

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Streets and Walkways Sub Committee Culture Heritage and Libraries	14 January 2013 28 January 2013
Subject: Relocation of Dorothy Annan Ceramic Panels to Barbican Highwalk and Transfer of Ownership to City of London Corporation	Public
Report of: The City Surveyor	For Decision
Ward (if appropriate): Cripplegate	

Summary

Nine ceramic panels created by Dorothy Annan are currently located on the Fleet Building, Farringdon Street. The panels were commissioned by the Ministry of Works in 1960 and now are listed. Goldman Sachs is seeking to undertake a comprehensive redevelopment of Fleet Building and Plumtree Court to provide a new HQ building in the City. Goldman Sachs considers that the panels would not sit comfortably within the scheme design for their new building and have sought agreement to relocate them elsewhere within the City.

The panels comprise abstract art representations of the telecommunications industry and it was considered any new location should provide an appropriate setting both in terms of architecture and accessibility. Having considered a range of options, a new location has been identified within the Barbican on the highwalk that links the Barbican Centre with Speed House. The location has been agreed in consultation with English Heritage and the 20th Century Society. Planning permission and listed building consent have been granted for their relocation to the highwalk, subject to conditions requesting details of the framing, fixing and lighting scheme.

It is proposed that the panels will transfer to the City Corporation ownership on completion of the relocation works and that a dowry of £100,000 provided by Goldman Sachs, be set aside in a ring fenced fund to provide for future maintenance and repair. Analysis of the likely costs associated with repair and maintenance has shown that the sum should be sufficient.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Culture Heritage and Libraries Committee agree in principal to the relocation of the panels to the Barbican highwalk and that on completion of the works the ownership shall be transferred to the City Corporation along with a dowry of £100,000 to be set aside in a ring fenced fund for future maintenance and repair.
- It is recommended that, subject to the approval of the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee, the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee agree the sum of £100,000 as being appropriate for the future maintenance and repair of the ceramic panels and associated light fittings and add it to the register of art works maintained by the City Corporation

Main Report

Background

1. Goldman Sachs is in the process of formulating proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of Fleet Building, 70 Farringdon Street and Plumtree Court, 42 Shoe Lane, for a new HQ building. A series of ceramic panels by Dorothy Annan are currently located on the east elevation of Fleet Building. There are a total of nine panels that relate to the sites previous use as a telephone exchange. These ceramic panels were commissioned by the Ministry of Works in 1960 for the building. They are semi-abstract in form and incorporate stylistic images of telecommunications equipment, each are titled and one is signed. They were unveiled by the then Lord Mayor of London in April 1961 and form a representation of the telecommunications industry. On 21 November 2011, the panels were added to the statutory list of listed buildings with grade II designation. Goldman Sachs is of the view that the listed panels would not fit comfortably with their aspirations to deliver a new HQ building and have been liaising with the City Corporation, English Heritage and the 20th Century Society to find an alternative location to display the panels.
2. The artistic merit and historical importance of the panels is recognised by the listing by English Heritage. In discussions with English Heritage and the 20th Century Society, they advised that it would be preferable to keep the panels in the City due to their historic relevance to the City context, and further that they should be placed on a listed building to reduce the risk of future development necessitating a further move. In considering the approach to the panels, officers first considered whether it was desirable to accept the panels from Goldman Sachs, and then secondarily where they should be sited.
3. Following the consideration and deferral of a report to Streets & Walkways in December 2012, the transfer of the panels and the proposed location was considered by the City's Arts Initiative Panel. This group includes elected Members and officers. The Panel strongly supported the transfer of the panels to the City, citing their artistic and historical importance, and further the specific proposed location on the Barbican Highwalk.
4. On 18 September 2012 the Planning and Transportation Committee resolved to grant listed building consent for the removal and safe storage of the ceramic panels. The permission was subject to a S106 agreement which provided that every effort should be made to find the panels a new home in the City. The report to committee indicated that a suitable and agreeable location had been found on the Barbican Highwalk and the S106 required Goldman Sachs to use all reasonable endeavours to secure its safe relocation.
5. When reviewing options to relocate the listed murals a key consideration was their special architectural and historic character and the need to ensure the new location complemented their modern / abstract appearance and the need to seek agreement with both English Heritage and the 20th Century Society that the new setting was appropriate. The need to ensure the murals did not compromise future redevelopment of any building (due to the murals listed status) on which they are sited was also considered relevant. In all respects, the Barbican estate, given its grade II listed status and modern brutalist style, was considered to be the most appropriate location in the City. A number of options were reviewed including the Beech Street Tunnel, the Museum of

