

MORLEDGE REGENERATION PUBLIC ART PROJECT

SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of Derby City Council's adopted Public Realm Strategy for Derby City Centre the Public Realm Programme is providing funding for a range of improvements to the Full Street Corridor project of which Morledge is part of. Examples of previous projects from the programme are;

1. Cathedral Green and Bridge,
2. Castleward (Phase 1), and
3. St Alkmund's Bridge

The improvements will breathe new life into the corridor and connect the river to the city centre. The project provides the opportunity for creative schemes that will include direct involvement from the Derby Public. Leading consultants for the arts and the public realm, Modus Operandi, are producing a public art strategy for the whole of the Full Street corridor, a high profile permanent public art scheme and an extensive public consultation programme to inform all the artwork. The cost of all the artwork and consultation by Modus is £70k

Modus Operandi, a team of DCC officers and Quad, appointed an artist of international repute John Aldus in December 09 from a long list of 12 top and talented new artists. He is currently developing his programme of work and consultation for the next few months and as part of the consultation process he, along with the Council would like to invite CAAC to be integral to this. CAAC are, therefore, invited to help provide their short-list of key heritage/historic/character view points (approximately 10).

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the artist's proposal, attached. To receive an oral report at the meeting from the artist and project management team and consider opportunities for important viewpoints as part of the project.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The consultation process is wide ranging and a critical part of the process, John's concept essentially aims to engage the Derby public including the university, local school children, youth groups, and the wider community through local media creatively in a subtly different way to current public art schemes. He asks the viewer to see elements of the city by sitting on a specifically designed seat original to Derby in a number of key sites around the Morledge and City Centre. The emphasis in this scheme is **not** the seat but what is being viewed and the consultation will ask the people of Derby in a series of creative and interactive workshops their preferred sites that best express Derby's unique identity. The sites will be expected to include the best of Derby's Heritage, but will also try to discover sites previously unseen or unusual and possibly humorous way. The full consultation is due to be completed by the end of July.

<http://www.derby.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/EF86719D-27DB-46B8-B4D2-F7E931456342/0/PUBLICARTStrategyFINAL.pdf>

- 3.2 This project aims to do the following, in line with objectives in the Corporate Plan:
- Encourage ambition, aspiration and achievement in young people. Allowing creativity.
 - Creates sense of value and community, well being and ownership by being involved in real creative projects and decision making process.
 - Contribution to the physical environment by directly involving communities in the development of their environment.
 - Improving the appearance of the public realm to provide a positive and high quality place to live, visit and work.
 - Creative initiatives such as public art increase tourism and interaction from the community.
 - Creative schemes that include artists allow greater involvement and create a wider debate.
 - Creating a sense of ownership by direct involvement in developing their own environment.
 - Creative schemes celebrate and express Derby's culture and unique identity.

3.3 Next Steps

CAAC's involvement in this is critical to providing the best of Derby's Heritage Site views and are asked to provide their shortlist as well as offer any other unusual or unseen views and ideas. To help with this process the Derby Public Art Strategy offers some insight into Derby's unique assets and character and is available on the Council website.

For more information contact:	Helen Acton, Public Art Officer, 01332 204194
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	None

'SITE SIGHT'

Project for the city of Derby

November 2009

At this point in my work, it is difficult for me to conceive an art intervention in a public space merely in terms of a singular sculptural or decorative element. I am quite worried by the international proliferation of sculptured objects that so many cities seem to be in need of and I feel quite reluctant to join this movement. Instead of just adorning only a specific site with a piece that, accepted or rejected by the public, will mainly receive (as experience often shows) nothing more than general indifference, it seems essential to me to give the viewer the opportunity of a privileged and personal dialogue with his city itself – a chance to experience a fresh look at his everyday surroundings.

Considering how little interest is generally given by the passerby to his urban environment, the purpose of this work is to set up this dialogue. The essence of the artwork resides in that which the object proposes to see. The city becomes the piece. The viewer, instead of simply witnessing a mere object, is invited to take part in the piece, to become an active element of it. This work is composed of a certain number of regular sized chairs, built in metal. An original design would be specially created for the piece. Their number would be determined by the budget but, because of the connection of this work with the idea of learning, it should ideally be that of the average number of seats in school classrooms in Derby.

They will be distributed throughout the whole city and placed in significant locations chosen in collaboration between the author and the Council, historians, politicians, associations, people involved in education, literature, architecture, art, religion, industry ... A system of consultation would be specially organised.

A short text (descriptive, poetic or even enigmatic) speaking of the aimed subject would be engraved on the seat or the back of the chair. Some Derby writers poets or historians could be asked to contribute to this part of the work. Each location, chosen for positive or negative reasons, must deserve a specific attention; the chair facing it gives the viewer a privileged viewpoint inviting him to a state of reflection. The subjects could range from a single detail, to buildings, curiosities, specific areas, landscapes, works in progress etc. Some could even face places from which significant elements of the city had been removed or demolished.

Cities are in constant change; new buildings, new planning, new street organizations, etc will create new views, new perspectives, new meanings, new problems. Whilst some chairs (related for example to historical components of the city) will never be moved, others could be orientated (and fixed for a while) to witness those changes underlining them, inviting the viewer to consider them with special attention, consciousness and, hopefully, involvement, thereby giving the chair a social, political or poetic function.

This work incites the viewer to look not only at what history offers to be seen, but also what we made of it and what we are doing with it.

To look at our own city is also a way of looking at the self. It requires an effort. This is why, rather than elaborating some 'arty finger', I prefer to invite the viewer to look at the moon!

John Aldus