

ISIS BCC MADE

Warwick Bar Development in Eastside Birmingham

Artist's Brief



Grand Union Canal towards Warwick Bar and city centre

INTRODUCTION

A lead artist is being sought to join the masterplanning team for the proposed Warwick Bar redevelopment site. The masterplan will give form to the vision to create a flagship development within ISIS's national development portfolio in the context of its Sustainability Charter, for a carbon-neutral mixed-use scheme that sets a standard for future developments for the city and beyond. It is an opportunity to be part of an exemplar place-making exercise.

The vision driving the masterplan is for the creation of a place in the city where this waterside can be experienced in a new way: a conduit for creativity, people and activity that has potential beyond amenity. The aspiration for this development is one that maximises quality of life and social inclusion. A vital element is the opportunity for the first substantial new frontage on the River Rea that could be a model for adoption elsewhere on the river. The site's importance as a principle node for wildlife has been affirmed, and its significant canal architecture and listed buildings give Warwick Bar its uniqueness within the city.

The Warwick Bar site is 4.9 acres with water along three sides, and is at the centre of a cultural spine that includes the creative hubs known as the Custard Factory and the development of contemporary art spaces along Fazeley Street including a new media centre (Vivid) and temporary project spaces for the Ikon Gallery. Warwick Bar has the potential to become a distinctive and sophisticated creative quarter, linking to the existing cultural community in Birmingham through the development of a vibrant, environmentally sustainable, mixed use, creative neighbourhood alongside the canal. It could contribute to inclusive, eclectic and creative activity along the wider

navigation corridor delivering an eponymous statement of waterside regeneration to the city region.

ISIS is expecting a high standard of urban design and architecture. They invested in the design through a competitive selection process where seven innovative architectural practices were invited from a long list of 45 practices to submit ideas for the area. Kinetic were selected as the preferred practice to develop the masterplan and it is anticipated that other architects will be brought into future phases of architectural schemes.

The masterplanning team

Kinetic – AIU
ISIS
BCC Eastside Team
Eastside Sustainability

For detailed information on the Warwick Bar development and the team please refer to the website www.warwickbar.net. The password is - deritend

The role of MADE – Midlands Architecture Centre

MADE is the regional architecture centre for the West Midlands established through funding from Arts Council England, RIBA and CABE (Commission for Architecture and Built Environment) with the aim to advocate and promote good design. Artists are integral to MADE's methodology for achieving this. ISIS approached MADE to work in partnership with them and Birmingham City Council on the realisation of the Warwick Bar development. Initially this involved the facilitation of the architectural competition for the recruitment of the design team. It will continue through the masterplan and development, where MADE will lead on the community consultation for Warwick Bar; bringing the Eastside neighbourhood and local artists together to ensure the aims for a sustainable scheme can be achieved. The Warwick Bar development will become a project case study for good practice that can be disseminated across the region.

THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST

The artist role is essentially a research post. The artist is required to work alongside the masterplanning team led by the architects, Kinetic (www.kinetic-aiu.com) to develop the urban design scheme for Warwick Bar site. The expectation is for the artist to be an integral member of the design team and to contribute to the entire process of developing a masterplan, in a collaborative and engaged process. It is not anticipated that the artist will make recommendations for sites or proposals for artist's work in the masterplan, nor to create a permanent artwork or to lead on

certain elements of the design unless, through the masterplan process, this is what is required.

The aim of the post created is that the artist will make a holistic input into the overall urban landscape and creation of place. This requirement does not preclude the production of artworks or temporary intervention/event that could inform the masterplan, in the course of the research.

The outcome of the lead artist post will be the artists' contribution of their creative methodology to the masterplan process. We will require the artist to document this in some way, either through a diary, series of drawing, film etc that could be produced and presented in some format. A essential element to the masterplan process will be consultation with stakeholders and the local community. The artist will be required to partake in the consultation process.

ISIS is keen to explore and develop the benefits of integrating the artistic process into the master planning process. The inclusion of an artist in the team is seen as pivotal to the sustainability of the area; ensuring the scheme reflects and engages the cultural community who will be the future owners and visitors to the area.

THE ARTIST'S BRIEF:

The overall commitment from the artist will be to attend design meeting and workshops over the course of the masterplanning process from March 2006 until the submission of the masterplan for planning permission in October 2006. The dates and times are to be agreed.

1. To contribute to the masterplan working to the same brief as the architects

The artist will work to the same brief as the architects, which is enclosed. The masterplan is a document that charts the master planning process and explains how a site or a series of sites will be developed. It will describe how the proposal will be implemented, and set out the costs, phasing and timing of development.

The purpose of a masterplan is to set out principles on matters of importance, not to prescribe in detail how development should be designed. But a masterplan should show in some detail how the principles are to be implemented. If the masterplan shows an area designated for mixed-use development, for example, it should show a layout that will support such uses (for example by ensuring that footprints of the buildings are appropriate to the envisaged uses).

2. To undertake research work based upon your creative practice which can contribute to the masterplan

Your area for research towards the masterplan will be negotiated and agreed by the design team. The lead artist role is an opportunity to bring another creative process into the design process and as such you will be encouraged to experiment and investigate with the site and surrounding area and to work in alternative mediums to document your research.

3. To contribute to community consultation

The architects and development team will be consulting with the local community and stakeholders as a process of developing the masterplan. The integration of the local specificity of the area is important to the success of the development and ensuring a sustainable community. The design team will be expected to work with MADE and develop methods of engaging with local communities.

