

Committee(s)	Dated:
Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision Open Spaces and City Gardens – For Decision	22/01/2018 05/02/2018
Subject: City Arts Initiative: recommendations to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	Public
Report of: Peter Lisley – Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director	For Decision
Report author: Alex Hugo, City Culture Executive	

Summary

This report presents the recommendations of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) which met on 14 December 2017. At this meeting, the CAI considered the following proposals:

1. **The London Tea History Association Monument, *from Bush to Cup*:** proposal to install a permanent monument to the tea trade in the City of London.
2. **Orla O'Connor, *Sleeping Rough*:** proposal to install painted canvases on building site hoardings to raise awareness of rough sleeping.
3. **NSPCC, *The Great Sherlock Gnome Hunt*:** proposal to include City of London sites in a London-wide trail of gnome sculptures.
4. **Culture Mile – Public Realm Pop-Ups Phase 2:** presentation on the second phase of public art interventions proposed for Culture Mile.

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee are asked to:

- Ratify the City Arts Initiative's recommendations in relation to the above proposals as follows:
 - **The London Tea History Association Monument: *from Bush to Cup*:** reject with an invitation to resubmit on the grounds that there is no agreed site in place for the work, and noting the current proposed plinth may pose accessibility issues and need to be reviewed and that more information is required on the proposed label text to accompany the work.

- **Orla O'Connor: *Sleeping Rough*:** reject on the grounds that the sites proposed in the application are not in the City of London and that City sites may not be suitable due to restrictions on advertising.
- **NSPCC: The Great Gnome Hunt:** approve the installation of at least six gnomes across the City with the City Information Centre acting as an information hub for the trail.
- **Culture Mile – Public Realm Pop-Ups Phase 2:** approve the installation of the proposed temporary artistic interventions from in and around the Culture Mile area, subject to agreement with road safety and public highways teams where appropriate.

Members of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee are asked to:

- Note the report
- In respect of **NSPCC: The Great Gnome Hunt:** delegate authority to the Superintendent of Parks & Gardens to agree any locations proposed within City open spaces

Main Report

Background

1. The City Arts Initiative was established to improve the management of public art in the City. It provides advice to your Committee and other service Committees as appropriate on proposals for new public art, the maintenance of the City's existing public art and, if necessary, decommissioning.
2. Your Committee appointed your Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Mrs Barbara Newman to sit on the City Arts Initiative in the 2016/17 Committee year.
3. Apart from officer time handling enquiries and looking after the installations, there are no resource implications other than where specifically noted.
4. Following comments from Members at the October meeting of the CHL Committee, a visual of each proposal has been circulated to Members with this report.

Current Position

5. The CAI met on 14 December 2017 to consider the proposals outlined below.
6. Full details of all the applications to the CAI are available on request from the Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director.

Proposals

The London Tea History Association Monument: *From Bush to Cup*

7. The London Tea History Association, who had their inaugural meeting in January 2015 at the Mercers Hall, aim to record the history of tea.
8. The London Tea History Association proposed the permanent installation of a bronze sculptural monument to the tea trade in the City of London to celebrate the City's historical links to the trade.
9. The proposed sculpture is a 2-metre high bronze depicting a tea plucker and London docker and is seated on a Portland stone plinth.
10. It is proposed that the sculpture will include a QR code for visitors to link, via their mobile devices, to other important sites related to the tea trade in the City.
11. The CAI were supportive of the idea of celebrating the City's links to the tea trade.
12. Concerns were raised over the possible siting of the piece. Two sites were put forward as possibilities: 1 Undershaft and Plantation House.
13. 1 Undershaft/St Andrew's will be undergoing considerable development over the coming years and sits within the Sculpture in the City area. This site is therefore not appropriate.
14. Concerns were raised that the Plantation House site would not allow for sufficient space around the sculpture for access noting a 2-metre clearance would be required. St. Helen's is also referred to in the application, but this site is scheduled for development as part of a HLF bid and has loading limitations.
15. Responsibility for the required annual maintenance of the artwork is mentioned in the application but not in detail, so the implications of this and an agreement to access the land of the eventual site would need to be in place with the relevant party.
16. There are also accessibility concerns as the sculpture seems to project beyond the limit of the plinth.
17. An additional concern raised was that the City of London may be seen to be celebrating Colonialism so this would need to be taken into consideration within the text appearing on the sculpture.
18. The City Arts Initiative recognises that the proposed sculpture marks a key part of the City's history and are supportive of this aim, but feel that, due to the size and permanent nature of the piece, further consideration will need to be given to the location, accessibility concerns, interpretive text and annual maintenance before the proposal can be approved.

