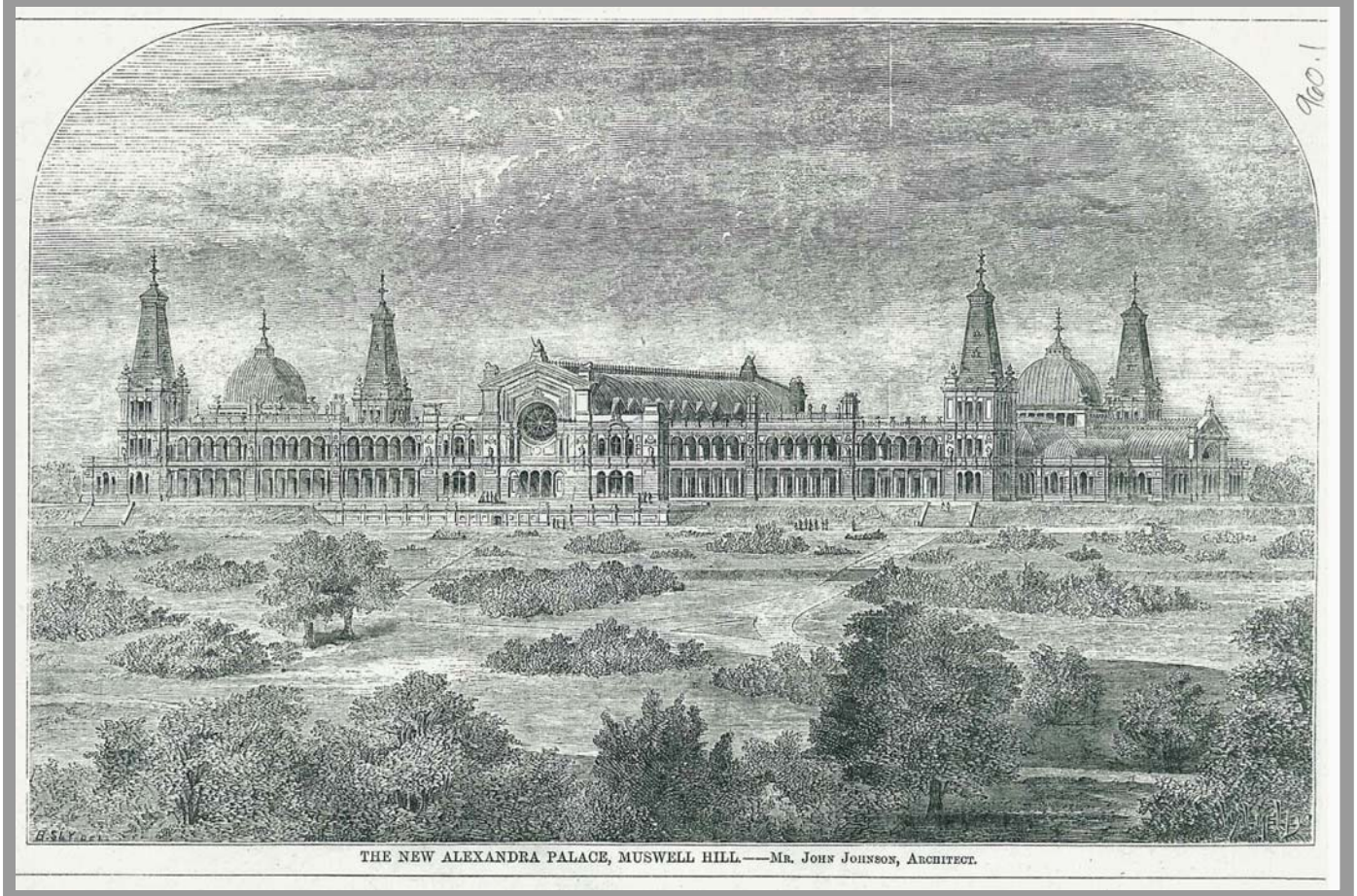
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THE NEW ALEXANDRA PALACE, MUSWELL HILL.—Mr. John Johnson, Architect.

ALEXANDRA PALACE
Conservation Management Plan
February 2012

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i. INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND TO THE DOCUMENT

This Conservation Plan was prepared by Donald Insall Associates for the Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust.

The survey was undertaken during December 2011 – February 2012 by Francis Maude and Heather Pavitt, and the research by Carrie Maude and Katrina Royall, all of Donald Insall Associates.

The intention of this document is to inform the Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust by providing:

- an analysis of the history and construction of the building.
- an assessment of the significance of the building and of its various component elements.
- a conservation briefing for the future usage of the building.

ii. CONSERVATION PLAN METHODOLOGY – HOW THE DOCUMENT WORKS

The Conservation Plan seeks to both guide and advise proposals for the future usage of the building, and is divided into nine parts:

1. The Buildings

This section gives a basic introduction to Alexandra Palace, including chronology of development and use.

2. Assessment of Significance

This section addresses the aspects of Alexandra Palace which contribute to its significance, and the hierarchy of the significance of its different parts and areas. A key part of this analysis is the Gazetteer, which is included in Section 6.

3. Vulnerability

This section addresses the various issues which make the building and particularly its most significant elements vulnerable, highlighting global issues such as the changing requirements for entertainment and function spaces, the service requirements of modern places of public assembly and kitchens and the need to maintain the use of the buildings in the light of particular matters such as fire safety, access requirements, and changing climate conditions.

4. Conservation Policies

This section sets out a series of policies which are aimed at informing the process of change and at guiding future building management decisions.

5. Implementation *(not included in the Draft Document)*

This section is prepared following consultation with the stakeholders about the provisions of the draft document, and details how the conservation policies are to be implemented.

6. Gazetteer

This section provides a description of the building part by part, room by room, giving an assessment of the construction, finishes, date of execution and significance in relation to the whole building.

7. Bibliography

This section gives a list of the key secondary sources consulted in the preparation of the Conservation Plan.

8. The Plate List and Plates

This section contain illustrations key to an understanding of the site and buildings.

9. The Drawing List and Drawings

This section contains current plans of the building, colour coded to show the date of construction and subsequent alteration.

iii. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to the staff at the Bruce Castle Museum, for providing such ready access to their collections of archive material; to John Hutchinson and Richard Loren for sharing their knowledge of the 1980s post-fire restoration and subsequent works of repair; to John Thompson of the Alexandra Palace Television Society, who provided us with a copy of his earlier review of the BBC occupied areas; and to Mark Hopson and Helen Cole at Alexandra Palace, for facilitating access throughout the building.

1.0 THE BUILDINGS

1.1 Introduction and Outline History of Alexandra Palace

The first Alexandra Palace was built as a "People's Palace", re-using the building from the 1862 Great International Exhibition in South Kensington, designed by Alfred Meeson with John Johnson. It took some time to fit out, due to financial difficulties, and was completed in 1873. Two weeks after opening, it burnt down.

Despite inadequate insurance, the Palace was rebuilt (the second Alexandra Palace) within two years. Apart from the main north and south entrance porticos, and their associated basements, none of the fabric of the first Palace was re-used. Opening in 1875, it contained a central Great Hall with a Willis organ, able to hold 12,000 persons, a Theatre and Concert Hall (3,000 persons each), exhibition galleries, a covered "Bazaar" for the sale of merchandise, extensive banqueting, dining and light refreshment facilities, and many further attractions in the Park.

Recurrent financial difficulties led to periods of closure. During WWI the building was used first for the housing of Belgian refugees and later for the internment of German prisoners of war. The concert hall was turned into a roller skating rink, while the Theatre was kept going by concurrent use as a cinema, and was remodelled in the early 1920s. Eventually, the BBC leased the eastern part of the Palace for their TV studios, and built the transmitter mast. While the TV uses moved to White City in stages after WWII, the Open University remained on site until 1981, leaving after the 1980 fire which destroyed the Great Hall and the western part of the Palace apart from the Palm Court.

The Palace was restored 1980-88 by the Alexandra Palace Development team led by Dr Peter Smith, and is now used for large live music and sports events, as well as containing an Ice Rink. Parts of the Palace, including the Theatre and former BBC studios, remain unused and in near-derelict condition.

The Palace is listed Grade II due to: the historic interest as a rare survival of a large-scale Victorian exhibition and entertainment complex, and for the surviving BBC studios where the world's first high definition television programme was transmitted in 1936; also the complete set of Victorian stage machinery in the Theatre. Architectural interest is associated with the surviving Victorian fabric and internal spaces.

1.2 The Basis of the Research

Desk top research has been undertaken by Donald Insall Associates in December 2011 and January 2012 using secondary sources. A limited amount of primary research has been undertaken thus far using material held by:

- The Bruce Castle Museum
- The London Metropolitan Archive
- The Victoria and Albert Museum
- The Illustrated London News Picture Library
- The British Library
- The National Art Library

1.3 A Building Chronology Drawn from Key Secondary Sources

Chronology Abbreviations

APTS Notes prepared by the Alexandra Palace Television Society, unpublished, 2011?

LB Laurie Brettingham "Beam Benders" 1997.

Bldg "Building" – periodical.

BS "Building Services" – periodical.

CL Country Life – periodical.

CN "Construction News" – periodical.

JE John Earl "Alexandra Palace Theatre Conservation Statement", 2009.

JH Janet Harris "Alexandra Palace: A Hidden History", 2005.

KG Ken Gay "Palace on the Hill: A History of Alexandra Palace and Park", Hornsey Historical Society, 1992.

PS Peter Smith "Alexandra Park and Palace", (ND) held by Bruce Castle Museum.

RC Ron Carrington "Alexandra Park & Palace: A History", 1975.

SB Stevan Brown "The People's Palace: Alexandra Palace & Its Changing Role In Society", AA Quarterly, April 1970.

WT "The Wireless Trader" – periodical.

1858
Publication of prospectus for a "People's Palace" of the northern heights. [JE]

1859
Design for palace by Owen Jones announced. [JE]

1860
Muswell Hill Land Co created. [JE]

1863
Alexandra Park opened to the public.

Contract signed for erection of a building using material salvaged from the 1862 South Kensington Exhibition. [JE]

1865
Liquidation of company and formation of Muswell Hill Estate Co and Alexandra Palace Co Ltd. Work well under way but financial difficulties caused continual delays. [JE]

1873
Johnson's plan for the re-built palace included the large hall which had been originally envisaged by Owen Jones. It was 386 feet long and 184 feet wide and designed to seat 12,000 people with 2,000 more in the orchestra stalls below the organ.

The Willis organ was a great feature of the palace, built by Henry Willis who had established organ works in Camden… the new organ was the principal organ in the country in size, design and equipment. It was driven by two steam organs with vast bellows in the basement… [ICG]

1873
The task of re-building was given to the same people who had planned and executed the original. Designs were drawn up by J Johnson, architect, for Mr Meeson who designed the first building. The contractors were Lucas Brothers, who had erected the first building with Mr John Kelk…

Work started on 10 October; at certain periods more than 2,500 men were employed and throughout the first six months of 1874 the number of men in constant employment never dropped below 800, though most of the work was manned there were six steam engines on site. [SB]

1873
Palace designed by Alfred Meeson and John Johnson completed and opened 24 May. Destroyed by fire 16 days later. New design commissioned from John Johnson. [JE]

9 June 1873
The first palace was reduced to a smouldering ruin. The fire began about half an hour after the palace opened and started on the roof, but never seems to have been satisfactorily explained. Three palace workers died, but no visitors. The fire was seen as a catastrophe and widely reported and illustrated. Concern was expressed about fire prevention and the inadequacy of the water supply on the day of the fire. These factors were taken into account when a new palace was designed. The company director had agreed to re-build as soon as possible. [KG]

Summer 1873
The (new) palace was designed by John Johnson, who had worked with [architect and civil engineer] Alfred Meeson on the first palace. Kelk and Lucas tendered £232,000 to re-build which went ahead

despite inadequate insurance. Using the same site and some of the original materials (it has been said that some of the features from the 1862 South Kensington exhibition building can be seen in the re-built palace), John Johnson built a larger, re-designed building over seven acres in extent. Its final cost was £417,128. [KG]

1874

"THE NEW ALEXANDRA PALACE.
The first building erected at Muswell-hill was burnt down on the 9th of June, 1873, and the second is now finished, as regards the material work, the first brick having been laid on the 10th of October, 1873. The last touches are now being given by the decorators.

The new building stands on the same spot as the old one did, and is of the same length and breadth, but the enclosed area is much larger, it covering 7½ acres, for while the first may be described as a long and comparatively narrow nave intersected by three transepts projecting considerably at both façades, the second building is a complete parallelogram; the amount of additional space thus obtained is very large.

As in the old building, the great hall forms the central transept, but in place of a dome it has a semicircular and very loft roof supported on four rows of columns, and thus a grand hall is obtained 386 ft. long by 184 ft. wide, with parallel sides, in which is a series of doors, and when necessary it can be shut off entirely from the rest of the building.

The central span of the roof is 85 ft., and light is obtained by two broad belts of white glass with ruby borders running the whole length of the roof, and by a series of lunettes forming a clearstory filled in with ornamental coloured glass; as also are the circular windows of the gables at each end. The central portion of the roof between the glazed belts and those between the latter and lunettes including the spandrels are decorated with bright Cinque-cento paintings of the Italian school. Right and left of the great hall are two courts, one of which is roofed with glass, and the other open to the air; these inclosed gardens are each 210 ft. long, 140 ft. wide. On each side of these courts are corridors of the same length, those on one side being for picture-galleries, and those on the other to be decorated with sculpture, objects of art, climbing plants, and flowers.

Beyond these courts, and between them and the eastern and western entrances are two large conservatories surmounted by glass domes, one intended for a permanent show of plants, the other for horticultural and floral exhibitions. In order to give the greatest possible freedom of movement to large masses of visitors and also to ensure the ventilation, the partition walls of all the parts we have mentioned are filled in with glazed doors, which fold into recesses, so that when open the entire central portion of the building is free from end to end. At the north end of the great hall is the grand orchestra, seating 1,160 performers, with organ by Willis. A large concert-room is provided at the north-west side of the building which will hold 2,700 persons sitting, and on the north-east side, in a corresponding position, a complete theatre of about the same capacity as the concert-room. Both are provided with all necessary dressing-rooms for artists, and every other accommodation requisite.

The whole building is warmed with hot water, the apparatus being supplied by Mr. Phipson, C.E.

On the right and left of the western entrance are a small theatre for special purposes, and a lecture and reading room, 60 ft. by 40 ft. The above forms the whole of the exhibition building proper, which is provided with tea, coffee, and refreshment bars variously placed, and also buffets and retiring rooms in convenient situations.

On the north side of the building there is no upper floor, the theatre and concert-room occupying the whole space.

The south front is devoted entirely to the hotel department, which occupies the two floors and the basement, and is on an exceptionally large scale. To the west of the great hall are large first-class dining and ante rooms, and on the eastern side a grand coffee-room, luncheon and grille room. On the one pair the western end contains a great banqueting-hall, 200 ft. by 50 ft., and on the corresponding side private dining-rooms of various sizes.

The service and other rooms on both floors, and the kitchens, store-rooms, cellars, and offices on the basement, are almost innumerable and of large dimensions. The whole of the rooms on the ground-floor open into a covered colonnade, and those on the upper floor into arcades as seen on the accompanying view which gives the general effect of the building without the necessity for any description. It may be mentioned, however, that the end of the great hall and the corner towers project 10 ft. beyond the rest of the façade, and the arcades are 10 ft. deep.

The window openings on the terraces are 20 ft. high, and down to the floor-line the lower sashes are hung: the top part opens for ventilation while the centre portions are immovable. On the top of the four towers are water reservoirs containing 16,000 gallons each, and at the angles of the central hall are four other reservoirs of 7,000 gallons each, the whole supplied by steam-pumps from the New River Company's reservoirs.

Completely surrounded by its own park the building is accessible on every side, and the railway being carried beneath the terrace, stairs on each side of the great hall lead from the platform of the station into the Palace. The company's board-room, and the offices of the manager, clerks, and assistants are on the two floors on each side of the eastern entrance. A post and telegraph office will be formed to the left of the south entrance, and a covered carriageway at the eastern entrance.

The material used for the façades of the building are white Huntingdon and dark-coloured yellow bricks, the mouldings and ornaments being of Portland cement. The corner towers are surmounted with decorated Mansard roofs and metal finials, and are 180 ft. high from the ground-floor. The extreme length of the new Palace is 897 ft. 6 in. and is 886 ft. wide. The architect of the building is Mr. John Johnson, of Buckingham-street, Strand; the contractors are Messrs. Kelk & Lucas; and Mr. Clements is clerk of the works. The decorations are being executed by Mr. Schmidt and his assistants.

For those who rejoice in statistics we are able to record that 15,000,000 of bricks have been used, and 3,000 tons of lime. The wrought-iron, 764 tons, was supplied by Messrs. Handyside, of Derby; the cast-iron, 1,354 tons, by the Staveley Works, Staffordshire…" [The Builder]

1875

"… The new building was opened on 1st May 1875 by the Lord Mayor of London, with 21,000 people present. On the Whit Monday following some 94,000 came. Mostly they travelled by rail. Unfortunately a derailment in the Copenhagen tunnel leading into Kings Cross in the evening blocked the line. Many got off the trains at Holloway station, whilst others slept the night through on them. Journeys by train even then were subject to unexpected delays.

Johnson's plan for the rebuilt palace included the large hall which had originally been envisaged by Owen Jones. It was 386 feet long and 184 feet wide and designed to seat 12,000 people with 2,000 more in the orchestra stalls below the organ.

The Willis organ was a great feature of the palace. It was built by Henry Willis (1821-1901) who had established organ works in Camden Town. Willis built organs for Gloucester Cathedral, the Crystal

Palace, the Royal Albert Hall, St George's Hall, Liverpool, Blenheim Palace and other places. The first organ built for Alexandra Palace by Willis had been burnt down in the fire, with Willis himself escaping only just in time.

The new organ outstripped any built by other makers and was the principal organ in the country in size, design and equipment. It was driven by two steam engines with vast bellows in the basement. Saving and restoring the organ after the second world war was an important leitmotif in saving the palace itself from being demolished…

The hall was flanked on each side by courtyards, probably to act as fire breaks should another conflagration occur. But before the opening, the courtyard on the east side of the Great Hall had been roofed over and was labelled Bazaar department on Johnson's plan. This is the area which in 1990 was opened as an ice skating rink. The courtyard on the west side was known as the Italian Garden. It contained a large fountain now to be seen in a rose garden in the park east of the palace. When the palace was reconstructed after the 1980 fire the Italian Garden was converted into the West exhibition hall.

Beyond the Italian Garden on the west side was a conservatory area filled with unusual plants. After the 1980 fire it was restored, its fine roof reglazed, and is known as the Palm Court. By the west entrance was an exhibition and lecture room, converted in the post-1980 fire restoration into the Londesborough Room (named after the collection of arms and armour formed by Lord Londesborough which had once been housed here). Also by the west entrance was a library and reading room in the area occupied by the Phoenix Bar since 1988.

At the four corners of the building were towers, with pointed roofs. These contained tanks of water also to help fight fires. Four other tanks of water stood near the central hall. Steam pumps from the New River Company reservoirs (subsequently Thames Water Board) were to provide water.

On the north-east corner of the building was included a theatre, built almost to the dimensions of Drury Lane Theatre…

On the north-east corner was a concert hall with another Willis organ. Later this area was adapted as a roller-skating rink…

The ground plan also shows exhibition galleries, banqueting and other refreshment rooms, and offices. Beneath the palace were vast cellars used for kitchens, maintenance, storage and other purposes. On the north side the lower level of the palace was used for the palace's own railway station but platforms outside were to be used later…" [KG]

1875

"The second palace

Assets to the tune of half a million pounds had gone up in smoke when the first Alexandra Palace burned down, and no insurance money had been forthcoming to cover the damage. Against this background the decision to rebuild was a brave one on the part of the sponsors. But it was no sentimental move; the success of the Palace during its brief life had convinced everyone of the financial soundness of the undertaking.

The task of rebuilding was given to the same people who had planned and executed the original Palace. The new designs were drawn up by Mr J. Johnson, the architect partner of Mr Meeson, who had designed the former building. The actual construction work was carried out by Messrs Lucas Brothers, who had erected the first building with the assistance of Mr John Kelk.

Once started, on 10th October 1873, the work of rebuilding was carried on with impatient speed. At certain periods more than 2500 workmen were employed, while throughout the first six months of 1874 the number of men in constant employment never dropped below 800. Although most of the work was manual there were six steam engines on the site during this time.

By April 1874 the building was reported to have been in an advanced state and, despite a serious accident on 17th April, in which one man was killed and eight others were taken to hospital, the work progressed so quickly that by August the actual construction was complete. The first brick of the new building had been laid on 10th October 1873 and in the course of construction covering a period of ten months 15,000,000 bricks and 3000 tons of lime were used. The wrought iron, 764 tons of it, was supplied by Messrs Handyside of Derby, and cast iron, 1354 tons, by the Staveley Works, Staffordshire. The Builder was able to report that only a small amount of decorating was still to be done.

Though the second Palace was built on the same site as the former building, its enclosed area was much larger, the plan being a parallelogram 897 ft long and 386 ft wide, with the great hall forming a central transept 386 ft long and 184 ft wide, with a barrel vault roof of 85 ft span. It had at its northern end an orchestra seating 1150 performers, a gigantic organ built by Willis, replacing that destroyed in the fire and one of the largest in Europe, and was considered to be the finest hall in London at that time, seating 12,000 visitors. The acoustics may have been good for the time, but by today's standards it would have been over-reverberant for anything but the organ.

On either side of the great hall were enclosed courts 210 ft long by 140 ft wide, one glass-covered and the other, to the west open, both containing gardens. Beyond these and between them and the eastern and western entrances were glass-domed conservatories in one of which palms, dracaenas, tree ferns, bananas and pandanas flourished in a tropical environment; stuffed lions and tigers added atmosphere! To the north-west side of the building lay a concert hall holding 2700 people, which corresponded to a theatre on the north-east side which was as large as Drury Lane. The west front contained a small theatre for special purposes and a lecture and reading room, while the corresponding east front contained the administrative offices. The whole of the south side of the building was devoted to the hotel department, containing numerous dining rooms and banqueting halls, which gave on to covered arcades on two storeys. The basements were very extensive. They housed two large kitchens which supplied the numerous dining-rooms as well as 'the laundry, the soda-water factory, the butchery, the confectionery and pastry stores, the plate-room, the knife rooms, the dining halls for servants, the larders, the capacious ice wells, and lastly the unrivalled cellars, containing a large and carefully selected stock of wines'. Despite this spacious cellarage, it was not enough to handle the storage necessary and therefore, every refreshment buffet, dining-or luncheon-room had a large cellar beneath it. All the services in the building, which was hot-water heated throughout, ran in this vast catacomb and on the north side it contained the entrance and booking-office to the station.

Taking into account the fate of the previous building, four water reservoirs holding 16,000 gallons each were provided at the top of the corner towers, which were surmounted by decorated 'pepper-pot' mansard roofs, and at the angles of the central hall four other tanks of 7000 gallons, all supplied by steam pumps from the New River Company's reservoirs.

The materials used for the façades of the building were white Huntingdon and dark-yellow bricks, the mouldings and ornaments being of Portland cement. The Palace, including the cost of the materials on the ground, building and grounds amounted to £417,128.

The Palace was filled to overflowing with objects described as of 'universal interest', enumerated at length in the Official Guide of 1875. They included such things as an Egyptian chariot; a model group, life size, representing a party of Laplanders with sledge an reindeer; mammoth carrots and mangelwurzels; full size models of a 'modern Moorish house, and the interior of an Egyptian villa'; the 'Londesborough Collection of Arms, Armour and Antiquities and Works of Art comprising no less than 1337 articles', and the 'Whitfield Collection' which was in fact a Museum of Natural History, with 1463 exhibits. In short the place must have been like a mixture of the 'Old Curiosity Shop', an art gallery, museum and an eastern bazaar! This atmosphere even pervaded the 220 acre park which was dotted with a number of Swiss chalets, a Japanese village, a Swedish restaurant, a Norwegian house, a large zinc building in which could be seen the 'Denayrouze Diving Apparatus', a circus, a five acre lake sporting an unusual water village erected on piles, and the original 'Tudor' Banqueting Hall, which was still in use. There was also a race-course and grandstand, a trotting ring which could be used for cycling or athletics events, a cricket ground two acres larger than 'Lord's' with two pavilions, and an amusement park with a chain of three lakes which included the skeleton of a whale among the attractions. With all these and other attractions the new Alexandra Palace was officially opened on 1st May 1875 by the Lord Mayor of London. The admission was one shilling daily…" [SB]

1875

"… It is possible to form a vivid impression of the Palace and Park from the numerous surviving engravings and photographs, many of which are retained in the Bruce Castle Museum. The Palace covered seven and a half acres and was centred on the Great Hall which corresponded with the central transept of the original building and ran between the north and south frontispieces retained from the original structure. The hall was intended to seat 12,000 persons in addition to 2,000 persons on the orchestra stalls beneath the mighty Willis Organ which was driven by two steam engines and vast bellows which were still present in the basement prior to the recent fire. The clerestory glazing and rooflights were relieved with decorative glazing bars and white and ruby coloured glass and the same ornamental glazing was adopted in the large circular windows in the frontispieces.

The main vault and the aisle ceilings were painted with decorative designs based on the Italian Cinquecento whilst along the walls the coats of arms of British towns were painted, and statues representing the English monarchy from William I to Victoria stood alongside the cast iron columns of the nave. On either side of the Great Hall were open courtyards – that to the west retained as the present Italian Garden, and that to the east being roofed over prior to the completion of the building to form a covered bazaar area or 'sales department'. To the north and south of these courtyards were galleries used for the display of paintings and sculpture whilst beyond the western courtyard was a conservatory housing exotic plants and surmounted by a glazed dome (the present Palm Court) with a similar building at the eastern end being devoted to exhibition use. Flanking the west entrance were large rooms allocated as a lecture hall and library, whilst offices for the management on two levels flanked the east entrance. The two towers on the south front housed billiard rooms on the ground floor and 'ladies retiring rooms' on the upper levels. The wings on either side of the Great Hall on this front were devoted to a wide range of refreshment activities – banqueting rooms where the Palace Suite was later situated and a grand banqueting room on the first floor in the area used by the Middlesex Polytechnic prior to the fire, whilst in the east wing there were coffee and grill rooms and private dining rooms at first floor level, all serviced from extensive basement kitchens and stores. On the north front of the building and isolated from the main structure by open areas (another fire precaution) there was an elaborately decorated concert room to the west capable of seating 3,500 with its own apsidal orchestra stage and another Willis organ (the area which later accommodated the roller skating rink), and to the east a theatre which was claimed to be as large as that at Drury Lane having an elaborately mechanised stage and capable of seating 3,000.

The materials used for the façades of the building were white Huntingdon and dark yellow bricks, the mouldings and ornaments being of Portland cement. The cost of the Palace, including materials, building and grounds amounted to £417,128…

The Palace was filled to overflowing with objects described as of 'universal interest', enumerated at length in the Official Guide of 1875. They included such things as an Egyptian Chariot; a life size model group representing a party of Laplanders with sledge and reindeer; mammoth carrots and mangle worzels; full size models of a 'modern Moorish house' and the interior of an 'Egyptian villa'; the Londesborough Collection of arms, armour and antiquities and works of art, comprising no less than 1337 articles; and the 'Whitfield Collection' which was in fact a museum of natural history, with 1463 exhibits…" [PS]

1875

"THE ALEXANDRA PALACE.

To-morrow the second palace on Muswell-hill will become an accomplished fact. Within the brief space of two years an amount of work has been performed that may be regarded as little less than a feat of human enterprise and modern resources. Barely had the shell of the old building cooled, after the fire which destroyed it on the 9th of June, 1873, before the directors resolved to rebuild the Palace upon the old foundations, with the charms of its predecessor still fresh in the public mind. The resolve was a bold one, after so sweeping a destruction of the old building and the spectacle of wasted energy and capital it presented. The Phoenix of undaunted energy arose out of the ashes, and will probably be looked upon as a fairer production than the consumed original. As seen last Saturday by the Architectural Association, very part of the edifice was in a state of rapid transformation; the great organ, by Willis, building in the Central Hall – half in skeleton – was receiving one by one the huge diapered metal pipes of its front, hoisted into their places by tackle and pulley; painters and decorators were clinging to its framework, doing the last work of touching and retouching; while here and there about the building upholsterers, carpenters, smiths, and every shade of artisan may have been seen fitting up stalls, uncasing pictures and goods, and arranging order out of chaos. Such a view behind the scenes, preparatory to the great spectacle of the opening, must, indeed, to a certain extent, be unsatisfactory; bazaars of empty stalls, and picture galleries half hung, may not be tempting to the casual visitor; though the architect can better see, in this unfinished state, what has been done, and what the effects of the several parts of the building are likely to be. Entering at the east entrance from Wood Green, we pass through a portal of some significance; and find ourselves beneath a square glass dome with three wings, also glazed above. This is an exhibition department, the most conspicuous trophy in it being some tower-like cases in Moorish style, filled with choice Oriental porcelain. The area is intended to be devoted to works of art and manufacture not intended for sale, and the general effect is light, though perhaps verging on the tawdry in decoration. The capitals of the pillars supporting the roof err on the side of lankness, and the whole pillar gives one too much the impression of a Corinthian column pulled out. The decorations are also a little bizarre; the caps are of a bright buff, the lower leaves being on a deep red ground, and the upper scrolls on blue. A deep blue fret necking, relieved by red stripes, decorates the upper part of the shaft under the caps, while the shafts themselves are of a strong lavender-coloured tint. The prevailing colour of the walls is the buff or yellow colour of the bricks, which throws the purplish-tinted pillars into relief. In the plan of the Palace we gave in the BUILDING NEWS of the 6th of February, 1874 (p.146), this space, now devoted to exhibition purposes, is marked "conservatory", and the court westward also is shown as an open court. We think that the change is a wise one. The latter space forms a fine hall 213ft. from east to west, and 140 ft. wide, and the stalls now in progress will be devoted to the sale of the articles exhibited. The object is to make this a great mart as well as bazaar, in which all kinds of manufactures, from carriages and musical instruments to toilet requisites, will be provided. Among the models we saw were some illustrating the warming and ventilating arrangements of convict prisons and other buildings, and we believe it is intended to make models of architectural and engineering structures a special feature. A great deal of practical knowledge may be conveyed by

such means, which other methods of this instruction fail to give. On each side of this department or bazaar are two long corridors or galleries, the south being devoted to refreshments, and the north being the picture gallery. The latter is well lighted from the roof, and some fine water-colour drawings of Owen Jones, showing his designs for the Palace, are among the collection. The southern glazed corridor forms, in fact, a passage-way from the east entrance to the central hall. It is 30ft. wide, and has a glazed roof; on its south side are spacious tea and coffee bars and refreshment buffets, while, facing the open colonnade to the south, are the grille and meat-room, reading-room, and first-class coffee-room. Corresponding to these rooms on the north side is the theatre. Its dimensions are said to be very nearly those of Drury Lane, and it will hold 3,000 persons, the length of the auditorium being 104ft. by a width of about 84ft.; the stage of the same width, with a depth of 50ft. The proscenium is 36ft. wide in opening, and 32ft. in height. The stage is fitted with five bridges; above it are two tiers of "flies," respectively 25ft. and 37ft. from the stage, and above these is the gridiron floor, 49ft. high. Under the stage, a spacious cellar, 22ft. in depth, will give room for heavy scenes and other stage appliances, and Mr. Walford Grieve's "lock-iron" has been introduced to prevent accidents when working the traps. The construction and decorations of the stage have been entrusted to the well-known scenic artists, Messrs. Thomas Grieve and Son, who, we need hardly say, have produced a telling effect with the means at their disposal. On each side and at the ends of the theatre is an open area, about 10ft. wide, completely isolating the theatre from the main building.

We have now explored the eastern wing of the palace. Let us enter the Central Hall, which is the chef-d'oeuvre of the present structure, intact in itself, the great transept and domical area of the old building converted. Instead of the dome we have a semi-circular roof, supported on four longitudinal rows of pillars, thus dividing the area into a nave of 85ft., and double aisles, each with a collective span of about 50ft. Each aisle has a row of single columns down its centre, forming, with the inner columns and walls, square bays. These aisles embrace two stories of the building, and the pillars are braced and connected together at the top by thin spandrel arches, decorated. Above the aisles a clerestory, comprising a series of lunette-shape lights, filled with mosaic glass of brilliant colours, throw into the hall hues of prismatic brightness. These lunettes are really the arches of the bays, carried up above the springing of the main vault. The lighting of the nave is a happy combination of the all-glass roof and the opaque ceiling or vault. Broad belts of glass, with ruby borders, run the whole length of roof, one on each side, allowing an intervening belt of panelling down the centre, and one at each side. The spaces thus formed between the ribs and the lights are very chastely decorated and stencilled in Cinque-Cento taste by Mr. Schmidt. In the colouring, perhaps, too much has been attempted; this crudity, however, will be toned down in a few months. The predominant tint of the structural members, as the pillars, is lavender and blue; the walls are buff, in three shades. The pillars are striped with a warmer shade, and the bands and underside of capitals have a buff fretwork on blue ground, with red and yellow in horizontal lines. The capitals are gilded, on a red ground. The main ribs (those which spring from the iron shafts placed in groups of four) are coloured as follows:- Soffit, a yellow fret on blue band running along centre, edges of soffit bright buff; on each faced of rib a band of brown, relieved by gilt stars at intervals.

As the Great Hall will be the centre attraction, it may be asked what amount of success may be anticipated from it? Great social and musical gatherings will doubtless be held under its roof; it will seat 12,000, and its orchestra affords accommodation for another 2,000 persons. Acoustically, we understand, the Hall is perfect. To test this, we tried one or two positions while the organ was being played, and the sounds fell upon the ear distinctly and melodiously. There was no apparent reverberation or confusion, and none of that want of resonance discoverable in buildings wholly of glass and iron. The segmental arrangements of the seats of the orchestra, and the coved recess in which the organ is placed, aid the diffusion of sound. What the effect may be when filled with visitors remains to be seen. One of the attractions of the Great Hall will be a series of statues of the Kings and Queens of England – not excluding Cromwell – designed to illustrate the regal costumes of the

various periods, or some remarkable episode. Messrs. Farmer and Brindley are the sculptors of these figures; their colouring is by Mr. B. L. Spackman.

Opening in the centre of its western side is the Italian garden, with fountains, still in an unfinished state, but which, when completed, will become a grateful promenade. On each side also will be picture and sculpture galleries of corresponding position and size to those in the eastern wing; while conservatories under glass roofs and domes will entrance the visitor by the beauties of the exotic plants and climbing foliage. The concert-hall on the north side of this wing will be a spacious apartment capable of holding 3,500 persons. The orchestra is a curved recess, and the acoustic properties are, we are informed, good. The decorations are flat – of French Renaissance character – and the prevailing wall-colour is drab. Grand banquet-rooms and dining-saloons occupy the southern front of the building, while other conveniences are plentifully provided at all the main points.

We may add that the fine-art galleries are intended to be complete of their kind. A collection of sculpture and painting is to formed of an extensive and unique kind, and works of merit exhibited for sale will be purchased by the company as prizes in the Art Union; in which all season-ticket holders will participate. The Londesborough collection of arms, armour, antiquities, and works of art will doubtless draw many connoisseurs; the repoussé metal work and the damascening in gold and silver are very fine.

Not the least attractive feature is the Japanese village, erected by Japanese workmen, westward of the Palace, in which Japanese productions of all kinds will be exhibited. A modern Egyptian and a Moorish house, constructed from Dr. Dresser's designs, are also interesting models. The statuary and busts are supplied by Signor Brucciani. Among the exhibits we noticed some admirable paper-hangings by Jeffrey and Co., of Islington; a handsome oak carved chimney-piece by Messrs. Cox and Sons, of Southampton-street; and stained and painted glass will be represented by the same firm. But to these and other works we intend to return.

The general arrangements of the Palace show that the directors have consulted the convenience and comfort of visitors. Nearly the whole of the southern side is appropriated to the refreshment departments, and a large detached banqueting-hall has been provided to seat 1,500. The directors are determined that this department shall surpass any other English or foreign establishment, and Messrs. Bertram and Roberts, who before catered at the Crystal Palace, are the purveyors. A fixed and moderate scale of prices is adopted. Refreshment buffets abound, and the dining-hall, 200ft. by 55ft., is to be replete with comforts.

The sanitary arrangements of the Palace have not been overlooked. The heating arrangements have been planned and carried out by Mr. Wilson W. Phipson, C.E., and the work has been in constant operation lately. The heating surface of 55,400ft. is divided as follows into five apparatus – first, for the Central Hall and picture galleries; second, for the east covered court; third, for the east conservatory and corridor; fourth, for the west conservatory; and, fifth, for the concert-hall. Hot-water boilers in the angle towers work a portion of the apparatus; and steam heaters, in the hot-water channels close to their work, the central hall and east court. Steam is supplied from three multitubular boilers, 16ft. long and 6ft. diameter, fixed in a central position. These boilers also supply steam to the engines working the organ. The gas-fittings have been provided by Messrs. G. Forrest and Sons.

Externally the building combines the monumental with the festive. The façades are solid, of white Huntingdon and yellow bricks, relieved by Portland cement mouldings and red bricks. In the entrance fronts, red brick, sunk joints, arches, and cement capitals are employed with effect; and, though the proportions of the colonnades are not perfect, the general massing and grouping is

effective. The corner towers, with their lofty pyramidal roofs covered in zinc tiles, have been criticised as being too like the legs of a table turned upside down, yet we find them usefully employed as water-tanks, each containing 16,000 gallons, supplied by steam pumps from the New River Company's reservoirs. There is a boldness of treatment in the general masses, however we may be disposed to find fault in detail; and the lofty roof of the Central Hall, with its great end gables and circular lights, contrasts forcibly with the wings, while the glass domes and mansard pavilions at the ends of the wings break up the façades, and give balance to the composition.

The commanding grounds on which Alexandra Palace stands are themselves worthy of a visit. A park of 220 acres, on one of the "northern heights" which form an impassable barrier to our great metropolis on the north, is the site of this building for the people. Mr. Alexander McKenzie has well planned and laid out the park in the landscape style. The roads may be used as carriage drives, while the flatter portions of the park are appropriated for outdoor sports, and a racecourse has been made. Lakes, rustic shelters, Swiss chalets, and other rural charms, are interspersed about the grounds, and the company have secured 300 acres of land, north of the estate, for building allotments. Muswell-hill was the residence of Moore. "Lalla Rookh" was written in the locality; and Thrale lived in an estate called the "Grove" on the west of the park, and thither Johnson and others resorted. The sylvan beauties of the Grove, and the commanding situation of the park, will alone become an attraction for the pent-up citizen. Messrs. Lucas Brothers have not been idle. The works, carried on under the supervision of Mr. J. Johnson, the architect, of Buckingham-street, Strand, have often employed more than 2,500 men. Mr. Clemence has acted as clerk of works. We have from time to time given detailed particulars of the building, and refer our readers to our previous notices for further information…" [BN]

1875

"… On 1 May 1875 the new Alexandra Palace opened its doors to the public. The park opened in the morning and many new features were to be seen. To the north-west a series of three lakes had been made, and nearer to the palace was a boating lake with a water village erected on piles as a special attraction. Close to this lake was a permanent circus building capable of seating three thousand people, and near the eastern entrance to the palace was a diving pavilion with a tank constructed for diving displays. The race course now boasted a trotting ring and a bicycle track for racing. Near the Grove was the Japanese village; the Grove itself was to be open to the public three days a week, and on other days would be available for private parties, picnics and wedding breakfasts.

Seen from the park, the new palace was not so attractive as its predecessor. More solid, heavy and functional, it was obviously designed to be less susceptible to fire. The first palace was a long narrow nave intersected by three transepts which projected each side; this palace was rectangular and provided more floor space. Fifteen million white Huntingdon and dark-coloured yellow bricks were used in construction. The central transept was crowned, not as before with a dome, but with a semi-circular roof. There were four towers, one at each corner of the palace, and at the top of each tower was a tank containing sixteen thousand gallons of water as an aid to fire fighting. These tanks, together with four others at the angles of the central hall, each containing seven thousand gallons, were supplied with water from the New River Company's reservoirs by steam pump. It was no longer possible to promenade right round the palace as no terrace was provided on the northern side.

Opening day was dismal and wet, prompting The Times to remark that the elements do not seem kindly disposed to the venture – "first fire and now water" – and this made the growing crowd explore the palace rather than the park. The main feature of the palace was the central Great Hall; three hundred and eighty-six feet long and one hundred and eighty-four feet wide, it housed the new Willis organ and seating for twelve thousand people. The central span of the roof was eighty-five feet supported by four rows of columns. Statues of the kings and queens of England from William the Conqueror to Queen Victoria were at the base of the colonnade, designed and coloured to represent

the royal colours of each period. The Great Hall was decorated in chocolate brown, lavender and grey; light was admitted through the white glass running the length of the hall, with ruby borders in the roof, and coloured glass lunettes. Multi-coloured round windows at each end of the hall completed the colour scheme.

On each side of the Great Hall in the centre of the palace were courts, one open and one roofed. The court to the west was an Italian garden, and to the east an exhibition hall. This was originally intended as a covered garden, and would have been opened as such had the palace been ready in 1874, but by 1875 it had been re-designed as an exhibition hall where stalls could be leased to increase income. Beyond the courts, at the eastern and western entrances, were conservatories. The partition walls of the Great Hall, conservatories and corridors were glass folding doors so that the entire centre of the building could be free from end to end. The only exceptions to this were in the north-western and north-eastern corners; in the first was a concert hall to seat three and a half thousand; in the second a theatre seating three thousand with a stage fifty feet deep and eighty-four feet wide. The directors claimed that the design was such that a fire starting in either hall would not spread to the rest of the palace. There were also picture galleries, a natural history museum, and the famous Londesborough collection of arms and armour housed in a large room at the western entrance. The south front housed the refreshment department, with the main saloon seating one thousand. The Egyptian and Moorish villages were housed at the Wood Green entrance to the palace…" [RC]

1875

"… After the inadequate water supply to the first building, the new design incorporated four water tanks placed on the four corner towers, each holding more than 16,000 gallons. The angles of the central hall contained four reservoirs of 7,000 gallons each, the whole being supplied by steam pumps from the New River Company's nearby reservoirs. Other fire prevention measures were incorporated in the new design. A novelty was the introduction of flush lavatories; thirty-four ladies' and forty-six gentlemen's divided between the four corners of the building.

The grand central hall, 386ft long by 184ft wide, with a central vaulted roof span of 85ft could accommodate an audience of 12,000 and an orchestra of 2,000. A series of brightly coloured statues of England's rulers, from William the Conqueror to Queen Victoria, including Oliver Cromwell, ranged along the sides of the central hall, all wearing the 'regal costume of their period' and illustrating a remarkable event in their lives. The side walls bore armorial bearings of principal cities and towns. The focal point of the hall was the rebuilt Willis organ which was allegedly the principal organ in size, design and equipment. Driven by two steam engines, of 8 and 12hp, with vast bellows housed in the basement, twenty-four hours' notice was required for the raising of steam before the organ could be used, either for playing or tuning. The hall's acoustics were deemed by 'eminent authorities' to be perfect.

A further attraction was the installation, adjacent to the central hall, of the Palace's very own post and telegraph office from which one could be 'in direct telegraphic communication with the Metropolis and all parts of the Kingdom as well as with foreign countries'. The Palace also boasted a fire station partly manned by staff volunteers; a police office and lost property office. The London Stereoscopic Company 'had been entrusted with the sole right of photography, and suitable studios provided for the purpose'.

Under the management of Sir Edward Lee, the second palace opened on 1 May 1875. Trains were restored, including a service from Broad Street. On the first day 21,000 visitors were recorded. The following Whit Monday notes 94,000 visitors, many of whom travelled to the Palace by rail. The journey from King's Cross took over an hour and on the evening return journey a derailment caused some to walk off the railway while others slept on the trains.

The programme promised an astonishing variety of events – both inside and outside – until December. External attractions included cricket, an outdoor swimming pool and the Denayrouze Diving Pavilion near the Palace's east entrance, comprising a tank containing nearly forty tons of water wherein several divers would entertain visitors 'with the various and latest in the art of diving'. The Pavilion was described as a building similar to that constructed for the Paris Exhibition of 1867.

The refreshment departments were under the supervision of Messrs Bertram and Roberts, who promised that 'this important department will be conducted in a style which will surpass any other English or foreign establishments of the kind'. Besides the grand dining hall designed to seat 1,000, in the Park stood a banqueting hall with provision for 1,500 diners. There were many other dining and refreshment facilities scattered throughout the grounds, while separate arrangements had been made for the servants of visitors to the Palace.

Boating on the lakes, walks in the Grove, accompanied by al fresco musical performances on the bandstand, visits to the Japanese village, the modern Moorish house and modern Egyptian house helped while away the hours.

Horses, fruit and flower, dogs, pigeons, poultry and cage birds were among promised shows. Archery competitions, cycle races, fireworks, swings and a skating rink were a few of the attractions advertised, plus a circus ring capable of seating 3,000 for equestrian performances. Alongside accommodation for the circus animals was stabling for 400 visitors' horses. Indoors, a theatre seating more than 3,000 was allegedly as large as Drury Lane. For the highbrow there were concerts, operas, oratorios, choirs, a resident orchestra, recitals on the Willis organ and exhibitions of paintings and other works of art. Despite the variety of entertainment the gigantic enterprise was a financial disaster. Dependent upon a steady flow of visitors, it was only Sundays and bank holidays that attracted large numbers, otherwise there were low levels of public attendance, especially during the winter months. The Palace's concept – to cater for the education and leisure of the masses – overlooked the fact that the masses wanted entertainment rather than education and had very little money or leisure, despite six bank holidays established by Act of Parliament in 1871…" [JH]

1875
The new Alexandra Palace opened 1 May. Incorporated a theatre with a stage comparable to that of Drury Lane Theatre Royal. Stage designed and built by T Walford Grieve. [JE]

1 May 1875
The new palace was opened less than two years after the destruction of the original building, a feat which appears all the more remarkable when it is appreciated that the building followed a different layout from its predecessor…

It may be thought that much of the design was influenced by the desire to avoid a recurrence of the fire – for example the introduction of four tall corner towers each supporting tanks holding 16,000 gallons of water and the grouping of the building wings round two open courtyards and at the angles of the central hall. Four other tanks of 7,000 gallons capacity were provided all supplied by steam pumps from the New River Company's reservoirs. [PS]

1 May 1875
The new building opened by the Lord Mayor of London with 21,000 people present. On the Whit Monday following some 94,000 came, mostly they travelled by rail. [KG]

1876

Petition in bankruptcy leading to sale of palace to London Financial Association. Parts of grounds sold off. [JE]

April 1876
The Alexandra Palace Company published its 'Prospective Arrangements' for the 1876-77 season…

The banqueting hall, the grand dining hall would be available, also 'retiring rooms' for both gentlemen and ladies. A police office and metropolitan fire brigade station were at the south entrance of the central hall and a volunteer fire brigade had been organised… The telegraphic office was at the eastern entrance.

The London Stereoscopic Company had sole rights to photography and suitable studies were provided.

The refreshment department offered either a shilling or 1s6d tea in the saloons, or snacks and drinks in tents or in the banqueting hall in the park. [KG]

October 1876
A petition for winding up the Alexandra Palace Company presented in the Bankruptcy Court… The first Palace was in smoking ruins in 16 days, the second in financial ruins in just over 16 months. [RC]

1877
Palace and Park re-opened 10 May. Good attendance figures failed to make profits for lessees. [JE]

1878
For the opening anniversary celebrations in May the circus company performed in the central hall; the permanent circus building now being closed as a result of the decision to sell off part of the grounds. [RC]

1880s
"… In early 1880 Bartram and Roberts gave notice of terminating their tenancy in May. The Palace re-opened in May under James Willing, closing in October. In December 1880 entertainments manager William Henry Jones and Benjamin Barber, the Park's refreshments contractor, acquired the lease of the foundering enterprise. On Boxing Day they mounted 'a big programme for twelve hours enjoyment for twelve pence'. Attractions included Princess Newuramoosha of the Osage and other North American Indians showing Indian ways, plus a female walking contest between Mesdames Victor, Engles and Florence. For the next two seasons, Jones and Barber brought record attendances to Palace and Park, mostly of the middle and working classes, the anticipated high class carriage trade rarely materialising.

Barber, altering the refreshment tariff, introduced buffets, bars and second- and third-class refreshment rooms, knowing that working-class visitors wanted fast food – but the food was never fast enough. There were hellish rows with hungry cockneys who wanted only a hard boiled egg and a cup of tea.

