



Mereside (Blackpool)/ New West Division Police Headquarters

Artist Brief

This brief is to commission an artist to develop a new piece of work, in partnership with the communities of Mereside, Blackpool for the new police headquarters.



(image 1: book at bedtime part of the Mereside at Play programme/
image 2: Adrian Pritchard cardboard town as part of Mereside at Play activity day)

Background

LeftCoast have been working with the communities of Mereside for the past 12 months through Mereside at Play, a project to creatively explore the green spaces of the estate. This project will come to fruition in autumn 2017 through the redevelopment of one of Mereside large green spaces into a playful space designed with the under 4's in mind. Through this consultation we have developed a partnership with the police and the new police station being built opposite the estate.

The build of the new police station is a great opportunity for the police to work closely with the community that they will soon be part of. The developers have offered schemes such as skills open days on the site, and the police have identified the option to install a new art work, created with the surrounding community within their main entrance.

This is an exciting opportunity to create something innovative and unique that will become part of the fabric of the police station and the place, bridging the gap between community and police.

Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner has asked for the artwork as part of his pledge to engage the community in the work of the police. His role as the voice of the public in policing seeks to ensure that barriers are removed and positive and engaging relationships are encouraged.

The artwork will be funded from money seized from criminals under the proceeds of crime act, allowing the community to turn something bad into something good.

The overarching aim of the brief is to bring the community from the outside in to new build serving as a daily reminder of the local community the police serve.

Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw said:

"I am keen that the new police headquarters is seen as part of the wider community – that it helps to bring together officers and staff with the local people they serve.

"The building's walls should not be seen as a barrier to the local community and the art project offers an opportunity for the people of Mereside to help influence the culture of the force that works out of the headquarters and serve as a reminder of their purpose to keep people safe. "

Insp Chris Hardy from Lancashire Constabulary said:

"The new West Division Police Headquarters will be a state-of-the-art building, which will provide vital support to officers and staff who deliver frontline services to keep the area safe.

"This project provides a fantastic opportunity to strengthen the existing links between Lancashire Constabulary, Mereside and the wider community. We are really keen that the communities of Mereside feel involved in the development of the new building and, by continuing our work with the communities through this project, I am sure we can commission a piece of artwork that is fitting for the location and reflects the strong links between the police and the community."

Sarah Threlfall chair of proactive community group, Mereside and Friends in Action said:

"As a resident of Mereside and Chairperson of M.A.F.I.A. I would like the piece to replicate our values as individuals and also as a group who are proactive on the estate. The final piece will be recognition of our hard work and will make people see Mereside in a different light. We are proud of Mereside and want people to see us for who we are and what we represent, it will give us a part in the ownership within the new building where it will be housed."

Brief



 Lancashire Constabulary | West New Build | Blackpool
Stakeholder Presentation, April 2017

 WILLMOTT DIXON
 MCBAINS COOPER

We would like to commission a permanent piece of work that further develops the relationship between the police and the surrounding community, both in the development of the work and the finished piece. We would like to hear from artists who have a socially motivated practice, the creative engagement process should be integral to the final design. We are open to suggestions on how this might happen, either through workshops or short residencies; this should be a way for the artist, police and police commissioners office to have a dialogue with the community. We would envisage workshops over the summer targeting young people (diversionary activity) and the wider community as well as opportunities for the Commissioner to observe work and engage with the community as part of the process.

The work itself can take a variety of forms (please see options in the building spec below), however it should be based on conversations between the community and the police. We are open to proposals from all art forms but feel that suggestions that work closely with materials and could involve a hands on, skills sharing/making element within the engagement may suit the opportunity well.

The work will be sited in the main entrance of the police station, the first area that visitors to the station will see, and so need to be appropriate to people with a variety of different needs, varying from police personnel visiting the site to those reporting a crime.

We see the process of developing this work as helping to develop a relationship both ways. The residents of Mereside have the opportunity to input into this large new development on their doorstep and feel some ownership over it, and the police have the chance to explore the community that they

will soon become part of, from the green spaces that can be used on a lunch time stroll, to the local shops and amenities that they might frequent.

The final work will need to be a low maintenance design that will be commissioned for ten years and then reviewed. We are open to ideas and art form.

Themes



Below are three themes that have been identified that we would like to see taken in to consideration in this commission:

Environment

Mereside at Play has been working with the communities of Mereside for the past 12 months, exploring creative and outdoor play. The programme has sought to link the young people of the estate and their families with the outdoors, resulting in projects such as a community orchard and wild flower meadows. This is echoed in the build of the new police station which has been designed to be as environmentally responsive as possible. The stations design has been inspired by the idea of shelters on the Blackpool sea front.

Place

This commission is rooted in its place. Mereside is an estate that was built in the post war late 1940's era, and so has a long history in Blackpool. Significantly it is named Mereside because of its location is next to Marton Mere, a SSSI site, and also the original 'black pool' that Blackpool was named after. The new police station will be a large development on the site of the old gas works directly next to Mereside. The artwork can use this heritage, stories or aspirations for the future as an engagement theme.

Community

This commission is about finding a process that both the community of Mereside and the community of the new police station can get involved with, possibly with a hands on making element.

