



NOTICE OF MEETING

Dear Members of the Public and Press,

You are cordially invited to attend an **extraordinary** meeting of **Full Council** to be held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 19th October 2022** at **7.15pm** to consider the business detailed below.

Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive and consider apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**
To note any declarations of members' pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary/other interests pertaining to items on the following agenda, to note any dispensations granted in respect of business to be discussed and to consider any requests for dispensations.
3. **Minutes**
To confirm as a true record, the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 7th September 2022 (copy herewith).
4. **Public Participation**
To consider a resolution under Standing Orders 3d to 3h to suspend the meeting to receive reports from the County and District Councillors, on behalf of the Police, and to hear comments from members of the public on items to be discussed on the agenda (*members of the public are entitled to speak for a maximum of three minutes*).
5. **Items of URGENT business**
To discuss any item(s) of business which the Town Mayor or Town Clerk has previously been informed at least 24 hours before the meeting and decides should be considered as a matter of urgency (*councillors are reminded that no resolutions can be made under this agenda item*).
6. **Experience Art Trail**
To receive an update regarding the art sculpture for installation on the Mere's Mouth early 2023 (report reference 24/2223 herewith refers).
7. **Date of Next Meeting**
To note that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for Wednesday 9th November 2022 at 7.15pm.
8. **Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings)**
To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 3d to exclude members of the public and press in order to discuss the following items which are properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

9. IT Infrastructure

To consider a further confidential report (ref 25/2223 herewith) following the review of the Council's IT supplier.

10. Cemetery Bungalow

To review the additional valuations and information received relating to the sale of the Cemetery bungalow (report reference 26/2223 herewith).

11. Deed of Easement – 14 Market Hill

To consider the draft deed of easement granting access over Town Council land to 14 Market Hill and approve the execution and sealing of the legal deed as per Standing Order 23a (report reference 27/2223 herewith).

NOTES

1 - Council has a statutory legal duty under the Localism Act 2011 s2 and has adopted a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members in order to promote high standards of conduct as required by the Act. Members' disclosable pecuniary interests are kept on a register available to view on the Council's website. Allegations about the conduct of a councillor may be made to the district council's monitoring officer. Diss Town Council has also adopted a dispensation policy.

The reports and enclosures referred to in this agenda are available (unless marked confidential) for public inspection at the Council Offices during normal opening hours or on our website at <https://www.diss.gov.uk/full-council>.

DISS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

DRAFT

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 7th September 2022** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors S. Browne
D. Collins
M. Gingell
A. Kitchen
S. Kiddie
K. Murphy
S. Olander (ex-officio)
J. Robertson
E. Taylor (ex-officio)
J. Welch
J. Wooddissee

In attendance: S. Richards (Town Clerk)
S. French (Deputy Town Clerk)
County / District councillor Kiddie
4 members of the public

FC0922/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from councillor Peaty due to family commitments.

FC0922/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

FC0922/03 MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 13th July 2022 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Town Mayor.

FC0922/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 5 members of the public present. County / District councillor Kiddie spoke on behalf of both councils. Apologies were given on behalf of District councillors Minshull and Wilby. It is too early to pass on any information following the recent change in Prime Minister. The Vinces Road scheme has started, which should have positive benefits to help alleviate traffic congestion albeit there have been considerable impacts on traffic through Diss. The energy crisis has led to a national shortage of tarmac and with the former scheme being prioritised, the resurfacing of the A1066 at Roydon has been postponed to the end of the year. Potholes will also take longer to fill. Traffic calming measures are being reviewed for the top of Denmark Hill, which will be financed through councillor Kiddie's member grant. The Diss beacon cycle trail signs have been installed but need reviewing to check they are correct.

(Action: Clerk to follow up with CV & PC; by 03.11.22)

The district hub will open in due course in the former Tourist Information Centre. A waste & recycling event will be held on 28th September at the DYCC. Unwanted electricals can be dropped off between 9am – 1pm. The County tree planting initiative is active and Fair Green has applied for some trees. There was a request for the drains in Mere Street to be flushed due to unpleasant smells and for one of the new Enforcement Officers to be stationed at the new hub in Diss dedicated to the Waveney Valley area.

(Action: KK; by 03.11.22)

There was a query regarding the decision to change the retail space of the former TIC to offices and it was explained that as the building is owned by the District Council, it avoids rental payments and followed leasing issues with the former tenant.

It was noted that there is very little advance warning signage regarding the Vines Road scheme outside of Diss and councillor Kiddie agreed to follow this up.

(Action: KK; immediately)

FC0922/05 **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were none.

FC0922/06 **FINANCE**

- a) Members noted bank outgoings for July 2022.
- b) Members received the first quarterly financial report (April – June 2022) including a revised format Income, Expenditure and Earmarked Reserves report (ref 19/2223). Comments were made regarding point 17 in the report regarding interest gained on the savings account and that the further diversification of funds would be prioritised after budgeting.
- c) Members noted the Income & Expenditure report for July 2022. It was noted that most of the Carnival sub-committee queries have been addressed and the final one is being resolved.
- d) Members noted Earmarked Reserved for July 2022.

FC0922/07 **CO-OPTION**

Members considered two applications for co-option to Diss Town Council. George Waterman, spoke of his 18 months in Diss, the welcoming vibe from the community and collective achievements namely the litter pick, fridge / freezer and composter projects. He is proud to be Diss' Honoured Citizen, is keen to learn more about how the town functions and coordinate projects born from people with ideas and enthusiasm.

Liz Sinfield has a long association with Diss with her husband's business based here and moved here 2.5 years ago. She also finds the community welcoming, feels the town has a positive vibe and is becoming increasingly prosperous. She wants to work with like-minded people to further improve the town.

The Chair explained that he and the Clerk met with Liz in advance of the meeting to provide more information about the role given she wasn't known to Council. It was

RESOLVED: To co-opt George Waterman and Liz Sinfield to Diss Town Council with the declarations of office signed in the presence of the Clerk.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0922/08 **CEMETERY BUNGALOW**

Members received report (ref 20/2223). There was a query regarding whether this item should be considered under the public session of the meeting, but it was agreed that it is in the public interest and there are no legal issues or quote comparisons.

There was a view that this property should be sold to raise funds for work on other Council properties particularly given the precept levels of the Town Council. It was noted that precept increases in the last 3 years have been 2.5%, 2% & 0% and that significant increases have been historical.

Members considered selling the plot size that gives best value. A steer from committee was required regarding the option to sell or rent prior to additional valuation quotes being sourced.

There was discussion regarding the lack of rental options in Diss but given the condition of the bungalow, expenditure of around £25k is anticipated on the upgrade and the ongoing costs of maintaining the property will not give a return. It was

RESOLVED: To approve Option 2 to sell the cemetery bungalow seeking comparative valuations with all monies received used to repair, upgrade and future proof existing Council facilities.

(Action: DepTC; by 17.11.22)

FC0922/09

MAYOR'S CADETS

Members considered the appointment of Mayor's Cadets. The Flying Officer for the Air Cadets spoke about the proposal. They now have 33 cadets who age out at 20, they parade Tuesdays & Thursdays and are all volunteers. They provide local children with a whole range of activities including flying, gliding, shooting and BTEC qualifications, which teaches them values.

The scheme would be aimed at the older cadet (16-18) who would apply to become a Mayor's cadet. They would accompany the Mayor to Diss major events such as the Remembrance parade and Christmas Lights Switch-on. It will provide them with an understanding of what the Council does, give them pride and additional responsibility in their role and get them out in the community. The Cadets would be presented with a special badge to denote their role. The Town Council would be able to select their Cadets from several options.

There was also a request for a representative of the Town Council to join their civilian committee where they consider fundraising opportunities, grants and welfare issues. They meet 4 times per year and would need to be DBS checked. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the appointment of Mayor's Cadets.

(Action: Clerk; by 30.09.22)

FC0922/10

ITEMS FOR NOTING

a) Pedestrianisation of Mere Street - members noted an update regarding the pedestrianisation of Mere Street project (report reference 21/2223 referred). The aspiration for the project is to improve the town centre for pedestrians and increased footfall to shops. The scheme was brought forward following the Covid pandemic to entice the public back to the high streets and funding was provided. The scheme aims to remove vehicles as much as possible, enable a café culture and create a more ambient town centre. It allows for deliveries until 11am with adequate loading and unloading bays for deliveries by foot thereafter and DDA compliant parking spaces.

There was discussion regarding the future use of the Kingshead Yard which is in private ownership following Wetherspoon's decision to halt on its development, the possible prescriptive right of way through the Yard to the rear access to properties on Mere St and thereby the opportunity for traders to negotiate same legal right and the rear access for Chapel St traders. It was noted that at the last Infrastructure committee meeting, it was agreed that a meeting would be held with stakeholders and an illustration of the scheme has been requested from the County Council to facilitate such.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

b) Norwich Western Link - Members noted that the pre-planning application consultation regarding the Norwich Western Link project is underway. It was noted that this will complete the outer ring road around Norwich and stop the significant amount of rat running around the airport to the dual carriageway. It was agreed that councillor Olander would submit a response on behalf of the Town Council on the scheme.

(Action: SO; by 05.10.22)

- c) Progress report – Members noted the progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council. It was reported that the item cllr Gingell is dealing with will be considered by the next Executive committee meeting (minute ref FC 0622 /15).

(Action: MG; by 28.09.22)

FC0922/11 **MEMBER FORUM**

Members considered information or issues relevant to Council from members for brief discussion, action, or inclusion on a future agenda. The environmental health concerns regarding pigeons in Mere St was raised. It was noted that hawk decoys have been successful in scaring the pigeons at the rear of a building in St Nicholas St. Sonar devices are being trialled in Mere St. This would be an item for consideration by the next Infrastructure committee.

(Action: Clerk; by 20.10.22)

FC0922/12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for Wednesday 9th November 2022 at 7.15pm

FC0922/13 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS)**

To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 3d to exclude members of the public and press in order to discuss the following item which is properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

FC0922/14 **IT INFRASTRUCTURE**

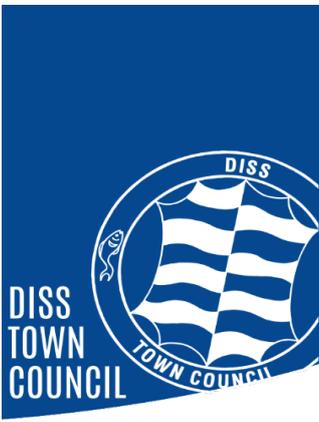
Members considered a confidential report (ref 18/2223) regarding a review of the Council's IT supplier. The retainer package would allow staff to ask for support whenever required rather than being charged each time. Given the increasing IT costs, it was agreed that a costs for same from similarly sized councils staffing / councillor wise would be helpful. A price would be sourced for changing to a Mac operating system rather than Microsoft which seem to have more issues. It was

RESOLVED: to investigate the costs of the Mac operating system, costs of IT support from similarly sized councils (staffing / cllr) and to purchase 14 new Ipad Minis (6th) at a total cost of up to £6,500 allocated to General Reserves.

(Action: DepTC; immediately)

Meeting Closed: 9.16pm.

Councillor Taylor
TOWN MAYOR



DISS TOWN COUNCIL

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Report Number:
24 / 2223

Report to:	Full Council (extraordinary)
Date of Meeting:	19 th October 2022
Authorship:	Town Clerk / Chief Executive Officer
Subject:	Mere's Mouth art installation

Introduction

1. At the January 2022 meeting of Full Council, members resolved to support the 'Toy Studio / Flock' design for the new outdoor artwork commissioned by Norfolk County Council (NCC) at the Mere's Mouth location. See minute reference below:

FC120122/15 EXPERIENCE ART TRAIL

Members reviewed the feedback from Town Council representatives on the four designs received for a Norfolk County Council commissioned art installation at the Mere's Mouth (report reference 53/2122 referred). The Council Panel preferred the 'Flock' design as the only art installation, mimicking the fountain, that meets the combined criteria of creativity, engagement, accessibility, sustainability, low maintenance and size / scale so as not to impose upon the unique positioning in front of the Mere.

There was a strongly held view that the choice of options was somewhat underwhelming and not particularly fitting for the intended location. Members discussed local artists who could have been approached although it was recognised that some artists would not be interested in designing a public art sculpture. It was noted that the public favourite is also 'Flock', it is unlikely to be a permanent structure, that it comes with the funding, which cannot be used for anything else, and that it will form part of County-wide trail, which will be heavily promoted and aims to increase footfall into Diss. It was

RESOLVED: To support the 'Toy Studio / Flock' design for the new outdoor artwork commissioned by Norfolk County Council at the Mere's Mouth location.

2. Owner of the land at Mere's Mouth, the Diss Parochial Charity has also been consulted throughout the process.

Planning application

3. The planning application (reference 2022/1793) for the installation of the sculpture is currently pending consideration by the Planning Authority.
4. The designer's design and access statement provides a detailed overview of the proposal and is available at Appendix A.

Positioning of artwork

5. P8 of Appendix A provides an indicative positioning of the sculpture. This is centrally located on the Mere's Mouth which allows for movement around the sculpture, event /

stall set up and good line of vision to both the Mere fountain and CCTV camera on Mere Street. It will also not affect the brick weave foundation as it located solely in the resin bound gravel area.

6. The Facilities & Buildings Manager and Supervisor met with the Clerk met to agree this as the optimum positioning. The sculpture will be positioned in line with the handrail leading up the steps to the toilets adjacent to the hedge. This can be better viewed at Appendix B where the blue X marks the spot.

Scale

7. Appendix C provides the height and scale measurements of the sculpture. The base will be 4m in diameter with a maximum height of 4.5m.

Power requirements

8. The external power source proposal set out on p8 has since been superseded by connecting to a Diss Town Council owned streetlight to the west side of the Mere Street.
9. Norfolk County Council has already spoken to our streetlighting contractor about their requirements. This will avoid having to lift and relay brick sets although there remains the requirement for the resin bound gravel to be removed so cabling can be accessed to the plinth and then replaced.
10. It is felt that although this will influence the aesthetics initially, it will soon bed down and does not require additional treatment in terms of a patterned effect.

Poem

11. The artist has engaged with the community to identify text that reflects the voices, opinions, thoughts, and stories about the town of Diss and the Mere. This is integral to the design and will be engraved on the material forming the sculpture.
12. The output of this community engagement can be viewed at Appendix D.

