

FUTURE\CITY

# OVAL & KENNINGTON CULTURAL STRATEGY SUMMARY





The design of the Oval and Kennington Development Area (OAKDA), signifies an opportunity to produce a thriving “Creative District”. Interwoven with the establishment of employment, residential and commercial opportunities, the OAKDA can harness its existing cultural offer to become one of a growing number of London neighbourhoods that are using culture as a driving force to create attractive, successful places.

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The Cultural Strategy encompasses a set of principles that form the foundation for placemaking in OAKDA and provide a consistent framework for determining cultural opportunities across every phase of the development. They are:

**Retaining local identity**

The OAKDA will create opportunities for grassroots culture to shape and define its future, offering space to local businesses and supporting community initiatives that emerge from an integrated and engaged approach to cultural placemaking.

**The Blast Zone**

The OAKDA will extend the area’s history of providing energy – water, then gas – to its surrounding areas by designing imaginative ways to generate and share ideas and creative activity, across Lambeth and wider London.

**Skills, employment and enterprise**

The OAKDA will be a future-facing location for employment in London. It will unlock the enterprise potential of Lambeth and support the training of local young people with a particular emphasis on the knowledge and creative economies.

**Celebrating history and reframing for the future**

The creative re-use of physical infrastructure and the appropriation of historic themes by artists will play a role in sustaining an authentic identity from the outset of the OAKDA’s redevelopment.



### **Animating public space**

The OAKDA will deliver new public spaces that are successfully animated by permanent and temporary arts commissions, creative programming, pop-up and mobile interventions that appeal to a broad range of users.

### **Cultural partnerships**

Recognised arts, cultural and educational organisations will be engaged through the OAKDA Cultural Strategy to offer guidance or governance, to provide curatorial or selection advice or directly as the suppliers of artworks or cultural activity.

### **Embedded art**

Embedding physical artworks into the fabric of the OAKDA, its architecture and infrastructure, will help it to establish its own unique character, connecting to the wider cultural identity of Lambeth and referencing the locality and the communities nearby.

In addition to the Principles, four specific areas of activity are proposed:

### **An Exemplar District for Creative Employment**

OAKDA will generate a positive impact through employment, training and related community engagement on and beyond the Gasholders site. It will:

- Support small businesses in using contemporary models – including co-working spaces, clustering, networking, flexible spaces and working conditions;
- Provide skills and training – creating a framework to

support local apprenticeships, training and retraining for Lambeth's large working age population;

- Network the area's commercial offer within a coherent and unified brand that provides a distinct theme and which can be curated for events and special occasions.

### **Celebrating History**

OAKDA is on the cusp of significant change, and the sensitive use of cultural approaches can take communities on important journeys that respect the past and anticipate the future. The possible refurbishment of Gasholder No. 1 to be a focal point of the site's heritage, will inspire:

- A curated programme of artist residencies resulting in artworks that celebrate and enrich OAKDA's 'place memory'
- Placements or traineeships for future heritage and conservation professionals, supporting new work and career aspirations
- Permanent artworks, responding to the visual and material heritage of the site, supporting a dialogue between the architecture of the gasholders and the new scheme

### **Creating a Cultural Destination**

OAKDA can become an important cultural destination, by building on its high quality and distinctive cultural assets and capitalising on the cultural dynamism displayed in adjacent neighbourhoods such as Vauxhall, Brixton, Southbank and Waterloo. It will:



- Enhance the location of existing cultural assets by improving access, legibility and streetscape quality
- Work collaboratively with cultural anchor Gasworks Gallery to extend and broaden the reach of its successful art, participation and residency programmes
- Curate all commercial and community use to ensure it contributes to the creation of a sustainable cultural destination

### **Animated Public Realm**

OAKDA can deliver creative, inspiring and inviting public spaces that make people feel welcome, and activate these through the commissioning of permanent and temporary artworks and events. It will:

- Work in partnership with local organisations to create a distinctive programme of events that achieves repeat visits and engenders a sense of local-ownership
- Design flexible public realm spaces suitable for regular animation through outdoor performance, markets and pop-up food events
- Champion an embedded arts programme, commissioning artists to work in collaboration with the design team to develop artworks that energise the architecture and public realm

The character of this part of London is multi-faceted and complex. Warmth, energy and a strong sense of community spirit exist alongside concerns around safety and lack of opportunity, particularly for younger people. The cultural strategy provides approaches that build on the area's strengths to create a positive identity for the OAKDA while offering a framework for ambitious cultural placemaking that will help it reach its full potential as a "Creative District".

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**“ In order to carry  
a positive action  
we must develop here  
a positive vision.**

**”**

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