Jones attempted to allure visitors on the normally slack weekdays and lengthy off-seasons. He retained a permanent circus company, panoramas and nightly firework displays, plus a bill of artistes who could be detached for performances anywhere within the Palace and grounds. But many of Jones's weekday performers belonged to the realm of 'self-improving rational diversions' featuring cooking lessons by Mrs Gothard, clay-pipe making, sheep-dog trials, exhibitions of goat and rabbit breeding (not to each other), and demonstrations of the very latest industrial machinery, including

hourly exhibitions of the Palace's own food refrigerators and ice-making equipment. Visitors never materialised…" [JH]

1882-1885
Palace closed for nearly three years. [JE]

1883-1889
"The 1882 season started with bad weather… in November with £11,200 of rent arrears the partners filed for liquidation… In 1883 the Palace and grounds were put up for auction. There were no takers. The Palace remained closed through 1884 with the Park open to the public. In May 1885 the Palace opened as an International Exhibition Centre and closed three months later… The Palace remained closed in 1886.

A new venture began in Easter 1887 with lessee Mr W. H. Hayward, closing before the year end after a disastrous season. Milkmen were encouraged to distribute free admission tickets with their daily deliveries. With the Palace's bad reputation for mismanagement and poor catering, the public refused them. Nothing would induce people who had visited the Palace either season ticket holders or those offered free admission, to return a second time. A standing joke of the day went that 'in lieu of 6 months hard [labour] an extra severe magistrate gave sentences of a Palace season ticket'. The years 188-89 saw openings and rapid closures of both Park and Palace…" [JH]

1889
Brooke's Great Monkey Show – over 1,000 monkeys in the west conservatory (or Palm Court). [RC]

1889-1898
Again closed. [JE]

1900-1901
Public ownership of the park and palace was achieved under the 1900 Alexandra Park and Palace (Public Purposes) Act.

In February 1901 responsibility was placed in the hands of trustees drawn from the consortium of local authorities which had purchased 173 acres, including the --- grove and 28 acres comprising the racecourse and Hornsey entrance area. The £150,000 purchase price included the palace. An additional £15,000 was given for another 18 acres on the north side which included the boating lake which was intended to be built over. [KG]

1901
A new roller skating rink was opened in what had been the concert hall on the northwest side of the building. [SB]

1901
The re-opening of the Palace
"Free to all for the first time on May 13. In fact, the hope is to make the Palace, a free resort without parallel, a home of happiness, health and culture. There are to be free picture galleries, museums, music, organ recitals, choir festivals, bands, entertainments and exhibitions of all kinds of the earth's wonders and marvels man has produced." [JH]

1901
The opening of the roller-skating rink failed to halt the decline. The Star of 21 September 1901 announced *"Winter Joys at Alexandra Palace"* and *"a magnificent skating rink has been laid down in*

the conservatory, with a polished maple floor of 130ft by 92ft. The skates to be used are of the new pneumatic ball-bearing type…" [JH]

1901
The theatre had needed an asbestos fire curtain and brick surround to separate the stage from the auditorium only attracted good houses on two days a week. [RC]

1901
Gifts of birds and animals to help stock the aviaries and monkey cages in the conservatory in the Palace arrived. [RC]

1901
Park and Palace taken into public ownership. [JE]

1901
Theatre provided with a structural firebreak and safety curtain between auditorium and stage. Biograph introduced. Varied stage productions. [JE]

1902
A cycle track was installed in the Great Hall extending from the promenade to the orchestra. It was 86 ft in width and 200 ft long and rose to a height of 10 ft 6 in at the two ends. There was space for 9,000 spectators and the "velodrome", as it was called, was at the time the only indoor cycle track in Europe.

It was mounted on castors in sections and could be removed to make way for concerts. [SB]

1902
The opening of the velodrome, an indoor cycle track 200ft long and 85ft wide between the columns of the Great Hall, it was laid in the hogback principle and was the only indoor track in Europe. [RC]

1902
First pantomime in theatre. Acoustics criticised. [JE]

November 1902-1903
Opening of velodrome in the Central Transept, the only indoor cycling track outside America – it failed in February 1903. [JH]

1903
Difficulties with catering. An article in the North Middlesex Chronicle described
"… the second class refreshment room… was spacious and lofty but very dreary and inhabited by large tables covered with dirty cloths…"
Unfavourable comment on the refreshment facilities were common. [JH]

1903
"… Problems still beset the Trustees. In 1903 they received a report that "the whole roof of the palace is in a very bad state. Water had been coming in at every point damaging cases, pictures and stalls. The central hall is especially bad, also the Jubilee Gallery and East Exhibition Hall"…" [RC]

1904
"… The Standard of 29 November described the glass roof of the Great Hall as unsafe and leaking, and taking at least £4,000 to be repaired. Work on this and the Industrial Hall had begun but was then abandoned from lack of funds:

> *The Exhibition Hall, covered in glass from top to bottom and the two great domes flanking the east and west of the building are all in disrepair, as is the large conservatory at one end of the Palace. The barn-like theatre needs repair and restoration. From floor to roof the whole of the Palace is in a discreditable state.*

The approaches to the Park are deplorable. The pathway leading from the Grove entrance at Muswell Hill to the Palace is an eyesore. The Priory entrance, at the Hornsey end of the grounds is so dangerous that vehicular traffic has been prohibited. This is having an appreciable effect on revenue. If the roads were in fit condition for carriages it is anticipated many of the more well-to-do classes, who prefer this mode of reaching the Palace, would be among the visitors. The paths leading from Wood Green to Muswell Hill and to Hornsey remain untouched, and when the earth is sodden, as now, they form a perfect quagmire. There are no fewer than twelve glasshouses in the grounds, each 150ft in length. Six have been repaired, but the remaining glass roofs have fallen in and the houses are useless. The fence surrounding the Park is gradually rotting away…" [JH]

1904-1905
"… At this time unemployment was assuming serious proportions causing considerable privation and distress, especially in the winter months. Sir Ralph Littler, in making a special appeal for a fund for the relief of unemployment in Middlesex, said that men could be set to work immediately at Alexandra Palace and Park if the public contributed the money. Although public response was disappointing, the palace and park benefited to the extent of nearly £2,000 worth of labour and materials in a fourth month spell early in 1904. In the palace, entrance doors were repainted and portions of the flooring sealed to reduce draughts and permit smoking, and in the park roads and paths were repaired and improved…" [RC]

1905
"… A complaint from a lover of birds in a local newspaper centred interest on the collection of birds and animals built up by the Trustees mainly from gifts from the public. The complaint was about a cage with two Java sparrows, a linnet and a chaffinch given by a local inhabitant and placed in the Palm Court where there was also a lofty aviary, and small kangaroos, a mongoose and paradoc cats. There was a monkey house in a small room off the Palm Court. The collection was under the care of a Captain Henry, who was formerly a lion tamer with Lord John Sanger. It was proved beyond doubt that the accusation was unfounded…" [RC]

1905
Just before Christmas the first tram ran from Hornsey up the hill to the Palace. [RC]

1905
Stage described as 'admirable'' the theatre as 'an ugly, ill-ventilated, dirty old barn'. Electric trams serve palace. [JE]

c1905-1911
"By 1911 repayment of debts of the Palace underway. Part of the reversal in the Park's fortunes were attributed to the trams which began running through the Park to the Palace in 1905-1906…" [JH]

1907
Upper balcony of theatre removed. Enclosed projection box installed at back of circle. [JE]

1907

"… The annual meeting of the Palace Trustees in June 1907 was a gloomy event indeed. Newspapers reported on the bad and dangerous state of the building and grounds through lack of money. Replying to a question, Secretary Mr Goodship said the estimated price for all the necessary work to be done was about £25-30,000…" [JH]

1909
Theatre closed for live performances but continued as cinema; also used for public meetings. [JE]

1910
Edwin Sloper took over management of palace and park, beginning a period of stability. [JE]

1910
Opening of tennis courts at the Palace. [JH]

1913
Theatre showing a profit from cinema shows. [JE]

1914
"… In less than a month Ally Pally was closed again. This time the Local Government Board took over the building and grounds to house Belgian refugees whose homes had been over-run and destroyed in the advance of the German Army. Acting on behalf of the Government in housing and feeding the refugees was the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The palace was adapted to house three thousand at one time if necessary; the skating rink, the badminton suite and various other rooms became dormitories and the Great Hall combined sleeping and feeding. The warmest part of the building was equipped as a sick bay and hospital. The palace was one of three main refugee centres in London…" [RC]

1914
"… Everything possible had been done to welcome the Belgians. Rows of beds packed the Great Hall and other available space. Accommodation was set aside for those of the better classes who were allowed a modicum of privacy in their sleeping arrangements. The theatre was turned into a chapel where the Catholic Belgians could take Mass. The Winter Gardens became a smoking and reading room for the men, children had the freedom of the grounds while the women had been allocated a laundry room to help with the running of the Palace. During wet weather the conservatory was used as a drying area, with lines of washing hanging between the statuary and palm trees. On drier days washing lines erected outside were constantly in use. The Monkey House had been transformed into bathrooms. Despite this latter conversion, the Wood Green Herald of 9 October reported that parties of Belgian refugees were taken to the public baths by omnibus as they were badly in need of soap and water. Readers would have been pleased to learn that ablutions were carried out under 'ideal sanitary conditions'…" [JH]

1914
Palace requisitioned for a series of war purposes. [JE]

July 1914
Alexandra Palace Executive Committee agreed to a request for soldiers and their horses to be billeted at the palace in the event of mobilisation. [JH]

August 1914
Roller skating rink and picture theatre had re-opened. [JH]

September 1914

The Palace closed to the public. [JH]

1914 – March 1915
The palace was used as a temporary transit camp. Some 38,000 passed through. [KG]

1914-1915
In all the camp received 19,277 refugees before its closure in 1915 and there were rarely less than 3,500 resident at any one time. [SB]

1915
By March 1915 the Palace was empty of refugees. The Metropolitan Asylum Board's closing accounts showed that the number of Belgian refugees processed at the Palace totalled 32,000, a figure only slightly exceeded by Earls Court's 33,000 during the same period. [JH]

1915
Arrangements for the arrival of German and Austrian internees. [JH]

1915
During the early months of its new function, Alexandra Palace was used as a clearing house with parties of men arriving and leaving… [JH]

1915
"… The Belgian occupation ended in March 1915 and in the six months thirty-eight thousand refugees had passed through Alexandra Palace. It also brought another of the rare Royal visits to Alexandra Palace, when Queen Mary came to express the nation's sympathy in Belgium's distress. The Government's use of the palace meant the end of entertainment and sporting activities for the public who owned the estate. The skating rink was closed and cinematograph performances in the theatre came to an end; indoor bowls, rifle shooting and badminton were unable to continue. The Alexandra Palace Choral and Orchestral Society was forced to abandon its programme for the 1914-15 season at the palace…" [RC]

1915
The Palace and Park with part of the park enclosed in barbed wire, became an internment camp capable of holding 3,000 enemy aliens. [RC]

June 1915
Role of camp changed to that of an internment camp for German prisoners of war – quartered in the great hall like the refugees, they were joined by the civilian internees. [SB]

1915-16
"The lighting of the camp was entirely inadequate. The few gas lamps seldom burned brightly – the quality and pressure of the gas being reduced and various economy schemes practised…" [JH]

1915-1916
"…early in 1915 the palace and park with part of the park enclosed in barbed wire, became an internment camp capable of holding three thousand enemy aliens. At one count in 1916 there were two thousand three hundred and thirty-four prisoners of whom one thousand five hundred and ninety-eight were German, six hundred and ninety-five Austrian, fourteen Turkish, with twenty-seven of other nationalities. There were kitchens and bakeries, and workshops where men could work on carpentry, shoemaking, tailoring, glass engraving, and building small boats. Studios enabled sculptors and painters to work and there were music rooms where musicians could practice. The camp possessed a band and an orchestra of forty gave weekly concerts. In the park there was a poultry farm and plots

were allocated to both soldiers and prisoners to grow food and vegetables. In addition to physical exercises, there were route marches around the mile circuit of the racecourse. The gaol located in the subterranean depths of the palace was empty when the count was taken – breaches of discipline were rare in such a well-ordered establishment…" [RC]

1916-1918
Palace and park used as an internment camp. In 1916 there were over 2,200 prisoners of war including 1,600 Germans and c700 Austrian soldiers. [KG]

1917
Palace free of debt. [JE]

1918-1922
Rent-free use by the Government persisted after the war. Civil servants were housed in the palace and it was not handed back until 1922. [KG]

1919-20
Government occupation continued. [JE]

c1919
"… The Palace itself was in a very dilapidated state. No maintenance work had been done on the building since it had been taken over by the Government in 1914. Many panes of glass from the Palace roof were broken or missing, rain leaking everywhere and allowing access to pigeons. Woodwork was smashed and bereft of paint while floors were badly affected with dry rot. The Great Hall was dingy from the fumes of many oil stoves and cigarette smoke while the statues of the Kings and Queens of England were in a filthy, damaged state. The remainder of the building was in no better condition. The Palace was described as a 'scene of the utmost desolation'.

The Great Organ was choked with fluff and dust from the hundreds of blankets and carbon from the oil stoves and, upon examination, had been badly damaged. Rooms below the organ had been broken into and ransacked, parts of the mechanism and organ pipes had been torn from their fittings and used to bludgeon other pipes, with some thrown into the Great Hall itself. Others were found along the railway track leading from Alexandra Palace to King's Cross. The perpetrators were soldiers from the Palace who, when apprehended, were court martialled…" [JH]

1920
"… The dilapidated palace was closed to the public, and through the windows could be seen rooms partitioned off with asbestos and desks piled high with paper. It was becoming evident that Government occupation would continue for another two or three years to justify the cost of adaptation into offices..." [RC]

1920
Park re-opened. [JE]

1921
"… In the winter of 1921 the Banqueting Hall, (before the war the rifle range for the Alexandra Palace Rifle Club), was opened as a dance hall. It was the largest in London – two hundred feet long and sixty feet wide…" [RC]

1922
"… The Government finally handed over the keys of the palace at the end of February 1922. It was then found that fatigue parties clearing up the building had caused considerable wanton damage.

The organ suffered most. Several large pipes had been removed and thrown down, and the interior of the organ deliberately damaged. A large number of small pipes and tubing, and other delicate mechanism, had been smashed and scattered around the building and the railway station outside. A four figure estimate for the cost of repair, compared with the original cost of £6,000 for building the organ shows the serious extent of the damage…" [RC]

1922
"… Next the Trustees turned their attention to restoring and improving the theatre. The seating was revised for comfort and visibility, leaving two levels, the circle and stalls. When these plans were announced a correspondent in a local newspaper sounded a note of caution. "The heavy expenditure that must be needful to place the theatre in a proper condition will never be justified by the financial results. Unfortunately the theatre at the rebuilding of the palace was badly planned, not sufficient egress was provided – only one staircase to leave both balcony and gallery and virtually only one entrance to all parts of the auditorium – a lot of space wasted in the building itself at the sides of the stage; the stage itself, though large, has no proper entrance to it, only a narrow passage from the railway vestibule and another equally narrow passage running out of the picture gallery, rendering it needful for all heavy scenery, props, etc, to be taken over the footlights"…" [RC]

1922
Trustees anxious to resume a winter entertainments programme. Extensive works would be necessary in the Great Hall; with the organ unusable and the claim against the Government still not settled, it was decided to convert the Industrial & Exhibition Hall next to the theatre into a concert hall… The Japanese temples were cleaned and used as refreshment kiosks. [RC]

1922
W Macqueen-Pope appointed to manage palace. Concert held in Great Hall, September. [JE]

1922
Theatre refurbished. Ceiling embellished. Fire escape corridors introduced along sides of auditorium. Bar formed under circle. Capacity reduced to 1,050. Re-opened with pantomime. [JE]

1923
50th anniversary of the opening of the first palace; commemorative tablets installed on each side of the entrance to the Great Hall. The skating rink was an immediate success. The Ballroom in the Banqueting Hall was again a financial success. [RC]

1923
On the 50th anniversary of the first palace, large plaques were placed on each side of the Great Hall entrance on the South Terrace to mark the services of Henry Burt and Edwin Sloper [Chairman of Trustees and Hon Secretary 1910-1921, who cleared the palace debts of that era]. [KG]

1923
Theatre presented musical comedy and opera but attendance poor. Acoustics again criticised. [JE]

mid 1920s
Theatre let to Archie Pitt. Regular film shows ended. Previews of elaborate Gracie Fields productions held here. Also used by amateur societies.

1929
Repair and modernisation of the organ agreed. [RC]

1929-

Restoration of the Willis organ and conversion from steam to electric power. [KG]

late 1920s
Theatre in use for amateur productions and, once again, as cinema. [JE]

1930s-1940
By the early 1930s disorder and ruin once more prevailed with the situation desperate. The roller skating rink and ballroom in the Banqueting Hall remained popular but many theatrical productions flopped. The Palace was saved by the public television service inaugurated in 1935 by the BBC… The Palace played little part in the Second World War. [JH]

1934
The trustees rented the southeast end of the building to the BBC. [KG]

1935
A mast built on the southeast tower for the BBC, which still survives in a slightly reduced form. Internal areas were converted for studios and transmission. [KG]

1935
BBC took over southeast corner of palace. [JE]

1935-36
"… In 1935 there came another ray of hope. Early in the year the BBC were searching for a suitable site from which to launch television. High ground was essential and Hampstead Heath, the Crystal Palace and Alexandra Palace were all considered. Finally, in the summer of 1935, Alexandra Palace was selected: the Trustees agreed to the use of areas in the south-east end of the building and work started on a television mast on the south-east tower. The BBC also took over the theatre which had been vacated by Archie Pitt in 1934; it was used as an extra rehearsal area and all the seating was promptly removed.

Just over a year later, on 2 November 1936, the Postmaster-General performed the opening ceremony for the first public television service. Two transmission methods were used: Baird and Marconi-EMI. Both systems shared the opening ceremony and thereafter undertook a week's programmes alternately while the BBC made up its mind which system it preferred. The transmitter had a radius of about twenty-five miles, and another constraint was the price of sets - £90-£100 for one ten inches by eight inches or twelve inches by ten inches. Viewers who saw the opening ceremony by the Baird process saw the Postmaster-General about forty seconds after he had actually spoken. During the forty seconds a film was developed, printed and projected. The Marconi-EMI system was instantaneous but within a few weeks Baird had also evolved an instantaneous system. The first transmissions from Alexandra Palace were for two hours daily, from 3-4pm and from 9-10pm. Most of the afternoon programme was repeated in the evening.

Television did not bring a dramatic change in the financial fortunes of the palace. There were expenses in transferring refreshment and catering services for the public to the other end of the building and the need to make areas used by the BBC habitable and watertight led to an amortisation of rent…" [RC]

1936
The burning of Crystal Palace in 1936 meant that many large festivals which had been held there were homeless and needed to use Alexandra Palace. As a result, a new appeal was launched to lower the pitch of the organ so it could play with orchestras and choirs. [SB]

1936

"… A complete television chain, comprising studios, control room and transmitting equipment, has been installed by each of the two companies, while the B.B.C. has provide the sound transmitter and aerials for use with either television system. In addition, the B.B.C. has carried out the necessary structural alterations, including the erection of the mast.

The B.B.C. has leased from the Alexandra Palace trustees 31,840 sq. ft. of floor space at the south-east corner of the building, comprising three large halls on the ground floor, the rooms over them on the first floor, and the S.E. tower. A further area of 24,525 sq. ft., comprising the theatre and associated rooms, has also been taken.

The halls on the lower floor have, with slight alterations, been converted to the purpose of transmitter rooms, a film-viewing room, a restaurant and kitchen, while the rooms above have been treated to form two large studios with control rooms and apparatus rooms separating them.

Dressing rooms and make-up rooms for band and artists have been constructed, separated from the studios by a corridor.

Nearest to the entrance hall is the Marconi-E.M.I. television transmitter which, like its Baird equipment, operates on a frequency of 45 MC/S (wavelength : 6.67 metres). All the apparatus at the station is finished in grey cellulose and chromium.

Next is the sound transmitter hall, which accommodates an ultra short-wave installation of orthodox design for radiating speech and music accompanying the vision signals of both the Baird and Marconi-E.M.I systems. Its operating frequency is 41.5 MC/S (wavelength : 7.23 metres).

Between the sound transmitter and the Baird plant is the film projection theatre, or miniature cinema, in which film excerpts can be selected and timed for inclusion in the transmissions. At least thirty people can be comfortable accommodated.

The Baird transmitter hall, with its control panel and array of generators and amplification stages, is at the south-west end of the corridor.

Beyond this, at the south-west extremity of the B.B.C. section of the Palace, is a large area intended either for scenery construction or for televising such objects as motor cycles and animals which cannot be brought into the studio or televised outside.

Lorries can drive straight in. A large opening in the roof enables it to be lighted and, if necessary, televised from above. Lifting tackle can take up scenery and properties weighing a ton through a trap-door in the roof to the second dock, 25 ft. above…

An interesting feature at this point is the ramp or sloping runway, down which the television camera can travel to a concrete "apron", approximately 1,700 sq. ft., on the terrace outside, forming a platform for televising open-air performances or special experimental programmes.

The two main studios, one for use with each of the television systems, are 70 ft. by 30 ft. by 26 ft. high. Acoustically, the studios are rather more "dead" than is general practice for sound broadcasting, since the introduction of scenery necessary for television will, in effect, control the acoustic characteristics.

The walls of the studios are covered entirely, except for door and window openings, with sheets of asbestos compound which has a high degree of sound absorption. As this material has a rather rough

surface, it is covered up to about 10 ft. from the floor with a protective fabric which is designed not to affect the sound-absorbing properties of the compound.

The ceilings of the studios are treated with building board, as commonly used in ordinary broadcasting studios. The floors are covered with black linoleum over which can be laid any type of flooring which may be required.

Several microphone points are installed in each studio, and they are arranged to allow the use of any type of microphone which may be required. Portable stands of the "lazy-arm" type are also provided.

Ventilation has been provided in the studios by means of fans which extract the air through a series of gratings fixed in the ceilings and connected with the fans by trunking, the intake for fresh air being provided by openings in the upper part of the windows, fitted with filters that clean the air and deaden extraneous noise; the lower part of the windows are covered by sound-proof shutters during performances. Sound-deadening ducts are connected with the outlets.

The Marconi-E.M.I. studio is divided into two stages – A and B – of which A, the larger, gives an acting area of approximately 24 ft. sq. It is equipped with two sets of tableau curtains.

Lining the studio on two sides are hanging velvet curtains running on two tracks, the front curtain being black and the back one white to allow for interchange of backgrounds. Each stage has separate lighting, controlled from a central switchboard. Emitron instantaneous television "cameras" are used.

Across the middle of the studio runs a steel lighting bridge which will allow additional lights to be trained on either stage.

High up in the west wall a large plate-glass window indicates the position of the control room, where the producer and the engineering assistants operate.

Next to the control room is the Marconi-E.M.I. tele-ciné room containing two projectors and scanning cameras for televising films…

The Baird tele-ciné room is also fitted with two projectors and the necessary equipment for film transmissions. Next to this room is an additional small studio to be used with the Baird "spot-light" system of direct television of three-quarter-length portraits such as are required for announcements and talks.

In the main Baird studio the arrangement of the stages is different from its Marconi-E.M.I. counterpart. The larger stage is placed diagonally to the intermediate film camera room, which is situated in the centre of the studio and looks rather like the bay window of a modern villa viewed from without.

The curtains are the same as in the Marconi-E.M.I. studio, but the hanging arrangements differ in that they have to suit the different positions of the two stages.

On the opposite side of the corridor on the studio floor are the artists' dressing rooms. Five rooms are for men and five for women, each set of rooms having its own bath. There is also a chorus room. Forty artists can be accommodated twenty-one women and nineteen men. In each room are buzzer calling signals operated from the corner of each main studio. There are also an artists' waiting room and a special make-up room on the same floor.

At the south-west end of the studio floor is the concrete scene dock for storing scenery and properties. It may also be used for televising objects in the productions shop below, as already mentioned.

Adjoining the dressing rooms is the band room, the walls of which have been acoustically treated. The B.B.C. has also acquired the Alexandra Palace Theatre, which may be used later on for preliminary rehearsals and experimental programmes.

Heating is by means of hot-water radiators with pump circulation, and has been provided in all areas.

It was decided to convert the S.E. tower to provide offices for the television staff, and to remove the existing pylon and replace it with a steel mast to carry the television and sound aerials.

The television mast, constructed on top of the tower, presented some interesting problems. Its highest point is 300 ft. above the ground, the height of the steelwork above the brick tower being 215 ft. Thus from a hill 306 ft. above sea level the B.B.C.'s new television station dominates London and a large portion of the Home Counties, for the aerial array for vision transmissions, which is mounted at the summit of the mast, is more than 600 ft. above sea level.

The mast is tapered for a height of 105 ft. above the tower, square in section, the sides of the square being 30 ft. at the bottom and 7 ft. at the top of the tapered portion. At this point, to suit the special design of aerials, the section changes from a 7-ft. square to an octagon 7 ft. from face to face, and maintains these dimensions up to the top of the mast.

It will be appreciated that during a gale the force of the wind on the mast becomes very great, and special means were adopted to transmit the loads to the brick tower. Four steel lattice girders, 30 ft. long and 7 ft. 6 in. high, in the form of a square, were placed on top of the existing brick tower.

The four legs of the mast were then bolted to the corners of this square, and each corner was then embedded in 17 tons of concrete to act as a counter-balancing weight, to absorb some of the 100-ton vertical uplift in each leg under extreme gale conditions.

In addition to this, at each corner a heavy angle-shaped steel tie bar, 50 ft. long, was carried down inside each corner of the tower, and, after being subjected to a tension of 30 tons, was firmly connected with the brickwork of the tower with this pull still upon it.

Two separate aerial systems are carried by the tower, one for vision and one for sound. Both systems are similar, each consisting of a number of aerial elements arranged round the mast, those for vision being above and those for sound beneath. Each aerial consists of eight push-pull end-fed vertical dipoles spaced equi-angularly round the mast, together with a similar set of dipoles used as reflectors to avoid induced currents in the mast structure and so increase the radiated field.

The aerials are connected to junction boxes, with which are associated a number of impedance-matching transformers to correct the aerial response.

The aerial systems are connected to the transmitters by means of two 5.-in. concentric feeders which pass down the mast and along to the transmitting rooms, a change-over switch being provided so that either vision transmitter can be connected to the vision aerial…

The transmitter to radiate the sound accompanying the vision programme is capable of operating over a band of frequencies from 35 to 50 MC/S, the working frequency being 41.5 MC/S and the output rating 3 kW at 90 per cent. peak modulation (Copenhagen rating).

Owing to the different method and range of modulation adopted for the vision transmitters, the Copenhagen rating would have no meaning and these transmitters are rated in terms of instantaneous peak power which they will deliver to the aerial at 100 per cent. modulation – about 17 kW.

The sound transmitter is built in four separate units, each unit being housed in a metal cubicle. The master oscillator (ensuring a stability of plus or minus one part in 100,000) operates at half the carrier-wave frequency, and is followed by one frequency-doubling stage and five high-frequency amplifying stages.

Modulation is effected at the anodes of the final high-frequency amplifier by choke control; modulator, sub-modulator and sub-sub-modulator stages of the conventional type being employed…

In the final high-frequency stage, two CAT9 water-cooled valves in push-pull are used, and in the main modulator stage three CAM3 valves in parallel. The transmitter is designed to give high-quality sound reproduction and will enable full advantage to be taken of the wide frequency band which is available at this low wavelength.

The frequency response of the transmitter is substantially flat between 30 and 10,000 c.p.s., the maximum departure being less than 2 db. over this range, while the low-frequency harmonic content introduced by the transmitting apparatus is very low.

The low-frequency input stage (the sub-sub-modulator) is designed to operate from a signal which has an amplitude equivalent to that employed as a standard at all B.B.C. transmitters.

In an ultra-short-wave transmitter special precautions have to be taken to reduce spurious radiation to a minimum, and particular attention has been paid to the screening of the transmitting units in order to ensure this. In addition, the high-frequency energy is fed to the aerial through a concentric copper-tube feeder which is non-radiating.

Consequently, fields due to the transmitter other than the main field produced by the aerial itself are practically non-existent. Similar precautions are taken with the vision transmitters and feeder system.

All the valve filaments are heated by direct current from a motor-generator --- having an output of 300 A at 20 V, the filaments at the early stages being fed through voltage-dropping resistances.

The main H.T. supply at 6,000 V D.C. for the penultimate high-frequency amplifying stage, the power-output stage and the modulators is obtained by means of a hot-cathode mercury-vapour type rectifier fed by a step-up transformer and provided with adequate smoothing.

Control of the high-tension voltage is carried out by means of a remotely-controlled induction-regulator.

All auxiliary H.T. and grid-bias supplies are obtained from metal rectifiers, fed from transformers and provided with suitable smoothing circuits.

The main controls are grouped on a control table so that one operator is able to manipulate all the power supplies to the transmitter. All switching operations are effected by remote control, and the switch-gear is fully interlocked to prevent damage to the transmitter by the application of power-supplies in the wrong sequence.

In addition, there is a sequence-starting switch which ensures that sufficient time elapses between the application of each succeeding voltage, so as to allow valves and other apparatus to become properly warmed up before the mains H.T. power is applied.

All electrical apparatus is fully protected by means of over- and under-voltage relays and water-flow monitoring devices so that, in the event of the failure of any supply, the whole apparatus is automatically shut down and cannot be restarted until the deficiency is remedied…" [WT]

2 November 1936
The world's first regular high definition public service was inaugurated at Alexandra Palace. [JE]

The BBC initially experimented with two rival transmission systems, that of James Logie Baird and an alternative developed by Marconi-Erni, which was finally selected.

1938
Tram service to palace replaced by buses. [JE]

1939
Television service closed down for duration of war. Most of palace requisitioned for war purposes. [JE]

3 September 1939
Palace closed by the war. [SB]

1939-1945
BBC transmitter in action as a decoy for enemy aircraft and the palace hit by incendiary bombs. [SB]

1939-1945
Belgian refugees returned to the palace, as well as troops home from Dunkirk. [KG]

1941
"… The BBC transmitter at Alexandra Palace had been used for the first public transmission of television a few years earlier. Although closed for the duration of the war, it was still being manned on a 'care and maintenance basis', the engineer in charge being Wilf Pafford.

The advice was heeded. Dr Cockburn's team in the Telecommunications Research Establishment (TRE) at Swanage, designed a type of Meacon in which the enemy aircraft ranging signal (which was a re-radiation of the enemy ground signal) was picked up on a broad band receiver and the modulation superimposed on a medium power transmitter tuned to the radio frequency of the German ground range station. In this way the range indications at enemy ground stations would be confused.

The first installation of this counter-measure, to which the code-name Domino was given, was set up to protect London from enemy aircraft covering the Benito station at Cassel, near Calais. As mentioned above, use was made of the BBC television sound transmitter at Alexandra Palace, in North London. The receiver was placed at a disused BBC station in Swain's Lane, Highgate, where a high fidelity cable was already available to Alexandra Palace for passing the various tones to the transmitter. The receiving equipment was later moved to a higher site at Parliament Hill as it was found that receiving conditions were not good at Swain's Lane. The equipment was ready for operational use by the middle of February 1941. At the end of this month a second Domino installation was completed on Beacon Hill near Boscombe Down about eight miles north of Salisbury, thus making both the Cherbourg and Cassel controls subject to counter-measures simultaneously. In

addition, another counter-measure, code-named Benjamin, operated against the easily jammable electronic bearing analyser of the Benito system.

Dr (later Professor) Ewart Farvis, a peace-time lecturer in structural engineering, called up in the national emergency like so many other scientists made a major contribution to the new counter-measures. He did outstanding fieldwork in monitoring the enemy beam transmissions and later led the counter-measures at Alexandra Palace. He was later congratulated by Cockburn on producing 'an almost undetectable jammer design'." [LB]

1940s
In 1944 a flying bomb exploded to the north of the building, damaging the roof of the Great Hall. The organ suffered water penetration and covered in snow had to be dismantled during the severe winter of 1946/47. [JH]

1940s
"… the palace again became a reception and distributing centre for refugees from Belgium and Holland; also for troops evacuated from Dunkirk. Furniture from bombed homes and, towards the end of the war, luggage belonging to Gibraltarians was stored there. From November 1941 to March 1943 even the skating rink was denied to the public when it was found that a major job of under-pinning was needed on the north wall of the rink and also to the north-west tower. During this period the only public activities in part of the palace were open-air summer entertainments organised by local borough councils and given during the war years in the Grove…

In July 1944 a flying bomb which fell in the Avenue to the north of the palace damaged small buildings in the park and the roof of the Great Hall. When the war was over the Trustees went through the same traumatic experiences of the early 1920s. Although the park was available to the public, as indeed it had been throughout the war, the palace was a long way from being suitable for public use. In fact some areas were to remain under requisition for several years. Added to the miserable business of protracted negotiations for war claims (for this time the palace had suffered from war damage) was the difficulty in getting materials for essential repairs. The Tudor Ballroom, re-named Blandford Hall after the clothing firm which rented it during the war, was now unsafe. Late in 1946 it was announced that the Trustees could not obtain the permits for materials to repair the Great Hall roof and the organ was in jeopardy. During the severe winter of 1946-7, when snow lay on the organ, it was dismantled and the parts stored in the aisles of the Great Hall where the roof was relatively waterproof…" [RC]

1944
Flying bomb fell just behind the palace which caused the loss of much glass and roofs. The shingles were stripped from the towers.

The rose window in the north gable blew in and the organ suffered. [SB]

1944
A flying bomb damaged the roof above the organ. [KG]

1946
Television service re-commenced but other uses of palace fragmented. [JE]

1946-1947
The organ partly dismantled and stored. [KG]

late 1940s

Description of the BBC area:

"… Eighty-five years ago crowds of recreation-bound Victorians first climbed the hill to inspect the stuffed animals which formed the major attractions offered by Alexandra Palace. Today there is only a huge and hideous derelict building, completely fallen from its purpose of entertainment – except for one corner. Here in paradoxical contrast flourishes the great entertainment of the future.

Fourteen years ago BBC architects designed the first television station so that it would fit into the Victorian edifice. They proved commendably well that the two were not irreconcilable. True, there are more functional stations built now, but this one will last some time yet – and it will have to, the way things are. It isn't possible for everyone to see for themselves, so let's take a look around on paper.

Under the 220-foot mast, the office suites in the tower are occupied by the senior executives, who enjoyed the most striking view of London, when they have time to look at it. We'll get dizzy staring up at the tower, so push open the heavy swing doors and enter. The front hall just has room for a telephone box, a display stand, a sofa and the commissionaire. The big clock is not right, nor does it agree with any other in the building, it's simply another unexpected hazard of television.

The first door we notice is labelled "No Smoking" and in smaller letters "Film Cutting Room". This room together with an office and the projection and viewing rooms is the Film Section premises. When the television set is not in use, the viewing room becomes a miniature cinema, seating up to thirty people, where producers can see the newsreel and any other films to arrange the cutting and timing.

The spacious vision transmitter and power supply hall is set out with great boxes painted battleship grey and emitting a sickening hum from the delicate machinery they guard. In the centre of the room is a long desk covered with knobs and dials. Facing this are the screens on which the pictures are checked as illustrated in the Demonstration Film. Enormous valves sparkle and crackle with brilliant blue mercury vapour arcs. The whole is run by two engineers who go about their work with unhurried efficiency. The sound transmitter is similar, but smaller and quieter.

A quick queue in the newly painted canteen gets us an excellent meal in the company of all the weird galaxy of performers and engineers and executives. Thus refreshed we can mount the double flight of stairs to the second floor.

In the upper scene dock the scenery and furnishings for the day's productions are standing ready for use. Contributions from the carpenters and painters and the properties' store are assembled in the lower scene dock and hauled up through a big hole in the ceiling to the second floor. As many as twenty sets may be used in one day. Once the programme starts the scene shifters strike one set and replace it with another in a matter of seconds, and continually whole sets are entering and leaving the studios, being 'managed' down the vast high corridor from the scene dock.

The make-up room is no longer the chamber of horrors is used to be, when television was in the experimental stage. Where, in days gone by, actors have come out with purple or black lips and white faces, they now would look only a little unnatural in the street. It is the character make-up which gives the make-up department an opportunity to show their skill. They may have to make an actor twenty years older or younger, or create anyone from a Roundhead to a Cavalier.

The two studios are not identical in layout. In 1936 studio B was used with the Baird apparatus, and studio A with the Marconi-EMI. Control room B is on one side of the studio, and has more room for the production staff on the upper floor, but less for the engineers and their equipment. Studio B has

three cameras. Studio A has four cameras, and an alcove which is very useful for such shots as the taxi in Café Continental.

The telecine room houses the two telecine machines, with a checking monitor, and the apparatus for rewinding the films after showing. The telecine cameras have no control of their own, but can pass through either A or B control room, so that film sequences can be handled in conjunction with plays in either studio.

The lines termination room is where all O.B.'s [outside broadcasts] come into Alexandra Palace. They may come by cable all the way or by radio link to Highgate and then on by cable. The room has the appearance of a small telephone exchange.

The output from the lines termination room and from A and B control rooms are fed to the central control room. Here, as the Demonstration Film shows, the whole programme is assembled and checked before going down to the transmitters. As usual there are the two screens for preview and transmission, a desk full of switches and buttons, and three or four telephones. In this room also is the master oscillator which provides the synchronising signal which keeps every camera and screen in step…" [APTS]

1954
Passenger trains ceased to serve Alexandra Palace. [JE]

July 1954
The railway line which ran right to the basement closed. [SB]

1957
Great hall restored, re-decorated and re-opened; exhibitions held and conferences and banquets held in the Palace Suite. The roller skating rink in use. [KG]

1966
The Minister of Housing and Local Government awarded control of the palace and park to the GLC [under the re-organisation as a consequence of the 1963 Local Government Act]. The 1966 Alexandra Park and Palace Order defined the details of the change. [KG]

1966
Act of Parliament transferred administration of palace and park to Greater London Council. [JE]

late 1960s
"… The roller-skating rink, opened by the Trustees sixty years before, was one of the few features of the palace to enjoy continuous success, but it was now showing signs of age and declining popularity. A new surface and modern skates led to smoother skating and reduction of noise; improved décor and amplification of music made the rink attractive and skating again became a very popular recreation, especially among young people. One feature of the improvements was the removal and lowering of a false ceiling. It was found that the main beams of the roof were in a highly dangerous condition and liable to fall without warning. Had they done so during a public session a major tragedy would have resulted.

The new surface brought problems of balancing the needs of speed skaters, now concentrated in the palace with the closing of other rinks, with those of recreational, dance and figure skaters. This was solved by constructing a special speed skating asphalt track in the Palm Court…" [RC]

1970
The Jockey Club did not renew the race track licence and the 1865 grandstand demolished. [KG]

1970
Racing at Alexandra Park ceased. [JE]

1971
Banqueting hall in the park destroyed by fire. [KG]

1974
Closure of the roller skating rink due to a dangerous roof. [KG]

1974
The roller skating rink closed because of the dangerous state of the roof. [JH]

1974
GLC decided against a programme of restoration. [JE]

1975
Centenary event held. [KG]

1975
"… Improvements already completed at the Palace include the redecoration of the banqueting suite, the palm court and the bar and cafeteria adjoining the great hall. In the park a new refreshment kiosk in the grove and nature trails have been opened, and approval in principle has been given for the creation of a children's zoo, an outdoor roller-skating ring, a model village, a riding school and improvements to the buildings associated with the boating lake.

Taking Ally Pally into its second century, however, has brought the GLC face to face with some harsh long-term realities. After 100 years of neglect and extensive war damage the Palace is still in a severe state of disrepair, and in some places is in danger of collapse. Already the GLC has spent more than £630,000 on essential building maintenance work. But a further £2 million must be spent to bring the Palace interior up to statutory safety standards. To restore and modernise the 8-acre Palace fully would require capital expenditure of £17 million, something that is impossible in the current economic climate…" [CL]

1979
Haringey designated the park and palace a conservation area following the Secretary of State's refusal to list the building. [KG]

1980
Haringey took over the building with a GLC 'dowry' of £8.5 million to help with restoration. [KG]

1980
Fire caused severe damage to more than half the palace building. Development Group set up and programme of radical repair and re-building put in hand. Theatre proposed as a concert hall, but this never proceeded with. [JE]

10 July 1980
Fire began in the area of the organ and spread west across the building. The hall was ruined and the western side severely damaged.

1982
BBC departed from the palace. [JE]

1986
GLC abolished. Palace and park passed to Haringey Borough Council. [JE]

1986
"… A prominent feature of the rebuilt Alexandra palace in North London are the two external, triangulated tubular steel roof trusses from which the Great Hall's glass roof is to be hung. The trusses were lifted into place during last month's freeze-up. Ben Roskrow reports:

Providing 7,000 sq m of uninterrupted floor space has not been regarded as particularly difficult over recent years – unless of course the roof has to be the shape of a traditional Victorian archway.

This is the case at the £32 million rebuild of "Ally Pally" under a Taylor Woodrow management contract where the central Great Hall is to become a massive exhibition centre.

The original roof, burnt down in 1980 with most of the site in a devastating fire, took the form of a 24 m diameter central arch springing out of horizontal beams on each side. The total span of 52 m was supported regularly by columns within the main body of the building.

It was the stipulation that the roof should be supported only at the side walls that resulted in an ambitious design hinging on the use of two 50 tonne external trusses. The roof itself will be suspended from them.

The more widely accepted space frame, which would have been fully capable of meeting the engineering requirements, was not able to provide the architecture of the arch and apex that formed the familiar north and south faces of the building. This system has, however, been used to cover the 3,000 sq m West Hall.

The first work in the stage by stage construction of the external truss roof involved bracing the hall's end walls against the wind. With the structure completely exposed to the elements on top of a hill, wind conditions can be very severe.

So the roof has been designed with not only future wind loadings in mind, but with special attention to wind uplift during construction. The north and south walls, as well as the bracing, have been grouted and underpinned to strengthen them. They have also been tied to concrete anchors weighing 100 tonnes.

Both main trusses bear on two composite steel portals erected on each side of the hall. These in turn bear on sets of four 600 mm diameter piles, sunk 20 m.

Each portal consists of two steel columns, one metre in diameter, bolted through a 60 mm thick base plate to the pile cap. Before each column was lifted into place, a wooden template was place over the 36 bolts to ensure that they were in exactly the right place to receive the 17 m high steel member.

A cross beam bridges the 7 m gap between the columns, and the bearings sit on this ready to take the truss.

Each truss was delivered to site in eight sections, having been fabricated in Robert Watson's Bolton works and split for transportation. Each unit consists of four pairs of 350 mm diameter steel tubes

connected by 200 mm diameter diagonals. The wall thicknesses vary according to how much load the tubes will have to take.

The eight sections were welded together on site to make four. Temporary steel support structures were built to aid the welding process, which when complete produced 30 m long members ready for lifting. To guarantee that the pieces were fixed in the correct position, a 200 mm gap was marked on them before they were parted for delivery. This length had to be re-established after welding with a tolerance of just 2 mm. The welder had to be particularly careful to compensate for the expansion caused by his work.

Lifting the trusses into place began earlier this year. Once erected, both units had to be temporarily supported by military trestles, themselves weighing 110 tonnes. These consisted of a 30 m high lattice of steelwork erected on site and anchored by 270 tonnes of concrete and ballast.

At the top of each trestle, angled supporting steel units are fixed on to which the trusses rest. These temporary support systems will be left in place until the whole roof is substantially complete.

The main lifting was carried out using a 200 tonne Gottwald crane with a 53 m jib but special slinging techniques meant using a smaller crane to assist. John Bowie, Robert Watson's site manager, explained:

"When the trusses were lifted we had to ensure that the base plate remained horizontal to the ground. This meant attaching one long rope and one short one to the unit to maintain the correct angle of lift. If only one crane had been used, all the load would be taken by just one of the ropes during the early stage of the lift."

"Conditions were atrocious for some of the lifts," said Mr Bowie, "but once the work is started you reach a point of no return and you have to persevere."

The first two sections forming one half of the truss were lifted and fixed in place. Connecting the second section was the problem, slipping the 20 mm collars in to the fixed female tubes and welding the major members. The bracing pieces were bolted near the apex to complete the connection.

The next stage in the roof construction will be hanging five girders between the trusses, stretching the 120 m length of the hall. These consist of similar units to the eight truss members. The three that are hung at the apex and half-way along each truss are to be 5 m deep while the edge girders are just 3.5 m. All are delivered in seven sections and bolted on site.

These girders will support 32 sets of rafters and 26 sets of purlins which will make up the main roof on to which the covering will be fixed.

Special steelwork will form the ornamental arch of the original roof. A combination of straight and curved members will be hung from the main roof at intervals of 14 m. This will be covered with a translucent ceiling covering.

High quality grade 50 D steel is used for the external trusses to provide strength and resistance against the elements.

The main roof will be glazed as the hall relies on the roof for all its natural lighting…" [CN]

1988
Completion of the first phase of restoration by contractors Taylor Woodrow under the supervision of Dr Peter Smith and his team.

1988
"… For seven long years the Alexandra Palace Development Team has battled to reinstate one of north London's most prominent landmarks. But with the first phase of a major restoration programme, estimated at around £30m, now complete, there is growing optimism among the building team that the task will finally end.

For architect and historian, Dr Peter Smith, who heads the design team, the last few years have been trying. Dogged first by the famous fire of July 1980, which gutted much of the grand Victorian edifice and put paid to comparatively modest renovation plans, he and his team were then hampered by the rigours of an 18-month public inquiry into the redesign.

But since a radically revised scheme was finally approved by the environment secretary in 1983, work has moved quickly on one of the country's most sensitive renovations.

The project has inevitably had its setbacks, not least provoked by the need to graft new building technologies on to the ruins of the original brick structure, designed in 1873 by architect Owen Jones. But the ingenuity of the architectural team is helping revive the former Palace of the People as an interesting modern showcase…

Exhibition halls and conference space are part of the plan, as are public entertainments. There is to be a luxury hotel, an ice rink and other sports facilities plus attendant restaurants and bars.

According to Smith, craft skills have played a major part in the job, which aims to recreate some of the spirit of the old building. The use of crushed sea shells for the walls of the new Roman Bar is a typical example of the detail his architects have gone to. So too are the specially-crafted handrails, made of ductile iron rather than the original cast iron to give strength without spoiling the aesthetics.

But, on the products front, Smith and his team can also claim a few significant innovations.

Most important, perhaps, is the use of a silicon-coated glass fibre inner membrane to line the 8000 m^2 glass roof of the Great Hall. Though the original plan to use a double skin fabric membrane for the entire roof covering was rejected at the public inquiry, the installation is still claimed to be the first major use of the silicon fabric in Europe.

Architect Richard Loren explains that the fabric, manufactured by US specialist Oak Dow Corning, was specified because of its high translucency and noise reducing qualities. Following the advice of USE engineering consultant Horst Berger, the designers decided in favour of a silicon coating rather than Teflon (ptfe) because tests have shown the material to be less of a hazard in case of fire. The silicon coat is claimed to be as durable as Teflon.

Second on Smith's list is the Trocal gasket used to seal the perimeter of the main glazed roof. This was selected, he says, for its flexibility, which allows 50 mm vertical movement and 150 mm from side to side.

According to Loren some 350 mm of the plasticised PVC gasket have been installed in the Great Hall, where the massive roof comprises Ruberoid's patent double glazing system supported on extremely high tensile steel beams. "It seemed to be one of the few systems that would be feasible for the job," he says.

On the craft side, Smith gives a special mention to the glazing in the Great Hall's historic rose window.

Here, glass designer Maria McClafferty has used traditionally blown coloured and iridescent glass from German specialist Derix of Stuttgart in combination with coated brown mirror glass from Pilkington.

The predominantly blue glazing is set into a steel reinforced wooden frame made by London craftsman Andrew Murray to give a dramatic focal point to the building. Loren explains that the mirror glass "gives a reflective quality to the window and a terrific sparkle, which can be seen a mile away", though the effect is equally stunning from inside the building.

Low maintenance
In the interests of low maintenance, the architects have been very selective in their treatment of the decorative plasterwork that gave the old interiors much of their character. Specialists HAT Interiors have used fibrous plaster for the long runs of cornices and mouldings in the Great Hall, while the large columns and entablatures have been encased in glass fibre by Alan Butcher & Associates.

According to Loren, the fibrous plaster has been kept well out of public reach to reduce wear and tear.

Loren also highlights the special mineral-based paint used in the Great Hall as a low maintenance aspect of the scheme. Produced by West German manufacturer Keim Paints of Munich, the decorative coating is said not to fade and is highly microporous.

Though Keim paint is mostly used for external murals and on render finishes, Loren says it has been used on a number of historic interiors in Britain, notably at the Brighton Pavilion. Alexandra Palace is, he claims, the biggest interior installation in this country.

Finally, Smith mentions the resin-bonded gravel system that has been used on the south and west terraces to give a hard-wearing stable external surface for visitors to the building.

Architect Brian Dawson wanted "something a bit upmarket from tarmacadam", but cost prohibited the use of stone paving. "Loose gravel was not acceptable," he says, because of maintenance problems.

Dawson specified a yellow quarried gravel treatment from Total Protection (South Eastern). Epoxy resin, specially formulated for Total by Addagrip Surface Treatments, was laid on to a 60 mm substrate of new tarmacadam. The gravel chips were then placed and sealed with a coating of resin.

