

Report – Planning & Transportation Committee

Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy: Adoption of Strategy

To be presented on Thursday, 18th October 2018

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy and to inform Members of the results of the public consultation and the subsequent revisions to the Strategy. Copies of the Strategy and Detailed Delivery Plan have been made available in the Members' Reading Room and are also available [here](#).

Culture Mile is an initiative led by the City of London Corporation, The Barbican, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London. It aims to animate the north-west corner of the square mile with imaginative collaborations and events, making Culture Mile a corner of London where creativity is fast becoming the most valuable currency. The project also responds to the opening of Crossrail at Farringdon and Moorgate, which will make the area more connected than ever, and the move of the Museum of London to Smithfield.

The Look and Feel Strategy aligns with the Corporate Plan, Culture Strategy, and the Culture Mile Strategy and builds on previous work such as the Barbican and Golden Lane Area Strategy.

In October 2016, Members of your Planning & Transportation Committee approved the initiation and development of a Strategy for a distinct 'Look and Feel' of the public realm. Fluid Architects were appointed in January 2017 to complete this work looking at key themes: lighting; way finding; public information; public art and place activation; greening; servicing, infrastructure and management. The Strategy was developed through extensive stakeholder engagement, including holding regular workshops with officers from different City departments, Culture Mile partners, and residents' representatives. In addition, a series of 'pop-up' artistic installations and activities were held to engage with the public on the themes emerging in the Strategy.

On completion of the draft Strategy, Members agreed that a public consultation be held. The public consultation was held over an 11 week period, with resident and other stakeholder engagement continuing beyond this period; using a variety of methods as detailed in this report. A summary of the responses is set out in paragraphs eight and nine of this report.

The Strategy proposes a series of environmental enhancements and other projects/ approaches to improve the area, grouped into four aims:

- Aim 1: Form a Cultural Spine
- Aim 2: Take the Inside Out
- Aim 3: Discover and Explore
- Aim 4: Be Recognisable and Be Different

The majority of respondents to the consultation were supportive of the four aims. Positive comments included support for wayfinding improvements, increased greenery, prioritisation of pedestrians, improvements to Beech Street, and increased community involvement. Issues raised included concerns over maintenance, the need for protection of listed buildings and of green spaces, a need for noise management and communications around events. These are summarised in the attached Consultation Report (see Appendix 1) and at paragraph eight in this report.

The Strategy was subsequently redrafted, based on a 'you said, we did' approach. Certain elements of the document have therefore been revised in response to feedback, or to alter emphasis. A summary of the changes is provided at paragraph 14; and in detail at Appendix 2.

In addition to the Strategy, a Detailed Delivery Plan is presented for Members' approval, and all documents have been made available in the Members' reading room and are available [here](#).

The final Strategy creates a strong framework to guide a range of activities and projects that collectively will transform the look and feel of the Culture Mile area.

Recommendations

Members are asked to adopt the Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy, and the Detailed Delivery Plan.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. In October 2016, Members of the Planning & Transportation Committee approved a project to develop a Culture Mile 'Look and Feel' Strategy that would give clear and demonstrable direction to the City's ambitions for the public realm in Culture Mile; and to set out how to deliver change in the area in the most efficient and coordinated manner.
2. After an open tender exercise, the architects Fluid were appointed to deliver the Strategy. Their team included sub-contractors from: Arup (digital and landscape); Seam lighting; Contemporary Arts Society; and Alan Baxter, who together were able to provide the correct expertise to fulfil the wide-ranging brief.
3. The process has involved an in-depth research period and analysis of the area; including interviews with relevant stakeholders, meetings and representation from officers including Planning, Heritage, City Transportation, City Police, Open Spaces, Highways, and Culture Mile partners (Barbican, LSO, Guildhall School, Museum of London). The working party has also included local residents' representatives. The Strategy has been developed via the Culture Mile governance process, including the Members' Culture Mile Working Party and the Culture Mile Programme Board of partner CEOs.

4. In addition, informal public engagement has been undertaken to inform the drafting of the document. This has included a series of 'Pop-Up' events and art installations in the area, surveys, walking tours, and 1:1 meetings. Through this work the project has engaged with residents, Smithfield Market traders, Culture Mile champions (local businesses looking to support Culture Mile objectives), and visitors in the area.

