



NAVIGATOR QUARTER, LAND ADJACENT TO SOUTHAMPTON AIRPORT

PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION

MAY 2025

blocwork (Eastleigh) LLP & Southampton International Airport Ltd



Public Art Strategy

Navigator Quarter, Eastleigh

Introduction

This strategy has been prepared to outline how public art can be incorporated into the proposed development of the Navigator Quarter, on land adjacent to Southampton Airport, in Eastleigh. This relates to a hybrid application to provide new employment premises at the site, comprising up to 92,000 sqm (GIA) of flexible floorspace within Use Classes E(g) (ii & iii), B2 and B8.

The requirement for the development to submit a Public Art Statement was identified by Eastleigh Borough Council's pre-application response (ref. Q/24/98346) dated 21st February 2025 and is also referenced on the Council's Local List for Validation of Planning Applications as follows:

The public art statement should demonstrate how the developer has provided and will provide opportunities for artists within the development. Information from the public art statement will inform the Section 106 agreement or the planning conditions focusing on public art for that development. The content of the statement will vary depending on the scale and nature of the development and the stage reached in the commissioning process.

This document has therefore been prepared to meet the objectives of the Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan (2016 – 2036) and associated Public Art Strategy (2023 – 2028) to deliver more opportunities for the provision of public art across the Borough.

This document therefore provides a strategy that identifies the approach that will be taken to the provision of public art at the site and outlines the anticipated mechanism that will secure its delivery as part of this development.

It is proposed that a detailed Public Art Strategy will be prepared following the grant of planning permission to confirm the approach to the provision of public art at the site, the subsequent detailed strategy will confirm the approach that the Applicant wishes to take and to clarify future responsibilities for the delivery of public art at the site.

Local Policy & Guidance

In accordance with the Council's Validation Requirements (2024) for planning applications, Public Art Statements should support Major Applications and be informed by the following documents:

- Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036)
- Eastleigh Borough Council Public Art Strategy (2023 – 2028)
- Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2008)
- Public Art Vision for Eastleigh Town Centre (2023)
- Eastleigh Borough Council's Guidance for 'Preparing a Public Art Statement'

These documents have been reviewed in the preparation of this strategy and a summary is provided below:

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036)

Policy DM1 of the Local Plan, which considers the general criteria for new development, states that new large-scale development should include provision for public art, with supporting para. 5.11 outlining the intention to provide “*opportunities for community engagement and creative industries to participate in the economic growth of the area*”.

Eastleigh Borough Council Public Art Strategy (2023 – 2028)

This strategy sets out the key principles by which a programme of public art will be delivered in the Borough, which are as follows:

- o Encourage high-quality design and environmental standards
- o Improve accessibility and legibility
- o Enhance public open space and other recreational facilities
- o Raise the profile of town and village centres
- o Empower local people and communities
- o Celebrate heritage, biodiversity, and culture
- o Advocating and promoting the benefits of public art

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2008)

Section 3.5 of the SPD encourages early engagement with the Council's Urban, Landscape Design Team Leader and Public Art Officer and states that public art can be delivered either on-site or off-site. The SPD adds that on-site public art may include art that is integrated into the design of buildings and spaces whereas off-site art may include environmental artwork and participatory arts. The SPD also notes that maintenance of Public Art schemes must be considered in any commissioning process.

Appendix 5.1 of the SPD states that Public Art contributions for Industrial / Warehouse development should be provided at a rate of £250 (indexed) per 100 sq m of floorspace, which is considered to be the most relevant category for the Navigator Quarter proposals.

Public Art Vision for Eastleigh Town Centre (2023)

This document provides a historical context to the town of Eastleigh and identifies some useful themes that can be used in guiding the detailed of the Public Art Strategy.

Eastleigh Borough Council's Guidance for 'Preparing a Public Art Statement'

This document states that Public Art Statements should provide details of the budget, the appointed artist, the commissioning process, the aims and ideas of the project as well as the programme for implementation and maintenance.

Consultations

In advance of the preparation of this document, an initial meeting was held with Eastleigh's Public Arts Officer on 7th April 2025, who suggested that the strategy should take an open and flexible approach, so that any artist that is involve in delivery of the strategy has the ability to explore different opportunities and themes in a creative manner. It was agreed that this Outline Strategy should not prescribe a particular route and that details could be clarified at a later stage, once planning permission has been granted with the preparation of a detailed strategy secured as an obligation in a S106 agreement.

The officer suggested that the Public Art could take influences from the site and town's heritage and could include on and off-site elements such as using existing or proposed walking routes, which would have to take account of the operational requirements of occupiers that may come to the site.

The officer also recommended that local councillors be consulted on the Public Art Strategy, which would provide opportunity for their opinions to be heard and for greater engagement in the process.

The Navigator Quarter Site

The application site is 34 hectares in size and consists mainly of greenfield land, located between the town of Eastleigh and the city of Southampton. The approximate site location is illustrated on Figure1.

