

## **Ness Point Public Art Installation**

**Introduction:** This paper sets out recommendations and stages that should be considered for any proposed public art installation at the Ness, from the vision to ongoing maintenance.

### **1. Vision:**

Every permanent art commission or temporary intervention starts with an idea, with a matching of the artist's creativity with the expectations of Lowestoft Town Council (LTC). A decision should be made as to whether the art work is conceptual, commemorative or traditional as this will affect the story and the experience felt by the viewer.

### **2. Selection method and criteria:**

There are three approaches to how to decide to commission a public art installation, they are as follows.

#### **2.1 Open competition:**

The commission is advertised - promoted openly and all interested artists can submit their work for consideration and then design proposals invited. This is labour intensive and time consuming.

#### **2.2 Limited Competition:**

Shortlists of artists are approached and are often commissioned to develop preliminary designs for which a fee should be paid to the artists. This is an effective method enabling informed choices to be made from high quality work, with relative economy of effort. ACE are unlikely to fund feasibility work unless it had tangible community and creative outcomes.

#### **2.3 Direct Invitation:**

A single artist is directly approached based on previous experience or knowledge; advice or research, and commissioned to produce a design proposal. This method is most suitable for smaller projects, or when commissioning a leading national or international artist.

**2.4** A Selection Panel can/should/usually set up to make a final decision on design. The role of the selection panel needs to be clearly defined, it may be advisory only or it may be the decision-making body. A further technical panel might be formed to offer advice on practical or site-related issues. Membership of selection panels would include LTC, and then art curators or experts; artists; architects; East Suffolk Council, community representative; other local stakeholders; representative of funder or other partner.

### **3. Approach:**

The Final Draft Local Plan does not include an Art Policy or Public Art Strategy or in any Supplementary Planning Guidance, but culture features in the 'main Vision' and enhancement of cultural facilities is a main objective/strategic priority. This may be something that is being looked at in the neighbourhood plan? However if there is no planning document, the Arts Council England recommend following the Plymouth Principles to tease out the vision and processes for any public art in a town or city.

**The Plymouth Principles are:**

- Broaden Horizons – Commission ambitious projects
- Shake Up – Lifespan of public artworks
- Give Time – Developing ideas with artists
- Avoid Fields and Jump Fences – Embrace cross-art forms
- Listen to Young Voices – Create opportunities for children and young people to contribute
- Test and Stretch the Possibilities of the Digital – Test out new artistic approaches to digital media
- Make Making Visible – Opening up the working process of artists
- Invest Wisely – Policy for public art funding
- Promote Generously, Own Cautiously – Support a culture of co-production and collaboration
- Pass On – Pass on information, evaluation and data to other cities
- Grow Producing, as well as Artistic Talent – Producing and curatorial talent across the city

**4. Research:** Conversations have taken place with Arts Council England (ACE) to gauge their response to funding a landmark sculpture at the most easterly point. ACE has indicated that they would welcome an application and a grant request should be in the region of £50,000 but LTC will need to work with an independent commissioning agency and follow the Plymouth Principles as part of the process.

**4.1** Finding an appropriate artist or artists and managing the process is a long process.

Conversations have taken place with Calvin Winner (CW) Head of Collections at Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (SCAV) at the University of East Anglia (UEA), about a commission. In 2017, SCAV curated a series of three sculptures from artist Antony Gormley on the campus and CW has agreed to contact Gormley and his team to see whether he would be interested in a commission for the Ness. CW has also offered to look at suitable matches for a commission with alternative and emerging artists that have a reputation for landscape art installations. The costs of having a sculpture from such a known artist can vary greatly and it may well be that this is out of budget, however having started this conversation it may lead to alternative artists (within budget) coming forward.

**4.2** Understanding the theme for the Ness and the messages the public art is trying to convey is extremely important and will decide the artistic direction of the sculpture and the artist/s that are to be engaged. Potential themes can be seen below.

<b>Sea</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Energy</b>	<b>Openness</b>	<b>Heritage</b>	<b>Meeting Place</b>	<b>Rustic</b>
<b>Wind</b>	<b>The Grit</b>	<b>Weather</b>	<b>Contemplation</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Edge</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>Fishing</b>	<b>Defence</b>	<b>Revival</b>	<b>Compass</b>	<b>Traditions</b>	<b>Power</b>
<b>East</b>	<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Drying Racks</b>	<b>Potential</b>	<b>Loss</b>	<b>Sentimental</b>	<b>Story</b>

**4.3** Feedback has also been received from a Creative Production Company around the idea of having a public art wall along the sea defence, similar to the Belfast Peace Wall and Shoreditch Art Wall. It is a cost effective way to get a scale of impact and to reimagine public spaces utilising arts. The underpasses in Great Yarmouth have undergone a

transformation and turned into creative spaces and an outside gallery as part of Making Waves Together. The artwork at the underpass near Asda makes the place more vibrant and welcoming but also inspires and engages local people. There has been noticeable less vandalism around that area and the group have received positive feedback from residents, especially older people about the street art.

**4.4** There are two options to consider, firstly that relationships are nurtured with an artist that produces an art piece purely because of its location and landscape and for it to be self-funded or that LTC go out to commission in use public funding. The commission route is more likely but is reliant on additional funding and scale aspirations need to fit within the budget.

## **5. Things to consider:**

Alongside deciding on the vision there are other practical considerations from technical viability, budget and planning permission.

- Technical viability - longevity or resilience of materials
- Is it to be temporary or permanent (up to 20 years)? Is it celebratory or conceptual? Is it functional or integral?
- What is the funding? Set the budget, including any sources for additional funding, and a suitable timescale for completion.
- Develop a brief covering aims of the project and themes identified for the Ness. Artist's experience of, or interest in, working in the public realm.
- Appropriateness of proposal to site and neighbourhood.
- Is Planning Permission required?
- Consultation with local people should be considered and if this is appropriate, might include workshops in schools, presentations to local groups or questionnaires.
- Regular communication with the artist is essential and should be established from the outset (from the development stage through to finalising the design and installation).
- A press and media strategy may be necessary depending on the scale of the project - ensuring that images of the work are included on the project's promotional and marketing material.
- How will the work be evaluated? To guarantee the best outcomes, this should be part of an ongoing process, to feed into marketing and promotion.
- In a publicly accessible private space; the artwork will need to be maintained by, for example, a site management company for the completed development.

## **Organisational costs**

- Writing an Art Plan or Public Art Strategy
- Managing the competition and the commissioning process
- Managing the consultation process
- Arranging exhibitions or presentations

- Running education and community programme
- Publicity and public relations

#### **Competition costs**

- Artists' design fees and expenses
- Selection panel fees and expenses
- Exhibition of artists' proposals
- Transport and insurance of artists' proposals

#### **Commission costs**

- Artists' (and any collaborator's) fees and expenses
- Materials and fabrication
- Transport and installation (and de-installation if appropriate)
- Building- or other sub-contractor's costs
- Insurance and permissions
- Fees to other experts (lawyer, quantity surveyor, architect, landscape architect, engineer)
- Consultation process
- Education and community programme
- Exhibitions of work in progress
- Documentation and evaluation
- Security
- VAT if non-reclaimable
- Contingency

#### **Publicity, information and launch costs**

- Signage and information material for artwork in situ
- Publicity and public relations
- Catalogue or website
- Inauguration or opening event

#### **Long-term costs**

- Ongoing running costs or maintenance
- Establishing a legacy trust or dowry for maintenance if ownership of artwork is to be transferred