Consultation

5. The draft Strategy was completed in October 2017, and Members agreed that a public consultation be undertaken. The draft contained a series of environmental enhancements and other projects/ approaches to improving the area, grouped into four aims:
 - Aim 1: Form a Cultural Spine
 - Aim 2: Take the Inside Out
 - Aim 3: Discover and Explore
 - Aim 4: Be Recognised and Be Different
6. The consultation on the draft took place over a period of 11 weeks, from November 2017 to February 2018. In addition, engagement with local residents and other stakeholder groups continued after this period, via meetings and presentations. The consultation used a variety of methods which included:
 - A total of 12 public drop-in sessions, during lunchtimes and evenings in locations across the area
 - Online consultation web pages: the document was uploaded and publicly accessible on the website; an online survey was available; and a contact email for general enquiries/ responses was provided
 - Engagement with Culture Mile stakeholders and the Culture Mile Network
 - Email updates/ correspondence with interested City Members, members of the public and stakeholders
 - Publicity through the Culture Mile partners and the City of London, including adverts/ articles in City Matters and City Resident, and social media publicity of drop-in sessions
 - Meeting with the Barbican Residents Association 'Culture Mile' working party
 - Presenting to Barbican Residents House Groups AGM
 - Presenting to City of London Access Group (CoLAG)

Consultation responses

7. There were various forms of responses to the Strategy consultation. The drop-in sessions were attended by members of the public (c.180 total); there were 74 responses to the survey; along with 16 separate emailed responses from individuals and seven responses from various resident representative groups including the Barbican Association, Heron Tower residents' representatives, and the Friends of City Gardens. Meetings with resident groups were also held. This is in addition to the engagement undertaken throughout the process of drafting the strategy, which included 197 surveys collected (including a

wayfinding survey), pop up engagement for 250 people, and walking tours (20 people).

8. The Consultation responses were generally supportive of the Strategy and aspirations for Culture Mile, though in some cases with some specific concerns about particular recommendations, or clarification was required about the way in which the initiative will be developed. A detailed consultation report is attached at Appendix 1. In summary, the key findings included:
 - The four aims of the Strategy were agreed with by 66% of respondents
 - Major changes and improvements to Beech Street were supported
 - Wayfinding improvements were a high priority
 - Residents and local businesses would like to be more involved/ kept better informed in regard to Culture Mile activities, and reassured that proper processes are in place for event management
 - Residents in general were very supportive of community-led projects and better community facilities in the area
 - The maintenance of the listed building was a key priority for Barbican Estate residents, along with ensuring that peaceful areas in the estate are maintained
9. The consultation also played a role in starting to communicate the wider Culture Mile projects to members of the public. The survey included questions about how the local community might be interested in being involved in Culture Mile. Many respondents requested ongoing communication and consultation throughout the development of the Culture Mile initiative. See detailed information in the attached consultation report for responses to these questions (at Appendix 1).

Current Position

10. The Strategy has been redrafted to reflect the findings of the various consultations and engagement sessions. It is now recommended that the revised Strategy be adopted by Members as the guidance document for the 'Look and Feel' of the Culture Mile area.
11. The rationale for changes made in the document is generally to allow it to respond to one of three factors:
 - i. The responses received during the public consultation
 - ii. The new Culture Mile governance structure, and feedback from the subsequent engagement with the new workstream leads. In addition where Culture Mile projects had moved on (e.g. Museum of London move to Smithfield; Legible London Wayfinding); some updates were made to reflect these changes
 - iii. To streamline/ rationalise the proposals and make the document clearer
12. The Strategy sets out the high-level Vision, Aims and Outcomes for the Culture Mile Look and Feel initiative. It also includes a Summary Delivery Plan that sets out a list of programmes and proposals to achieve the Outcomes in the Strategy. These programmes include:

- The development of major projects such as the Museum of London and Smithfield Rotunda, Beech Street tunnel and the proposed Future Centre for Music
 - The delivery of temporary installations, public art and community-led projects
 - The implementation of the 'Culture Spine', Silk Street and Moor Lane projects and infrastructures supporting future Culture Mile activities
 - The delivery of signage and public information system, lighting enhancements
 - The development of policy and processes
13. The detailed information about the proposals can be found in the 'Detailed Delivery Plan' which can be found [here](#).
14. The changes made in the Strategy have been set out in a detailed amendments table, which is given at Appendix 2. A summary of the changes made in response to the consultation and stakeholder engagement includes:

Aim 1: Form a Cultural Spine

- Culture Spine: A new section in the strategy relating to north-south links off the main 'spine', to ensure that these areas are also given importance
- Beech Street: Clearer emphasis on aspirations to transform Beech Street as a key 'place'
- Wayfinding and Accessibility: A much greater emphasis on accessibility has been made, with strengthening accessibility of spaces as a key principle in the strategy, and specific access improvements set out

Aim 2: Take the Inside Out

- Community: Recommendations added to focus on community and how local communities can be involved with programming to reflect the enthusiasm of respondents.
- Processes: Additional recommendations for putting together curatorial strategies and technical manuals were added. This would provide processes for event management and resident communications.

Aim 3: Discover and Explore

- Quiet areas and air quality:
 - A section on greening has been developed further and called 'Urban Oasis' to give emphasis to the parts of Culture Mile that have a calm, quiet or oasis-like character;
 - A recommendation to use measures to protect wildlife and habitats was added;
 - Greater emphasis on reducing traffic and improving air quality;
 - References to changing the use of car parks have been withdrawn due to some negative responses;

- References that implied allowing public access through to the Barbican via privately accessible-only spaces (e.g. via Barber Surgeon's Garden) have been removed.
- Listed Building guidance and maintenance: Additional references to Listed Building guidance and other conservation issues have been added, and a new section called 'Sustain, maintain and enhance' has been included to reflect the desire of respondents to see a greater emphasis on maintenance, cleansing, and the protection of the listed buildings and conservation areas in Culture Mile.

Aim 4: Be Recognised and Be Different

- 'Creative enterprise': A new section to reflect the aim of enabling SMEs, local independent businesses, and creative start-ups to work in the area.
- Culture Mile Network: A new section on local businesses/ organisations and the Culture Mile Network in response to the Network wanting to be involved with Culture Mile and public realm initiatives.

Proposals

15. Members are asked to approve the adoption of the final Look and Feel Strategy, and the Detailed Delivery Plan.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. The Look and Feel Strategy sets out a series of recommended changes to the Culture Mile area, which will contribute towards achieving various corporate and departmental strategic objects. In particular:

Corporate Plan:

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture
- We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration
- We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment
- Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained

Department of the Built Environment business plan objectives:

- Advancing a flexible infrastructure that adapts to increasing capacity and changing demands
- Developing a smarter approach through use of data and technology
- Creating an accessible city which is stimulating, safe and easy to move around in
- Empowering a rich and thriving social and cultural offer

17. The Look and Feel Strategy also contributes to the aims of: the City's Cultural Strategy; the Culture Mile Strategy; and some of the Culture Mile Partner's Strategic Objectives.
18. A number of the recommendations in the Strategy relate to exploring changes in policies or processes. For example, the 'Creative Enterprise' section looks at how to make Culture Mile a place for creative businesses including start-ups, which may require a change in the way some spaces are let in the area. In these cases, detailed reviews will be undertaken and any changes would be brought to Members for adoption prior to any changes being made.

Financial Implications

19. The approved £350,000 budget has been fully utilised on developing and delivering the Strategy, the Committee reports, and all associated documents.
20. The Strategy sets out a series of recommended changes to the Culture Mile area which are further explained in the Detailed Delivery Plan document. These will be enacted via individual projects subject to their own governance and budgeting. It is anticipated that a number of the projects will be funded through the 'Culture Mile Look and Feel Implementation' budget that has been set aside for this purpose. In order to draw down on that budget each project will be subject to specific reporting processes and brought to Members for approval in due course.
21. Funding for each work programme and project will be subject to confirmation at that time but it is anticipated that funding for these projects will be mainly from external sources such as Transport for London and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions, s106 and s278 agreements from existing and future developments.

Recommendations

22. Members are asked to approve the adoption of the Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy and Detailed Delivery Plan.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy Consultation Report
- Appendix 2 – Look and Feel Strategy Amendments Table

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 11th day of September 2018.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Christopher Michael Hayward
Chairman, Planning & Transportation Committee