

# Sports Centre Studies

# Ideas for sport in the park

Crystal Palace Park has a great sporting history and there is widespread support for continued sport in the park. However, the National Sports Centre (NSC) cannot continue to function without major works in the next 5–8 years.

The following boards show a series of studies for the major sports buildings and sports activities within the Crystal Palace Park. The study area is within the red line shown on the Park plan below, but also includes the central car-parking space just west of this area.

The first four studies shown, A–D, all retain the existing National Sports Centre building, with considerable refurbishment and improvements to its facilities. The upgrades would improve comfort, cut energy costs and – through the provision of lifts and ramps – make the facilities accessible to all users. However, re-engineering the current building will mean losing sports facilities for 18–24 months while works are carried out, and it will miss the opportunity to move the facilities closer to transport links.

Studies E and F involve creating a new sports building nearer Crystal Palace rail station. These studies would provide a modern, efficient building, using less space than the current centre, with improved access and security. Sports provision would carry on uninterrupted, although there would still be some disruption while the new centre was being built. Studies E and F would mean finding another use of the current Listed building or leave it facing full or partial demolition.

Funding is a vital issue in taking forward any of these ideas. It will be addressed later in the exhibition.



## Key:

- 1 Metropolitan Open Land MDS boundary
- 2 National Sports Centre building
- 3 Concourse
- 4 Sports buildings
- 5 Jubilee Stand
- 6 West Stand & terraces
- 7 Hostel
- 8 Residential
- 9 Other buildings
- 10 Central car parking zone

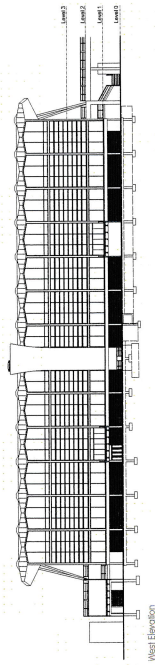


# The National Sports Centre

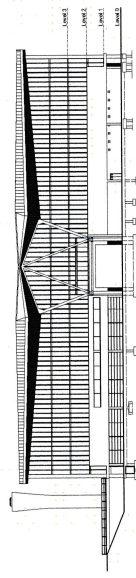
The NSC has served as a sports centre for 40 years and was awarded Grade II\* Listed status in 1997. The DCMS Listing incorporates the following description:

"... views across [the] concourse and seating, and down into squash areas, are particularly impressive. [The] fluidity is enhanced by the bold expression of the 'A'-frame and delicate arched bracing supporting the roof which is a most distinctive and distinguished feature."

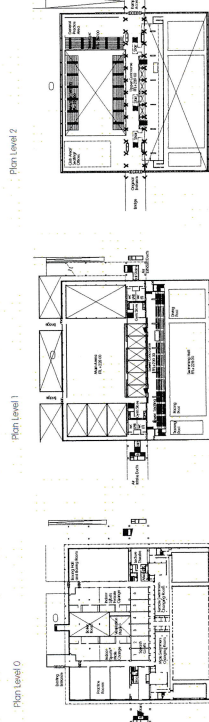
A refurbished centre would mostly retain the unique structure, but serious functional and cost issues would remain unresolved.



West Elevation



South Elevation



Plan Level 0

Plan Level 1

Plan Level 2

Plan Level 3

Roof Plan

## Problems with the existing building

- It is isolated within the middle of the Park creating safety and security issues especially in the evenings when many people want to use it
- Current centre creates a physical barrier in the middle of the park
- Most car parking is away from the sports facilities
- Poor pedestrian access to and within the building, particularly for people with disabilities e.g. swimming changing rooms not at pool level
- Lack of dividing screen between wet and dry sports leading to poor conditions in each and under-use of squash courts
- Extensive clear glazing causes glare throughout sports centre
- Major mechanical and electrical systems need replacing
- Running costs are unsustainable at present