Ongoing maintenance

13. NCC intend to install the sculpture early 2023.
14. The sculpture will become an asset of the Town Council once handed over and NCC will cover the costs of maintaining and insuring the sculpture.
15. It is anticipated that the sculpture will be in situ for at least 5 years and will require low level clean every 6 months and high level clean within those 5 years. Costs of our Facilities & Buildings team carrying out the low level clean have been provided with a recommendation to outsource the latter.

Recommendation

To note the contents of this report.

FLOCK



FLOCK | DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

THE NORFOLK

WAY ART TRAIL

DISS MERE



: toystudio.co.uk



: info@toystudio.co.uk



: [toy.uk](https://www.instagram.com/toy.uk)

Project Overview

This proposal is part of a wider initiative to establish a brand new outdoor public art trail, The Norfolk Way Art Trail, spanning 250 miles through Norfolk. The initiative is funded by EXPERIENCE, a €23.3 million project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme. Led by Norfolk County Council, it aims to deliver innovative and sustainable growth via a new tourism strategy. It is project-managed by creative agency Creative Giants. The overarching goal of the project is to create accessible public artworks that would engage local communities, reveal hidden stories and encourage visitors to explore the county between October and March.

toyStudio was awarded the commission after the client Norfolk County Council (NCC) undertook a rigorous selection process, advised by art curators Creative Giants (CG). The proposal was selected through a formal tender process and judged by a panel which included representatives from

- Creative Giants (Art Curator)
- Experience (European Regional Development Fund)
- Diss Parochial Charity (Landowner)
- Diss Town Council.

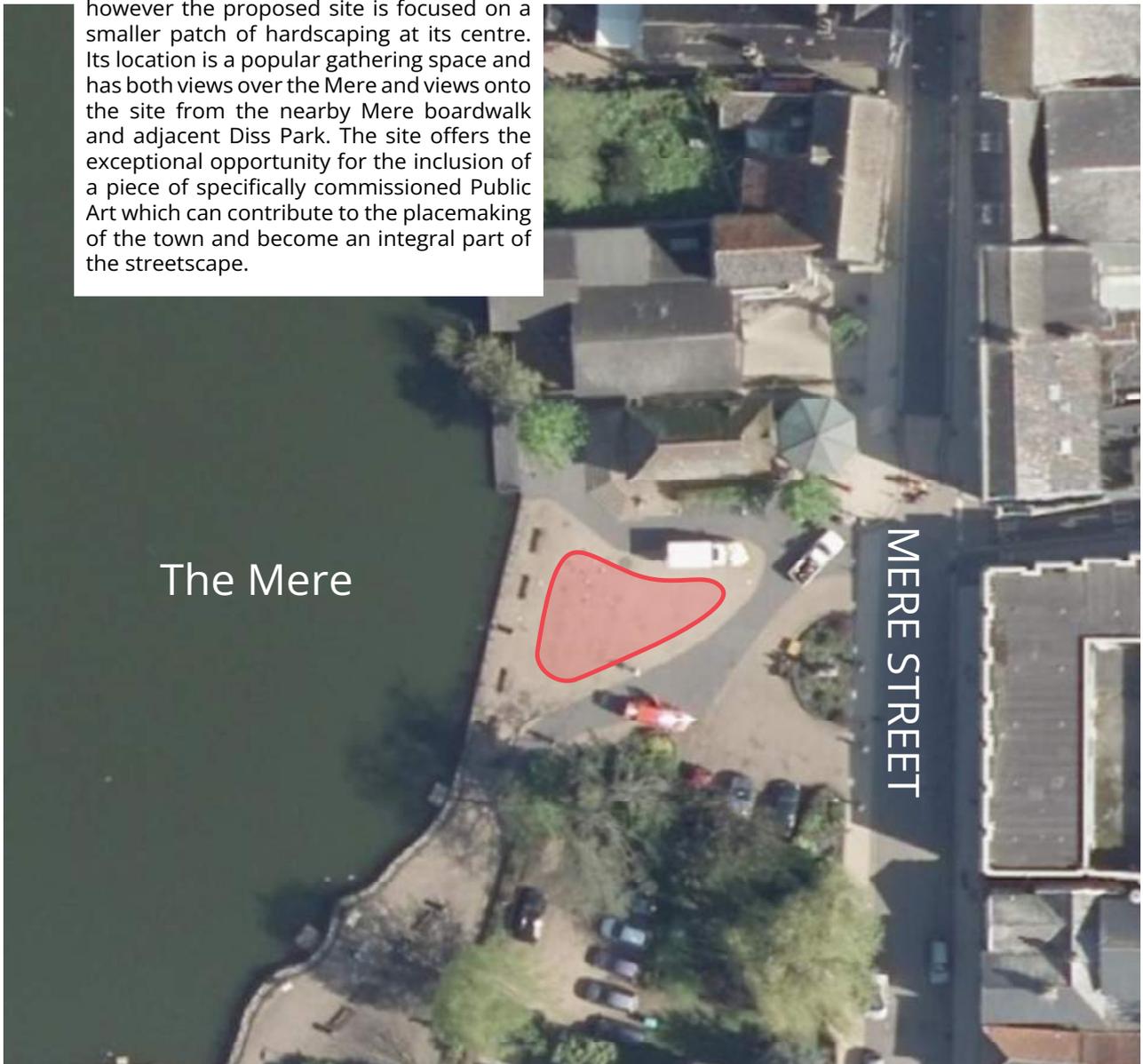
The artist was to respond to a site-specific brief, written by NCC and CG, that required the design of the artwork to be creatively ambitious and contribute to making the site a place of interest. It is to reveal the hidden stories and reflect the character of its region whilst making sure the artwork is sensitive to its environment. It was also stated that the artworks are safe, durable and permanent (lasting 10 years) whilst also easy to maintain and not require any specialist cleaning or upkeep. The final selection was also put to an online public vote against three others, allowing the panel to consider feedback from the public in their assessment. Flock was 'liked' by 144 people and 'favourited' by 138 - the most out of the four design proposals.



Location

Located in the cherished market town of Diss, South Norfolk, the proposed site is an existing public space, a frequented spot at the entrance to Diss Parkland and the mouth of the Mere - adjacent to the intersection of Mere Street and Chapel Street. The site sits within the conservation area, the Diss Heritage triangle, and has a number of listed buildings close by - though not directly adjacent.

The public 'square' is roughly 25m x 30m, however the proposed site is focused on a smaller patch of hardscaping at its centre. Its location is a popular gathering space and has both views over the Mere and views onto the site from the nearby Mere boardwalk and adjacent Diss Park. The site offers the exceptional opportunity for the inclusion of a piece of specifically commissioned Public Art which can contribute to the placemaking of the town and become an integral part of the streetscape.



The Mere

MERE STREET

The Proposal

The sculpture, 'Flock', responds directly to the brief and is inspired by the flocking behavior of flights of birds, schools of fish and the swarms of eels which are so synonymous with the Mere and the nearby River Waveney. However, Flock does not only mimic the behavior of this wildlife, but it also represents the movement of Diss' own residents. Just as the Mere's wildlife has migrated to Diss over the years, many different communities have arrived in Diss and have been welcomed into the town.

The sculpture's overall form responds directly to the site, intending to evoke the Mere's infamous depth. Originating from a singular point, the artwork grows from a narrow base, spiralling upwards expanding in radius and the members disperse, intending to evoke a cross-sectional representation of the Mere. The local community will be invited to share their stories which will be curated into prose by a local collaborator, Bel Greenwood, and showcased as a physical part of the installation.

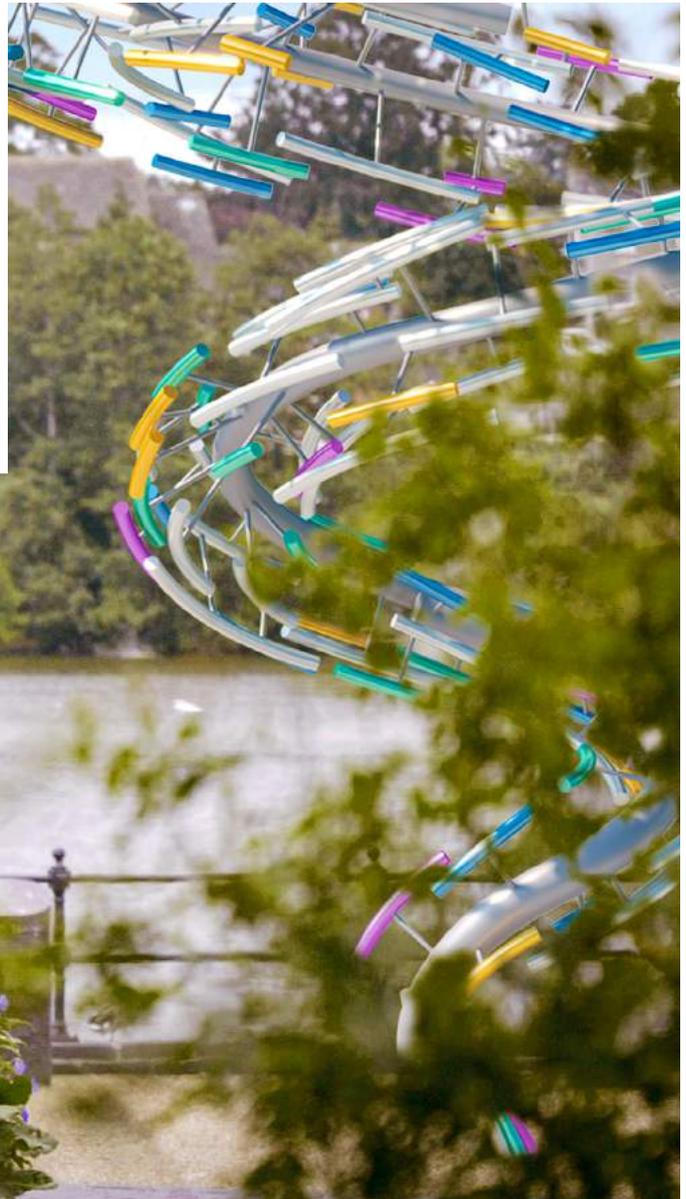
Flock is formed of a collection of curved, metallic, tubes of varying lengths, spiraling upwards. Each one of these tubes represent the individual directions we take within a community and how we move forward together as one. The artwork therefore becomes a metaphor for the community of Diss - "flocking" through life.



Placemaking

The artwork responds to, and respects, the local distinctiveness of the site and aims to create a strong sense of place. The view onto Mere from this location is popular with residents and therefore, consideration has been made to not propose a sculpture which is too overbearing or 'solid'. Instead, a visual anchor is created with the use of height, while its conical form, spiraled massing, and materiality ensures the unobstructed views of the Mere are retained and minimal impact is made to the movement around the public realm.

The Mere is an important part of Diss and the materiality of Flock compliments the environment it sits in, rather than standing out from it. The main body of flock will have a silver finish, allowing the artwork to catch the colours of the work's surroundings. Positioned at the head of the Mere, Flock will become a strong source of identity for the community and needs to become a successful placemaking asset. This is ensured by providing an outlet for the community to express themselves through extensive public consultation and an in-depth engagement program.



Public Consultation

Creative Giants - acting as an agent for Norfolk County Council and project manager - have undertaken extensive public consultation, both as part of the brief writing and the tender selection process.

A series of public surveys were undertaken which not only outlined key public considerations which needed to be accounted for, but also helped to better understand the character of the town and the residents, influencing both the design process and the outcome. Furthermore, a fundamental part of the proposal is a community engagement process, involving the public throughout the design stage with engagement activities and ultimately resulting in their input becoming physical part of the final work.

Following the selection of 'Flock' as the preferred artwork by the panel pre-planning advise was requested from South Norfolk Council, case officer Glen Beaumont provided the following response.

"Given the location of the site within the conservation area, the Diss Heritage triangle and with a number of listed buildings close by [it was] discussed with the Council's Senior Heritage and Design Officer. His view that as it is an existing public space, one might expect to see a piece of public art in a location such as this. His view was that what is being shown on the images will relate acceptably to nearby heritage assets and may assist in giving this space some definition."



Community Engagement

Flock intends to become a strong source of identity for the community and a well-loved communal asset; therefore their engagement is an integral part of our proposal. Residents, community groups and schools in Diss have been invited to share their voice, and in particular share their stories of place, which will be collated and curated into prose by toyStudio's local collaborator, Bel Greenwood. Their messages will be imprinted onto some of the tubes which make up Flock, providing a physical place for the community to tell their stories and creating a place for quiet contemplation and reflection.

Sharing the town's hidden stories, past and present, with residents' and visitors alike, provides a place where memories and

aspirations can be enjoyed in years to come and encourages people to pause and reflect on their own community. By concluding the community engagement process as a physical part of the work, it ensures the community feel both a part of the work and connected to the process.

The messages have been highlighted from the rest of the flock with the use of colour. By looking back at Diss' historic cloth and linen markets, we've identified colours and tones that were synonymous with Diss and the tubes of the messages adorned in these colours as a subtle reference to the town's history.