Because of its stability, the system was successfully used on access ramps with falls of up to 1 in 18.

According to Dawson, the only potential problem was that the strength of the material might pull the flooring away from the building. But this has been overcome by using a specially formulated edge strip to allow for movement.

Work is continuing on the second refurbishment phase at Alexandra Palace.

In typical spirit, Smith and his team are expecting to claim a few more materials triumphs before the contract has run its course…" [Bldg]

1988
Re-building programme completed. [JE]

1988
"… Following its virtual destruction by fire in July 1980, numerous restoration schemes were appraised and amid considerable public debate, a phased reconstruction was agreed upon in 1982. The final scheme incorporates 10 000 m^2 of exhibition space, sports facilities, a hotel and associated catering and administrative facilities.

Phase 1, the largest part of the renovation and reconstruction project, was completed in February. This comprised the large expanse of the Great Hall, the West Hall and its glass roofed entrance, called Palm Court. These areas were the most badly damaged by the fire.

The Great Hall, which is 120 x 56 m, can accommodate around 7500 people and has one of the largest uninterrupted open floor spaces of any exhibition hall in the UK. 2500 people can be accommodated in the West Hall.

The total project cost (phases 1 and 2) is £37.5 million. Mechanical and electrical work, accounting for £8 million (£5 million taken up in the first phase alone). DSSR was appointed the building services consultant.

Fire protection… understandably was a top priority in the design – the fire in July being the second time that the Palace had succumbed to such extensive damage which, ironically, occurred just five days before extensive alterations and modernisation were due to take place. The result is an overall external and internal fire fighting concept which has been developed through a series of meetings with the former London Fire Brigade and, latterly, the London Fire Civil Defence Authority (LFCDA).

The system uses time divisional multiplex (tdm) which constantly monitors various fire alarm panels from where fire zones, ventilation equipment and ancillary fire alarm systems are controlled. The monitoring of these panels is relayed to three central stations, each with its own hierarchy.

The North West Tower serves as a main base for the LFCDA who would control and supervise any potential emergency/fire situation. Its central station works in association with the development's main control room, where identical facilities are provided. A satellite fire zone information panel is also provided within the event hallmaster's office.

To augment the fire alarm installation, and as an integral part of the life safety system, public area alert and evacuation procedures are relayed via the public address system.

The external fire hydrant ring main was considered to be an immediate requirement for the protection of the building throughout the redevelopment and in the future. From the Thames Water Authority mains supplies were taken to an automatic hydrant pump set. The set comprises electric duty pumps and diesel driven automatic standby pumps, the system pressure being maintained by an electric jockey pump. Fire hydrants are strategically placed around the Terrace and Service Yard to provide optimum cover.

Connections from the hydrant main feed water to first-aid fire fighting hose reels. These are located in housings to harmonise with the Victorian finishes. The building is also protected by a sprinkler system supplied from two large bulk water storage tanks providing 227 m^3.

These tanks have duplicate supplies from the domestic and hydrant water main and feed a fully automatic fire pump set comprising electrically driven duty pumps, together with a fully automatic diesel driven standby pump. Sprinkler valve chambers (which house the valve set for each sprinkler zone) are provided for each phase of the works. All escape routes in the West and North West Hall have sprinkler protection. Larger areas such as the Great Hall and Palm Court incorporate drencher protection using "cut-off" heads to prevent spread of fire. The height of the Great Hall and Palm Court precluded the effective use of sprinklers.

Ceiling voids are provided with additional sprinkler protection while electrical rooms use multi-jet controls to contain the spread of fire.

Sprinkler protection of the multi-service tunnel required inter-related isolation of exhibition power supplies, when sprinklers are operational in this zone automatic isolation of the air current breakers is initiated.

Water management
The drainage was the first thing that needed looking at to see if the original installation could be adapted to the redevelopment and whether it could cope with the expected increase in demand. To do this a complete cctv survey was undertaken of the underground system. This revealed considerable collapse of pipework, root intrusion and extensive blocking. In view of this a new design was started in conjunction with the Borough of Haringey Engineer's department. This resulted in a new gravity installation and new sewer connections.

The redevelopment's design introduced two sub levels. The restaurant and kitchen at basement level and the main boiler house, electrical switchgear, transformers and beer store at sub-basement level. This resulted in fragmenting part of the below slab drainage installations which was related to an advanced reinforced concrete works package. The foul and surface water design required careful forward planning so that the earlier installation would relate equally to the future planning of upper levels, and areas of the overall development control plan which did not form part of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 works.

The below slab drainage system incorporates manholes and rodding eyes; the system terminates at 225 mm and 450 mm sewer connections for the foul and surface water system. The system used vitrified clay pipework and fittings with flexible joints, manholes being generally constructed from concrete ring sections.

Internal soil, waste and ventilating pipework installations are designed as a one-pipe system. The installation uses cast iron pipework with flexible joints. Branch waste and anti-syphon pipework is upvc.

The vast surface areas of the various roof levels and the extent of surface water meant that a network of horizontal trunk rainwater pipes had to be devised which could deal with rainfall in the region of 150 mm/h. The rainwater pipework is installed in cast-iron with flexible joints or upvc with solvent weld joints.

As the structure of the Palace was to remain unchanged, it was considered that high level large capacity storage tanks for domestic supplies were not feasible. As a result a low level storage system was developed in conjunction with Thames Water Authority, providing central water storage of 227 m^3. The cold and hot water systems are pressurised by a single set of automatic pumps with diaphragm pressure vessels.

Exhibition and events can be offered full water services, these being distributed through the multi-services tunnel and link trenches below the exhibition space.

Quick release couplings within the service tunnel are provided from which flexible hoses can be distributed to the exhibition stands.

Domestic hot water to main exhibition halls is provided by duplicate semi-storage calorifiers which are sized to cater for fluctuating demands. The other public and ancillary areas are supplied from local storage calorifiers…

The redevelopment of Alexandra Palace required Eastern Electrical to establish a new 11 kV service for the maximum demand of 4MVA. The supply uses vacuum type circuit breakers (vcbs), five being provided, three of which are used for Phases 1 and 2. The remaining vcbs will be employed for future phases of the development.

The power distribution transformers are located centrally and comprises three cast resin encapsulated units manufactured by GEC Transformers. These are rated at 1250 kVA with automatic forced cooling to increase maximum capacity by 40% to 1750 kVA which is particularly suited to the varying load situations.

Each transformer incorporates temperature monitoring devices to control the forced cooling and provide protection over the transformers' operating temperature with first stage alarm and trip facilities.

In addition, each transformer feeds a section of the main lv switchboard housing incoming and outgoing acbs and fuse switches for 40 outgoing feeders. The switchboard, which is rear access, incorporates audit monitoring of power supplies to public areas…

An essential services switchboard provides emergency supplies for the firemans lift, cold rooms and other maintained services and uses a 200 kW diesel generator which is housed within a containerised, acoustically treated enclosure.

Supplying power to exhibitions, concerts and sporting events in the Great Hall and West Hall is done via a system of power bus-bars of varying capacity.

The busbars are routed below the concrete floor of the main spaces and located within a multi-service tunnel. Tap off units can be used every 0.5m over their entire length to serve the exhibition stands above.

10 lv load centres use cable feeders and floor distribution cubicles of the front access type. Cable routing to these load centres required a network of underground pipe ducts/access points and the supplies to the high level switchrooms for the Great Hall use former chimney flues which, though now redundant, provide excellent vertical risers.

Telephone systems are provided and available to all exhibitions with facilities for direct and switchboard lines, telex and facsimile database transmission.

Returning Alexandra Palace to its original Victorian splendour required careful consideration as to the method of routeing electrical services.

The extensive use of renovated fair-faced brickwork throughout the restoration required careful brickwork removal so that wiring pathways could be established.

Over 500 m of profiled cornicing incorporates and hides cable routeing for lighting, power and ancillary services in the main spaces of the Great Hall and Palm Court…

The most visible of the services, and hence most important to the overall concept, is the lighting which required careful consideration.

Extensive glazing within the Palm Court and Great Hall assists in effective energy management and the Great Hall, with its translucent silicon coated fabric lining suspended from the roof structure, provides suitable conditions for indirect lighting.

The Great Hall is provided with 120 1500 W MBIL floodlighting luminaires mounted on two triangular lighting gantries. Fluorescent management/safety lighting is mounted below each gantry.

The lighting design for the Londesborough Room, Phoenix and Roman Bar, main restaurant and circulation areas enhances the special period designs of the finishes where murals depicting historic points of interest adorn the walls.

Maintained emergency lighting was provided using a number of central battery units operating at 110 V, rated between 1.12 to 3.5 kW and of 3 h duration. Safety is of paramount importance in an enclosed public space and Alexandra Palace is no exception. The systems were designed for low maintenance, with minimum ventilation requirements associated with the operating characteristics of gas recombination-type calls…

The hvac systems within the redevelopment had to be designed in conjunction with the development team so as to be unobtrusive yet provide the various correct internal ambient conditions.

Heating in the Palm Court, for example, has to be closely controlled because the raised plant beds are inhabited by palm trees from Alexandria. Thermostats located by the trees maintain the underfloor heating which comprises low temperature hot water finned tube convectors at a minimum of 10˚C changing to 16˚C when the external temperature is -2˚C. There is no cooling; surrounding fan convectors circulate the air and in summer mechanical ventilation is used.

The whole complex has to comply with the requirements of the former GLC publication Places of Public Entertainment Technical Regulations.

Cooling is limited in the first phase to the restaurant which is served by an external chiller in the north service yard, the bars and the hall master's office; all main areas rely on heating and ventilating.

The main halls, that is the Great Hall and Hall B, are ventilated by constant volume air handling units located at roof level.

CO_2 monitoring equipment positioned in the return air duct controls the amount of fresh air being brought into the halls when they are occupied, via three sets of infinity variable modulating dampers. This is one of the first buildings in London of this size to use this facility, provided at minimal cost and producing considerable energy savings over a stepped fresh air damper control system.

In the main restaurant at basement level, which can accommodate 400 diners, and in the organisers' offices, performers' changing rooms, bars, snack bars, staff changing and toilet areas, either mechanical ventilation or comfort cooling is available.

The boilers and ancillary plant are located at sub-basement level below the Great Hall and comprise four 1500 kW natural gas-fired forced draught boilers, gas boosters, pumps, pressurisation units and associated equipment. This plant produces low temperature hot water which is pumped around the site by a series of distribution mains to the various plant areas, radiators, fan and natural convectors.

Controls
The central control and monitoring system shuts off areas which are not in use via a number of zone control valves located around the site. The central computer (currently located in the hall master's office but which will be moved to the SE tower when it is built) analyses the number of zone valves which are shut and calculates the number of pumps and boilers needed to maintain the necessary flow rate and temperature.

All the hvac systems are continually monitored for operating conditions and malfunctions. The central computer enables the engineer to select space temperatures and starting times of plant and equipment.

Phase 1 of the reconstruction was completed on February 22 1988. Since then the halls have been in constant use for various exhibitions and sports events.

Phase 2 is currently under way with an expected completion in October of this year. The work comprises an ice rink and associated facilities providing a venue for exhibition skating, shows, ice dancing, and public skating…" [BS]

1996
Alexandra Palace added to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade II. Importance of the theatre stage recognised. [JE]

2.0 SIGNIFICANCES

2.1 An Overview of the Significance of Alexandra Palace

Alexandra Palace is of Victorian design and execution with extensive 20th century repairs and alterations. It is now listed Grade II, which makes it of special interest.

The key significances in descending importance are:

2.1.1 Historic Values

The Palace is a rare survival of large scale Victorian project built for public entertainment and educational purposes. It houses surviving remnants of BBC occupancy from the 1930s, when the studio and tower were used for the world's first high definition television broadcast.

The Victorian Theatre survives, albeit in near derelict condition, but does still contain the interesting stage and a fine set of modern stage machinery. (The Museum of London possesses a set of scene gloves from this Theatre).

The Palace is a much loved and well-remembered part of the broad cultural life of the capital, and had, in addition, proven its usefulness in two World Wars.

2.1.2 Site Significance

The Palace is an unmissable London landmark on a prominent hilltop, high above north London. It sits within c196 acres of landscaped setting. This landscaped park is in large measure as it was set out in public ownership, and freely available for use and recreation.

This public access is guaranteed under Act of Parliament.

The Park is also listed Grade II on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.

2.1.3 Architectural Significance

Alexandra Palace's architecture is important as an example of a Victorian Exhibition Hall (a "People's Palace") and as an example of the move in the later 1860s to 1880s hiding cast-iron framed buildings behind ornamentation. The survival of the fabric is patchy and this alone reduces the building's significance. This may well explain why the building is not listed at a higher grade under the National Listing framework. There are nearly half a million listed buildings in the United Kingdom, of which 94.5% are listed Grade II.

2.2 The Significance of the Site

The site of Alexandra Palace is prominent and beautiful, and arguably as important as the extant Victorian architecture; indeed popular legend has said that *"when the farmland upon which Alexandra Palace stands was sold, a curse was made that while nature would prosper on the site, man made enterprises would fail"*.[1]

Significances of the site may be grouped around these themes:

[1] J Harris "Alexandra Palace: A Hidden History", 2005, p7.

- The site within which Alexandra Palace sits comprises some 196 acres and is 300ft above sea level; the building and its environs are prominent on the north London skyline and the Palace was built as and remains a visual focal point. Its height above London has had practical uses in war and peacetime.

- The Palace remains within its original landscaped setting. Certain changes have been made to the park of course since the 1870s (including a prominent road) and orientation of the Palace has shifted as the north front lost prominence. Nonetheless, the symbiotic relationship of the building and parkland remain.

- The Palace and parkland were created for general public use as an alternative in north London to the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. The Palace remains affectionately known as "the monster of Muswell Hill".

- The creation of such a large building in large parkland is representative of Victorian attitudes both to health and leisure. Whilst railway travel made the seaside and other tourist attractions easier to visit, more working people could afford to visit Alexandra Palace at a short distance from the city centre. The desirable properties of a large site which could be accessed by large numbers was of key importance to the creators of the Palace. The official guide to the (first) Palace stated that:

  "A prominent object in the northern heights of London, looking proudly on the smoky metropolis below, is the Alexandra Palace, Muswell Hill. For centuries the region has been well known for fresh air and lovely landscape. For centuries artists and poets revelled in its leafy landscapes. Many generations of citizens have delighted in Hornsey and its Green Lane… In our time they [the public] will come by road and rail a crowd still more dense to rejoice in the attractions of the Alexandra Palace, and to stroll in the 220 acres of leafy glades which form its Park… the building as a whole is imposing and looks well at a distance…"[2]

- The Palace and Park have been in public ownership since 1900 and the passing of an Act of Parliament which led in 1901 to the setting up of the Alexandra Palace & Park Trust; administered now by the local authority. This required that the Trustees maintain the Park and Palace and keep them available for the free use and recreation of the public forever.

  Even when the site was in private ownership in the late 19th century, its importance away from threat of development was recognised; the original guidebook states:

  "It is well the Palace Company have got hold of this ground and set it apart for the use of the people for ever. All round London the speculative builders have ruined the country. They cannot do so here. At Muswell Hill the Park is sacred from their grasp as long as the Alexandra Palace stands…"[3]

- The development of the site, as with the development of the Palace building, is representative of entrepreneurial vision and spirit in the latter part of the 19th century when London was increasing in size rapidly, and services for its inhabitants becoming more desirable and viable. These efforts were not without setbacks, however,

2 The Official Guide to Alexandra Palace and Park, 18--, pages unnumbered, held by the National Art Library.

3 Op cit.

particularly of finance but the continued existence of the site is proof of the dedication devoted to the creation and maintenance of the Palace and Park. The creation of the site in the 19th century has been summarised thus:

"… On his death in 1856, Thomas Rhodes' grandchildren inherited Tottenham Wood Farm, a large dairy farm between the villages of Muswell Hill, Wood Green and Hornsey. Influenced by the success of the Crystal Palace (1851), they drew up a scheme for a similar venture for a north London Palace of the People. The site was described as 'undulating and well timbered with abundant springs and water', and the situation with its extensive and beautiful views was considered 'remarkably healthy' (The Times, 12 November 1858). Of the 450 acres (187.5ha), 150 acres (62.5ha) was to be set aside as park, and the remaining 300 acres (125ha) was sold for building to finance the project. By 1858, a layout of the grounds had been submitted by Mr John Spencer of Bowood, but nothing came of these early plans. Mr Francis Fuller then made a detailed survey of the park as an amusement centre, with a building to rival the Crystal Palace of which he had been a manager for three years. Fuller failed to raise the necessary funding and his scheme was also shelved.

In 1863, the 'Alexandra Park Committee' was formed with the purpose of acquiring the land in order to lay it out as a place for public recreation and amusement. The exhibition building from the Great International Exhibition of 1862 was at the time being taken down at South Kensington, and this was brought to the site and re-erected. Financial difficulties meant that the Palace was not opened until 1873. Sixteen days after the formal opening, it burnt down. Rebuilding to the designs of a Mr Johnson started at once and the new Palace was opened in 1875, many new features having been added to the park. The 200 acre (c 83ha) park which surrounded the Palace was opened in July 1863 and included 10 acres (c 4ha) of the grounds of the adjacent Grove estate, purchased in 1863. The layout was designed by Alexander McKenzie, who chose an informal landscape style, in direct contrast to the formal approach used at the Crystal Palace, and kept in view that the place was a park rather than a flower garden, and so required general effects rather than minute detail.

Efforts to improve the financial situation of the series of companies who ran the Palace resulted in parliamentary powers being obtained in 1877 to sell off 80 acres (c 33ha) of the grounds north of the Palace for housing. The land to the west of Alexandra Park Road, including what became Grove Avenue, was sold off in the late 1870s and used for housing. Bills in the 1880s and 1890s to sell off the whole of the park for building were however unsuccessful. Land to the east of the northern end of The Avenue was also later sold, with the subsequent development of Vallance and Elgin Roads; houses were also built to either side of The Avenue itself.

Following an Act of Parliament, in 1901 the Alexandra Palace and Park Trust was set up, administered by the local authorities. It required that the Trustees maintain the Palace and Park and keep them 'available for the free use and recreation of the public forever'. Only 173 acres (c 72ha) were purchased, despite the 1864 Act which had specified 240 (100ha) were to be devoted to public recreation in perpetuity…"[4]

The importance of the site is reflected in the designations which give it legal protection. These are:

[4] Alexandra Park Conservation and Heritage Management Plan, 2011.

a) Conservation Area
In 1979 the Palace & Park was designated a conservation Area. This is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. (Not including the Garden Centre & allotments).

b) Metropolitan Open Land
The whole of the Park, including the Garden Centre and allotments, is designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

c) Historic Parks & Gardens
The Park is Grade II listed on the English Heritage "Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England".

d) Metropolitan Park
The park is designated as a "Metropolitan Park" by the local Authority.

e) Nature Conservation/Ecology
The Nature Conservation area at Alexandra Palace Park is designated as "An Ecologically Valuable Site of Borough Importance Grade I", the remainder of the Park is designated Grade II.

The park element of the site was the subject of a Conservation and Heritage Management Plan of January 2011, to which the reader is directed for further account of the landscape surrounding the Palace.

2.3 The Significance of the Architecture

The architecture of Alexandra Palace is significant for two main reasons. These are:

1. It has place in the history of the architecture of exhibitions and entertainment in Britain and beyond, and in the later reaction to Victorian architecture in the 20th century.

2. It is a survival of the 19th century technique of building in glass and ironwork, indeed it appears that the 1870s building incorporates structure from an 1860s iron and glass exhibition building which had been put up in South Kensington.

These significances are detailed below.

The architecture also gains importance from the proximity of the 19th century railway station.

It should be stated, however, that these significances are diminished to a certain extent by the patchy survival of 19th century built fabric, due to the decay and fire damage the building has suffered. The building is thus not a complete example of a Victorian "people's palace", nor an untouched example of the skills of 19th century engineers and builders.

Nonetheless, the paucity of examples both of large-scale entertainment buildings and iron and glass constructions contribute to what makes Alexandra Palace special enough to be afforded the protection of Grade II listing, which has been re-confirmed in January 2012.

These strands of significance are further detailed below:

1. Alexandra Palace as an Example of a Victorian Exhibition Hall

The idea of a grand exhibition hall for entertainment and education (a so-called "people's palace") in Muswell Hill dates from 1858, when Owen Jones and Sir Charles Fox proposed a north London version of the Crystal Palace, which had been re-erected in Sydenham in the mid 1850s. The original palace was to have a role which went beyond the commercial aspects of previous exhibitions though, *"a more precise and permanent local and educational role, and this aspect was developed in the re-building of 1873-75 which provided theatre, concert halls and a great hall to seat 12,000, with a huge organ by Henry Willis, the largest in the country"*.[5]

A recent account of life in London in the Victorian era describes the impact of the 1851 "Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations" whose building was re-built in Sydenham in this way:

"Of all the London ventures of this tempestuous and enterprising century, the Great Exhibition was the most stunning: first, for the grandeur of its conception, celebrating for all classes a new world of progress; second, for the revolutionary 'monstrous greenhouse' in which it was placed; and third, for the speed with which the conception was brought to triumphant reality.

The idea originated in early 1848 with Henry Cole, a civil servant, Christ's Hospital scholar, one-time law clerk and member of the Society of Arts. Cole had been involved in local art and industry exhibitions and suggested to Prince Albert, the society's president, a national exhibition on a grand scale. Albert was at first lukewarm but experience of something similar in Paris in 1849 made him a convert. The scheme won royal consent in January 1850. Some 250 architects' designs were considered by the royal commission in charge of the project and for a time confusion and doubt held sway. At Albert's urging, Joseph Paxton's plan for a great conservatory, modelled on one he had made earlier for the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth, startled the commission into a decision. Begun at the end of September 1850, it was miraculously completed by the following January. Installing 100,000 exhibits from all over the world, fitting out two floors in scores of exhibition halls and courts, occupied just a further three months. The Great Exhibition opened on May Day 1851…

No previous event in the nineteenth century had brought all sorts and conditions of Londoners together in such numbers or so harmoniously as at Hyde Park from 1 May to 11 October 1851. And this time nothing burned down.

International exhibitions on a smaller scale would be a continuing feature of London pleasure-making until 1874. But the true legacy of 1851 worked itself out in a different direction. The unparalleled richness and variety of the Great Exhibition's exhibits reinforced the commercial attractions of an omnium-gatherum of many things in once space. These things required huge joint-stock investment. And because Hyde Park could not be available for ever, entrepreneurs were forced to turn to cheaper suburban sites to realise their projects. London pleasure gardens – and London variety – would go on. But now they would do so in ways influenced by the events of that astonishing summer.

The Crystal Palace was moved from Hyde Park, sold to a private company, enlarged by half again and re-erected at Sydenham in 1854. The new owners reverted at the Sydenham site to the old pleasure-gardens formula of balancing outdoor attractions with indoor. But the

[5] Pevsner, Buildings of England: N London Haringey, p580-581.

Crystal Palace Company set its sights high. This was to be no reborn Vauxhall. Crystal Palace adopted a superior tone. It offered art, education and beauty to middle-class visitors who would reach it from London on excursion trains to the palace's two railway stations (the second opened in 1865). It would be an 'illustrated encyclopaedia', and an aural one too, with giant classical concerts in the Great Transept. These were a special passion of the company secretary, the great musical lexicographer George Grove. From 1857 Crystal Palace was home to a triennial Handel festival, where some 4,000 performers sang and played to an audience of 16,000. Handel was ruined. But in the first ten years the palace clocked up 15.3 million visitors.

Even by then something of the high tone had begun to slip. London variety, the old pleasure-ground fair-bill, had asserted itself as the only sure way to secure ticket sales among a wide class of customers. The first balloon ascent was 1859. The incomparable Blondin first strode the high-wire there in 1861. Wombwell's Menagerie brought the circus from 1864, Brock's famous fireworks displays began in 1865, and fêtes and 'Fancy Fairs' that same year. Cat, dog, bird and fashion shows followed from 1871. In 1881 a panorama opened in the grounds and by that time Vauxhall had indeed been born again in Sydenham…

Sydenham spawned a number of imitators which, like the Crystal Palace Company itself, found difficulty in attracting sufficient revenue to recoup their enormous outlay. The Agricultural Hall (the Aggie) was opened at Islington Green in 1862. Filling three acres, it was an urban pleasure-ground varying dog and horse and cattle shows with circuses; walking, running and wrestling matches; exhibitions and the Royal Tournament. Like Crystal Palace, it had its own extensive refreshment rooms. Alexandra Palace (Ally Pally) was opened between Muswell Hill and Wood Green in 1873 and reopened in 1875 after a disastrous fire. Like its Sydenham predecessor, there were huge grounds and gardens for strolling and play, and it had its own race course. Olympia opened as the National Agricultural Hall in 1884 but changed its name and purpose in 1886. It was famous for its circuses and (from 1890) the Hungarian-born impresario Imre Kiralfy's spectaculars. They presented variety in three-dimensional panoramas, including 1,000 performers in 'Venice in London' (just like Vauxhall seventy years before), ballets and choruses and plenty to eat and drink. A few hundred yards to the south-east, Earl's Court opened with Buffalo Bill in 1887, and was from 1893 under Kiralfy's inspired direction. It had a theatre, restaurant, dancing and a 'Great Wheel' along the lines of Chicago's: it stuck one night in May 1896 and sixty passengers received £5 each for their elevating experience. Also in 1887 the People's Palace, more educational in tone, brought non-vulgar pleasures to the Mile End Road…"[6]

Alexandra Palace now is afforded statutory protection against unauthorised alteration and/or demolition and yet comparatively recently its continuing future was being publicly discussed.

The post-war period saw a period of creeping decay (see chronology) and by the 1970s there were discussions on what should be done with the vast building. In the summer of 1972, the Architects' Journal published an article summing up the situation thus:

"… Now the future of the palace and park is in the balance and recently Peter Malynn, chairman of the Alexandra Palace Board of the GLC, organised a public talk-in. Some fascinating information was disclosed.

For instance, Councillor Mrs Berkerey Smith of Haringey revealed that Haringey had been receiving not enquiries about development possibilities but applications for planning

6 Jerry White "London in the 19th Century: A Human Awful Wonder of God", 2007, p268-271.

permission for piecemeal development of the palace grounds by private companies. Yet this land was made over as public open space in perpetuity by Act of Parliament in 1900. Haringey has a chronic shortage of public open space as have the adjoining boroughs, Islington and Hackney. It will be interesting to see what happens should the GLC decide to implement any of the present private schemes, since Haringey is the planning authority.

What of the palace itself? It already contains one of the most successful roller skating rinks in the country, recently refurbished. In 1902 a demountable indoor cycle track was erected in the Great Hall 86ft wide and 200ft long and rising to 10ft 6in at both ends, which still left room for 9000 spectators. The organ, although dismantled internally and largely removed to the maker's factory, can be restored. In the north east part of the building is a theatre the size of Drury Lane, now being used as a BBC storeroom. There are acres of cellarage under the palace, in an area where large-scale eating and drinking facilities could be provided in a part of London where they are virtually non-existent.

Yet the GLC seems still determined to pull it down. When the Arts Council first approached the council to hold the 'Messiah' concert they were told that the floor would not take the weight of large audiences, yet that week a heavy machinery exhibition had been held, which imposed point loads far in excess of an audience of elephants. The GLC stresses that the BBC and Hornsey College of Art have leases still running and that it would cost £2¼ million to put the fabric into a preservable state, but it does not mention how much more it would cost to pull the building down or build an equivalent amount of space today. One wonders whether the GLC has founded a demolition company. Two things are quite obvious. If the various leases run out in 1977, now is the time to start planning. The GLC must come forward with a comprehensive and constructive plan, preferably within the next six months. And the opening gesture towards public participation in the planning of Ally Pally's future must be continued and consolidated, in reality rather than name."[7]

By 1978 pressure was mounting for the building to be listed, and in July 1980 fate intervened with a terrible fire, and eventually impetus was gained for its repair and restoration. The lead architect for the project did, however, note at a conference in 1986 that *"After the fire, the first immediate problem was safety and the need to decide what to keep and what not to keep. There was an immediate move to demolish most of the building…"*[8] Happily, as with similar struggles over whether to demolish the glass and iron structures in Covent Garden, and whether to repair the Temperate House in the Botanic Gardens at Kew, restoration went ahead.

2. Victorian Architecture of Glass and Ironwork

The use of cast iron on a vast scale for construction is generally acknowledged first to have been seen at the Crystal Palace in 1851, which also contributed to a growing awareness of pre-fabrication.

The (second) Alexandra Palace of 1875 comes towards the tail end of the decades which saw the possibilities of this building technique seized upon and used in both botanic gardens and places of public entertainment. Alexandra Palace gains significance through the scale of the work produced in the Great Hall, from its interesting re-use of an earlier iron and glass building, and from its dating from an era when the structure had begun to be hidden behind masonry and decoration. A German account of the building technique and resultant forms details the development of this type thus:

7 S Brown "Ally Pally" in The Architects' Journal, 7 June 1972, p1238-1240.

8 P J Smith "Rebirth of the People's Palace" 1986 conference paper held at Bruce Castle Museum.

"… the iron space frame made its appearance around 1800 in the building of cotton mills. The basic type consisted of a multistory iron frame made of columns placed one above the other with internal undivided spaces and massive surrounding walls. In keeping with the spans of the cast-iron girders used at the time, the rows of columns were placed at 14-foot intervals. The first building of this kind (1892-93), a warehouse in Milford by William Strutt with two internal rows of cast-iron columns placed one above the other, had wooden beams for the ties, which carried the brickwork vault. The birth of the iron space frame was completed with the flax-spinning mill built in 1796-97 at Shrewsbury by Charles Bage, which had iron girders joining three rows of columns. The character of a type of British factory building that developed over the next 50 years finally manifested itself in the seven-storey cotton mill built at Salford, near Manchester, by Boulton and Watt in 1799-1801. Cast-iron columns passed through rings in the beams, one directly above the one below. The cast-iron beams were covered with brickwork vaults. The development of an iron space frame of columns joined together gave an impetus to the production of cast-iron girders. The cross-sections served as patterns for the later development of the shape of the girder to match the strength of the material.

In the overall sequence of the development of British cotton mills there was still no appearance of special coupling joints between columns and girders. The whole framework obtained its strength not from its iron members but only from masonry walls and massive floors. The iron building frame was developed further in various American factory and office buildings erected between 1850 and 1880 which showed the perfection of the iron frame in their load-bearing cast-iron façades. The façade, which had first provided its validity in the hothouses of the Jardin des Plantes, was no longer a surface with openings made in it but was now a glazed load-bearing frame.

However, with both the British and the American buildings created between 1850 and 1880 (a time which people liked to call the "cast-iron age"), it was a matter of intersections of columns and girders, and the cast-iron ridge members above the columns. There were no structures in which a connecting piece joined the iron girders and hence made an important contribution to the strength of the whole framework. The Singer Building in New York (ca. 1855), for example, had capping vaults to reinforce the structure.

In hothouses and exhibition buildings – where the visibility of the structurally important joints had to be considered from the start and where separated massive elements, but never massive floors, could be incorporated – engineers were compelled to find simple solutions to the problem of force-transmitting joints in the iron framework.

In 1831, in his second design for a large glasshouse dome for the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, J. C. Loudon designed a three-storey cast-iron space frame with an internal framework to be built by his wrought-iron-shell method. There were to be three circles of cast-iron double columns in an interior space 200 feet in diameter and 100 feet high…

…The main elements of the Paxton-style space-frame building – the hollow vertical columns bolted together, the cast-iron braced girders, and the ridge-and-furrow roof – had already been propagated for hothouse building by Loudon two or three decades before the building of the Crystal Palace…

The specification of the giant glass-and-iron building for the 1851 World Exhibition called for a 700,000-square-foot hall, as undivided as possible, to be built in a very short time. (The announcement of the international competition for the design was made on February 21,

1850; the exhibition was to open May 1, 1851.) It was to be low in cost and capable of being dismantled and erected elsewhere for further use. In the checking of the competition designs by the Building Commission, and in the consideration of them individually on June 22, 1850, it emerged that the specification could be met only through a thorough exploitation of the possibilities offered by industrialized building. In this situation, Paxton's concept of a cast-iron space frame made of prefabricated standardized parts seemed to be the salvation of the project. The realization of this revolutionary concept for iron construction proved that at that time cast iron could best be exploited by the forces of production if the economic and technical specifications of the building brief were met in an optimum way. If up to 1850 the principle of prefabrication and standardization of cast-iron parts for assembly into space frames appeared as an additional stipulation, then it proved its worth for the first time as a philosophy of construction in the building of the Crystal Palace…

Paxton's Crystal Palace corresponds to the classical formulation of iron space frames, and also to that of pure prefabricated building…

… About 3,500 tons of cast iron, 550 tons of wrought iron, and 500 tons of glass were used in the building of the Crystal Palace.

The filigree effect of the framework structure of the Crystal Palace was, as mentioned above, derived from pre-1850 hothouse building. The concept of the glasshouse was not only the origin but also the substance of Paxton's design; the transept of the building was to cover some large trees in Hyde Park, and in addition Paxton wanted to reuse the building as a gigantic hothouse after the end of the World Exhibition. In the transfer of the Crystal Palace to Sydenham (1852-1854) and in his project for the Great Victorian Way (1855), Paxton planned to cover extensive park landscapes with glass.

In the cast-iron space frames of the next two decades, in which Paxton's design was taken up with enthusiasm and developed further, there was continued use of the typical construction principles of glasshouse building. This is shown in the following examples.

In the Munich Glass Palace (1853-54), August von Voit applied Paxton's construction principle in a modified form… An attempt to convert this exhibition building into a hothouse came to nothing because its dimensions were too great. Instead, Voit built between 1860 and 1865 a cast-iron palm house nearby in the Old Botanical Garden. In this palm house the principle of space-frame construction was modified for the building of the dome-capped central hall…

Paxton's principle of space-frame construction was applied directly in the cast-iron Great Palm House built by Bouché, Herter, and Nietz in 18157-1859 in the Old Botanical Garden in Berlin… The engineered design developed specifically for this hothouse lacks the classical simplicity of its prototype, the Crystal Palace; nonetheless, it was used in a surprising number of early German iron-space-frame buildings.

Variations of the Paxton principle of space-frame construction were used in the hothouses in the Breslau Botanical Gardens (1861), the glasshouses in the Pavilion Gardens at Buxton (1871), and the Old Palm House in Bonn (ca. 1875). In all these examples the multistory space-frame principle was expressed in the supporting elements in the façade.

…The glasshouse in the Buxton Pavilion Gardens was built by E. Milner, a colleague of Paxton. The framework of the façade was a quote from the Crystal Palace. The columns placed one over another to make two stories were separated by glass windows with

semicircular arches on top and carried a canopy roof structure made of wrought iron. The Old Palm House in Bonn, built with a raised center part and two lower transepts, had the same design for its two- and three-story space frame, so that double columns were used at the corners. This large hothouse was one of the last of the cast-iron space-frame constructions.

In Britain the example of the Crystal Palace led to a euphoric acceptance of such structures by the following generation of engineers and architects. The fall in the price of glass in the 1860s also contributed to the acceptance of glass-and-iron buildings.

Between 1857 and 1859 the classically educated architect Edward M. Barry built the Floral Hall in London, the cast-iron façade of which was assembled from pilaster-type frames with semicircular arch windows between and with richly decorated architraves. The load-bearing frames were infilled with colored glass after the manner of Richard Turner's buildings. Above this framework stood a barrel vault made of wrought-iron lattice ribs, which was a copy of the transept of the Crystal Palace and which, like that transept, terminated in a large semicircular rosette made of cast iron. The nave was internally strengthened with cast-iron columns and was not divided into stories.

In 1859 the architect Owen Jones, who had advised Paxton on the matter of decoration for the Crystal Palace, designed the projected Palace of the People at Muswell Hill in London. This glass palace was to have been erected over a railway station and was to have a giant dome-shaped palm hall as its focal point. Its spatial concept was based on a yearly flow of a million visitors. The framework, of cast-iron columns and cross-members, illustrated a number of new forms based on the box building principle. A long nave covered with a glass ridge roof above the three stories was to be flanked by eight square five-story glass towers. Apselike glazed extensions were to terminate the structure, which was to be partly covered with a ridge-and-furrow roof.

The Winter Palace built in Dublin for the 1865 International Exhibition had a three-story cast-iron space frame. A gallery structure built around a barrel-vaulted center bay with latticework ribs and supported on cast-iron columns made a strong frame for the springing of the roof support structure... The overall skeleton was erected without reinforcement by diagonal ties, which had provided inconvenient in the Crystal Palace. R. M. Ordish, the resident engineer at the site, had been employed as a specialist in cast-iron prefabricated structures in the building of the Leeds winter garden and the Royal Albert Bridge over the Thames.

The Crystal Palace in New York (1852) and the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris (1855) were further applications of the Paxton system.

After the heyday of the unadorned space frame, there arose a trend towards hiding the cast-iron framework behind ornamentation and masonry. This is illustrated by the Alexandra Palace at Muswell Hill (1872-1874) and by the large floras built in Cologne (1864) and Leipzig (1882)…"[9]

2.4 The Importance of the Users and Occupants of Alexandra Palace

English Heritage's recently published listing selection guide for cultural and entertainment buildings includes a statement on special considerations when considering structures of this type, noting that:

[9] G Kohlmaier and B von Sartory "Houses of Glass: A 19th Century Building Type", English translation 1986, p105-110.

"Social history claims may well be valid. Some buildings embody particular social phenomenon…"

Apropos of exhibition buildings, the guide states that:

"… Most exhibition buildings of note were designed as temporary structures and have long since been demolished. This is particularly true of the larger exhibition halls for international exhibitions. However, separate pavilions (either for nations or commercial companies) and other structures have sometimes survived to be relocated elsewhere. Whilst these may be rare, caution needs to be exercised in establishing their authenticity. Historic interest will be a paramount consideration…"[10]

In the newly worded (as of January 2012) listing description, the historic interest is the initial reason described for designation.

The Palace has been the venue for innumerable uses and varied events, indeed its original size and scope made this inevitable. The Museum of London's Collection includes a poster advertising events at the Palace[11] which states boldly *"always a good programme"*. This poster dates from the late 1870s/80s but it might be argued that the subsequent users of the Palace have had the same aspiration (although sometimes with mixed effects)

The key uses of the Palace are summarised below, but it should be remembered that they are part of a vibrant chronology of activities, which would well warrant further detailed recording and examination (see policy).

1. The Victorian Palace

The Palace of the 1870s may be seen to represent an awareness of the need for leisure facilities for London's growing population; indeed, it perhaps embodied understanding of mass leisure certainly not seen in previous centuries. The 1857 plan of the ground floor of the Palace and the early guide books set out a dazzling diversity of activities available, from the circus in the grounds and fireworks to the more educational aspects of the Londesborough and Whitfield Art Collections. The didactic nature of parts of the Palace were seen elsewhere in Victorian Britain in other "People's Palaces" in Glasgow and in the Mile End Road.

When the Palace's centenary was recognised by Country Life Magazine in 1975, its varied use was summed up thus:

"… The Palace building was popular for its local small-scale specialist exhibitions from industrial art to goat and pipe shows. As a concert hall it was famous for its choral works, accompanied by the fine Willis organ. It was also a place of learning, with many lectures and evening classes, and plays, mostly of a melodramatic nature, were performed there. Song and dance acts, ventriloquism, mesmerism and conjuring were all part of the Palace's music-hall routine. It also offered a strange combination of diversion, the "respectable" existing side-by-side with typical street entertainment. The size of Ally Pally made it an obvious point for Britain's rapidly growing pressure groups, such as the trade unions, and the Salvation Army.

Although the first managers of the Palace liked to see the park full of mock-villages, circuses,

[10] English Heritage "Listing Selection Guide: Cultural and Entertainment", 2011, p8-9.
[11] Museum number A8949.

animals and showmen, these were gradually replaced by a more natural landscape, which included tropical palm trees. Finally, Ally Pally became one of London's main sports centres with horse-racing, archery, skating, swimming, pigeon racing, cycling, and trotting."[12]

The Palace was the home of the 1885 International Exhibition and in the 1920s of the popular North London Exhibition, but after trading difficulties in the 20th century such mass use declined, exacerbated perhaps by the final closure of the railway line that had run right to the basement of the Palace, in 1954.

2. The Palace in the 20th Century

The Palace had two uses in the 20th century which increase its significance. These are:

a) varied Government use during both World Wars
b) the use by the BBC of the part of the Palace to the east of the Great Hall from 1935 to include the theatre and associated rooms. On 2 November 1936, the first regular high definition television service in the world was launched from Alexandra Palace. BBC news came from Ally Pally until 1969 and the Open University broadcasting service remained here until 1981.

These significances are examined in turn.

The Wartime Uses of the Palace

The benefits of both the Palace's vast size and height and location within parkland which could be secured were used by the Government in wartime to good advantage.

The Palace was closed during the Great War and used initially to house Belgian refugees and subsequently German internees. Its size and flexibility meant that whilst the interiors of the Palace declined, permanent alteration did not take place.

During the Second World War the height of the towers and the existence of the BBC transmitters led to their adaption for national defence. They were used for radio counter measures against the German bombers, utilising information gained from the famous Enigma Codes to jam German navigational beams known as the "Knickebein" and later X and Y – Gerät systems.

The Activities of the BBC at the Palace

The BBC had some connection with Alexandra Palace for 46 years from 1935, during which time they broadcast the first regular high definition television service in the world from here.

The early history of television and the BBC involvement has been detailed thus:

"The BBC became involved in developing television from about 1929 and was pressed by the Post Office to provide the facility for Baird to continue his transmissions, the first of which was received by about thirty sets. Initially, sound and vision occupied a single wavelength: the speaker was first seen without being heard, then heard without being seen. However in 1933 the BBC resolved to end Baird's experiments because the rival electronic technology seemed to be making more progress in the form of the American-originated EMI system.

[12] E Hillman "A Hundred Years of a People's Palace" in Country Life, Nov 13 1975, p1296-1297.

In 1934 the government appointed the Selsdon Committee to consider the --- of television broadcasting, and the latter recommended that a regular public television service should be operated by the BBC, using both the Baird and EMI systems on a weekly, alternating basis until the superiority of one or the other had been proved. It also recommended that the service should not carry advertising but be paid for out of the existing licence fee, although some form of sponsorship might be considered.

The government accepted these recommendations and the BBC Television Service opened on 2 November 1936. According to Roy Armes (1988) it was not the first regular TV service in the world: the Germans had begun theirs in March 1935. But since the latter was transmitting only 180-line pictures, the BBC could fairly claim credit for the first high-definition service. It transmitted from Alexandra Palace in north London and was received within a radius of 40 to 100 miles by a few thousand viewers in about 400 households. Early broadcasts ran for two separate hours a day, excluding Sundays, and the weekly programme budget was £1,000. In the first week viewers were treated to a comedy featuring Ben Lyon and Bebe Daniels, excerpts from a West End play called Marigold, a demonstration of tap dancing, and a talk from a bus driver on how to build model boats…"[13]

The early days of television from Ally Pally were of impact to relatively few people as Glen Creeber has noted:

"It was into the climate of public service broadcasting that BBC television was first introduced at 3pm on 2 November 1936, the 'first high definition' service in the world (Germany had begun transmitting 180-line pictures a year before). Broadcast from Alexandra Palace ('Ally Pally' as it was to become affectionately known) in north London, it was received only within a radius of forty to 400 miles by approximately 400 households. However, this shortage of viewers (originally no more than a few thousand) was not simply the result of technical limitations, but reflected the relatively high price of a set which ranged from £35-£100 (the price of a small car). Added to this, the picture quality was frequently very dim and lacked definition, not helped by a screen that was no more than eight by ten inches. Competing with radio for a share of the licence fee also meant that the programmes themselves were sometimes surprisingly amateurish; the weekly budget for the whole service was only around £1,000.

Early television audiences were provided with two separate hours of viewing a day, excluding Sundays when – in true Reithian style – programming was shut down altogether. On its opening day viewers were treated to 'a display by champion Alsatians from the Metropolitan and Essex Canine Society's show' which was followed by 'The Golden Hind, a model of Drake's ship made by a bus driver' who described its construction… Later Leslie Mitchell introduced the first edition of Picture Page that included interviews with a tennis player and an aviator. No doubt partly due to cost, the same short newsreels as those showed at the cinema provided the only news on offer. However, this decision may have also reflected the lack of 'weight' or 'gravity' that television seemed to possess in contrast to radio. This was a period which the broadcasting critic T. C. Worsley called 'the era of radiovision'…, a time when television was still rather condescendingly treated as simply 'radio with pictures'.

In terms of its Reithian heritage there was little in this early programming that would have unduly worried the earlier director-general. Viewers were dutifully presented with plays and extracts from Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw and Jacobean dramatists such as Francis

13 A Crisell "An Introduction to British Broadcasting", 1997, p70-71.

Beaumont and John Fletcher. In terms of broadcasting national events, the new medium seemed uniquely suited to the job, reaching a high point with the coronation procession of George VI in May 1937. Although cameras were not allowed in Westminster Abbey for the coronation itself, it was BBC television's first outside broadcast and attracted between 10,000 and 50,000 viewers. Later that same day the Remembrance Day ceremony and Neville Chamberlain's historic arrival at Heston Airport in Munich were both transmitted. However, because the medium was still generally regarded as an experimental novelty it tended to get away with more 'frivolous' entertainment than radio. Indeed, its affluent upper-middle-class audiences were soon demanding to see West End shows and plays such as Noel Coward's Hay Fever and Brandon Thomas's Charley's Aunt, which were among some of the first contemporary plays broadcast. Sport, such as the FA Cup Final, the Boat Race, the Wimbledon Tennis Championship and test matches from Lord's Cricket Ground was also proving popular with audiences. However, it was felt that broadcasting should be terminated during the war (apparently in case transmissions aided enemy bombers). During the middle of a Mickey Mouse cartoon on 1 September 1939, all British television was abruptly brought to an end. But despite these humble origins, 18,000 to 20,000 sets were sold during the three short years it had been on the air – clearly a suggestion of things to come…"[14]

2.5 The Significance of the Architects and Designers

The designers of Alexandra Palace had not inconsiderable careers in architecture. The 1873 (first) Palace was designed by Alfred Meeson and John Johnson, re-using parts of Captain Francis Fowke's 1862 exhibition building at South Kensington. When fire virtually destroyed the first Palace, Meeson and Johnson again designed a vast exhibition palace for the site.

1. The DNB highlights Alfred Meeson (1808-1885)'s skill and reputation in the field of construction thus:

"Meeson, Alfred (1808-1885), architect and engineer, was born on 4 April 1808 at 67 Aldermanbury, London, the son of Edward Meeson and his wife, Elizabeth, née Collins. He was educated in London, and spent the earlier part of his life in private practice as architect and surveyor in Wakefield, Yorkshire. In 1842 he moved to London at the request of Sir Charles Barry to superintend the constructional and engineering details of the new Houses of Parliament; he continued to act as Barry's confidential assistant until the completion of the work. In 1853 he was appointed building services engineer at the Houses of Parliament, with a residence in the building. On the abolition of that post Meeson continued in private practice at 58 Pall Mall. His principal tasks as a surveyor and consulting engineer were on the international exhibitions buildings of 1851 and 1862, and on the erection of Covent Garden Theatre, and of the Royal Albert Hall. He was architect to the first Alexandra Palace on Muswell Hill (1867-73), in the construction of which he reused materials from the 1862 exhibition building in Kensington. The distinctive building with five domes was almost destroyed by fire in 1873; Meeson worked on the new building with the architect John Johnson. Meeson died unmarried, aged seventy-six, on 12 January 1885, at his home, 4 Harley Road, South Hampstead, London. His nephew Frederick Meeson lived next door and was also an architect."[15]

2. John Johnson and his important relationship with Owen Jones has been summed up by Jacqueline Banerjee of the "Victorian Web" thus:

"… John Johnson was a distinguished Victorian architect about whom tantalisingly little is

14 G Creeber in "The Television History Book" ed M Hilmes, 2003, p25.
15 Dictionary of National Biography, p710-711.

known. He is easily confused with two other John Johnsons, one earlier and one later. The earlier John Johnson (1732-1814) was a fine Georgian architect with a liking for Coade stone (a precursor of Portland cement for façades etc.), who was at one point County Surveyor of Chemsford. The later one (d. 1920) was a member of the AA from 1863, and was also responsible for some noteworthy churches and civic commissions from the 1870s onwards. There are no known familial links between these architects.

In historical records, this (middle) Johnson's name crops up most often in connection with Sir John Kelk (1816-1886), the civil engineer and building and public works contractor who built, amongst others, the Victoria Station and Pimlico Railway, the early buildings of what was to be the Victoria and Albert Museum, and, to much acclaim, the Albert Memorial. For example, Johnson worked with Kelk on the old Army and Navy Club on St James's Square. Kelk also employed Johnson to design his London home at 3 Grosvenor Square, and the church at Tidworth on his Hampshire estate. After the 1862 Kensington Exhibition, again working with Kelk, Johnson refaced the parts of the building which were to be preserved, with a recasting "in the François Premier style" (that is, with both Gothic and Italian elements; Hobhouse, The Crystal Palace… 139). He then reused some of the other materials in the construction of Alexandra Palace, also for Kelk, who built it in partnership with the contractors Charles and Thomas Lucas. Kelk put up a great deal of his own money for this project.

