

# Public Art Strategy

## Morello II, Croydon

### Menta Redrow

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## Introduction

In August 2019 Menta Redrow commissioned a Public Art Strategy for Morello Quarter Phase II. The Strategy has been developed as part of Menta Redrow's long-term investment in East Croydon to bring creative and economic benefits to the area. The Strategy responds to the need to connect the new development with the surrounding communities. It is the result of consultation with the joint venture team, local schools and a range of local individuals and historic site research. The Strategy aims to ensure the arts make a positive and cohesive contribution to the character and identity of the development enabling wayfinding and linking the interconnecting pathways throughout the site.

A meeting was held with Redrow's project team on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019 to discuss and debate the objectives of the Art Strategy. The following document represents the aspirations and potential scope of work for public art within the scheme and it provides opportunities for diverse community participation. For the purposes of this document "the arts" has been defined as visual arts permanently embedded into the public realm. All images within this document are indicative illustrations of materials, finishes and methods of working which might be considered, alongside others, for this project.

## Executive Summary

The East Croydon Masterplan places the railway station at the centre of new development within the area. Menta Redrow aim to reflect this objective by focussing the public art strategy on designs for a decorative staircase balustrade adjoining the Network Rail bridge. The Strategy seeks to create a unique sense of identity throughout the development by a series of visually linked, permanently embedded works of art that connect the entrances/exits and delineate the development's footprint. For example, elements of design (visual, text or texture) might be inlaid into the built environment or integrated within street furniture such as seating, landscape planters, lighting posts and recycling bins. The design concept aims to reference the site's historic context as a Cherry Market/Fair. The artistic interpretation of this theme may take the form of conceptual, abstract or figurative representations.

## The Client/Stakeholder Team

Urban regeneration specialist Menta and leading UK housebuilder Redrow Homes are working together as the joint venture partnership Menta Redrow. The team have been working with the London Borough of Croydon and key stakeholders over the last six years to deliver the major regeneration that will transform Croydon into a 21st century city. The Morello Quarter Phase II residential-led development is located on Cherry Orchard Road and provides a new station entrance connecting the Addiscombe community, through the Morello II development, into East Croydon station and beyond. This project is a key element in the new Croydon, turning an underdeveloped and largely derelict site into a cutting-edge, sustainable and innovative solution that will integrate with and regenerate East Croydon and its surroundings.

## Enhancing the Value of Public Realm by Integrating Public Art

The Strategy sees the role of the artist as a critical and creative catalyst within the process of urban design and as a creator of high quality spaces and places within the public realm. The value of the arts is in both the creative process and the product: what the artist does, what the artist makes and the resulting debate that is stimulated. For the urban dweller and visitor alike, art in the urban realm can be an inspiring source of relevance and meaning, encouraging pleasurable and unpredictable encounters.

## The Strategy Objectives

- To identify & celebrate the unique site-specific qualities of the location, historically & physically
- Engage, inspire and stimulate involvement with diverse audiences.
- Create a place to be and visit for residents, surrounding communities and visitors.
- Establish a reputation for high quality art.
- Positively contribute to the process of regeneration.
- Support local artists' strategies to enable their collective presence as a creative industry.

## The Strategy Principles

A number of key principles inform the Strategy. These principles include:

A flexible methodology that allows for concept development over the period of development.

Align the Strategy with wider neighbouring cultural initiatives and school projects that focus on activities to engage, explore and discover local creativity, culture and heritage.

To deliver integrated public artworks with relevance and meaning (relating to the site-specific context) which form a visual thread linking the pathways through the architecture and landscape of the development.

Create a programme of activities to engage the public where locals can up-skill/learn new skills through involvement in the project.

The Strategy includes a model of excellence for best practice (Appendix I).

## The Strategy Context

The Morello masterplan has already delivered over 330 new homes and includes a landscaped 'café culture' public piazza, flexible community and small business space, on a gateway site next to East Croydon train station. Morello II will deliver 445 new homes including 107 new affordable homes. The development will complete the public East Croydon bridge link that will provide a much-desired connection between central Croydon, with all its shops, facilities and transport links, and the Addiscombe community. Opportunities for art in the public realm are provided by the new pedestrian entrance into East Croydon Station via a high-quality landscaped public space and new stairs connecting to the existing station bridge and by the retention of the Cherry Orchard / Oval Road public 'pocket park'.