Community Engagement Detail

Lighting Design

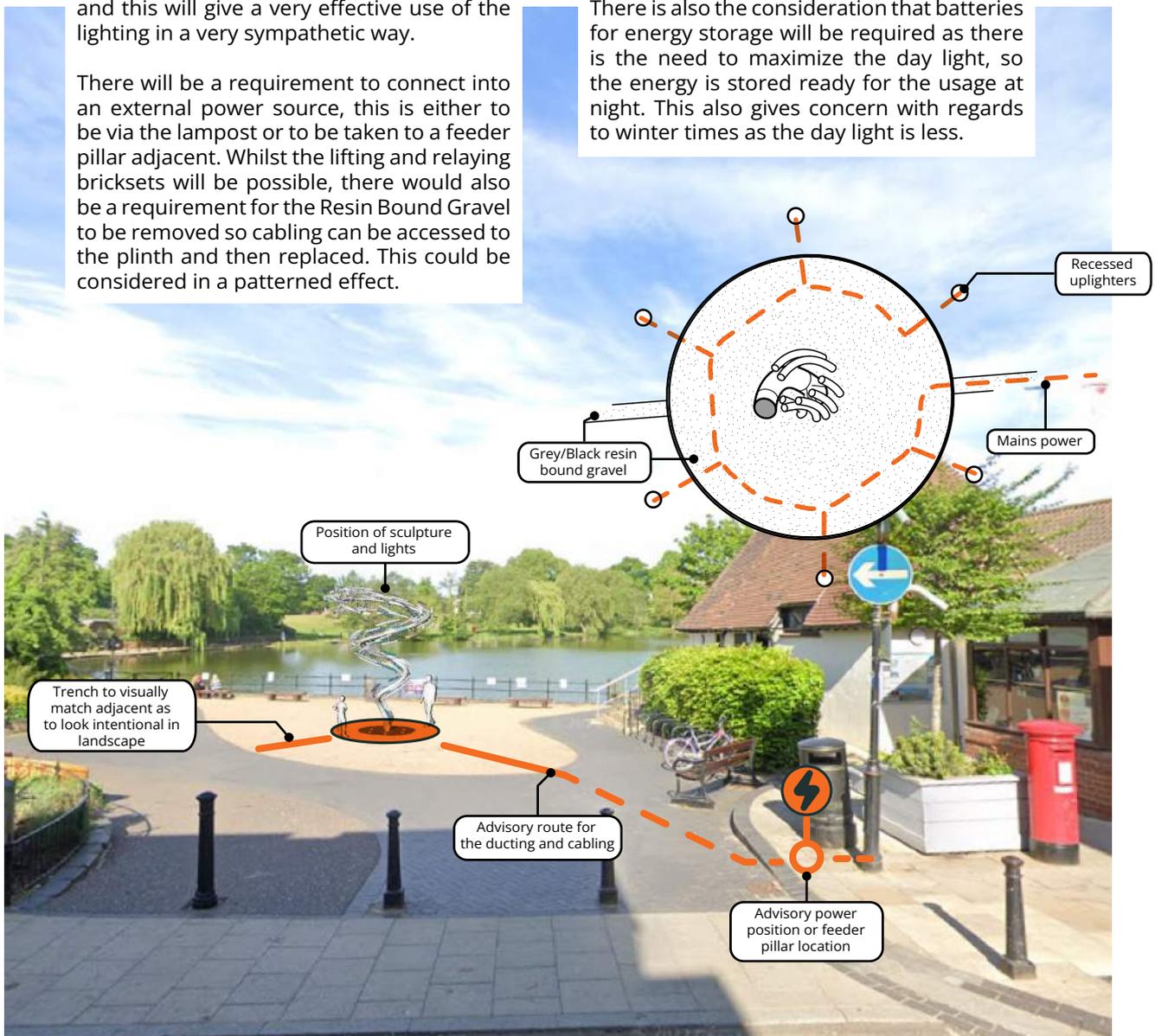
This section has been written based on information provided by lighting design consultant Mason Hart & Associates.

Four to six inground uplighters will be set into the Resin Bound Gravel outside the plinth found at the base of the artwork. The use of the inground uplighters is a very effective way of pushing light towards the tubes and with the use of different optics within the apparatus, this will allow light to be positioned upwards through the artwork and this will give a very effective use of the lighting in a very sympathetic way.

There will be a requirement to connect into an external power source, this is either to be via the lamppost or to be taken to a feeder pillar adjacent. Whilst the lifting and relaying bricksets will be possible, there would also be a requirement for the Resin Bound Gravel to be removed so cabling can be accessed to the plinth and then replaced. This could be considered in a patterned effect.

Early investigations were undertaken consider environmentally friendly ways of creating a power source, in this case we really do feel that the use of solar or wind or both would create a visually unsuitable option as the solar panel and wind turbine would require to be above the artwork and solar panel would be at least the same width as the sculpture which would detract away from the visual effect of the artwork and its lightweight appearance.

There is also the consideration that batteries for energy storage will be required as there is the need to maximize the day light, so the energy is stored ready for the usage at night. This also gives concern with regards to winter times as the day light is less.





Materiality

Flock will be made from CHS steel members rolled into arcs and finished with powder polyurethane paint/powder coating, a robust material and finish with 20 years to first maintenance expectancy and a design life expectancy of 50 years. The robustness of these materials and their fixing methods safeguards the work from any public interaction - be it respectful or malicious - and will allow the work to be safely installed for the 10+ years expected. The structural engineer of the work has been undertaken by Format Engineers; their report has been appended at the end of this document.

Where there is the requirement to disturb the existing resin bound gravel to both cast the in-situ foundation and to connect back into the mains. The foundation will be lined with a decorative blackened steel slab edge, protruding to account for the change in level of the landscape. This will then be topped with a similar type of resin bound gravel as the existing landscape, however in a contrasting colour, as it is unlikely to be able to achieve a colour match to the existing. This will also be the approach to make good the trench, using a similar, but contrasting, resin bound gravel floor finish.

Whilst much of the sculpture will be silver in colour, allowing the artwork to catch the colours of the work's surroundings, some flock member will be highlighted will be colour. These colours have been identified by looking back at Diss' historic cloth and linen markets and finding tones which were synonymous with Diss.



Contrasting Resin Bound Gravel



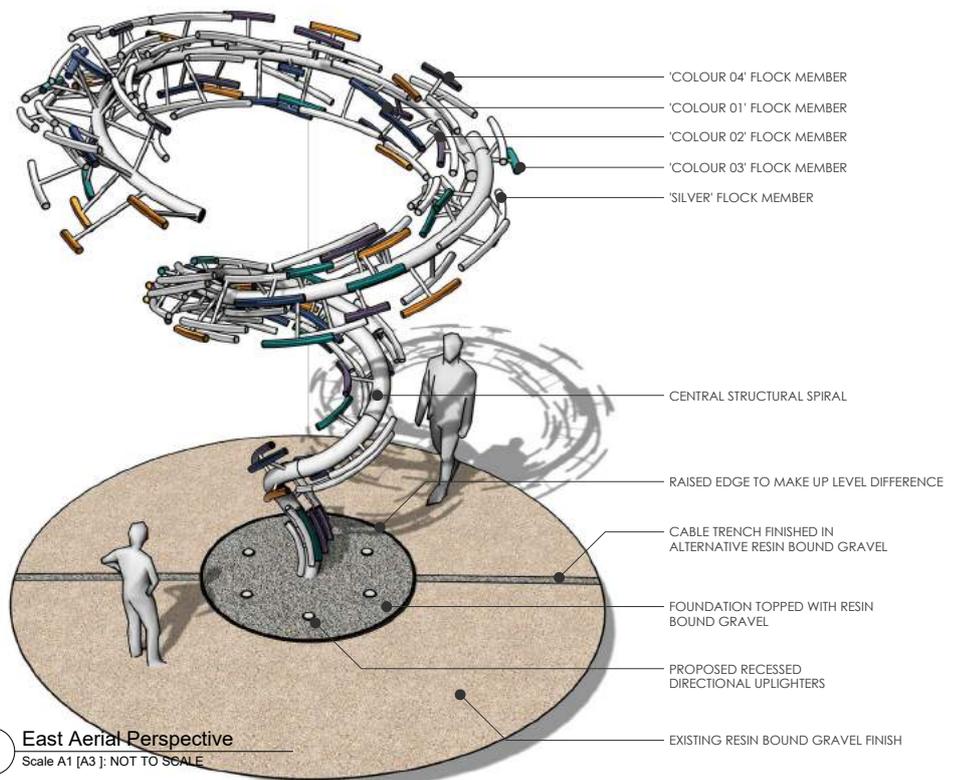
(Existing) Resin Bound Gravel



Blackened Steel



Finished Steel Tube



4 East Aerial Perspective
Scale A1 [A3]: NOT TO SCALE

APPENDICES

- 1. RISK REGISTER**
- 2. STRUCTURAL REPORT**

Risk Ref	Hazard Category	Activity	Hazard and Risk Description	Risk Level (Pre-Mitigation)	Control Measure (Eliminate, Reduce, Inform, Control)	Risk Level (Post-Mitigation)	Date (Logged / Updated)	Status	Owner
RR-AR-01	Reduced Headroom	In Use	Low headroom close to base of sculpture. Risk of injury to the public.	High	Raised plinth to mitigate public approaching sculpture where headheight is less than 2m	Low	10/08/2022	Closed	TOY
RR-AR-02	Fall From Height	In Use	Lower flock members increase likelihood of person climbing on the structure. Injury to public and permanent damage to sculpture.	Medium	Sculptures form has been made steeper at lower levels and number of flock members at the lower level decreased to reduce risk and possibility of climbing. Low level boundary fence has been discounted due to inversely increasing the ability to climb by providing a raised step to help reach the sculpture, and adding an object to risk falling onto. Alternatively, a raised plinth provides further mitigation measure to discourage climbing. 'Do not climb' signs also to be present around sculpture.	Low	14/09/2022	Closed	TOY
RR-AR-03	Manual Handling	Construction	Central structural spiral and individual flock members may be heavy in large sections, causing risk of injury through manual handling	Medium	Flock elements limited to manageable lengths whilst structural spiral elements to be rolled as smaller more manageable individual arcs rather than continuous spiral.	Low	17/06/2022	Closed	TOY
RR-AR-04	Overhead Crane Lifting	Construction	Installation of sculpture requires overhead lifting and handling	High	Adequate allowances for lifting points or sling positions to be incorporated into the fabrication. Design to be fully assembled and lifted in one piece to reduce amount time spent lifting overhead.	Low	17/06/2022	Residual CP	Contractor
RR-AR-05	Drowning	Construction	Proximity of sculpture is close to water body, risk of falling into Mere during installation	Medium	Sculpture position on site is adequate distance away from water body to allow adequate movement around site during and after installation. Contractor will be required to provide fencing to protect workers from Mere	Low	10/07/2022	Residual CP	Contractor
RR-AR-06	Fall From Height	In Use	Risk of falling from height during cleaning and maintenance of sculpture	Medium	Material choice requires little maintenance or cleaning requirements. Detailed access and maintenance strategy to be developed with client before hand over	Low	10/08/2022	Residual EU	Client
RR-ST-01	Fall From Height	In Use	Person climbing on the structure causing accidental load case. Serious injury to public and permanent damage caused to sculpture	High	Structure to withstand accidental loads. Client to advise requirements and their mitigation measures for preventing the public from climbing on the structure. Please also refer to RR-AR-02 Risk Reference and subsequent control measures.	Low	14/09/2022	Residual EU	Structural Engineer
RR-ST-02	Structural Damage	In Use	Excessive wind load deformation due to lack of stiffness of sculpture.	Low	Design team and Client to agree acceptable magnitude of movement of sculpture in wind conditions during Stage 4.	Low	22/08/2022	Open	Structural Engineer
RR-ST-03	Structural Damage	Maintenance	Excessive corrosion of structural steelwork supporting sculpture if not adequately protected leading to loss of structural material and visual impact to sculpture.	Medium	Adequate protective coating applied to steelwork, to be defined during Stage 4	Low	22/08/2022	Residual CP	Contractor
RR-ST-04	Strike by Moving Vehicle	In Use	A vehicle colliding with the sculpture may lead to collapse. The sculpture is not designed to resist vehicle loading. Risk of injury to public and damage of sculpture.	Medium	Area not subject to regular vehicle movement. Client to confirm management of area to prevent vehicular impact.	Low	22/08/2022	Residual EU	Client

APPENDICES

- 1. RISK REGISTER**
- 2. STRUCTURAL REPORT**

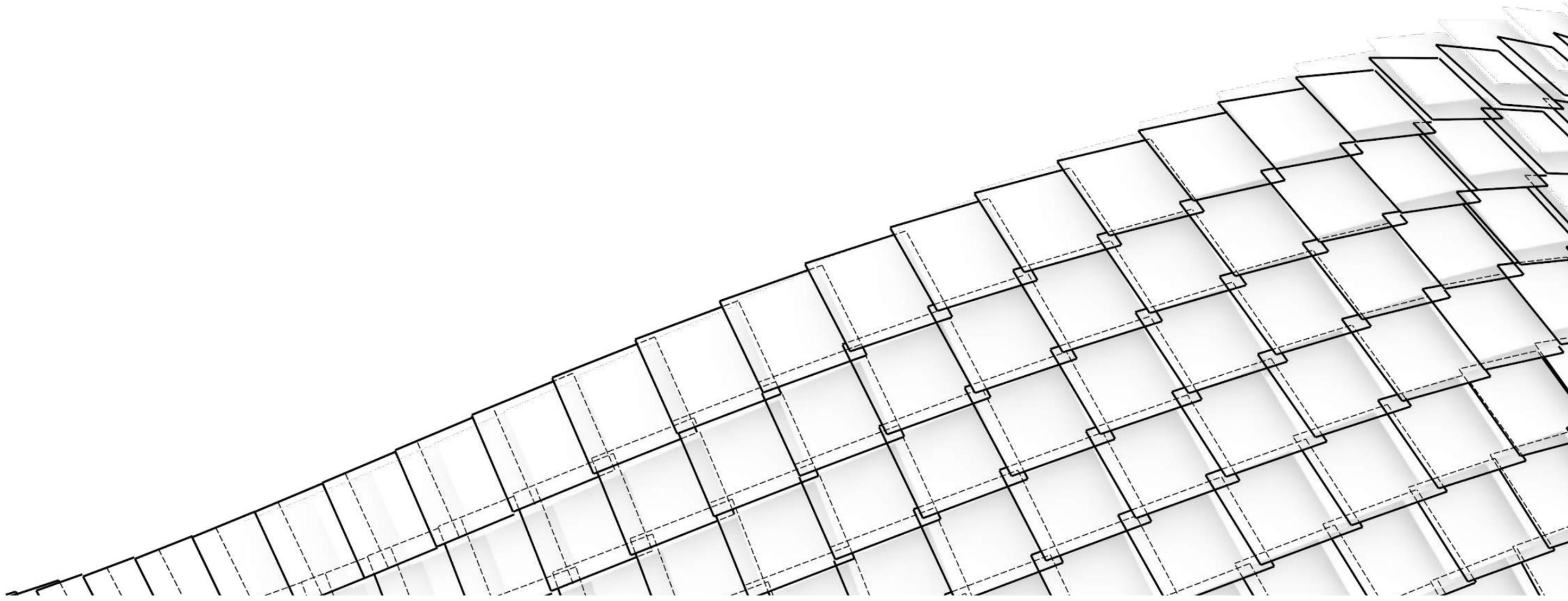
format

STRUCTURE | DESIGN | GEOMETRY | RESEARCH

Flock Sculpture Structural Engineering Stage 3 Report - For Tender

*For toyStudio Ltd
2nd September 2022 - Rev01*

Project Number: 0341



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Revisions

Revision No	Date	Description
00	26/08/22	For Tender
01	02/09/22	For Tender

Prepared on behalf of Format Engineers by :

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Date: 26/08/2022

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1. Introduction

Format Engineers have been engaged by toyStudio Ltd to assist with the design and structural engineering of the proposed Flock Sculpture.

