



To: Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth:
Cllr Clare Blair

Report by: Head of Joint Urban Design

Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny

Wards affected:

October 5th
2010

Approval of the Capital Project Appraisal and Procurement Report and the S106 Public Art Initiative Funding of £28,815 Towards the Provision of Public Art as Part of the Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project
Not a Key Decision.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Upper Cam Biodiversity Project encompasses a complex of five natural green spaces on the banks of the river Cam, adjacent to the heart of the historic centre of the city. The enhancement of all five sites had been identified as a key priority in the adopted City Council Nature Conservation Strategy (2006). Following officer recommendations and public consultation, approval was given at the March 2010 Environment Scrutiny Committee to secure S106 Informal Open Space funding to undertake habitat and access enhancement works detailed in the project appraisal attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 As part of the Upper Cam Biodiversity Project an opportunity exists to commission an artist to contribute to the project. The proposed works as part of this wider project include improvements to access, wayfinding, legibility and interpretation. A major aim of the project is also to encourage more family exploration and use of the five open spaces.
- 1.3 This commission will contribute to the works proposed and, will be developed to address issues of legibility and wayfinding between the open spaces, adding the value of an artist to provide a creative interpretation to items identified in the wider project and add the value of the S106 Public Art Initiative to the existing budgets, to achieve this.
- 1.4 This Report seeks approvals for the Capital Project and Procurement Report and S106 Public Art Initiative funding of £28,815 towards the inclusion of public art within the Upper River Cam Biodiversity project. Any on-going revenue costs will be funded from the Local Nature Reserve revenue budget. A Capital Project Appraisal & Procurement Report for this commission was approved by the Asset Management Group on September 9th 2010 and is attached as Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The S106 funding for this project comes from a commuted public art payment from the Meadowcroft Hotel development and is subject to a repayment clause (November 2012).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended: The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve the Capital Project Appraisal and Procurement Report and the S106 Public Art Initiative funding of £28,815 Towards the Provision of Public Art as Part of the Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project.

3. Background

- 3.1 The City Council is in the process of developing a Public Art Commissioning Strategy, which will be finalised in early 2011. The principle of the inclusion of public art within the Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project, has already been identified as part of that work. However, the project is proposed to be developed prior to the approval of the Public Art Commissioning Strategy, in order to ensure its integration with the wider Upper River Cam project and to also ensure its development and delivery prior to the expiration of a repayment clause within for the S106 contribution, which is proposed to be used for this project.

- 3.2 It has been identified through public consultation that an issue within the necklace of green spaces (which form the Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project) is poor legibility, in terms of understanding, which space one may be in and what is special about that space. Also, wayfinding through the spaces could be improved. Proposals within the wider project aim to resolve these issues. This commission will contribute to the delivery of those proposals, to resolve these issues, by adding the value of an artist to provide a creative interpretation to the project, using the S106 Public Art Initiative and adding it to the existing budget. The vision for the project is to commission subtle artworks that will encourage ALL users to engage, understand and appreciate these spaces.

- 3.3 The sites covered in the Upper River Cam Biodiversity project are (please refer to Appendix 3):

- Paradise Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and County Wildlife Site
- River Cam County Wildlife Site
- Coe Fen County Wildlife Site
- Sheep's Green County Wildlife Site
- Lower Vicar's Brook, New Bit & Coe Fen Straits City Wildlife Site

- 3.4 **Desired Outcomes of the commission:**

- Reinforce the City Council's commitment to 2010 International Year of Biodiversity
- Promote the use of the five natural green spaces and connecting network of footpaths and open spaces
- Promote improved legibility of signage and wayfinding
- Encourage family use and exploration of the open space
- Develop a sense of discovery through the open spaces
- Provide points of reflection
- Promote a heightened awareness and celebration of the city's open spaces

