



Crystal Palace Sports Partnership



Submission for Crystal Palace National Sports Centre development options: Public Consultation

Submitted as evidence, and to be taken into consideration:

1. The latest Change.Org CPSP petition regarding the NSC **supporter count**
 - a. As of **16/11/2014 at 17:15** this was **3,300 signed supporters to the petition**
 - b. Web Site: <https://www.change.org/p/boris-johnson-save-athletics-and-sports-at-crystal-palace>
2. Change.Org CPSP petition summary for additional support comments captured from ChangeOrg
 - o As of **16/11/2014 at 15:45** this had **1,125 additional supporter comments**
 - o **Accompanying file: Signatures 16.11.14 @15.45.pdf** containing these comments (pdf extract direct from Change.Org)

Background

Nowhere else in the United Kingdom is there a multi-sports facility, comprehensively connected into local and regional transport networks, and which caters for grass roots sport through to world Championship and Olympic medalist level. Situated in the densely populated area of South London – one of the most heavily populated London regions (and spanning both inner and outer metropolitan areas) – it serves as a hub for regional sports and leisure activities (spanning fifty years) and serving the locally community, wider regional sports community, and hosting a diverse mix of events. Activities range from school sports days to the London Youth Games, from regional club galas (indoor and out) to an event space for a huge list of sports, health and well-being-related organisations, clubs and sports competitions, as well as the huge range of major events held indoors and on the track and field, and the huge range of outdoor events on the multi-sport, and all-weather pitches.

Within the Centre, the multi-sport NSC provides a “nursery” type environment for Olympic and youth sports training starting from 5 years old across a huge range of sports. The value of NSC as a Regional Sports and leisure centre is demonstrated in many ways. For example, it has multiple performance pathways for young talent across multiple sports for the youth of South London, catering for all ages, and skill levels from beginner to elite. This mixture of integrating family based leisure and sports training in one centre makes the cross-benefits and value of the NSC exceptional and unique in South London, and providing the basis for Olympic legacy opportunities for new generations.

The Crystal Palace Sports Partnership (CPSP) is a diverse group of stakeholders and sports people who are combining to help form one unified voice representing all interests in the future of this historic site.

Our mission is simple: We support a mixed-use sports and leisure centre at Crystal Palace – a sustainable facility that is shared by the local community, schools, clubs and aspiring athletes at all levels. It should be a resource that caters for the needs of recreational users as much as it provides for and supports the development of the next generation of Olympic athletes.

Represented in our group is Athletics, Diving, Gymnastics, Football, Weightlifting, Water Polo, Swimming, Triathlon, Road Running, Health & Well-being, Personal Training, Beach Volleyball, and Modern Pentathlon to name but a few.

We are concerned that the consultation by the GLA for repurposing the current National Sports Centre was way too short, and has failed to identify and consider the needs and views of existing NSC users.

Following many discussions with GLA, CSM and CPSP members and supporters, plus NSC users and clubs, we have grave concerns that the GLA-led pre-public assessment has failed to appropriately assess the value, benefits and purpose for sports the NSC provides, and its regard to the effect that its proposals will have on the health and health inequalities of people living in Greater London.

The GLA's continued reluctance to provide details on the GLA's commissioned report into NSC options (subject of a Freedom of Information request) is equally of concern, and suggests the GLA are not providing an equitable or reasonable public consultation process or engagement with stakeholders and the public. Such action has compromised the ability to assess the NSC options and material considerations the GLA have made.

Support of users and stakeholders

We would seek to guide focus on our Twitter account, Facebook page, and the petition that has, and continues to be, held online. We believe these represent an overwhelming endorsement of our mission statement. After such a short consultation period, to set up these forums, let alone attract 3200+ signatures, and similarly robust support across all the social media forums, surely this represents a groundswell of support that cannot possibly be ignored. **We strongly urge the GLA and CSM to read all the additional comments given on the CPSP petition (and now submitted to support CPSP concerns), and we note:**

Christine Ohuruogu Britain's reigning track and field Olympic champion commented: *"It's a shame that a pivotal, memorable and hugely historical icon of British Athletics is on the brink of being taken away. It was not just a 'track' it was a place where athletes: local and international; elite and club; juniors, seniors, masters and everything else in between, competed, watched, cheered, supported...It is a track holding a myriad of memories for those fortunate enough to be at the National Sports centre. Grassroots to champions, that is Crystal Palace athletics track"*

Donna Fraser, current President of South of England Athletics Association, and Olympic 400m finalist (4th Sydney) commented: *"I am absolutely appalled to hear the future plans of Crystal Palace NSC. This venue has been a key training and competition venue for many sports for many years; I not only have trained and competed at the venue, but seen individuals aspire and develop into champions, because of the history, accessibility and facilities of CP. Logic surely must prevail here...two years down the line since London 2012 and all we talk about is the legacy, yet taking away the only all sports venue in the South East is disgusting. Those who make such proposals have no idea of what damaging impact this could have for the community and future Olympians – they need to speak to the people in the know, i.e. coaches, athletes, parents to understand the need for CP and take their blinkers off"*.