The flock members rise in a spiralling formation, supported by a central steel tube which cantilevers upwards from a concrete support pad at the base. The height of the flock extends to approximately 4.5m above ground, encompassing a diameter of approximately 3.5m at the top.

This report describes the technical criteria used in the analysis and design of the Flock Sculpture and discusses any actions required going forward to Stage 4 Technical Design.

This report is the property of Format Engineers Ltd and is for the exclusive use of the Client and should not be used in whole or in part by any third parties without the express permission of Format in writing.

This report should not be relied upon exclusively by the client for decision making purposes and should be read in conjunction with all relevant Format drawings and specifications as well as related reports, drawings and specifications.

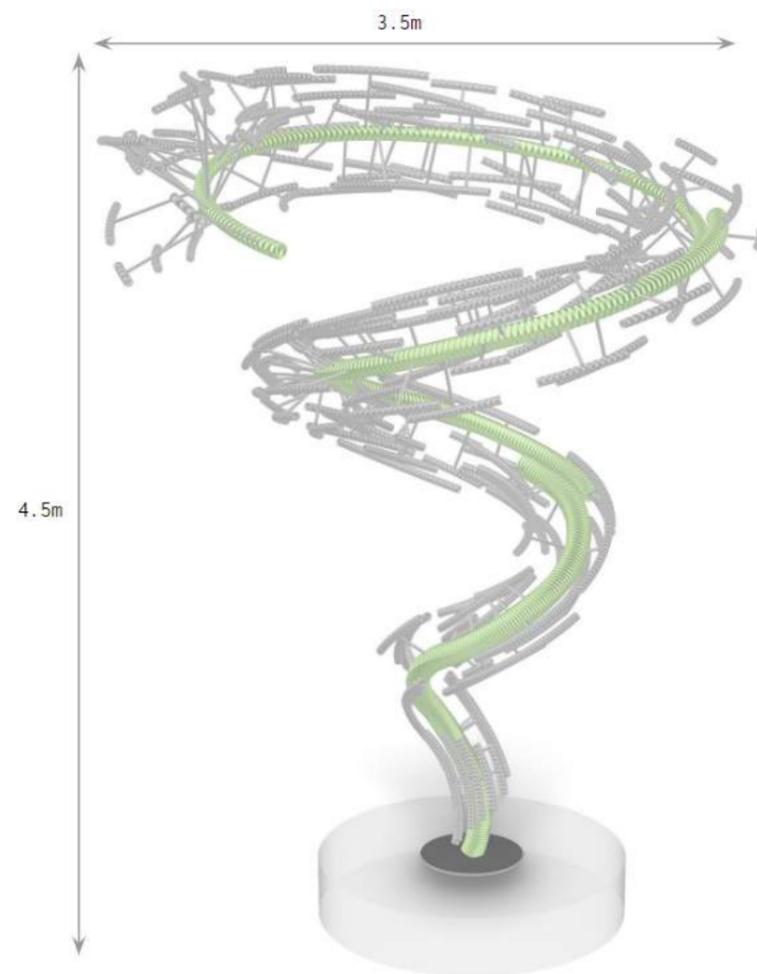


Fig.1 Flock sculpture with overall scale

2. Information Received

From the information which has been received to-date, this report is based on the latest geometry provided by toyStudio:

- 220806-toyStudio - Flock - Diss Mere.gh

3. Design Responsibilities

Format are responsible for:

- Structural design of the steel primary spiral tube and adjoining flock members
- Design of the above ground concrete pad foundation
- Connection design between all of the elements listed above

Format are not responsible for:

- Design of any elements not listed above

4. Next Steps

Following this report the next steps required to complete technical design of the structural elements is:

- Perform final geometric coordination and analysis of the main spiral tube with the steel fabricator, based on available steel sections and practical bending radii.
- Confirm the element design of the flock member pieces and their supports based on their requirement to resist accidental design loads.
- Finalise the design of all connection details between the primary structural elements.

5. Site

The sculpture is to be located adjacent to Diss Mere in the market town of Diss, Norfolk.



Fig.2 Location of the site in Diss, Norfolk, UK

The sculpture is to be situated on a current area of hardstanding to the southeast corner of The Mere. It is understood that the proposed location consists of a thin wearing surface, which was replaced in 2020, placed over backfill.



Fig.3 View of the proposed site of the sculpture adjacent to Diss Mere

6. Geometry Development

The geometry of the sculpture has been led by toyStudio with input from Format Engineers relating to the requirements and efficiencies of the supporting steel structure.

During this stage, rationalisation of the curves which make-up the primary spiral and Flock members has been done in order to simplify fabrication whilst minimising the impact of the aesthetics of the sculpture.

Much of the review process undertaken to this point has focussed on reducing the size and weight of the central spiralling member in order to reduce its dominance over the smaller Flock elements. To arrive at the design described within this report, studies have been undertaken to review options of continuous diameter and tapered tubes, as well as grouped clusters and offsets of small diameter tubes.



Fig.4 Primary spiralling CHS tubes of the sculpture

7. Detailed Description of Structural Elements

7.1. Primary Spiral

The primary spiral tube is approximately 15.5m long and has been rationalised into 10 individual planar arc sections by toyStudio. The tube is constructed of steel circular hollow sections (CHS) with diameters decreasing from 139mmØ at the base to 89mmØ at the top.

Lengths of the primary spiral tube, beginning at the base, are listed below:

- CHS 139x10.0 = 3.65m
- CHS 114x6.0 = 5.92m
- CHS 89x5.0 = 5.98m

In general the tube diameters have been reduced as far as possible for both aesthetic reasons and to facilitate the rolling of tighter bending radii of individual arcs by the fabricator.

Typically, individually rolled arcs are to be joined via welds end-on-end. However at the 2 locations along the length of the primary spiral where the CHS sizes reduce, the tube sections are designed to offset and overlap one another by approximately 700mm.

7.2. Flock Members

Tubular Flock elements make up the spiralling mass which surrounds the primary spiral tube. Rising up from the base, the Flock elements typically become more dispersed and move further away from the primary spiral, to a maximum distance of 600mm.

The Flock elements are also planar arcs with a length between 200mm and 800mm and each is supported at its mid-point with a support element back to the closest point on the primary spiral.

The colourful Flock elements have been designed as thin walled steel tubes of 48mmØ, but may also be constructed from resin material.

The Flock support links are considered to be 22mmØ solid steel bars that project from the primary spiral. In the next phase it will be determined whether it could be feasible for Flock elements to share support links, as this would help to reduce both the overall weight and visual density of these members.

7.3. Pad Footing

An allowable bearing capacity has been assumed of 50kN/m² based on the backfilled sub-surface below the current tarmac hardstanding, though no official ground investigation has been conducted at this stage.

A circular reinforced concrete pad footing of diameter 1800mm x 350mm deep has been designed to distribute the imposed loading of the sculpture within the assumed allowable bearing capacity.

It may be noted that under typical calm wind conditions the imposed bearing stress under the footing is <15kN/m². Peak bearing stresses of 50kN/m² may only occur below a portion of the footing during instances of storm wind conditions.

7.4. Connections

Indicative connections are described below, with the detailed connection design by Format to be completed during Stage 4 in collaboration with the chosen fabricators requirements.

7.4.1 Primary Spiral Connections

Typical end-on-end joints between equally sized CHS members can be made with partial joint penetration welds.

Where the primary spirals offset, the adjacent tubes are assumed to be joined continually along their length with flare bevel welds. Additional shaped stiffener plates will be required to provide further connection stiffness between the faces of the tubes. Number and size of stiffeners to be developed.

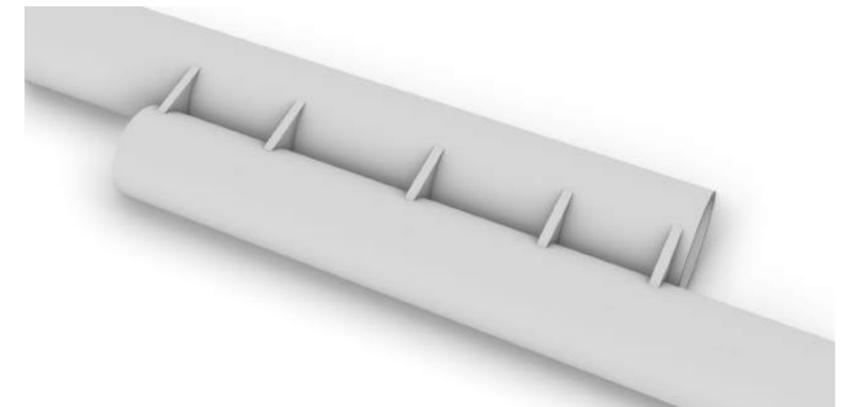


Fig.5 Indicative connection detail between offset CHS tubes

7.4.2 Flock Member Connections

Solid bar link elements are to penetrate through the primary spiral CHS with welds to be provided at both entry points. These are assumed to be fillet welds where the solid bar initially penetrates the CHS member and plug welds on the far side.

Although this method of connection requires an increased level of fabrication, it is important to ensure that the strength and stiffness of the primary spiral CHS is not compromised locally at the connection points.

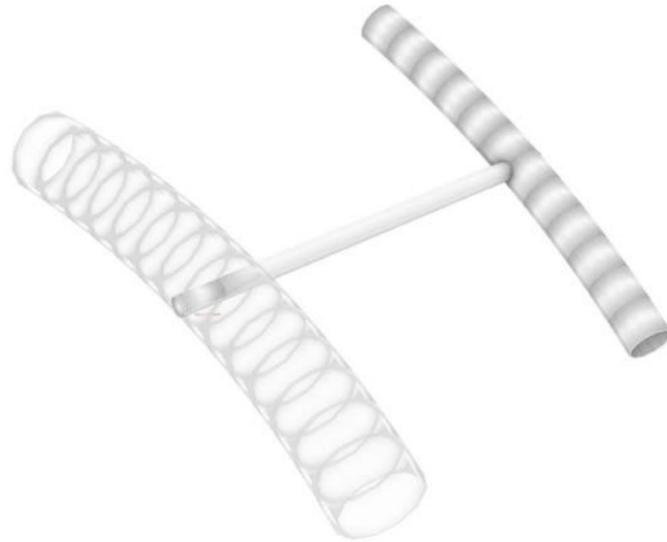


Fig.6 Indicative detail of Flock member support element at CHS

7.4.3 Primary Spiral Connection at Base

The primary spiral shall be welded to a steel embed plate to be cast into the pad foundation. Steel embed plate to have minimum 8No. 19Ø headed studs welded to the underside and lapped with the pad foundation reinforcement.



Fig.7 Indicative detail of primary spiral CHS connection to pad footing

8. Design Codes

The structural analysis and design of installation has been performed in accordance with the following design codes (and corresponding National Annexes), and non-contradictory complementary information:

- BS EN 1990 Basis of structural design
- BS EN 1991-1-1 Densities and self-weights
- BS EN 1991-1-4 Wind actions
- BS EN 1992-1-1 Design of concrete structures
- BS EN 1993-1-1 Design of steel structures

9. Material Properties

9.1. Steel

All steel elements of the structure are permanently exposed and require adequate protection against corrosion by either painting or hot dip galvanising. Protection method to be determined during the next phase.

9.1.1. Grade S355

- Grade S355
- Minimum yield strength, f_y : 355 MPa
- Ultimate tensile strength, f_u : 510MPa
- Modulus of elasticity, E : 210 GPa

The primary steel spiral tube and associated connection plates shall be constructed using grade S355.

9.1.2. Grade S235

- Grade S235
- Minimum yield strength, f_y : 235 MPa
- Ultimate tensile strength, f_u : 360 MPa
- Modulus of elasticity, E : 210 GPa

The Flock member elements are assumed to be hollow tubes of grade S235. Some Flock members may be fabricated in resin in lieu of metal as noted by toyStudio.

9.1.3. Grade S275

- Grade S275
- Minimum yield strength, f_y : 275 MPa
- Ultimate tensile strength, f_u : 430 MPa
- Modulus of elasticity, E : 210 GPa

The Flock support elements are assumed to be solid bar of grade S275.

9.2. Reinforced Concrete

The foundation pad shall be constructed with minimum C30 Grade concrete with and Grade B500 reinforcing bar.

10. Specification and Bill of Materials

An estimate of the approximate quantities are summarised below for draft information at this stage of development. An allowance on top of these numbers should be made for connections.

Primary spiral tube:
139.70x10.0 CHS
- Length = 3.65m
- Mass = 117kg

114.30x6.0 CHS
- Length = 5.93m
- Mass = 103kg

88.90x5.0 CHS
- Length = 5.98m
- Mass = 62kg

Flock Supports:
220 solid bar
- Length = 80.9m
- Mass = 240kg

Flock Members:
48.30x1.5 tube
- Length = 105m
- Total mass = 180kg

Pad footing:
18000x350 concrete
- Total mass = 2700kg
- Rebar quantity = 55kg/m3

11. Loading Criteria

11.1. Dead Loads

The primary dead load is the self-weight of the elements which has been automatically calculated and applied in the analysis model.

11.2. Wind Loads

Wind loads have been calculated in accordance with the Eurocode requirements for the specific site location.

The closest coastline is taken to be 38km at Dunwich and the terrain surrounding the site is predominantly flat country.

Wind Calculation Summary:

- $v_{b,map}$ = 22.3 m/s
- v_b = 22.8 m/s
- q_b = 0.320 kN/m²
- q_p = 0.61 kN/m²

The wind forces acting on the elements of the sculpture are calculated by finding the drag force on a cylinder relative to each element's diameter.

11.3. Accidental Loads

An imposed load of 90kg has been assumed to account for the accidental load of a person climbing on the sculpture. The structure is designed to have sufficient strength to withstand this load action, however it may lead to permanent deformation of the flock members (not primary spiral tube).

Further discussion is required in the next phase to confirm the design requirements of this accidental loadcase.

11.4. Load Combinations

The load combinations have been generated according to the UK National Annex of BS EN 1990.

