

City CIL Neighbourhood Fund,
Development Plans Team,
Department of the Built Environment,
City of London, PO Box 270, Guildhall,
London EC2P 2EJ

Sent via email

18 January 2019

To the Development Plans Team,

Re: City of London Community Infrastructure Levy Consultation on Proposed Neighbourhood Fund

Merchant Land welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation with respect to the proposed Neighbourhood Fund. Merchant Land are a property development and investment company. Our portfolio is diverse in both its scale and appeal, from luxury apartments in key central London locations, to exceptional and flexible office and retail spaces and well designed good value homes for hard working Londoners. As part of our portfolio, we are leading on the redevelopment of 33 Creechurch Lane in EC3.

General comments

Merchant land welcomes the City's ambition to fund strategic infrastructure priorities. In addition, we would welcome the Neighbourhood Fund being used to more directly to support the City as a place for working, living, and visiting.

Consultation Questions

1. Do you agree that City CIL Neighbourhood Fund spending should be guided by the spending priorities set out in the City's Regulation 123 List?

In our view, the City's Regulation 123 list represents a good guide for the Neighbourhood Fund. In addition, we would like to see the Fund more directly supporting local projects with a focus on community and education facilities, and promoting health through public realm enhancements.

2. Do you have other suggestions for spending priorities for the City CIL Neighbourhood Fund?

We have taken note of the projected growth in employment and population in and around the City of London, and that there is significant variation in indices of deprivation. We would welcome the Fund being used for projects that support community and education facilities with a clear focus on areas of deprivation.

We also strongly support enhancements to the public realm that have direct benefits of residents, workers, and visitors. The lack of green and community spaces, and space to exercise, is an issue for health and wellbeing. This is compounded by air and noise pollution. Appropriate public realm enhancements can ameliorate some of these factors, promote biodiversity, and support making the City an attractive place to live, work, and visit.

3. Can you suggest any specific projects that you consider should be funded through the City CIL Neighbourhood Fund?

We would encourage projects where local community groups, and particularly those in more deprived areas, can become involved in a community driven design and build projects (the design and construction of new pocket parks, community centres, renovations and so on) with staff from property development/construction businesses offering project support and guidance. This also gives career insight into opportunities within the property industry as well as enabling local improvements.

4. Do you think that there should be an upper ceiling on bids for the CIL Neighbourhood Fund, or a minimum level? If so, what should these levels be?

Whilst we think the scope for how the CIL Neighbourhood Fund should be left flexible rather than restricted to projects of particular sizes, in each funding round a substantial level of funding for smaller community led projects should be made available to encourage local groups and organisations to make use of the funding available.

5. Do you agree with the list of groups and organisations that would be eligible to bid for CIL Neighbourhood Funds? Are there other organisations that should be eligible?

No comments at present.

6. Do you agree with the proposed assessment criteria for the CIL neighbourhood Fund?

We are content with the assessment criteria with its focus on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area, as well as the requirement to demonstrate alignment to the City's delivery plans and strategies.

Your sincerely,

Katherine McCullough
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Merchant Land

Sophie Taysom
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Merchant Land