London Rotund, the external elevations to Silk Street and Frobisher Crescent. None of these options were considered to provide as an appropriate setting as the proposed location on the City of London Highwalk.

6. The S106 was signed on 4 November 2012 and there was provision within the agreement for a maintenance sum of £100,000 to be made to the owner of the panels to cover specialist conservation, future upkeep, maintenance, repair and proper display of the panels. As part of the agreement, provision has been made that the transfer of the ownership and the maintenance sum should occur on completion of the relocation of the panels. All associated costs including removal, refurbishment storage and relocation will be met by Goldman Sachs.
7. On 8 November planning permission and listed building consent were granted for the relocation of the panels to the covered elevated walkway at second floor level on the south wall of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama which forms part of the grade II listed Barbican Estate. Associated conditions were attached requiring details of the lighting arrangement, the means of fixing and appearance of the framework together with the content of an interpretation panel. The site was selected as an appropriate site for the display of the panels as it is open to the public, is protected and relates to a listed building that is similar in period to the building from which it will be removed. Appendix 1 contains an image of how the panels will appear once in situ.
8. The scheme design will see the panels displayed in the same historic sequence and at a comparable height to their original setting. Since the highwalk is covered, it will be necessary for the panels to be artificially lit in an appropriate manner. The lighting scheme will provide for appropriate enhancement of the panels and will improve the lighting arrangements in what is a currently poorly lit environment. The scheme will also provide for the replacement of existing lighting on the south side of the highwalk with units that are more energy efficient than those currently used. The Guildhall School of Music and Drama has confirmed that they consider that a new lighting scheme that incorporates low energy LED lighting should be cost neutral when compared to the existing situation.

Current Position

9. Goldman Sachs has now submitted a formal application to redevelop their site and are keen to progress arrangements for the seamless removal and relocation of the murals to a yet to be determined timetable that is suitable for the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.
10. On completion of the relocation, the ownership of the panels shall transfer to City Corporation and a sum of £100,000 will be paid by Goldman Sachs to be set aside in a ring fenced fund to provide for future management and maintenance of the panels to be managed by the City Surveyors Department. The likely cost of future maintenance and repair has been reviewed with our consultants and an annual figure of £3,220 has been derived (including 20% contingency). The sum of £100,000 would therefore be more than sufficient to provide for maintenance over a 25 year period, which has been the norm for calculating such payments. This sum includes a provision of £1,750 for an annual clean which due to the covered nature of the highwalk would not always be necessary. An additional insurance premium has been provisioned for within this payment.

11. It is considered that the display of the ceramic panels will not harm the special architectural and historic interest of the Barbican. The current area of highwalk is poorly lit and the panels and associated lighting will provide an enhanced environment within this part of the Barbican estate.

Proposals

12. It is proposed that the relocation of the ceramic panels to the Barbican highwalk on the south face of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama be approved, subject to agreeing the precise timings, and that the panels are transferred to City Corporation ownership along with £100,000 to provide for future maintenance.

Conclusion

13. The relocation of the ceramic panels to the Barbican highwalk would provide a fitting environment for their display. The introduction of new and replacement lighting will create an enhanced environment for this part of the Barbican. The transfer of the ownership to the City Corporation will be accompanied by £100,000 dowry to provide for future maintenance and repair.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – computer generated image of panels in situ

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Appendix 1

