

Hornsey Library

Supporting Documentation for Fountain Refurbishment

Description and historic Provenance:

Huxley-Jones was born in Staffordshire and studied at the Wolverhampton School of Art from 1924 to 1929 and then, until 1933, at the Royal College of Art in London where his tutors included both Gilbert Ledward and Henry Moore. After graduating, Huxley-Jones held the post of head of sculpture at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen.

Working in bronze, ivory and terracotta, Huxley-Jones exhibited statuettes and reliefs at the Royal Academy, at the Royal Scottish Academy, at the New English Art Club, with the Society of Scottish Artists and the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists. Huxley-Jones received a large number of public commissions for his sculptures, which were often elegant compositions with a smooth surface and a simple profile.

These public works include the statue of Helios at BBC Television Centre in London and the 1963 *Joy of Life Fountain* in London's Hyde Park. He also created *Mother and Child* for Chelmsford's Central Park Memorial Gardens which won an award from the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1966 and was renovated in 2009.

Huxley-Jones was married to the artist Gwynneth Holt and lived at Chelmsford in Essex and died near there, at Broomfield. Aberdeen and Wolverhampton art galleries hold examples of his work. Letters to Huxley-Jones from the architect Graham Richards Dawbarn are preserved at the Essex Record Office.

DETAILS:

Name: Hornsey Library Fountain

Location; Haringey Park, Crouch End, Haringey N8 9JA

Materials: Concrete, Bronze, Granite, composite pond materials

Sculptor: Thomas Bayliss Huxley-Jones (1908-1968)

Year: 1963-65

Description and Condition of the Fountain

Overall, the Fountain is structurally in sound condition, with general atmospheric staining to all surfaces due to exposure from water and weather. The concrete backing wall is structurally sound, but the modern masonry emulsion paint has failed on several areas. The granite at the base of the wall has heavy water / salt staining due to the extended exposure to water from the pond.

Some panels are loose and most of the joints are free of jointing compound. The centrally located sculpture plinth has lost most of its granite cladding and what remains is also heavily stained. The reclining bronze figure sculpture and the two small bronze panels (mounted on either side of the wall) are in overall good condition with no obvious failures, but a green patina covers all areas. The joints to the statue are splitting as is evident on the arms and legs.

The existing pond is currently disused due to the extensive cracks to the base. The liquid membrane previously used is defective due to the extensive ground movement. The existing water feature has been decommissioned due to the extent of defects and damage to the pipework and jets. The makeup of the pipework is a combination of cast iron, uPVC and copper. This reflects the unsympathetic repairs carried out over the years.

The kerb to the fountain is of concrete construction. These have moved over the years due to the extensive ground movement. The joints are free of mortar in some areas and will require re-setting and repointing.

The stainless-steel rail was added as a protective barrier. This remains in good condition and will be retained.



The photograph above, taken in 2009 shows the fountain in much better condition. The paint on the rear wall is still stable and at this time there was only superficial staining on the granite, and the pond and pump system appeared in overall good and operational condition. It appears that some of the granite on the plinth had already been dislodged. This might indicate that the fountain had either been restored previously or that a regular maintenance plan was in place at the time.

In more recent years the fountain has fallen into disrepair and works are now proposed to restore it back to its original condition.

TREATMENT PROPOSAL AND REPAIRS METHODOLOGY:

Cleaning, Conservation and Repairs:

Rear concrete wall

Preparation

Temporarily remove for re-fixing at a later date the existing plaques and transport to studio.

The wall will be stripped off the existing flaking paintwork by DOFF cleaning the wall completely throughout. This is a system that is used to gently clean the surface using pressurised steam which will reduce any impact to the rendered surface.

