

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision Open Spaces and City Gardens – For Decision	25/03/2019 08/04/2019
<b>Subject:</b> City Arts Initiative: recommendations to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Peter Lisley – Assistant Town Clerk and Director of Major Projects	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Nick Bodger, Cultural and Visitor Development Director	

### Summary

This report presents the recommendations of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) which met on 21 February 2019. At this meeting, the CAI considered public art proposals 1 to 4 (below) and, subsequent to the meeting, proposals 5 and 6:

- 1. River View:** approval for *Liminal*, the winning entry of the London Festival of Architecture (LFA)/City of London River View Competition to animate the North Thames Path in conjunction with Illuminated River;
- 2. Wayward, Smithfield Rotunda:** approval for a bespoke 'glass house' with informal stage, modular seating and tables and entrance design elements commissioned by the City Corporation's Public Realm team;
- 3. Volo – Dreams of Flight:** approval for an immersive, virtual reality swing experience commissioned by the City Corporation's Cultural and Visitor Development team (CVDT) and Culture Mile;
- 4. Sculpture in the City:** approval for the shortlisted artworks for the project's ninth edition, launching June 2019;
- 5. London Festival of Architecture – Benches:** approval for five benches to be installed in June in the Cheapside footprint; and
- 6. London Festival of Architecture – St Paul's Plinth:** approval for the installation of new artwork within the existing frame at St Paul's station.

The following application was considered by the CAI between meetings:

- 7. 22 Bishopsgate:** an artistic design for a wind mitigation device, to be situated at the south west corner of the building on private land.

## Recommendation(s)

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

- Ratify the City Arts Initiative's recommendations in relation to proposals 1 to 6 above as follows:
  - **River View:** approve subject to final consent from City engineers, and Highways and Planning Teams;
  - **Wayward, Smithfield Rotunda:** approve, subject to final consent of the City Gardens Team;
  - **Volo – dreams of flight:** approve subject to final consent from City Gardens, Highways and Public Realm Teams;
  - **Sculpture in the City:** approve shortlist in principle and subject to necessary permissions and licences from Highways and Planning Teams, and the City Gardens Team, noting the serious concerns from the Director of Communications over some works appearing on the shortlist;
  - **London Festival of Architecture – Benches:** approve subject to final consent from the Highways and City Gardens Teams and implementation of recommendations; and
  - **London Festival of Architecture – St Paul's Plinth:** approve subject to final consent from Planning and Engineering Teams.
- Note the application for **22 Bishopsgate** acknowledging that the CAI may only comment and not recommend, and that your Committee may not approve or decline applications for public art on private land.

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

- Approve the proposals agreed in principle by the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee for *Volo – dreams of flight*, *Sculpture in the City* (at relevant sites) and *London Festival of Architecture – Benches*, delegating authority to the Director of Open Spaces to sign off installation subject to satisfactory details and plans being received.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The City Arts Initiative (CAI) 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. The CAI comprises elected Members drawn from your Committee and relevant officers across planning, highways, open spaces, and cultural and visitor development, as well as those with specific expertise in the visual arts.

3. At your Committee in May 2018, Members confirmed that those occupying the roles of Chairman and Deputy Chairman on the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, and the Chairman of the Sculpture in the City Partner Board should have permanent seats on the City Arts Initiative. Your Committee also elected Mrs Barbara Newman and Mr Jeremy Simons to serve on the CAI for the 2018/19 committee year.
4. Apart from officer time handling enquiries and managing the installations, there are no resource implications other than where specifically noted.

### **Current Position**

5. The CAI met on 21 February 2019 to consider the proposals outlined below excepting those submitted by London Festival of Architecture which were received following the meeting and considered by the CAI via email.
6. Full-colour visual representations of the proposed artworks are circulated electronically with this report and available in appendices 1 and 2. Full details of all the applications to the CAI are available on request from the Assistant Town Clerk and Director of Major Projects.