The Strategy seeks to meet the ambitions of Croydon Council for access and inclusion to culture. It appreciates that the audience at railway stations and mixed-use developments is diverse. The Strategy aims to provide unique access to contemporary art by bringing art outside the traditional confines of museums and galleries and it aims to provide unique opportunities for artists to work in new unchartered places.

## The Strategy. Working Practically

### I Built Spaces & Creating Places

The Strategy embraces the process of change at this site and sees it as an opportunity to enhance and remake public realm which features high quality contemporary public art as an integrated part of the development that contributes to the permanent built infrastructure.

### II Creative Dialogue & Community Engagement (Debate & Education)

The team will explore opportunities to create local community involvement to encourage participation in developing ideas which contribute to creating the permanent works of public art.

Examples of this might include (though are not restricted to) a visual artist(s) and/or a poet working with local community groups and schools (such as the Oval Primary School) to explore the design brief and develop ideas. Several one-day workshops might focus on themes related to “nature” and the site’s historic context as a cherry tree fair and “journeys” referencing travels via the railway station. The latter theme might include journeys in the broader sense of the word, such as life’s journey, growth, movement, personal development and the ability for any change to have massive effect.

### III Permanent Public Art

The public art strategy will be delivered by a team with expertise and knowledge in managing public art commissions from inception to delivery and installation. The team will positively encourage high quality art with relevance and meaning. Methodologically, a diverse range of procurement processes will be considered such as (though not restricted to) local or national competition, selective engagement, employing an artist on the design team.

### IV Advocacy & Promotion (Raising Artistic Awareness/PR)

Promotion of public art activities will be fostered to build broader links with residential communities and local businesses in order to encourage and raise artistic awareness and generate a sense of local ownership and pride.

## Phasing & Programme

End October 2019	Design phase ends/completes.
December 2019	Building programme starts on site.
Sept 2020–Aug 2021	Concept development. Community workshops.
July 2022 (TBC)	Installation of permanent public art linking site to Network Rail bridge.
Completion of site	September 2022 (circa 2 years, 9 months from start of project build).

## Appendices

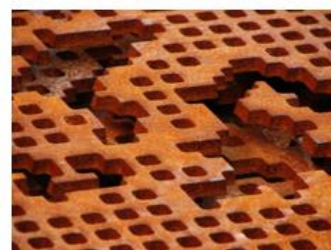
### Appendix I, Guidelines for a Model of Excellence

- Place the artists (visual and poetic) at the centre of the process of creating public art and community liaison/workshops.
- Include the client in all stages of the process.
- Establish at the outset realistic timeframes for all parts of the artistic process (such as research and concept development, community workshops, fabrication, delivery and installation on site).
- Ensure briefs are transparent and reflect Menta Redrow's objectives yet are sufficiently flexible to encourage a range of creative processes and outcomes.
- Support the artist by genuinely enabling a free rein to develop the brief within the context of the project.
- Encourage and be supportive of all speculative endeavours from the artist(s), within the parameters of the budget.
- Accept the outcome of an artist's commission cannot be known from the outset and accept that speculation involves some risk.
- Encourage local participation and inclusivity yet select artist(s) on the basis of merit rather than other factors.
- The artist(s) to consider the sustainability of proposed materials and the durability and lifespan of them.
- All design work to comply with national regulations and standards.
- The designs to enable adequate access for routine cleaning and maintenance.
- A maintenance programme to be supplied by artist with a budget to enable adequate funding.
- Plan decommissioning alongside commissioning.