This cleaning system is successful at applying concentrated pressurised steam, without the need to apply high volumes of water with the benefit being that the cleaning medium evaporates harmlessly and does not saturate the surfaces. This enables accurate and effective cleaning without damage incurred. The level of cleaning can be accurately monitored with the DOFF steam cleaning system, not only is there no resultant damage to the cleaned substrate but patinas of the historic surface can be retained as necessary. In this case the intention will be to work with a combination of increased temperature to remove biological growth, and reduced pressure to avoid damaging the historic stonework.

Making good

Following removal of the paint from the concrete wall, it will be re-painted using the KEIM solidat paint system which is specific for application to concrete surfaces.

The Granite panels

Preparation

The existing granite panels will be removed to allow for the new lining to terminate behind the reinstated panels. The panels will be cleaned and polished with appropriate treatment.

Making Good

The panels will be reinstated after the lining is installed. The installation will include new concealed stainless steel fixings and brackets. A combination of mechanical and chemical fixings to be included in the reinstatement. Any damaged or missing panels will be replaced with new with as close a match to the existing as possible.

The Statue

Preparation

The Bronze statue will be carefully removed and taken to a studio off site for repairs, cleaning and polishing. This will be reinstated on completion.

The concrete plinth holding the sculpture will be tested for structural integrity, repaired and rebuilt if deemed necessary to the existing dimensions. The panels will be reinstated on completion as per the wall panels noted above.

Fountain lining

Preparation

The existing pond waterproofing membrane will then be removed using a method of DOFF cleaning / jet washing the surfaces to provide a key coat. The existing cracks will be repaired prior to the new lining being installed. Any loose / defective cement mortar will be removed and reinstated.

Making Good

A new GRP lining will be moulded and adhered to the existing formed pond. The lining will be

colour matched to the existing.

Concrete Kerb

Preparation

The stainless-steel rail will be temporarily removed to allow access to the statue and kerb. Existing defective pointing will be raked out and the kerbs re-aligned and set in position.

Making Good

On re-alignment, the kerbing is to be repointed with a sand and cement mix throughout. This will allow for a uniform appearance on completion.

Works to the Fountain Equipment

Equipment Removal

Carefully remove existing nozzle manifold including nozzles for replacement / refurbishment as deemed necessary. Remove delivery pipework and pumpset and dispose.

Testing of Existing Services

New supplies to be installed in accordance with current regulations. A new utility supply cupboard will be installed to the rear of the WC block. All M&E to be concealed below ground level. The existing exposed services to be removed and replaced with concealed supplies.

Site Preparation

Inspect and advise on pool preparation of pool structure for GRP.

Fresh water connection

Remove existing freshwater top-up and replace with WRAS approved freshwater top-up system. Includes new pipework runs and excavation/making good required.

GRP Waterproofing

Access pool area and apply new GRP waterproofing to prepared structure. GRP gel coat finish to be RAL9005 (Jet Black).

Fountain manifold and fountain nozzles.

Install refurbished / repaired nozzle manifold with nozzles located every 100mm (58 nos. required). Nozzles to be OASE Comet 5-10T each producing a 10mm Ø vertical clear stream fountain jet up to 1.5m high.

Water Feature Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) Works

Supply and install new stainless steel manifold including support legs and all pipe and fittings. Supply and install new Safe-Rain 6mm Lance Jets. Supply and install 2 x new display pumps for manifold. Supply and install bespoke pump strainer basket (for protection of pumps) Supply and install external cabinet (lighting cabinet or similar) Design, supply and install Water Feature Control Panel (inc. mains isolator, RCD/MCB protection, motor starters, timeclocks, thermal overloads, toggle switches, indicator lamps and emergency stop circuit.

Submersible fountain pumps

Install new fountain pumps. Supply to site 3 nos. OASE USP44000 submersible fountain pumps each fitted with a 700w / 230v single phase motor, mounting chassis, fine debris strainer and BSPM treaded outlet.

Electrical installation

Install new system control panel inc. automatic on off controls with touch screen HMI.

Testing, commissioning, handover inc. O&M manuals

Final works to include testing, commissioning and handover with hard copies and electronic copies of the full operating and maintenance manuals.