Southampton Airport is located immediately to the south and west of the site, on the edge of the city's suburbs. To the immediate north of the site is a train depot, located at the convergence of trainlines from Southampton and Portsmouth. Sandwiched between the train depot land there is a residential area on Campbell Road, which is in a conservation area and Barton Park Industrial Estate is located beyond the depot to the north.

The site is formed of 2 plots, a larger area immediately adjacent to the Airport that is known as the South Plot, and an area of land to the north of this, known as the North Plot, which is separated from the South Plot by an area of landscape that has established on a now raised railway embankment that is now redundant and has become overgrown. The nearby railway lines form the northern boundaries to the application site, with the railway raised on an embankment.

The only structure on the site is a radar tower next to the site's eastern boundary, which is no longer needed for airport operations and is to be removed.



Figure 1. Site Location (approximate)

Development Proposals

The application is submitted as a hybrid proposal that details the initial infrastructure works to support development, with proposals for the employment aspects of the development submitted in outline, reserving all matters with the exception of the means of access. Details of the site layout for the employment units will come forward at a later date as part of Reserved Matters submissions. Details of any public art provision, will therefore need to be considered at this later stage of the design, once the layout of the plots is more defined so that an integrated approach is taken to the development.

Illustrative layout proposals have been prepared to support the application, as shown below at Figure 2.



Figure 2: Illustrative Layout

Public Art Strategy

This section has been structured based on Eastleigh Borough Council's Guidance for '*Preparing a Public Art Statement*' and identifies the main issues that will make up key aspects of the Public Art Strategy:

1. Management of the Public Art Commissioning Process

The strategy will either be managed by the Applicant, with assistance from the Borough Council's Public Arts Officer, or led entirely by the Council. This will be kept open to provide flexibility in terms of the process and will be confirmed in the detailed Public Art Strategy, following the grant of any planning permission prior to the commencement of the development.

If the strategy is to be led by the Council, the Applicant will need to be informed of any works which are planned on or immediately adjacent to the site.

2. Selection of Artist to provide the public art that will be provided as a result of this Strategy

At this hybrid stage, no artist(s) have yet been commissioned to deliver/design the artwork(s). It is proposed that an artist will be selected by reaching out to selected artists or by way of limited competition to consider different approaches to the delivery of the public art. If the Applicant manages the process, then the list of artists approached to provide any artwork will be discussed with the Council's Public Arts Officer. In the event that the Applicant agrees that the Council can manage the process then the Public Arts Officer will have the responsibility of identifying the artist(s) to approach.

3. Identification of Budget to support the Commissioning Process

A financial contribution will be made by the Applicant towards the Public Art Strategy. This contribution will be based on a fee of £250 per 100 sq m of Gross Internal Area (subject to indexation), as set out under Appendix 5.1 of the Planning Obligations SPD based on industrial/warehouse development. This sum of money can then be used as part of the commissioning process to secure the agreed public art that will be provided as part of the development. On the basis that the planning application is to secure permission for up to 92,000 sq m of floorspace, then the indicative budget for the public art strategy is £230,000.

In the event that the Applicant chooses to manage the process then they will be responsible for distributing the budget to secure the public art work(s). In the event that the Council are elevated to manage the process then the calculated sum of money will be a financial contribution and will be paid to the Council as a planning obligation set out in the S106 Agreement.

4. The aims of the proposed public art project

The aim of the proposed public art project is to use a creative design process in the preparation of any commissioned work to explore the local context and/or shed light on the local, regional and/or national importance of the site and the immediate area, in a way that engages, informs, and inspires Eastleigh's residents and visitors.

Given that there may be space restrictions on the application site the commissioned work(s) site should consider their quality of expression, rather than size or quantity.

Any work(s) provided on or next to the site will need to ensure that they do not interfere with the operations of the adjoining Airport or potential occupiers at the employment development.

5. Consultation and Engagement

To inform the final Public Art works that are commissioned, it is proposed that this should involve public engagement with the local community, with input encouraged from local schools, residents and businesses as well as Eastleigh Town Council and Local Ward Councillors. The selected artist will need to identify how engagement will inform their process.

6. Potential conceptual ideas and broad locations for the public art

While the direction and theme of the artwork should be decided by the relevant artist(s), the Navigator Quarter and the surrounding area celebrates a diverse culture, heritage and biodiversity. Possible themes which could be explored by the Public Art Strategy at the site are listed below:

- o The rich aeronautical history of Southampton Airport, dating back to the First World War.
- o The role of Southampton Airport in hosting refugees during the Interwar period.
- o The ecological importance of the Itchen Valley.
- o The use of Itchen Navigation canal system as an important trading route throughout the 1600s – 1800s.
- o The history of the London and Southampton Railway, as one of the country's earliest railway lines.
- o Artworks could also have digital elements to them as well as physical or conceptual forms.

