

Open Call Somers Town ACTS



View of Phoenix Road and Chalton Road

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The Commission

The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) and the London Borough of Camden (LB Camden) invite emerging architects, landscape architects, designers and artists to develop and submit a design proposal for a new public realm intervention that will act as a focal point for events and activities in Somers Town during the LFA 2022.

Situated along Phoenix Road, a main link between Euston and St Pancras Stations, the project will deliver an intervention that acts as a platform for bringing people together and enable activities to take place throughout the festival. A weekend- long road closure is envisaged at the end of June and will concentrate most of Somers Town programme of events for the festival. The intervention is to be in place for the duration of a month, including during that weekend closure.

This is a great opportunity to create links with and build on projects already happening in the area and for the design to increase public interest and conversations about the past, present and future of this unique and diverse neighbourhood. The installation is also an opportunity to test what can be possible in an improved car-free environment.

We want to celebrate people coming together after two years of lockdown and provide a community asset for Somers Town during the festival and beyond.

A winning team will be confirmed in April and awarded £25,000 + VAT (which includes a £5,000 design fee) to develop a fully costed, feasible design that can be delivered at the end of June 2022. The delivered scheme will remain in-situ for 28 days, but might stay on site for up to a year.

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The Context

The project will be located in Somers Town, a residential neighbourhood home to a diverse and well-established community. It is a place with a unique history that has changed throughout the centuries, from initially being private estate land through to receiving refugees from the French Revolution in the late 18th Century and being the temporary home of Charles Dickens.

Situated directly north of Euston Road and nestled between King's Cross and Euston, Somers Town sits in an area that is undergoing large scale redevelopment, including HS2 construction and the British Library Extension. While today Kings Cross and Euston are areas of major growth, Somers Town is an area that is yet to see the full benefits of surrounding regeneration.

Several Council led projects are underway in Somers Town and set to improve the area. Some of these are the [GLA funded Future Neighbourhoods projects](#), the greening of estates, Central Somers Town, and [Greening Phoenix Road](#). Consideration to these projects should be given when developing the proposals.



Previous road closure of Phoenix Road

Of particular relevance is the Greening Phoenix Road project, funded through HS2 mitigation funds, which will create a new green space at the heart of Somers Town and act as a green link between Euston and St Pancras Stations. Proposals for a 12-month Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) after Summer 2022 along Phoenix Road are being developed and will enable the testing of a vehicle-free public realm, with opportunities for new and improved open space.

As part of the project, 5 broad design aspirations for the area have emerged through community engagement undertaken in 2019:

- From grey to green: a colourful and biodiverse public realm
- Safe and accessible for all
- Place specific and unique: reflecting the character of Somers Town
- Sociable and playable space
- Well-connected and integrated

The proposal is seen as an opportunity to respond to some of these objectives for Phoenix Road and the wider Somers Town, and take advantage of the 12-month road closure by creating something that could last for the duration.

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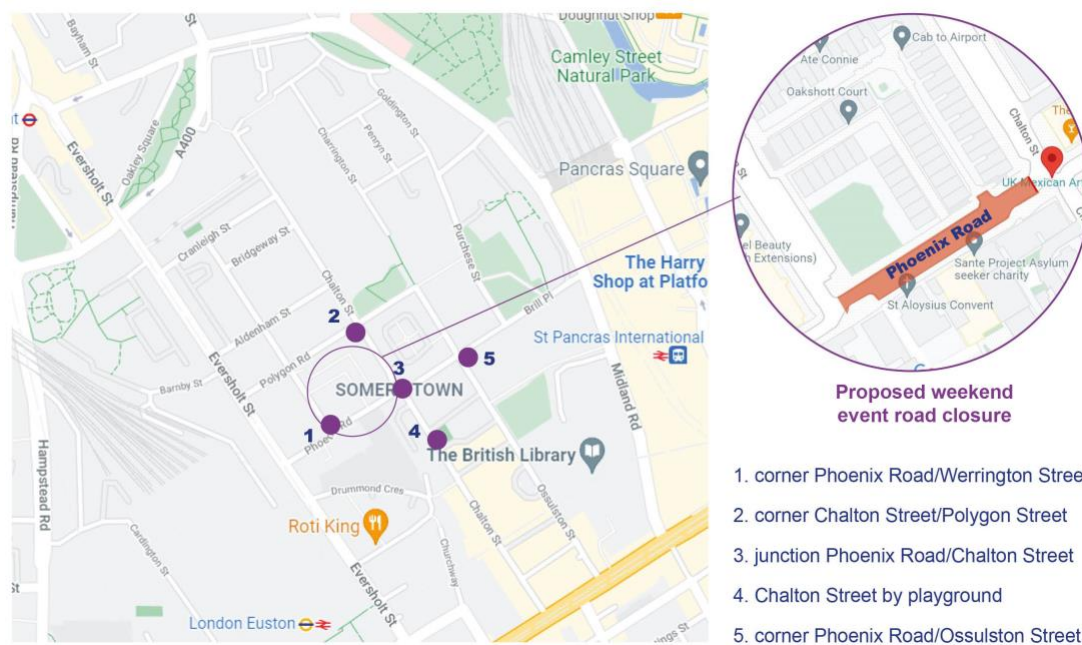
The Site