19. The CAI therefore recommend that the proposal be rejected and that the applicant be asked to work with City officers to find a suitable site and resolve the issues cited above so that it may be resubmitted for consideration at a later date.

Orla O'Connor: *Sleeping Rough*

20. Orla O'Connor is an artist who has proposed to install painted canvases onto building site hoardings and allow them to be weathered to raise awareness of rough sleeping.
21. The proposal is that the paintings will be offered for sale in aid of homelessness charity Shelter.
22. It was noted that all of the proposed sites were not in the City of London.
23. The CAI also noted that the proposal, if sited in the City, may contravene guidance on advertising given that the painting would carry details of the sale of the paintings.
24. The CAI therefore recommends that the proposal be rejected and that the applicant be made aware of City rules on advertising in case a suitable City-based site were to be found and the proposal resubmitted for consideration at a later date.

NSPCC: The Great Sherlock Gnome Hunt

25. Working with London and Partners and Paramount Pictures, Premier Communications have proposed the installation of several gnomes across the City as part of a wider pan-London trail in aid of NSPCC and to mark the release of the movie *Sherlock Gnomes*. The gnomes will be interpreted / decorated by various celebrities and high profile names.
26. Having previously worked on the first Paddington Trail, BFG Dream Jars and the Elephant Parade, Premier have experience at delivering this kind of trail.
27. Previous similar trails like the Paddington Bear, Shaun the Sheep and BFG Dream Jars have worked well in the City driving visitor footfall and sharing of images via social media. They have been particularly popular amongst family audiences and have helped to drive audiences at weekends when the City is quieter.
28. The CAI support this proposal, noting that proceeds of the sale of sculptures (at the end of the trail) will be donated to the NSPCC.
29. The CAI recommends this proposal for approval, requesting that at least six gnomes are placed within the City of London to encourage visitors to walk and discover them, and that the City Information Centre be the information hub for the trail. The sites selected – it is recommended – are identified in collaboration with relevant City officers.

Culture Mile – Public Realm Pop-Ups Phase 2

30. The Culture Mile propose to install a number of temporary artistic interventions:
 - a. *Symphony Wall*, Nina Dunn Design (Feb-Mar 2018), is a temporary artistic lighting and projection installation on the corner of Aldersgate Street/Beech Street. The artwork is designed to create a 'visual symphony' for visitors to the Culture Mile, displaying a live visual display, which is generated by sound feeds from Culture Mile partner venues and Aldersgate Street itself.
 - b. *Brutalist Tapestry*, Jason Bruges Studio (Apr 2018-Apr 2019), is a public art installation designed to transform a section of panels within the Beech Street tunnel into an artistic canvas for the Culture Mile. Taking inspiration from the pick-hammered finish of the Barbican's concrete façade, Jason Bruges Studio will transform a series of panels into an evolving tapestry of pixels – with an automaton physically moving across the panels and manipulating the pixels to create shapes, images or textures. The artwork will be programmable by Culture Mile partners and the constantly shifting content will augment the pedestrian journey through Beech Street.
 - c. *Colourful Crossing*, Dolman Bowles and Eley Kishimoto (Apr 2018-Apr 2019), proposes the installation of two colourful pedestrian crossings at Aldersgate Street junction. The crossings would function as way-finding elements, but will also represent an 'arrival' point for Culture Mile visitors at Barbican Station. These installations are temporary and would be located at the station entrance (across to Beech Street), and also from the Virgin Active gym (across Beech Street, towards the Museum of London). A bespoke, abstract, design will be created through a design workshop with Culture Mile partners, to ensure that the project fits within the collaborative values and ambitions of the project.
31. There is an additional plan for a Beech Street Event on 17 and 18 March 2018 which falls outside of the remit of the City Arts Initiative and will be considered through the Public Highways' Special External Events Group (SEEG).
32. The Culture Mile team have liaised closely with the City's road safety and public highways teams to ensure that all interventions do not present any hazards and are suitable.
33. The proposed installations will be abstract and image-led with no words, and with movement or animation within the pieces running at a slow pace in order not to provide a distraction to drivers.
34. The CAI are supportive of the Culture Mile Public Realm Pop-Ups Programme Phase 2 proposals and recommends them for approval.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

35. The City Arts Initiative was formed to support the City's management of public art which supports the delivery of the City's Cultural and Visitor Strategies.

Conclusion

36. This report summarises the discussions of the City Arts Initiative and presents recommendations in relation to the public art applications considered on 14 December 2017.

Background Papers

Full details of the applications received by the City Arts Initiative are available on request from the Assistant Town Clerk and Cultural Hub Director.

Appendices

- None

Alex Hugo

City Culture Executive

T: 020 7332 3567

E: alex.hugo@cityoflondon.gov.uk