- 1.0DL + 1.0W(x)
- 1.0DL + 1.0W(y)
- 0.9DL + 1.5W(x)
- 0.9DL + 1.5W(y)
- 1.35DL + 1.5W(x)
- 1.35DL + 1.5W(y)
- 1.0DL + 1.0AL

Where DL = permanent loads, WL(x) and WL(y) = Wind loads in primary orthogonal directions, AL = Accidental loads

12. Structural Analysis and Design

12.1. Modelling Philosophy

The sculpture has been analysed using finite element analysis (FEA) software packages to predict its structural behaviour. This software runs within the Rhino / Grasshopper modelling environment and allows for an efficient workflow for exploring variations in the structural form and sizing.

The section sizes of the primary spiral are governed by the deflection criteria of the sculpture under both permanent and wind loading, and have been identified by the optimisation algorithm.

12.2. Serviceability Limit State

Allowable deflections under both permanent and wind loads are taken to be 100mm.

As can be seen in the figure below, the majority of deflection in the permanent case occurs in the smaller diameter CHS tubes located towards the top of the spiral. It may be possible to preset these tubes at the connection points to accommodate the predicted deflection, and this can be discussed with the chosen fabricator during the next phase.

Deflection of the sculpture under wind loading has been designed for a maximum of 100mm which may occur under storm conditions. Under more typical day-to-day conditions this could result in approximately 20mm of movement.

This magnitude of movement can be investigated further during the next stage. Additional stiffness of the sculpture could be added by increasing the wall thickness of the CHS primary spiral tube, however this would lead to an increase in weight of the steel frame.

Deflection of the sculpture under the accidental load case has been checked to confirm that it does not exceed the movement which can be expected under wind loading.

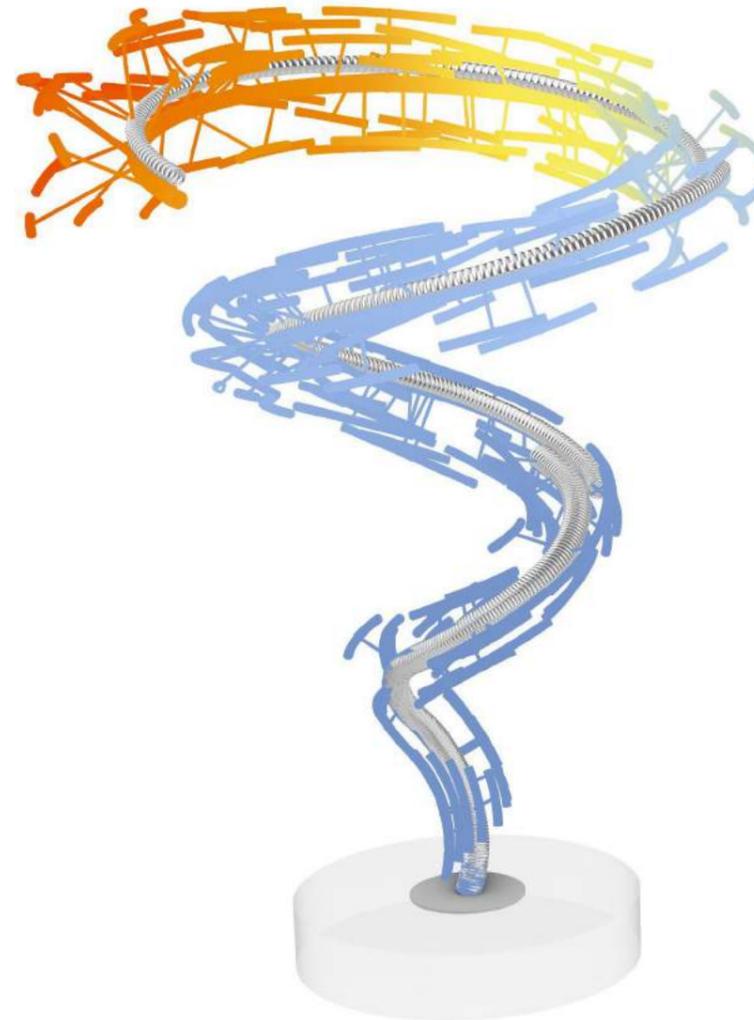


Fig.8 - Deflection under permanent gravity load = 100mm



Fig.9 Deflection under wind load = 100mm

12.3. Ultimate Limit State

12.3.1. Primary Spiral

The optimised primary spiral CHS sizes have been checked for their peak stresses and buckling resistance.

The highest utilisation occurs in the smaller diameter CHS tube located towards the top of the sculpture, with $UT_{max} = 55\%$ for primary spiral members.

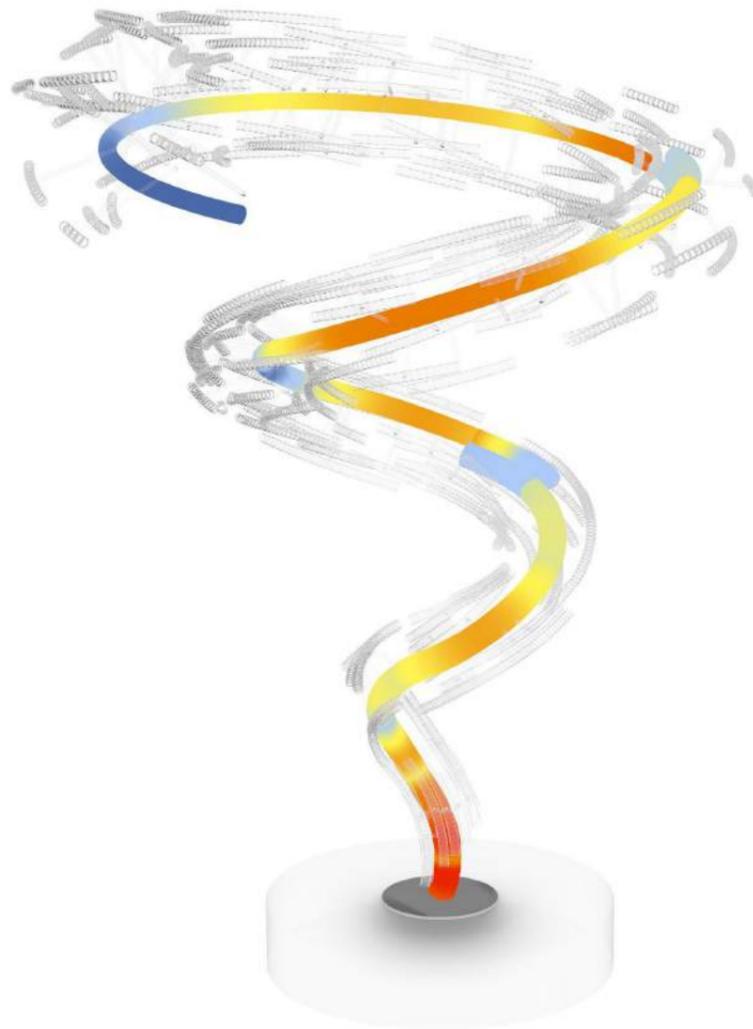


Fig.10 Utilisation of primary spiral CHS tubes

Preliminary checks have been conducted on the fatigue resistance of the primary spiral based on the stresses analysed at this stage have proved to be satisfactory. Further design checks will be carried out by Format during Stage 4 technical design based on the final connection geometries.

12.3.2. Flock Members

Flock members and the support links are heavily governed by the bending stresses that are generated under the accidental loadcase of a person climbing on the sculpture.

Flock support elements have been allowed to exceed their yield stress limit under the accidental loadcase, which means permanent deformation can be expected of the Flock members if subject to this full load.

In the current iteration of the geometry of the Flock members, 97% of the support elements are passing ($UT_{max} < 1.0$). The utilisation of the Flock support elements generally increases as they progress up the sculpture as the Flock members disperse and are located furthest from the primary spiral. Due to the relative height and position of these elements they are considered the least likely to receive the accidental loading.

It should be discussed in the next stage whether the requirements for a person climbing on the Flock members located towards the top of the sculpture are too onerous. The Flock support struts could be made more slender if this requirement can be reduced, resulting in an overall lighter appearance of the sculpture.



Fig.11 Utilisation of solid bar Flock support elements. Failing members in black

THANK YOU

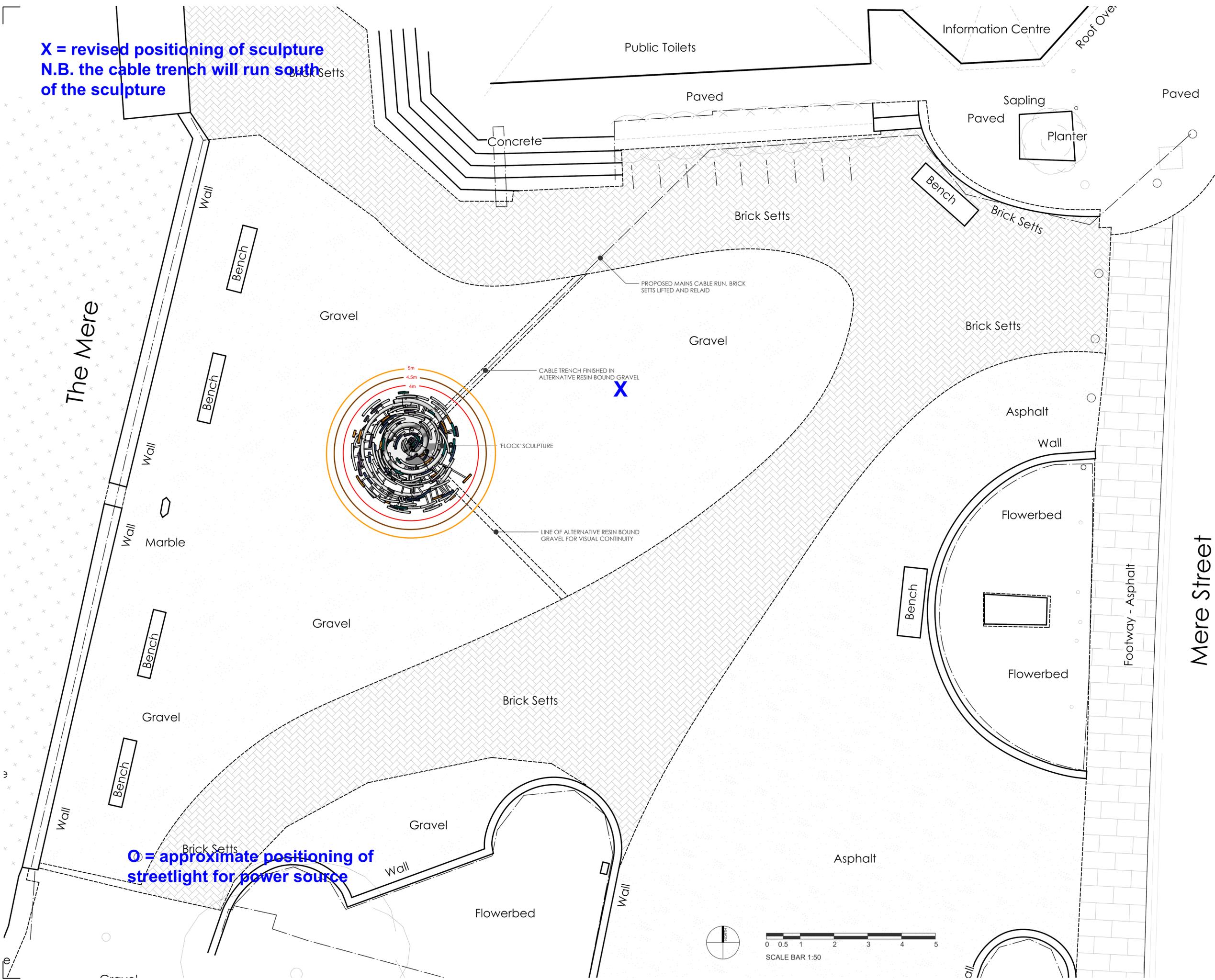
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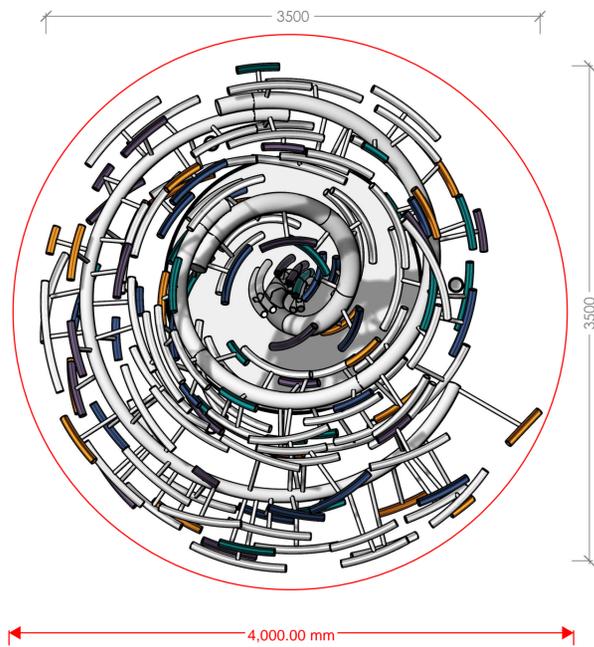
X = revised positioning of sculpture
N.B. the cable trench will run south of the sculpture