The concept of the Palace had come from Owen Jones, and Johnson used some of Jones's original ideas – the transept and nave arrangement, for instance – in his own design. Jones and Johnson both had addresses at the Adelphi, so there may well have been contact between them. Johnson was clearly influenced by Jones's flair for colour and pattern, as well as by his keen interest in Egyptian and Islamic design – witness the sphinxes in the west wing's Palm Court. At any rate, here Johnson had the opportunity to develop these decorative elements in his own way and on a vast scale. He even had a chance to improve on them when rebuilding after the first fire of 1873. Quite deservedly, on the strength of his work on Alexandra Palace, Johnson was made a Fellow of the Florentine Academy in 1877.

Despite the ravages of a second major fire in 1980, "Ally Pally" is still a remarkable sight. The frontispiece, which has now been restored, gives an idea of how splendid it must have been when first opened. In contrast to this grandeur, the Palm Court is wonderfully bright and airy. Planned as an aviary and conservatory, and undamaged by the later blaze, it continues to offer visitors a welcome sense of release from city life. The whole enterprise, including the immediate rebuilding after the original disaster, bears lasting witness to the great industry and vitality of the overlapping specialities of architecture, civil engineering, building and decorative arts in Victorian London.

John Johnson, who was for some years District Surveyor of the London borough of East Hackney, was very much a part of this élite network. He had an eye for detail, contrast and symmetry, something which is as much in evidence in a small commission like St Matthew's Church in Cobo, Guernsey, as in a very large one like Alexandra Palace. In this connection it is worth knowing that he was a keen fisherman, and for ten years a member of the General Committee of the Thames Angling Preservation Society. Obituaries for him appeared both in The Builder of 11 January 1879 (pp.53, 137), and The Fishing Gazette, 3 January 1879 (p.7). Perhaps it was because of this interest that he was approached to build a little fisherman's church in the Channel Islands, and because of this interest too that he put so much thought into it…"[16]

[16] http://www.victorianweb.org.misc.banerjee.html

3. Important restoration work was carried out in the 1980s under the auspices of Dr Peter Smith *[further biographical information awaited]*.

2.6 The Significance of the 1980s Post-Fire Rebuilding

The 1980s post-fire restoration is still too recent in date to be critically appreciated, as opposed to reacted against as an example of work from a decade which is now highly unfashionable. Consideration of the following points may be helpful in any future review of the significance of the building.

1. **Approach:** The majority of the significantly damaged spaces were not restored to either their design as first built, nor to their arrangement just before the fire. A pragmatic view, balancing costs and future function, and allowing parts of the Palace to remain un-rebuilt, was taken. In general, only the main walls were repaired to their original design.

2. **Repairs:** The repair of the SW Tower was much debated, as the condition of the masonry had been much affected by the expansion and subsequent contraction of the iron floor beams. Dismantling and rebuilding the Tower would have required the simultaneous dismantling of the adjoining South Terrace. While it may seem obvious now that the Tower should have been repaired in situ, at the time, this was not a foregone conclusion.

The materials used in the repairs of the historic masonry structure do not match modern standards of authenticity, most particularly in the specification of the mortar and render used, and in the tooling of the brickwork joints. Where tuck pointing in a colour intended to be part of a polychromatic decorative scheme, complementing the natural tone of the brick was intended, a light brown cementitious mortar with an unattractive weather-struck joint was used. This casts shadows where none were intended, and furthermore has often washed out where exposed to falling rain at plinth offsets.

3. **New Roof Structures:** The space-frame Toblerone trusses over the Ice Rink and West Hall are functional interventions of neutral significance. The new roof over the Great Hall is of greater importance, both due to its size and ambition (to leave the Great Hall uninterrupted by columns), and because of its free-standing structure supported by four sets of legs, arranged in pairs opposite each other in the 5th and 11th of the 15 bays of the Hall.

The principal visual objections to this approach lie in the choice of tubular steel sections having little affinity for the historic walls around, and the heavy appearance of the portal frames spanning the Hall as seen from a distance.

The choice of a largely glazed roof admits daylight but does not help the present usage of the Hall for music events requiring their own lighting.

4. **Decorations:**

i. Within the Great Hall, the gable and wall decorations are intended to recreate the 1865-66 first Palace decorative schemes, which were revealed after the 1980s fire. Richard Loren suggests that these were originally painted onto wet plaster using a fresco technique, although his recreations use mineral paint.

ii. Ironwork in the Palm Court and Ice Rink Foyer is again the result of research into the original colours, though here they have been approximated to, in the nearest colour commercially available at the time, when paint matching systems were less advanced than they are now. A better solution would now be possible.

iii. The Trompe l'oeil wall paintings in the Londesborough Room, Roman Bar, Palace Suite Stairs and Palace Suite Banqueting Hall are especially unfashionable, being both highly coloured and representational. Nevertheless, such murals have a long history, forming a footnote in the history of 20th century taste. They might interestingly, if unflatteringly, be compared with picturesque stage-set architecture as at Clough William Ellis's Portmeirion, and Rex Whistler's murals at Plas Newydd, Angelsey.

3.0 VULNERABILITY

3.1 Vulnerability Overview

3.1.1 Statutory Framework

Alexandra Palace is listed Grade II; this includes all of the built fabric, inside and out. The Listing Description is included in Appendix I. Any alterations to the exterior fabric will require Planning Consent, irrespective of whether the alteration is to modern or historic fabric, and should be made to Haringey Council, who are the Planning Authority. Listed Building Consent will also be required, and should be made to Haringey Council for all works to the fabric, internal or external. They will notify English Heritage, and it would be prudent to have discussed major proposals with them in advance.

Listed Building Consent procedures are subject to the advice set out in Planning Policy Statement 5, 2010 – Planning in the Historic Environment (PPS5). The entire site lies within the Alexandra Palace and Park Conservation Area. A Conservation Character Area Appraisal has not yet been prepared or adopted by Haringey Council. The Park is listed as a Metropolitan Open Space.

3.1.2 Overview

Alexandra Palace has never been consistently well maintained, due to persistent financial difficulties since the date of its construction. Instead there have been stop gap solutions applied to various parts of the building, which have provided temporary relief at the expense of both aesthetic consistency and long-term financial planning. This has been combined with major post-fire repairs in the 1980s which are now showing their age, and the abandonment of some parts of the Palace altogether.

The use of the building's occupied parts has developed to meet the changing expectations of popular leisure, as well as the perception (though not the actuality) that the Palace is difficult to reach. The original grand dining and banqueting rooms have been reduced to the Phoenix Bar (permanently open), the Ice Rink café, the Palace Suite, which is rather illogically placed in the basement, and various smaller bars which are open when events are taking place in the Great Hall and West Hall.

The 1980s Ice Rink is popular, profitable, and a worthy successor to the earlier roller skating rink.

The musical and sporting events which occur in the Great and West Halls suit the spaces in which they occur, and adequate support spaces exist. The present service yard would seem on first sight to be an extravagant use of space, but there are numerous advantages to being able to bring articulated lorries into the two halls.

The Theatre is derelict, and its design has never been satisfactory for audiences. The acoustics are better suited to concerts than plays. Meanwhile, the historically important stage machinery languishes. A revenue-positive, or at least neutral use for it must be found which will then establish the direction of its future repair. The adjoining Tower, Foyer and NE Pavilion provide support spaces which would also be useful.

The BBC Studios in the South East Wing are of great cultural significance, and there have been various suggestions as to how they might be presented as a museum. The difficulty has been in finding a way of integrating this with other uses in this area, since not all of the space would be needed for museum use.

The East Buildings are derelict, but retain in their layout the board room and clerks offices for the 1875 Palace. Ideally, they might regain this function – without a use, there is little incentive to repair them.

The Panorama Room is a tent which does not make use of the retained South West Tower and adjoining two-level arcade. A more ambitious solution is required here.

The Basements under the southern part of the Palace are also unused and thus vulnerable to decay. Again, a beneficial use is needed.

The external fabric as a whole, being exposed on a hilltop, is particularly vulnerable to driving rain and water penetration through the several acres of roof.

3.2 Vulnerability and Issues

3.2.1 The Setting of the Building

Alexandra Palace is set within Alexandra Park, which was first laid out at the same time as the Palace was built. A separate Conservation Management Plan has been written to cover the Park. From the east, south and west, the view of the Palace within the Park remains largely intact, sited as it is at the apex of the hill in large mature planting. Indeed, many of the other structures on these sides of the park, which might have competed with the Palace, such as the race-track grandstand, banqueting hall, circus, ski-slope etc have been lost, perhaps to the detriment of the overall amenity of the site.

To the north, however, the Palace now presents a blank wall to the reduced section of park and the boating lake, and to the early C20th housing. The closure of the dedicated railway station and branch line further emphasised the decline in importance of this façade.

Close-to, the Palace is fronted by car parking to the east, which is not well landscaped. The service area by the NE Tower is particularly unsatisfactory. To the south, an asphalted promenade runs the whole length of the elevation, and returns to the west side. The asphalt is rather too utilitarian and roadlike. Railings (with modern reproduction lamps), a steep grassy bank, and another road keep the Palace separate from the Park, which cannot have been intended originally – the layout of paths clearly relates to the front of the Palace.

Conversely, the main entrances to the Palace from the former railway station to the north, which are now used as fire escapes, have lost their purpose and contribute to the present deadness of the north elevation.

3.2.2 Legibility of the Building

The design of the building as first built may fairly be said to be an example of beaux-arts "architecture parlante". The massing of the volumes of the building, with large roofs, glazed domes, towers etc, enlivened by sculptures was clearly intended to make the functions of the parts of the building apparent from the first.

The sculptures have been lost, but the massing of the Great Hall, East and West Entrances, as well as the iconic BBC transmitter mast, make the functions of these parts of the building clear. The condition of the north side of the building (including the NE and NW towers), and of the former BBC Studios, unfortunately mean that the chief message here is depressing and off-putting.

Within the Palace, the West Hall, Entrance, Palm Court and support spaces are clearly enough laid out, as those of the Ice Rink and Foyer, but they are entirely separated from each other by the Great Hall, which seems a pity, as it is several minutes walk to go back out and walk around.

3.2.3 Understanding the Building

Contemporary descriptions from the 1870s make the details of the original construction of the (second) Alexandra Palace clear, and set out the extent to which the main north and south porticos, as well as the South Basements, have been retained from the 1860s first Palace, destroyed in 1873. What is less clear is the extent to which any ironwork from the first Palace (and originally bought from the 1862 Great Exhibition) was incorporated into the second Palace, and remains to this day.

We have also not been able to uncover full details of: the conversion of the Concert Hall to an Ice Rink; the BBC works to the upper floors of the SE Wing and SE Tower, or the works done by Open University; the works done by the Hornsey School of Art.

We have seen a great quantity of drawings relating to the 1980s post fire rebuild, and these have been partly catalogued.

Within the former BBC rooms there are numerous boxes and files containing further drawings, which will provide a good resource if properly catalogued. At present, they are in danger of dispersal, damage or loss. As with so many buildings, it is easier to obtain details relating to its first construction than to later alterations or programmes of work.

3.2.4 Uses of the Building

For descriptive convenience we have divided the building into zones covering:

- North Basements
- South Basements (excluding BBC areas)
- West Entrance, Palm Court and Adjoining Rooms
- West Hall, West Corridor and Adjoining Rooms
- Service Yard and Stores, NW Tower
- SW Tower, Panorama Room
- Great Hall
- Ice Rink and Adjoining Spaces
- Theatre, NE Tower and Adjoining Spaces
- SE Tower, former BBC Studios and Adjoining Spaces
- East Entrance, Ice Rink Foyer and Adjoining Spaces
- North Yard

a) **North Basements:** these were entirely rebuilt post 1980 fire around the retained lower walls of the north portico entrance, and are thus laid out to suit the functions they serve.

Being of no historic significance, there is no reason not to adapt them as developing needs may require. Expansion, however, would be costly and difficult.

As previously noted, there is no apparent benefit in having the main banqueting suite in the basement as opposed to in part of the present Panorama Room, where it was originally located. If necessary, additional Great Hall service spaces could perhaps move to the basement if the banqueting were moved.

b) **South Basements:** the present lack of use makes the south basements vulnerable to decay through penetrating damp and ill-considered structural repairs and alterations intended to allow the floor and external paving above to support greater loads. However, any refurbishment to support a new use is likely to sweep away various historical remnants of former uses: bread ovens, shelves within wine vaults, joinery to the former external areas, and relics dating to ephemeral wartime uses such as the machine tools and bunk beds used by Belgian refugees and German prisoners of war in WWI. But it should be borne in mind that, in the absence of any programme of intervention leading to a beneficial use, these items will decay of their own accord.

c) **West Entrance, Palm Court and Adjoining Spaces:** the West Entrance and Palm Court themselves remain in the uses for which they were first built, which is appropriate. The conservatory aspect of the Palm Court remains, though the present planter with sphinxes, obelisks etc, and the tiled floor and colour choices are very 1980s at present and thus desperately unfashionable.

The original male and female WCs have been reduced in scale, and the educational functions in the spaces now taken by the Phoenix Bar/Palm Court Suite, and by the Londesborough Room have been entirely lost, to be replaced by the present formal and informal facilities.

While these uses are not inappropriate, it is worth considering whether some educational or cultural use could not be found.

d) **West Hall, West Corridor and Adjoining Rooms:** the West Hall fills the former Open Court with its Italian Garden. Modern vehicle access requirements make it preferable to have a large hall here, and to leave the former Concert Hall/Roller Skating Rink area to the north as a service yard. Its solid roof and the replacement of all the historic glazing means that no natural light reaches the adjoining West Corridor. This corridor remains, essentially, in its original use, although the catering functions have been removed. There would seem to be no obvious objection to their reinstatement in the present Panorama Room area. The Roman Bar north of the West Hall is now very dated and in need of refurbishment or replacement by something of higher quality, which should (of course) be put in the Panorama Room area.

e) **North West Tower and Service Yard Area:** the historic tower and (now) free-standing north curtain wall are neglected and remain vulnerable to weather-related deterioration and subsidence, against which the present bracing scaffold is unlikely to offer sufficient restraint. The present infill structures within the yard are, essentially, of a temporary nature due to their low-budget construction, and their eventual disappearance for something better would be welcome.

f) **South West Tower and Panorama Room:** again, the historic structure is not used, and the high double storey arcade, as well as the terrace, are vulnerable to weather

related decay. The ground and first floor veranda and balcony slabs are already in quite an advanced state of decay.

The present tent can only be seen as a temporary infill; the current progressive decay arises from the historic fabric's lack of use.

g) **The Great Hall:** the present use is compatible with that originally intended. However, while such a large uninterrupted floor is useful on one level, in other respects the lack of intermediate support structure makes partial use of the space uncomfortable to achieve, and this may in turn diminish the number of potential uses.

h) **The Ice Rink and Adjoining Spaces:** the Ice Rink is a successful commercial venture, though it is annoying that the ticket control area prevents access from the Great Hall end, thus necessitating a long walk round.

It cannot be said that the changing facilities and club rooms have been inserted into the former gallery to the north with any degree of architectural sensitivity, and one might have imagined that spaces on this scale could more readily have been found in the BBC areas. It is also a pity that, as with the West Hall, there is no natural daylight to the Ice Rink, though it has been maintained by rooflights to the Ice Rink Café in the former east corridor.

i) **Theatre, NE Tower and Adjoining Spaces:** the lack of present use is once more the critical issue here. The Theatre itself is closed for "health and safety" reasons, and is slowly decaying. There is a leak in the adjoining foyer roof and the NE Tower rooms are derelict. There is a good opportunity for provision of ancillary accommodation here, and it might also be possible to make use of space above the flat roof to the west of the Theatre stage, where changing rooms were originally placed.

It should be remembered that the auditorium was never satisfactory for Theatre use, the acoustics being better suited to (classical) music and to the showing of films, which were shown from 1902 onwards.

j) **SE Tower, former BBC Studios and Adjoining Spaces:** the office use of the Tower rooms is non-threatening, though scarcely exciting, given the fabulous views available. The BBC areas on basement, ground and first floors are almost derelict, and are used for miscellaneous storage of drawings, papers, antique TV equipment and miscellaneous furniture. The status of Studios A and B, as the birthplace of public broadcast television is immense, and the surviving studios are the best tangible reminders, together with the transmitter mast, of this. A use (possibly museum-based) which acknowledged this would be the best guarantee of the preservation of this.

The remainder of the rooms were first used as dining and private banqueting facilities, and the associated support facilities. In the later BBC years, many of the rooms continued in similar functions, and it would not be difficult to revert to like functions or to conference use if this were financially viable. This would also justify the removal of some of the more baleful BBC interventions, and the repair of surviving historic features.

k) **East Entrance, Ice Rink Foyer and Adjoining Spaces**: are all at greater risk from dis-use and neglect than they are likely to be from any new activities; this particularly applies to the East Buildings, where the roofs are already falling in. The East Entrance

and historic fabric of the Ice Rink Foyer are in usages compatible with those for which they were originally designed. However, the ticket office, mini-golf and toddler play area are all hideous, and the latter two seem to be little used. The ticket office should be removed and relocated to allow the foyer to be used as a single space.

l) **The North Yard:** occupies the former railway station, and was once one of the main points of arrival. It is now only used by delivery lorries bringing supplies to the Palace Suite kitchens. The elevations facing the yard, and the remains of the wide pedestrian access bridge over the former station emphasise the lack of use. There seems no reason why, with re-planning, much better use could not be made of this area.

3.2.5 Presentation Issues

The 1980s restoration and redecoration does not meet modern expectations either of design quality, or of choice of materials used in the heritage repair works to the retained 1870s fabric.

Internally, many of the heavily used areas (WCs, Great Hall) are now tired and worn, despite periodic refreshment. The mural paintings are particularly strident to modern eyes, but in another 25 years may be appreciated differently.

Some of the materials used (e.g. floor tiling) appear to have been selected for cheapness rather than any aesthetic virtue.

The services have been installed to take advantage of spaces and rooftops not required by the 1980s post fire rebuild. This has compromised first, the future usability of these spaces (particularly basements), and the ability to achieve natural daylighting in the West Corridor, West Hall and the Ice Rink areas. The ducts in the BBC areas are even more intrusive, especially the one in the great stair. All of these cut through historic walls, floors and ceilings without regard.

The kitchen and WC spaces are now almost entirely within rebuilt fabric and these may be modernised without prejudice to the significance of the building.

Nevertheless, in looking at the re-presentation of any part of the building, it should be seen as part of the whole. In parts which have not been refurbished post fire, there may be vulnerable remains of original decoration schemes, which would confirm the contemporary descriptions and could guide the colour palette to be used through the building.

Extensive refurbishment is needed in the South Basements, Panorama Room/SW Tower area, Theatre/NE Tower area, BBC Rooms and East Building and pavilion to bring them into any form of effective or beneficial use.

3.2.6 Refurbishment

The building is, at present, not much more than half restored, and half occupied.

Reports have been prepared by others to identify the most promising uses for the South Basements, Panorama Room/SW Tower, Theatre/NE Tower, BBC Rooms and East Buildings, and those have inevitably touched on the whole cultural and commercial “offer” the Alexandra Palace makes. There would seem to be significant opportunities for enhancing the present catering spread to match the size of the building and its location; to integrate the

sporting history of the Park and Palace, maintained through the Ice Rink and darts and snooker championships, promote a wider range of musical, theatrical and cinema events through the refurbishment of the Theatre, to develop the cultural importance of the BBC TV transmitter and studios, and to consider hotel and conference opportunities.

As previously noted, some facilities seem to us to be curiously placed; in ways prejudicial to the integrity of the building.

i. The North Yard is underused and could be developed either as a route into the building (as originally, via the railway station), or as a service yard.
ii. The Palace Suite should be where the Panorama Room is.
iii. The present service yard layout encourages neglect of the north-west part of the Palace.
iv. The redundant infill rooms installed within the SE balcony and veranda by the BBC are an eyesore.
v. The Panorama Room takes no advantage of its views, or of the possibility of an upper floor.

All of these areas present opportunities for creative refurbishment.

3.2.7 **Conservation, Repair and Presentation**

Generally

All finishes, including robust fabric, are subject to wear and tear and will require repair and conservation, as indeed has already taken place in many areas. All such operations will involve risk to the fabric of the building and need to be properly managed by employing good conservation practice.

Render Externally and Internally – Plain and Moulded

The stonework is subject to weathering, impact damage at ground level, poor quality repairs in inappropriate materials and over-enthusiastic restoration. Some of the plinth mouldings in particular are damaged. Sections of cornice and string moulding have simply fallen off.

Brickwork Externally

The external brickwork is of high quality, except where the BBC infilled the SE balcony and veranda. It is subject to weathering and poor quality repairs, particularly re-pointing as may readily be seen at the south end of the hall, and around the West Entrance.

Roofing Materials

The metal and asphalt/felt roofs are subject to weather and impact damage. The flashings and dressings are subject to decay, weather and impact damage, as well as thermal movement.

External Paving Materials

The South Terrace is paved in asphalt to the south and extends to the west, with a large asphalt car park to the east. All these finishes appear to be non-original, and to have been laid out to suit the present usage of these areas.

The steps up to the East and West Entrances and to the Londesborough Room and Phoenix Bar are of York stone, and appear to have been relaid. Wide steps from the road up to the South and West Terraces are also of York stone.

Internal Wall and Ceiling Finishes, excluding Joinery

Within the main public spaces (running west-east through the building), comprising West Entrance – Palm Court – West Hall – Great Hall – Ice Rink – Ice Rink Foyer – East Entrance, the surfaces are almost entirely self-finished, comprising exposed brickwork walls with some mouldings formed in cement, and exposed steel/wrought iron roof structures, both original and 1980s work.

The same exposed brickwork was employed in other locations such as the Phoenix Bar, and the Theatre Foyer, where it has rather unnecessarily been painted over, the West Corridor, and the Ice Rink Café. Here, modern plaster ceilings have been fitted, sometimes in panels to conceal modern structure and services.

Within the Great Hall, an acoustic cloth has been stretched under the steelwork to conceal the services and to re-create the original form of the roof. This is not entirely effective and has become stained.

The Theatre retains the damaged ornamental plasterwork with which it was re-fitted in the 1920s. This is vulnerable to impact (low level), water (by drainage routes) and lath failure (ceiling), and a judgement must be made as to whether it is worth the cost of repair if sufficient details of the earlier stencilled decorative scheme can be uncovered.

In the BBC studio area, as well as within the damaged remains of the East Building, basic plaster finishes are evident, with fairly plain skirtings, architraves and cornice mouldings related to the size of the room. The more modern fit-out in the SE (BBC) Tower, and in the various back of house areas is generally plainer still.

The 1980 decorative plasterwork in e.g. the Roman Bar and Palace Suite is generally rather crude.

Decorations

Surviving features of interest include Richard Loren's recreation of the 1860s decorative scheme within the Great Hall, sadly not complemented by the finish to the columns concealing the new roof structure. The Ice Rink and West Hall are essentially undecorated, except for the joinery, picked out in blue.

The Palm Court and Ice Rink Foyer have joinery too, as well as the cast iron columns and wrought iron arches etc which support the roof. The capitals appear to be applied plaster castings. Their present paint colours do not faithfully follow the original schemes which are described in contemporary accounts due to the limitations of 1980s paint technology, and these should now be investigated further.

The pink paint in the Theatre Foyer is unfortunate. The Theatre itself shows the 1920s decorative scheme associated with the 1920s re-modelling, as well as of the earlier stencilled scheme, and both are, at present, vulnerable to loss.

The BBC studios hold some clues as to the decoration of the former dining rooms and associated spaces, particularly Studio B and the former prop store, where historic skirting, dado and wall surface colours remain, enlivened by applied paper panels to create a suitably Roman (or Italian) ambience. The surviving C19th joinery here will also bear traces of historic decoration.

The polychromatic nature of the historic interior colour schemes – which includes coloured brickwork, should be considered in the context of the differing colours used externally. The 1980s murals do not meet current expectations of taste.

Sculpture

The original set of didactic sculptures has been almost entirely lost, and would have included parapet-level statues along the south front, further statues on plinths integrated into the piers dividing the bays of the building, both here and on the north elevation, as well as those within the Great Hall depicting kings and queens, and in the Theatre. At present, the recreated statue at the apex of the south portico, and few mask heads high up on the north elevation of the Theatre are about all that remain.

Historic Metalwork

The status of the historic metalwork at the Palace is not fully understood, and may thus be liable to be underappreciated. The cast iron and wrought iron forming the Palm Court and Ice Rink Foyers is self-evidently of interest, but not helped by the replacement domes to the corners in Teflon coated fabric stretched over modern frames.

The Theatre roof trusses contain tension rods which may be one of the earliest uses of structural steel; the connecting shoes are, of course, castings.

The basement jack-vaults are built of cast iron beams with non-parallel sides of considerable spans – up to 10m.

The south terrace square-headed openings to the veranda are supported by beams which are in an advanced state of corrosion. The differing sizes of what ought to be identical components, suggests that not all these beams are original. In any case, the expansion related to the corrosion is threatening the adjoining masonry. The filler joist floors to the verandas and balconies above are likewise affected.

The bridge across the North Yard appears to be part of the former station structure, but is now without context.

Floors

All the floors throughout the occupied parts of the building appear to have been renewed. Historic timber floors survive in the Theatre and BBC studio areas. In Studio B, there are historic cast iron grilles set into the floor in front of the window positions, relating to some former heating system. The original treads and landing of the Great Stair in the BBC area is concealed under lino.

The Studio A has very old black lino on the floor, perhaps part of the 1936 fitting-out – it matches contemporary descriptions. The green flame pattern carpet in the studio corridor is of some interest to carpet historians.

The modern marble floors in the Roman Bar and adjoining areas down to the Palace Suite are pseudo-Roman in inspiration. The associated areas finished in specially woven carpet are getting worn out and do not match contemporary expectations of taste but may be better appreciated in another 25 years, if they survive that long.

Windows

The stained glass window to the Great Hall appears very 1980s, and is the result of a competition won by Marie McClafferty.

Various fragments of the tall sliding sashes to the NE, NW Towers and to the BBC areas remain, which would permit the creation of new joinery of sympathetic design, and indeed such has been done at the West Entrance.

The various former windows around the Palm Court/West Hall/West Corridor are now glazed in mirror glass with acoustic panels to the West Hall side, which is a pity visually. The Ice Rink Area has been similarly treated, in parts, but some plain glass is still included. It is a pity that the Palm Court and Ice Rink Foyer roof glazing is in Georgian wired glass. Laminated would be so much nicer – and it ought to be kept clean!

The extensive roof and side-wall glazing to the Great Hall is not entirely compatible with the black-out preferred for staging live music events.

The various small rooflights to secondary spaces and the East Buildings are 1930s or modern and without significance.

Historic rooflights have been blocked to the BBC studio corridor, and lost altogether to the (rebuilt) West Corridor.

Door Furniture/Window Fittings/Brassware

Historic items appear to have been almost entirely lost. Some sash window catches and sash lift handles survive in the BBC studios, as well as some unremarkable door furniture.

The 1980s restoration made enthusiastic use of brass door-pulls - formed to remind of the AP motif, and many of the fittings supporting signage were well considered and of high quality. The balustrade down to the Palace Suite is unusually robust, and retains the same overall sensibility. Given its prevalence, it would be as well to continue with like fittings.

Historic Wooden Joinery

Within the occupied parts of the Palace, the joinery was fully restored or removed altogether post 1980 fire, and remains a significant visual feature, to be respected in future works.

Elsewhere, surviving doors etc are identified in the Gazetteer. Fragments within the former BBC studios include doors, dado rails, panelling, internal lay-lights, sufficient to devise a programme of full reinstatement, Studio A and B also retain their 1930 studio doors with brass ‘porthole’ vision panels, and these are also important. The Great Staircase could easily be returned to its original condition.

Theatre Items

The historic stage machinery, both above and below the stage is particularly precious, but is vulnerable to insensitive decisions in determining the future of the Theatre, as well as to neglect.

Basement Fittings

Fragmentary remains of the former activities in the South Basements include:
- Various machine tools used in workshops located there during WWI.
- Bunk beds occupied by prisoners.
- Remnants of bread ovens; cast iron ovens.
- Shelves within wine/beer cellars.
- Former food-lift positions set into vaulted ceilings.
- Flagstone paved floors.
- BBC laboratory work benches, sinks and wiring, ventilation ducts.
- Goods hoist.

These items are all located in the Gazetteer.

3.2.8 **Security**

The nature of the building as a venue for ticketed events means that security has already been considered, particularly with a view to preventing gate-crashers to prestigious sporting events.

Areas open to the public without tickets are limited to the Ice Rink Foyer, the West Entrance, Palm Court and Phoenix Café/Bar, all of which are secured at night.

The Service Yard and North Yard are protected by barriers, and the door to the management offices in the SE Tower is controlled at ground floor level.

The principal concern is the ugliness of some security installations, exemplified by the Ice Rink ticket office, which it must surely be possible to improve upon.

Despite its isolated position and part-derelict condition, the building is surprisingly free of graffiti. Extensive CCTV installations may be instrumental in achieving this.

3.2.9 **Lighting**

The lighting in both the Halls and the Ice Rink is functional and not integrated into the architecture. Bowl light fittings illuminate the West Corridor, and a few similar fittings are provided in the Ice Rink Café, and the cafés off the Great Hall.

Office area lighting is functional.

The principal concerns are: failure to integrate the lighting with the architecture in the main spaces, the intrusiveness of some of the fittings, and the colour temperature of the light bulbs.

It is acknowledged that each event will require targeted lighting, but the gantries and other framework for supporting this ought to be integrated into the main fabric too.

3.2.10 Fire Precautions

Alexandra Palace has already burnt down twice.

The fire load on the rebuilt parts would appear to be small, but the Theatre, NE Tower and BBC Rooms and adjoining spaces must be vulnerable, not only as a result of the quantities of timber in their construction, but also as a result of both the accommodation of stored furniture, paper and other flammable items, and due to the partial removal of ceilings and walls, and the insertion of ducts (particularly BBC areas) allowing fire to spread where it would otherwise have been contained.

3.2.11 Accessibility

All the public areas are at ground floor level, and ramps provide access to the east and west entrances. The basement and upper floor facilities associated with the West Hall/Great Hall can be reached by lift and disabled WCs are included.

There appears to be no disabled access to the offices by the West Entrance. The SE Tower contains a lift, but no ramp to the main entrance.

There is no evidence of provision for the partially sighted.

The Service Yard enables full vehicle access to the West and Great Halls, and large lifts at the north end allow the storage basements and North Yard to be reached too.

3.2.12 Mechanical and Electrical Services

Inevitably, the post fire rebuild allowed the installation of new services throughout the occupied parts of the Palace; but these installations are now in need of improvement.

The installation of services can threaten the appearance and fabric of an historic building through:

- Inappropriate choice of fittings (colour, design, finish).
- Cabling, pipework and ducts may require chasing of or removal of finishes, threatening historic joinery, plaster and masonry.
- Where not chased-in or otherwise concealed, the plant can be obtrusive; externally, it may also inhibit maintenance of the fabric immediately behind.
- Raised temperatures, and often a corresponding drop in humidity can threaten historic joinery and other finishes through shrinkage.
- Increased light levels can hasten the degradation of paintings, photographs, leather and other finishes.

3.2.13 Environmental Issues

Over recent years there have been increasing calls for and legislation to ensure reduced energy consumption. So far, these pressures do not seem to have reached Alexandra Palace.

Pressure may be expected for implementation (or increasing the provision) in respect of the following:

- Roof insulation.
- Secondary glazing/double glazing.

- Energy efficient lighting.
- Energy efficient heating.
- Insulated wall linings.

These measures will affect both the historic fabric and present-day appearance of rooms and indeed, the appearance of the buildings from the outside.

Simultaneously, there will be pressure to provide environmental conditions attuned to the preservation of the historic fittings such as the panelling, paintings and ancient books.

3.2.14 Incremental Degradation

Historic buildings suffer from degradation under the principles of 'death by a thousand cuts' and 'Chinese whispers'. These changes are often the result of a lack of continuous memory of a building, due to poor documentation and/or rapid staff turnover, the demands of aggressive individuals that the buildings should be altered to suit them, and the willingness of others to accommodate them.

3.2.15 Carpets and Soft Furnishings

Carpets within the building are of limited interest, and are not original.

3.2.16 Disaster Planning

Fire, flood and physical attack can all result in catastrophic destruction of the buildings, as witnessed at Hampton Court and Windsor Castle, and a disaster plan for Alexandra Palace should be prepared to enable recovery following any cataclysm.

3.2.17 Signage

While much of the signage in the public areas is well conceived, some is not – e.g. in the middle of the West Hall long walls. New items should aspire to match existing items.

3.3 Element by Element

To avoid unnecessary repetition, the points described in section 3.2 will not be repeated. This section will concentrate on the specific issues confronting particular elements of the building.

3.3.1 Exterior and Interior Masonry: Brickwork

The original exterior brickwork was of high quality, bedded in mortar, carefully tinted and then tuck pointed to give a deliberately polychromatic effect. Except in isolated locations, this has been lost to fire, weathering, and the unsympathetic 1980s repointing in weather-struck cementitious mortar. Further work of this quality will only exacerbate the situation.

Since re-tuck pointing the whole is financially impossible, any repairs and alterations will need to be carefully considered.

3.3.2 Exterior and Interior Masonry: Render/Cement Mouldings

Previous repairs executed with an eye to economy have often simplified the cornice mouldings (e.g. to the BBC south elevation), thus diminishing the intended balance of light and shadow to the elevation. Roof level balustrades have also been lost.

There is a risk of an unsatisfactory match to the 1870s cement-based mortar providing the wrong colour and texture, as well as lack of integrity resulting in early failure, as may be seen on the SW Tower.

Other risks arise from the rusting of the armature securing the smaller mouldings in particular to the brickwork – as near the East Entrance, where the iron nails have rusted through; this leads to the loss of the moulding both through mechanical failure and through shattering as the rust expands.

3.3.3 Exterior Windows

Additional secondary and new double glazing can affect the appearance if not well detailed.

4.0 CONSERVATION PLAN POLICIES

4.1 General Policy

The effect of any alterations to these buildings will be considered in the light of their impact on their historic fabric and the surrounding area, both positively and negatively, and the benefits and/or dis-benefits balanced.

4.2 Area Policies

EXTERIORS

4.2.1 Elevations

External Elevations are all Significant or Highly Significant.

i. Any future alterations to the existing fabric will be carried out in a style and using materials appropriate to the building.
ii. Repairs or alterations to the elevations will be carried out in a like-for-like manner.
iii. All original and other subsequent significant historical fittings (as set out in the Gazetteer), including but not limited to roof coverings, joinery, windows, rooflights, doors and lighting will be repaired and / or restored and put into good order and maintained as such.
iv. Any works to the elevations should be properly recorded including recording of any fabric opened up during the works, and a précis included on the data sheet in the Gazetteer.
v. Before works are carried out to the elevations, or to fittings or elements on or around the elevations, including pavings, anything that might be susceptible to damage shall be properly protected.
vi. Alterations to provide access for those with disabilities will be carried out in the style of the elevation to which they relate.
vii. Detracting services and ventilation equipment will be removed.
viii. Detrimental alterations to the elevations will be reversed as noted in the Gazetteer.
ix. Blocked openings e.g. to the East Buildings, will be refitted with glazed joinery to the correct historical pattern.
x. The infill structures to the BBC south veranda and balcony will be removed, and the historic elevation reinstated.
xi. When repairs are undertaken to the elevations, the masonry will be cleaned.

4.2.2 Roofs and Roof Top Structures (including BBC transmitter mast)

i. Any future alterations will be carried out in a manner and in materials sympathetic to the part of the buildings being worked upon.
ii. Any necessary alterations will take place only following due consideration of the full implications of the alterations on the historic fabric of lesser significance or later alterations.
iii. Any works will be properly recorded, including recording of any fabric opened up during the works, and a précis included on the data sheet in the Gazetteer.
iv. Repairs to and replacement of historic materials will be on a like-for-like basis.

v. Before any works are carried out to the roofs, or within roof voids, elements that might be susceptible to damage shall be properly protected with temporary roofing or by other suitable means.
vi. Detracting services and ventilation equipment will be replanned to be less conspicuous, and removed altogether where possible.
vii. The Theatre roof structure, which includes very early structural steel tension rods, is of particular interest, and it must be repaired and maintained in good condition.

4.2.3 **External Pavings and Hard Surfacing around Alexandra Palace**

i. Surviving original or historic paving materials will be retained.
ii. The paving should be of consistent, historically appropriate materials.
iii. The area southwest of the building may be replanned to provide improved access as well as a protected external seating area.

4.2.4 **Lighting**

i. Any external lighting schemes, including floodlighting, will take into due consideration the historical and architectural significance of the elevations.
ii. Lighting within the building, particularly in rooms visible from the outside will be chosen with due regard to the historical and architectural significance of the elevations.

INTERIORS

4.2.5 **West Entrance, Palm Court, West Hall (Walls), West Corridor (Walls), Great Hall (Walls), Ice Rink (Walls), Ice Rink Foyer, Theatre Foyer, Theatre, BBC Studios A and B**

i. Any alterations to these areas will take place only following due consideration of the full effects of the alterations on the historic fabric and recognition that these areas form an architectural series of related spaces and must be, as far as possible, reversible.
ii. Any alterations will be carried out in a manner sympathetic to the historical style of the areas.
iii. Repairs to fabric or replacement of elements will be carried out in a like-for-like manner unless clear historical precedent advises otherwise.
iv. Any works will be properly recorded, including recording of any fabric within voids opened up during the works, and a précis included in the relevant room data sheets in the Gazetteer.
v. Before any works are carried out in (or above) these areas, or within the floor voids, elements that might be susceptible to damage shall be properly protected.
vi. Detrimental elements within these areas shall be removed.

4.2.6 **Londesborough Room and Offices, Phoenix Bar and Palm Court Suite, Ice Rink Café, Rooms within NE, SE and NW Towers, BBC Rooms except Studios A and B, East Buildings, South Basements, Ceiling/Roof Structures and Floors to West Hall, West Corridor, Great Hall and Ice Rink**

i. These areas may be fully refurbished or refitted within their historic structural volumes, as the original structural walls and partitions survive behind the present fit-out.
ii. The temptation to merge volumes should be resisted.
iii. Any alterations will be carried out only following due consideration of the full effects of the alterations on the historic fabric.

iv. Repairs to fabric or replacement of elements will be carried out in a like-for-like manner.
v. Any works will be properly recorded, including recording of any fabric within voids opened up during the works, and a précis included in the relevant room data sheets in the Gazetteer.

4.2.7 **Service Yard, North Basements (both Floors), Serverys, Bars and WCs off the Great Hall, Panorama Room, SW Tower**

i. These areas may, if required, be subject to major re-modelling if any scheme of alteration requires it.
ii. Any alterations will be carried only following due consideration of the full effects of the alterations on the historic fabric.
iii. Repairs to fabric or replacement of elements will be carried out in a like-for-like manner.
iv. Any works will be properly recorded, including recording of any fabric within voids opened up during the works, and a précis included in the relevant room data sheets in the Gazetteer.

4.2.8 **Hidden Spaces**

i. When sub-floors or ceiling voids are opened up for works to be carried out, surveys should be undertaken of the fabric and any original services within and a relevant note made on the room data sheet in the Gazetteer.
ii. Wherever possible any alterations to fabric or services within voids should be to later alterations.

4.3 Elemental Policies

4.3.1 **Maintenance**

The maintenance plan for all of the building fabric based on Quinquennial surveys should be followed. Consideration should be given to installing monitoring devices to warn against water ingress into the buildings in areas with significant historic fabric.

4.3.2 **Services Generally**

i. Throughout the building during alterations, the opportunity should be taken where possible to remove surface-fixed fittings, pipework, cables and ducts.
ii. When installing new services preference should be given to locating them within existing voids and chases.
iii. When installing new services, routes through occupied spaces, including basements, should be avoided.
iv. Routes for new services should be considered and designed with a view to preventing damage or destruction of historic fabric, particularly the most significant fabric.
v. Pre-planning of new installations in the most significant parts of the building should include fully worked out builder's work drawings.
vi. A record should be kept of all new services installations and alterations and a précis included within the relevant room sheets in the Gazetteer.
vii. Where historical services or pieces of plant including redundant items such as those within the South Basements, are to be replaced or removed, consideration will be given

to either leaving them in situ, or where this is not possible offering them to a relevant learned institution or collection for salvage.

4.3.3 **Lighting**

i. Cable routes should, as far as possible, be within existing voids in the building.
ii. When installing new light fittings or lamps, only those items appropriate for the sensitivity of their location should be installed.
iii. When installing new light fittings in historically or architecturally significant areas, consideration should be given to whether they might adversely affect the historic fabric either physically, due to the need for chases to allow for the installation, for example, or visually.
iv. Emergency standby lighting in significant rooms and spaces should not be separate fittings but rather wired into the general lighting fittings.
v. Illuminated signs should be avoided as far as possible (see also Fire).
vi. External lighting should be maintained as historically appropriate to the setting.
vii. Light fittings within rooms which are visible from outside of the building should be chosen with sensitivity to the external views of the building.
viii. Within the West Hall, Great Hall and Ice Rink, lighting gantries for event lighting shall be integrated into the designs of the rooms, and with sensitivity to their location.

4.3.4 **Heating**

i. Pipe and duct routes should, as far as possible, be kept within existing voids in the building.
ii. New room heaters should be chosen to be appropriate to the sensitivity of their setting. Generally heat sources will be concealed. Where floor finishes are to be renewed, under-floor heating may be considered.

4.3.5 **Ventilation**

i. The existing system of opening windows in the offices and minor spaces around the West Entrance and the high level vents in the Palm Court and Ice Rink Foyer, should wherever possible be relied upon, and kept in good order.
ii. New ventilation plant should be located, as far as possible, in locations which are discrete.
iii. When the SW, NE and NW Towers, the Panorama Room and the BBC Studio areas are refurbished / rebuilt, natural ventilation is to be preferred.
iv. Ductwork routes through occupied spaces should be avoided, and new ductwork will, where possible, be located within existing voids.
v. Grilles and vents should be chosen to be appropriate to the sensitivity of their setting.
vi. Additional external units should be placed in the north side roof areas, not in the east or in the basement areas.

4.3.6 **Lightning**

i. Lightning conductor tapes should run, where possible, behind or adjacent to down pipes or other vertical features. In any case, full detailed design drawings should be prepared in advance of installation.
ii. Stake pits should be located with consideration of the significance of the pavings.
iii. The heavy copper conductor tape below the BBC transmitter mast should either be

renewed in another metal less attractive to metal thieves, or repositioned less conspicuously.

4.3.7 **Public Health/Rainwater Goods**

i. When replacing visible above ground pipework this should be done with consideration of the sensitivity of its location, and on a like-for-like basis, unless the existing fittings are already inappropriate. The historic rainwater fittings (built into the brickwork) are attractive and of significance and should be maintained in good order.
ii. Plastic fittings should not be used externally.
iii. When carrying out maintenance to below ground services, the significance of pavings should be taken into account and appropriate records made of them prior to commencing the work.

4.3.8 **Floors**

i. Historic floors should not be lifted unless this is essential.
ii. When re-laying floors, below floor service positions which require access should have a discrete trap, or other method of gaining necessary access, formed.
iii. When replacing or repairing wooden floors generally, this should be done on a like-for-like basis, except where modern finishes have replaced earlier material or earlier material is inappropriately installed when consideration should be given to reinstating the original finish, or something appropriate to the setting of the room.
iv. When carrying out work in floor voids, historic plasterwork below the floor should be protected.
v. Structural alterations in significant areas should be carried out on the basis of reinforcement or addition to existing fabric and not replacement in significant areas.
vi. Flagstone floors in the South Basements should be re-laid.

4.3.9 **Joinery**

Generally:

i. Historic joinery should repaired rather than replaced.
ii. Dismantling joinery should be avoided, but if this is unavoidable it should be properly labelled and recorded before works commence and during dismantling.
iii. Details should be taken from the remaining sections of historic doors, windows and other features in the BBC areas and NE / NW Towers, and used to inform the design of new joinery.

Doors:

iv. Doors and frames and linings and glazing should be repaired with materials similar to those existing, except where these are already inappropriate.
v. Doors and doorways are particularly vulnerable to damage when works are being undertaken and appropriate protective measures should be taken at these times.

Windows:

vi. Windows, frames, cills and linings should be repaired in like-for-like materials, except where these are already inappropriate. Such alterations and interventions should be

reversed, and the historic joinery made good.

vii. Windows are vulnerable to damage when works are being carried out to external elevations and appropriate protective measures should be taken at these times.

Other, including Theatre stage fittings:

viii. Historic joinery should be repaired on a like-for-like basis.
ix. Carved joinery is particularly vulnerable to damage when works are being carried out adjacent to it, appropriate protective measures should be taken at these times.
x. Any moving joinery should be maintained in good working order.
xi. External joinery should be kept well decorated.
xii. Significant joinery should not be altered.
xiii. The stage machinery is of particular interest, and should be returned to good working order, and well maintained.

4.3.10 **Ironwork**

i. External and internal ironwork should be kept well decorated.
ii. Iron is subject to damage (wrought iron bends but cast iron breaks if subject to impact) so when works are being carried out adjacent to significant ironwork appropriate protective measures should be taken.
iii. Only those with appropriate smithing skills should be employed to carry out repairs to historic ironwork.

4.3.11 **Glass**

i. Historic glass should be retained where possible. The modern stained glass is also valuable and must be retained.
ii. Glass should be protected when works are being undertaken in areas adjacent.
iii. Replacement of damaged glass should be carried out on a like-for-like basis.

4.3.12 **Ironmongery and Door Furniture**

i. Historic ironmongery should be repaired where possible. Modern patterned hinges should not be used on historic doors, where these survive.
ii. Historic locks and latches should be retained and mortice locks added if extra security is required.

4.3.13 **Decorations**

i. In architecturally or historically significant areas, research into previous colour schemes should be undertaken before re-decorating.
ii. Decorative schemes for rooms with groups intended to be read as suites (e.g. BBC Tower offices, Palm Court Suite) should be appropriate for the suite.
iii. Decoration, rendering and stone-cleaning of the external elevations should be co-ordinated.
iv. Wholesale stripping of paint coats in historic rooms should not be done unless full recording of the previous schemes has been made, and then sample areas left of original paint in situ.

4.3.14 **Finishes**

External:

i. Replacement of or repairs to all external finishes: brick, stone, lead, slate etc, should be in like-for-like materials.
ii. The external fabric should be maintained in weather-tight condition.
iii. Historic fabric should be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible.
iv. Alterations to external fabric should be carried out using construction methods and materials similar to existing adjacent fabric.
v. Some external finishes are susceptible to damage when works are being carried out, proper protection of these should be installed during such operations.

Internal:

vi. Alterations to or replacement of or repairs to significant historic internal finishes should be in like-for-like materials using similar techniques.
vii. Historic render mouldings and brickwork, as well as decorative cast iron, particularly enriched work, is highly susceptible to damage when works are being carried out, proper protection should be installed during such operations.

4.3.15 **Structural Elements**

i. Alteration of significant historic fabric should be avoided.
ii. Any alterations to historic fabric should be fully recorded.
iii. Repairs and alterations to historic fabric should be carried out in compatible materials and, where visible, in like-for-like materials.
iv. When structural repairs are being made to floor or roofing members, these should be done as far as possible in ways which avoid removal or replacement of original fabric.

4.4 Particular Policies

4.4.1 **Fire Safety and Implementation**

i. Any implementation of fire safety requirements should be sensitive to the significance of the buildings and not undermine or de-value this significance.
ii. Wherever possible the need to change to accommodate fire safety installations should be avoided by management of risk rather than alteration of the fabric.
iii. When planning improvements to the fire safety of different elements or areas of the building, alterations should be considered in the light of the particular significance of the element or area being addressed, and the affect of alterations on the historic and architecturally important fabric and settings assessed with regard to the requirements of the building area and building element policies.
iv. Alterations to historic joinery, glass and ironmongery should be avoided. English Heritage guidance notes on the upgrading of doors for fire purposes should be used if alterations are the only solution. If possible, alterations should be reversible and use materials which reflect the existing fabric.
v. Emergency lighting should be installed as discreetly as possible and, in historic rooms, should be part of the permanently installed lighting scheme.
vi. Standard fire escape signs, fire door and similar signs are inappropriate in historic interiors. These should be avoided if possible. Suitable signs for many purposes have

already been developed and should be used further.

4.4.2 Accessibility and Implementation

i. Any implementation of access requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 should be sensitive to the significance of the buildings and not undermine or de-value this significance.
ii. Wherever possible the need to change to accommodate access requirements should be avoided by management rather than alteration of the fabric.
iii. When planning new access, alterations should be considered in the light of the particular significance of the element or area being addressed, and the effect of alterations on the historic and architecturally important fabric and settings addressed with regard to the requirements of the building area and building element policies.
iv. Alterations to historic finishes and fabric should be avoided, but if they are the only possible solution, if possible, they should be made reversible and alterations constructed in materials and in a manner which reflects the existing adjacent fabric.

