

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		06/01/2008	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		13/02/2008	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Angela Ryan				2007/6209/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
St pancras Gymnasium 26 Pancras Road London NW1 2TB				014-DCG-1D000-01174-AA			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s) Variation to condition 2 to allow extension of temporary time period until 31st December 2009 pursuant to planning permission dated 29th November 2004 (ref. 2004/4489/P) (for the change of use to D1 use including alterations to provide a temporary exhibition area, event space and franchise coffee outlet).							
Recommendation(s):		Temporary permission be granted					
Application Type:		Variation of condition					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	1	No. of responses	1	No. of objections	00
Summary of consultation responses:		<u>English Heritage:</u> Delegated the determination of the application to Camden Council (see letter dated 31/01/08)					

Site Description

The site is located at the southern end of the King's Cross Opportunity Area, between St Pancras and King's Cross Stations, both of which are Grade I listed buildings. The building is bounded by Pancras Road to the south and east and the new extension to St Pancras Station to the West. To the north lies the Southern Stanley building, which is Grade II listed.

The building itself is Grade II listed, built in 1864-65 as one of the earliest examples of a purpose-built gymnasium. The National Olympian Association held its first games at the German Gym in 1866 and the building is important in the evolution of the Olympic movement. The gym was designed by the architect E A Grüning, in a Prussian vernacular style.

Relevant History

The recent planning history of the building has involved a number of permissions for different uses, many of which have been temporary. These include:

- The use of part of the first floor for housing association offices, the basement for storage and ground floor for a telephone exchange (1985);
- Continued use of the first floor as housing association offices (1985);
- Continued use of the first and second floors of the building as an arts centre, including for exhibitions, performances and functions (1995);
- Permission for continued use as an arts centre renewed (1997);
- Continued use of the upper part of the hall as a film location studio and associated offices (2000).
- Part of the building was demolished to make way for the CTRL works. The western end wall has subsequently been re-built.

Listed building consent was refused in 1995 for the erection of external fire escapes and the installation of internal partitions. This was prior to the CTRL Act being passed in 1996.

On 29 November 2004 planning permission was granted for change of use, including alterations to provide a temporary exhibition area, event space and franchise coffee outlet, involving the partial removal of internal walls and floor, external alterations and the following temporary works: erection of two external fire escapes; installation of louvre vents; and internal secondary glazing on windows on the north and east elevations (Ref:2004/4489/P)

Relevant policies

SKC1 Sustainable development
SKC3 Development Phasing
KC1 Mixed use development
KC7 Parking
KC11 Heritage
SD1 Quality of life
SD7B Noise and vibration
SD6 Amenity for occupiers and neighbours
B3A Alterations and extensions
B7A Character and appearance of conservation areas
B6 of listed buildings
T1A sustainable transport
T3 Pedestrians and cycling
E2 Retention of existing business uses
C2 Protecting community uses
Appendix 6- Cycling Standards, Parking Standards, and Servicing Standards

Assessment

Proposal

The application variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission ref 2004/4489/P. Condition 2 allowed for temporary works for a specified period until 31st December 2007. These works included external fire escape stairs to the east and north elevations, fire escape doors, fans in the clerestory windows, ventilation louvres. The original fabric is to subsequently be reinstated.

The works were to facilitate the change of use of the building from its then current (B8) storage use to (D1) use as a temporary exhibition space/event space in the build up to the opening of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in 2007.

With the final use of the building undecided, the applicants have not sought permanent solutions to all the issues to be addressed in the re-use of the building. Therefore, some of the proposed works applied for would be temporary, while others would be more permanent.

The proposed works fell into four main categories:

1. Permanent high quality refurbishment works;
2. High quality new works which may be permanent in the long term;
3. Works to retain the existing interior in its present state but sealed in varnish/painted etc. to “create an atmospheric setting for the CTRL exhibition”;
4. “Pragmatic” proposals for which temporary consent are sought. These include:
 - i. Temporary escape stairs on the north and east elevations;
 - ii. Louvres on the windows in the north elevation; and
 - iii. Secondary glazing to the internal face of windows providing fire protection to 1.8m distance from the fire escape stairs. This would include four windows on the north elevation and one window on the east elevation;
 - iv. Essential repairs to the external envelope on the north and east facades where the long term refurbishment is not yet proposed.

These temporary interventions were proposed where long term interventions in the existing fabric could only be justified on the basis of a long-term plan. In these instances, the alterations proposed by the applicant sought minimum intervention in the listed fabric and full reversibility.

The proposals were subject to pre-application discussions with English Heritage.

Assessment

The external alterations would normally be considered unacceptable. However, with the permanent use of the building undecided, the proposal facilitates a publicly accessible interim use to a historic building. By locating the fire escapes externally, the listed interior would be protected from any permanent alterations until the post-CTRL use has been determined.

The building is Grade II listed and its historic significance is reflected by the intention to host a visit by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in February as part of the London Bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. Therefore, the proposal would enable this to happen without irreversible alterations to the interior of this unique building.

Therefore, while the external alterations are undesirable, they would be temporary and have significant advantages including:

- Facilitating the immediate re-use of the building;
- Public access to a Grade II listed building;
- Promotion of the London Bid for the 2012 Olympics.

Design

In design terms the proposals were broadly acceptable. The interior proposals would improve the appearance of the interior and reinstate a degree of the historic character, which was compromised by later works. The temporary use was particularly welcomed, as the building has been vacant for several years. Although the external facilitating works would detract from the external appearance, this was considered acceptable for four reasons:

- They would be temporary – to be secured by condition.
- These works are to the less prominent north and east elevations, which are currently part of the CTRL (Channel Tunnel Rail Link) construction site. Both elevations are screened off by high CTRL hoardings;
- The temporary works are reversible; and
- The works are to facilitate a temporary re-use for a vacant listed building, which include works to make the building weather tight. These facilitate the use of the building for events such as the IOC visit in February and the CTRL opening in 2007, helping to raise the profile of the building and stimulate the regeneration of the wider area.

Should the Argent St George 'King's Cross Central' development commence and should Pancras Road be realigned to its original layout to the west of the gym, the east elevation will assume a greater prominence than it currently has, as it will face the new development. The north elevation will also be more prominent. It is for this reason, as well as the building being listed, that a temporary consent is recommended for the external facilitating works.

The gymnasium has suffered from later insertions that are out of character with the historic interior. These include ground floor brick walls and partitions, a substantial brick wall under the iron girder on the ground floor, partial infilling of the first floor and the embedding of cast iron columns in brick walls. The roof has been overlaid with a silver reflective coated waterproof membrane. The clerestory windows have been covered with chipboard. Many of the original metal-framed arched windows were replaced with larger rectangular timber framed windows. Although the current application does not correct all these disfiguring alterations, it is anticipated that a forthcoming application for permanent works will do this.

of one cycle parking space per 700 sq m. of D1 use. A condition should be imposed to require the provision of one cycle parking space within the curtilage of the site.

No servicing space has been provided within the curtilage of the site. The proposed use is not considered likely to require special servicing arrangements and as such a servicing plan is not required.

The extension of the temporary period is sought to allow the Gym to continue in its interim role, pending development of a detailed refurbishment scheme.

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