⊙ = approximate positioning of streetlight for power source

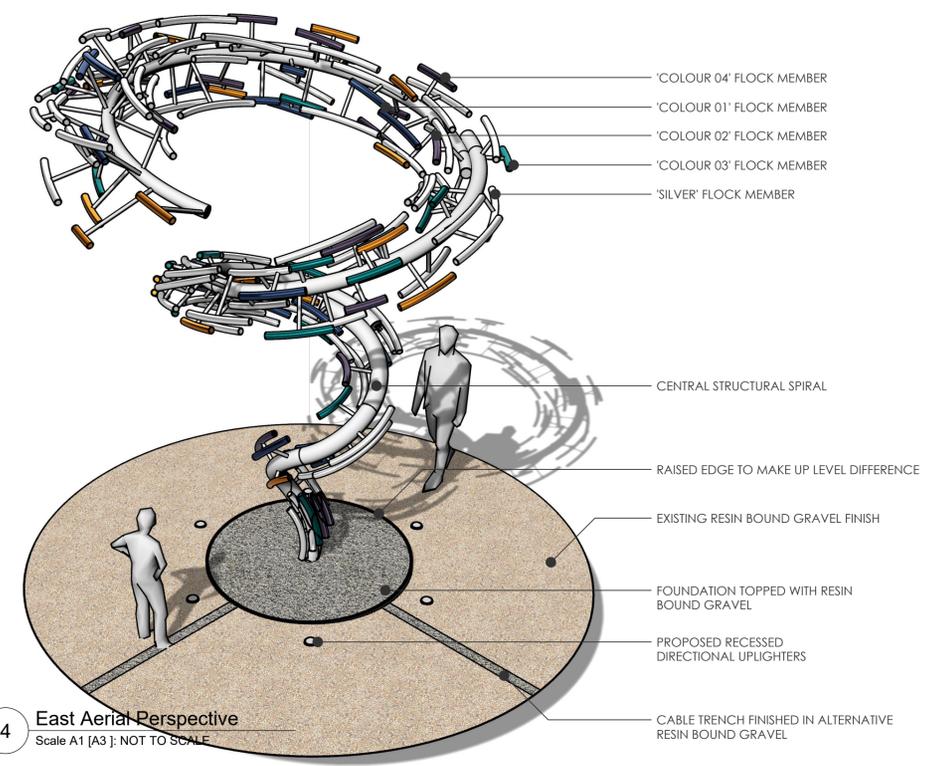


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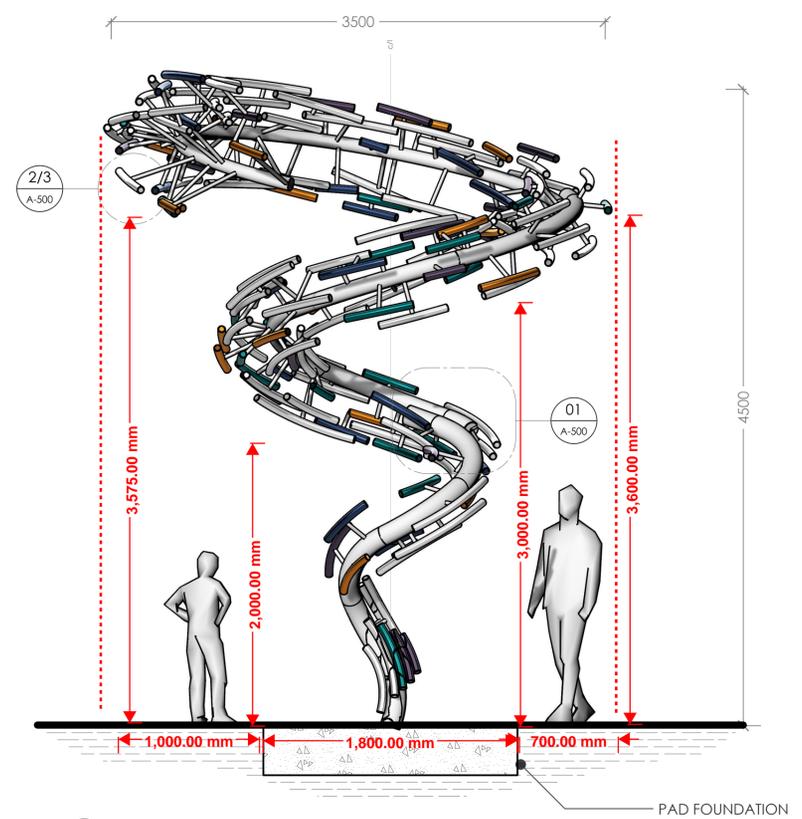
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-	-	-	-
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toystudio			
www.toystudio.co.uk / info@toystudio.co.uk			
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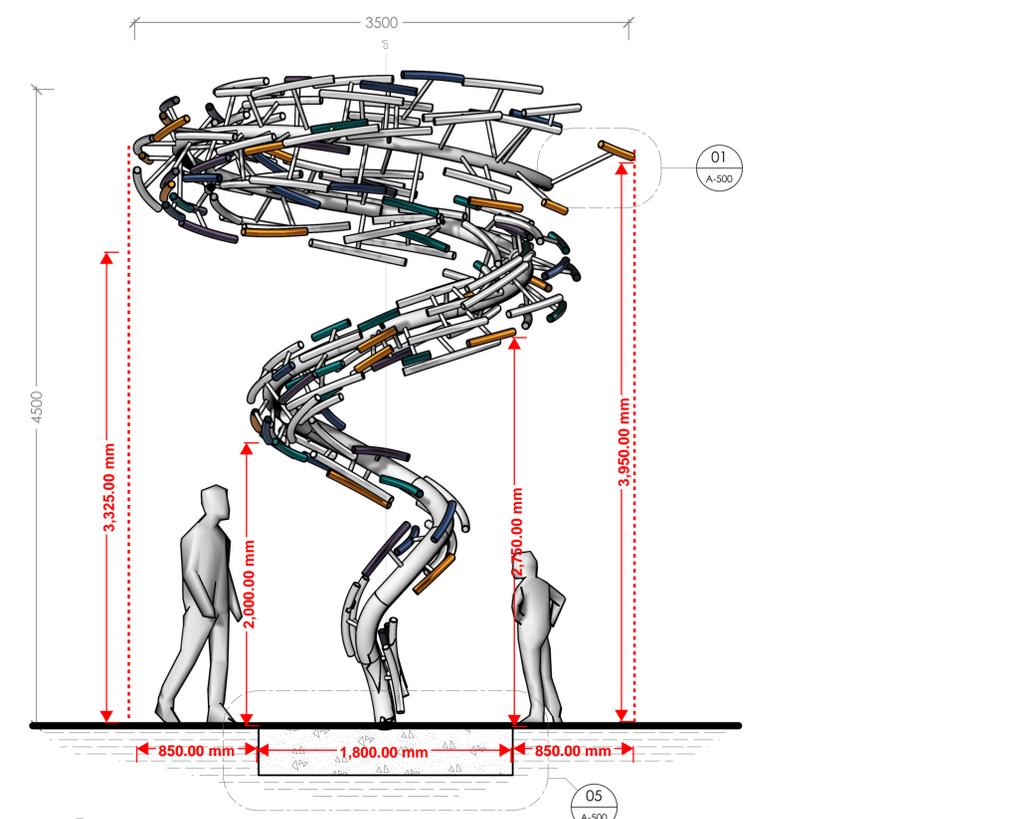
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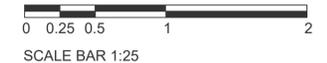
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2 East Elevation
Scale A1 [A3]: 1:25 [1:50]



3 South Elevation
Scale A1 [A3]: 1:25 [1:50]



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toystudio			
www.toystudio.co.uk / info@toystudio.co.uk			
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DRAWING TITLE: TYPICAL ORTHOGRAPHICS			
DRAWING NO: NWA-TOY-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1010			
SCALE AT A1 [A3]: 1:25 [1:50]	DATE: 30/08/22	DRAWN: TP	REVISION: -

**FLOCK:
COMMENTS
THOUGHTS
AND WRITING
FROM THE
COMMUNITY**

Flock

A number of birds of one kind feeding, resting, or travelling together.

A large number or crowd of people.

A Christian congregation or body of believers, especially one under the charge of a particular minister.

Old English flocc, of unknown origin. The original sense was 'a band or body of people': this became obsolete but has been reintroduced as a transferred use of the sense 'a number of animals kept together'.

John Betjeman's - A Mind's Journey to Diss

Dear Mary,

Yes, it will be bliss

To go with you by train to Diss,

Your walking shoes upon your feet;

We'll meet, my sweet, at Liverpool Street.

That levellers we may be reckoned

Perhaps we'd better travel second;

Or, lest reporters on us burst,

Perhaps we'd better travel first.

Above the chimney-pots we'll go

Through Stepney, Stratford-attle-Bow

And out to where the Essex marsh

Is filled with houses new and harsh

Till, Witham pass'd, the landscape yields

On left and right to widening fields,

Flint church-towers sparkling in the light,

Black beams and weather-boarding white,

Cricket-bat willows silvery green

And elmy hills with brooks between,

Maltings and saltings, stack and quay

And, somewhere near, the grey North Sea;

Then further gentle undulations

With lonelier and less frequent stations,

Till in the dimmest place of all

The train slows down into a crawl

And stops in silence...Where is this?

Dear Mary Wilson, this is Diss.

United Reform Church – Friday Coffee Morning for the Community

People were gathered in groups around tables, and I circulated giving each table small things to do – thinking about Diss

Roy said: Diss is a town that feels like a village – Comfortable.

(I asked people to describe Diss in three words as it is – and as they might like to see it in the future)

THIS DISS

Relaxed, eccentric, established

Cosy, beautiful, rustic

Old, mythical, coloured in

Quiet, heritage, comfortable

Mundane, tranquil, traditional

Home grown, warped, elderly

Autumnal, friendly, coffee

Community, cherished, tired

Worn, understated, cherished

Run down, loved, tired

FUTURE DISS

Bright, busy, thriving

Sunny, open, growing

Spacious, warm, mysterious

Diverse, clean, modern

Diverse, adaptive, eccentric

Colourful, welcoming, enriching

Holiday, Christmas, aesthetic

Flourishing, kind, driven

Vivid, thriving, memorable

Recognized, flourishing, peaceful

Overwhelmingly there is pride and a sense of welcome in the town.

Just A Cuppa

I was able to encourage the participants of this social group to write down some of their memories and thoughts about Diss.

Home, friendship, community.

Diss town centre lit up and the Mere lit up – a Christmas tree in the middle of the mere, a sense of Christmas. I get a sense of peace sitting on the seat in the churchyard.

I remember the infant school, the Causeway, walking past now, takes me back to being a young child. I imagine I'm there in the playground. I hear the sounds of the children, the teachers calling us back inside.

In the secondary school, I remember school friends, noisy classes and quiet learning.

The 'flash in the pan,' was a meeting place for young people, 'café' type establishment, where we could enjoy creamy cola and listen to the juke box. It was full of chat and music. We also used to have the scout and guide hut at the Heywood. As young people we participated in various activities towards out badges, signs and sounds, the leader instructing us and completing the challenge.

If we haven't already mentioned the "cinema" , which used to be where Hughes Electrical now stands .

I can remember going there as a child , around 1975 , very popular on a Saturday.

The Cherry Tree public house, at the top of St Nicholas Street , was also a regular meeting place for monthly discos.

The Park is pretty much the same although the play equipment has changed

We had a large concrete tube to explore and also the water fountain was welcome thirst quencher.

The grammar school, previously on the site that is now Scholar's Walk along Shelfanger Road, or the Secondary Modern, on Walcot Road where each offered education to suit pupil needs.

Various shops have come and gone; Woolworths, The China Cabinet, and The Co-op are three high street staples that we miss.

Hope this offers a taster of how things were.

Kim

I should have added that the hotel, after the train line was removed has been converted into houses and stands opposite the Railway Tavern. There were several other pubs in Mellis at this time and the custom from the American troops kept them ALL going.

The line closure was not a Beeching closure, but one done from common sense.

The station in Eye is now part of the chicken processing factory

Paul

In general conversation – recollections – getting things down.

There's a lot of human history here.

Diss Express going since 1912 or so.

Diss makes me come alive. The park I feel connected, a place of connection – you just start talking to people.

Places I love? The churchyard with its sense of peace. I've been coming in to Diss since 1988.

It's hanging onto tradition.

Memories

The first time I came to Diss was in the 1970s. There were buses running up Mere Street in those days. There was just one supermarket. I used to work for a finance company and had to repossess a dozen bakery vans.

Paul

Magic Cycles was the abattoir.

I lived at Gissing. Lived in a little palace – St. Mary's Drive – when the school opened in 1955 – I was journeying by bus – to the High School and Sixth Form. Sheila

Changes ripple out

Expanding Diss

Used to take my son to see the chickens – behind the Crown it was, pigs. Park Road where they built the OAP flats that was. Used to take him, saw some big piggies, a big sow.

Sheila

The Flash in the Pan with the jukebox and you could have colas.

The Gospel Hut use by something like the Plymouth Brethren.

Village schoolchildren went by bus to the seaside in peacetime.

Hope/changing feeling/ slotted back in

Slow pace.

Remembering: Basil Abbott

Nurse Edith Cavell's funeral train came through Diss and the local children lined up in the meadow.

The elephant buried under the green.

Circuses used to parade around the green.

The linen industry had a very detrimental impact on the mere, very contaminated with mercury from the hemp industry – contaminated for centuries – Hemp-mercury-peat they finished and chucked everything in the mere.

There was a swimming gala, had a picture of someone diving off the board – someone got ill and someone died.

The mere was scooped out of the ice age and filled with water.

Frozen mere – carnivals and played cricket on it in the 1920s and 30s.

Various drownings. 2 evacuee boys in 1944

Multi-coloured fountain

Diss was a place ringed by airfields and the town was a mecca for the troops.

Diss has become a retirement area.

A letter from Basil Abbott

A CENTURY OF ABBOTTS (2020)

My forthcoming marriage (if it ever happens) and imminent departure to North Lopham will mark the end of an era.

For the first time in 106 years there will be no Abbotts in Diss.

My grandfather, Amos, came in 1914 to be the waterworks engineer; and the family have been here ever since. Only my sister-in-law, Frances, an Abbott by marriage, will remain.

The children all went to Diss Church School; with one son getting a scholarship to the old Secondary (later Grammar) School. Five Abbott boys would have seen Nurse Edith Cavell's funeral train come through in 1919, as the children watched from the Rectory Meadow.

At 14 my dad left school and went to work in Bardwell's timber yard in Church Street. When the war came, he enlisted in the Royal Engineers, served in France, Belgium, Holland and

Germany, and was evacuated at Dunkirk. One of his brothers lost an eye from flying glass while driving a wartime ambulance.

Posted to Northern Ireland, my dad met my mum and brought her back to Diss. They would have four children, who followed the family tradition of going to the Church School.

I was the first in the family to go to university, after educating myself while working in a factory. Diss Grammar School had prepared me for nothing.

Several family members have gained degrees since. When I hear of my niece, Catherine, driving herself in her own car down from Edinburgh to an English university, I can trace that back to the day I went nervously on the train up to UEA to start my degree course.

