

Report Title: **East Wing Restoration Project Report**

Report of: Emma Dagnes, Deputy Chief Executive, Alexandra Park and Palace

1. Purpose

1.1 The report updates the Board on the progress on the East Wing Restoration Project and seeks approval of the draft Theatre and Collections policies appended to the report.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Theatre Policy at Appendix 1 be approved;

2.2 That the Collections Policy at Appendix 2 be approved.

Report Authorised by: Louise Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, Alexandra Park and Palace

Contact Officer: Natalie.layton@alexandrapalace.com, Telephone: 020 8365 4335

3. Executive Summary

3.1 Following an in-depth procurement process Willmott Dixon were awarded the contract for the first phase of the construction project with enabling works starting January 2016.

3.2 The design team continue to work towards RIBA Stage 4.

3.3 The Theatre Policy in collaboration with Friends of the Theatre is attached as Appendix 1 for comment and approval.

3.4 The Collections Policy is attached as Appendix 2 for comment and approval.

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

East Wing Restoration Project Programme Board

The programme board were presented with the new format of reporting which presents each area of the project with its own update report and RAG status. The content of the report presented to Programme Board is then used to update the SACCC and the Trust Board ensuring that the information provided to all committees and boards is consistent.

The below report is the first which mirrors the Programme Board update with the Theatre Policy and Collections Policy being presented for approval.

The programme board were also presented with the potential for a new learning zone in the East Court and discussion regarding the artistic finish to the banners. Both these matters will be presented in further detail to the Board during the RIBA interim Stage 4 workshop which will take place prior to the APPCT Board meeting on the 16th February 2016.

6. Enabling Works

The first stage of the construction works is on schedule to start January 2016 to the three main areas of the BBC Studios, East Court and Theatre, including the removal of internal partitions, removal of redundant services, removal and encapsulation of asbestos and the breakthrough into the first floor internal colonnade. The period of works is 20 weeks with completion due mid-June 2016

Willmott Dixon are formally starting on site and will have possession from the 25 January 2016 when hoarding will be set up around the 3 main areas (South Terrace, Rear of the BBC Tower to the East, and outside the Theatre external entrance to the North East). Health and Safety and sub-contractor visits have been taking place since the New Year.

Training and apprenticeship provisions were included in the preliminaries of the tender pack to ensure that the appointed contractor makes sufficient provision for local people to apply for opportunities in the construction phase. Now that the contract for the works has been awarded, the APP team and the wider design team will meet with the key members to discuss the structure and implementation of the training and apprenticeship programme. In addition, APP will be engaging with LB Haringey's Employment and Training team to ensure planning conditions with regards to employment and training opportunities are met.

7. Design Stage

- 7.1 The design team have continued to work through RIBA Stage 4 with design workshops being held every 2 weeks. The Interim Stage 4 design information was issued to Mott MacDonald commercial team for review with initial queries / clarifications issued to FCBS (Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios Architects) and responses received.
- 7.2 The East Wing Restoration Team are in the process of reviewing each cost item to provide clarity on areas for potential value engineering and those

areas of work needing protection. This is from the outset to get the fundamentals and main base infrastructure right.

- 7.3 The current target date is completion of RIBA Stage 4 by March 2016. The design team have a mini programme of activity prior to sign-off which includes workshops with the Board similar to the one held prior to the appointment of the contractor.
- 7.4 The live services survey, commissioned in early June to establish the location of all services (gas, electricity etc.) in the project area culminated in a full site power shut-down to locate the feed to a key distribution board. Now located, the live services consultants can use this valuable information to finalise their RIBA Stage 4 designs.

8. BBC Studios & East Court Area

- 8.1 The Design Team completed a demonstration of external lighting to the BBC tower, mast and colonnades which was well received by those present. An external lighting review has been commissioned to ensure that any initiatives relating to the East Wing integrate with the rest of the Palace and Park.
- 8.2 Following an operational workshop on the use of the Studios outside of BBC experience hours (i.e. evening events), it became apparent that Studio A would be much more suited to corporate events over Studio B. The only equipment in Studio A are high-level projectors, whilst in Studio B, the media centre, there will be a number of work stations that will be harder to move, more intensive in terms of human resources and at greater risk of damage.
- 8.3 Review work is being undertaken on the treatment of the Gallery space walls. The intention is to leave all the wall decorations in the three (currently divided) rooms to support the storytelling of how the spaces were used by the BBC and how their use changed over time as television broadcasting developed.
- 8.4 The design team have tested floor finishes for the East Court. There was also painting of the original pallet of internal colours before Christmas leading to a review with the Architects reverting back to a blue pallet, which is currently awaited.
- 8.5 A number of workshops have taken place with key members of the APP teams (Events, Sales, Ice Rink, and Catering, Facilities etc.) to ensure that the operational requirements of the East Court (lighting, power etc.) are well embedded into the RIBA 4 designs.
- 8.6 A significant amount of work has been undertaken with the operational and ice rink teams to design a new entrance system for the ice rink whilst the East Court is inaccessible. This includes new approaches for the café operation and skate hire.

