

Buckley Artist's Brief

Buckley Memorial Public Art Commission

Deadline for initial proposal - 22 September 2017

1. Introduction

A new ALDI supermarket has been built on land that once held the Royal British Legion. As a result, an important and respected war memorial has been left in situ surrounded by a customer car park.

As part of the development of the site, Flintshire County Council and the Royal British Legion have formed a steering group with other partners to redevelop the memorial site. The space needs to be improved, refreshed, re-designed and incorporated into a new piece of public art.

2. Buckley Background

Buckley is a small town situated on a range of hills which reach between the River Alyn and the narrow plain besides the Dee Estuary. At its highest point the town of Buckley is 518 feet above sea level and the town covers approximately four square miles in size. The town is located nine miles west of the ancient town of Chester and eleven miles north of Wrexham in East Flintshire, North Wales. Buckley is easily accessible by road from the A55 with links to the M56 and M53 motorways and it is only an hour's drive away from Snowdonia National Park.

The town's name may mean in Welsh the clearing in a Beech wood and, indeed, the Buckley Coat of Arms shows a buck or a deer in a woodland clearing. In Old English Buckley can also mean a buck or deer in a Ley or woodland clearing or a bullock field. Archaeological remains indicate that Buckley has been inhabited since at least the Bronze Age and was then host to a range of societies from the Celts through to the Romans, Anglo-Saxons and the Normans. Each successive culture brought with it the trappings of their own society including agriculture, industry, religion, law, communication and transport networks. The area was frequently exploited by mining industries and potteries alongside agriculture and major road networks.

Religious communities were founded locally and the first Christian church was established at 'The Tree of Bishops' (Bistre or Biscopestreu) by the famous Welsh Saint Deiniol (also linked to Bangor amongst other dioceses) in AD550. Buckley has other important Christian remains and is rare in that the town of Buckley has not one but two ecclesiastical parishes. Buckley was important during the Medieval era and when Henry V married Katherine in 1423 he chose to give her an annual gift the pasturage of Buckley and Ewloe which was then worth £26.00 per annum.

Later on in the town's history, its industry developed further most notably through its potteries. As Buckley is actually built over a primary bed of clay the town became renowned not only for its pottery but for its brickworks - Buckley bricks were world famous. At its height Buckley was home to roughly 19 potteries, 21 brickworks and 23 collieries. It was a highly industrialised landscape. Sadly, most of these industries closed by the the end of the Second World War leaving Buckley with a post-industrial feel until more contemporary commercial estates and businesses took their place.