The Abbott name lives on in Scotland, where I have four wonderful nephews. One is a teacher, one sings in a band, one is a writer and another is a comedian. Louis, the leader of the award-winning band Admiral Fallow, has a baby son called Axel. There is a wonderful feeling of family continuity from my grandad Amos, who was born in 1875 (that's five years after Dickens died), to Axel, who could well live into the next century.

As I emptied my flat and garage, I realised that, for the first time in my life, there will be nowhere in Diss to go in as home. Having lost my office as well, it is quite an emotive time.

But the fulfilment I have found in running Diss Museum means that I will always see myself as a son of Diss.

DISS IN IMAGES...

A hollow tree housing a family of barn owls

A DT stool = 70 years old and forgotten in the mere.

A simple chair, used and loved by generations

A tall pear tree with fruitful, fragrant days

An intelligent playful gorilla with a violin

A posh gentleman who rides a rolls Royce, grumpy on the outside but inside he is wise and kind-hearted.

An old spruce tree with new leaves growing at the top – the base is the town – the new leaves are the new generations...

An oak tree with different coloured leaves

An older woman with a mop which leads her to mythical places

Diss is a drooping willow tree, its branches trailing through water

A green duck

Diss is an elderly woman who knits jumpers for her dogs and reads the Daily Mail.

Diss is a faded armchair, worn but still comfortable.

Diss is an ancient conker tree covered in cobwebs and creatures

A sweet old lady in a bonnet in her award-winning vegetable patch

An old blind man with a monocle and a gnarly walking stick

A chair carved out of a magnificent fallen oak tree, forgotten in the forest

A silver birch laden with green and yellow moss

A handmade log stool, each leg a different length from the other, a few spots moulded and warped from water damage.

A crusty seagull

A wide willow tree

An old and expansive oak tree

A decaying rocking chair, old and traditional

A tortoise as it has slowly developed and is quiet.

An old man with a pocket watch waiting to be reborn

A willow

An old woman with beautiful white hair, crazy hats and tonnes of jewellery who practises magic.

A simple stool with a lot of history

A single duck, small but full of life.

A fat pigeon

A blue-sheened duck eating an eel

An old Tory man popping down the pub in his sandals

An unstable birch tree with an infestation of pigeons

A wooden collapsible chair

A clumsy, grey dragon-like creature who struggles to breathe fire

A middle-aged man carrying I-Spy books, bird books and binoculars

A willow tree, its branches blowing in the wind

A plastic foldaway chair found in village halls

Hungry seagull

A retired man feeding the ducks

The Dementia Group: Cornhall

I shared the session with an artist. Although I began the session by asking for colour and images, we moved on rapidly to a creative conversation about their experience and feelings about living in Diss.

An old lady – in the past I would know everybody – but there are too many foreigners – as far as she is concerned, they have spoilt the town. By foreigners she means anyone who has moved into the area from outside, Londoners, Essex, she means the flocking.

Diss is wonderful. When I come into it I always think I am going to the seaside because of the mere.

It's very friendly

The mere is like a harbour

Covid not growing now, it's changing.

Combines the industrial and the olde world.

Local market town with some traditional shops and a live cattle market. Once it had an abattoir.

Generally a very friendly town

I have made many friends from in and around Diss.

The colours of Diss – all different

Red, green, blue, orange.

Very friendly, welcoming, my home town

Ducks, pigeons and seagulls

Local shops and a few chains – Market Friday – you cannot move for people and cars.

Community

My grandmother used to play the piano at the cinema.

I moved back to Diss – people leave Diss and move away and then come back.

Used to have a tobacco and sweetie shop in WWII

A bomb dropped and smashed all the windows. The Corn Hall/the marble pillars I used to come in with my grandad. It was grander. Chestnut trees – when I was a little girl, we used to play tennis out on the road with our friends.

I love Diss because I was born here. It's not the same.

Living in Diss is better, here there is peace of mind

Diss has welcomed us.

Opening out like a flower

Open-minded people

Diss is a very nice town/people are very friendly and there's lots of shopping and a good market.

Friendly, interesting, comfortable

Loving, caring, community

A place of no extremes

A pleasant place to live

A town with the feel of a village

Everyone you can talk to, and it gives you the feeling of a village, welcoming, feels like you are coming home.

URC Ukrainian Coffee Morning

This gathering involved talking with those who had enough English to be able to communicate and it was more of an open and creative conversation. It was Ukraine Independence Day and so inevitably the women's emotions were quiet near the surface, they were anyway because of their situation and being separated from loved ones, but it was heightened because of the date.

Thoughts about Diss

We say thank you as we are in a safe environment.

It is very peaceful here.

Peaceful, kind and cosy!

It's like living in a museum, like a big museum.

You seem to cherish your traditions – the traditions of the ancestors.

It is welcoming – feels like you are coming home.

Different cultures merged together and come together.

Last year, I mean, you could not imagine where we are now. And the enormous support of people. We all see it.

These are the scales when some are the dark side when you suffocate and the other is the light side and helps you to breathe fully.

Diss is like a deer/dear – a play on words.

Nearest to European culture – a mixture of family shops, open – the first time I saw Diss there were coffee shops and music. People were tolerant to the people

DISS HIGH SCHOOL

I encouraged the young people to think imaginatively about Diss – to think in images and then to write about being in a favourite place in the town.

SNAPSHOTS OF DISS

I'm sitting at the park where the cool air blows off the mere and hits the huge conker trees that line its edge. They spread out their branches over the grass that is covered in premature conkers, knocked off by the strong winds. In front of me, ducks bob like buoys the algae-covered water and dip little heads below to snap the insects and leaves.

I can hear children playing behind me, the creak of an unoiled swing, bubbles of laughter. Nearby a few people sit on the plastic table bench, perched on top because the seats are missing and cracking open soft drinks with a hiss.

A dog strains on its leash trying to reach the mere, desperate for a swim. Above is the sky, clear with a few wispy clouds creeping across the blue expanse, the sun looking down at the whole town, every shop, house, and street.

Across from me I can see the hot dog van parked on Market Street, and people passing by; little charity shops, cafes and Greggs, framed by the willow trees that droop their branches into the green-blue water.

A mother duck guides three scruffy looking ducklings past, hazarding a warning quack at the snapping dog pulling on his lead.

Rosalind

I am standing at the traffic lights clutching a bag of shopping, reaching to press the button which has been polished smooth from thousands of people wanting to cross. The cars trundle past, swinging around the roundabout and veering off one by one. The lights blink from green to amber and flicker to red and halt, the friction sending fumes of tarmac and rubber into the balmy evening.

As I walk, I raise a hand in thanks to the growling cars lining the crossing. I glance up, swinging my groceries, the plastic bag pressing into my fingers as I continue along the pavement, steadily progressing towards the marketplace. As I draw nearer the calls of the stallholders reach my ears, claiming unmissable bargains and deals. I am tempted by rows of fruit; strawberries, fresh and sweet, their delicate fragrance filtering through the atmosphere of the market.

Bethany

The woman on the stall

She offers me a grin

Deals as good as this
Really can't be missed
Strawberries two for one
I really can't resist
Coins clink, falling from my palm
I claim my prize, bit with relish
So sweet and so crisp.

Bethany

If I could take you to Diss, I would walk you through its winding streets, past the vibrant shop windows, and stumble through the wonderous market. The glorious smell from its bakeries, cafes and restaurants would entice you to find all of its hidden treasures. You would find a tranquil resting spot by the mere and close your eyes as you lay in the nurturing sun, listening to the water gently lapping against the banks. In the distance you would hear the mighty church bells strike. You notice a family of friendly ducks and ducklings waddle by. As the day passes, you would admire the tired sun set in the distance.

George

To Diss – A Letter

I am standing. A flock flies over the frolicking children, arms reaching like the sun's rays arching over the mere. Rays highlight the slightly curved ridges of each and every building. Each to their own and to themselves. Pigeons and gulls squat politely a rusting structure but the laughter and chirping collects everything together like the mixture of a homemade cake. A community. A man throws his fishing line, catching the sunlight as it goes. The line enters the water, the silvery blue curls of the mere cascade gently against the tall reeds.

Speeding past, a girl clutches an ice cream, and a waft of chocolate, a trail of it following her eagerly. This flourishing environment complements the slightly wilting homes with hanging baskets erupting with a waterfall of floral greenery.

A variety of dogs and ducks are in my path, separating as I go, and the soft crumble of gravel with a hint of gentle chatter guides me through the slowly emptying streets.

The flock returns and drops elegantly on the road before me beckoned by the hungry remains of crumbs and food left by those visiting today.

Robyn

I am sitting cross-legged in the middle of Diss park on an old red blanket I had found earlier. I am reading a copy of my favourite book, although I try to concentrate on the words, I can't help but look up and soak in the beautiful scenery surrounding me. The hot glare of the sun beats down on my face, perfectly counteracted by a cool breeze through the old willow trees. Faint giggles in the background of families playing on the swings echo through the park. There is a constant quacking from the local ducks and ducklings. The smell of fresh water circles the air from the fountain in the mere, the large trees trailing their fingertips thought the cool water. I take in the tranquillity of my home town once more, before tucking back into the world of my favourite book.

Katie

I am standing at the edge of the mere, looking out at the cheery fountain as it spouts out a steady stream of water. Behind me, I can hear the everyday bustle of the town centre – the enriching smells of the hot dog cart and pleasant music from the busker. Children's voices carry from the park, shrieks and laughs of joy as they spin on the roundabout and soar on the swings. The ducks, noisy as ever, rustle in the long grass at the edge of the water – a line of ducklings following their mother – feathers fluffy and golden. I turn and walk down to the park, passing elderly couples sitting in companionable silence facing the mere. As I pass under the willow tree, I reach my fingertips to brush the overhanging branches, revel in the way the sun filters through the leaves, distorting the shade. A crowd of ducks have gathered around a small boy and his mother as he gleefully tosses them food – seagulls fighting for his attention.

Isabella

I am walking through Diss right now. It's quite warm yet the wind is slightly chilling. Up the High Street there are mothers with a couple of straggling children and young businessmen with briefcases. There is the fish seller from the market shrilling his business to the passersby, jumping in front of them and waving flyers in their faces. They seem rather disturbed. A flock of seagulls is lined up on the crest of the church's roof but they fly away, scared, when the bells ring.

The soles of my shoes are slightly sticky, I feel it as I walk. The pavement is clear yet covered in a thin film of oil and dirt, it's disgusting. In the window of a charity shop, there's a man haggling the price of an old leather cowboy hat, saying, 'but it's got a hole!'

A small child grips onto his father's two fingers and looks up at him nervously as they walk towards Spec-Savers. 'Don't worry Otis, it's just an eye test,' the father says, squatting down by his son. 'But what if they take my eyes out?' The boy covers his eyes and the father chuckles, patting the boy on his back and standing up.

Lily-Rose

I am standing in front of a large oak tree with all sorts of creatures and animals living inside it, located in the centre of Diss Park. From there my eyes are met with the sight of children playing on the play equipment and looking excited to be there.

When I turn my head about 90 degrees, I see the mere with all different types of birds on it which is a really lovely sight to see in Diss. Birds like ducks, seagulls, crows and occasionally the odd heron which makes it so nice. Then when I walk down an open rustic pathway. I see a largely populated area with people from all different cultures, and a load of large variable food shops like Poundland and Aldi. When you walk through the area you are met with the loving and warm smells of coffee and pastries from the local café, my favourite part of Diss.

Abbie

I am standing in the fruit aisle at Tesco's staring at the bananas bunched up together as they look at me from behind their plastic walls. I pick up a bag and inspect the fruit for bruising, blackened spots like mouths gape disgustingly. I put it back on its shelf.

A woman with white hair struggles around the corner. She stops in front of the apples. Which kind will she choose? She is deliberating, hands shaking slightly as she bends with effort. She remains bent, glasses on the end of her nose, eyes grazing slowly over the produce. Too much choice these days, she mumbles.

I am back to my bananas. She's right in a way. Packaged? Not packaged? Bruised or green? Fairtrade? Rainforest Alliance or neither? Why not, just bananas?

I try my luck again. Too green this time, too new and too fresh. They will be hard to eat. Sighing I place them back on the shelf. Better luck next time.

The silence of the aisle is broken by trolley wheels and a child's voice. 'Mummy can we get oranges?'

Another, her trolley filled with the week's shop and a baby looking around brightly at the colourful shelves. 'You go and get them for me, make sure they're not too squishy.' Her eldest child runs towards the shelves and begins poking each orange as the mother checks her list, rummaging in her bag for a pen.

I reach down to the bottom shelf of bananas. I inspect the chosen bag. No bruising, no green, just bananas. I turn to go on to the next aisle. The lady has chosen her apples, pink ladies and the child is on tiptoes, dropping the oranges into the trolley.

I smile at them as I leave. I remember when I was that child, dropping oranges into my mum's trolley. I will be that old lady one day, bending over and choosing my apples. Will I be here? In this same aisle? In this same town? Sometimes all I want to do is to leave, get out and go somewhere else. Maybe that's what those people did, do. This town is like a place that you call a resting place, a place to begin lives and to live at the end of them.

In the middle is where you can wander and reach out, explore, that's what I will do soon, wander off. Maybe I will keep wandering, floating through life until I find myself here again. On the fruit aisle of this Tesco's trying to choose bananas. I guess I will find out.

In my eyes, this town is full of beauty. I stand among the ducks by the mere that gleams in the sun like stars shimmering in dainty ambience. The smell of green grass and vibrancy fills my lungs.

Diss is like a traditional old man, eccentric in style singing to the pigeons each morning and yet, a captivated, bright-eyed child leaning in to embrace Diss' beauty.

It is solitary and yet full of the hustle and bustle of town life, to some it seems just the same as the town's history, to others it has changed a great deal as shops become torn between chains and tradition.

The balance that can be found in Diss can be found nowhere else; for its relaxed manner can quickly become crowded, as its torrential rain can quickly become rays of warm sun. So as the weather warms and the seasons change always stop to visit Diss. Who knows, you might just be amazed!

Evie

Like an old pigeon

Or a well-cultivated duck

Reflected in the mirrored film

It sways in the wind

As change brings great divide

And seasons sweeten the streets

The deep heart of the town

Lost inside the mere

Circulates the charisma Diss possesses

The freeze of 1920

Brought joy to the mere
As games explored the ice
And skaters exposed the perils
In the even the safest of times

The days grow long
And life outstretches
Through history lessons
Bringing education
And the light of knowledge
To the seasoned place

Generations of individuals
Trade in peace
Now as nature lives again
Dancing in the spring of
Modern life

Evie

I am standing, glancing over at the gentler movement of water as the mother duck glides seamlessly towards the safe haven of shade and trees, leading her naïve ducklings behind her. The briny, brazing beams of sunlight reflect off the water, painting a picture of thriving nature and life. The rays bounce off the the willow trees and latch onto the lamp beside me; the evening has arrived.