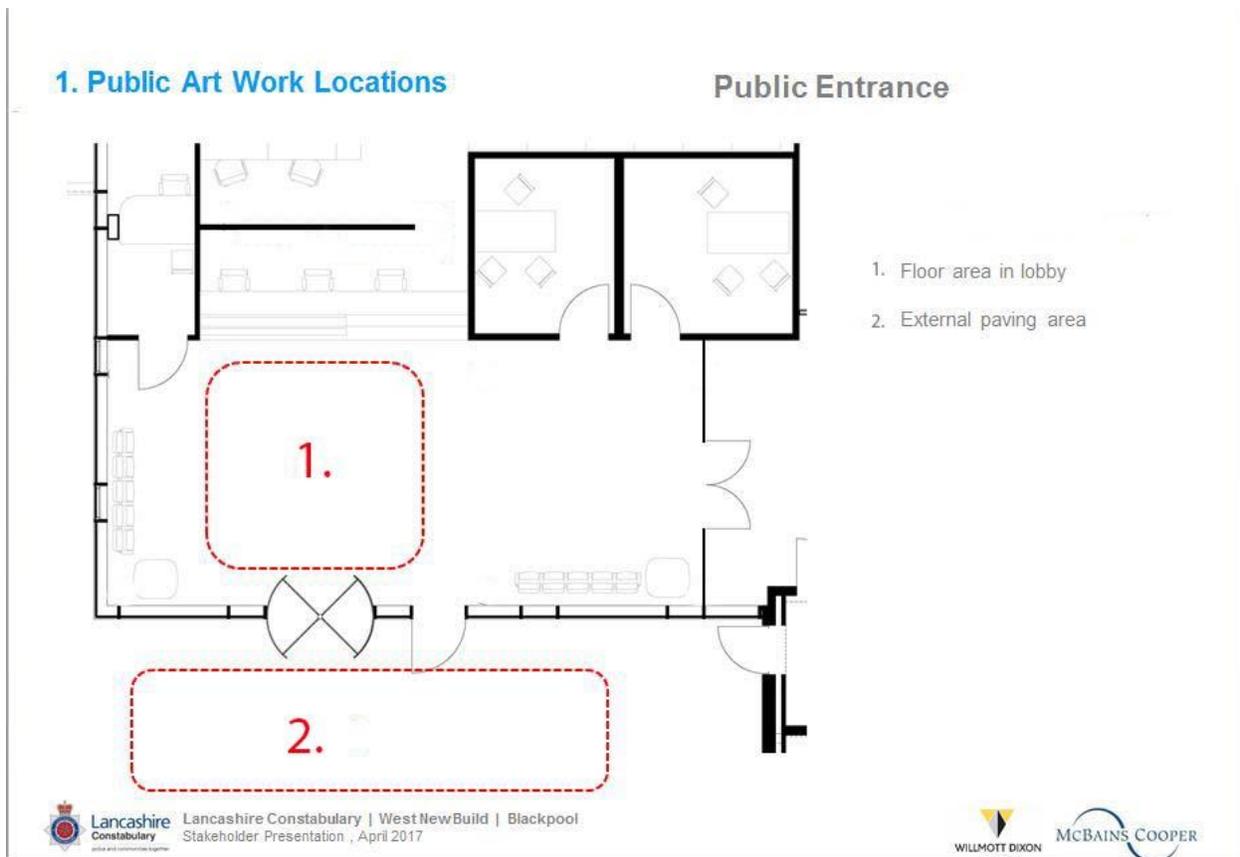
The community is core to this commission and we want these voices to be integrated into the creative process.

The Police Station - Possible Spaces

The police station is in the process of being built and as such we have the opportunity to embed work into the fabric of the building.

There are 4 possible spaces, one inside and one outside, that we think have the most interesting potential for installing a work.

1. The floor space, up to 4.5m², in the centre of the reception area of the main entrance for the station. There is the opportunity to embed something into the floor in this space. We would be keen to see proposals that work with the fabric of the floor as opposed to a treatment that is applied to the surface of the floor given the heavy traffic in this area.
2. The floor space directly outside of the main entrance. This is currently planned for flagging and again we would be interested in anything that forms part of the fabric of the floor.
3. A piece that would be sited on site two, directly outside the main entrance but may have a three dimensional presence.
4. The glass doors leading from the public enquiry desk into the main corridor of the police headquarters. There is the possibility that this glass can be added to or manipulated in some way.



Mereside Mafia

A key partner in this project are local community group Mereside and Friends in Action (MAFIA). The Mereside Mafia has emerged through the Mereside at Play project to take forward ideas developed in the consultation process wider than the original green space remit. They are a proactive partnership who are keen to build a relationship with the new police station, are rooted in their community and will be key to getting the wider estate engaged with this commission.

Applications

Please send us an expression of interest that includes:

- What interests you about this commission?
(200 words)
- How would you approach the engagement process?
(200 words)
- Three examples of projects you have worked on that involved an engaged development process and a high quality final outcome
(400 words)

- CV

Timeframe

- Closing date for proposals Mon 29 May at 5pm
- Interviews are to be held in early July
- Work to commence mid July

Budget

There is £9500 budget for this commission. This needs to include all costs, fees, materials, installation and travel.

Additional Information

More information on Mereside at Play:

www.meresideatplay.org

More information on Mereside Mafia

<https://meresidemafia.org.uk/>

Contact

Any further questions can be sent to Laura Jamieson, Creative Engagement Manager
laura.jamieson@leftcoast.org.uk