

Art in Public Places

■ **OBJECTIVE**

The guideline acts as a framework for good practice to ensure that contemporary art works match the quality of the past, and enhance and contribute to the environment.

■ **POLICY CONTEXT**

Local plan policies promote high quality new design. For example, policy CD22 of the Central Edinburgh Local Plan states:

“The Council will encourage a high standard of street furniture design and the use of good quality natural paving materials appropriate to the historic environment when alterations and development affecting streets and public places are proposed”.

■ **SCOPE OF GUIDANCE**

This supplementary guideline applies to artworks on a city wide basis.

■ **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Arts and craft works which have fixed foundations or are fixed to buildings will require planning permission and/or listed building consent. Early consultation on proposals is recommended.

POLICYGUIDANCE

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1. The established architectural character and art work tradition of an area are essential considerations for the introduction of art works. Projects should be site specific and carefully integrated with the building structure and surrounding environment. Proposals should illustrate a comprehensive understanding of site considerations and the physical, social, historical, topographical and architectural context.
2. Projects should result in landmark structures in the tradition of the locality. To confer a strong identity requires an understanding of the nature of the place. This has three main aspects: the physical location, the people who use the space and the local community.
3. Projects will be more appropriate if they have some social relevance or significance to the local community.
4. Design and materials should give permanence to the artwork with little or no maintenance required.
5. New developments, either architectural or landscape, can provide excellent opportunities for inclusion of contemporary art works. Art works should be seen as an integral part of the project, with artists involved from the outset, in conception and design.
6. Projects should promote quality, innovation and good practice in contemporary art works within the traditions of the area.
7. Art works which represent cosmetic interventions should be restricted to limited temporary displays.
8. The participation of the local community should be encouraged at all stages of the project.



Symbolic



Informative

■ REASONED JUSTIFICATION

Art in public places can be defined as the placing of art and craft works, which are in essence and intention designed for installation in the public domain, in areas which are in public use within the built environment. It can include building and landscaping related works of art, fixed or free-standing, permanent or temporary.

Art works in the public environment of an area can enrich its visual character and make a positive contribution to its cultural identity. The principal categories of justification for public art are: the enhancement of sense of space, the provision of a model of imaginative work, the engagement of the people who use the space and assistance in urban regeneration with the art work acting as a catalyst for wider improvement.

Art in public places has a long tradition, and an appreciation of existing public art works is an essential basis for the formulation of appropriate guidelines. Existing art works can be divided into one or more of four categories:

- **Symbolic:** Normally representing civic, national or military events or prominent individuals in the form of bronze or stone statuary groups, and commemorative monuments and memorials.
- **Informative:** Works providing a public reference to specific sites, in order to provide interpretation of its relevance or importance. Decorative wall plaques or facades mounted sculptures are the normal form for these.
- **Functional:** Elements in the urban environment serving a functional requirement which have artistic qualities by their design, materials and craftsmanship.
- **Aesthetic:** Non-functional elements which are intended directly to enhance the urban environment.



Functional



Aesthetic

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