4.4.3 Security and Implementation

i. The implementation of any security installations and alterations to the fabric to make the buildings more secure should be sensitive to the significance of the buildings and not undermine or de-value this significance.
ii. Wherever possible the need to change to accommodate security requirements should be avoided by management of risk rather than alteration of the fabric.
iii. When new security installations are being planned they should be considered in the light of the particular significance of the element or area being addressed and the affect of the alterations on the historic and architecturally important fabric and settings assessed with regard to the requirements of the building area and building element policies.
iv. Alterations to historic finishes and fabric should be avoided but if they are the only possible solution, if possible, they will be made reversible.

4.4.4 Signage

i. Should additional signage be required, new signs should be appropriate for their location and be sited in positions which do not compromise the architectural setting in which they are positioned; Signwriting should be considered, as an alternative to the fixing of additional plaques. Alexandra Palace already contains many well considered examples.

4.4.5 Disaster Planning

i. Measured and photogrammetric records should be maintained for the building generally and the most significant fabric in particular and items within the collections. This should include detailed records of all of the elements of the elevations, and the interiors listed at 4.2.5.

4.4.6 Chinese Whispers – Review and Management

i. To engender a respect for and an interest in the buildings, those working and studying in them should be advised of their significance in general and the architectural, historic and

cultural significance of the areas they occupy.

ii. Areas not generally occupied, such as stores, should be annually inspected and assessed for ill treatment and gradual degradation. This assessment will be acted upon by carrying out on-going repairs and maintenance as necessary.

iii. A Quinquennial survey should particularly review areas in light of the possibility of accretive degradation of the fabric.

4.5 Use Policies

4.5.1 Generally

Alexandra Palace should continue to keep its primary use public entertainment for sporting and musical spectator events, supported by suitable events for public participation (e.g. the existing Ice Rink), as well associated catering and other hospitality facilities.

4.5.2 Great Hall

The present use is suitable, but the Great Hall could be enhanced by:

- Improved acoustics, perhaps involving alteration to the fabric roof liner.
- Completing the enclosure to the Organ.
- Providing better control of daylight through the roof and upper windows on both sides of the hall.

4.5.3 West Hall; West Corridor and Associated Spaces

The present use is suitable.

4.5.4 Panorama Room, SW Tower and Adjoining Spaces

i. The present use is a wasted opportunity; a new structure, the full height of the retained south elevation should be constructed to provide accommodation on two stories, perhaps with additional mezzanines. Banqueting, conference and an element of hotel use would be suitable.

ii. Providing a fully beneficial use here would justify the improvement and continuing maintenance of this part of the building.

4.5.5 The West Entrance, Palm Court and Adjoining Spaces

These rooms provide the main entrance to the Palace, and the Palm Court should act as a foyer to various activities in the West Hall, Panorama Room and present Service Yard Areas.

i. The Palm Court needs heavier use to feel properly occupied. At present, it achieves this only when a large scale event is in progress.

4.5.6 Service Yard and NW Tower Areas

i. It seems a pity to give over a fair part of the ground floor to service functions.

ii. The present north yard (and its basement access, with lifts), and the escape "bridge" from the north portico offer an opportunity to reconsider how the Great Hall and West Hall could be serviced, which might release the present Service Yard for a revenue raising activity.

4.5.7 Ice Rink and Adjoining Areas

i. The present use is not threatening to the fabric of the building; it is profitable and should continue.

4.5.8 Theatre, NE Tower and Adjoining Spaces

i. The acoustics of the room suggest (classical) concert use, if the Theatre were refurbished. This would also allow preservation of the historic stage machinery, which would not be required for actual regular use, though it could be presented from time to time.
ii. The adjoining spaces would, if refurbished and remodelled, provide suitable accommodation for rehearsal and changing rooms and these might extend into the support spaces by the East Entrance.

4.5.9 East Entrance and Ice Rink Foyer and Adjoining Areas

i. The ticketing and security booths in the Foyer should be removed, as should the mini golf and toddler circuits.
ii. The space will serve as the Foyer for the Theatre/Concert Hall, as well as for the present BBC Studios area, and should be treated accordingly. At present, it is under-used.

4.5.10 BBC Studios Area and SE Tower

i. The Studios A and B should be preserved, restored and open to the public.
ii. The remaining spaces should be refurbished, where possible regaining the correct historic room proportions, for use as banqueting, conference or exhibition space, with associated support spaces.

4.5.11 North Basements

i. In time, when the Panorama Room and/or BBC areas have been refurbished, the Palace Suite should be transferred and the space used for Great Hall support functions.

4.5.12 South Basements

i. The present lack of use is not sustainable in the long term. Traditionally, kitchens were placed here to serve the dining facilities above, and such a use could be reconsidered.
ii. It might also be beneficial to have a public route through the basement to link the east and west parts of the Palace together under the Great Hall.

4.5.13 North Yard

i. The present use is unthreatening, and could be increased.
ii. Alternatively, the main traffic route through the park, including the bus route, could be replanned to run through the North Yard, with bus stops at each end of the Palace. The section of road passing the south front of the Palace could be removed, allowing much better connection between the Palace and its Park.

6.0 GAZETTEER

A. EXTERIOR

1. Roofs
2. External Elevations
3. Terraces and Adjoining Landscape

B. INTERIOR

1. Basements – North
2. Basements – South
3. West Entrance, Palm Court and Adjoining Areas
4. West Hall and Adjoining Areas
5. NW Tower and Modern Service Yard
6. SW Tower, Panorama Room and Adjoining Terrace
7. Great Hall, North and South Porticos
8. Ice Rink and Adjoining Spaces
9. NE Tower, Theatre and Adjoining Areas
10. SE Tower, BBC Studios and Adjoining Areas
11. East Entrance, Ice Rink Foyer and Adjoining Areas

A. EXTERIOR

6.A.1 ROOFS

1.1 GENERALLY

Description/observation: Almost all the roof coverings have been renewed since the 1980 fire; to the Great Hall and the western part of the palace, this has also meant new roof structures, or the substantial rebuilding of what was there before. To the east, the Ice Rink has a new roof and structure, while the Theatre and BBC Studios areas have new coverings to older structures. The Ice Rink Foyer has been repaired to match the Palm Court. The buildings either side of the East Entrance have older coverings on original 1870s structures and are largely derelict.

1.2 WEST BUILDINGS

Description/observation: Including the café, Londesborough Room etc generally have modern pitched roofs with sheet metal coverings.

i. **The roof over the café/bar** (which has offices on an upper floor) is asphalted with lead dressings. Here, some of the 1930s rooflights have been retained, and are supplemented by rather clumsy but effective 1980s replicas. There are various extract ducts penetrating the surface.

Significance: Limited.

ii. **The historic timber roof structure,** with clerestory glazing, remains above the block to the south, which contains WCs. New sheet metal roof coverings have been fitted.

Significance: Significant.

iii. **The internal "corners" to the Palm Court roof** have modern translucent tension fabric roofs on modern steel frames. While reasonably effective visually, this material will not match the lifespan of the proper glazed structure, and should be regarded as sacrificial.

Significance: Neutral.

iv. **The glazed roof over the rest of the Palm Court** has been fully re-glazed in wired glass, with modern sheet metal by the portico entrance. The supporting structure retains most of the historic cast iron and other metalwork, as well as the rendered supporting structure to the dome, which is in poor decorative condition.

Significance: Highly significant.

v. **The roof over the Londesborough Room** is pitched and seems entirely new; sheet metal coverings.

Significance: Limited.

vi. **The roof over the pavilion north of the Palm Court** matches the profile of that at ii. above, but has no clerestory windows; assumed new structure.

Significance: Limited.

1.3 WEST HALL AND ADJOINING SPACES

Description/observation: All new roofs and structures dating from after the 1980 fire.

i. **West Hall:** modern toblerone truss steel structure, nearly flat to main area, curving down to perimeter gutters; numerous air extract vents to main area.

Significance: Neutral.

ii. **Corridor to south:** modern metal covered double-pitch roof with plant areas at both ends.

Significance: Neutral.

iii. **Roof over WC and restaurant areas to north:** another metal clad double-pitch, this time partly spanning into the original concert hall/roller skating rink part of the plan, thus confusing the historic layout.

Significance: Neutral.

1.4 SERVICE YARD AREA

The modern unloading dock, stores and offices are entirely functional with profile metal sheet roofs. In time, an overall treatment to the whole area which recognises the original plan would be preferable.

Significance: Detrimental.

1.5 PANORAMA ROOM AND ADJOINING AREAS

i. **The present Panorama Room** is a tent, and provides a temporary solution to this area.

Significance: Detrimental.

ii. **SW Tower** has a modern c1980s flat roof in place of the original spire, which was removed post-war. A spire would give better visual appearance to balance the BBC TV transmitter mast in the SE Tower.

Significance: Neutral.

iii. **South Terrace:** there is modern metal decking roof structure here with felt coverings. The coverings have not been seen.

1.6 GREAT HALL

Description/observation: An entirely modern structure replacing that lost to the 1980 fire, and in some respects improving on it by omitting all the intermediate columns which supported the 1870s barrel vault and aisles.

Two large steel portal frames supported on additional steel columns (concealed within giant Corinthian porticoes located on the east and west walls) are visible externally, and are impressive rather than beautiful. Between them and the north and south porticoes span beams which support the rest of the roof structure. This is extensively glazed, with metal weatherings, being divided into 15 bays to match the historic wall structure below. Within this, a fabric "voile" is suspended, to recreate the vault and aisles. The void between is packed with air-handling plant, walkways, service gantries and the like.

Being 25 years old now, the roof is in need of some redecoration, cleaning and maintenance, and the "voile" is water-stained.

Significance: Nevertheless, as 1980s rebuilds go, this rates as significant.

1.7 ICE RINK AND ADJOINING SPACES

The roofs have all been renewed since the 1980 fire.

i. **Skating Rink:** the structure is similar to that for the West Hall. The massive supporting beams to east and west are visible. The roof has recently been refurbished, and has felt coverings as has the rink as a whole.

Significance: Limited.

ii. **The former corridor to the north** (now filled with WCs, changing rooms, club rooms etc) has a flat roof and bears much plant serving the ice rink. Some of the rooflights leak. The structure is a concrete slab; concrete paving slabs protect the waterproof layer.

Significance: Detrimental.

iii. **The roof to the south** covers the café etc and appears to be a new double-pitched structure with extensive rooflights, and a felt covering.

Significance: Functional but of limited significance.

1.8 THEATRE AND ADJOINING ROOFS

i. **The gap between the Theatre "fly tower"** and the Great Hall was destroyed in the 1980 fire and has been replaced with a modern flat roof of utilitarian design.

Significance: Neutral.

ii. **The Theatre and fly tower** above the stage retain the 1870s timber roofs, which support parts of the stage backdrop mechanisms. New metal roof coverings have been laid over the historic torched and felted zinc sheet coverings to prevent water ingress, which had previously caused damage to the very large softwood queen trusses, spanning north-south, which form the main roof structure. Some of the trusses have dropped, and most of the bearings have been "plated" onto new padstones. We noted a missing flashing at the west end of the theatre.

Significance: Nevertheless, this roof structure remains highly significant.

iii. **Immediately south of the Theatre** is a fire-break passage, with a new profiled metal roof, which leaks.

Significance: Neutral.

iv. **The Theatre Foyer and adjoining (shortened) tower** have new-ish flat roof coverings in felt. These structures have not been reviewed.

Significance: Neutral.

1.9 BBC ROOMS AND SOUTH EAST TOWER

i. **The former lightwell between the Great Hall** and these rooms have a 1980s flat roof and a large lantern rooflight, reasonably well detailed.

Significance: Limited

ii. **The main range of rooms** (the studios) have a hipped roof with fairly new metal sheet coverings, running to a wide parapet gutter behind the front arcade. The roof trusses/structure appear to be 1870s.

Significance: High.

iii. **The SE Tower roof** was rebuilt in 1935-6 with a flat asphalt covering, and supports the 200ft high steel transmitter mast, for the pioneering television broadcasts which began in 1936. Although the dipole aerials have been removed, the mast is otherwise intact.

Significance: Notwithstanding its appearance, it is highly significant.

iv. **Rooms to the north of the SE Tower** have zinc sheet roofs of some age, in poor condition.

Significance: Limited.

1.10 ICE RINK FOYER AND ADJOINING AREAS

Description/observation: In layout, these generally mirror those at the west end/Palm Court Area.

i. **Main glazed iron vaults and dome** – as Palm Court.

Significance: High.

ii. **Adjoining tension fabric** "corner" roofs: ditto.

Significance: Neutral.

iii. **East building roofs:** asphalt flat roofs on timber structure (1870s) with later (1930s?) rooflights. Derelict and dangerous; the northeast building needs total renewal; it may just be possible to mend the other building.

Significance: Limited.

iv. **The corner pavilions** retain clerestory windows and 1870s timber structures but the perimeter gutters have begun to leak. Temporary

tarpaulins have been fitted over to control leakage generally, but early repair will be the best solution.

Significance: Significant.

6.A.2. EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS

2.1 GENERALLY

Description/observation: Largely 1874-75 except north and south porticos/entrances (1864-66). White/buff Huntingdon brick with some red brick details, others in London stock brick and rendered mouldings.

2.2 SOUTH WEST TOWER

Description/observation: Completed 1875; top spire now missing. Openings boarded up post 1980 fire after which much of the top storey had to be rebuilt. Three storeys; ground – tripartite arched openings (larger to centre), Corinthian capitals to rusticated pilasters; heavy piers to sides also rusticated with lion heads in moulding at arch springing level and panels over. Heavy bracketed cornice under first floor; here, side piers are plain except empty plinths for statues; central triple opening – major central part has rendered balcony supporting ¾ Corinthian columns; heavy render keystone and continuous cornice under second floor. Here, the side piers have vertical panels surrounded by render mouldings; central triple opening shorter than first floor, Corinthian capitals to ¾ columns flanking central opening; precast concrete balcony of cast cement overlapping circles, no keystone under top moulding which rises to form segmental pediment under raised bullseye roundel. Brick parapet was base of spire, now removed.

South and West Elevations of tower match this description – though south side has side openings at first and second floors bricked in.

North Elevation: originally seen at mid-first floor level and above only due to lower level buildings adjoining – similar to south and west here; below this level plain brick, scarred where original structure has been removed post 1980.

East Elevation: top floor matches others; ground and first floors joined to two-storey arcade – engaged ½ pilasters with mis-aligned brickwork at the join. Northern part of this elevation formerly internal – red brick with some fletton repairs post 1980 fire.

Condition: Some post fire repairs, including renewals of red brick and render; but top render cornice failing to west side, as well as on band moulding to plinth.

Comment: Is renewal of spire desirable? Internal condition understood to be poor/derelict.

Significance: High.

2.3 SOUTH ELEVATION BETWEEN SOUTH WEST TOWER AND SOUTH ENTRANCE PORTICO

Description/observation:

i. This elevation is two storeys high, and was conceived as a two storey loggia fronting the dining rooms set behind; public at ground floor level, with a large banqueting hall above. Each storey is some 24 feet high.

ii. The front of the loggia at ground floor level is of slender square brick

piers supporting a cement rendered entablature, the piers being of white brick with brown recessed courses to imply rustication. There are cement plinth, base and capital mouldings. The upper storey is a turned brick arcade supported by Cotswold (?) limestone piers. Above the arcade runs another cement render cornice, topped by a new stock brick parapet.

iii. The elevation is divided into three sections, each of five bays. The divisions are marked by larger brick piers, dressed with red brick, and surmounted by a taller square brick pier which contained chimney flues. At first floor level, a projecting bracket was intended to support a statue, but is now empty.

iv. Between the capitols of the lower storey piers, decorative painted softwood pelmets conceal the iron beams holding the upper floor. These have recently been refurbished.

v. Between the bases of the upper storey columns is a cast iron balustrade, topped by a hardwood handrail. This appears to be an original fitting and historic illustrations show a similar fitting at ground floor level.

vi. The ground floor rear wall to the loggia has large flat-headed openings (rubbed brick flat arches) some 6' wide x 18' high. These were once fitted with tall sash windows, lost since the 1980 fire.

vii. The upper floor rear wall to the loggia has arched openings of similar materials and dimensions, enhanced by cement mouldings at springing level. Again, the sash windows have been lost.

viii. The easternmost bay at ground floor has a large opening, fully glazed with doors leading to a side lobby to the Great Hall.

ix. The next bay to this to the west, originally had no ground floor opening, but has been adapted to give access to the side of the Panorama Room plant area. The blind upper floor opening here has been rebuilt and rendered over.

Condition: The beams over the ground floor front openings are badly corroded and the brickwork to the front piers has spalled. The rendered cornices at both levels also need inspection. There have been some previous repairs (post fire) but more are needed. The rear wall is in better condition except at the western end where two flat arches have lost bricks. The top parapet wall appears to have been rebuilt post 1980 and should have a render finish.

Comment: The elevation is unsatisfactory as a perforated screen wall in front of the modern semi-permanent tent forming the Panorama Room. (The sash window glazing, fragments of which remain on the other half of the south elevation, should be put back). It would also be nice to reinstate the statues to the two intermediate piers and on top of the skyline parapet.

Significance: Highly significant.

2.4 SOUTH ELEVATION – CENTRAL PORTICO WITH WINGS TO GREAT HALL

Description/observation:

i. This portico, together with the matching one to the north, are the sole

remains of the original Alexandra Palace, burnt down in 1873. After the 1980 fire, it was extensively, if somewhat inexpertly, refurbished.

ii. The main central part, is surmounted by a heavy cement rendered gable pediment, the main cornice to which is broken. The cornice returns the depth of the portico structure at the ends. A glass fibre reproduction of the original angel, reconstructed from old photographs by Frederick Banks, crowns the gable apex.

iii. The construction generally is of white/buff brick with red brick features, rubbed red brick arches at ground floor level, and heavy cement render; ground and upper floor cornices supported by Corinthian columns of the same material by the upper floor openings.

iv. Centrally at first floor level there is a very large recessed arched opening, with a short coffered vault, all in cement render, in front of a large rose window constructed in blue painted softwood and fitted with coloured glass. This window being set back some 15'; there is a first floor balcony, framed by paired Corinthian columns and fronted by a cement balustrade.

v. The wings either side have large triple arched openings at first floor level, the larger central opening being emphasised by Corinthian columns supporting a segmental pediment. Again there is a cement balustrade. The openings are fitted with mesh grilles.

vi. Above the central arched opening is placed an oculus run in cement with a blue painted vent opening, all set within a spandrel of diaper patterned brick.

vii. Centrally at ground level a three-arch loggia on brick piers with cast ornamental capitals leads to a porch in front of large blue-painted doors which enter directly to the Great Hall. There are two blank arches, one each side, which should have statues placed before them.

viii. Similarly in each wing a group of three arches provided further access to the Great Hall. These have been rebuilt post 1980, and the arches furthest from the centre now contain bronze commemorative plaques.

Condition: Some minor repairs to the brickwork are required, otherwise good.

Comment: -

Significance: Highly significant.

2.5 SOUTH ELEVATION – SOUTH ENTRANCE PORTICO TO SE TOWER

Description/observation:

i. The general arrangement is as for the two-storey loggia the other side of the South Entrance, being symmetrical to it, and of 15 bays in three sets, arched above and square headed with pelmets below.

ii. The rooms behind this elevation were occupied by the BBC from 1936-1977. Their alterations to this elevation included the partial infilling of the loggia, with startling architectural insensitivity, at both floor levels.

iii. The bays infilled are (from west), the 4^{th}-6^{th} and 10^{th}-14^{th} at upper floor

level, and 4th–6th and 10th–12th below, with partial infill by fire escapes and low level rooms beyond in bays 13-15. Buff brick with London stock brick detailing was used for the infill, set back half a brick from the front face of the piers and first floor arches. Both ground and first floor mezzanines were included, and the rooms were lit by steel-framed Crittall windows, now boarded over.

iv. The westernmost bay has the same ground floor door and void above as the corresponding bay the other side of the Great Hall.

v. Bay 2: bricked up above (always thus); half height blocked lower opening, this is a recent amendment.

vi. Bay 3: openings here also blocked; they served the 1936 Baird system studio and transmitter room.

vii. Bays 4-6: infilled to front as described above; contained ancillary equipment stores etc for the Baird system.

viii. Bays 7-9: full height original windows in ground floor rear wall blocked now; parts of front cast iron/hardwood handrail balustrade remain. Upper floor retains full balustrade and parts of sliding sash windows to Baird and EMI Marconi system support spaces.

ix. Bays 10-14 (upper), 10-12 (ground): infilled to serve as ancillary space equipment and support to EMI Marconi studio behind.

x. Bay 15 upper: splayed enclosure wall from bay 14 leaves space for steel fire escape stair from the SE Tower, which continues down to upper part of ground floor, where it travels across the low level infill office at bays 14 and 15 to emerge at bay 13; the tops of the ground floor window remain visible.

Condition: Poor: the lower cornice is soot-blackened. The beams supporting the ground floor in the loggia have expanded, broken away the concrete and let water into the basement. The remaining joinery is shockingly mutilated where it survives. All in all, a picture of decrepitude.

Comment: While the loggia infill does relate to the pioneering BBC television studios of 1936, it does not form part of the spaces where the programmes were made, and the equipment they contained does seem to have been lost. It would be better to remove the infill and to return the elevation to its original appearance.

Significance: Highly significant.

2.6 SOUTH EAST TOWER

Description/observation:

i. This tower should match that which has been rebuilt externally at the south west corner of the Palace, and would have been surmounted by a spire sheathed in zinc tiles, containing water tanks as insurance against fire.

ii. However, in 1935 the eastern part of the Palace, including the South East Tower, was leased to the BBC, who rebuilt it to contain their offices and to support their transmitter mast for their pioneering television broadcasts,

which commenced in November 1936. The mast has been described under "roofs".

iii. The mast is restrained against wind by a large steel angles built inside each corner of the tower, and extending down about half its height. The large metal plates on the external elevations relate to where the angles are secured through the masonry. The prominent lightning conductors also relate to the mast.

iv. The three large (double height) storeys of the original tower were removed and replaced by a ground floor and five upper floors. On the south and east faces the original openings framed by rendered columns etc were removed and replaced by a five storey canted projecting bay in unadorned painted render, fitted with Crittall steel windows (entrance door up steps at ground floor south). Similar Crittall windows, not in a bay, were placed on the upper floors of the west elevation, above the level of the adjoining Studio roofs. On the north elevation, the rendered window surrounds were retained, and new glazing was introduced at high level only to suit the new staircase within the re-planned tower. Historic glazing has all been renewed.

v. The projecting bays rise above the main parapet level of the tower to form an Art Deco architectural feature with a small semi-circular balconette with metal railings.

vi. Above first floor level, the cornices were weathered in copper; these weatherings are of some age, but this detail does not seem to have been repeated elsewhere.

vii. There is a rather obtrusive fire escape running from the fourth floor west side round the north side of the tower, falling to meet the roof to the north.

Condition: This part of the Palace has been reasonably well maintained recently.

Comment: A more integrated fire escape would look better, as would the reversion of the layout and appearance of the tower to the status quo ante 1936. However, the cultural importance of the transmitter mast and supporting tower make it an icon of the television age.

Significance: Highly significant.

2.7 EAST ELEVATION (SOUTH):

Description/observation: Single storey elevations between South East Tower and the East Entrance.

i. This elevation is largely of white Huntingdon brick with red details (notably spandrel panels) and rendered moulded cappings, string mouldings at arch springing level, cornice etc.

ii. The semi-derelict condition of the accommodation within is revealed by the fact that almost all the openings have been blocked, mostly by blue-painted plywood sheets.

iii. Moving north from the tower, the first bay contains a range of 3 narrow arches, within which some high level glazing is visible in the first two. The third has more recently been blocked. The second bay in this section of wall has a single arched opening with side lights. Much of this is hard

to see behind a 1930 fire escape from the roof over which is set in the return corner to the South East Pavilion.

iv. The pavilion has two south-facing bays, both with arched windows with single lights. The western one has more recently been converted into a glazed double door, with fixed glazing above. The side panels remain blocked. A large pier marks the corner of the pavilion, and has a rendered panel at upper level, and a narrow slot at ground floor level. The east facing wall has a single arched opening with side lights, entirely blocked. The steeply pitched and clerestoried upper floor is visible above the parapet.

v. The east building (south) by the East Entrance continues the same design motifs, and has 2 bays facing south, and a large corner pier, which incorporates a roundel at upper panel level on the east face. There is a triple arched opening facing east (central one larger), again all blocked. The pier at the north end of this wall matches the one at the other end. This pier, unlike the whole of the rest of the elevations described above, has been cleaned to emphasise its link to the heavily repaired East Entrance.

Condition: Mostly poor. Loose sections of applied cement moulding have fallen off and, more worryingly, have been removed from the top of the parapet and main cornice without being made good. This will hasten water ingress and structural decay.

Comment: The fire escape is unusually ugly, and it ought to be possible to arrange it to run internally, if indeed it is still needed. The blocked openings should of course be re-opened and reglazed to enliven the façade.

Significance: Subject to removal of the detrimental fire escape and window blocking, highly significant.

2.8 EAST ENTRANCE

Description/observation: Built 1873-75, refurbished post 1980 fire. Borrows many of the details from the main South Entrance, but on a smaller scale. Large arched opening some 50' high within a flat pediment. Modern constructed side piers within the opening are surely intended for statues. Entrance doors (7 leaves wide) set back some 15' from the front, so arch has coffered barrel vault to meet them. Modern blue painted joinery with large bullseyes to doors, the whole being some 30' wide and 18' high, with a segmented arched opening. Unlike the West Entrance, there is no balcony, so the plain glazed semi-circular window is directly above. Within the return walls, to the entrance are set windows in arched openings which served staircases to the various offices in the adjoining East Buildings. The area within the arch forms a porch, and is paved in York stone; 3 steps rise up from the asphalt car park; to the north is a disabled access ramp guarded by simple blue painted metal rails.

Condition: Mostly good, except where water run-off below the scrolls each side of the pediment has washed out the mortar and soiled the brickwork. Some lost mouldings.

Comment: Why have the truncated side piers been inserted within the arch?

Significance: High.

2.9 EAST ELEVATIONS BETWEEN EAST ENTRANCE AND NORTH EAST TOWER

2.9.1 East Building (North):

Description/observation: Symmetrical with item 2.7 iv), though north facing openings have been infilled with fletton brick and small modern flush doors.

Condition: Derelict.

Significance: High.

2.9.2 North East Pavilion

Description/observation: Symmetrical with South East pavilion. Cill to east facing window has been removed and a flush door reached via a short concrete ramp has been installed. Of the two northern openings, the eastern has been blocked, the western rebuilt and fitted with full width glazed fire escape doors under a modern lintol which supports the retained central arch.

Condition: Derelict – extensive mortar loss and plant growth.

Significance: High - if later alterations are reversed.

2.9.3 Theatre Foyer

Description/observation: Originally had 3 'Venetian' glazed openings incorporating entrance doors to the foyer, the southernmost being about 9" higher and wider than the other two *(why?).* This has been infilled with fletton brickwork and a small double flush door has been inserted. The central opening has had a new beam placed across its whole width (to support the arch) and is now blocked below this by plywood sheets. The northern opening retains original glazed joinery, much patched.

Condition: Poor; buddleia growth is extensive.

Significance: High.

2.9.4 Theatre Upper Elevation (behind theatre foyer)

Description/observation: Red and buff brickwork in bay-width panels under a repaired rendered cornice. Access ladder to roof at right-hand end.

Condition: Fair.

Significance: High.

2.10 NORTH EAST TOWER

Description/observation:

i. Due to structural problems, this has been reduced in height to two storeys since 1950s. These retain the brickwork and render features noted for the South East Tower (6.A.2.6 above).

ii. South and east elevations retain (worn and patched) historic window

joinery to the upper floor.

iii. Tell-tales have been placed across cracks in the east elevation brickwork to monitor movement.

iv. The ground level drops some 25' towards the north across the width of the east elevation. The lower part of the east elevation and of the north is constructed in red brick. A modern flush door is an older opening; accessed by steps from above, gives entry to a basement (not inspected).

v. The north side has first floor windows with revised historic joinery, which includes French window to the balcony.

vi. At ground floor, the upper arched parts are bricked in over supporting steels, the lower parts are boarded over.

vii. At basement level is a hatch some 10ft above ground level reached by an access ladder with a locked cage.

viii. The west facing return contains no visible openings as seen from the north.

Condition: Render is looking vulnerable; some cracks to brickwork (especially north face), which has tell tales – *are those being monitored?* Red brick lower elevations are spalling. Glass is broken to windows; joinery needs redecoration.

Significance: High.

2.11 NORTH WALL (EAST) RUNNING TO NORTH PORTICO

Description/observation: This is almost entirely in white brick above "ground" level, enlivened with London stock and red details, and cement mouldings. Lower part below "ground" in stock brick down to splayed base covered in concrete slabs behind a modern red engineering brick retaining wall.

Elevation divided into 14 equal bays by stepped buttresses. The middle 6 are separated from the 4 each side by wider buttresses (perhaps containing chimney flues). These 6 bays have blind arched openings to the upper floor with rendered architraves, keystones and ornamental spandrels depicting female heads. The eastern 3 openings are covered by boarding, for no clear reason.

At first floor level, the buttresses incorporate plinth supports for statues, all now lost; scars to the brickwork indicate these. At ground floor mezzanine level, they bear semi-circular decorative castings (lion heads to wide buttresses). The copings have been renewed in cement.

At basement level, each bay has a narrow slit (1/3 brick wide), now covered by rusty mesh; modern plastic drainage pipes appear in bays 4, 6, 8 and 11 from east end.

The four bays by the north entrance portico have a structure built some 10' in front, not corresponding to their bay width. At basement level it is of red brick in 3 large bays (2 eastern are arched) surmounted by a balustrade – all part of the 1864-66 Palace. The right-hand bay has been rebuilt with a square head. This and the middle bay serve as emergency

exits to the Great Hall, via a large and ugly blue metal staircase (1980s). Under the bay nearest the north portico is a flush door service entrance to the basement.

Above this bay, the ground floor projects forward to meet the line of the north portico, with matching brickwork.

Condition: Reasonable, though neglected.

Significance: High, except escape stair which should be better designed.

2.12 NORTH ENTRANCE PORTICO

Description/observation: Above ground level, this was built to mirror the south entrance portico.

Differences:

i. Top pediment cornice replaced by concrete slabs, which are unsightly and need regular repointing to keep them secure.
ii. Central round window filled by red brick disk with central cement bullseye.
iii. Ground floor side openings fully glazed to serve various bars (modern).
iv. 3 central ground floor openings blocked by flush panels with applied mouldings. If these are escape doors, they do not appear to be used ever. They open onto a bridge spanning the former railway station to meet the avenue beyond.

Below ground level the elevation continues down in red brick to show 2 levels of basements. Openings, three to each side and to the centre, align with those on the ground floor and are fitted with modern metal louvres, doors or patent glazed windows to suit the functions of the entirely rebuilt basement rooms behind.

Condition: Extensively repaired post 1980 fire, and again subsequently. Damaged ground floor cornice and brickwork at right-hand-side of central openings, broken oculus vent above main arch, render loss to left-hand-side column to main arch.

Significance: High.

2.13 NORTH WALL (WEST)

Description/observation: This mirrors the east part. Despite post-fire repairs, especially to the middle part of the cornice, its condition is generally worse, due to large parts of it being left free-standing around a service yard behind. Various pieces of bracing scaffold disfigure the 6 western bays, at first floor level, and pattern plates restrain the ground and basement brickwork along eight bays, where not visibly broken. This wall was also extensively underpinned in 1941-3, after the foundations were damaged by a water main.

Other differences: only bay nearest north portico now used for escape; other opening is now blocked behind; there is no modern retaining wall in front of the sloping wall plinth.

Significance: High.

2.14 NORTH WEST TOWER

Description/observation: Reduced to ground and first floor only.

Design, subsequent alterations and present condition on north side mirrors that to North East Tower. Like the adjoining north wall, this was underpinned. To the west, the upper openings have been bricked in and the central mouldings have been lost. The ground floor opening is also blocked except for the Crittall window.

The south side bears the scars of the section of exterior wall removed after the fire when the former roller skating rink was turned into a service yard. The ground floor triple-arched opening was formerly internal, with a dentil brick cornice above, all in fair condition.

Modern plywood blocks the openings with doors to equipment stores within. The upper floor mouldings are boarded up.

The top of the tower as it now stands has a modern concrete coping over 2-3 courses of new brickwork.

The east face of the tower should be an internal wall, and is now faced in modern render with expansion joints. There is a modern timber casement window in a reduced former door opening.

Condition: Mostly poor. Brickwork needs patching and repointing, some parts of cement cornice have been renewed with plain rectangular section concrete, other parts loose.

Significance: High.

2.15 NORTH WEST PAVILION AND LONDESBOROUGH ROOM/SW PAVILION AND PHOENIX BAR

Description/observation: 1875 fabric extensively repaired post 1980 fire. Buff brick with red details and stucco mouldings. Divided into bays by projecting piers. NW Pavilion: 2 bays to north (arched openings to each bay blocked); single bay to west fitted with fully glazed French window and sidelights under fully glazed arch. Londesborough Room north has two bays matching this, though the right-hand one has no door. Adjoining west elevation has wider piers to the sides with mezzanine level round vents, and three arched openings in the wide gap between. The large central opening has French windows under a glazed spandrel, the two side openings have large sliding sashes. The French doors open to a slightly raised York stone paved area. The parapet coping has a modern lead weathering. The clerestory roof to the NW Pavilion has had its windows blocked by the new metal roof coverings.

The SW Pavilion and Phoenix Bar are of symmetrical design to the NW Pavilion and Londesborough Room, except that:

i. Original structure with clerestory glazing remains to SW Pavilion.
ii. Phoenix Bar south elevation: both openings fitted with French windows.
iii. SW Pavilion west opening is a fixed window.
iv. SW Pavilion south openings: fixed window to west, doors forming

an emergency escape to the west.

Condition: Good.

Significance: High.

2.16 CURTAIN WALL: SW PAVILION TO SW TOWER

Description/observation: Divided into 2 bays by projecting piers. Left bay is narrower and formerly contained an arched opening with side lights. These have now been knocked together to form a single vehicle gateway, with a rendered lintol supporting the retained arch at mezzanine level. There is a utilitarian modern metal mesh gate. The right-hand bay has three arched former window openings, all now boarded up.

Condition: Fair; some render lost and spalling red brick. Parapet rebuilt in stock brick.

Significance: High.

6.A.3 TERRACES AND ADJOINING LANDSCAPE

3.1 AREA IN FRONT OF WEST ENTRANCE

Description/observation: To the north end there is an asphalt road leading up to the entrance of the North Service Yard. This has an area for car parking to the north and painted (black and blue) bollards in front of the Londesborough Room.

Directly in front of the main West Entrance and along the whole length of the elevation is a 6' wide paved area with 4 paved steps leading down from this to meet the asphalt. At either end, these slope away to meet the asphalt and are cordoned off with blue painted bollards (1980s).

There is a row of removable painted bollards to allow access to the west and east side of the terrace and here the asphalt terrace is approx 15m wide and separated from the grass bank by a low brick wall topped with concrete render blocks and 1980s blue painted railings.

Significance: Neutral.

3.2 RAILINGS

The railings which top the wall retaining the West and South Terrace are of alternately higher and lower upstands with 2 horizontal supports between each.

The taller rail has a flattened top section with rectangular blocks at the intersections with the upper and lower rail. These sections have circular and pyramid decoration and a square base.

The shorter upstands are the same except the base has 4 scrolled corners and the top is not flat. The whole length of the wall is divided into 3 sections with each section having a short brick plinth at either end topped with a 1980s blue painted light. The plinth has offset central and upper sections which are capped with shaped white bricks at the offset. This is then topped with a cement rendered pad into which sits the lamp.

The lamp has an octagonal base which tapers upwards towards moulded dragon supports on 4 of the corners; above this the upstand has a cylindrical section with leaves projecting from above this.

This continues up to a Corinthian scroll at the top of the stand and is then topped with 3 spherical opaque lights supported by metal sections to the centre and at segments around it. This is capped with a pinnacle.

Between the 2 piers at either end is a centred taller pier with the same base as the others but topped with more brick to match the patterning of white brick banded with red at every 6th course on the main elevation.

To the south of the northernmost set of railings, there is a set of steps leading down to road level. These are split into 2 sets: top 16 steps followed by 13 and separated by a concrete render landing.

A render topped brick wall runs down either side with a brick plinth at the termination topped with a lamp. The stair is divided vertically by a blue painted handrail running down the centre.

The lamps to the top and bottoms of the steps have only one light.

This railing continues this way all along the terrace to the south and is all new 1980s post fire construction.

Significance: Central section of South Terrace: limited; elsewhere: neutral.

3.3 SW CORNER PHOENIX BAR TERRACE

Where building returns to the south outside the Phoenix Bar, there is a small rectangular terrace of brick topped with render blocks and laid with stone slabs. At either end facing south, it has a brick plinth topped with the blue painted lamp on the main retaining wall.

Around the edge of this, on top of the brick retaining wall, is a blue painted railing topped with a timber balustrade – this is divided into rectangular sections with top and bottom supports to create a central circular piece with projections to each side.

This area is accessed from the easternmost end by 3 steps and contains wooden picnic benches.

In front of the Phoenix Bar terrace, there is an area separated off by wooden posts. To the west edge and part of the south section areas are infilled with black and silver cast iron railings. The cast iron panels have a central silver circle with alternate rose, clover and thistle patterns in the circle of each. Either side of this is a black metalwork pattern which is badly damaged in places. There is a step down 200mm from this area to the main walkway and is edged in cement and render rolls.

This area contains more wooden picnic benches and a large wooden planter. The whole area is asphalt covered and the planter is full of palms and a large fluted plant pot with small pebble dashed planters on either side.

Significance: Neutral except cast iron infill panels, which have been brought from elsewhere and may be significant.

3.4 SOUTH TERRACE

The South Terrace has a bonded gravel covering about 20’ wide and finishes at the steps in front of the south terrace colonnade. To the southern edge of the terrace, the brick wall continues as at the west elevation. Beneath this, the grass slopes away to the road below. The majority of this outer wall is in good condition, having been recently built.

At intervals along this area there are viewing binoculars and metal benches.

The central section to the South Terrace projects out above the basements below. Either side of this projection are staircases down to road level.

These stairs are divided into 3 sections by blue painted handrails and consists of 23 steps with a central landing. To the west a wall runs down

the edge of this and has again got lamp mounted plinths at top and bottom. To the east side, it curves around to take in the projected section.

The wall at road level supports the projecting terrace above. The wall has a top section of yellow brick and the lower is red with yellow brick panels projecting out. There are 4 tall columns at this level: 2 at either corner and 2 in the centre, these are topped with plinths in a similar style to that of the entrance section above.

There is an entrance door to the basements in the centre at road level and either side of the central Traitor's Gate, the wall is divided into 5 bays by projecting columns of yellow brick. The bays are red brick with yellow projecting panels with a brick base all the way along below this.

Either side of the door are 3 openings (all now boarded up). These are square topped openings with a central keystone in brick with rendered bases. The doorway in the centre has an arched opening and new rendered keystone. The area in front of this is gravel with small trees in each bay. The wall is topped with the blue railings as on the West Terrace.

The condition of the brickwork and joinery of the central part of the South Terrace containing the Traitor's Gate is poor.

Back at terrace level the BBC entrance, at the east end of the terrace, has 5 tiled steps up to the reception from the gravel terrace. Dividing these steps into 3 sections, there are painted metal 1932 railings.

Significance: Central section: high; elsewhere: neutral.

3.5 CAR PARK

To the east entrance, the bonded gravel stops with a line of timber removable bollards and the asphalt of the car park starts – this runs all the way up to the edge of the building. Beyond the car park to the east, a grass bank slopes down to the road. Within the car park are gravel pathways with timber bollards on either side, these lead through to the Ice Rink entrance and denote pathways through the centre of the car park.

At the entrance to the Ice Rink, there are 4 steps up from the gravel path with the north side ramped up with blue metal railings. This car park runs the whole length of the east elevation.

Significance: Neutral.

3.6 NORTH AREA SERVICE YARD

To the north elevation, there is a service road running in from the car park to the east. Big blue metal vehicle gates with a pedestrian entrance to the side separate this from the public. To the right of the roadway is a brick paved area containing a brick shed and metal tanks, this is separated from the roadway by a low brick wall topped with railings. Sections of these railings are the original 1875 railings.

The asphalt surface finish stops just before the north elevation of the building and becomes brick pavers laid in a herringbone pattern. Either

side of this, the roadway is curbed with brick pavers and a new brick retaining wall topped with cement render runs to the north of this.

Opposite the Great Hall entrance stands the remains of 6 bays of the 1875 retaining wall of red and white brick topped with a render plinth and cement balustrade. This has been repaired to the westernmost end and joins up with the original 1875 access bridge from the station.

The 1875 bridge and access stair which led from the station to the north main entrance, is still in place. This is supported at the north end by a brick wall with 3 circular columns adjacent to this, as well as this, there are 3 circular columns supporting the bridge centrally.

The steps to the old station lead down the back of this brick wall to the road behind. Below the bridge, the supporting wall has 2 recessed archways with the westernmost one now boarded up. The bridge structure consists of 3 I beams with metal joists spanning between these and infilled with brick.

This large wall continues west for 2 more bays – these bays both have high level windows with one now blocked. The wall steps down at this point with an 1875 lamp on top. This area behind including the old station building, has been sold.

At the west end, there is a car park bounded by modern fencing on 2 sides. Beyond the fence to the north are the old rail tracks and the building beyond the fence to the west is now a new gym.

Significance: 1875 bridge and supporting columns, brickwork and station retaining wall are significant. Remaining retaining walls and pavings, modern fencing etc are neutral.

6.B. INTERIOR

6.B.1. BASEMENTS - NORTH

1.1 GENERALLY

Description/observation: The basement accommodation here has been largely re-excavated and rebuilt since the 1980 fire. Older parts remaining from the original 1860s structure include the sub-structure to the Great Hall's north portico, which is exposed externally to the north, where it faced the railway station originally placed in this location. The north portico originally matched the width of the Great Hall, and was flanked by external areas. Glazed openings on to these areas provided some light to the interior of the basement.

1.2 LEVEL 1

1.2.1 Substructure to North Portico:

Description/observation: Now entirely refitted and used for sprinkler control and part of the boiler room. The original return walls to the east external area, and to a lesser extent to the west area, remain.

Significance: The structure is highly significant, the modern fit-out is neutral.

1.2.2. Lifts and Lobbies, Electrical Intakes, Boiler Areas, Cellars and Service Corridor to South Basements:

Description/observation: All of these areas have been re-excavated and rebuilt since the 1980 fire, though they have been planned to allow the foundations of the Great Hall east and west walls to remain intact – these walls have been underpinned where necessary.

Significance: Neutral.

1.3 LEVEL 2

1.3.1 Substructure to 1860s North Portico and Great Hall East and West Walls:

Description/observation: Remains largely intact, though modern finishes conceal much of the historic fabric.

Significance: Highly significant with neutral fit-out.

1.3.2 Palace Suite and Associated Kitchens, Stairs to Great Hall and Ice Rink and Adjoining Storage Spaces, Lifts etc:

Description/observation: Are all 1980s work. Nevertheless, the Palace Suite Dining Room and the Grand Stairs up to the Great Hall are of fairly good quality (by the standards of the time), with marble stair finishes, extensive brass work, and perspective wall paintings by Charles Bourchier in the dining hall. However, it is not clear why the dining hall was placed underground, rather than behind the South Terrace, where it had traditionally been located, and where it would have had splendid views across London.

Significance: Limited.

6.B.2 BASEMENTS – SOUTH (except BBC Areas – see 6.B.10)

2.1 Generally

These are accessed by a long modern service corridor from the North Basement; this has been rebuilt to the alignment of an earlier corridor of like function, which leads to Area A (see below). The majority of the basement structure dates to the short-lived first Alexandra Palace, and was built 1864-66, to support the south portico and the south end of the central transept of that building. This accounts for the Area A, which was originally an external area, being fronted by glazed openings into the various vaults forming the basement accommodation. A matching area lies within the BBC basements (see 6.B.10.15), and a wide corridor linked the two. North of this corridor were a number of beer and wine cellars; to the south, various other store rooms, for groceries, a servant's hall, and various offices lining the passageway south towards the traitor's gate. Further wine cellars, a glass store and a plate store filled the southern half of the present very wide corridor. When the Palace was rebuilt in 1873-75, the open Area A was glazed over, as was the corresponding space opposite, and a bakehouse was built into the southern half. Additional basement spaces were formed to the west, and were occupied by laundries. The corresponding spaces to the east were used as kitchens.

During WWI, and later, the laundries appear to have been used as machine workshops, and into the 1960s the Area A was used as a boiler room and coal store. Subsequently, abandonment and dereliction have been their lot.

2.2 Area A

Description/observation: This was built in 1864-66 as a brick structure with arched openings to either side; on the east these lead to large rooms and the west to vaults. The central section has a tiled ceiling with services running along the top. Each vault has its original door/window joinery. The northernmost has the remains of a WC. The central vault opens out into Area B. 2 manhole covers are in the centre of this space and new plastic rainwater pipes have been installed.

The southernmost 2 bays have brick built areas in them, probably relating to former use as a bakehouse. At the southernmost end there is a large steel structure supporting the ceiling and a pavement light above.

Significance: Significant.

2.3 Area B

Description/observation: This area is entered from the central vault in Area A and is under the Panorama Room. This area is unlit and filled with rubbish. There are large wire gates which separate off one section in this area. The rest is supported by the 1873 structural columns, this divides this area into a series of vaults all with vaulted ceilings. There are old pieces of machinery in this section. The southernmost edge of this area also has pavement lights at ceiling level, under the South Terrace.

Significance: Significant.

2.4 Area C

Description/observation: This area is a wide corridor leading off the centre to the east of Area A. There are former wine and beer storage vaults to the north side and rooms to the south; with the traitor's gate at the central southern projection. These openings are original all the way along, with some still containing the original door joinery. Services and modern strip lighting runs along the top of the ceiling. In this area, the 1873 brick wall continues up till above door level, this is then topped with a concrete plinth with high level openings cut in it. The ceilings to the vaults are brick vaulted. Larger rooms are covered by jack vaults, built in brick of cast iron beams with non-parallel bottom fringes. The brickwork in this area is in extremely bad condition and is rapidly crumbling away. The area is used as a storage space for old pieces of furniture etc and in one room, there are some original external lamp posts.

Many of the rooms have original cast iron pipework in them. The penultimate 2 rooms to the far east of this corridor on the south side have brick wine/beer storage shelves built into the side of them, with the smaller of the 2 having a hatch in the ceiling for unloading.

One of the rooms on the north side contains a window to which jail bars have been fitted. This presumably dates back to when the basements were used to hold Prisoners of War in World War II.

The windows out to the easternmost window would have originally looked into a lightwell which has now been filled in and these windows boarded up. The easternmost bay (south) also has new concrete columns in it.

The southern projection of rooms leads to traitor's gate which now has a new metal door but 1 of the original timber doors still remains inside. There are 3 exposed steel goal post trusses in the centre of this area, which are slowly delaminating – except the central one which has recently been replaced.

The central corridor to traitor's gate has a concrete filler joist system in the ceiling, which supports external trafficked areas above.

Back in the main Area C corridor, the westernmost (south) room contains a cast iron cooker with coat of arms and inscription on it *(can't be read)* in the first bay of the room to the south wall.

2 of the rooms in this area have timber ceilings over the brick vaulting.

Condition: Poor – original structure deteriorating; some nice original features.

Significance: Significant.

There are also 3-4 pallets of yellow brick in the basement. *Not sure where they are from?*

6.B.3 WEST ENTRANCE, PALM COURT, AND ADJOINING AREAS

3.1 PALM COURT

Description/observation:

i. 1875 construction, this area was not destroyed by the fire of 1980, however, the walls have been heavily restored. The main court area has been largely unchanged since built in 1875 starting out as a conservatory and now used as a foyer between the West Entrance and the West Hall.

ii. This is a double height space with re-glazed 1873-75 roofs covering the whole space. This is made up of a central large dome with 3 barrel vaults to the north, west and south. The corners to the southwest and northwest have 1980 Teflon coated fabric domes over modern steel supports.

iii. There are 2 central planters in concrete and painted white. These contain large mature palms as well as concrete obelisks and sphinxes. To the West Entrance there is a separate porch area, this has a gallery above opening into Palm Court.

iv. 1875 brick piers support the roof structure both along the edge of the West Hall and also to the west creating lobbies in front of the Londesborough Rooms and the Phoenix Bar.

v. The brick piers in the Palm Court are the same as those on the south façade and elsewhere in the building – i.e. brick built with render bases and cornices at the spring of each archway. This is topped with a heavier cornice painted blue which supports the roof structure. The central space has a second row of arched windows above the entrance to the West Hall, with the roof then sitting on this. Each opening contains an arched doorway.

vi. The cast iron columns supporting the central roofs are square and in a cluster of four at each corner. These are topped with Corinthian capitals painted in silver and Dresden blue paint, these colours being chosen in the 1980s as the best commercially available match to the original colours as identified by research.

vii. A new metal stair has been inserted leading up to the office above the kitchens on the west.

viii. Most of the doors contain mirrored glass.

ix. The floor is tiled throughout with grills to north and south.