### **Proposals**

#### River View

7. The CAI received a proposal for siting *Liminal* by Wolfgang Buttress, the winning design from a competition commissioned by the City Corporation's Cultural and Visitor Development Team (CVDT) and run by the London Festival of Architecture (LFA). This new commission is designed to complement the *Illuminated River* project launching in July, the LFA (running throughout June) and the City's own *Fantastic Feats* outdoor arts programme (running June through November).
8. *Liminal* will be sited in front of the City of London Boy's School from June to September 2019.
9. *Liminal* blurs boundaries between 2D, 3D and 4D using a variety of mirrored, bright, satin and matt aluminium panels that focus and alter viewers' perceptions and experience of the river. As well as the 6.5m long x 4.5m tall x 0.7m deep sculpture, a live data feed from an underwater sonar that captures the life and flow of the river, will be sent to an app, expressing the life of the Thames through sound and light on visitors' mobiles and tablets.
10. No power supply or network is required for this installation; it is a weather-proof, ruggedized system. No maintenance is required other than a wash with soapy water as requested or required.
11. The proposal is fully funded by City of London Corporation and Rothschild Foundation. Wolfgang Buttress has also secured further funding from The International Aluminium Institute.

12. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved in principle, subject to final consent from City engineers and Highways and Planning Teams.

#### Wayward, Smithfield Rotunda

13. The CAI received a proposal from the Public Realm team for a bespoke 'glass house' with informal stage, modular seating and tables and entrance design elements to be sited in Smithfield Rotunda Garden from May to September 2019.
14. The Wayward are a collective of designers, artists and urban growers, experienced in 'placemaking' initiatives. Their proposal supports the Culture Mile's Look and Feel Strategy outcomes, including improving wayfinding, enhancing outdoor spaces for public art, play and programming, and supporting community participation, as well as Culture Mile summer programming. The proposal will enhance the visibility and public amenity of the garden with unique design elements and a community greening initiative.
15. The proposal will be funded by the Culture Mile Look and Feel Experiments budget, subject to approval by committees.
16. Maintenance will be agreed between Wayward and City of London officers with a clear maintenance plan devised.
17. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved, noting that Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee, Streets and Walkways Sub Committee and Projects Sub Committee have already approved it.

#### Volo - dreams of flight

18. The CAI received a proposal for four immersive virtual reality swing experiences to be placed in public spaces from 18-22 June 2019.
19. The swings are hung from a sculptural structure in each location and riders will wear virtual reality headsets to be transported through one of four dream experiences, each inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's flying machines.
20. The footprint of each site is 6.959 x 3.848m. The applicant will work closely with your City Gardens team to identify four suitable trees for the swings to be rigged to. While in operation, two operators will be present to give instruction, manage crowds and monitor health and safety.
21. The proposal is a commission by the CVDT as part of the *Fantastic Feats* programme and is funded by the City of London Corporation and Culture Mile. A funding application to Arts Council England has also been submitted.
22. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved in principle subject to final consent from your City Gardens, Highways and Public Realm teams.

### Sculpture in the City

23. The CAI received a presentation on the shortlisted artworks for *Sculpture in the City*'s ninth edition. The shortlist comprises 32 works with visual of these provided separately from other applications in this report in Appendix 2. The artworks were selected by the project's Art Advisory Board and agreed with *Sculpture in the City*'s funding partners prior to their submission to the CAI.
24. The project is funded by the City Corporation in partnership with local businesses, largely in the Eastern City Cluster area.
25. It should be noted that the final installed exhibition will not include the full shortlist. The final works for installation will be selected from the shortlist based on their technical feasibility and through negotiations with landowners on locations. The works will be installed in locations around the Eastern City Cluster.
26. The shortlist was reviewed by City Highways and Planning teams to ensure it meets the City's technical, planning and access requirements. The project team will continue to consult the relevant internal teams as and when locations for the artworks are determined.
27. Serious concerns were raised both by the CAI and the Director of Communications over some works appearing on the shortlist. An ongoing discussion regarding these artworks is taking place in consultation with the Sculpture in the City Partner Board and the Head of Media.
28. The CAI recommends that the shortlist be approved in principle, despite the concerns of the Director of Communications, and subject to necessary permissions and licences from Highways and Planning Teams and final consent from City Gardens (as relevant).