9. Theatre

- 9.1 Over the last two years during the preparation for stage 1 and stage 2 HLF applications a number of cultural institutions and performance organisations have been engaged with and invited to visit the Theatre. As with all cultivation for a “new” space (albeit one built in 1876) relationships take time to nurture into collaborative artistic partnerships. From discussion with these institutions and organisations and with the Friends of the Theatre it was clear that a Theatre Policy would be needed to provide a framework for all activity undertaken in the Theatre.
- 9.2 A well renowned Theatre Programme Consultant worked with the Palace and the Friends of the Theatre to develop the draft Theatre Policy, attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 9.3 The draft Policy sets the tone for the management and programming of the Theatre and acknowledges the challenges that will be faced to ensure a successful and complementary programme is achieved all year round.
- 9.4 It is acknowledged at this stage in the construction process that the Policy is working on the business plan as provided at the start of the project. The team at the Palace are ambitious for the space and recognise the importance of the technical specification and access to marketing support underpinning the programme. However at this stage it is not possible to outline these elements in detail. Therefore, it was considered sensible to produce an initial Theatre Policy, which will be a living document updated and re-issued as and when more information becomes available.
- 9.5 Currently the Palace is working on an opening season starting in April 2018 with four tent pole events of the highest calibre, which will provide a strong artistic profile whilst offering exceptional learning and community opportunities. The ambition of the team is to announce partnerships for the 2018 programme throughout 2016 to set the tone for the space and demonstrate commitment to its year round use.
- 9.6 Work has continued on the finer design details such as ventilation strategy, roof strengthening works and floor loadings. A series of lighting demonstrations have taken place in the auditorium to establish the most appropriate locations of light fittings within the ceiling rose.

10. Interpretation / Collections / Archive

- 10.1 The project’s consultant Curator has drafted a Collections Policy based on the Museum Associations Spectrum guidelines and, working with Kirsten Forrest (AP Regeneration Manager), refined the document for SACCC comment prior to Board presentation. They have also drafted guidelines for the use of historical images to be embedded as good practice by APP staff in the future.

- 10.2 A “Memories” recording of the conversation between Mark Evison, AP Park Manager and 101 year old Mr Charles Gill the former Head Gardner of Alexandra Park 1954-1969, has been made and will form part of the APP Digital Archive for future interpretation.
- 10.3 In November, the Interpretation Team did a presentation to all APP staff on the interpretation design and collections management. The project team received lots of positive feedback after, with some members of staff coming forward to donate their own collections.
- 10.4 APP have been offered two significant, large oil paintings of the Palace and Park by the artist Nicholas Volley. Kirsten Forrest has drawn up an agreement for their donation with the artist’s widow. Kirsten has also been working with a local contemporary printmaker Teresa Hales on fundraising initiative to mount a selling exhibition of etchings inspired by the Theatre.

11. Fundraising

- 11.1 In this quarter APP received a grant of £30,000 from American Express Foundation towards the project. Applications submitted to the two other foundations were, however unsuccessful.
- 11.2 The fundraising team have met with Arts Council, England to introduce the APP restoration project and investigate potential Arts Council funding in the future.
- 11.3 As highlighted in previous reports fundraising from Trusts and Foundations has been disappointing. The team is acutely aware that there are unrealised opportunities with Public Fundraising. However to undertake a successful public fundraising campaign which does not only achieve a one-off payment but converts into an on-going relationship, significant resource both in time and initial start-up costs must be administered.
- 11.4 With the appointment of Louise Stewart as our new Chief Executive it was agreed that a recruitment process would be initiated to appoint a Director of Fundraising and Communications. We are confident that the role will be filled prior to the start of the new financial year, with the new Director building on the considerable amount of work which has already been undertaken by our Fundraising Manager and also offering new initiatives and contacts to unlock public and private financial support.

12 . Legal Implications

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

13. Financial Implications

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

14. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Alexandra Palace Theatre Policy

Appendix 2 – Alexandra Palace Collections Policy