## Appendix II, Concept Images of Public Art (to inspire and “capture the spirit”)

*Examples of different production methods and finishes of cherry theme translated into metalwork*





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*Examples of different production methods and finishes of cherry theme translated into metalwork*



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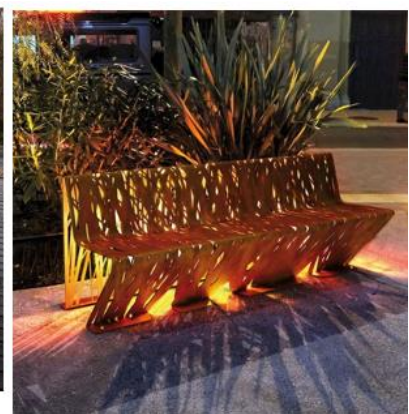
*Inspirational/source imagery of cherry tree leaves and silhouettes*





## Appendix II, Concept Images of Public Art

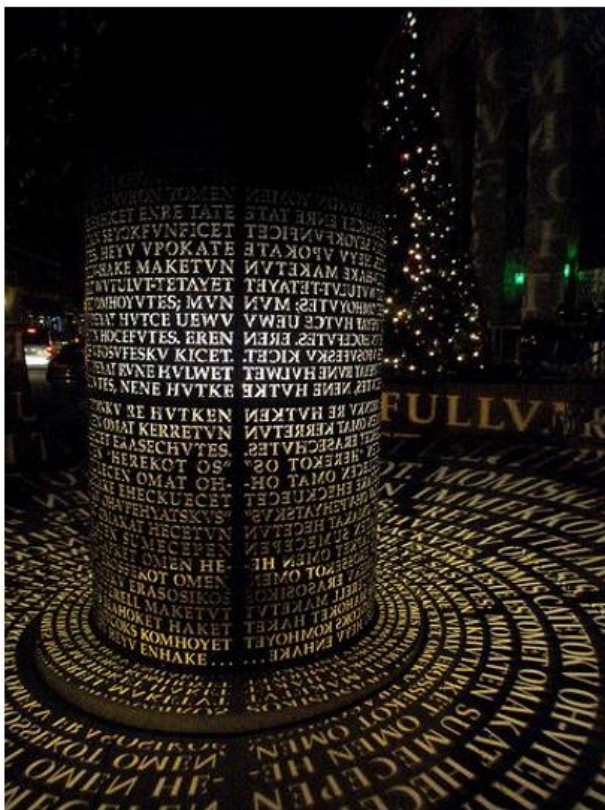
*Examples of laser cut medium creating light poles/wayfinding/street furniture through the scheme*





## Appendix II, Concept Images of Public Art

*Examples of laser cut medium creating wayfinding/street furniture through the scheme*



## Appendix III, Consultation/Community Involvement Summary

### *PHASE 1: Reference Menta Redrow's, Morello Phase I Community Activities to date...*

(Summary of Claire Winterfold's work with local schools and creative gathering).

### *Link the objectives of Phase II's creative plans with complementary ideas to Phase I's work.*

Demonstrate continuity in the approach & concepts for both phases of the development.

### *PHASE II: Going forward...*

Examples of artistic and poetic/literary community involvement might include a visual artist (ideally a local artist with expertise in public art and community liaison) to work with local schools, such as the Oval Primary School (and/or others) to explore the design brief and develop ideas related to the site's historic function as a Cherry Tree Market/Fair. The cherry tree/leaf design (in a representative/figurative or abstracted form) to be rolled out throughout the site to visually connect all entrances/exits, link the thoroughfares and delineate the development's footprint. Examples of the design being fused with functional objects, such as street furniture, include benches/seating, lighting posts, planters and recycling bins.

A local poet might run a one-day workshop focussing on themes relating to travel (the railway station) and nature (cherry tree fair). Themes might include "journeys" in the broader sense of the theme, such as life's journeys, growth, movement, personal development and the ability for any change to have massive effect. Examples of text imbedded in the public realm might include carved lines of poetry (in sinewy lines within the paving) or laser cut wording located on the uprights of the railway staircase steps), alongside visual leaf motifs (such as cherry leaves windblown along paths) to be inlaid into the paving to help move people through the site.

### *Production/Fabrication of Public Art*

The Strategy encourages local participation and inclusivity relating to the metal fabrication of this project and therefore suggests 50% of quotations for metal production are provided by local fabricators.