

NEWS RELEASE

13 MAY 2020

WATERFRONT PLACE INTERACTIVE PARK

AN AWARD-WINNING young British artist has been chosen to provide the centre-piece of a key space at Dundee Waterfront.

Delivering the next phase of the project will be a fundamental part of the city's economic recovery plan and the decision to award the contract to Lee Simmons allows detailed design and engineering work to take place.

Construction on the other elements of Waterfront Place will continue when the current restrictions are eased.

Lee Simmons has centred his design proposal on a sculpture in the form of a humpback whale that will act as a beacon within the new interactive play park at Waterfront Place.

His design and cost of £134,750 were judged to provide the best overall quality/price by a panel of experts led by Dundee City Council.

Alan Ross convener of the council's city development committee said: "Looking at Lee's proposal, and some of his previous work in London, shows not only what a talented and creative individual he is but also that someone with his track record wanted to be a part of the Waterfront redevelopment, demonstrates the massive buzz that it is creating across the country and beyond.

"This decision allows the more detailed design work to be undertaken so we are ready to get underway without delay, subject of course to the government advising that construction activity is safe."

Lee said: "I am delighted to have been offered my first commission in Scotland and excited by the idea of getting started when it's possible.

"The natural form of a huge mammal created with modern materials in such an amazing setting is perfect for me because I love to bring together architecture, art and design and explore what blurring their boundaries looks and feels like."

2.

The council invited proposals from potential designers to develop and deliver a unique space within Waterfront Place to bring art, technology and play together to deliver a contemporary destination.

Chosen for the city's historical connections to whaling, a key element of the play space is an original "sculptural structure" in the form of a whale, and seven innovative and ambitious entries to the design competition were judged on quality and cost.

As part of the selection process, a shortlist of four were invited to present to a panel chaired by Dundee City Council and including representatives of V&A Dundee, Abertay University, St Andrews University and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design.

The humpback whale design will be the centrepiece of the space created in a size and scale that complements its surroundings, while accommodating both convincing aesthetic values and visual strength.

Formed in tubular sections that follow the contours of the creature, the structure will flow from the northern entrance of Waterfront Place with the tail arching towards the Tay to capture a sense of movement.

Visitors to the park will also enjoy a multi-sensory experience using both sound and light and exploring the use of an interactive canvas beneath the whale that can respond to users' three dimensional movements.

In line with the council's procedures during the pandemic the contract was approved by the chief executive and executive director of city development in consultation with the committee's convener, Labour Group Spokesperson, Conservative Group Spokesperson, Liberal Democrat Group Spokesperson, the Independent Member and the Lord Provost.

It will be published under the scheme of delegated powers at <https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/corporate-services/democratic-and-legal-services/essential-council-business> and reported to the city development committee for information once the council returns to its normal business.

The council and its partners will work closely with the appointed design team to fully develop all workings drawings and design information required for tender purposes and a further tender report will be brought back to the city development committee to approve construction costs for the finalised design.

Media enquiries: Mike Boyle 01382 434196