

EAST



Public Art in Birmingham Eastside



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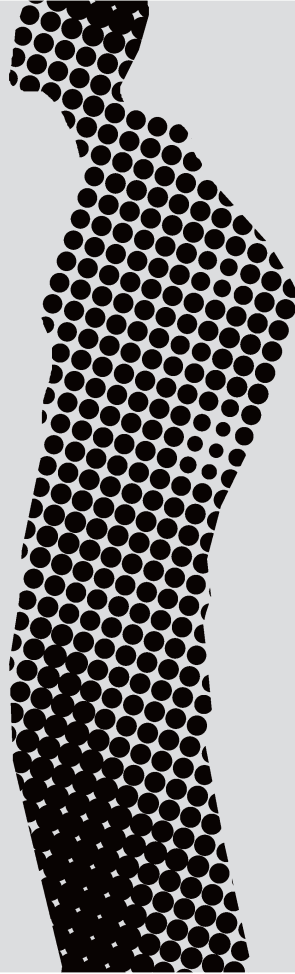
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Public Art in Birmingham Eastside

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1 introduction



Congregation
Meeting points
Sitting and waiting
Journeys
Change
Interactivity
Night and day
Sound of the city
People

The Eastside Development represents a unique opportunity for artists to integrate their thinking, work and creative process into a significant city centre regeneration initiative. Eastside represents significant challenges in its physical complexity and as a result of the multi organisational nature of the development partners. Here the rationale, some key themes and good practice principles that the Eastside Development should seek to fulfil in relation to the delivery of public art and artistic programmes within the area, are set out.

The guidance notes act as starting points for public art programmes and commissions within Eastside. All parties involved in the development are encouraged to consider a broad and diverse role for the arts throughout the life of the development and into its future.

Developers and Partners are expected to consider the themes outlined and particularly address the wider impact of their development within Eastside, how they interact with adjacent sites in considering the places 'in-between'.

Key principles of management and recommended process outlined here should assist the teams on site in establishing sound and creative opportunities for artists and ensure the best advisors are found for each development site.



PUBLIC ART IN BIRMINGHAM **EASTSIDE**

Contemporary arts practice invites diversity in artistic disciplines and can make a significant contribution to the public realm.

2 public art for eastside – a definition

At Eastside, public art will encompass a wide range of practices and processes, with artists involved in different ways and carrying out different roles.

Artists can be:

- Creators of artworks and installations
- Commentators on process and practice
- Negotiators and contributors to design decision-making
- The channel for ideas and expressions – a creative mechanism for engagement with others

The commissioning of artists can result in:

- A permanent, physical presence, integrated into its surroundings
- Holistic input to an overall landscape, place or building
- Temporary work, recurring works, changing works, virtual works
- Events, publications, meetings and celebrations

USE

The creation of any tangible artwork is just one aspect of the artist's potential to contribute to a city centre development. The manifestation of an artist's input takes many forms, as does the process by which they create it. This could be making conceptual contributions to projects, working as a team member providing new or complimentary skills; engaging the public in defining an agenda; challenging ways of working and processes of consultation.

Artists are increasingly representing, analysing and challenging cultural issues and social circumstances. Commissioned work for the public realm can have a variety of meanings, origins and functions, with an increased focus on the relevance to a place and its users.

Public art should be site-specific; not only with reference to geographical or physical concerns but also considering the human and social context, both of which are crucial to the delivery of a sustainable artwork be it permanent or temporary. Contemporary public art practice must be about both the place and its people.

Permanent work can serve as an enduring feature or functional part of the area in which it is sited. Temporary work can be as memorable as permanent work and make an equally lasting impact, as well as offering a potentially valuable approach to creative consultation and communication.

The redevelopment of Eastside will inevitably impact for long periods of time on residents and users of a city. Communities affected for longer periods of time will require a constant voice in the progress of the development; here the arts can play a vital part.



24 HRS. A DAY

3 themes and priorities for eastside



Identity

Eastside will experience extensive change, it will be renewed, invigorated and be inhabited by diverse communities and activities. A new and positive identity for this part of the city will result.

Artistic activities that respect the past and the heritage of the area whilst remaining innovative and contemporary will help in the creation of a new identity and context for an area.

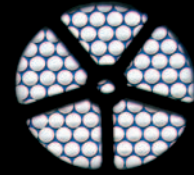
Research by artists into Eastside, looking at both social and industrial history, will contribute to a new and relevant sense of identity for the area.