## The internal environment

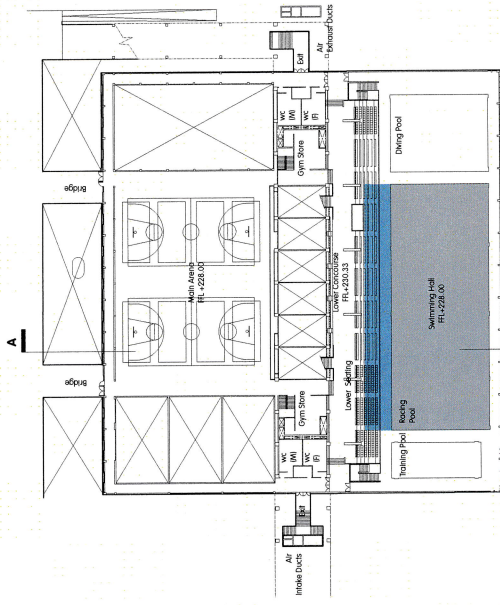
The main sports building was designed as one large space with 'dry' sports facilities on one side of the building and 'wet' (pool) facilities on the other, separated by a central gallery that leads to spectator seating.

There is no adequate temperature or noise separation between these areas, leading to high air temperatures and humidity in the gymnasium. An environmental dividing screen could be created by inserting glass screens within the A-frame structure. However this is costly and the centre would need to be closed during the installation.

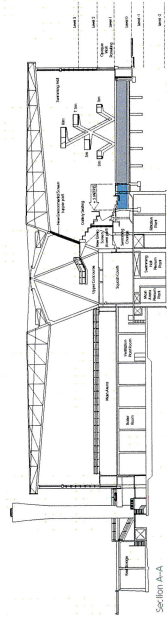
## The pool

The existing 20m wide racing pool is too narrow for accredited competition.

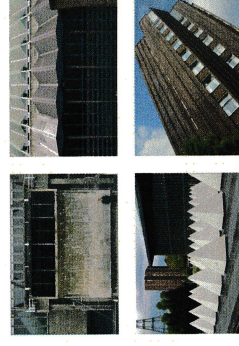
The dark blue areas show that there are significant structural issues involved with extending the pool in width



Designed and built by the London County Council 1967 - 64  
 Hubert Burnett FRIBA in succession to  
 Professor Sir Leslie Martin, WA PhD FRIBA  
 Structural Engineering Consultant Dave Arup & Partners  
 Grade II\* listing  
 500s



Section A-A



## Your Comments:

What do you think about the NSC building and its sports facilities?