There is a whirring of hushed murmurs and contented voices fill my ears as the shops close their doors and say goodnight. I lamber along the cobbled pathway. Avoiding the gum and all matter of detritus which has been stamped into our roots. A rustle above my head signifies the arrival of yet another pigeon as the peak of the evening has begun, the scent of chips wafting through air, the warm, familiar scent of battered and fried food as a worn, older man strides out of the chippy, clutching a bursting bag of chips. The sound of the bell rings jovially behind him and the chips finally come into view.

Matilda

I am standing, the glistening mere in front of me, the rising sun behind me. The smells of Greggs all around me, the intriguing smell of satisfaction. Yet silence, not a sound, except for the chirping of the birds and the disruption of the ducks.

I turn to face Greggs and start walking. Step by step, enjoying the relieving smell of the fresh air and the peace before the rest of the town awakes.

I walk into Greggs, buy a hot chocolate and a sausage roll and take a seat. The calm atmosphere brings the realisation of how undeveloped Diss is, yet the potential it has for improvement. However, I still find myself gazing at the ripples the wind causes on the magnificent pond.

Daniel

I am standing outside a fish and chip shop in Diss. The strong smell of food invades my nostrils. The sky is cloudy but that just makes me feel at home. As the wind brushes my hair, I sit down on an old bench, peeling, cracked paint crunching. I move my weight on the seat. I run my hand against the old wood feeling it beneath my fingers, letting them mould into the indents and trace the cracks and engravings. The old, dirty chip shop used to be clean and white, but now it has mud, dirt and black dots creating patches of discolouration. The road near me is also dirty with sweet wrappers and plastic, somehow that just makes it cosier.

A scattering and rustling noise comes from a tree near to me. There is a grey squirrel jumping from branch to branch, gathering nuts for winter hibernation. I close my eyes and listen to the occasional sound of a car and of a mother comforting her child.

Someone calls my name from behind, and I swirl around. My food is ready, so I stand up and walk into the shop. People are sitting at a table, laughing.

Rosalie

Diss is like a caterpillar patiently waiting to bloom into a butterfly. So undeveloped with so much potential. I also envision Diss as being like a tortoise due to its slow development and how silent and calm it can be.

I am currently sitting on one of the decaying wooden benches that remain at the mere. The beauty of the sun is glimmering on the surface of the murky pond in front of me. The scent of Gregg's sausage rolls fills the air and begins to make my stomach rumble. However, the agitating noise of the ducks that surround me distract me from the amazing smell.

The disruption of rain takes me by surprise as I was expecting it to remain a nice summer's day but not so much as this is typical of Britain. I start to hear children scream and cry, running from the

mere park in hopes of finding shelter while their parents walk calmly beside them. I lift myself from the old bench that is now drenched in rain. I decide to enter Costa to protect myself from the heavy and dangerous rain so that I can warm myself up with a hot cappuccino.

Chloe

I am sat in Costa, halfway down Diss' fairly adequate high street. The scents from each individual coffee bean grows wings and flies to my nose as I sip and swallow a mouthful of my iced tea. The cold condensation almost causes the cold plastic cup to fall from my fist., but instead the water drips onto my t-shirt which slowly absorbs it.

I look through the rain-strained glass to see the multitude of small shops. Some are charity shops, one of which I could see a carefully hand-crafted jumper on the further side of the window, there are also discount shops, in addition to chain ones.

Returning to my own surroundings, I begin to hear the distant sounds of seagulls as they wait not so patiently amongst some children who were sharing a portion of salt-covered chips bought from the food cart, rushing to eat them before the wild birds launch into the children's lunch.

My ears are interrupted by the voices of new customers, purchasing a latte with a crumbling chocolate brownie, this forces a sudden rumbling to enter my stomach. I stroll to Greggs.

Lauren

I am standing in the centre of town. The hot sun is shining on my sunglasses causing me to squint ever so slightly. The market is here and all around me I can see smiling children, holding ice creams of all flavours. I can see vanilla, chocolate, coconut, pistachios, pineapple and I stand here with my coffee ice cream and new clothes I have just bought from a friendly man at the market. He told me ha had to get up at five am to get here at six. His beautiful wife came round the corner and mentioned that they have had so many people buy their clothes today and they are over the moon. I decided the green dress I had my eye on was definitely the one I wanted. They were so appreciative.

I am now making my way through the town. Poundland is busy and popular, and I don't think Costa has ever had so many customers in one day. To my right I spot a family speaking a different language. Polish. I think I heard a Spanish woman on the phone earlier and I'm delighted to know people from around the world are here today. I have smiled at everyone who has walked past me and have gotten smiles in return. I feel safe, surrounded by the loveliest people and their children who keep giving me rocks.

I have arrived outside Greggs where I was hoping to get some lunch, but I think I will have to come back in a few minutes. Everyone has heard of Greggs it seems and have got there before me. I have never seen the line so big but I'm happy for the workers because they look delighted. I decide to find a bench by the mere.

Erin

I am standing outside Greggs, the sound of strangers talking behind me at the mere and cars driving by. I occasionally hear a dog bark as someone walks their dog. As I take a few steps forward, the smell of fresh sausage rolls hits me. The backwards I shaped line allows the customer to see everything on shelves and in fridges before seeing the freshly baked goods. On the left there are tables and stools you can eat at, or you can take your food to go.

As I get my food I decide to eat in and as I take a bite it burns my mouth but at the same time it is so nice to eat. I take a sip of my drink and because it has been in a fridge, it balances out the burning, hot, delicious taste of the food.

After I walk outside and look at the other pedestrians sitting on the benches. They are feeding the ducks on the mere. I decide to go to a bench. I appreciate the large, expansive pond, and the willow trees reaching their heads into the water.

George

Personally, I would say that Diss has a wide variety of shops to explore. And masses of amounts of olden architecture. Diss has a lot of history that comes along with its people, which gives even more activities to do with family and friends.

The views are stunning for different audiences, photographers as an example. Views can be seen such as, the mere (which is a large lake that holds different wildlife and shocking views at night when the lights clash with the leaves), buildings and their old, detailed architecture.

Diss is also full of activities for the community and others. For an example, parades and fairs may take place for different occasions.

Olivia

I am standing in the park gazing over the mere. A family of ducks huddle up on the shore as an elegant swan swims by. I glide down the path, the ducks waddling slowly as I pass them. I walk slowly along the path, staring into the murky depths, wishing it was cleaner. I wander slowly up the hill towards the road. An old man in a small car drives past, honking his horn at the kids on their bikes as they swerve around, almost dancing in the gloom of a Thursday afternoon.

I cross the road towards the building, Greggs. The smell of fresh pasties floods my nose as I step through the partially working automatic doors. The queue was long and slow, but I have nothing

better to be doing. I make my order and sit down on a small sticky table as I eat my warm sausage roll, for as tired as Diss may be, there will always be a Greggs.

It was raining so I decide to stay inside and order a cup of tea. The clock ticks slowly on the wall and the other customers chattered incoherently. Somebody outside starts honking their horn as some kids begin to laugh loudly. They are shouting now, with a slamming of a door, a man gets out of his car. The kids start screaming as the man shouts at them. The other customers started talking louder. I couldn't hear myself think. The noise is unbearable. I slip down in my chair and close my eyes. Suddenly it all stops. I open my eyes. The other customers have gone, the road is clear. I pick myself up and look at the time. I had slept for three hours. As I leave I see the sunset in the distance. It is beautiful. Finally, it is very peaceful.

Joe

I am sitting in Greggs in the... luscious seats smelling of middle aged man and sausage rolls, eating one myself. When I walk out of Greggs I can finally breathe again, and as I look out at the mere I see a child kick a pigeon. I am walking up to the market – the main reason I'm here – and as I get closer the stench of fish fills my nostrils. I need to find the mini tuxedo for my angry pet goose, George and this is the only place I can buy it. When I finally find the tux I sit down and don't realise there's a crack on it, and I fall right through.

I decide to explore Diss a bit more, going back down to the mere where that pigeon was kicked. As I am walking down. I pass Poundland and decide to go in. The shop was huge and everything was so cheap, this is definitely where I will be shopping for the next few days. Out of the window I see the sky go grey. I decide it's best if I buy an umbrella and they're only £3.50 so why not? I leave Poundland and as soon as I exit, four bikes fly past me, blasting UK drill and stunning me.

I keep walking further towards the mere and it starts raining. I click the button to open the umbrella and nothing happens, so I open it manually. I finally reach the mere and while I am admiring the different patterns on the ducks, a gust of wind blows at me, and the umbrella flips inside out. I know I shouldn't have trusted it at that price. A duck slowly approaches me and as I look closer, I see it has a furry white heart on its back. As soon as I hold my hand out to try and pet it, I get bitten on my ring finger and see two bleeding bite marks appear.

Josh

Curated by Belona Greenwood

October, 2022

FLOCK: Diss Mere

Evaluation – Gathering and Writing the Text for the Sculpture/Community Engagement

In the design of the sculpture is text that reflects the voices, opinions, thoughts and stories about the town of Diss and the mere engraved on the material forming the sculpture. This was gathered in July and August 2022 through a series of creative conversations and workshops with the community and Diss High School.

The response of people taking part was overwhelmingly positive about Diss. It was seen a warm, welcoming place, tolerant and kind.

I researched community groups with the support of Diss Town Council who supplied some information and contacts and also through Diss Library, the town museum and word of mouth. I worked with those groups who I could reach during this period since some of them met monthly and those who were open to me coming along. Some of those I contacted such as Hope Church didn't get back to me despite showing an initial interest, but I was able to work successfully with a number of community groups and also Diss High School.

I attended a fortnightly session of *Just A Cuppa* hosted by Diss Library where people who lived alone in the community could come together, this was facilitated by a volunteer who knew the participants. We were able to talk, and the participants wrote for short periods – for non-writers this was very encouraging, and the participants engaged so well they responded via email with further recollections and thoughts about the town.

My second community group visit was at The Cornhall and Diss Dementia Group. This was a session which I shared with an artist – and because of the nature of the participants and the session itself, after an introduction it worked better for me to move between groups of attendees holding creative conversations and recording their responses. The group was very interested and enthusiastic about recording their thoughts, opinions and sometimes, prejudices. It definitely stimulated discussion about the town, its values and history.

I then, visited a group of people who come into Diss from outside at the United Reform Church. Again, because of the nature of the set up – I moved from table to table, challenging and asking for responses to prompts and listening to opinion and stories.

My final community group was a gathering of newly arrived refugees from Ukraine. My visit fell on Ukraine Independence Day and the women's emotions were very close to the surface, whether because of the day or because these are women separated from their loved ones. Language was less of an issue than I thought it would be, because fortunately one of the women was an English teacher in Odesa and others used Google Translate freely. Their responses were completely positive about the town, how it struck them, the people of Diss and their welcome.

I also spent time in conversation with the people who run Diss Museum, and in particular Basil Abbott and I researched the history of Diss and events at the museum.

Diss High School

I was able to work with 20 Year 9 and 10 students in a morning workshop at Diss High School before the end of term. We were able to explore creatively the young people's thoughts, ideas, and experience of the town. They wrote snapshots of being in the town which were positive and illustrated a real love and awareness of Diss, and in particular the mere – and Greggs. As a favourite place in the town, it is definitely in their top ten. Some of the writing is excellent and all of the young people were engaged.

Conclusion

The community engagement was in my opinion, successful, and a wide range of people were reached and participated. Even if no actual writing down of their thoughts was involved, such as with the Dementia Group, the participants were engaged and stimulated to talk and remember their experience of living in and around Diss.

The work with Diss High School was of a high quality and a very rewarding experience. It was useful for the students to consider their thoughts about where they live. For many participants it seemed to be something that they didn't actively think about until prompted. It was especially good to discuss with the young people how they would like to see Diss in the future. They recorded this in three word responses.

It would have been good to have involved a primary school but despite approaches, this didn't materialise, and I think the primary schools were simply too busy to engage.

I used the material to inform my writing of the text and I had more than enough to use. It has been a very rewarding process.

Belona Greenwood,

October, 2022

DISS – FLOCK - TEXT

Look!

A murmuration above the mere

the coming and going of generations

people

from every walk of life

from here and there

A gathering that like a flock of winter birds feeds, rests and flies.

Was this wide well of water scooped out in the ice age?

Or did a meteorite shaft through layers of ancient rock

to leave

An eon-deep pool cupping the centuries.

The mere is the heart of the town

A harbour, a haven, a home.

At Christmas the lights on the water

Create a carnival of welcome,

as this home-grown market town

With the feel of a village

Opens its cheerful doors

Greets new neighbours

Brought in on the tide

Man, woman, and child.

Diss embraces the mere

Which remembers in a voiceless dreaming

The circus elephant buried under the green,

The swimming galas,

Skaters criss-crossing its frozen surface,
the cricket match, one unforgiving season. played on ice,
the linen makers poisoning the waters with mercury released from hemp,
Tom Paine sitting at the water's edge with a head full of revolution,
John Betjeman strolling by with a head full of words,
Kings, murderers, and the innocent, their lives witnessed by mere water,
A flux of farmers, tradesmen, soldiers, refugees, lovers, seekers of sanctuary, feeders of birds,
Flocking
Strangers
Friends
Here.

Buildings cluster on the hill
A living museum of brick and flint
Cherished traditions weathered into the stone
Diss market anchored since medieval times
The birds fly free from roof and church tower
A community of sounds echo in the air
Carry across the mere
A mingling of languages, a marriage of thoughts, a wash of ideas,
Of all the people coming here.

Single strands of text – public images and thoughts about Diss

Diss is like a deer,
a simple chair,
somewhere to sit.
A tall pear tree,
a crusty seagull,

an old man with a pocket watch waiting to be reborn.

A quiet tortoise,

an ancient conker tree covered in cobwebs,

busy with creatures,

a green duck,

a wide willow tree,

a fat pigeon,

a pleasant place to live.

Diss is as comfortable as a feather bed,

loving, caring and kind.

A friendly town with a tolerant, open mind.

My home.

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31st August, 2022