Comments that have been amassed, volunteered by hundreds of users and interested parties, range from highlighting what a farcical process the data collection has been so far between CSM and GLL, as well as emphasizing just how passionate people are about Crystal Palace. Parents, children and users in general express emotional tributes to a centre, despite the fact that many of its facilities have been allowed to rot over years

Key facts

The following observations, we believe, should also be prominent in the minds of those working at CSM, the company tasked with compiling a final report post-consultation, and the GLA whose final say will determine the ultimate outcome:

- Overall, the data submitted through GLL is completely flawed as it is not representative, and provides no perspective on the true use of the centre on a day-to-day basis across each of the sports, or over the multiple events that the centre holds per month and per year;
- Uniquely, coach loads of school students enter the facility daily for various activities, and not being registered on entry – hundreds of usages go unrecorded in GLL data;
- Many organised events and regular sports sessions (e.g for block booking by leading coaches) are likewise not counted in the “GLL” data. Reliance of just GLL data as a “top down” evidence is fundamentally flawed for assessing the overall usage per sport and activity and event space, and the GLA are now at significant risk of misappropriating the use of the NSC based on totally flawed evidence.
- Many, and repeated annually, charity events are held at the centre throughout the year – again unrecorded;
- A number of sports have stated their use of the centre would be significantly higher if it were managed more efficiently. Access to the track and field facilities is one prominent concern, along with pricing policies that outstrip affordability;
- Areas like gymnastics, diving and weightlifting are very successfully run by sub-letting / hiring of venue spaces to specialist sports. Yet, GLL do not have the evidence or records of overall numbers, benefits, schools, or performance pathways these services provide to the NSC and local and regional communities. This is a major evidence flaw in the adopted “top down” consultation approach adopted by GLA/CSM of the appraisal of the NSC. The CPSP is very concerned that indoor and outdoor sporting uses have not been appropriately assessed with the NSC demise and Park.
- Of the sports we represent, Diving, Gymnastics, Athletics, Weightlifting, Water Polo, Swimming, Triathlon and Modern Pentathlon entertain both grass roots level participation as well as World and Olympic standard athletes;
- The Brazilian Olympic team were based at Crystal Palace pre-2012 Games, and commented that they felt there was no other multi-sport facility in the world that measured up to what Crystal Palace provided!

Wider picture

The CPSP is also interested in seeking a new management plan for the NSC that integrates its value with the wider park as “one”. We are concerned about the disjointed approach the GLA have adopted and consider the consultation should be extended in line with government guidelines, that would take it into 2015. It should be aligned to wider park management concepts, and known outcomes to how the wider park can be developed with the NSC and complement an integrated masterplan for the one park.

With the public consultation period coming to a close, however, we as a key stakeholder in the future of Crystal Palace must be fully involved in the next stage of planning. We will continue to encourage a show of support through our petition, and local consultation with schools and clubs, in the hope that this will further endorse the need to the GLA and other ruling authorities for a regional sports centre that caters for grass roots sport, the local area, and the wider sporting community aspiring toward major championship or Olympic level competition.

JOHN V. POWELL MBE, FRSA
Chairman, Crystal Palace Sports Partnership

<https://www.change.org/p/boris-johnson-save-athletics-and-sports-at-crystal-palace>
16/11/2014 at 17:15.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.change.org/p/boris-johnson-save-athletics-and-sports-at-crystal-palace>. The page features a navigation bar with the Change.org logo, a search bar, and a 'Log in' link. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a photograph of the Crystal Palace stadium, a title 'Save Athletics and Sports at Crystal Palace', and a description of the petition. The right column contains a 'Sign this petition' section with a progress bar showing 3,300 supporters and 1,700 needed, followed by a sign-up form with fields for name, email, address, and a 'Sign' button.

change.org Start a petition Browse Search Log in

Sign this petition
with 3,300 supporters
1,700 needed

First name
Last name
Email
United Kingdom
Street address
Zip Code
I'm signing because... (optional)
 Share with Facebook friends
Sign
 Display my signature on Change.org
By signing, you accept Change.org's [terms of service](#) and [privacy policy](#), and agree to receive occasional emails about Change.org campaigns (you can unsubscribe at any time).

Petitioning Mayor of London Boris Johnson and 1 other

Save Athletics and Sports at Crystal Palace

Dwayne Dowding
London, United Kingdom

Save Athletics - and sport - at Crystal Palace. Current plans threaten to bulldoze the iconic athletics stadium and indoor training track, and significantly reduce other indoor and outdoor sporting facilities in the NSC. The impact of this on track and field in London, let alone other sports could be disastrous. What IS the Olympic Legacy for South London?! The Crystal Palace Sports Partnership (CPSP) is a group of stakeholders who are combining to form one unified voice representing all interests in the future of this historic site. Our mission is simple:

We support a mixed-use sports and leisure centre at Crystal Palace - a sustainable facility that is shared by the local community, schools, clubs and aspiring athletes at all levels. It should be a resource that caters for