Routes and linkages

Eastside will host diverse functions including retail, residential, learning and education, technology and leisure sectors. People will be using the area for many different purposes. How people move through the area, by bus, car, cycle or on foot, and the routes that they take, will be largely defined by the footprint of buildings and the road and pedestrian infrastructure. Artists could play an invaluable role, in partnership with the urban design professionals, to make routes interesting, safe and inspiring to the user.

The places 'in-between'

The areas 'in-between' are crucial to the legibility and sustainability of a diverse and high quality environment. Often neglected or forgotten, these areas that sit outside and in-between the main developments can offer unexpected opportunities for artists to create interventions, temporary or permanent. By animating such spaces they become part of a coherent public realm.





Artists can help explore and make manifest the cultural diversity of an area, ensuring reference is made to the different ways in which people live and carry out their daily routines.

Sustainability

Sustainability, both economic and environmental, sits at the heart of the Eastside Development. Artists' commissioning opportunities must seek to embrace the widest notion of sustainability in physical terms and through the process by which ownership and ideas are generated for works and events that take place during Eastside's regeneration.

Cultural diversity rewrite

The Eastside area is already characterised by a diverse population. This will increase in its diversity as the area is developed, and new communities – working, visiting, residential – move in. Artists can help explore and make manifest the cultural diversity of an area, ensuring reference

is made to the different ways in which people live and carry out their daily routines, respecting and celebrating difference.

Change

A city changes throughout the day, the week, the month and the year, this change is created by different groups and individuals inhabiting a place or space for a long period of time or even for a moment. The public realm at Eastside must accommodate, welcome and celebrate change and an innovative, challenging arts programming can contribute to this.





4 priority areas of artistic activity

The art programme could effectively contribute to the blurring of physical boundaries.

City Park for the 21st Century

Artists will be involved in the conceptual debates about the nature and design of this park. Artworks and interventions will be commissioned as an integral part of the design process. The Park and adjoining developments are inextricably linked and these linkages can be furthered by the involvement of artists, who would contribute to a Forecourts and Foyers policy, ensuring a public/private interface.

A central, high profile public space within the development, the inclusion of arts practice here is vital. Debate about how the park is animated and used by city dwellers and visitors is essential. Similarly, discussions about how artist and arts organisations may use this place in the future as a programmable space should be considered at the earliest opportunity.

The soft edge

The notion of public space is one that has boundaries. In a regeneration scheme as complex as Eastside it will mean that physical boundaries, due to land ownership, are inevitable. Boundaries can also be created by the users of the space/place by the nature of their activities. The art programme could effectively contribute to the blurring of these boundaries, ensuring distinctiveness but also aiding transition from one space/place to another.

Artistic activities that contribute to a transition through a space and that create distinctive senses of arrival are important.

Lighting

Vital to Eastside will be the creative use of light. Lighting that functions beyond the statutory requirements will:

- enhance the perception of safety
- reflect and enhance the night time economy of Eastside
- be part of the aspiration for an area that it is in constant change
- ensure Eastside is animated – be part of the 24-hour city

See *Lighting Places SPG draft 2002*

The public face of the development process

Eastside will be undergoing change for many years, with each development area having its own design and construction programme. For example, this will mean that miles of hoarding will be erected, and for much of the development time this will form the public face of the development.

The hoarding is just one way in which the arts and the developer can work together to provide a place for important cultural expression.

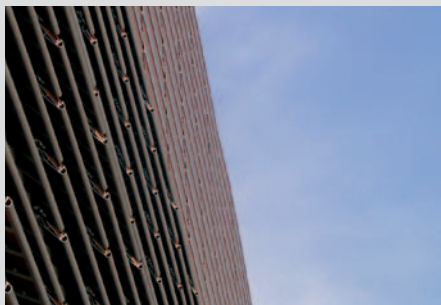
Individual developments

It is expected that the individual developer/stakeholder engage in their own commissioning programmes that in part relate to the capital build but also engage with the wider city. It is hoped that their commitment to the arts will run for the duration of the design and construction phase to completion and beyond.





Artistic activities that contribute to a transition through a space and that create distinctive senses of arrival are important.





5 elements of good practice

1. The Arts Advisor

It is expected that each developer would appoint an arts advisor to work on their behalf. The arts advisor could be a public art consultant, an arts organisation, or gallery, and ideally will have a local connection with, or understanding of the Eastside area.

