

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

DOWNS COMMITTEE

29 January 2015

Report of: Aldo Rinaldi

Title: Summer time Public Art Commission: Bristol Downs

Ward: Clifton (Downs)

Officer Presenting Report: Senior Public Art Officer

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 922 3064

RECOMMENDATION

We would like the committee to:

1. Approve the installation of a temporary public artwork on The Downs by local artist Richard Long, commissioned by Bristol City Council & Arnolfini as part of a 2 year public art programme (the first work approved by the Downs Committee was realised in Summer 2014)
2. Agree a location for the artwork to be installed in 2015 to enable Bristol City Council and Arnolfini to gain the approval of the installation by BCC planning in time for the summer and to coincide with the artists exhibition at Arnolfini's: Richard Long: TIME AND SPACE (31 July – 15 November 2015).

Summary

Bristol City Council, in partnership with Arnolfini, is working with the artist Richard Long on a new temporary public artwork. The public artwork is being developed as part of a two year public art programme for the Downs which saw the first work (a work by Oscar Tuazon) installed on the Downs during the summer of 2014. This second work by Richard Long is developed to coincide with a large solo exhibition of the artists' work which will be presented at Arnolfini Gallery in Summer 2015 as part of the Bristol 2015 European Green Capital.

Richard Long is considered to be among the most important artists of his generation. He won the Turner prize in 1989 after previously being shortlisted four times, and represented Great Britain at the 37th Venice Biennale in 1976. Long has realised many works that respond to the landscape, investigating nature and our experience within nature. He emphasises the process of perception and ideas in art, while his works create moments of beauty and poetry inside and outside of gallery spaces.

Richard Long was born in Bristol, where he continues to live and work. The exhibition at Arnolfini will be the first museum-scale presentation of the artists' work in his home city since 2000, and will include newly commissioned and existing works that reference his personal connection to the landscape of the South West.

The artwork for Clifton downs is designed to compliment the exhibition at Arnolfini and will be created in direct to response to the Downs landscape. The Downs are an area of special significance for the artist who was lived in Bristol since his birth in 1945. The work that Long would like to realise would be based on a footpath by the footprints of people walking across the Downs, instinctively following the same route and establishing an unplanned path through the grass that the artist would pick out in a white graphic material.

The significant issues in the report are:

The project proposed would involve:

- Erection of a structure on the Downs (Bylaw no. 5)
- Events programme

Policy

This project is compliant with Bristol City Council policies:

- 'Bristol City Council Public Art Policy'
- 'Bristol City Council Public Art Strategy'
- 'Bristol City Council 20: 20 Plan'
- 'A Management Plan for Clifton and the Downs' (sections: D1 and D2) and in pursuance of section 3.8 'Cultural Heritage' and 3.9 'Built Heritage'
- 'BCS21: Quality Urban Design (Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy)'

Consultation

1. Internal

Andrew Gordon, Estates Management Team Leader (BCC)

Re: practical issues relating to the installation of art works.

Peter Insole, Archaeological Officer (BCC)

Re: sites of historical or archaeological sensitivity.

Peter Watts, Festival and Events Officer (BCC)

Events licenses and permissions.

Ben Skuse, Area supervisor: Downs, Blaise, Kingsweston estates (BCC)

Re: practical issues relating to the installation of art works.

Becky Belfin, Nature Conservation Officer, (BCC)

Ecological impact of the work and ensuring the sculpture does not disrupt or damage any

nature or plant life.

At time of report preparation:

We will continue to consult with the Safety Advisory Group, arranging table top exercises where necessary; along with the police service, fire service, NHS, and Becky Coffin, Nature Conversation Officer on the exact location of the proposed art work.

2. External

At time of report preparation:

Friends of The Downs and Avon Gorge (FoDAG)

Mark Harris, Freelance Production Manager

Project delivery and fabrication, installation, including planning and risk assessments.

Context

- (1) Bristol City Council, in partnership with Arnolfini, is working with the artist Richard Long on a new temporary (4 – 5 months) public artwork. The work coincides with a large solo exhibition of the artists' work which will be presented at Arnolfini in Summer 2015 at part of Bristol 2015 European Green Capital.
- (2) Bristol and the South West have remained an important production context for Richard Long's work, both in making works that respond to the landscape of the region, and in the ideas and language developed through his early career, when he returned to Bristol often to make work. The exhibition at Arnolfini will focus on works by Long made in the South West, while offering a broad overview of the artists' different forms of working. The project is a very personal response from the artist, to an invitation to present a significant survey of works in his home city.
- (3) Walking is central to Richard Long's work as a way of perceiving and recording landscape. His works use raw materials such as stones, slate and driftwood, often found along the way, to mark the places that he finds through simple interventions that follow particular ideas. Often he leaves little trace of these actions, and works are documented through photographs, diagrams, installations of stones, or text works that record environments and observations.
- (4) Alongside his exhibition at Arnolfini during 2015, the artist has proposed a new temporary public artwork for the Clifton Downs, an area of special significance for the artist. He has talked of playing in in these grassy, rocky, wooded and often secret places, and the physical connection with nature and freedom that he felt as a boy. The roots of Long's work with the landscape can be seen in his childhood connection to these places, which have remained a personal and enduring reference point for the artist.
- (5) The work that Long is interested to realise on The Downs is centred on a footpath which has been made over many months by the footprints of people walking across the Downs, instinctively following the same route and establishing an unplanned path through the grass.