### London Festival of Architecture: Benches

29. The CAI received a proposal for five benches to be sited within the Cheapside footprint from 1-30 June as part of the London Festival of Architecture.
30. Architecture and design students, recent graduates and emerging practices from across London were invited to submit a bench design to enliven the public realm of the Cheapside area. The five winners were selected from 80 entries to the competition by a panel of experts. The benches will be constructed predominantly from wood.
31. The project is funded by Cheapside Business Alliance.
32. Five sites have been identified following a site visit with your Highways Team and the benches have been assigned as follows:
  1. Anna Janiak Studio: in front of 150 Cheapside
  2. Delve Architects with Will Drayson: in front of Bloomberg building

3. Sarah Emily Porter: in front of Royal Exchange
4. Armor Gutierrez Rivas: Bow Church Yard
5. Astrain Studio: Cheapside Sunken Garden

Please see the appended map for exact locations and designs (Appendix 1). Two designs, 6 and 7 have been selected as backup options.

33. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved in principle subject to final consent from your City Gardens (as relevant), Highways and Public Realm teams and the following recommendations and conditions:
  - a. For benches containing plants and flowers, a watering schedule should be planned, and each bench should be maintained and cleaned throughout the month, particularly bench 5 under the tree in the sunken garden.
  - b. Pedestrian flow must not be compromised by larger benches and 2m access around the benches on all sides should be accommodated.
  - c. A dimension has not been provided for the height of the lower L-section of bench 4. It should be at least 1.5m above ground level to enable a person who is blind or partially sighted to detect it using a cane. Consideration could also be given to highlighting the corners with a contrasting colour.
  - d. As bench 4 appears to not be fixed to the floor there may be a risk of tipping over. A relevant risk assessment must be undertaken and consent for solutions by obtained from the City's Highways Team and City engineers.
  - e. There should be a clear plan in place for the removal of the benches on 30 June.

#### London Festival of Architecture: St Paul's Plinth

34. The CAI received a proposal for a new installation within the existing metal frame on the traffic island at St Paul's station as part of the London Festival of Architecture.
35. The installation consists of 35 angel sculptures that sit on wooden seats/bars randomly arranged and fixed to the existing wire grid. The connection with the existing wire frame will be designed in a way so that the individual angel sculptures cannot move in the wind. The work will be produced and installed by KHBT Architects. The drawings and the risk assessment documents will be checked by a City engineer. On delivery, the installation will be checked to ensure it is safe for public use.
36. At the point of deinstallation (responsibility of KHBT Architects), the installation will become the property of the competition winner.
37. The structure is being designed to be maintenance-free during the duration of the London Festival of Architecture (June 2019). Thereafter, should the installation be granted planning permission, it is envisaged that a simple spray cleaning might be required similar to the St Paul's Gateway project.

38. The designers of the current structure, known as St Paul's Gateway, ScottWhitbyStudio and Arup, have given their consent for the frame to remain in situ and be used by the London Festival of Architecture to install the new artwork.
39. The London Festival of Architecture have requested that the new artwork and frame remain in place until March 2020. A planning application will be submitted on 18 March 2019.
40. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved in principle subject to planning permission being granted and the following considerations:
  - a. LFA and KHBT Architects to liaise with your City Gardens and Highways Teams regarding installation dates so summer planting activity can be planned around the installation date and that there are no clashes with major events being held.
  - b. Current planning permission for the main structure expires on 30 July 2019, a condition on the current permission requires that the art installation permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 30 July 2019. New planning permission is required to retain the main structure as well as the above proposed artwork.
  - c. The structure must be sufficiently weatherproof, particularly in respect to high winds, to ensure it does not become dangerous to the public.

## 22 Bishopsgate

41. The CAI received a proposal for an artistic design for a permanent wind mitigation device, to be situated at the south west corner of 22 Bishopsgate.
42. The structure is inspired by the natural wind mitigating properties of trees, with the plates of the wind structure becoming canopies of foliage and the vertical supporting beams the trunk and branches of a sheltering tree. The tree, a Poplar, will primarily be fabricated in steel, with aluminium used for the angled foliage plates. It is proposed that the trunk and branches will be painted maroon and the foliage plates gold.
43. The CAI may comment on but not recommend, and your Committee may not approve or decline applications for public art on private land. This application is for informational purposes only but is subject to standard planning application procedures.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

44. 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**

45. This report summarises the discussions of the City Arts Initiative and presents recommendations in relation to the public art applications considered on 21 February 2019

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: CAI Images, 21 February 2019
- Appendix 2: *Sculpture in the City* Ninth Edition shortlist, 21 February 2019

## **Background Papers**

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

## **Nick Bodger**

Cultural and Visitor Development Director

T: 020 7332 3263

E: [Nick.Bodger@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Bodger@cityoflondon.gov.uk)