- Encourage biodiversity and awareness of the importance of biodiversity in the City
 - Encourage healthy lifestyles
 - Recognise the international importance of this historic landscape.
 - Inspire people to engage with their local natural environment
- 3.5 The commission will be subject to an ‘open competition’, where expressions of interest will be sought. Artists will be required to submit examples of previous work and asked to give an initial response to the artist’s brief. A shortlist of five artists will then be drawn up and those artists will be invited to attend an interview. This commission will comprise of three stages:
- Stage 1 – The selected artist will carry out preliminary research and work closely with the Project Steering Group to develop a series of artworks within the open spaces, which address issues of wayfinding, legibility and interpretation.
 - Stage 2 – The detailed development of the artwork proposals for final approval.
 - Stage 3 – The installation of final approved artworks.
- 3.6 A Project Steering Group will be appointed and will include the following: City Council Members, the City Council’s Nature Conservation Officer, and the Senior Arts and Urban Design Officer.
- 3.7 The artworks must be safe, robust and attractive and have minimal pollution impact in both the immediate and wider vicinity. They must be designed, manufactured and installed using sustainable materials, processes and techniques wherever possible. Other design considerations include safety implications, vandal resistance and maintenance access. A budget of up to £28,815 is proposed for the project. This budget is to include all fees, expenses, planning permission and approval costs, materials, fabrication, public consultation, transport, installation, sub-contractors costs, technical consulting advice (including structural engineering advice), insurances and any other costs associated with the making or installation of the pieces.
- 3.8 The S106 contribution for this project is subject to a repayment clause (after November 2012). Planning permission and Environment Agency Consent may be required for any artworks proposed in the River Cam floodplain. Appendix 4 provides indicative timescales for the delivery of the project.
- 3.9 If the proposal is successful with this request for funding, the development of a the proposal will involve:
- engagement with the local public
 - consultation with Ward Councillors and the Public Art Panel
 - final approval of the detailed proposal by the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth
- 3.10 The Public Art Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) states that ‘any proposals brought forward for consideration for funding from the S106 Public Art Initiative must conform to the requirements of the SPD’. In Section 5.11 it states ‘successful public art should aim to deliver benefits through:

Community

- *helping people to reflect on the nature of where they live or work or socialise*
- *Ownership and engagement* with spaces and places
- *Contributing* to the creation of the art work
- Improving *community safety* in the public realm
- Contributing to *community building* and social cohesion
- *Empowering* and involving the community in decision making

Placemaking

- *Identity*, both citywide and locally
- *Orientation*, giving information about the place and its meaning
- Making *connections* that link the various meanings of the place and its relationship to its context
- Giving *directions* through the place and along routes and spaces
- *Animating* the place and building on its uses and activities
- Improving the *environmental quality* through the creation of artworks that provide visual and emotional delight

Key thematic issues for linking public art across the City also include the environment, focused around climate change and sustainable living (section 6.5). Section 9.8 in the Public Art SPD sets out the process for considering the funding of proposals from the S106 Public Art Initiative; this proposal is following the stages as set out in this part of the SPD. The proposal to integrate public art within the Upper River Cam Biodiversity project, therefore complies with the relevant policies set out in the SPD. Appendix 5 provides exemplars of artworks.

- 3.11 The project supports the Council's Nature Conservation Strategy objectives, both through the enhancement of an existing LNR (Paradise LNR) and the positive management of the adjacent Sheep's Green and Coe Fen County Wildlife sites. The designation of Sheep's Green and Coe Fen as Local Nature Reserves is proposed for 2011.
- 3.12 2010 has been named 'International Year of Biodiversity' by the United Nations and Cambridge City Council has pledged support to this initiative and the launch of this project would demonstrate the authorities commitment. Subject to relevant approvals the works will be complete by November 2012.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Financial Implications: The project will be funded by the S106 Public Art Initiative. There are no financial implications for other council budgets. The contribution is subject to a repayment clause (November 2012)
- 4.2 Staffing Implications: The project will be managed by the Senior Arts and Urban Design Officer with support from the Nature Conservation Officer and therefore staff resources have already been committed and will continue you to be committed, subject of course to funding being provided and the project commencing.

- 4.3 Equal Opportunities Implications: No direct implications, however, it is the intention that public art is freely and widely accessible. An aim of the wider project is to address issues of accessibility to and through the open spaces.
- 4.4 Environmental Implications: The provision of public art in the city adds to the interest, variety and quality of the public realm. The project will provide a direct support to the promotion of biodiversity and support the Council's objectives to support the International Year of Biodiversity.
- 4.5 Community Safety Implications: There are no direct implications. The inclusion of works of art in public places can make them more attractive and encourage people to use them. Maintenance of public art is also an important consideration in assessing proposals. For instance, the ability to withstand vandalism and weathering should be demonstrated. Ongoing maintenance details are required to accompany all public art scheme submissions.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Public Art Supplementary Planning Document
- Landscape Master plan (June 2008) Paradise Project
<http://www.lnr.cambridge.gov.uk/uploads/Paradise-LMP1.067.pdf>
- CCC Nature Conservation Strategy (2006).
<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/pdfs/Nature-Conservation-Strategy.pdf>
- Biodiversity Action Reporting System
<http://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/uploaded/files/S41%20NERC%20List%20-%20May%202008v2.xls>
- Coe Fen & Sheep's Green Conservation Plan (2001)
- Paradise Local Nature Reserve Management Plan
- County Wildlife Site Register (2005)
- Sheep's Green and Coe Fen DRAFT Management plan

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Upper River Cam Biodiversity Capital Project Appraisal and Procurement Report

Appendix 2 - Upper River Cam Biodiversity Public Art Proposal Capital Project Appraisal and Procurement Report

Appendix 3 – Site plan illustrating Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project

Appendix 4 Indicative Timescales

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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