Condition: Good.

Significance: High – original structure remains and original form of the space.

3.2 WEST ENTRANCE LOBBY

Description/observation: This is a small space between the West Entrance colonnade and the Palm Court. This space is newly decorated with carpeted floors, plastered and painted walls and ceiling (with recessed lights) and new doors fitted with assisted opening.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Significant - historic layout with new decoration.

3.3 LONDESBOROUGH ROOM

Description/observation:

i. This room is to the north of the entrance lobby and is a double height space - it appears to have been used as a lecture room originally. The original 1875 walls have been plastered and painted. The south wall has murals painted in 1980s redecoration. The rest of the room is painted pink.

ii. The ceiling has been newly plastered and has new uplighters set into the raised central section.

iii. The floor is the original floorboards with carpet in the central section.

iv. The east wall contains a 1980s fireplace of green marble with a timber upper section with green marble affect painted on.

v. To the corners of the room and either side are columns of painted timber construction and look like Corinthian columns. They are each topped with a moulded Corinthian capital.

vi. The west wall contains two store rooms and doors lead out to the terrace area, as does the door to the north.

vii. A door in the east wall leads to adjoining WCs and Fountain Servery.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Limited – original room but new fit-out.

3.4 LONDESBOROUGH ROOM WCs AND CORRIDOR

Description/observation: New fit-out with tiled floors and painted walls with suspended waffle grid ceiling.

Condition: OK.

Significance: Neutral.

3.5 FOUNTAIN SERVERY AND KITCHEN

Description/observation:

i. New fit-out with tiled floors and walls. The new plastic suspended ceiling contains recessed spotlights.

ii. The kitchen and servery are both fitted with stainless steel kitchen equipment.

Condition: OK.

Significance: Neutral.

3.6 BOX OFFICE

Description/observation: This is on the east wall of the Palm Court. A small room with 1980s ticket booths to the east wall. The floors are covered in the same tiles as the Palm Court and the ceiling and walls have been painted.

Condition: OK.

Significance: Neutral.

3.7 STORE ROOMS AND STAIR BY WEST ENTRANCE

Description/observation: New fit-out.

Condition: OK, but tired.

Significance: Significant original structure but modern fit-out.

3.8 PHOENIX BAR WCs

Description/observation: Corridor and WCs are all newly fitted out with tiled floors and painted walls. The ceiling is a suspended waffle grid. The WCs are all new.

Condition: OK/good.

Significance: Significant original structure with new fit-out

3.9 STAIR TO SOUTH LEADING UP TO PALM COURT SUITE

Description/observation: Concrete stair with carpet, with the floor at ground level tiled. At ground level, the walls are damp and paint is peeling.

Condition: OK – damp is a problem.

Significance: Neutral – new infill.

3.10 PHOENIX BAR

Description/observation: This sits to the south of the main West Entrance, and is the original 1875 structure; it appears to have been designated as a reading room initially. It now contains a new bar fit-out with central bar area and adjoining kitchen. This can be entered from the terrace to the west or from the Palm Court.

Condition: Good – newly fitted out.

Significance: Significant original structure with neutral fit-out.

FIRST FLOOR

3.11 PALM COURT SUITE

Description/observation:

i. The suite sits above the Phoenix Room and contains a suite of five meeting rooms and a kitchen.

ii. All the meeting rooms have either carpet or wooden floors, suspended ceilings and painted walls. They all contain the top part of the windows below. All is new fit-out.

Condition: OK.

Significance: Significant original structure but with inserted upper floor, partitions and fit-out.

3.12 FIRST FLOOR OFFICES NORTH OF WEST ENTRANCE

Description/observation:

i. This sits above the Fountain Servery and is accessed by the stair at the north of the Palm Court.

ii. New office fit-out with kitchenette.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Significant original structure with new office fit-out.

3.13 GALLERY OVER WEST ENTRANCE

Description/observation:

i. This sits over the west entrance and opens out over the Palm Court.

ii. The floor is original floorboard with metal railings at the edge - 1875. Wooden obelisks are set at either end of the railings. From this level there are exits out to the roofs, to the north and south.

Condition: OK - the exit door to the south has a leak which is rotting the timber below and getting into the electric cabling.

Significance: High – original space.

6.B.4 WEST HALL AND ADJOINING AREAS

4.1 GENERALLY

The West Hall was created after the 1980s fire, when the Open Court, which contained a formal "Italian" garden, was roofed over to provide an additional large hall for major events, such as the World Snooker Championships.

The West Corridor, running along the south side of the Hall remains as a corridor, as it was when first built, though the associated refreshment facilities have been removed.

The space occupied by the Picture Gallery to the north of the West Hall has been entirely rebuilt post fire. From the early C20th it was used as an ancillary sitting out space for the roller skating rink, located in the NW corner of the Palace, outside this zone (see 6.B.5 below). The remains of this were removed after the fire, and a new catering facility, the Roman Bar, was built at ground floor level, along some three fifths of the overall former length of the Picture Gallery, with WCs and other support functions above. The rest of the space was incorporated into a new service yard.

4.2 WEST HALL

Description/observation: Created post 1980 fire.

i. Ceiling: Blue-painted toblerone roof trusses spanning north-south between repaired 1875 walls, to support profiled metal roof deck to a shallow rise, curved at the perimeter. Heavy mass concrete beams span north-south at the east and west bays, behind which the ceiling is flat at a lower level. Large downlights are incorporated within the roof trusses.

ii. Walls:
North – 13 bays long, largely a blind arcade in buff brick with cement render and mouldings at arch springing level and cornice. Bays 2-4 appear to have been rebuilt. Parapet entirely rendered and contains modern a/c vents (many of these are distorted). Red brick spandrels and infill to arches, with raised white brick panels. First and last bays are set forward and contain glazed doors. Bays 2 and 3 from west, have panelled full height vehicle doors; bays 6-7-8 are narrow-wide-narrow and form a large central opening, square-headed with cement render brackets and cornice flanking, either side of which are ground and mezzanine windows. Bay 12 has full height panelled doors leading to a stair lobby.
East – 5 wide bays similar to those previously described, but with rendered panels to each side of the central opening. Bays 1, 3 and 5 have doors to the Great Hall incorporated, the others are windows only.
South – Generally mirrors the north wall in its construction, but here all the arches are fully glazed. The central and end bays have doors to West Corridor.
West – This wall is divided into 7 bays; the end pairs match those on the south wall, the central 3 are similar to those on the east, but with glazed side panels and narrower subdividing piers. All openings have doors.

iii. Windows: Locations as noted above, all the joinery appears to have been renewed, or at least to have been very heavily repaired.

iv. Doors: Post fire. The windows are not glazed, being instead fitted with

acoustic material behind a stamped aluminium grille. Only the doors at bays 2, 3 and 12 in the north wall are "solid" joinery. The joinery is finished in light and dark blue paint.

v. Floor: Vinyl covered concrete slab incorporated service trenches with removable covers.

vi. Fittings: Brass door furniture and brackets to exit signs, which are of better than usual quality, various other signs, including hideous illuminated ones signing the WCs, fire hose reels etc.

Condition: Mostly good, some joinery is a bit bashed.

Comment: The space would be better with a higher ceiling.

Significance: Perimeter walls are highly significant. Everything else – neutral.

4.3 ROOMS TO NORTH – GROUND FLOOR LEVEL:

Description/observation: Entirely built 1980s; accommodation comprises (from east):

- Lobby to Great Hall and West Hall: with wide stair down to Palace Suite Restaurant in basement, narrower stairs up to WCs, lifts, entrance to Roman Bar/Servery and to medical centre. Plaster ceiling divided by beams containing lighting, plastered walls with columns and trompe l'oeil paintings by steps down; multi-coloured marble floor in panels; modern joinery, good quality to the Halls; decorative cast concrete balustrade to flight up, heavy ornamental brass going down. All good quality by 1980s standards.
- Roman Bar and Servery: decorative neo-Roman fit-out with columns, beams, fresco panels in recesses, Roman pattern metal grilles over (mirrored) doors, vent panels etc. Floor is mixed marble areas and specially woven carpet; whole room designed by Amanda Potts, and now rather shabby and in need of updating. Granite servery counter is cracked.
- Staff and service areas behind are given basic plaster finishes, 1980 joinery etc, generally rather tired.

Significance: Limited to main staircase lobby, otherwise neutral.

4.3.1 **At the west end of the ground floor (behind bays 2-3) of the West Hall**, is a modern covered vehicle unloading dock. Large modern roller shutters give onto the service yard.

Significance: Neutral.

4.4 ROOMS TO NORTH – UPPER FLOOR

Description/observation: Upper floor is reached by staircase previously described – more trompe l'oeil antique landscapes at half landing level. The upper landing is also served by lifts and reaches the Hallmaster's Office Suite, from which both the Great and West Halls can be seen. This suite is entirely functional – suspended ceiling with lighting, plaster walls, flush joinery, carpet tile floor.

- The Ladies WCs are of large scale and have been refitted quite recently; suspended waffle ceiling, melamine cubicle and cladding system, tiled floor and some parts of the upper halls; white sanitary

fittings.
– The Gents WCs are similarly fitted.
Both are well maintained and clean, except the waffle ceiling which is indelibly dust stained. Missing panels reveal the modern metal construction and ductwork above.

Significance: Neutral.

4.4.1 **West of the WCs,** on the upper floor are cleaning staff rest rooms and the like, reached by a functional stair off the service yard (breeze block walls, tiled floor, metal handrail).

Condition: Tatty; plaster has failed where steel framing has rusted.

Significance: Neutral.

4.5 WEST CORRIDOR

Description/observation:

i. Originally built as a corridor 30ft wide linking the Palm Court to the Great Hall, and fully glazed to the north (Open Court, Italian Garden). Also gave access to the Dining Rooms to the south (now the Panorama Room), and was itself served by a large Buffet near the western end. Post fire, a new metal deck roof structure was fitted, and the brickwork was fully restored and rather aggressively painted in cement. All the joinery was renewed, though mirrors were fitted all along the north wall. Most of the panels in the north wall contain murals by the Haringey Mural Workshop, 1987.

ii. Ceiling: Large acoustic plaster panels, corresponding to the bay divisions of the walls and separated by false beams form the ceiling. A/C vents are incorporated, and each of the eleven main bays has a large bowl chandelier in brass and opal glass.

iii. Walls: Like the Hall, the corridor is of 13 bays, there being 2 narrow bays, 1 each side of the central doors to the Hall and the Panorama Room. Buff brick with rendered plinth, string course, and surround to central door to Hall in the north wall. A simple dentil brick cornice (original) is just visible above the suspended ceiling line.
North Wall– Openings and glazing correspond to the West Hall south wall.
East Wall – Large off-centre opening to Great Hall (original rebuilt), with modern joinery incorporating a pair of double doors with central bullseye vision panels and mirror infill to the arch. There are several redundant electrical switch boxes.
South Wall – All bays have high level segmental arches with mortar keystones except the minor bays each side of the centre. Bay 1 (from east) has a new large opening with modern panelled doors leading to the South Terrace. Bays 2-5 have triple arched shallow openings filled by rendered panels with mural paintings depicting key features and events in the Palace's history. Bay 9 is similar. All show much evidence of rebuilding of brickwork. Bays 6 and 8 are blind minor openings flanking the central bay 7 door to the Panorama Room. Here, mural paintings on the side strips and the spandrel over the door depict the 1980 fire. Bays 10-13 were originally open between the supporting piers, and led to the buffet. Larger murals occupy the wall area here, except the rendered string and skirting.
West Wall – Plain brickwork with 2 fully glazed openings containing doors to the Palm Court.

iv. Floor: Modern ceramic tiles laid in panels corresponding to the bays of the north and south walls. Several breakages.

v. Fittings: Brass mounted exit signs, as West Hall. Ingenious built-in cast iron square drainpipes in return corners to north and south wall bays, painted in brick colour now suspended by new 8" diameter blue-painted steel pipes.

Condition: Fair/Good.

Comment: It is a pity this space cannot be actually lit from the windows to the north wall and from above, as was originally intended.

Significance: Brickwork: high; murals: limited; everything else: neutral.

6.B.5 NW TOWER AND MODERN SERVICE YARD

5.1 NW TOWER

Description/observation: This area was originally occupied by a Concert Hall, which could seat 3000 and could contain a large choir, as well as (another) Willis Organ. In this use, it was unsuccessful and in the early C20th it was made into a roller skating rink, with associated foyers and cafes in the adjoining foyer and corridor to the south (see West Hall). This was very successful, particularly during WWII. However, by the 1970s lack of maintenance had led to the structure becoming dangerous, and the rink was closed. The area was not rebuilt after destruction by fire in 1980.

i. This tower used to be used as an observatory. It now contains 2 workshops and an electrical room belonging to fire control.

ii. The walls internally are blockwork with concrete floors. All the walls are covered with shelving and metal cabinets, and work benches.

iii. The windows are mostly covered/replacement and rooms are lit with strip lighting.

iv. The stair up the tower is no longer in use as the space in front of it has been packed full of wood. The stair is red painted metal and in places, the ceilings and floors are missing at high level.

Condition: Fair – stair blocked and ceilings missing but OK.

Significance: Neutral – the original tower still stands; all walls inside are 1980s and detrimental.

5.2 SERVICE YARD ROOMS

Description/observation:

i. **The ground floor** has a row of storage rooms. The main 3 that face into the yard all have roller shutter doors. They are all block walls and concrete floor.

ii. The stairs leading up from ground level have painted block walls and a tiled floor with new stair.

iii. **The first floor** contains the Star Suite which is 3 rooms used for dressing rooms etc when shows are on. Each room has a shower room attached. These have plastered walls, carpeted floors and square comb suspended ceiling panels. There is also a lift in this area.

iv. **The second floor** contains a staff room, WCs and storage rooms along a corridor. These have plastered walls, carpet tiled floor and a corrugated metal ceiling. There are rooflights in the ceiling and suspended strip lighting.

Condition: Good – modern fit-out.

Significance: Neutral/detrimental – all new.

6.B.6 SOUTH WEST TOWER, PANORAMA ROOM AND ADJOINING TERRACE

Overview: The present Panorama Room occupies the entirety of the zone once given over to fine dining and first-class banqueting, at the SW corner of the Palace, the overall area being some 200ft x 100ft. The rooms were separated from the Great Hall by a glazed court approx 1.5 bays of the South Terrace in width. From 1932 this space was infilled by additional kitchen and storage facilities.

The ground floor behind the Terrace was filled by two large dining rooms some 70' x 50' deep, separated by a smaller ante room. Behind this, a service corridor ran full length east-west, and north of this was the buffet serving the West Corridor, various WCs and offices, and smaller dining rooms towards the east end of that corridor, and a large central open-well stair to reach the upper floor banqueting room. This arrangement of rooms remained substantially intact in outline, if not in detail, until the 1980 fire, and its outline may still be discerned in the matching rooms east of the main South Entrance, where the BBC Studios remain. The upper floor housed the Hornsey School of Art post-war. The SW Tower contained a billiard room on the ground floor and ladies retiring room above, under tank rooms at high level. The tower was burnt out in the 1980 fire and no access was provided in the rebuilt structure. North of the SW Tower were smaller rooms used for ancillary catering functions and storage. These later became WCs and boiler rooms before the fire. The SW Tower rooms became the original Panorama Room at ground floor level, and ancillary accommodation to the School of Art above in the 1960s.

The whole area was entirely gutted in the 1980 fire, including all the large sash windows in the south elevation at both levels. Excepting repairs to the perimeter walls, it was not rebuilt. The debris was cleared away, and the site was levelled and a new ground slab with drainage was laid, on which new temporary accommodation was laid out.

Description/observation: The main structure is a large temporary pavilion with a tension fabric roof. The large main room is some 70 x 170ft and connects to the West Corridor half way down its north wall, and to the Palm Court via a lobby of like construction at the northwest corner. Also at the west end are coat hanging spaces and Portakabin type WCs. Air handling is achieved by plant located at the east end, standing externally.

There is a void gap between the temporary pavilion and the retained 1873-75 perimeter walls, which show:
North Wall – Blocked openings to West Corridor, including triple arch windows to Grille Room etc.

East Wall – North part: ground floor opening (later) to kitchen/stores, and for the service corridor; door and windows to rear room; south part has four tall blocked window openings to the old glazed court behind, one of which is partly fitted by an unused door to the Great Hall/West Corridor escape. There are also two blocked fireplace openings. The brickwork sets back half a brick for the upper floor where there are two further blocked fireplace openings. Just below the upper floor offset the ends of steel girders can be seen cut off against the brickwork. The extreme south end of this wall has been rebuilt to new alignment in brickwork post fire, for no apparent reason.

South Wall – This runs 13½ bays from the SW Tower towards the Great

Hall; the remaining bay and a half are taken by the former glazed court/escape route and WCs. Exposed brickwork throughout, showing locations of lost double hung sash windows on both floors – flat headed below, arched above. Wall sets back half a brick at upper floor level. New copings at top. Chases in the brickwork illustrate the position of former gas light fittings. Vents projecting through the asphalt ground slab ventilate the basement.

Beyond the south wall is a double-height loggia, historically referred to as a veranda (ground floor) and balcony (upper floor). Here, all walls have exposed brick finishes (see 6.A.2 Elevations). The upper floor has a new metal deck ceiling, but retains the historic cement floor over a filler joist structure. The lower floor has a new rendered ceiling in panels, and similar filler joist floor, renewed in parts and with some mid C20th pavement lights.

West Wall – Against Tower has blocked doors and fireplaces at both floors.

South Wall – Against Tower has blocked openings near its NE corner.

West Wall – The perimeter wall has been breached by the formation of a central vehicle dock. The three arched openings have timber blocking. Various steels from earlier roof structures are evident, and two small non-original doors to the SW pavilion.

Significance: The remaining original walls and arcades are highly significant, with neutral/detrimental later alterations, as described under elevations. The Panorama Room tent is detrimental.

6.B.7 GREAT HALL AND ADJOINING AREAS

Historical development: The 1875 Great Hall was built on the same footprint as that of the 1873 Hall, and was again the centre of the Palace.

Since the first Great Hall in 1873, this has always housed a Willis Organ which has sat on a platform above the North Entrance. The new 1875 Great Hall had a capacity to seat 12,000 people, with orchestra stalls to seat 2,000 below the organ. However, it had a forest of columns supporting the roof, with 2 rows running down either side of the hall. There were entrances from both the north and south, with the north entrance leading from the railway station. The south entrance housed offices and a post office at ground floor level and this was later home to the St John's Ambulance.

Towards this southern end on both the north and south sides, were buffet areas.

To the north end either side of the entrance lobby were the male and female WCs.

Immediately before WWI, aluminium sheeting appeared on the roof of the Great Hall both internally and externally and at this time, any decoration that was in the way of these sheets was smashed off.

It was in the Great Hall where the fire of 1980 started and completely burnt out the hall and melted the roof structure. The Great Hall was rebuilt without the central forest of columns and orchestra stalls to make a more desirable exhibition space. The new space frame roof was installed to enable a limited number of columns. The hall decoration was to replicate that of the original 1873 Great Hall, except for the columns which were clad in a Roman style. The Willis Organ was once again mounted on a platform above the North Entrance.

7.1 GREAT HALL

Description/observation: Main space is 1875 construction with a 1980s glazed roof. The room is 15 bays long by 5 bays wide and is the entire depth of the building. To the north end of this hall stands the organ, mounted on a raised platform over the north entrance doors on 20 columns. At the south entrance to the hall there is the stained glass circular window similar to the one at the West Entrance to Palm Court, though more elaborate. The pattern was put out to competition, won by Maria McClafferty, within a stainless steel reinforced wooden frame by Andrew Murray.

There are 4 secondary entrances to the hall: 2 are on the east wall; 2 are on the west wall. These have 2 sets of double doors in an arched opening as all the other bays, except each entrance is framed by a pair of Corinthian columns with metal posts supporting the roof inside, and topped with a heavy entablature. The columns are made of fibreglass: behind, fluted pilaster of the same material enclose another pair of posts.

To the east and west walls, the central 5 bays contain mirrored glass windows and the remaining 4 at either end contain doors or blanks. At high level above these all the way around the hall, are high level windows, 1 above each bay. The walls are painted using Keim mineral

paint in a red/cream colour scheme with patterned decorations devised by Richard Loren, on the basis of what was revealed of the 1860s first Palace after the fire. These are more elaborate at north and south walls around the organ and stained glass window. The 1875 scheme described in the Chronology was not re-examined. The organ stand and the doors to the north and south are painted in a blue/cream colour scheme. The floor throughout is a concrete slab. The ceiling covering is a fabric sheet held tight between the space frame structure to the roof. This space frame also supports the lighting gantry which runs down the east and west sides. From this hangs spotlights and sound equipment.

Each wall has render at the base with a cornice running around the room at the level of the bay arch springs - another under the first floor windows and one at the springing point of the top window arch; there is a keystone at the top of each bay. Each entrance at the north and south has 5 double doors.

Significances: High (walls); significant (roof/ceiling)

ADJOINING SPACES AROUND THE GREAT HALL

7.2 ROOM TO EAST ENTRANCE (access from Lobby)

Description/observation: This room is the access stair up to the roof gantry. The walls are block/brick with a concrete stair and scaffold pole railings (same as other side).

Condition: OK.

Significance: High – original space.

7.3 WILLIS SERVERY AND KITCHEN (NE Corner)

Description/observation: This room has a modern bar and kitchen fit-out with a concrete floor, plastered ceiling and walls. It contains a bay of 3 windows to the north and has recessed spotlights and pendants in the main bar.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Significant – original space but new fit-out.

7.4 STORE ROOM

Description/observation: Originally dressing rooms for the Theatre. This room has the exposed 1875 walls in places with a concrete floor and corrugated metal roof. A new lift and platform gantry have been put in.

Condition: OK for use.

Significance: High – original brickwork but needs repair; gutted by fire so no original features. New goods lift and gantry detrimental.

7.5 FIRE ESCAPE STAIR FROM THEATRE

Description/observation: There is a concrete stair with metal railings taking up most of the space which leads to the Store Room. The wall to the west is the 1875 structure with the wall to the right made of block. A plastic curtain separates this area from the Theatre.

Condition: OK.

Significance: Neutral – Built in the original void between the Great Hall and Theatre but with some retained structure.

7.6 ROOM BEHIND ICE RINK CHANGING AREAS

Description/observation: This room is currently empty. It has vinyl non-slip flooring with plaster walls which is damp in places. The ceiling is concrete and has ductwork running along it.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Neutral – original space.

7.7 ROOM BEHIND ICE RINK CAFÉ

Description/observation: This room is currently empty. It has the original 1875 walls, new doors and a vinyl non-slip floor. This room has been newly finished and has pendant lighting.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: High – original 1875 space with exposed walls.

7.8 JOHNSON SERVERY

Description/observation: This space is very similar to Willis Servery with modern fit-out.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Significant original structure, neutral fit-out.

7.9 WC

Description/observation: This space is new infill into the original void between the BBC Studios and Great Hall.

It has a tiled floor with new concrete stair leading up to first floor WCs which are new fit-out. The space below is void with painted plaster walls.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Neutral – all new infill and fit-out.

7.10 OWEN JONES BAR

Description/observation: This room has a modern bar and kitchen fit-out with a concrete floor, plastered ceiling and walls. It contains a bay of 3 windows to the north and has recessed spotlights and pendants in the main bar.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Significant original structure, neutral new fit-out.

7.11 WCS IN SOUTH ENTRANCE FOYER AND STAIRS UP

Description/observation: Modern fit-out.

Condition: Good (both sides of South Entrance).

Significance: Neutral within highly significant structure.

7.12 EXHIBITION BAR

Description/observation: This room has a modern bar and kitchen fit-out with a concrete floor, plastered ceiling and walls. It contains a bay of 3 windows to the north and has recessed spotlights and pendants in the main bar.

i. Ladies WC – as male opposite.

ii. Marconi Servery – as Owen Jones Bar.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Neutral – fit-out within significant historic structure.

7.13 ROMAN BAR AND RESTAURANT (with West Hall)

7.14 ACCESS TO SERVICE YARD

Description/observation: In the NW corner, the penultimate 2 bays have been replaced with metal roller shutters leading out to the service yard, this allows vehicles and exhibits to be brought in.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Neutral.

7.15 ALEXANDRA BAR

Description/observation: This room has a modern bar and kitchen fit-out with a concrete floor, plastered ceiling and walls. It contains a bay of 3 windows to the north and has recessed spotlights and pendants in the main bar. Folding doors to all.

Condition: Good.

Significance: Neutral fit-out within significant historic structure.

7.16 ORGAN PLATFORM

Description/observation: Standing on 2 no. columns above the North Entrance to the Hall on a concrete slab with elaborate cornice. This is topped with blue/gold painted metal railings and a wooden central pediment. Wooden steps lead down from the door to the level of the organ. Another wooden flight of steps leads up to the top of the organ. The organ sits on a timber dais in the centre of the platform.

Comment: The installation appears incomplete, as does the organ case.

Significant: Highly significant.

6.B.8. ICE RINK AND ADJOINING SPACES

Overview: This part of Alexandra Palace is shown on the 1874 plan as an open court (with Italian garden landscaping), and wide corridors to both north (with art gallery displays) and south (giving access to refreshment rooms and bars). These both had glazed roofs when first built. The open court was roofed over in the final building (probably at first intended as a winter garden) and served as a "Bazaar", where items were displayed and sold by a variety of stall-holders. After WWI this area fell into disuse, until it was ultimately colonised by the BBC for storage of stage sets, workshops and such like uses. After the 1980 fire and the departure of the Open University studios in 1981, the area was redeveloped to its present form.

8.1 MAIN HALL

Description/observation:

i. Generally as West Hall (see 6.B.4.2 above).

ii. The windows are all replacement 1980s timber with Georgian wired glass. A mix of mirrored, frosted and plain.

iii. The roof is 1980s space frame toblerone construction with a fireproof fabric ceiling hiding the services above. To the east and west ends of the hall, the roof is supported on new concrete beams which encase the top of the 1875 cornice.

iv. Stage lighting suspended from the ceiling runs down the north and south side of the rink.

v. Flooring is modern nonslip vinyl around the central ice rink. Raked seating occupies the north quarter of the floor area.

vi. Stairs up from the raked seating lead to rooms over the west corridor. Under the raked seating is an area for putting skates on.

Condition: Good - some areas of render need repair but mostly post fire refit.

Significance: 1875 walls highly significant. All 1980s infill is neutral.

8.2 NORTH AISLE CORRIDOR AREA

8.2.1 Ground Floor – Changing Area

Description/observation: Long corridor with changings rooms/skate hire booth to the north wall and the entrance door from main hall in the central bay. This is all 1980s fit-out. The walls have been plastered and painted and the floor is non-slip vinyl going 1m up the walls. Stores are 1980s plaster and paint.

Condition: Good – newly fitted.

Significance: Neutral - all post fire fit-out.

8.2.2 First Floor Club Room and Offices

Description/observation: Post fire fit-out. Plastered and painted walls in Club Room with suspended ceiling and integrated fluorescent lighting and a new rooflight. The floor is polished chipboard in the large room with the small adjoining room having

carpet tiles. The two rooms are divided by a broken 1980s folding screen. There is a ballet barre on the north wall with mirrors to the east. Windows are replacement timber with Georgian wired glass.

Condition: OK, but tired.

Significance: Neutral behind retained historic wall to the Ice Rink.

8.2.3 Corridor

Description/observation: The floor is covered with carpet tiles. Walls are plastered up to 2/3 height then above this, is exposed 1875 brick of Theatre behind. New concrete beams and blocks inserted to support 1980s roof. Exposed services on the ceiling as well as a new leaking rooflight. Doors are modern. Office fit-out all 1980s.

Condition: Poor – leaking rooflight and unfinished decoration.

Significance: Neutral against significant historic structure.

8.2.4 West Stair

Description/observation: Walls have plasterboard finish, with some sections missing and large cracks. Stair is concrete and carpeted. Ceiling is concrete and has a badly leaking rooflight.

Condition: Poor (post fire). Ground floor level is in very poor condition with leaks and badly cracked walls.

Significance: Neutral.

8.2.5 East Stair

Description/observation: Stair leads from ground floor up to roof level. Walls are plasterboard finish at first floor level and newly plastered walls at ground floor. There is a rooflight at first floor and the walls around it are badly cracked. The staircase is concrete with carpet to the lower half with metal handrails.

Condition: OK, cracks to walls and unfinished at first-roof level.

Significance: Neutral.

8.3 SOUTH AISLE CORRIDOR AREA (FORMER EAST CORRIDOR)

8.3.1 Ground Floor – Café

Description/observation: Walls are 1875 brick and render to 4 sides as in Main Hall. The basic layout matches the West Corridor. These have been heavily repaired post fire but still have some damage to lower render bases and door surrounds. The windows and doors are 1980s replacement in timber with Georgian wired glass. The windows to the east wall are frosted. The ceiling is new plaster/painted with new rooflights down the centre of the room. Ceiling has recessed spotlights and vents throughout the space. The floor is nonslip vinyl throughout. At ground floor eight new columns support the mezzanine level above. The space below the mezzanine contains store rooms and a canteen which all have plastered walls.

Condition: OK, some damage to render sections.

Significance: High - 1875 walls throughout; modern mezzanine and café structure is neutral.

8.3.2 Mezzanine Level

Description/observation: Concrete steps lead up from the east and west end to the mezzanine seating area inserted in the post fire rebuild of 1980s. The floor is carpeted and all render mouldings on the original wall have been painted in this area. The deck is supported by 8 columns with a curved central section containing a bar. The WC at this level has the exposed 1875 south wall above the tiled sink splashback.

Condition: OK.

Significance: High - 1875 walls; mezzanine level is neutral.

6.B.9 NE TOWER, THEATRE AND ADJOINING AREAS

9.1 THEATRE AUDITORIUM

Description/observation: The Theatre is now unused due to concerns about its safety, arising from loose plaster mouldings. As built, it had a balcony and an upper tier of seating (now removed) as well as the stall, and could seat 3000 persons. Its chief present interest lies in the survival of most of Walford Grieve's stage machinery, both in the flies, and under the floor. The auditorium, being long and narrow had poor sight-lines but good acoustics, and it was used for screening films from 1902; the projection box was added in 1907. In the 1920s the auditorium was remodelled, and the upper tier of seating was removed, and additional plaster enrichments were added to the ceiling. Audience figures did not, however, rise.

After WWII, the Theatre and adjoining areas were colonised by the BBC for use as workshops and scenery storage. Their policy of neglect is as much as anything responsible for the historic survival of the Theatre machinery.

i. Ceiling: The ceiling to the Theatre is the remains of the 1920s decoration. It is constructed of lath and plaster with all the plaster mouldings being tied back to the ceiling joists with wire and then held in place with plaster covered rags which also wrap around the joists. This is now covered with a wire mesh to stop sections of the ceiling falling into the Theatre below. The roof is a timber frame construction supported by 7 main timber trusses which span the width of the Theatre – these are tied back to the roof with metal upstands. Around the edge of this central area, secondary tie beams support the sloping sides of the roof. The central main truss has the remains of the winding gear which was used to raise and lower the main chandelier (which is currently missing). A new timber walkway has been inserted to give access above the ceiling to the timber structure.

ii. Walls: The walls have the 1920s cream and pink decoration to sections of the walls, however, this is missing to the majority of the upper parts of the Theatre. The previous stencilled decorative scheme sits behind the 1923 scheme. The plaster panels to each wall at low level are still largely intact as are the moulded cornices and pediments above the door. The timber dado and skirting areas also mostly remain. The decoration around the stage area is also in fairly good condition with the original statues in the reveals either side of the stage still present, as well as the mouldings and cornice above these and the decoration to the 2 pilasters framing the figurines. The decoration to the balcony is still visible in places and the back wall still has column cornices. The ceiling under this balcony once had plaster decoration to match the rest of the Theatre which has been lost and is being held together by timber battens.

The majority of the plasterwork and mouldings in this area are in fair/poor condition.

iii. Doors: The entrance to the Theatre is from the east through 2 sets of double doors, a third set lead up to the balcony level.

Within the Theatre itself, there are 4 entrances: 2 off the south corridor and 2 off the north. The 2 southern doors are now emergency exits and those to the north are blocked. Each of these 4 doorways has a semi-circular moulded decoration above it and are flanked by square columns which are

decorated with sword mouldings and topped with a plaster lion head (these are damaged to varying degrees and 4 are missing). These sit on a square base, above these the moulded frieze continues from around the balcony and this is topped with a semi-circular pediment which links with the top moulding running around the top of the balcony.

iv. Floors: The floor throughout is timber floorboards and this slopes downwards from the back of the room to stage level. In front of the stage the floor steps down with timber steps up to the stage. There is a small door in the stage which leads to the under-stage machinery.

v. Fittings: At balcony level on the north and south walls there are remains of vertical metal gantries running up towards ceiling level. To the north and south walls, there are also 6 internal rainwater pipes: 3 to each side. There are 6 radiator bays at ground floor level, each containing a cast iron radiator. There has been modern halogen lighting strung all around the Theatre to give light. The second entrance into the Theatre has an indented ramp from the foyer (this is currently blocked).

There is no access up to the balcony level.

Condition: Ceiling: fair/poor – the roof timbers are in good condition, however, the ceiling is in need of repair to prevent more of the ceiling falling down and any more holes appearing. There is lots of debris on top of the ceiling which needs to be removed to reduce weight on the already fragile ceiling Decoration is in poor condition with the majority missing.

Significance: High – 1875 structure with the 1920s decoration and fit-out being of limited significance.

9.2 ENTRANCE BETWEEN THE THEATRE FOYER AND THEATRE

Description/observation: This area used to be part of the main theatre (circle) but was separated into a bar foyer in 1919. This is slightly sloped and divided into 2 areas (both accessed from adjoining doors from the foyer). The floor is wooden to match that of the Theatre but in places the roof is falling in. This room is currently used as storage.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: High – 1875 structure.

9.3 THEATRE STAGE

Description/observation:

i. The stage area of the theatre has brick walls and the floors have a floorboard finish.

ii. To the north and south of this area are 3 gantries at either side. The lower 2 to each side stretch ¼ the way into the main space. The top gantry covers the full length of the stage area. There is a gangway spanning between the bottom gantries at each side.

iii. The roof is of timber construction and described previously as part of the auditorium ceiling.

iv. The north wall has a timber lattice structure across its whole length. At the back of the stage, there is a small slot into which scenery would have dropped to the space below. To the right of this, is a large iron winch/pulley to take the scenery up and down and a wooden cleat to secure it in place.

v. The gantries are all beam and joist construction and are cantilevered out of the wall.

vi. There is a cross braced balustrade at the side overlooking the stage. All of these are badly bowing in the centre.

vii. There is a door to the north side of the stage which leads to the north corridor.

viii. The original stage curtain is hanging above the stage which now has a fire curtain in its place.

Condition: Fair.

Significance: High – an unusual and remarkable survival.

9.4 UNDER THE STAGE

Description/observation:

i. This area is accessed through a small door in the centre of the stage base from the Theatre.

ii. The space has a central section with timber piers which support the stage floor above, with a walkway running around 3 sides of this space. The central section is double height with walkways at various levels. The north and south walkways have Y trusses running down the centre supporting the stage floor.

iii. There are 2 slit windows to the north elevation. At the back of this space you can see the slot where the scenery rises and falls above.

iv. To both the north and south sides of the central section and along the front, there are metal pulley wheels encased in the timber structure, and adjacent to these are moving wooden arms which move up and down. These arms have a hole at the end (which contains remnants of rope), and were used to lower any scenery at different parts of the stage. These can be seen the whole length of each side; handles would also have been used to release the scenery.

v. Just inside the entrance door to the under stage area, there is a man hoist – this consists of a timber stool with rope attached at its base, this rope then runs up to the pulleys above on either side, then back down; above the stool is the trap door in the stage. 1 man (either side) would have pulled the person up through the door.

Condition: Good – the man hoist has been refurbished and all mechanisms still work.

Significance: High – an unusual and remarkable survival.

9.5 SOUTH CORRIDOR

Description/observation: This area is the 1875 construction which runs along the southern edge of the Theatre and has access off it to the Theatre and stage. It is currently used for storage and was originally a fire break.

i. Ceiling: The corridor has been re-roofed after the 1980s fire and now has a corrugated metal sheet ceiling running the whole length.

ii. Walls: 1875 brick construction to either side of the corridor which has had some repairs to it. At high level spanning the inner and outer walls are brick sloping buttresses with arched openings (5 in total). At high level on the Theatre wall, there are large bricked up openings and in the penultimate bay, there are the remains of floor joist pockets at high level.

iii. Doors: From this corridor there are 3 doors: 2 lead to the Theatre and the other leads to the stage; these are currently locked. The 2 to the Theatre are original whereas the stage door is modern solid wood. All other doors are modern replicas.

iv. Floor: Concrete screed.

v. Fittings: The corridor is currently lit by fluorescent strip lighting to the southern wall. There is a cast iron rainwater pipe at the entrance door and at the west end of this corridor there is a plastic curtain separating this space from the escape stair from the Great Hall.

Condition: Fair – brickwork in good condition.

Significance: Significant – 1875 access corridor into the main theatre.

9.6 THEATRE FOYER

Description/observation: This is the area connecting the Ice Rink Foyer to the Theatre entrance. This space was recently redecorated when the floor was renewed in 2001 but is currently unused.

i. Ceiling: The ceiling has a modern suspended ceiling with suspended fluorescent lighting hanging from it. The ceiling currently has many damp patches especially to the 3rd bay from the north on each side. The north end currently has a hole in it.

ii. Walls: This is the 1875 structure with the brickwork, render cornices and bases in good condition despite being painted in varying shades of pink.

The room is divided into 3 bays in length – each one having a door in it. These arched doorways have been recessed giving a column between each bay.

To the north and south ends are a set of 3 bays, a large central one with a smaller one either side. These columns separating them are the same as the others.

There is an entrance from the foyer to the central bay of the south side and at the north end a small door is in the westernmost bay. This leads to what was the theatre changing rooms and north corridor but is derelict.

iii. Doors: The blocked up doors to the east façade used to be the main entrance directly into the foyer. These doors have now been blocked up and are out of use. The 2 northernmost doors are replicas of the original full height and these lead into the Theatre. The 3rd door is a new smaller door taking the place of the original and this leads to the upper level of the Theatre. The far south door is a smaller new door which has been offset from where the original was – this leads to the southern escape corridor. At the top of each of these arches is a keystone. The same can be seen on the facing wall with the 4 doors leading out to the car park. These are all now blocked. The 2 northernmost are original doors, the 3rd being a new smaller door in its place with the windows either side blocked. The 4th is a door to the currently vacant room off the Ice Rink Foyer.

iv. Floor: The floor is carpeted and currently has a large rug in its centre.

v. Fittings: There are emergency exit lights at the base of each column and there are concealed rainwater pipes in the 4 corners, however, the NE pipe has been replaced in plastic.

Condition: OK, lots of areas of damp.

Significance: High – original space and layout. Shame about the colour of the brickwork and new infill doors.

9.7 NE TOWER ROOMS AND CORRIDOR

Description/observation:

i. These are accessed from the Theatre Foyer and contain 3 old dressing rooms, the stair access to the Theatre roof and the northern corridor which runs along the stage to the theatre. These areas are all unused and are in a similar condition.

ii. **The 2 larger changing rooms/offices (NT01 and NT03)** are derelict with collapsed roofs, blocked windows and holes in the walls.

iii. **The smaller room (NT04)** is in OK condition with intact plastered walls and ceiling. The windows here are also blocked. It currently stores all the old theatre chairs.

iv. **The north corridor** is also derelict and its roof has fallen in in places. The walls are painted and the ceiling is low compared to the double height south corridor. There is a small window at the easternmost end but it was too dangerous to go any further past the fallen roof.

v. **The central space** (which these rooms are off) has painted walls, chipboard floor and the ceiling here is also starting to fall in.

vii. **The stairs leading up the tower** are in poor condition, there is debris lying around and the walls are damp with peeling paint.

viii. **First Floor** - There is a small 1907 projector corridor with steps leading up from both sides of the stage. There is a very small space centrally where the projector used to sit. This is a concrete construction.

ix. **Second Floor** – Rooms and loft rooms above are 1980s fit-out and in very poor condition. The ceilings are falling in and the rooms are damp.

Condition: Poor – unused damp/rotten rooms; very quickly becoming derelict.

Significance: The projector room is of limited significance. The other rooms including those in the North Tower are of neutral significance within a significant structure.

6.B.10 SW TOWER AND BBC STUDIOS AREAS

Overview: This area, like that on the opposite side of the Great Hall, was first built to contain dining facilities being a luncheon room, grand coffee room and grille room, which were served by kitchens in the basement under. The accommodation was placed in two ranges, separated by a central service corridor. On the ground floor the grand Grille Room, Cold Meats Room and Ante Room face the South Terrace behind the loggia, with a Billiard Room in the base of the tower and pantries behind. North of the corridor, and facing the main East Corridor were further serving rooms, offices, a wine bar, a large tea and coffee bar (with buffet), and grand stairs up to the upper floor. Here were placed further private dining rooms along the south front, reached from a long corridor, behind which were ranged various stores, pantries and the like, with WCs (aka retiring rooms) placed in the tower and adjoining spaces to the north.

In 1909 an indoor Bowling Green was placed in the north east part of the upper floor, with associated club facilities.

The dining facilities remained thoroughly under-used, and in 1935, a lease was granted to the BBC, who needed a location for their pioneering television studios. The large rooms available, as well as the position on top of a hill made Alexandra Palace a suitable location. The Tower was re-modelled to provide ground floor and five upper floors of office accommodation. The main front private dining rooms at each end of the south elevation were turned into studios, with control rooms in between.

Additional equipment rooms were formed by enclosing parts of the balcony. The main corridor became the studio corridor, on the other side of which were numerous store rooms. The northwest corner of this zone contained dressing rooms, makeup rooms, and so on. Downstairs, the ground floor contained the transmission equipment underneath the studios, with separate sound transmission equipment in the middle. Further workshops, cutting rooms, screening rooms, telecine rooms (for broadcasting newsreel footage) were placed behind, and in the basement areas under the western end of this part of the Palace. The BBC café was placed under the indoor bowling green.

The former glazed court by the Great Hall became an upper and lower scenery dock, where sets could be transferred to and from the studios via the studio corridor. The sets themselves were made in the theatre area.

The whole of the area underwent continuous alteration as various broadcast systems were tried and abandoned (the Baird system in Studio B and adjoining spaces), different programme types made (news, Open University), colour television was developed, and catering needs varied. The Open University left Alexandra Palace in 1981, since when the majority of the area had remained empty, with the exception of the tower now used as offices by the Alexandra Palace trustees, and a large ground floor room used by a community group.

Overall, the cultural significance of this part of the Palace, as the birthplace of public broadcast television, is almost without equal. Aesthetically, however, most of it is a mess.

10.1 STUDIO A

Description/observation: Converted 1936 from redundant private dining room, to become the original EMI-Marconi TV studio.

i. Ceiling: White fibreboard to replace earlier lath and plaster, secured by battens and lightweight steel suspended from the main roof beams.

ii. Walls:
North – Recently re-finished with hardboard panels on 4" x 2" battens, slightly reducing room size.
East – Black painted rough plaster; central chimney breast projects.
South – Ditto; 5 no. blocked window openings have damaged plaster architraves.
West – As east. Note high level mezzanine window to control room.

iii. Doors: Large 1930s panelled doors to north wall to bring in scenery (they slide), have smaller wicket doors with brass portholes – original. Single leaf door in centre of north wall end at SE corner of room.

iv. Floor: Black lino sheet, very aged.

v. Fittings: 1980s replica of original lighting gantry supports only lighting to the room. Display of vintage TV equipment and panels describing development of broadcasting.

Condition: Ceiling much damp stained and extract vents are blocked off; north wall is re-lined. Otherwise "as found".

Significance: Very high.

10.2 STUDIO A CONTROL ROOM

Description/observation:

i. Ceiling: Lath and plaster, collapsing and partly in hardboard.

ii. Walls: Painted plaster; lath partition to north has exposed lath. 1930s partition to west.

iii. Doors:
North – Modern ply blocking.
East – 1930s panel door to Studio A.
South – Opening in blocked window to loggia; reached 1930s equipment rooms.
West – Bare opening to adjoining space.

iv. Floor: Exposed softwood boards.

v. Fittings: The eastern part of the room has a platform built 15ft up which formerly combined the actual control suite. No access due to stored equipment.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: High.

10.3 ADJOINING SPACE TO WEST (previously one room with Studio A control)

Description/observation: Appears most recently to have been used as a caption room.

i. Ceiling: Lath and plaster – much plaster has fallen.

ii. Walls: Painted plaster to north, west and south bears remains of dining room decorative scheme.
East wall is a C20th partition.
South wall has glazed window opening. Lower half is blocked up with emergency exit doors to balcony. There appears to have been a corridor across the southern end of this space with a concrete slab ceiling – the scars can be seen in the adjoining wall.

iii. Floor: Timber boards. It may previously have been raised some 6" for BBC use.

Condition: Derelict.

Significance: Limited to 1875 fabric; otherwise neutral/detrimental.

10.4 ROOM WITHIN ENCLOSED BALCONY BY STUDIO A

Description/observation: Rooms here were formed in 1936 and extended subsequently, filling 5 bays of the balcony with 9" brick walls and Crittall windows. A panel door opens to the remaining balcony (3 bays in the centre of the elevation). A number of ducts cross the space to the outside.

i. Ceiling: Mixed plaster on joists (some losses) and concrete slab; acoustic tiles.

ii. Walls: Painted brick (and stone columns); some plaster to studio wall and in east rooms.

iii. Doors: C20th flush, painted.

iv. Floor: Concrete.

v. Fittings: None.

Condition: Poor – water leak at inside of brick pier. Collapsed ceilings; windows boarded over.

Comment: Generally low quality construction.

Significance: In the absence of any important finishes, except those belonging to the original Palace, or any of the equipment the room were meant to accommodate, significance is limited to the 1875 fabric only. The 1936 and later intervention is detrimental.

10.5 MAINTENANCE ROOM, LOBBY AND ROOM BEHIND (not connecting)

Description/observation: These rooms first formed the 1936 Baird System Copy Room and

Spotlight Studio. Following the failure of the Baird system, the Maintenance Room (now used as a drawings store), became a music library (1939), and then a maintenance room. The Spotlight Studio became the post war Central Control Room; an additional mezzanine floor over gave further Control Room space from 1950s. There is no access to this.

i. Ceiling: Painted plaster; exposed downstand beams in Maintenance Room.

ii. Walls: Painted plaster; projecting chimney breast in Maintenance Room.

iii. Windows: Maintenance Room has enormous sliding sash to original 1875 pattern; cill at floor level gives easy balcony access. Butchered remains of a similar window serve the lobby. The tops of both windows are cut off by the mezzanine floor, but much of the architrave remains.

iv. Doors: Mixed flush doors and 1930s panel door.

v. Floor: Linoleum; raised floor in lobby.

vi. Fittings: Electrical switchgear on lobby/partition to room behind; built-in work benches to Maintenance Room.

Condition: Poor to derelict.

Comment: The sliding sash window is a useful historical survival.

Significance: More fittings are needed to support TV-related cultural significance which at present appears detrimental; the 1875 surviving fabric is the key survival in those much adapted rooms.

10.6 STUDIO B

Description/observation: This room, adapted from a private dining room by the BBC in 1936 was used for trialling the Baird system for TV broadcasts. This being unsuccessful, the room was used as a second studio to support Studio A; its final use was with the Open University.

i. Ceiling: Now missing; the ceiling joists and roof void are visible.

ii. Walls:
North – The BBC hanging blinds/backdrops have been removed, though support battens remain. The Victorian dining room decorations are of painted panels on the plaster, with paper decorative borders applied. A large sliding door to the studio corridor (as Studio A) and two single leaf doors, now blocked, crudely inserted.
East – Similar decorative treatment to north, though more disrupted, high level windows to control room and door near SE corner to Maintenance Room.
South – Now mostly damaged plaster; four blocked arch-headed windows, the western two of which retain architraves in whole or in part. One of these is fitted with a sound deadening material (asbestos?). The other two openings have 1936 single leaf doors to the equipment rooms built into the balcony. Projecting bolts all over must have supported wall linings in the BBC period.
West – Mostly bare plaster with fragments of C19th decorations. Projecting chimneybreast.

iii. Floor: Covered in hardwood sheets; decorative cast iron grilles in front of each former window. The whole floor is raised some 6" compared with the adjoining corridor.

Condition: Nearly derelict. At least the roof doesn't leak.

Comment: This room is more easily imaginable as a dining room than as a TV studio.