4. To record the work with the masterplan team

We envisage that a document could be produced that records the process of working with the design team. This could take the form of a film, publication, exhibition or event. A separate budget could be available for this depending upon the extent of the proposal.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The artist will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Artistic quality: Visual documentation of past work
- Understanding of the brief and response to the development
- Good communication skills

Timetable

Artist interview 1st March 2006
Artist begins work March 2006-
Masterplan process – March – September 2006
Planning permission – October 2006
Start on site – 2008

Fee: £8,000 inclusive of VAT and expenses.
We would expect a minimum of 20 days work.

A materials budget may be available for work arising from the work with the masterplan team that is above the research work that you may undertake.

Monitoring and documentation and evaluation of the project

MADE will project manage the artist's work in collaboration and consultation with the development partnership, this includes monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary design work and the added value of an artist on a design team. MADE will document any information regarding the lead artist work and interactive portal for the development work taking place.

The evaluation of the work will be based around a case study model looking at the process and outcomes of working with an artist. The University of Birmingham Urban and Regional Planning Department have approached the partnership to use Warwick bar as a research study into the process of developing a sustainable mixed- use building development. They intend to undertake to observe the design process for a sustainable site.

Background *The Eastside zone*

Warwick Bar is situated within the regeneration zone known as Eastside. The Eastside area is a major regeneration initiative for Birmingham in the 21st century. It complements the major investment achieved in the city so far around the International Convention Centre, Broad Street, Brindley Place, and the development of the Bullring and Selfridges retail spaces adjacent to Eastside.

The removal of the inner ring road, known as the 'concrete collar' at Masshouse circus, has allowed the expansion of the city centre into the Eastside area, increasing the size of the city from 80 to 800 hectares and encouraging the development of a new quarter focussing on the themes of learning, technology and heritage. Already completed are the building of a new higher education college, a science park, a technology and innovation centre, and an IMAX cinema with leisure and visitor attractions. The Warwick Bar development will initiate work to the historic heart of Eastside in Digbeth.

Warwick Bar



Warwick Bar is an area of 1.9hectares (4.56acres). It is where the Grand Union Canal, which connects Birmingham to London, meets the Digbeth Branch canal and is the focus for the Warwick Bar Conservation Area. It was an important wharf used by the companies who built the canals. It contained two canal basins, now filled in. Its architecture, with three statutorily listed buildings built by the canal company in the 1840s and 50s, and a locally listed canal warehouse of 1935, distinguishes the site.

Warwick Bar Conservation Area

The site sits within a conservation area, for which the character appraisal and management plan is in draft and about to go out to public consultation. *The River Rea* is largely invisible, flowing between the backs of factories and behind walls. The corridors of railways, canals and river in Digbeth, together with neglected pockets of land, support a rich diversity of flora and fauna, remarkably close to the city centre.

Present uses

The Eastside area is currently an area of light and heavy industrial workshops units. The architecture is a mixture of Victorian and modern warehouses, factories and workshop viaducts. The majority of the Warwick Bar site is presently occupied by uses which are thought to be incompatible with the vision for the future of the site, and for whom new locations will be found.

Warwick bar context

Digbeth Village

The fine-grained network of streets and buildings in Digbeth, and the adjacent Deritend, has the capacity, with the right planning policies, to become a lively and attractive neighbourhood. The nearby existing developments of The Bond, The Arch, and The Custard Factory, all making imaginative use of old redundant buildings, demonstrate what is possible.



Sustainability

The intention of ISIS is that the Warwick Bar development should be an exemplar of sustainability, being carbon-neutral, and rating highly on all other sustainability indicators; physical, economic and social. Safeguarding the historic environment is an integral part of the sustainability principles underpinning the whole of the Warwick Bar scheme.

Interdisciplinary team approach

It is envisaged that the masterplanning team will include practices related to the vision for Warwick bar including artist and experts in sustainability and ecology.

Mixed uses and occupation

Within the 4.95 acres of the site, there will be a mixture of land uses, bringing diversity and vitality, as well as economic stability to a key location. The integration of the creative economy is seen as vital to the success and sustainability of the area.

Joining-up and accessibility

The nature of the site, connecting street, canal and river, creates the opportunity to make new pedestrian connections that will enable residents and visitors to move between the different parts of Digbeth in ways not possible at present. On the site itself, the development will create an accessible and popular waterscape of a new kind.

Urban space

There will be public space created that will make Warwick Bar a significant and memorable location, that will attract people by making a new addition to their mental map of the city centre.

Catalytic effect

The success of the joined-up Warwick Bar development will act to catalyse new development on adjacent sites; critically the Sita waste transfer site across the canal, and the old Fazeley Street gasworks site across the river.

The River Rea

ESAG have drawn up a vision of how the invisible and abused river can be transformed by the development of Digbeth and Deritend into an environmental and social asset, with a riverside walkway, new planting and new buildings. The Warwick Bar development may be the first opportunity to put a part of this vision into practice.



Biodiversity

The new development is the most important wildlife node in the city centre. Warwick Bar aims to demonstrate how the intensification of human activity in Digbeth can successfully coexist with the nurturing of native flora and fauna, rather than driving them out as is so often the case.

Commercial profitability

The objective of ISIS is that all of these various objectives shall be achieved in a way that also delivers an adequate commercial financial return on its investment. The development has to pay for itself.

USEFUL WEBSITES

ISIS - <http://www.isis.gb.com>

The Bond Studios - www.thebondco.net

Eastside Sustainability Vision Document -
<http://www.birminghamfoe.org.uk/ESAG/Intro.htm> and www.sustainable-eastside.net

Government Office West Midlands
<http://www.rcu.gov.uk/GO/gowm/eastsideregen.asp>

Birmingham City Council – Eastside Major Development -
<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/majordevelopments.bcc>