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■ The hotel would sit behind the west facade

Three star hotel 'would be best option for Pally'

But more upmarket venture not being ruled out of plans yet

by Flora Drury

flora.drury@archant.co.uk

Building a luxurious five star hotel at Alexandra Palace could be a "risky investment", hospitality experts have said.

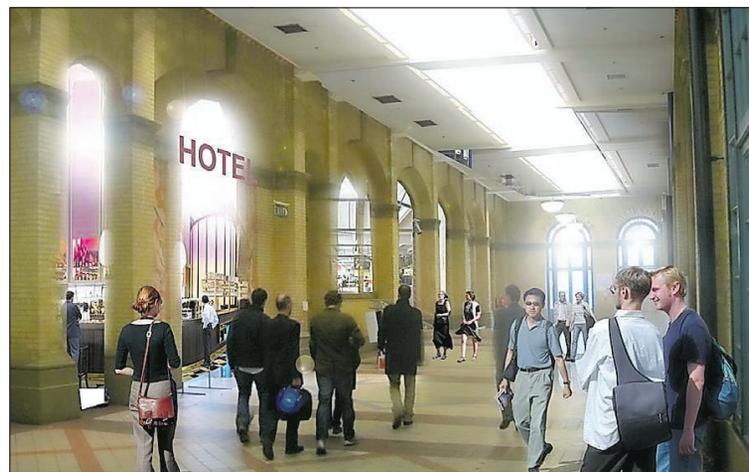
A feasibility study carried out by TRI Hospitality Consulting has recommended an 195-room three star "plus" hotel would be the most financially viable option for the iconic venue – but building something at the higher end of the scale is not being ruled out yet.

The chief executive's report, presented at a meeting on Monday, noted: "This by no means excludes the possibility of a more upmarket development, but indicates that this would be a more risky investment."

The proposed hotel – which would be built in the Panorama Room space, with a potential lobby off the Palm Court and guest rooms with views across London – forms part of the overall masterplan for the Palace's regeneration and redevelopment.

It would sit behind the existing Victorian façade and make use of the derelict West Tower.

Palace bosses believe the increasing



■ The proposed hotel and corridor

number of events at the venue will lead to increased demand for accommodation.

Alexandra Palace has already been approached by a number of hotel operators, mostly at three star or three star "plus" level, interested in the site.

But now, in the wake of the Herit-

age Lottery Fund awarding the Palace £844,800 to help develop the regeneration plans further, estate agents Knight Frank will begin contacting a target list of 40 companies which may be interested in the venue.

These include hotel investor developers visitor attractions and event organisers, among others.

Friends' delight as 'impossible dream' comes closer

Alexandra Palace's 'Friends' have expressed delight at "an impossible dream" moving a step closer to becoming a reality.

The Friends of the Alexandra Palace Theatre are jumping for joy after the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced it was granting the Palace £844,800 to help it develop its regeneration plans.

It means the Palace is one step closer to getting the full £16.8million it needs

from HLF to – among other things – bring the theatre back into use.

Nigel Willmott, the chairman of the Friends of the Theatre, said: "The Friends have been working and campaigning for the refurbishment and reuse of the Victorian theatre for the past 11 years, since the formation of the group.

"For most of that time it seemed an impossible dream. Suddenly it is on the way to becoming a reality.

"It is a stunning result for chief executive Duncan Wilson and his team at the Palace, the board of trustees, and for Haringey council, which has fully supported a new strategy of redevelopment of the Palace led by the Trust, rather than a developer."

Mr Wilson will attend the group's AGM at Alexandra Palace on Wednesday, May 29, to report on the next phase of the project and how the Friends can help.

Mark park's 'eclectic' past at big festival

Bird's eye view on balloon rides

by Flora Drury

flora.drury@archant.co.uk

Take part in pedalo races, enjoy a "long lunch" or float in the skies above one of London's most iconic buildings as Alexandra Park celebrates 150 years of the extraordinary this summer.

More details have been revealed about what people can expect from what looks set to be the biggest and most impressive birthday party held in Haringey this year.

The park is marking the impressive milestone in style between 11am and 4pm on Sunday, July 21, with a festival showcasing the park and palace's eclectic past, diverse present and exciting future.

Themed "zones"

But because of its size – the park stretches for 196 acres – organisers have decided to divide it into a number of themed "zones" for the day.

The "village green", set around the Grove Cafe, near Dukes Avenue, will have community and local performers entertaining people from the bandstand, with stalls, free workshops and a host of activities.

Meanwhile, over on the pitch and putt course, a golf foundation workshop will offer free balls to

those willing to have a go.

The old racecourse will be transformed into a sports zone, complete with community games, as well as basketball, archery, mini rugby, football and cricket – all of which will be free to try out.

The South Terrace will host the Long Lunch – a chance to sit down with other visitors on the day and enjoy a bit of food – and a mini stage, with local performances. There will also be a chance to get a second look at the homemade vehicles which took part in the Red Bull Soapbox race the previous weekend.

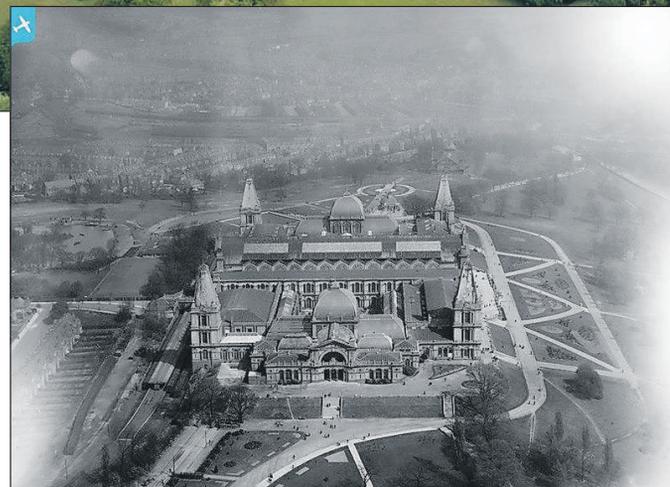
And if that isn't enough, there will also be a farmers market, a trackless train, pedalo races, roaming performers and – excitingly – a tethered balloon which will take visitors up into the sky for a birds eye look at one of the best views in London.



■ Alexandra Palace today, above, and in 1921, right

Alexandra Palace and Park chief executive Duncan Wilson said: "We are very much looking forward to welcoming everyone to Alexandra Park to help us celebrate our park's historic anniversary."

"The day's activities have been carefully planned so we can ensure that there is something for all. We wanted the day to celebrate the park's eclectic history as well as being a showcase for local talent from across the borough."



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