

# Alexandra Palace

## **ALEXANDRA PARK & PALACE CHARITABLE TRUST** **BOARD MEETING** **11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

**Report Title:** Palace Colour Strategy

**Report of:** Neil Coe, Building Surveyor

**Report Authorised by:** Louise Stewart, Chief Executive Officer

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**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**  
N/A

**Purpose:** This report seeks approval of the Colour Strategy.

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 To note the work undertaken on the historic paint schemes at the Palace.
- 1.2 To agree the Colour Strategy.
- 1.3 To proceed with the Listed Building Consent application.
- 1.4 To delegate to the CEO to sign-off the Colour Strategy subject to no material amendments, as a result of the to the Listed Building Consent process.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 In June 2017, the Trust employed the services of Patrick Baty, a historic paint consultant, to undertake some sampling of existing painted surfaces to establish the colours used in the various schemes over the years. Given the size of the Palace and the limited budget and time available, Patrick was tasked with focussing on the external decoration of the Palace, including the frames of the Great Hall roof, and the decorations on the timber windows, doors and pelmets, ironwork to the SW Colonnades and the BBC Studios, and the metal balustrades and lanterns on the South Terrace.
- 2.2 The findings of the Paint Study were used to inform the colour palette of the East Wing Restoration Project for external timberwork and internal decorations.

#### **Paint Study findings**

- 2.3 In summary, Patrick's findings were as follows:

- He found over a dozen different colours – some used at different stages of existence, and some as one-offs;
- There is a long history of the use of dark green on external elements, of the Bronze Green and Brunswick Green kind – blue is a very recent innovation;
- Of the external ironwork sampled, black has only been used once;
- The treatment of joinery and ironwork is clear – bronze green, pale stone and Venetian red;
- The BBC Tower decoration was separate and distinctive.

Using this Paint Study, and the East Court brief, the East Wing Restoration Project Team were able to choose a palette of colours that are appealing and relevant to today's audiences, whilst complementing the heritage of the space reflecting the spirit of the Victorian era.

### **3. Palace Colour Strategy**

- 3.1 With the benefit of the historic paint sampling and analysis from Patrick Baty, which has confirmed that blue was never one of the original colours on the exterior, and used only selectively internally, the Trust wish to move forward with a site-wide Colour Strategy. The Colour Strategy work will include an application to Haringey Council for Listed Building consent.
- 3.2 We are not about to change the colour of the Park or Palace overnight or even soon. However, ahead of any more works by the Trust we do need to have a site wide approach to colour. The need to paint the space frames above the Great Hall in this financial year is our most pressing paint colour issue and has driven us to complete the colour strategy work, which will essentially act as a framework by providing the Trust with conservation and architectural advice on external paint colours.
- 3.3 The Trust obtained fee proposals from three conservation architects, and have appointed Donald Insall Associates to develop the external colour strategy for the Palace and South Terrace. The professional services include a review of the historical paint analysis and recommendations, conservation management plan, and archive information, together with preparation of photomontages of the proposed colour changes to the principle elevations and features, for the information of the SAC, CC and Board.
- 3.4 The scope of the Colour Strategy work is as follows:
  - Change in colour of Great Hall space frames to complement the elevations/ roof-scape/ sky
  - Extension of colour palettes of Bronze Greens for the external joinery, already adopted on the NE Tower (Theatre) and NW Tower (West Yard), to all remaining external elevations
  - Change in colour to the Victorian timber pelmets and metal roundels of the BBC and SW Colonnades to an early scheme of red and cream
  - Change in colour to the Victorian cast iron railings of the BBC and SW Colonnades to an original scheme of cream
  - Change in colour to the replacement circular Rose Window joinery/ metalwork and the Palm Court balcony semi-circular window to complement elevations

- Change in colour to replica metal railings and lamp columns along the South Terrace to a complementary cream or contrasting colour to replace the blue adopted in the 1980s.

3.5 The colour recommendations to be incorporated into the proposed Listed Building Consent application will be forwarded to the SAC and CC by 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for information and appended to these Board papers with accompanying images from conservation architects Donald Insall Associates.

3.6 It is planned to submit the Listed Building Consent application for the external colour strategy for the Palace and South Terrace during late September and to receive approval within the statutory 8 weeks.

#### **4. Risks**

4.1 The proposed subtle change of colour to the Great Hall spaceframes is not considered controversial, as the 1980's blue is already subdued through age, but an early decision is required for the forthcoming redecoration of the spaceframes.

4.2 The proposed extension of the Bronze Green's to the remaining joinery will be implemented over a number of years, and the precedent has already been approved by Historic England and the Conservation Officer on the East Wing Restoration Project and West Yard Project, so the risk of any potential objections should be very low.

4.3 The proposed change of colours to the cast iron railing and timber pelmets to the colonnades will be based on historical evidence, and are considered an enhancement and should not prove contentious.

4.4 The proposed change of colour to the Rose Window joinery will complement both the stained glass and other joinery/ironwork colours to the South Elevation and should be favourably received.

4.5 The proposed change of colour to the replica metal railings and lamp colours could perhaps be the most contentious item, as there is no historical precedent and there is more scope to create a modern and welcoming alternative to the current light blue.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 The Council's Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and has no comments.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 The Council's Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and has no comments.

#### **7. Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1 (Donald Insall Associates – External colour strategy and recommendations)