

Committee:	Date:
Planning and Transportation Committee - For decision	November 14 th 2017
Subject: Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy draft: consultation	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision

Summary

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.

In October 2016, Members approved a project to develop a strategy for a distinct 'Look and Feel' of the public realm. The project aimed to produce a 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.

After a tender exercise, Fluid were appointed in January 2017 to complete this work. The brief for the strategy set out a number of key themes to be explored: Lighting; way finding; public information; public art and place activation; greening; servicing, infrastructure and management; and relationship to the Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN) initiative.

Since then the development of the strategy has been underway, using a method that has included regular workshops with stakeholders drawn from different City departments, Culture Mile partners, and residents' representatives. In addition, a series of 'pop-up' activities were held to engage with the public on the themes emerging in the strategy.

A draft has now been completed, and has been agreed by the working party. The strategy contains a series of environmental enhancements and other projects/ approaches to improving the area, grouped into four aims:

- Form a Cultural Spine
- Take the Inside Out
- Create Opportunities to Discover and Explore
- Be Recognised, Be Different

This report sets out details of the planned public consultation to aid the development of the Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy. Copies of the draft strategy are available in the Members' Reading Room.

Officers are recommending that a formal public consultation exercise is undertaken to gather public responses to the ideas in the Strategy. It is proposed that the Strategy is out for consultation for a period of 11 weeks, using a variety of methods as set out in this report. The approach will closely follow the corporate approach to consulting with Barbican residents and follows previously successful consultation exercises conducted by the public realm team when developing Area Strategies.

The costs for the consultation will be funded from the approved budget for the Look and Feel Strategy.

Recommendation:

That the draft Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy be publically consulted upon in November, December and January, and a final version brought back to members for adoption, incorporating the feedback received.

Main Report

Background

1. In October 2016, Members approved a project to develop a Culture Mile 'Look and Feel' public realm strategy. The project aimed to produce a 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. The brief for the strategy set out a number of key themes to be explored: Lighting; way finding; public information; public art and place activation; greening; servicing, infrastructure and management; and relationship to the Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN) initiative.
3. 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.
4. The process has involved an in-depth research period and analysis of the area; including interviews with relevant stakeholders. Throughout the period a large working party has met to review draft ideas and take part in workshops to gain their views. These sessions have included representation from officers including Planning, Heritage, City Transportation, City Police, Open Spaces, Highways, and all four Culture Mile partners (Barbican, LSO, Guildhall School, Museum of London). The working party has also included local residents'

representatives. Through this process the working party has endorsed the recommendations that are in the draft strategy.

5. In addition, informal public engagement has been undertaken to inform the drafting of the document. This has included a series of 'pop-up' events 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 passers-by to the area.
6. A related project, Culture Mile Pop-Ups artistic programme was also initiated during this period. That project saw new public art installations placed into the Culture Mile area over the summer of 2017 as the first real iteration of Culture Mile activity. The Pop-Ups programme also involved resident engagement, with a set of drop-in sessions held to give residents opportunities to discuss the proposals. In some respects these installations were designed to test some of the emerging themes of the Look and Feel Strategy; and correspondingly the experiences of this programme have informed the Look and Feel Strategy.

Current Position

7. The draft Strategy has now been completed, and has been agreed by the project working party. It has been presented to the Culture Mile Working Party, chaired by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, with positive feedback received. The Strategy has been developed to allow the City to plan for the changes that the area will face, including the opening of Crossrail in 2018 and the Museum of London moving to its new site in Smithfield. The Strategy sets how to a) ensure that the public realm provides a fitting welcome and enhanced environment for visitors to the cultural institutions in the area, and b) ensure that the public realm is itself a destination, where the 'spaces in-between' have been animated.
8. The strategy contains a series of environmental enhancements and other projects/ approaches to improving the area, grouped into four themes:
 - a) Form a Culture Spine: Create a linear public space stretching from Farringdon Road in the West to Moorgate in the East. It links the destinations through enhanced wayfinding, and is also a place where culture coexists and is consumed. It is a connective element that is active and accessible, welcoming and memorable, for pedestrians, cyclists and all visitors.
 - b) Take the Inside Out: New visual links are to be strengthened, to reveal to the street the content of world-class institutions in Culture Mile. The area will be animated, attracting a wider audience across London and increasing engagement with visitors, workers and residents; bringing the activity of the cultural institutions to the streets.
 - c) Create Opportunities to Discover and Explore: Reinforcing the area's varying social, cultural and architectural history; an environment visitors want to explore and discover. Initiatives will be developed that involve

collaborative working with local stakeholders; and the learning and education aims of the Mile will be embedded into art programmes within the public realm. The area will become a robust backdrop for contemporary interventions and activities.