Significance: High, as a structural envelope.

10.7 EQUIPMENT ROOM IN BALCONY BY STUDIO B

Description/observation: Similar construction to those for Studio A, though smaller being one long room taking 3 bays of the balcony arcade. A steep softwood step ladder gives access to the mezzanine over the two west bays. Here, the ceiling is plaster fixed to the joists and traversed by numerous ducts, walls are again patched brick (with a sliding door into the studio) and the floor is concrete/steel filler joist construction.

Condition: The ceiling is collapsing and the floor is covered in guano; the east wall has partly come down.

Significance: In the absence of any of the equipment which was the justification for the balcony enclosures, these rooms are detrimental to the building as a whole.

10.8 STUDIO CORRIDOR

Description/observation: Originally the serving corridor for the dining rooms; it was later used to access the studios, and to deliver stage sets.

i. Ceiling: Most of the BBC ceiling has gone, allowing the original 1875 plaster ceiling with rooflights to be seen, some 23' up. Decorative arches divide the corridor into thirds.

ii. Walls: Lined by the BBC with hardboard sheeting with cover strips between panels; original plaster visible above the lost ceiling. Coved moulding instead of a skirting.

iii. Doors: As described for the various rooms.

iv. Floor: BBC flame pattern green/beige carpet; red lino at west end.

v. Fittings: Surface wiring; large ornamental light fittings at eastern half (6 no.), "on air" lamps over studio doors.

Condition: Fair, except for the missing ceiling.

Comment: The access to the scene dock at the west end has been bricked up. Its length as compared with its width remains intimidating.

Significance: Highly significant.

10.9 BOWLS CLUB

Description/observation: Formed in NE corner of upper floor, in 1909, approx 96' x 36'. Original purpose of space not clear, but there are blocked openings in the south wall, and in the WC at the far east end is a connection through the BBC areas.

i. Ceiling: None (entirely removed except easternmost bay). Black painted timber monopitch roof trusses at approx 12' centres to match main structural bays. (Room is 8 bays long). Modern fluorescent batten light fittings.

ii. Walls: Painted brick. Piers project a full brick x four bricks wide at south wall.

iii. Doors: 2 no. early C20th four-panel.

iv. Windows: 6 no. fixed casements; upper parts may have opened as hoppers.

v. Floor: Damaged SW boards, special carpet laid over now largely removed. Runners at east and west ends.

vi. Fittings: Scoreboards at all four corners, raised decks for seating both ends with bench at east, cinema seats at west. WC and escape lobby at NE corner – all early C20th. Original ight fittings – 2 per truss.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Significant.

10.10 ADJOINING LOBBY

Description/observation: Walled off from stair landing and dressing room. Subdivided at SW corner to create Bar and WC.

i. Ceiling: N part has painted-over ceiling laylights; otherwise lowered. C20th.

ii. Wall: Painted plaster. NB arch opposite original stair head separating north and south parts of this room.

iii. Doors: Flush.

iv. Fittings: C20th shelves and bar counter.

Condition: Ceiling is falling in and the room is tatty.

Significance: Significant original fabric with detrimental alterations.

10.11 GRAND STAIR

Description/observation: Large stained pitch pine stair raising from ground floor – original 1873-75 fitting.

i. Ceiling: Flat plaster under-drawn with plasterboard.

ii. Walls: Plasterboard – modern partition to south (Bowling Club); heavy skirting.

iii. Doors: Modern flush door to Bowling Club, C19th 3-panel door in west wall off head of landing.

iv. Windows: 3 no. timber lights with upper (slightly smaller) sash as a hopper.

v. Floor: Marmoleum applied to stair treads.

vi. Stair: Half open well, corner newels. Landing boxed in. Turned balusters.

Condition: OK.

Comment: Huge extract duct built into the middle of the well – this should be removed.

Significance: Highly significant (except duct).

10.12 REAR ROOMS WEST OF GRAND STAIR

Description/observation: A heavy structural wall defines the back edge of the 50' deep primary rooms. Between the main passage and this, as well as to its north are arranged various fitting rooms, washrooms, make-up areas and the like with suspended ceilings (ductwork above sometimes accessible), combination of 1930s and post war joinery and lots of modern partitions, sometimes part glazed. Windows now blocked internally. West end of this area has a fire escape corridor. The rooms off the main corridor appear all to be storerooms – some C19th skirtings remain. Doors generally flush with vision panel, but some older e.g. to room 123.

Condition: Neglected/abandoned.

Significance: Limited.

GROUND FLOOR ROOMS BELOW FORMER BBC STUDIOS

10.13 ROOMS SOUTH OF CORRIDOR

i. As with the opposite wing, these rooms were originally laid out as catering facilities. There was a large grille and cold meat dining room with an ante room between to the front, and a glazed court against the Great Hall. A service passage ran behind, on the other side of which, and running parallel to the former east corridor (now skating rink café), were various serveries and kitchen offices to the west, a grand stair to the upper floor in the middle, and a long bar and buffet to the east.

ii. Following the lease of this part of the building to the BBC in 1936, most of the original rooms were subdivided, and ceilings were lowered. However, most of the original structure remains intact. As on the upper floor, parts of the veranda have been enclosed to create additional accommodation.

iii. **Former glazed court**, now WCs and escape route from Great Hall – see section 6.B.7.

iv. **1875 Coffee Room area (south front, east of glazed court)** was used in 1936 as the Baird system transmission hall, later subdivided to form a prop store, workshop, band room and artists' waiting room. The prop store has a gantry hoist at the SW corner, and two makeshift mezzanine platforms in softwood for additional storage, the lower of which has been cut back at the NW corner. One of the original two west walls to the glazed court has been bricked up, the other retains its original huge sliding sash window. Old dining room decorations (with dado rail and skirtings) remain to the north and west walls. The workshop/stores run the full width of the former coffee bar, behind the veranda, with various fragments of window joinery to the south wall, and a modern door, plus historic skirtings and picture rail. 1930s stairs provide access to the basement. The northern wall is built along the line of the row of columns in the middle of the old coffee room which supported the floor above. The NE quarter of the space has 1950s/1960s partitions and lowered ceilings, with a projection room at mezzanine level.

Condition: Poor, but mostly salvageable.

Significance: The BBC interventions are now mostly without context and in any case of poor quality, and thus detrimental. The projection room is of some limited significance. The main historic structure of the space is highly significant.

v. **Former 1875 Ante Room area** – 4 bays along the south front. Used as the sound transmission hall, and later subdivided to form a preview screening room (1960s hessian wall linings, screen to east, suspended ceiling and associated projection room to the east of this, all along the northern side). A larger room of indeterminate purpose along the south front. Stair of c1960 provides access to mezzanine rooms built inside the veranda.

Condition: Poor, but salvageable.

Significance: The 1875 structure is significant, and the screening room and projection room are also of interest and might be worth preserving possibly in a new location. The rooms built into the veranda are detrimental.

vi. **Former 1875 Grille Room Area (south front, nearest SE Tower)** – 5 bays wide. From 1936 this room was used as the EMI-Marconi system transmitter hall, though all traces of this equipment have been removed. The room was subsequently used as the BBC club, and in the 1960s a bar and associated store was built into the east end. The room was also used as a boxing club. The room retains some good original heavy double doors to the service corridor, as well as the freestanding cast iron columns supporting the floor above, and various decorative mouldings. The original windows are thoroughly mutilated and partly lost behind veranda infill.

Condition: Poor, but salvageable.

Significance: Original structure and fittings: high. Bar installation and balcony infill: detrimental.

vii. **Main E-W corridor –** initially constructed as a serving passage connecting to the serving room and lift to the basement kitchens to the various bars, buffets and dining rooms. West section now has suspended ceiling, and plastered walls over a matchboard dado, perhaps original 1875

fabric. Central (wider) part has been subdivided to form various small lobbies and stores, and the pattern of original openings has been quite lost. The east section again has a suspended ceiling, walls are plastered at high level over a modern panel system. Lino floors throughout, and extensive networks of ducts at high level.

Condition: Poor

Significance: Original structure and fittings: high. C20th alterations: detrimental.

10.14 ROOMS NORTH OF CORRIDOR

viii. **The Serving Room** at the west end is now used a store. The full ceiling height has been maintained – painted black with upper parts of plastered walls; the floor is finished in cement. The original north wall window openings have been blocked; the door appears to be 1930s?

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Significant 1875 fabric.

ix. **Male and Female WCs, a kitchenette and an office** occupy the next rooms, between the store and the main stairs. Extensive 1930s and later partitions, suspended ceilings, extensive ductwork is wide above, former north wall openings: all blocked.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Detrimental alterations to significant 1875 fabric.

x. **Main stair -** 1875 stained pine stair rises round 3 sides of this lofty room some 50' high, and is almost entirely unaltered in itself. Decorative newels to corners, turned balusters, modern lino to treads. Skirting only to wall side. A store has been built under the bottom flight, and a lobby and 1960s period kitchen in a free-standing enclosure under the top flight. A hideous modern freestanding duct rises up the middle of the central wall.

Condition: Stair is OK, decorations and fitting-out not so.

Significance: Detrimental alterations to highly significant 1875 fabric.

xi. **The adjoining room (east)** was originally a wine bar and has been refitted as an office in 1960s – low suspended ceiling and hessian wall finishes etc.

Condition: Fair.

Significance: Detrimental fit-out to significant 1875 fabric.

xii. **BBC Canteen and adjoining kitchens and WCs to east** – these rooms collectively formed the Tea Bar and Buffet until 1938, when the canteen was put in. From this date, only the central half glazed oak door and partition to the kitchen are obvious survivals. Ceiling has been underdrawn about 3' below proper height in wood-wool slabs, and painted black. Walls are plastered and have heavy plinths below projecting pilasters showing how the wall was largely open to the East Corridor/Ice Rink Canteen, then reduced to smaller openings, presumably glazed, and now clumsily filled in blockwork. The west wall seems unchanged. The

floor is lino finished. The kitchen area and WC fit-out in the eastern third of the space is all mid/late C20th.

Condition: Fair/poor.

Comment: There seems no good reason either to remove or keep the present subdivision.

Significance: Main canteen area: limited. Kitchens etc: neutral within highly significant original fabric.

xiii. East: Rooms between these kitchens and the SE Tower form an escape corridor in very poor condition, a derelict room (no access) and late C20th WCs.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Limited to 1875 fabric only.

10.15 BBC BASEMENT AREAS

Description/observation: These basements extend along the southern edge of the Palace, and correspond to the western 12 bays of the veranda structure at ground level above. The westernmost 3 bays run back some distance and date from 1864-66 (i.e. the first Palace), and were arranged round an open area, which has now been covered over since the 1874-5 rebuilding, when the rest of the vaults were built. The 1860s former open area now has a BBC period concrete ceiling. In the BBC period, a timber stair was built down from the ground floor in the 6th bay from west, various partitions in clay block were put in to subdivide the vaults, thus creating various laboratories, cutting rooms, stores, etc, and some additional openings were made between vaults.

A few C19th fittings remain – a few doors and windows to the 1860s work, a later C19th hoist to the front area in bay 9.

Much of the surviving joinery and fittings seem to be 1930s or early post war, including doors, work benches and the surviving electrical fittings and air handling ducts.

In the 1930s brick piers were inserted to support the sound transmission hall floor, since the 1870s jack vaults spanned a considerable distance in relation to the size of the bottom webs of the cast-iron joists.

Painted wall decorations have often been lost. Where remaining, these have a grey lower wall, black dado stripe and white upper. Some rooms were fitted with acoustic tile ceilings and upper walls.

At the back of the 1870s vaults, particularly bay 4, there are some rectangular holes punched through the ceiling which perhaps indicated the earlier presence of serving hoists from the kitchens which were formerly placed here.

Condition: Generally worn, with some damp along the southern edge under the veranda, particularly at the east end. Otherwise dry.

Comment: It would be really useful to have a plan showing how the spaces were used

in the BBC period.

Significance: Significant.

10.16 ROOMS WITHIN THE SE TOWER (under BBC Mast)

Description/observation:

i. The Tower originally matched the other three, being of three large stories under a zinc tiled spire. In 1936, the BBC heavily re-engineered it to support the mast (see section 6.A.2), and arranged reception and office accommodation over a ground floor and five upper floors.

ii. These floors are served by a 1936 concrete open well stair with a lift rising up the centre in a mesh cage. There is a concrete balustrade with hardwood capping, and a round metal handrail, and painted wooden dado strip to the opposite wall. No windows except at top flight, in heavily painted softwood, with a small opening casement, glazed in wired glass. Linoleum to treads. The top landing has a ladder providing roof access and beams supporting lift cables, weights and the lift car.

iii. The fifth floor contains a machinery room to which we did not gain access.

iv. 1st-4th floors contain offices reached from the stairs by 1930s type flush doors with copperglaze vision panels. 1930s cornices are attached to the downstand beams on the plastered ceilings. The Crittall windows in the projecting bays to east and south have been renewed using patent double glazing systems. All walls are finished in painted plaster, which in many areas have been recently enlivened with new dado and cornice strips. The floors as a whole have been partially subdivided by partitions of indeterminate date to give a mixture of cellular and open plan offices. Some Crittall windows remain at 3rd, 4th and 5th floors, facing west; these have often received secondary glazing.

v. At ground floor level, there are no projecting oriel windows, though the glazing has been renewed as at the upper floors. Wall finishes are as above, as is part of the ceiling. The rear of the reception room has a suspended ceiling and a reception desk of 1960s style. The entrance door is fully glazed in a hardwood frame. The west side of the ground floor is subdivided into a lobby photocopy bay, and plant room. Through them, a recently refurbished office built into the adjoining south terrace veranda is reached.

Condition: Fair to good, depending on how recently redecorated. There is failed plaster under the 4th floor fire escape window, due to damp getting in.

Comment: We need BBC period plans of the upper floors to establish how much of the partitioning dates from that time.

Significance: Limited, due to absence of historic décor and fittings. The stair and lift are perhaps the only significant survivals.

UPPER FLOOR ROOMS REACHED VIA BBC ROOMS IN SE TOWER

10.17 SOUTH EAST PAVILION

Description/observation: This room is currently used as a junk store/abandoned.

i. The structure is a timber framed roof of shallow pitch (damp in places). Below this, small square opening clerestory lights in timber frames run the whole way around. These are supported on a timber beam at top of wall level. The wall splays back here about 30° to meet the vertical wall on all 4 sides. To the south slope are 3 timber lights in very bad condition. The walls are plasterboard finish. The floor is carpeted. The south wall is wet with rain coming in through a broken window and the timbers are rotten.

ii. The north wall also has major damp where the window is leaking.

iii. Stairs down into room from corridor (10) with wooden handrails: no lighting – strip lights where ceiling bulbs removed.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Limited to original fabric.

10.18 CORRIDOR

Description/observation: Stair up to escape and locked door to Room 104. Chipboard floor and ceiling. Metal steps up to fire escape. Walls are concrete with peeling plaster and timber skirtings at base. Lath and plaster walls with paint other side. Timber skylight with Georgian wired glass. Up to yellow doors.

Condition: Poor.

Significance: Limited.

10.19 SECOND CORRIDOR

Description/observation: Continuation through double doors back towards main BBC Tower Stair. This corridor has a lino floor, painted walls with skirting at base. There are 2 rooflights of 3 lights each at either end of the corridor. Abundant cabling runs along the top of the walls and a fire hose is situated opposite the doors to the first floor studios. The ceiling is lath and plaster with plasterboard painted on top.

Condition: OK, ceiling needs repair.

Significance: Limited.

LOBBY OFF CENTRAL BBC STAIR

Description/observation: Square room with no windows. It has a lino floor and painted walls as corridor. This space has 3 exits off it: 1. to the BBC Tower; 2. to the Studio A; 3. to the second corridor.

6.B.11. EAST ENTRANCE, ICE RINK AND ADJOINING AREAS

11.1 ICE RINK FOYER

Description/observation: This area is a mirror image of the Palm Court at the West Entrance and is now used as a foyer/ticket office for the Ice Rink as well as containing a children's play area and a crazy golf course. This is the main entrance from the car park to the east and was badly damaged by the 1980 fire.

This area initially housed Christopher Dresser's Egyptian and Moroccan full-scale house-sets, but later seems to have become part of the area used for the sale of merchandise, before lack of use led to it being leased to the BBC 1935-81. Undamaged by the fire, the primary structure was repaired and the whole roof was re-glazed 1980s.

i. The new roof constructed in the 1980s is identical to that of Palm Court consisting of a large central glass dome with 3 smaller glazed domes to the north, east and south and each having a raised lantern in the central section. Each section of the roof is supported by large blue painted columns around the edges, these are a mix of square and circular and are all topped with Corinthian capitals, with the main space being 12 bays wide with an arched glazed door/window in each. To the east of the north and south roofs, are small areas created by the supporting columns and these are roofed with an opaque tent structure. The central domed area has a second tier of windows at first floor level directly above those at ground floor level.

ii. At the main East Entrance there are 3 sets of double doors - all 1980s replicas and the whole of this wall inside has been plastered over. The large semi-circular window remains above the door. Either side of the main entrance are stairs leading up to room above, and to the south corner of the main foyer is a prefab security box.

All the walls in this area are 1875 construction and match those in the Ice Rink area. The majority of the brickwork in the central aisle is in good condition, however, the north and south aisles are not in as good condition with a lot of areas of damp. An air handling unit has been pushed through one of the blocked up windows to the north side and boxed in with plasterboard. There are lots of areas of missing bricks and broken/missing render, damp, mould and peeling paint. In most places, the render cornices and plinths are still intact although most have damage. Unsightly metal panels to hold strip lighting have been inserted at eye level to the south wall.

iii. The doors off this space to the Ice Rink and Theatre Foyer are all 1980s replicas.

iv. The floor is covered throughout in a non-slip covering.

v. The central booth in the foyer was built in the 1980s and is constructed of concrete blocks with a painted wood pelmet around the top and timber ceiling construction. The front contains a glazed ticket booth with the back fitted out as a first aid room.

Condition: Poor – the space is underused and decaying in places.

Significance: High, this is the original structure of the building although compromised by the insertion of the ticket booth and security hut.

11.2 EAST BUILDINGS EITHER SIDE OF ENTRANCE

Description/observation: These rooms were previously offices but are now derelict.

i. The 2 spaces contain the remains of a 1980s inserted corridor with office rooms off either side at both ground and first floor level. The 1875 external walls still stand with some rooms having brick fireplaces. These, however, are deteriorating and crumbling as a result of lost ceilings.

ii. In places, the roofs are missing and leaking, floors are missing and the whole area is covered in pigeon guano. There are rooflights to the corridor in both buildings at first floor level.

Condition: Poor due to missing and leaking roofs.

Significance: High – these are original spaces but have become unsafe due to derelict state of 1980s fit-out.

GROUND FLOOR

11.3 NORTH EAST PAVILION

Description/observation: Currently empty.

i. There are a number of temporary timber partitions dividing up the room (all locked).

ii. The room contains original walls of 1875 which need repairing in places.

iii. This room is double height due to the removal of the 1st floor and now has a grille of wire at this level.

iii. The roof is a timber structure (as opposite one on BBC side) with a row of windows running along the screed top of wall level.

iv. The floor is concrete.

v. There are areas where original window and door joinery still exists behind the blocked openings. There are also new doors to the car park (locked.)

Condition: Poor – abandoned. The room is damp with bricks missing in areas.

Significance: Significant original structure but with floor missing. Some original joinery behind boarded up windows. Original brick arches are visible where square topped 1980s doors have been inserted.

11.4 SOUTH EAST PAVILION (full access not available)

Description/observation: This space is currently empty.

i. This space is accessed off the ice rink foyer and is a small section of the ground floor room. It has original 1875 walls to the north and west and new blockwork division to the east.

ii. A new steel frame structure with wired ceiling has been inserted. The

original ceiling above has deteriorated to one side and is leaking badly.

iii. Double doors lead out to the south. An original drainpipe is in the SW corner although has been blocked up.

iv. Floor is concrete screed.

Condition: Poor – there is a hole in the ceiling and the room is damp.

Significance: Compromised by the block partition wall and steel frame holding up the roof.

7.0 RESEARCH SOURCES

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S. Vaughan notes on BBC occupation of Alexandra Palace, ND presumed c2011

J. White “London in the 19th Century: A Human Awful Wonder of God” 2007

7.2 Periodicals Consulted

The Builder

Building

Country Life

The Illustrated London News

The AA Quarterly

The Wireless Trader

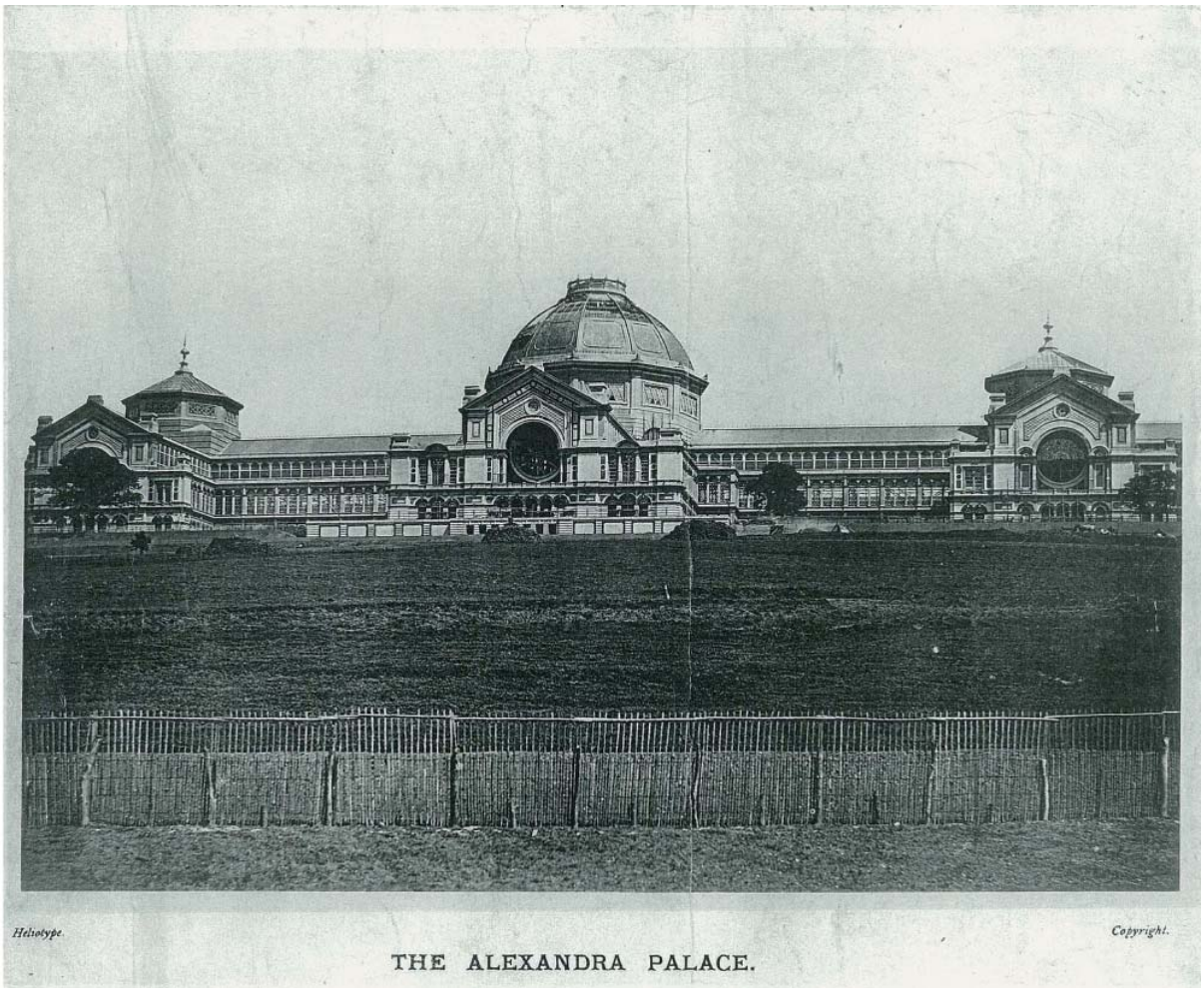
The Times

8.0 THE PLATE LIST AND PLATES

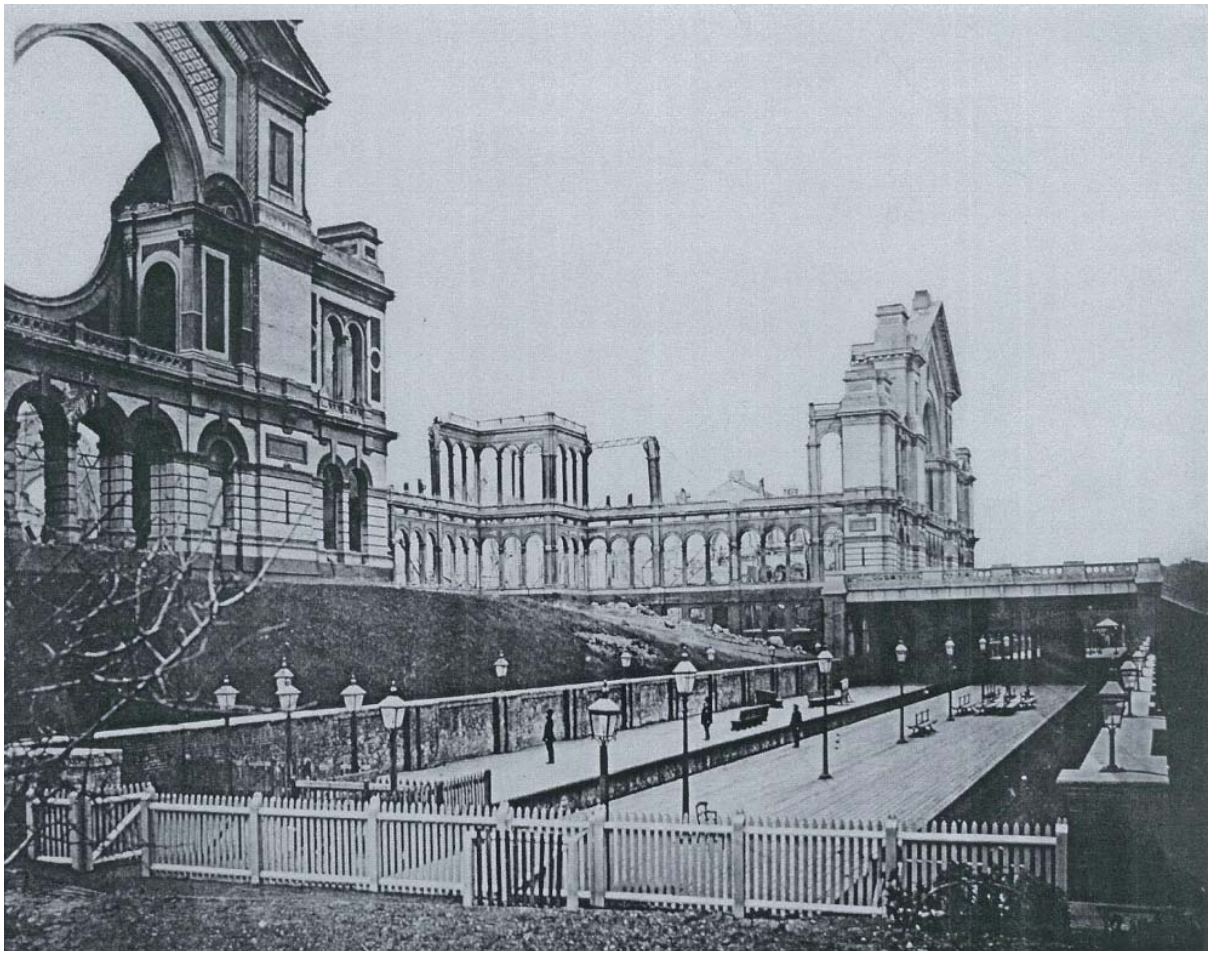
Unless indicated otherwise, all the photographs, plans and illustrations are held by the Bruce Castle Museum.

Front Cover – The New Alexandra Palace, Muswell Hill, The Builder, 15 August 1874

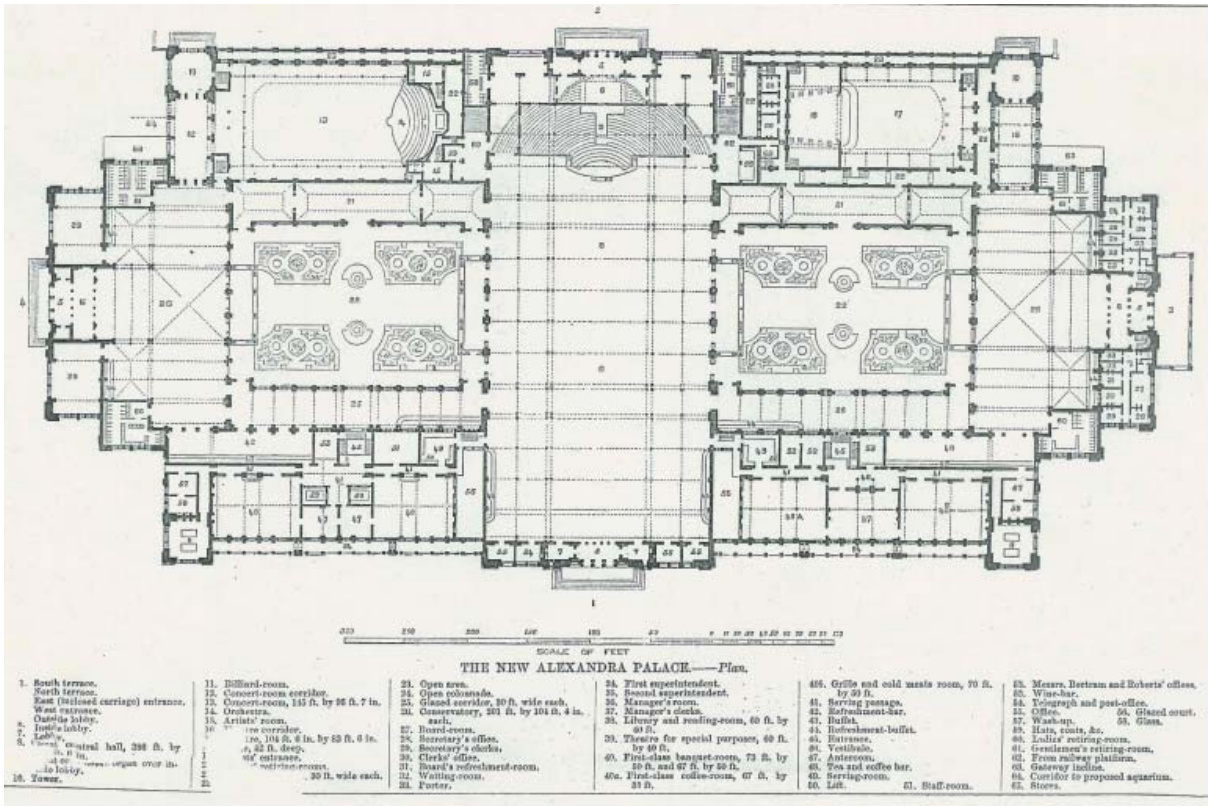
1. The First Palace – undated but before 1873
2. The First Palace after the fire – winter 1873-74
3. The New Alexandra Palace – Plan, The Builder, 15 August 1874
4. Alexandra Palace Basement Plan (ND)
5. Alexandra Palace, aerial view from west, before 1930s
6. Alexandra Palace: Ground Plan, before 1930s
7. Cutaway view of SE Wing and Tower showing BBC TV installation – 1936
8. Alexandra Palace Television Tower, late 1956
9. Alexandra Palace: Ground Plan, area occupied by British Broadcasting Corporation (ND)
10. The Great Hall occupied by Displaced Persons – WWII
11. View of Ground from SE Wing (ND)
12. The Italian Garden in the Open Court (ND) *(courtesy of John Hutchinson)*
13. Alexandra Palace – Diagrammatic Layout, October 1974
14. The Great Hall: view during rebuilding – Country Life, 10 January 1985



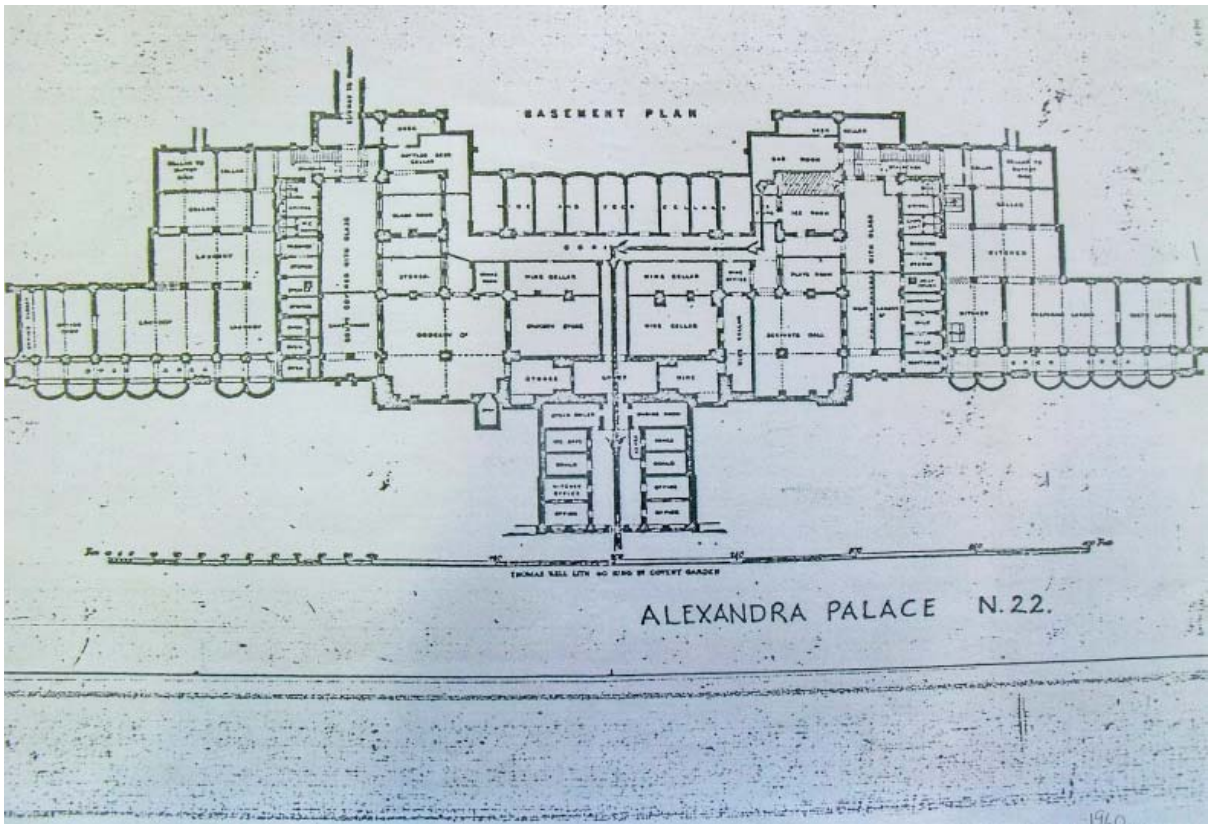
1. The First Alexandra Palace - destroyed by fire 1873



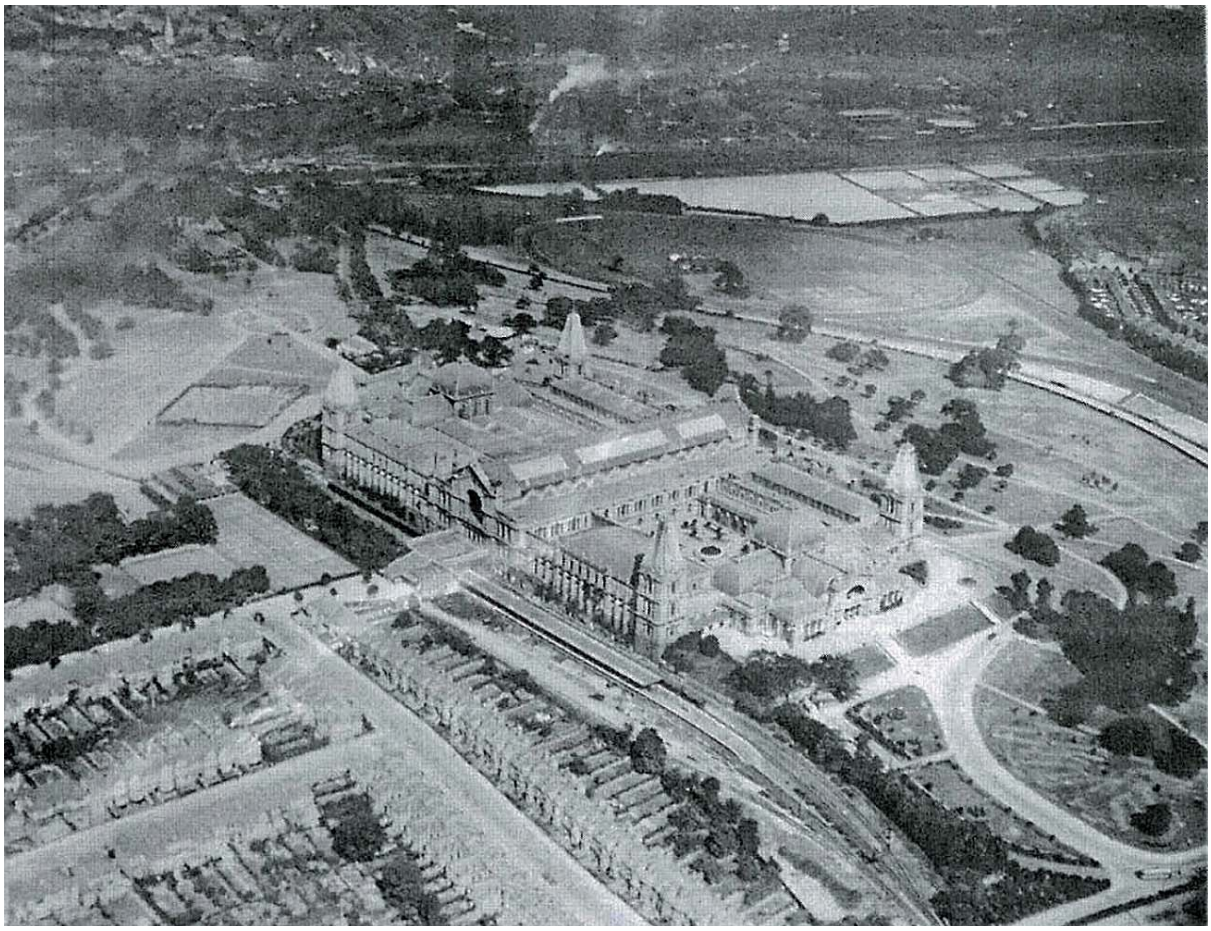
2. The First Palace after the fire - winter 1873-74. View from NE showing railway station and access bridge to the central north entrance portico, which was retained in the second Palace opened in 1875. Note the two storeys of basement visible on the east facing return - these too were retained in the second Palace, though the arcaded structure above was entirely renewed.



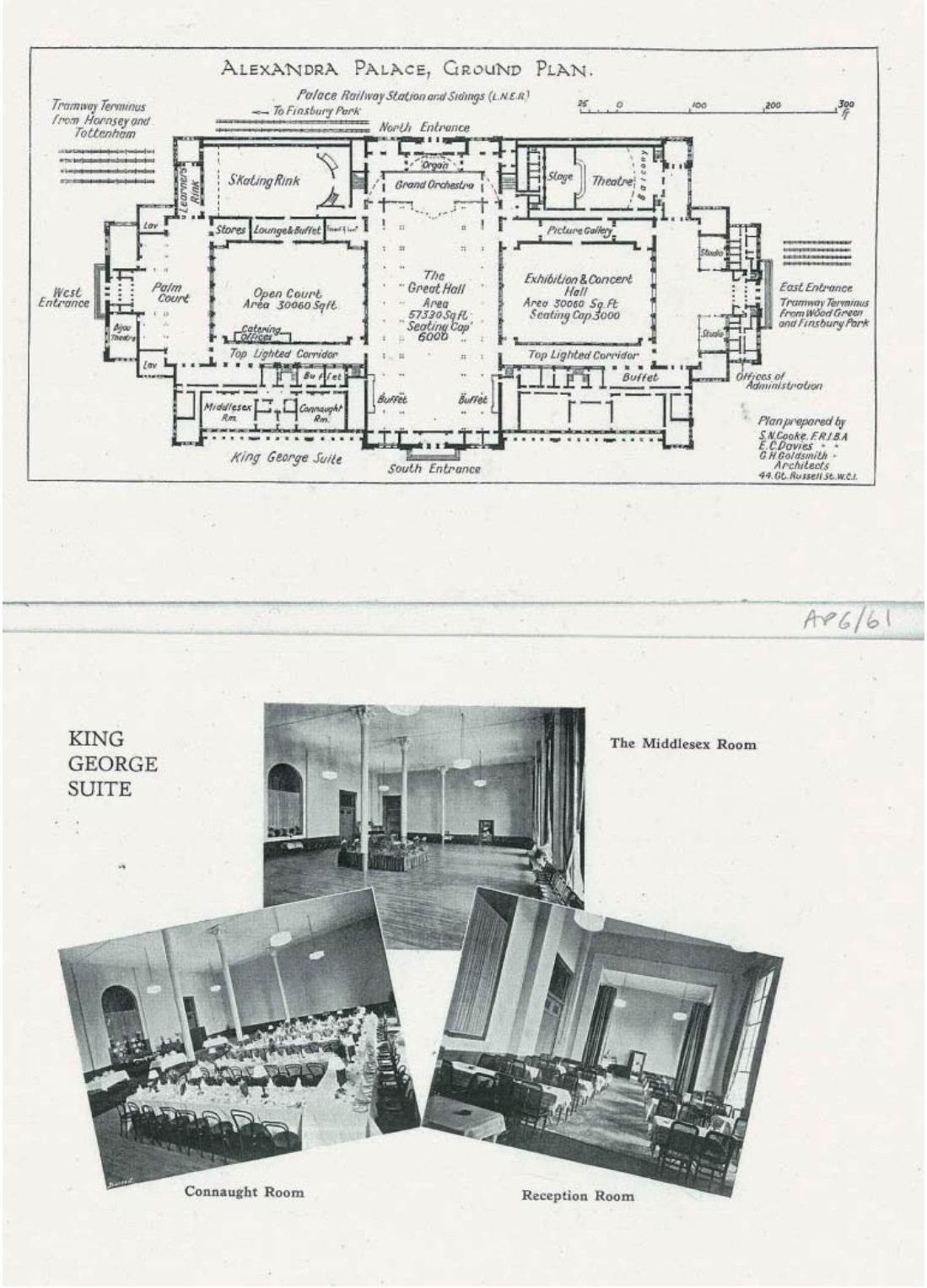
3. The New Alexandra Palace - The Builder, 15 August 1874. In the completed building opened in 1875, the right hand Open Court was roofed over to form a “Bazaar Department”.



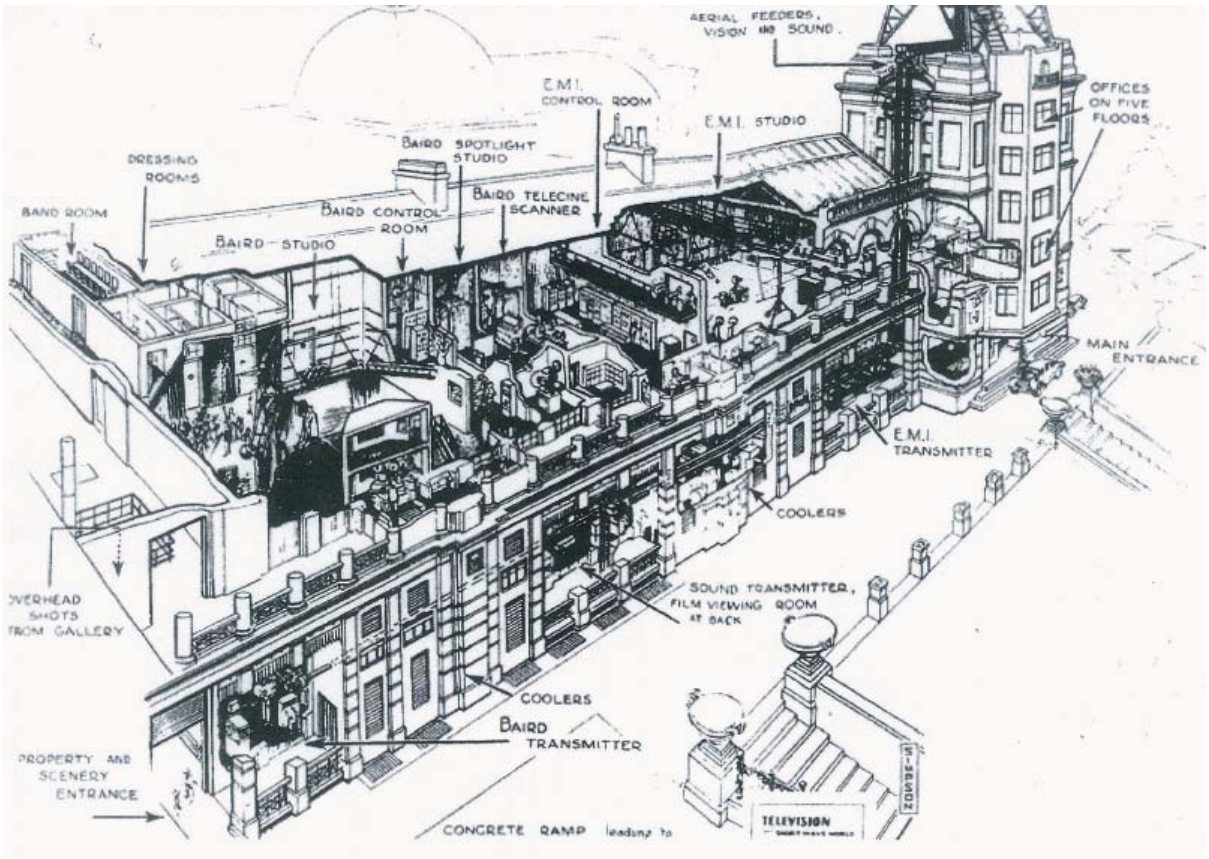
4. Alexandra Palace, Basement Plan (ND). The kitchens under the SE Wing are a long way from the Banqueting and Dining Rooms in the SW Wing, which may account for the complaints of cold food.



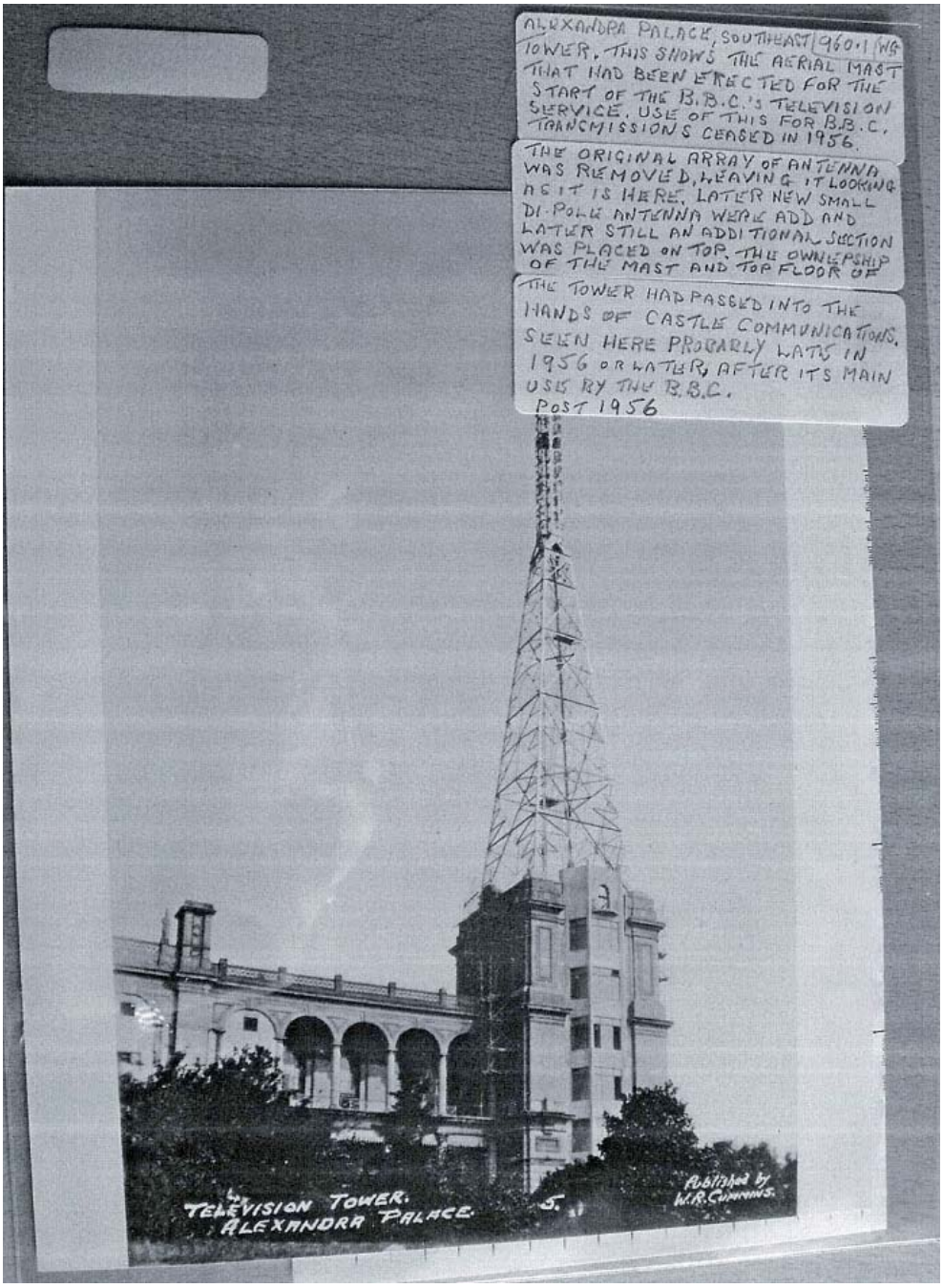
5. Aerial view from west - before 1935-36, when the BBC transmitter mast was built. The access road has not yet been built across the south front, separating the Palace from its Park.



