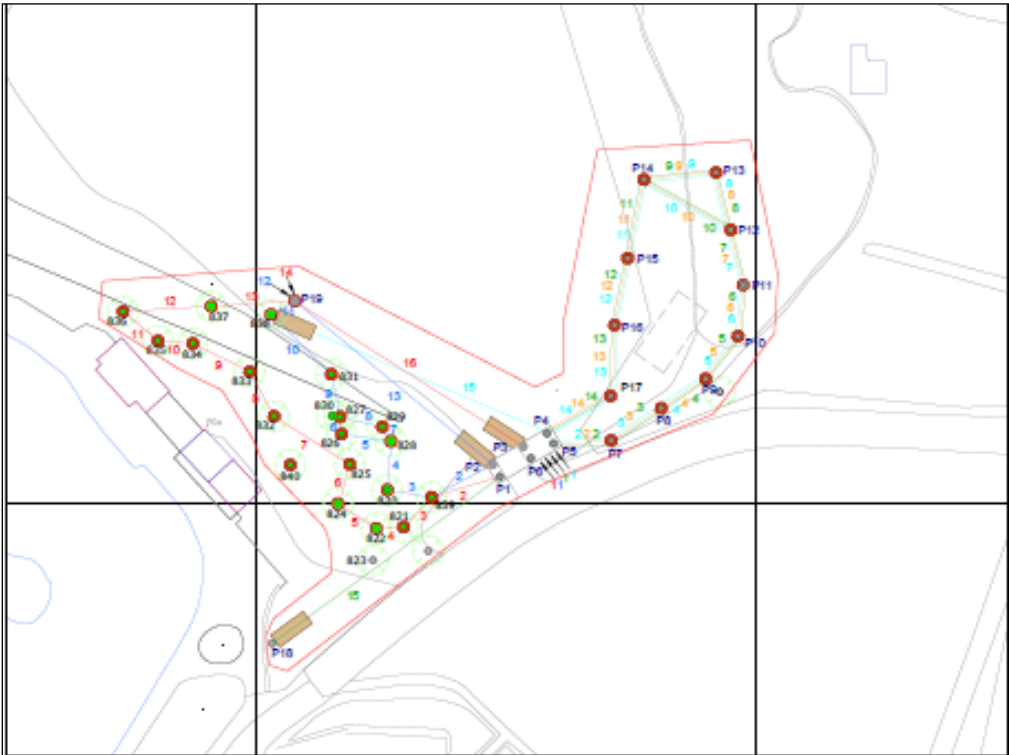
Existing site – Looking north west away from the Palace



Existing building



Proposed Site Layout



Example of 'sacrificial battens'



Example of tree top platform



Example of crossings



Example of zip wire



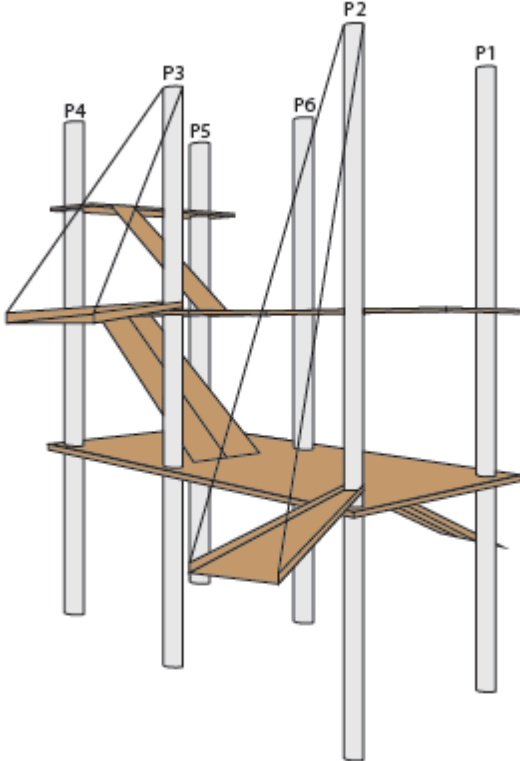
Example of landing site



Example of 'Go Ape' course



Proposed access tower



Typical elevated platform layout