It is proposed that any work(s) commissioned should be sited where they can be easily seen and appreciated by members of the public. To avoid any hazards, the work(s) should also be positioned at a safe distance from internal estate roads and service yards.

The most suitable locations for on-site artworks would comprise areas adjacent to proposed pedestrian routes. It may also be suitable to locate works along nearby footpaths, which are in the immediate vicinity of the site, such as the route along the River Itchen, as indicated on Figure 3 below. If multiple artworks are provided, the pieces could potentially be spread across the route to form a trail.

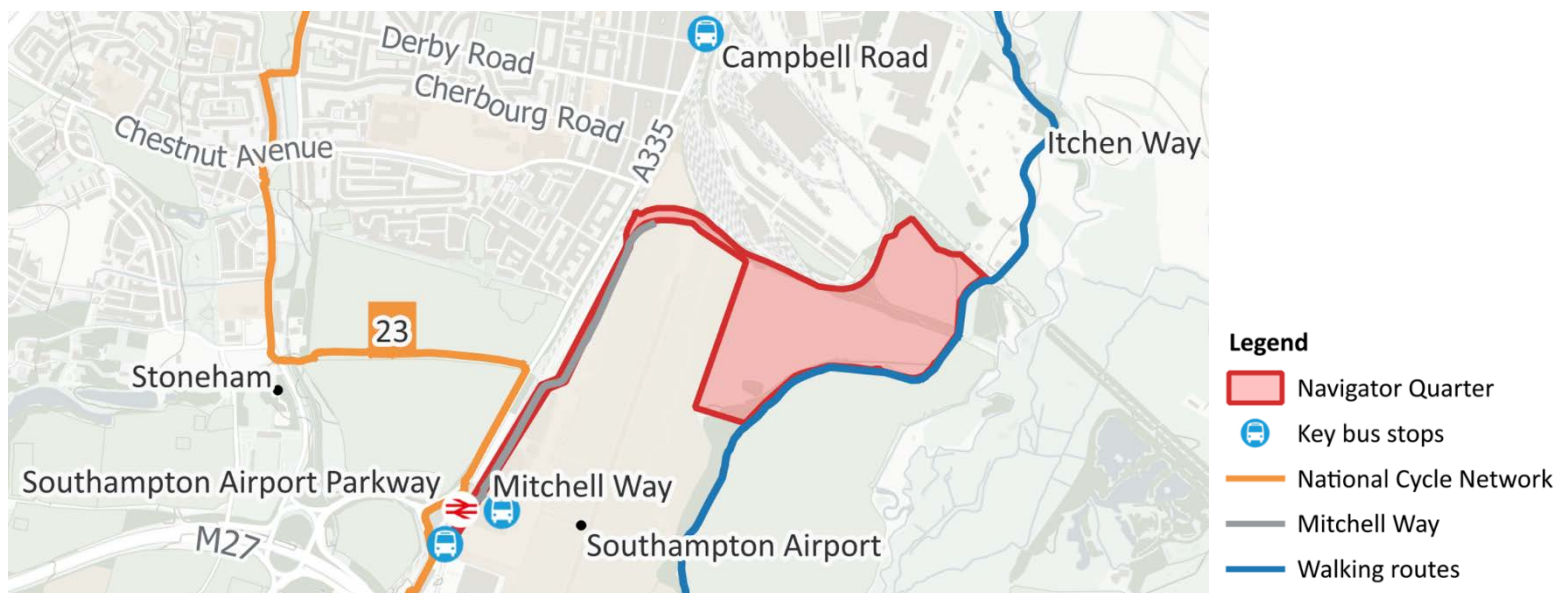


Figure 3. Map showing walking and cycle routes in the vicinity of the site.

7. The details of partners steering the project or any collaborations between the appointed artist, other artists, architects and other design professionals,

The artwork will be funded by the Applicant, blocwork (Eastleigh) LLP and Southampton International Airport Limited (SIAL).

The final strategy, including those involved, will be agreed with the Council following the grant of any planning permission and prior to the commencement of the development.

8. A programme for the development and implementation of all the public art commissions

The final strategy, including the programme for implementation, will be agreed with the Council following the grant of any planning permission and prior to the commencement of the development.

If the strategy is to be led by the Council, the Applicant will need to be informed of any works which are planned on or adjacent to the site and the associated timings.

9. Any training opportunities for less experienced artists and public art managers

If the Council would prefer, some of the budget could be allocated towards funding local creative schemes in the Borough.

The final strategy, including potential training schemes and workshops, will be agreed following the grant of any planning permission and prior to the commencement of the development.

10. Details of ownership, maintenance and de-commissioning of public art

The final strategy, including details of maintenance and de-commissioning, will be agreed with the Council following the grant of any planning permission and prior to the commencement of the development.

11. Budget allocations relating to all of the above

The final strategy, including details of budget allocations, will be agreed with the Council following the grant of any planning permission and prior to the commencement of the development.