The brief is the first and most important tool to ensure an artist is fully informed of key information about the project.

2. Artist's brief

The arts advisor/public art consultant will develop briefs for the artists' commissions that must be agreed by all partners, and the implications clearly understood in advance of any artistic appointments. This will be the basis for the artists' appointment.

The fee level must be agreed in advance of creating a brief and appointing an artist(s).

The brief is the first and most important tool to ensure an artist is fully informed of key information about the project, what is expected of them, the budget, the timescales/project programme.



3. Artist selection processes

Artists should be selected through a clear and transparent process.

The most effective approach to selection is appointment through a competitive process. Two variants on this process are recommended:

1. Artists appointed through interview
2. Artists appointed through competitive proposal development (shortlist created either by interview or on their merit judged on past work presented to a shortlisting group)

The key to success of artist selection procedures is the thoroughness and nature of the artist research and longlisting process and again two key mechanisms are recommended:

1. Through research and advice from the arts advisors
2. Through open calls for expression of interest through national advertising and the use of other communication tools

4. Appointment criteria

The arts advisor will work with the client to ensure a clear selection criteria is agreed in advance of appointing an artist.

Selection criteria to be agreed with Arts Advisors for each Developer/ Stakeholder. The criteria will be adjusted according to specific commissions.

5. Professional support for artists

Few commission opportunities, particularly permanent work, can be realised without the support and input from design and construction professionals, architects, lighting designers, structural engineers. It is essential that all the individual developers/stakeholders fully brief and instruct their design professionals to work with the artists.

Time should be allocated within these professional fee structures to accommodate attendance at artist meetings and other liaison with artists.

The potential for artist commissions must be written into the main contractors tender documents – where appropriate.

6. Payment to artists

Artists are professionally trained and should be treated and paid as such. Fixed fees or percentage rates should be negotiated according to the size and scale of the commission. Artists should never be asked to work for nothing, i.e. any ideas or proposals that they are asked to put forward should always attract a fee.

7. Contractual issues

Each appointment must be supported by design contracts followed by commission contracts on approval of proposal. The advisor must be able to advise the client on contractual issues.



6 the expectations

Birmingham City Council are committed to the inclusion of artistic practice into new development.

1. A commitment to good practice in Eastside

Good practice means that all commissions and artistic opportunities within Eastside will be:

- appropriate to the context – be site specific and unique to the commissioner and artist
- programmed and developed to have a presence throughout the life of the development and onto completion
- diverse in the artistic practice, from sculpture to live performance
- include temporary and permanent works
- developed with timescales and artistic briefs that allow for effective research and dialogue
- properly supported by the range of design, construction and development professionals involved in the development to encourage interdisciplinary working
- generated through creative partnerships and dialogue

2. The developer commitment

It is expected that each developer would appoint an arts advisor to work on their behalf.

The arts advisor will assist in the development of a detailed plan or programme for public art to be submitted as part of the planning cycle.

It is expected that each developer will agree a commitment to a genuine programme of public art within their development site. This commitment will be agreed with the Council at the earliest stage of the planning process as possible.

It is hoped that part of this commitment will be targeted to the areas 'in-between'.

3. The Council

Birmingham City Council are committed to the inclusion of artistic practice into new development.

In appropriate circumstances the Council will require artistic involvement in a new development.

Birmingham City Council is committed to high quality public art, in terms of process and outcome.

It is expected that each developer will submit their plans for public art to the Council and liaise with them throughout the development process.

4. How to get advice

Each developer/partner can be offered advice through a range of mechanisms to secure an appointment of an appropriate art professional. It is considered important that arts advisors are appointed to assist in the commissioning of artists and these appointments should be made competitively to ensure the correct appointments are made for each development.

Birmingham City Council are committed to the inclusion of artistic practice into new development.

7 contacts



This advice will be available from
Birmingham City Council Planning
Department

Nigel Edmondson

Arts Ambassador, Eastside

Jenny Peet

Public Art Officer, Arts Council England
West Midlands

It is anticipated that a Public Art
Coordinator post will be established to
support and advise on public art
throughout the development life of the
Eastside Development.

Public Art in Birmingham Eastside

EAST
SIDE

The Eastside Development represents a unique opportunity for artists to integrate their thinking, work and creative process into a significant city centre regeneration initiative.