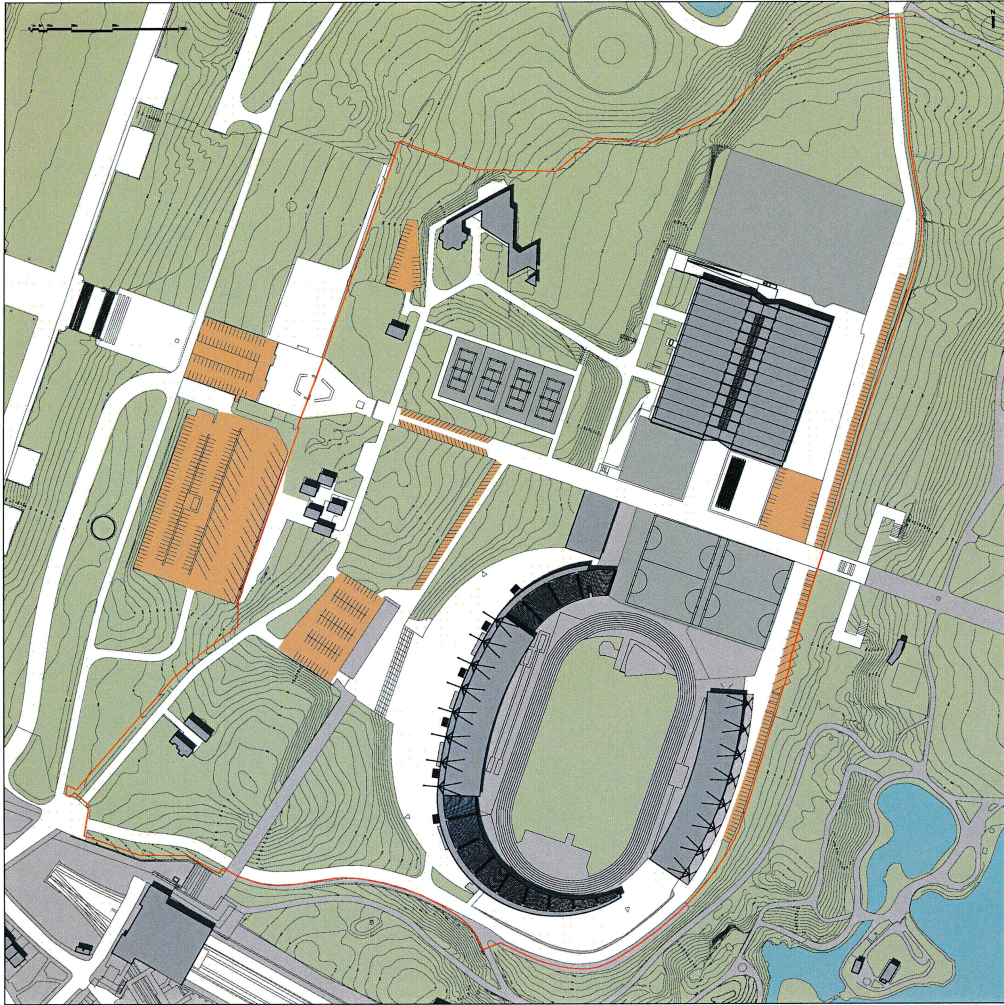
Are there things that stop you using it?

If you currently use the NSC, would you be able to find alternative facilities if it were to be closed for refurbishment?

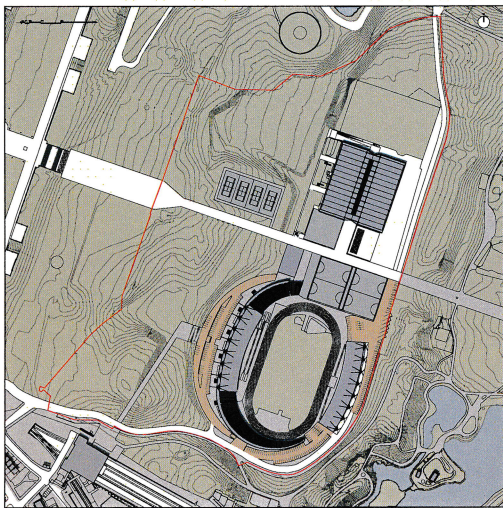
# The sports centre site

The car parking around the NSC covers a large area, yet is fragmented into different parking zones and serves the buildings poorly. The low bridge and turnstiles from the railway station cause problems for emergency vehicles and force service vehicles through the middle of the Park.

The immediate area around the NSC building is cluttered by a collection of smaller buildings, detracting from the Listed building itself, reducing visibility and access across the Park and increasing security concerns.



Existing Layout



Suggested Improvements

All the studies you will see in this exhibition enhance the park by consolidating and moving the car parking nearer to the main sports facilities, together with rationalising the infrastructure and access roads that serve the buildings.