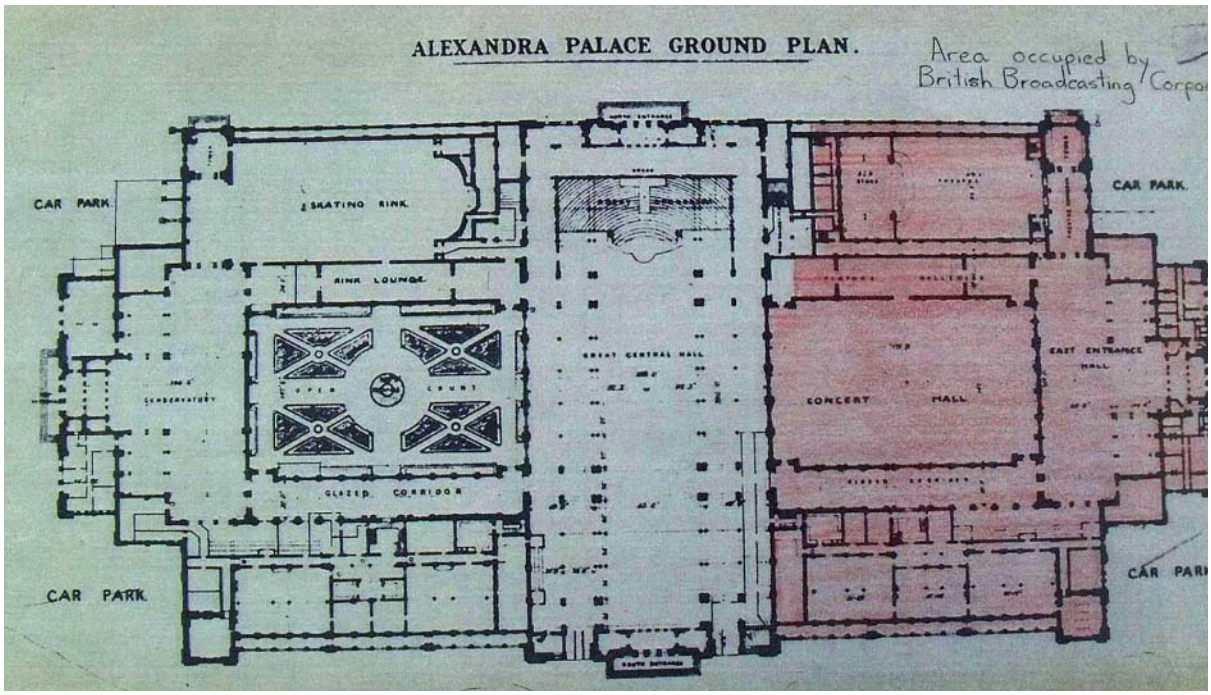
6. Ground Plan, C20th before 1936. Note the skating rink, the King George Suite in the SW Wing (now the Panorama Room), and the un-named rooms in the SE Wing suggesting that they were already out of use. The studios in the East Entrance Foyer (now the Ice Rink Foyer) were used by photographers. The illustrations of the King George Suite, which are very sparsely and drearily decorated and furnished, perhaps help one understand why they were not commercially successful.



7. Cutaway view of SE Wing showing BBC TV Studios and transmitter installations. Besides the BBC equipment layout, the arrangement of urns by the steps up to the terrace, and the piers without railings between are of interest.



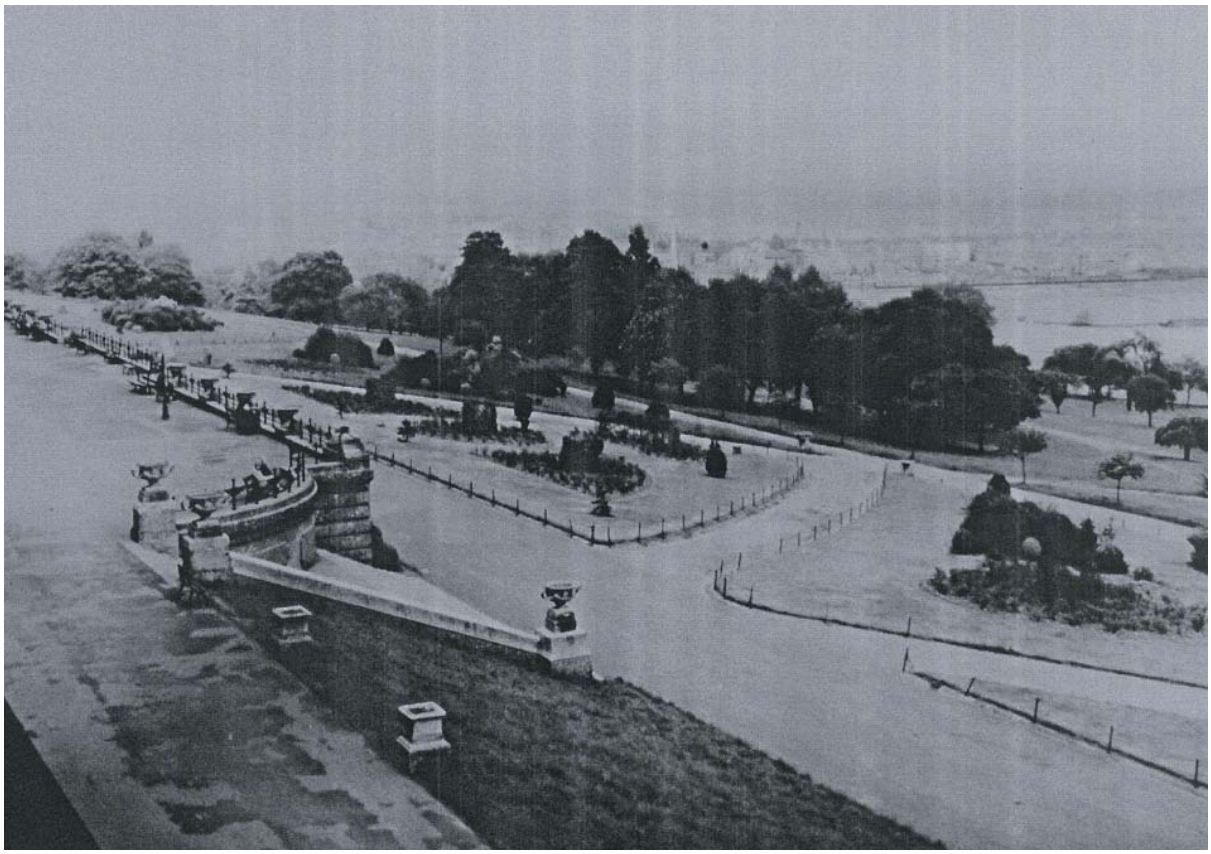
8. Alexandra Palace Television Tower, late 1956. Note also the balustrade between the piers at roof parapet level. After this photograph was taken, more of the arcade was infilled.



9. Alexandra Palace Ground Plan - area occupied by the British Broadcasting Corporation (no date but probably mid 1960s). Usefully shows the layout of the rooms around the Great Hall and in the western part of the Palace, and corresponds to the 1967 condition survey.



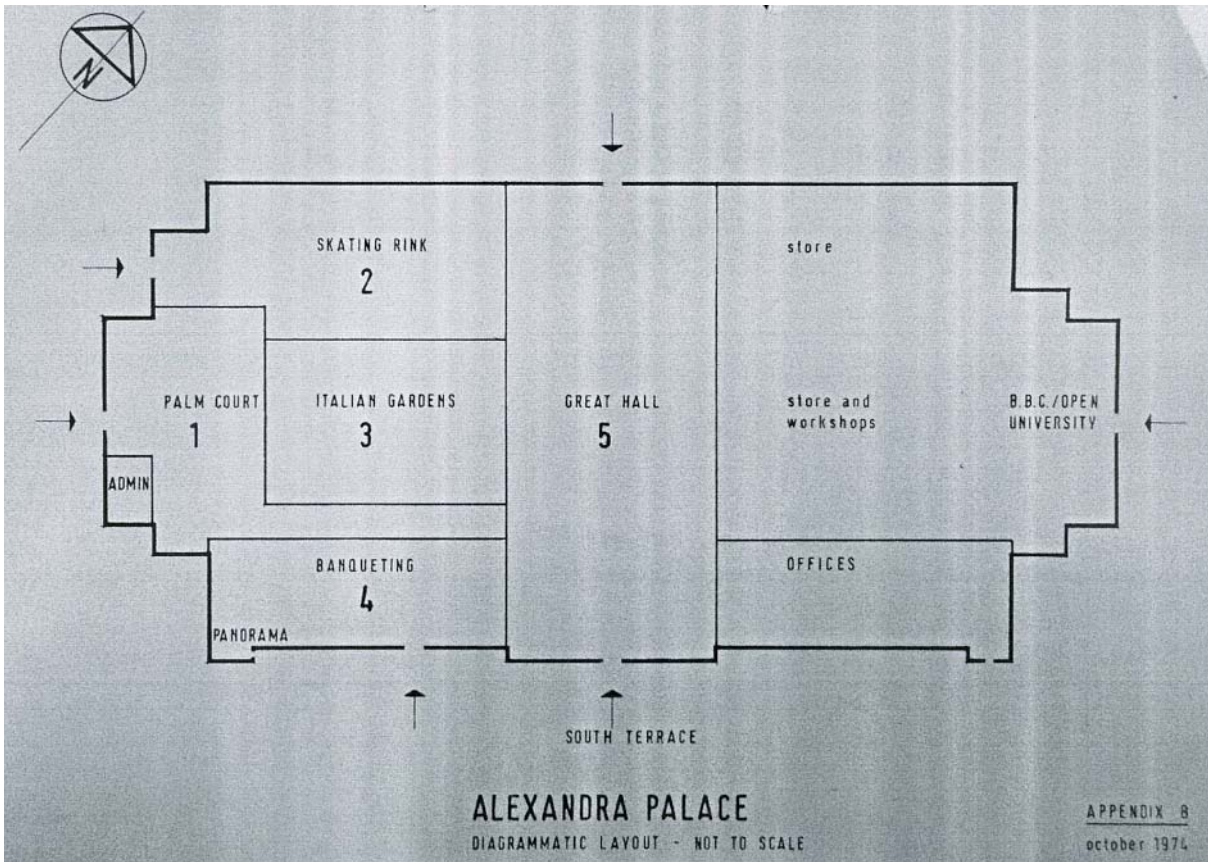
10. The Great Hall occupied by Displaced Persons (no date, but obviously WWII). Interesting chiefly for showing the quality of daylight inside, and the pattern of decorative motifs.



11. View of Gardens from SE Terrace, after building of the road. Apart from this, the landscaping remains intact. For urns etc on the South Terrace, compare with Plate 7.



12. The Italian Garden in the Open Court (west of the Great Hall). The aquarium in the middle of the garden is visible.



13. Alexandra Palace - Diagrammatic Layout, October 1974, showing the continuing disposition of uses.

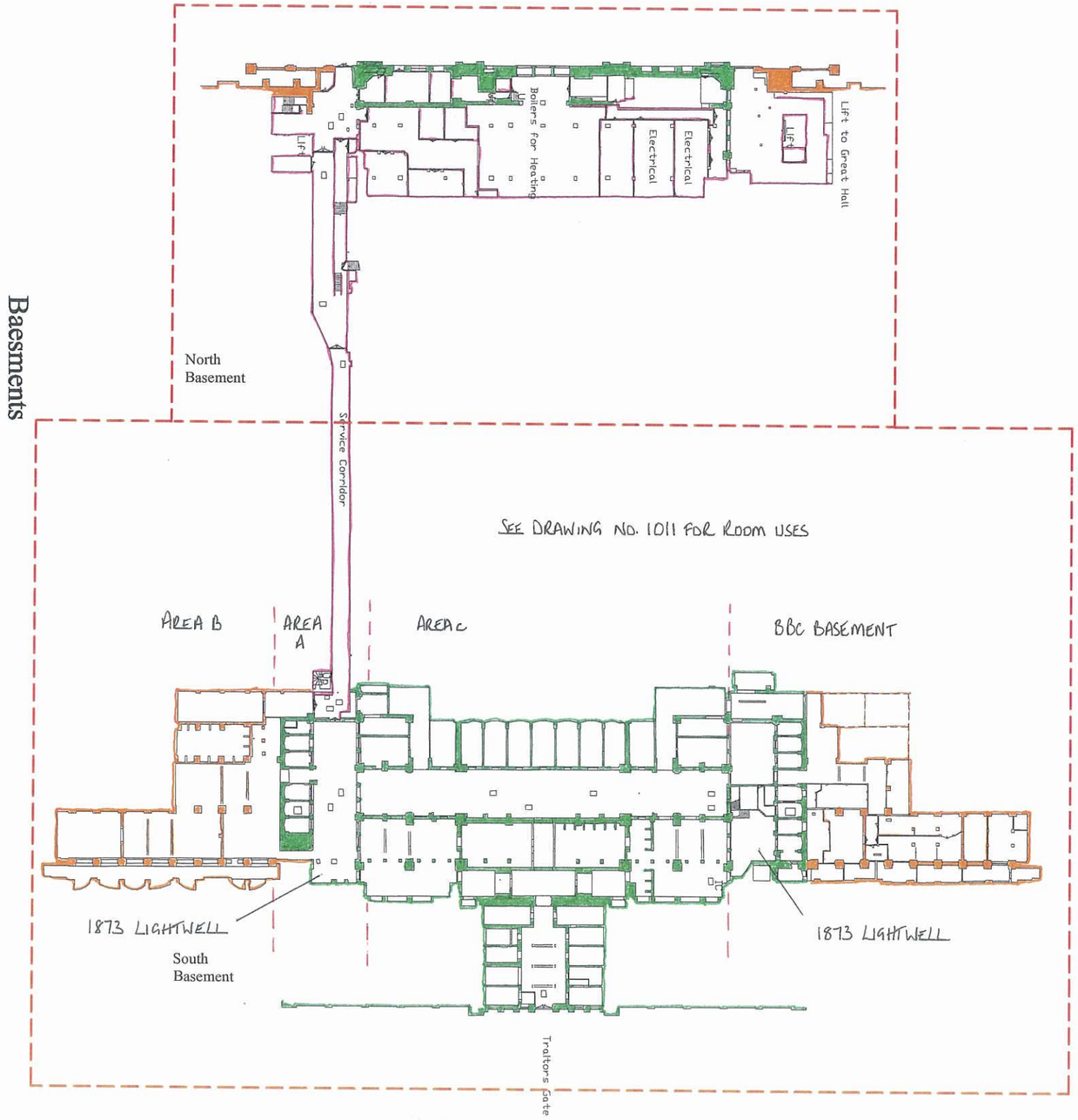


14. The Great Hall: view during rebuilding - Country Life, 10 January 1985. Showing excavations at the north end for the new two-storey basement, which may be compared with Plate 2.

9.0 THE DRAWING LIST AND DRAWINGS

1001 Zoned Basement Plan with Chronologies
1002 Zoned Lower Ground Floor Plan with Chronologies
1003 Zoned Ground Floor Plan with Chronologies
1004 Zoned First Floor Plan with Chronologies
1005 Roof Coverings and Second to Fifth Floor Plans with Chronologies
1011 Great Hall – North Basement Layout Showing Historic Room Uses
1040 South East Wing – Ground Floor Areas Showing Historic Room Uses
1050 Panorama Room – Pre-Fire Ground Floor Layout Showing Historic Room Uses

Baesments



- 1873
- 1875
- EARLY 20TH
- 1930
- 1980 POST FIRE

No.	NOTES (STATUS: F. FEASIBILITY S. SKETCH DESIGN P. PLANNING B. BUILDING CONTROL D. DESIGN DEV / PRELIM M. MEASUREMENT T. TENDER C. CONSTRUCTION R. RECORD)	Rev	Date	Dwn	Auth	REVISIONS
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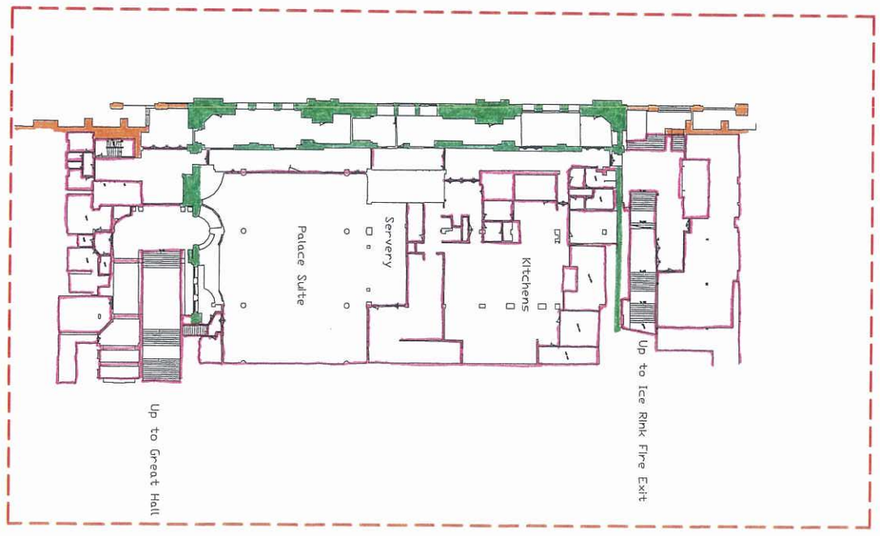
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1873
1875
EARLY 20TH
1930
1980 POST FIRE

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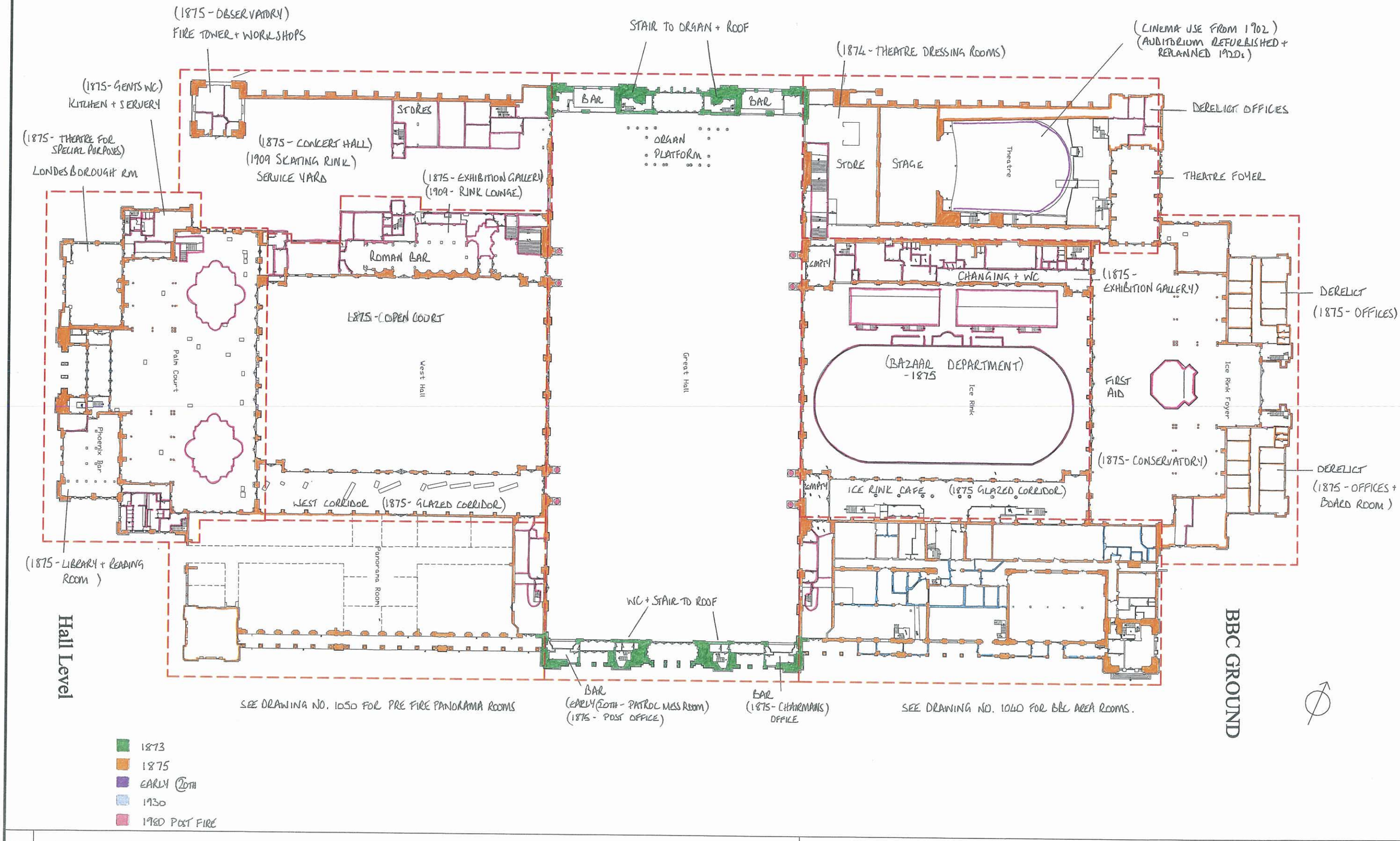
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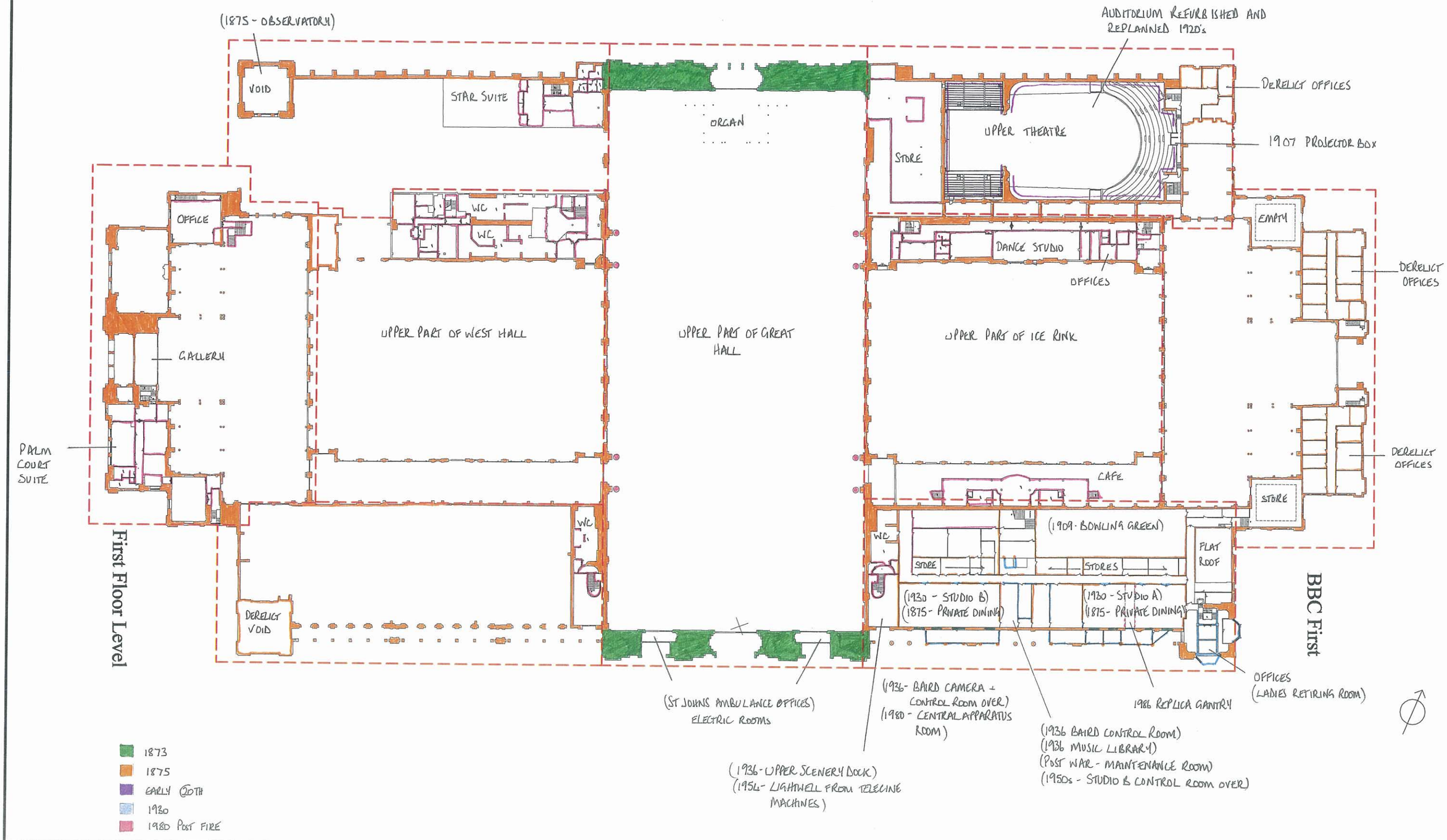
Job Alexandra Palace

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Job Alexandra Palace

Title Zoned First Floor Plan with Chronologies

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STAFF ROOMS + STORES

Second Floor/Roof Level

BBC Second

BBC 3rd - 5th

1873
1875
EARLY 20TH
1930
1980 POST FIRE

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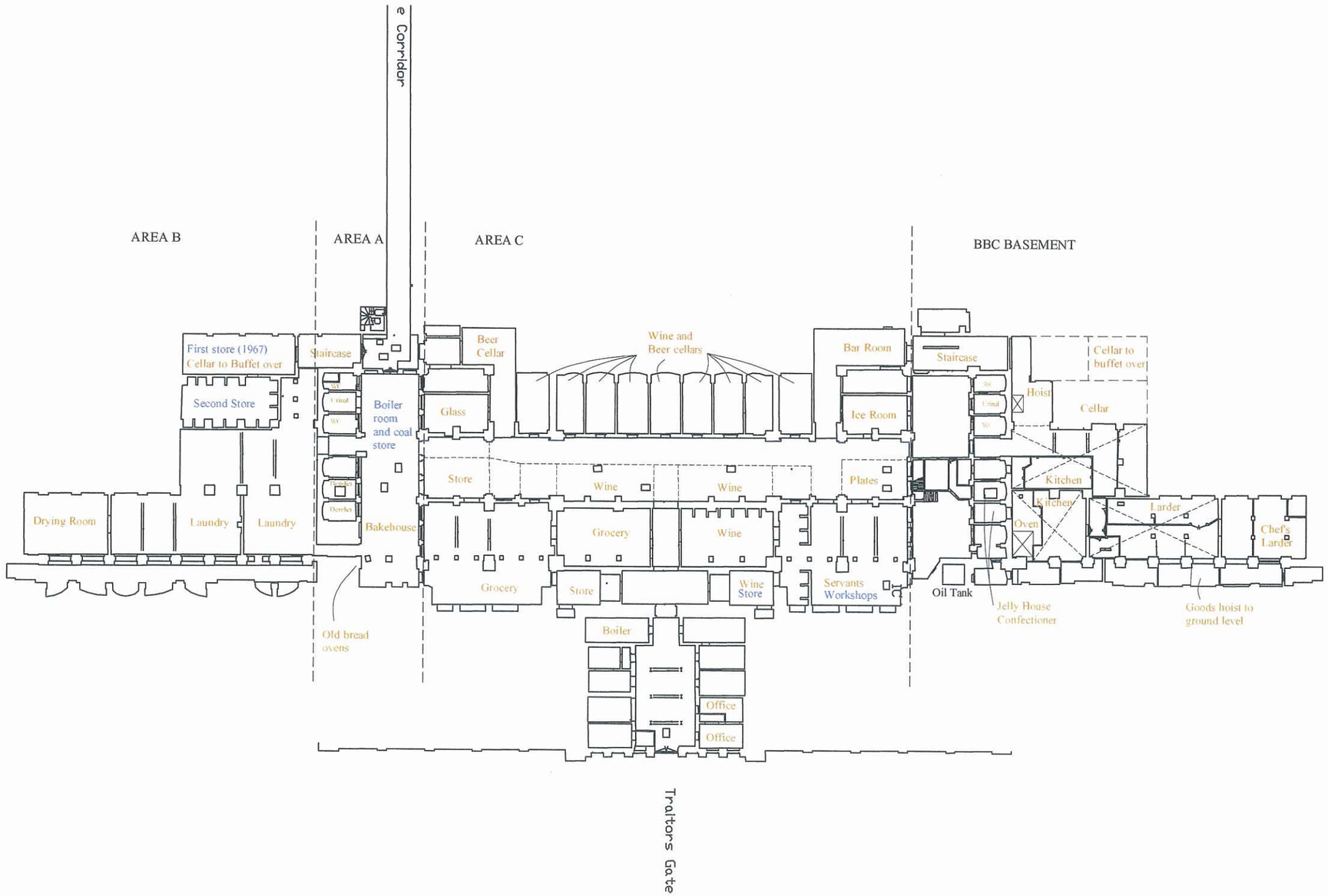
Job Alexandra Palace

Title Roof Coverings and Second to Fifth Floor Plans with Chronologies

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1967 survey description

Late C19th room use

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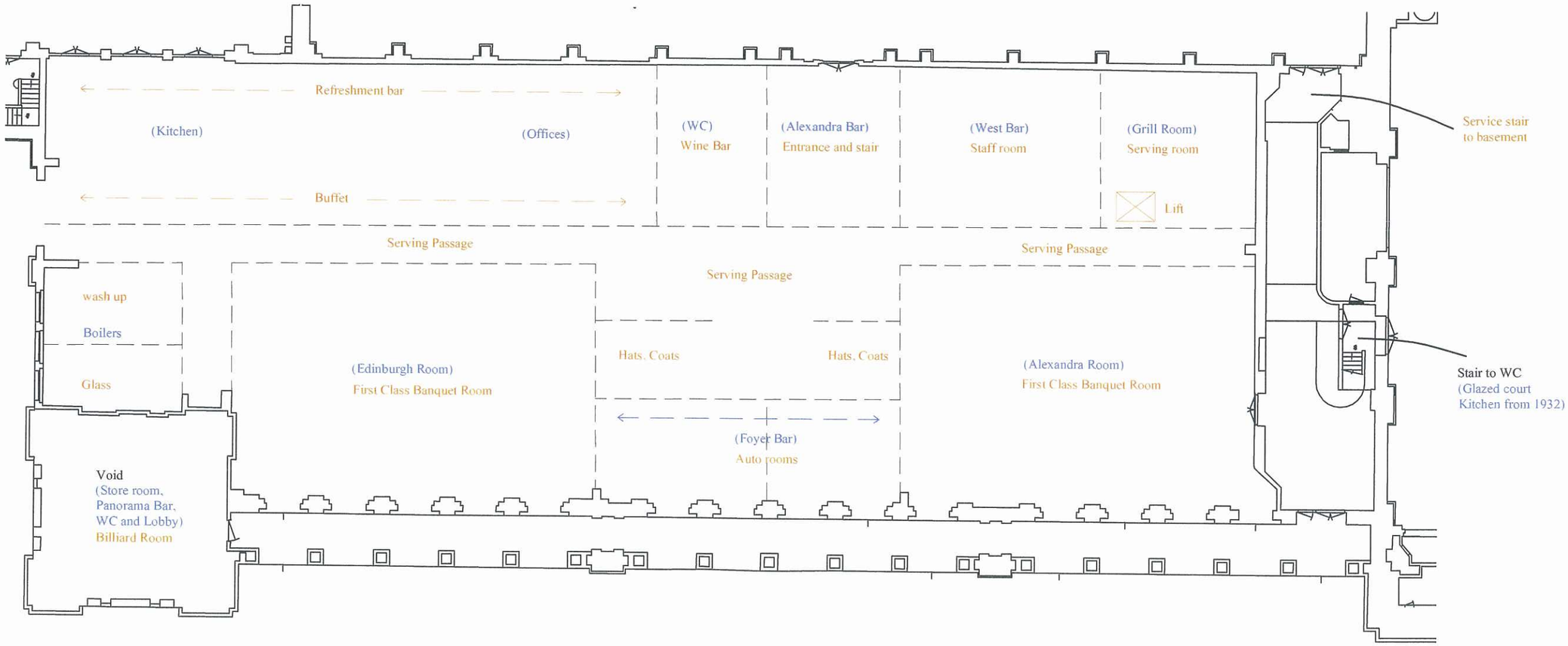
Job Alexandra Palace

Title Great Hall - North Basement layout showing historic room uses

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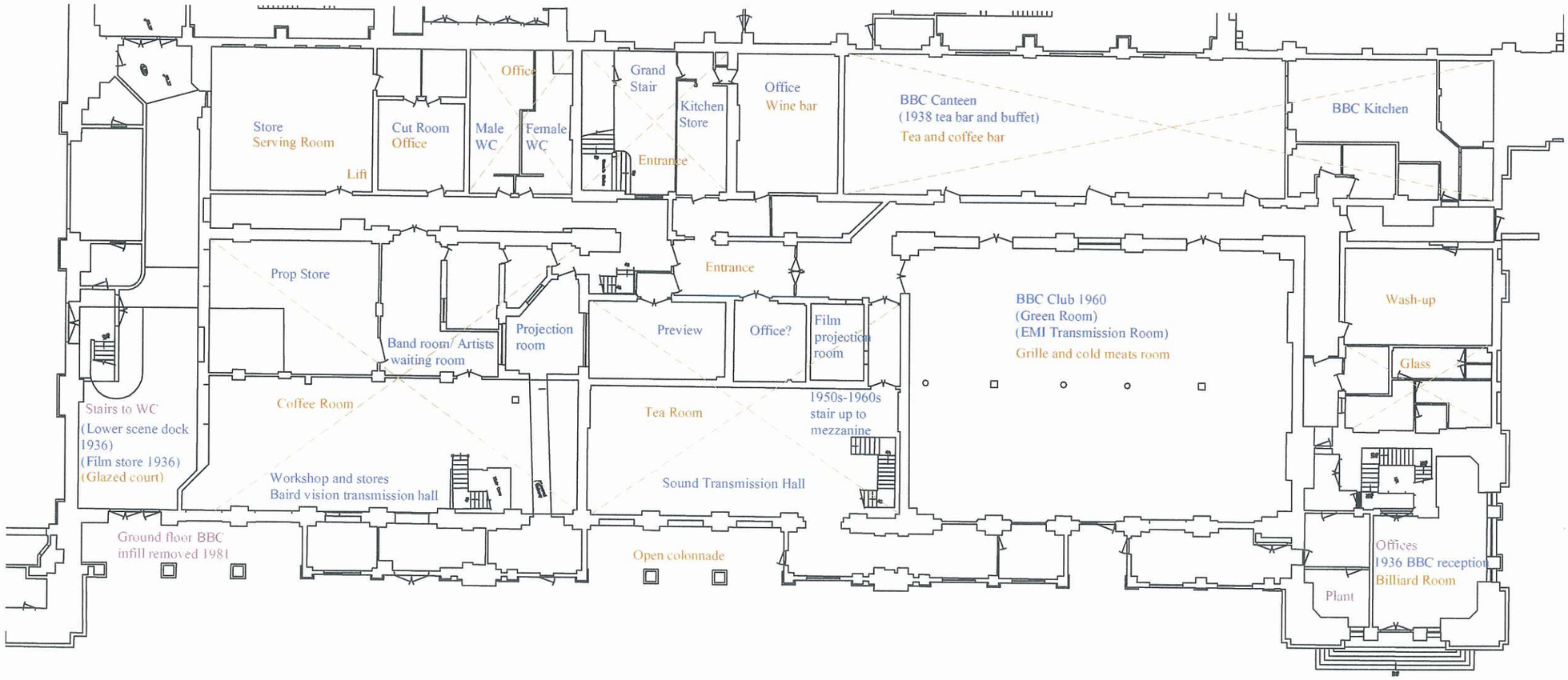
Job Alexandra Palace

Title Panorama Room - Pre Fire Ground Floor Layout showing historic room uses

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Post 1980 fire room use

1936 BBC room use

Late C19th room use

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Job Alexandra Palace

Title South East Wing - Ground Floor areas showing historic room uses

Job	Status
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APPENDIX 1

The Statutory Listing Description

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

Former International Exhibition Hall and 'People's Palace'. Rebuilt 1873-5 by John Johnson and Alfred Meeson following fire damage to the first building of 1868-73 by the same architects. Built by Kelk and Lucas. Restored 1980-88, following second fire in 1980, by the Alexandra Palace Development team led by Dr Peter Smith. Various C20 alterations before the second fire.

The former Alexandra Palace Station building of 1873 stands immediately to N of the Palace. No platforms or other associated structures survive.

Reasons for Designation

Alexandra Palace and the former Alexandra Palace Railway Station are designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:
* Historic interest: a rare survival of a large-scale Victorian exhibition and entertainment complex, and for the surviving BBC studios where the world's first high-definition television programme was transmitted in 1936; also the complete set of Victorian stage machinery in the theatre;
* Architectural interest: for the surviving Victorian fabric and internal spaces, as described above
* The former railway station has special interest as a well-detailed building in the Italianate style, and for close historical associations with Alexandra Palace; it has strong visual group value with Alexandra Palace

History

The spectacular success of the Great Exhibition of 1851 inspired similar events worldwide. The idea of a 'People's Palace' in north London was propagated by the architect Owen Jones (1809-76) who had designed much of the interior décor of Paxton's Crystal Palace. Although his plans for a vast iron and glass building never materialised (mainly on grounds of cost), in 1863, after five or six years' planning, a former dairy farm on high ground between Muswell Hill, Wood Green and Hornsey began to be developed by the Alexandra Park Co Ltd as a north London rival to the Crystal Palace. The building from the Great International Exhibition of 1862 was then being dismantled in South Kensington, and this was acquired by the company, although financial difficulties delayed its re-erection. Work did not actually begin until 1868 when parts of that structure, designed by Captain Fowke, were reused in the new building designed by Alfred Meeson and John Johnson. Only in 1873 did the Alexandra Palace open as 'The Peoples' Palace', a recreation centre and visitor attraction for north Londoners. This was serviced by a new railway line from Highgate Station which terminated at a station alongside the north terrace. Two weeks later the palace was virtually destroyed by fire. A replacement building opened two years later, also designed by Meeson and Johnson. Covering seven acres it was centred on the Great Hall with its immense steam-powered Willis Organ, while four corner towers each supported 16,000 gallon water tanks supplied by steam pumps from the New River Company's reservoirs.

Palace and park faced successive financial difficulties, closure and changes in ownership. The theatre/music hall had been unsuccessful from the outset, partly due to poor sight lines and acoustics. No provision was made for moving scenery on or off stage. A mechanised timber stage was designed and installed by the Grieve family of stage carpenters and

scenic artists and was ingeniously adapted to compensate for the idiosyncrasies of the theatre design. The theatre however only began to return a profit once film shows were introduced in the early 1900s, which also attracted more people to the palace complex as a whole. The Palace closed during the Great War and was used for the internment of German prisoners of war. The theatre was refurbished under the management of W Macqueen-Pope and reopened in 1922, but it ceased to be used as a cinema the following year when it was leased to Archie Pitt - Gracie Fields' first husband - who used the stage for rehearsals.

The BBC's involvement with Alexandra Palace dates from June 1935 when it leased the eastern part of the building - 31,840 sq ft within the south-east wing and a further 24,525 sq ft comprising the theatre and associated rooms - following advice from the government-backed Television Advisory Committee that it was the most suitable site for the development of high-definition television, including the testing of two rival systems. To facilitate broadcasting, the cupola on the south-east tower was removed and a 225 ft lattice mast was erected, which gave an aerial height of 460 ft above sea level. Below, the tower was converted to offices and the colonnade arches were bricked up. On the ground floor two former coffee rooms became transmitter halls for the two companies, while the tea room between them housed the shared transmitter. The first floor was converted to two studios separated by control rooms and rooms for film scanning, with dressing and make-up rooms across a corridor. Test transmissions took place in August 1936.

On 2 November 1936 the BBC introduced the first, regular, high-definition, 405-line television service in the world. Before that there had been episodic low-definition broadcasting in Britain and elsewhere, for instance in the USA and Germany. Later advances also took place there: tele-recording, colour broadcasting, the launch of the Open University, and video tape demonstrations.

Studio A was equipped with the relatively well-developed Marconi-EMI television system employing four Emitron cameras, Studio B with the more experimental and varied equipment installed by Baird Television Ltd. In January 1937 the decision was taken to adopt the Marconi-EMI system as the London Television Standard for the future of television. The Baird equipment was removed and by September Marconi-EMI equipment was in Studio B too. At the same time a Central Control Room was constructed in the former Baird Control Room to enable all programme sources - from the two studios, outside broadcasts, and film channels - to be controlled separately. Almost immediately technical and production standards improved, and over the next two years the annual number of hours of television broadcast grew fourfold to over 900 hours in 1938. With this came an expansion in set ownership, which on the outbreak of war stood at 20,000 sets.

The BBC Television Service shut down two days before war was declared in September 1939, closing with a Mickey Mouse cartoon. Transmitters were adapted to radio counter-measures against German bombers, using settings derived from Enigma intercepts to jam or 'bend' German navigational radio beams known as the 'Knickebein', and later the X- and Y-Gerät Systems, thereby giving important protection to London and the Home Counties from Luftwaffe attacks, notably during the Blitz. This was one of a number of installations for this purpose.

Broadcasting resumed on the day of the Victory parade on 7 June 1946, and although take up was slow due to post-war conditions, there were technical advances such as the recording of outside events which, for instance, allowed film of the 1953 coronation to be rushed by plane to America. After the BBC acquired the former Gainsborough film studios in Lime Grove, Shepherd's Bush, Alexandra Palace closed as a production centre, apparently for good, in 1954. However, it reopened months later as the home of BBC TV

News, which it remained until 1969, colour television being launched in 1967. Then, until 1981, Alexandra Palace was from where the Open University was broadcast.

In 1980 a second major fire seriously damaged the Palace (only Palm Court and the area occupied by the BBC escaped damage). After restoration of the central hall and west end the Palace reopened in 1988.

The former Alexandra Palace railway station was the terminus of a short branch line from Highgate station and stands immediately adjacent to the north-west of the Palace. It was built by the Muswell Hill Railway and opened in 1873 along with the Palace. In 1911 the line was taken over by the Great Northern Railway (GNR), becoming part of the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) in 1923. In 1935 London Underground planned to take over the line from LNER together with the LNER's routes from Finsbury Park to Edgware and High Barnet, modernise it for use with electric trains and amalgamate it with the Northern Line. Works were completed from Highgate to High Barnet and Mill Hill East and that section was incorporated into the Northern Line, but further works on the Highgate and Alexandra Palace section were postponed and the line continued under the operation of the LNER. Wartime economies meant that services were reduced to rush hours only, so that after the war the dwindling passenger numbers and a shortage of funds lead to the cancellation of the unfinished works. Passenger services to Alexandra Palace station and the other stations on the line ceased on 3 July 1954.

Alexandra Park is included in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

Details

MATERIALS: cast-iron and steel columns with walls of white Huntingdon and yellow stock brick embellished with patterned red brickwork in the Italianate style. Classical mouldings and ornaments such as cornices, volutes, keystones, lions' heads etc. made of Portland cement.

PLAN: the Palace covers about seven and a half acres. Symmetrical plan about a great central hall which corresponds with the central transept of the original building and runs between the N and S frontispieces that survived from that building. Flanking the great hall were an Italian garden to the W and an exhibition hall to the E, beyond them were 2 conservatories. The entire south front was occupied by refreshment rooms including a large banqueting hall; the corresponding spaces on the N front held a concert room and a large theatre. Most of the internal walls defining this plan survive, but the roofs have been replaced, and open areas roofed over. The concert hall and refreshment rooms have gone. The theatre auditorium to the NE and the BBC studios to the S, adapted from former refreshment rooms in 1935, survive.

EXTERIOR: N elevation: Least fire-damaged area. Central frontispiece with pedimented gable and large, recessed rose window (now blocked) above entrance porch which connected to the approach from the former railway station.
E and W elevations: entrance fronts and vestibules behind largely rebuilt 1980-88 following original form and reusing structural ironwork in part. Palm Court entrance, now main public entrance, to W has pedimented gable and arcaded ground floor.
S elevation: Central pedimented and gabled frontispiece with large recessed rose window (reinstated after fire) above entrance porch. Patterned brickwork in gable. Arch flanked by tall 3-light windows separated by half columns with segmental pediment above. 2-storey, 15-bay colonnade either side, divided into 3 sections and terminating in square towers. The upper colonnade is arched with stone columns, the lower has flat arches resting on brick

piers. The tower at the SE corner was adapted in 1935 to house offices and studios for the BBC with metal canted bays and the addition of a tall steel latticed girder mast on top.

INTERIOR: survival of the original interior is patchy. The principal areas of interest lie in the eastern part of the building: the theatre auditorium in the NE and the television studios in the BBC wing in the SE corner. The theatre auditorium has fittings of interest dating from 1875. These include a balcony to the rear, a large raked stage, a proscenium with niches and, below the stage, a complete set of Victorian stage machinery designed by Messrs Grieve and Son. The machinery comprises a series of wooden bridges, traps, pulleys and levers to enable large scene transformations in pantomime and melodrama, and the projection of props and actors onto the stage. It is the most pristine example in the country and therefore of particular special interest. Neoclassical decoration on either side of the auditorium dates from the 1920s when W Macqueen-Pope was manager. The former BBC studios 'A' and 'B' have historic rather than architectural interest. A significant feature in studio 'A' is the glazed control room or 'gallery'. Some original doors to the studios with brass porthole windows survive. To W of the studios the original staircase survives with ramped wooden handrail, turned balusters and chamfered newel posts. Some original cast-iron columns with capitals survive on the ground floor in this part of the building. Some areas of the Palace have been demolished and are therefore of no interest; these are the unroofed spaces at the SW and NW corners, and the area occupied by the skating rink. The Great Hall has been renewed sympathetically following its almost total destruction in the 1980 fire. The columns and glazed roof were not reinstated; instead a new pitched roof slung below tubular lattice girders was constructed, with a ceiling of tensioned acoustic fabric imitating a barrel vault. It is the overall spatial quality of this interior and that of the west hall which are of interest. The original Willis organ, restored in the 1980s, stands to the N of the Great Hall. The Palm Court to the W, originally a conservatory, escaped serious fire damage, has cast-iron columns and piers with foliated capitals. Roof has been reglazed.

FORMER RAILWAY STATION: now a community centre. The style is Italianate to complement that of the Palace. Small, single-storey building with gabled cross wing and pitched slate roof, built in white bricks with red brick banding and dressings. Round-headed keyed windows linked by string courses; segmental headed entrance. Rusticated angle piers. Cross wing has roundel in gable and moulded brick parapet. Moulded brick chimney stacks. The interior has no features of interest.

Selected Sources

1. **Book Reference** - *Author:* Ian Mackintosh and Michael Sell - *Title:* Curtains or New Life for Old Theatres - *Date:* 1982
2. **Book Reference** - *Author:* Ken Gay - *Title:* Palace on the Hill - *Date:* 1992
3. **Book Reference** - *Author:* Pevsner, N and Cherry, B - *Title:* The Buildings of England: London 4: North - *Date:* 1998 - *Page References:* 580-583
4. **Unpublished Title Reference** - *Author:* Thorne R - *Title:* Alexandra Palace - *Date:* November 1989 - *Source:* English Heritage
5. **Article Reference** - *Author:* Smith P - *Title:* Alexandra Palace and Park - *Journal Title:* Hornsey Historical Bulletin No.24

Map

National Grid Reference: TQ2946489964, TQ2947389940, TQ2949090022, TQ2949490089, TQ2949589962, TQ2949689931, TQ2951190094, TQ2951790088, TQ2952390082, TQ2952689992, TQ2952790078, TQ2953689921, TQ2954889954, TQ2959890039, TQ2961189991, TQ2966690128

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