



HM Government



Cultural Quarter Towns Fund Business Case

Nigel Tidy

2nd March 2022

Towns Deal Board

Aim of the Cultural Quarter Project

'The design of a new Cultural Quarter in the town centre, mapping out the prospective location of new cultural and events venues through:

(1) A test, pop up programme of arts and cultural events and

(2) Providing site concept designs to visualise these new amenities, demonstrating in principle effective and workable site layouts, appearance, scale, mass and access in order to justify the scope of the offer on each site' – Project PID

'Investment in arts and culture ... can be an effective way of establishing a 'city brand' which helps to attract young and creative people to the areas. In turn, this can attract commercial creative businesses, catalysing regeneration and urban redevelopment.'

- Centre for Economics and Business Research report for the Arts Council England, 2019

Background

- The effect of **Covid-19** has impacted the way people shop (11% rise in global online sales recorded in 2021) and work, i.e. less reliance on town centres.
- Crawley Town Centre currently has a **higher vacancy rate** than the regional and national average and a **lower rate of independent units**.

	% of units vacant	% of independent units
Crawley	14.7	36.5
South East	12.0	46.7
UK	11.7	39.0

- In December 2021 visitors typically spent **1hr 9min** on site (Up **7.77%** from the previous month).
- Consumers were visiting **3.37 times per month** in December. (Down **3.16%** from the previous month).
- The most popular time of day to visit was **midday**, with **41%** visiting between 11 – 2pm (Oct-Dec).
- The **weekend** was the most popular time of the week to visit – **19.3%** of visits on a Saturday.

Previous Engagement

- In **2019 a public consultation** into arts, culture and leisure took place in Crawley. The consultation took the form of a touring art installation using touch screen technology called *Mystic Joe* by Joe McAlister, an online survey and a series of 8 focus groups. **1,016 people took part and across all 14 neighbourhoods.**
- The final report, 'A report on the public consultation into arts, culture and leisure' highlighted the **demand for cultural events.**
- The report recommended the next steps for arts and culture in the town:
 - **Test a programme of activity.**
 - **Development of a high-profile arts and cultural activity.**
 - Accessible to people who live and work in Crawley.
 - **Encourage people to visit the town** specifically for the innovative cultural offer.
 - **Offer employment opportunities, resources for artists and access to arts and culture.**

Objectives and Outcomes

- Attract **more people to live, work and study** in the town by improving the reputation of Crawley as a creative place, especially as more residential/office space becomes available.
- Unlock significant **new cultural amenities and infrastructure** as key assets for a vibrant town centre neighbourhood comprising high quality living accommodation.
- Attract major **footfall** from Crawley and beyond to attend events.
- Create **new business growth** in the cultural and creative industries – **diversify sectors**.
- Create **new jobs/employment** in the cultural and creative industries – prevent leakage.
- **Increase footfall** in the town centre and spread by location and time of day/week.
- **Improve the perception of the place** by residents, visitors and businesses.
- **Reduce the vacancy rate** of empty retail premises.

Examples of Other Initiatives

- In 2019, in Hartlepool, an arts organisation “**Empty Shop**” set up an **exhibition and creative drop-in centre** at a former electrical goods **shop that had been vacant for 18 months**, to help revitalise the town centre.
- In terms of **social impact**, Stoke-on-Trent have a three-year programme “Appetite”, which has engaged more people in arts and culture, helping to boost local pride, town centre footfall and town perceptions. Responses indicated that **90% participants felt an increase in community pride**.
- An under-used multi-storey carpark in Southwark was transformed into a **cultural and creative hub** with **over 450 full time and part time jobs created**.
- In 2019 the University of Cambridge Museums attracted more than one million visitors, with 48% combining their visit with dinner in a local restaurant and **31% with a local shopping trip**.

Outputs

Project Outcome	Project Indicator	Project Outputs
Delivery of the Cultural Quarter masterplan	Agreed masterplan approved by CBC stakeholders	1
Development of 4 site feasibility studies	No of feasibility studies	4
Production of 2 site delivery plans	No of plans produced	2
Delivery of a Cultural and Arts Pop-Up events	Operational facility open	1 new facility
Attraction of 2000 visits to arts, cultural and heritage events and venues	Footfall counts	2,000 attendees at events
	Number of artwork installations	3

Financial and Economic Case

Year	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Revenue	75,000	75,000	50,000	
Capital	75,000	75,000	50,000	50,000
Total	150,000	150,000	100,000	50,000

Activity	Revenue Cost (£)	Capital Cost (£)
Delivery of arts and events “Pop up” programme	48,300	
Professional services associated with cultural quarter, feasibility and site assessments - design, architect, planning		£250,000
Artist fees	40,700	
Production costs	37,000	
Show/Events fees	37,000	
Contingency	11,100	
Community Engagement	14,800	
Monitoring and Evaluation	11,100	
Total costs	£200,000	£250,000

This will link via match funding with the Arts Council England Creative Playground ‘Creative People and Places’ National Portfolio (April 2022 – March 2025) with up to £1 million investment recently announced.

Governance and Management

- This project will be led from within **Crawley Borough Council**.
- Crawley Borough Council officers will take responsibility for undertaking key project tasks including procurement, financial control, monitoring, legal and communications. RAG ratings will be used to flag up risks.
- A Project Board, coordinated by CBC, will report back to the Towns Deal Board.
- A project team will help to deliver the pop-up cultural events.
- Procurement will follow the CBC procurement code.

Timeframe

- Business Case Development (January/February 2022)
- Sign-off of the Project Summaries and submission to DLUHC (February - March 2022)
- Culture and Arts Pop-Up Programme (2022 - 2025)
- 4 site feasibilities (2023 - 2024)
- Cultural Quarter Masterplan (2024 – 2025)
- Site Delivery Plans (2025 - 2026)