

Report Title: Update on HLF scheme design, RIBA Stage 2 (Outline design)

Report of: Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive Alexandra Park and Palace

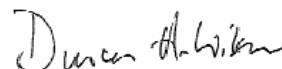
**1. Purpose**

1.1. To update the SAC and CC on progress with the design of the HLF project covering the refurbishment of the TV studios, the theatre and the East Court

**2. Recommendations**

2.1. That the SAC and CC endorse the recommended design approach as at most likely to meet stakeholder and public expectations, to realise the potential of the TV studios as a public attraction and the theatre as a performing/cultural space, within financial parameters

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Contact Officer: Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive Alexandra Palace and Park

**3. Executive Summary**

3.1 This short summary paper is designed to be taken with a full presentation of the detail of the Feilden Clegg Bradley team's scheme for the HLF project, which will be made at the meeting

3.2 The designs go together with a business plan for how the new spaces will be used. The main points of this "business plan" are outlined in the paper below. They demonstrate that the new facilities can be run commercially and deliver community and public benefit.

3.3 The Committees' comments on the scheme are invited, to feed into the next stage of design development.

3.4. We will be engaging further with our stakeholder groups (eg AP Friends of Theatre, AP TV Group and Society) over the coming weeks now the outline design has been completed. We are also now launching a consultation with local and community groups and schools about the planned use of these proposed refurbished historic spaces, and how we can engage with them. There also will be a full public consultation when the planning application is lodged in the autumn.

**4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)**

N/A

**5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

N/A

## 6. Background

### Design and Consultation

- 6.1 The design is currently at the end of RIBA workstage 2 - concept design (previously known as RIBA Stage C). A full presentation on the current iteration of the design of the HLF project will be given at the meeting, but in summary:-

*East Court:* the East Court will be radically transformed into a warm & welcoming space, providing wifi-enabled areas for people to linger and relax in, areas for drinking/eating and areas for more dynamic movement. The space will be designed in such a way as to be adaptable to create 'moods' for different times of the day/evening, special events, and to host one-off events or relevant 'show-pieces' (eg. a period BBC OB truck). The space will also host a range of interpretation including displays on the history of the Palace and Park and its early developers/patrons, the history of popular entertainment and the future direction of global media technologies.

*Theatre:* will be an adaptable theatrical space which can host a range of programmed activities including live performance (music, dance, spoken word, comedy), banquets, film screenings, weddings, awards ceremonies, etc, in a wide variety of audience configurations (end-on, auditorium/stage only, in the round, traverse, seated tables, etc). To this end the most workable format will be a flat floor with re-raked balcony to allow better views into the auditorium. It will accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> Century technological capabilities, but will be restored in as 'as found' manner to retain its unique atmosphere. Pre-booked tours will also be available for those with a specialist interest at regular slots throughout the year.

*BBC Wing:* this will tell the history of popular entertainment at Alexandra Palace & beyond from Victorian theatre, through the development of public broadcasting and broadcasting technologies, up to the present day through a series of varied but interconnected spaces over 2 floors. The unique ticketed & timed experience will commence at a grand new staircase lead leading from the East Court, incorporating both historical features and a surprise 'reveal' of the television mast above the roof, through a glass panel. A structured narrative will lead visitors up to the Studios at the first floor for an immersive experience, telling the story in Studio A of the first television broadcast. An exhibition in the intermediate rooms between the two Studios will allow interaction with key artefacts and end in the opportunity for self-exploration via the touch of a button of a vast unique AP-related archive and the opportunity to create and view your own media content.

- 6.2 In terms of costs, the project is currently £736k (3%) above the total of £23.8m indicated in the Round 1 submission to HLF. £699k of this total is for construction inflation, which has increased by over 50% to 11.5% in the time between the submission of the Round 1 application and the time of writing - a factor affecting all construction projects in London & the SE at present. This has been raised with the HLF, who are in principle understanding of this as a construction industry issue.

**6.3** The design team have identified additional areas of investment which are desirable to maximise the impact of the project but at present not achievable within current budgets. AP will seek to secure the funding to deliver these. The approach will vary from element to element but could include a combination of developing business cases for elements of commercial investment (eg in catering facilities); applications to other funding bodies or to trusts & foundations for enhanced interpretation and learning provision; and opportunities for bespoke areas of targeted and appropriate sponsorship.

The key areas this will be sought for are:-

- interpretation, namely to increase the scale, content and impact of the BBC wing visitor attraction and Theatre
- theatre technical fit-out, to increase the specification for element (such as AV, lighting and staging) from current baseline to a higher level
- food & beverage facilities, notably to provide a full finishing kitchen and an additional bar facility offer to facilitate a larger and more sophisticated F&B offer

**6.4** The team have also agreed with the Trust a number of other areas of potential value engineering - ie. testing of design options against a set of cost/benefit parameters - to be addressed over the coming weeks, along with identified targets for actual cost savings. This includes structures and building services; specification/performance of finishes; and scope of items such as South Colonnade opening up and fenestration. It is essential to do this work in advance of developing the scheme and receiving tenders, in case necessary to balance the budget at a later stage.

**6.5** Staff from AP and the design team have spoken to many stakeholders through the development of the design concepts, including statutory stakeholder such as English Heritage and planning/transport/fire/conservation authorities, and will continue this process with a broader range of audiences over the coming months, culminating in a formal 2-week consultation process for the planning consent in late-Sept/early-Oct. Residents groups and neighbourhood forums will be a part of that process, subject to their agreement on our inclusion within planned meeting agendas.

**6.6** The business plan that underpins the long-term viability the HLF project has been developed in tandem with the design and tested using various scenarios and sensitivities. Benchmarking and best practice/lessons learned has been drawn from comparator projects elsewhere.

**6.7** The HLF have undertaken a Stage 1 review and are content with progress to date. They were particularly pleased at the steps taken to mitigate the potential impact of costs and risks inherent within the current highly competitive construction contractor market.

## **7. Legal Implications**

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

## **8. Financial Implications**

**8.1** The Council's Chief Financial Officer notes the contents of this report and has no further issues to highlight.