Proposal

(1) The Proposal

The sculpture proposed by the artist would consist of 5cm chips of white marble that would be embedded into the ground along an unofficial footpath which crosses the downs. The marble would be installed in a wide line along the path, covering the area and creating a vibrant, curved white line in the landscape. The dimensions of the work would be 165 metres long with a width of 40 cm.

The artist will work with Arnolfini technicians in order to realise the work. The design and location for the art work would be decided in consultation with Becky Belkin, Nature Conservation Officer; Peter Insole, Archaeological Officer; Andrew Gordon, Heritage Planning and Partnership Officer, the downs Ranger, and following the full approval and support of the Downs Committee.

(2) Events programme

The public artwork would be a central element in a programme of summertime community events including guided walks, which would be open to local residents and the general public. The events would be programmed regularly throughout July, August and September (working around events already scheduled to take place). Events would be managed and delivered by Arnolfini, in consultation with Peter Watts, Festival and Events Officer at BCC

Events would be small scale, with numbers less than 100, managed and overseen by Arnolfini. They would link to workshops and education activities for families and with a wide appeal.

(3) Timetable

Jan – March: consultation, detailed structural plans from artist, risk assessment

March: start of planning approval period

May: consult local community, police, fire service and NHS; contract fabricators

June: installation

July – September: events programme takes place

November: work deconstructed, ground repaired to original state

(4) Location:

The artist has proposed a location for the work. Siting the artwork is subject to comment and approval from Becky Belfin, Nature Conservation Officer, at BCC, and Natural England who at the time of the drafting of this report have not confirmed.

Other Options Considered

The area identified for this commission is based on the area use in 2014 for the erection of the artwork by Oscar Tuazon and which was informed by the nature conservation officer as the area did not have rare grasses or protected species. The artist for 2015 (Richard Long) has developed his proposal for a specific footpath on the Downs, chosen for its position in the surrounding landscape. An alternative location would need to be discussed with the artist. Due to the site specific nature of the artist's proposal (developed in direct response to the Downs and its landscape) no other option for siting the work in Bristol has been considered.

Risk Assessment

A full risk assessment will be drawn up following submission of detailed structural plans from the artist.

Arnolfini will:

- Ensure that the structure is built by competent craftsmen / fabricators.
- Provide sound public liability in excess of £10million
- Prove that all damaged ground can and will be repaired to its original state, we will seek advice from Andrew Gordon, Heritage Planning and Partnership Officer, in this area. The Arnolfini is also happy to provide a bond to cover any works to the ground that Parks or Downs Committee may require.
- Consult with other organisations (including the downs committee and friends of group) about similar successful projects undertaken in Bristol and the Downs, (such as 'The Black Cloud' for Victoria Park, and sited for 4 months in summer 2009) www.morison.info/theblackcloud to determine the positive and negative impact and how to mitigate any negatives.
- Provide a full working RAMS produced for the construction period, events and dormant stages. We will seek to get the RAMS independently approved so a guarantee we are fully compliant and are not placing the public at risk.
- At all times be fully accountable for maintenance of the artwork, and repairing any damage to the artwork or the location it is placed within during the period at The Downs.
- At all stages of the process be fully conversed with the local community, friends groups, and local resident groups, so they feel involved with what is happening.
- Seek advice from the police so to mitigate as much potential vandalism or miss use.
- Consult with local community groups and parties

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 8a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- ii) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to -
- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected

characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);

- encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –

- tackle prejudice; and
- promote understanding.

8b) *< Insert a note on how the public sector equality duties are relevant to the proposals and how these duties have been taken into account in developing the proposals. Where an equality impact assessment has been undertaken, summarise its findings here and provide link to full document, or include the equality impact assessment as an appendix. Where no equality impact assessment has been undertaken, give reasons why not>.*

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

<Consult Legal Division - relevant solicitor will provide a view which should be typed in here>

(Legal advice provided by *<Insert name and job title>*)

Financial

(a) Revenue

n/a – project budget held by Arnolfini.

(b) Capital

n/a – project budget held by Arnolfini.

(Financial advice provided by *<Insert name and job title>*)

Land

Land is owned by BCC and subject to The Downs Bylaws.

Personnel

n/a – project produced by Arnolfini.

(Personnel advice provided by <Insert name and job title>)

Appendices:

1. Art work proposal with examples of previous work.

2. Art work location options (map based)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

<It is a statutory requirement to list papers used to prepare the report but not ones already published. If none insert “none” here)>



**Bristol City Council
Horticultural Services**

**Proposed location for temporary sculpture
and future BBQ area**

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ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

Scale: @A3 1:2,225
Date: 09/05/2014



NEIGHBOURHOODS
DIRECTORATE

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Appendix 2.

Richard Long Selected Images



England, 1968



Connemara Sculpture
Ireland, 1971



Cornwall Slate Line, 1990



White Onyx Line, 1990



River Po Line, Italy, 2001



Berlin Circle, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, 2011



Flint Cross, 2012



Box Hill Road River
London 2012 (commission for the Olympic Games)



A Circle in Antarctica
Ten Days in the Heritage Range of the Ellsworth Mountains, 2012