3. The Development

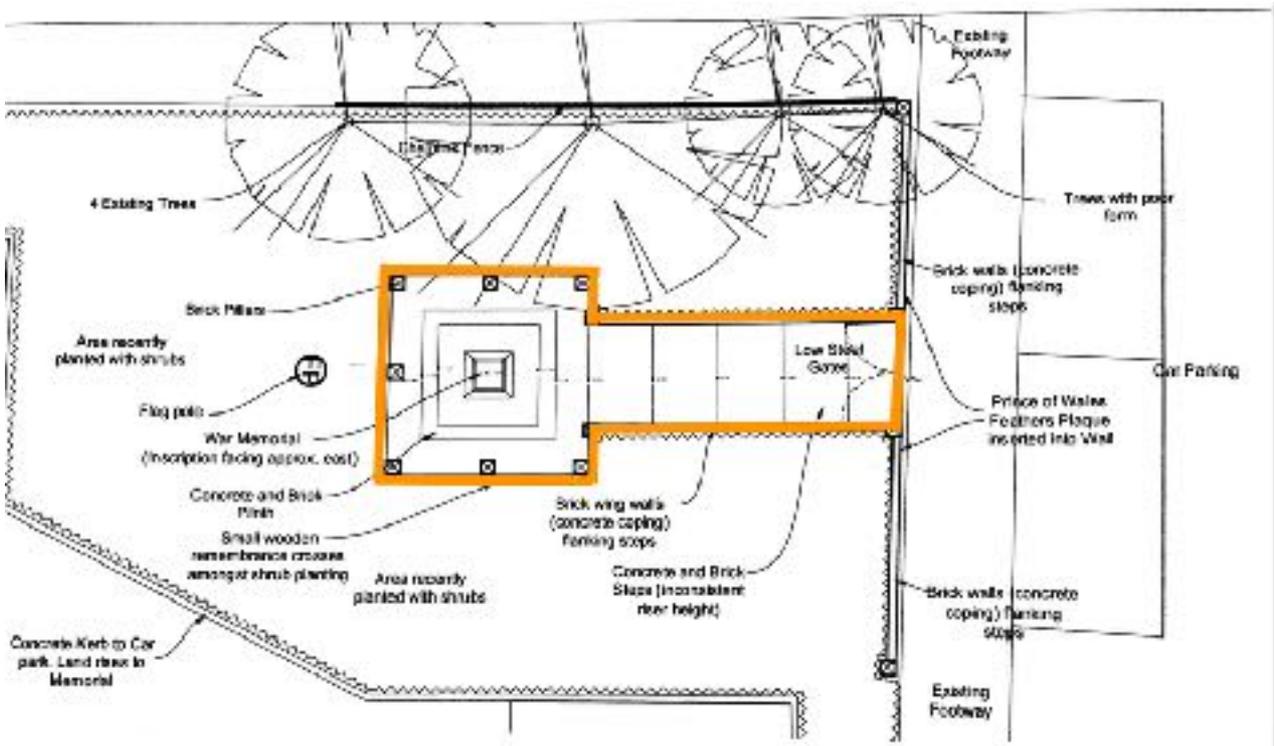
The Existing Monument

The war memorial is a simple obelisk located at the top of a small flight of steps - the steps are accessed by a metal gate and flanked with a low brick wall and some iron-chain fencing. The steps are formed by concrete paving slabs.



The Site

The Site incorporates all areas within the orange line in the following drawing.



Artist's Role

The commissioned artist will design, fabricate, arrange for delivery and oversee the installation of a work of public art at the Buckley War Memorial site.

Public Consultation

The active involvement of representatives of the Royal British Legion and Buckley Town Council is important to the success of the project. Datrys will guide them through the decision making process. It is also necessary to involve St Elfed's school where the appointed artist is expected to host workshops engaging local children with the design of the new public art. Datrys and the artist will work together to arrange these workshops.

Scope of the Work

The installed artwork will take the form of an original, eye catching, thought provoking yet sensitive work which may involve elements of landscape design, sculpture, 3-D, 2-D or other artworks. The precise form of the work, in both concept and construction, will be determined by the artist. The commission proposal should include all groundworks required within the site. The groundworks can be considered part of the artwork.

However, the committee are keen to see proposals matching any of the following – work that:

General

- acts as a landmark; makes a statement, is eye-catching and not too ‘safe’
- is calming and child-friendly
- is perhaps representational
- is perhaps interactive
- is 2D or 3D
- is easy to maintain
- is reflective and thought provoking
- either incorporates the existing slate front with the inscription, or does not include any of the existing materials, but includes the current inscription in Welsh and English as a part of the artwork.
- incorporates the 2 x welsh feather icons currently part of the memorial.

Form

- site specific
- is made from one or multiple materials
- is functional for it’s use as a memorial
- is perhaps representational

Content

- a memorial that is sensitive to it’s purpose.

The following, in particular, **should be avoided** – work that:

General

- includes nudity
- is attractive to vandalism
- includes sitting areas

Form

- is purely abstract

Content

- is aggressive, confrontational or unfriendly to children
- is heavy with political or other ‘messages’
- is silly, comic, humorous or weird
- is quirky or too clever
- includes soldiers or arms
- incorporates sound

Further considerations

- artist can consider replacing the existing war memorial (although this is not essential and will depend on the artist's proposals submitted to the Committee).
- The chosen artist must consider access to the monument - access is currently very difficult, e.g. wheelchair. The artist should consider the relative merits of paths and steps, and whether it should be open from more than one direction.
- The artist should give consideration to the current level, height and dimensions of the monument and the monuments orientation.
- No names of servicemen and women to be included on the new memorial.

Physical Limitation

The work may be located anywhere in the area described in The Site above. The artist is free to propose how much of the area is used by the artwork and must also propose how the rest of the area would be landscaped and utilised. The proposal should include all groundworks required within the site and the costs of these works.

Key dates

22 September 2017 - Deadline for initial proposal

29 September 2017 - Artists notified if shortlisted

10 November 2017 - Deadline for worked up proposals by shortlisted artists

24 November 2017 - Artist notified if selected

December 2017/January 2018 - Site visit

January 2018 - Fabrication begins

May 2018 - Fabrication complete

June 2018 - Installation

Budget and Fees

An inclusive fee of £500 is available to each short-listed artist as payment for a fully worked-up proposal.

A further inclusive fee of £35,000 is available to the selected artist.

This sum will include:

- all artist's fees
- all artists travel and subsistence
- fabrication and material costs
- maintenance manual
- public liability and damage insurance
- transport of finished artwork
- installation of finished artwork

The artist is responsible for the costs of any necessary foundations or contextual landscaping.

The Steering Panel

The Steering Panel is comprised of:

- representatives from the Royal British Legion
- representatives from Buckley Town Council
- representatives from the local secondary school

The project is managed by DATRYYS, led by Iwan Williams.

Point of Contact

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Appendix - Site Images