- d) Be Recognised, Be Different: Culture Mile will be recognised as a different and distinct area of the City and London, with a different 'look and feel'. It will be experimental and innovative, both in the content on the streets, and in the processes and policies the team uses to implement initiatives. Culture Mile will be a place where the spaces in between buildings are animated with public art; and where cultural activity is produced as well as consumed.
9. The strategy sets out a series of recommendations for changes to be made that will fulfil these four thematic aims. If the guidance given in these themes is enacted, officers believe that they will be able to fulfil the potential of the area and meet the aspirations set out in the Culture Mile vision and brand, which states that activity should 'animate the spaces in-between'.
10. Each project within the strategy will remain subject to confirmation of funding and Member approval under separate gateway reporting procedures; and planning permission and listed building consents will be applied for where appropriate.

Proposal

11. Officers are recommending that a formal public consultation exercise is undertaken to gather public responses to the ideas in the strategy. It is proposed that the strategy is out for consultation for a period of 11 weeks, using a variety of methods:
- Leaflets and questionnaires emailed to each residence in the Culture Mile area; and each business
 - Engagement with Culture Mile stakeholders and the Culture Mile Network
 - A total of 12 public drop-in sessions, spread over two, three week periods, during lunchtimes and evenings in locations across the area. (The first three week period will be prior to Christmas, the second period will be after Christmas)
 - Online consultation web pages; to be 'live' for an 11 week period
 - Email updates to interested members of the public and stakeholders
 - Publicity through the Culture Mile partners.
- Officers will also follow up on any requests made for presentations and workshops to groups or individual briefing sessions.
12. The approach will closely follow the corporate approach to consulting with Barbican residents, agreed with residents and previously successful in consultation exercises conducted by the public realm team for Area Strategies. As described above, quite a few forms of consultation have already occurred in addition to the agreed approach. Care will be taken to

follow up with people who have previously expressed their wish to be involved with the project and with future consultation exercises.

13. The costs for the consultation exercise will be funded from the approved Look and Feel Strategy budget.
14. Copies of the draft strategy have been made available in the Members' Reading Room.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

15. The Look and Feel Strategy is in line with the aims and objectives of the City of London Corporate Plan 2015-19 and the emerging Cultural Strategy.

Corporate Plan

KKP5: 'increasing the outreach and impact of the City's cultural heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation', includes as its first aim: 'we will build on our role as a major sponsor of culture and the arts by:

- Developing proposals for a "cultural hub" centred on the major cultural institutions of the Barbican Centre, Museum of London and Guildhall School of Music and Drama'

Cultural Strategy

The City of London's Cultural Strategy aims to: 'develop Culture Mile in the north west of the City which will become an exciting destination for London and act as a catalyst for change across the rest of the Square Mile'.

Policy Implications

The proposed Strategy is in line with the following adopted City of London policies:

- Local Plan 2015:
Culture Mile is located within Key City Places: 3.5 North of the City
- Policy CS10:
'10.6 Delivering improvement in the environment, amenities and enjoyment of open spaces, play areas, streets, lanes and alleys through schemes in accordance with public realm enhancement strategies'.
- Policy CS11 Visitors, Arts and Culture:
'11.2 Maintaining the City's existing collection of public art and culturally significant objects, pursuing opportunities to commission new high quality pieces in appropriate locations.'

Conclusion

16. This report updates Members about the Culture Mile 'Look and Feel Strategy' for the public realm. It outlines the process of drafting the strategy, including public engagement and stakeholder workshops; and sets out the key themes. It then recommends to Members a plan for public consultation on the draft strategy, to be undertaken from late November 2017 to the end of January 2018.

Background Papers:

Draft Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy. This can be viewed in the Members' reading room, or an electronic copy can be sent directly to Members on request.

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