# Sports facilities mix

## Sports facilities

Following discussions with Sport England and user groups, it is suggested that a new centre may contain:

- Swimming pool – ideally international competition size
- Learning pool
- Spectator seating for the pool
- Sports Hall – to allow 8 x badminton courts or the equivalent
- 4-lane 70m indoor sprint track with run-off space
- Combat hall
- Boxing hall
- Weight lifting room
- 2 dance studios
- Health and fitness suite
- 4 five-a-side football pitches (outside)
- Outdoor track

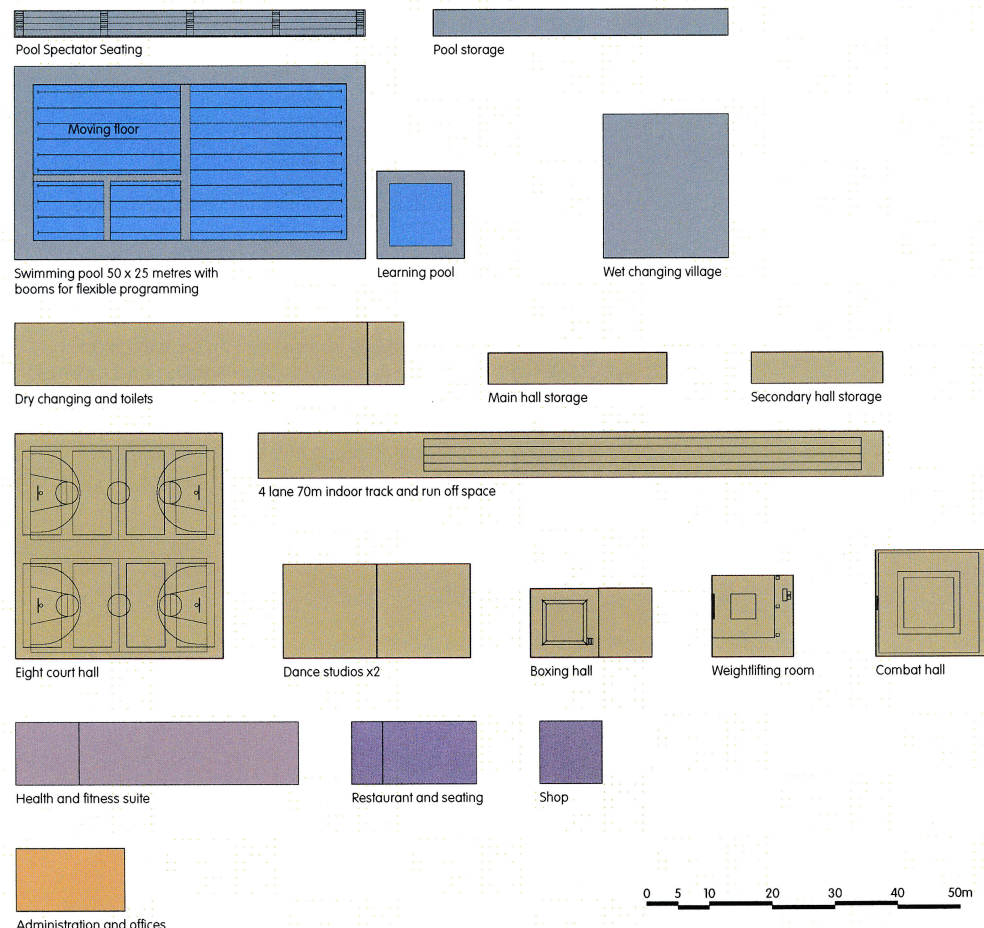
It is assumed that diving is relocated to the Lower Lea Valley.

Our aspiration is that the sports facilities will be for the community but that they will also benefit elite and aspiring athletes.

## Additional facilities

In addition to the above, the following range of facilities could also be considered to provide a balance to the recreational and community mix and generate more income for the development:

- Soft play zone
- Children's gym
- Crèche
- Hairdressers
- Beauty Salon
- Doctor/Dentist surgery
- Sports science/visitor attraction/science museum
- Extreme sports (skateboarding/biking/rock climbing etc.)
- Bar and multi-purpose function rooms
- Restaurant
- Sports education
- Sports injury clinic



Area diagrams

## Your Comments:

We want to know whether you think this mix of facilities is right?

What are your priorities?

What other sports should be catered for?