Proposals would be on site for a month. They can be located along Phoenix Road or in the areas close by. Possible pavement locations have also been highlighted below.

It is encouraged to show how the intervention could be situated in the area along Phoenix Road shown on the map below for the weekend event road closure. This may involve an intervention that sits on the carriageway during the road closure but can be easily moved and/or transformed to work when the road is open to vehicular traffic.

Constraints and opportunities for each site will need to be addressed at stage 2 of the competition.

Somers Town intervention potential locations



Map indication potential locations for design intervention

1. corner Phoenix Road/Werrington Street
2. corner Chalton Street/Polygon Street
3. junction Phoenix Road/Chalton Street
4. Chalton Street by playground
5. corner Phoenix Road/Ossulston Street



View of Phoenix Road

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Community Engaged Practice

Camden Council prides itself on putting participation at the centre of what we do, and we want the LFA to be a continuation of this, raising the voices of community organisations, groups and residents.

We encourage proposals to take a socially engaged approach and to deliver positive outcomes for local residents and local communities. Shortlisted practices will be invited to meet with community organisations in Somers Town including representatives from Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum to develop their proposals.

The design proposals need to foster participation and respond to the local context, but we are particularly looking for submissions that propose a collaborative approach with local organisations including schools, groups or residents. Your proposal could be in partnership with existing groups or outline how this collaboration would realistically work in the 5 months leading up to the festival, including reward and recognition.

Camden Council can provide suggested community organisations and groups, as well as guidance on collaborative and equal working relationships on request.

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Design requirements

The applicant should provide a creative design solution for a site-specific public realm intervention that acts as a catalyst and focal point for people to come together and from which events and activities can take place during the LFA and beyond. It should creatively respond to the brief of Somers Town ACTS and this year's LFA theme 'act'.

We are looking for interventions that:

- are bold, imaginative and forward looking, creating interest and debate
- enable activities and events to take place during the festival and beyond, potentially becoming a platform for other Somers Town events and activities
- create a lasting legacy by encouraging community partnerships and building on existing objectives for the area
- act as a hub to bring people together to showcase and create conversations about Somers Town, also exploring the relationship between regeneration and existing communities
- involve the local school(s) in a way that creates opportunities for students to gain new skills, potentially considering the development of a collaborative curriculum project through the [Camden STEAM programme](#).
- relate to and take advantage of opportunities presented by the various projects happening in the area
- explore this year's LFA theme of 'act' and how it relates to Somers Town

The applicant should undertake the following tasks:

- Provide a feasible and on-budget design intervention that is robust enough to be in the public realm for its duration
- Consult with key stakeholders, including the London Borough of Camden, local residents and businesses, and community and cultural organisations
- Project management and delivery of the winning design

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Further guidance

- **Budget:** The budget will be managed by the entrant. There is no restriction on how the budget should be divided between various aspects of the proposal. This might include a portion of the budget allocated for activities and/or rewarding participants.
- **Materials:** You can use salvaged materials or seek in-kind materials sponsorship to reduce expenses. We would encourage sustainable materials and disposal/recycle/after life need to be considered.
- **Design:** The intervention should be robust enough to withstand all weather conditions and potential damage, as well as to be used by multiple people simultaneously. We are seeking for proposals that are functional (not purely sculptural) and realistic to the brief (do not become pavilions or follies).
- **Location:** If located within the carriageway, the installation should be easily moveable to another location after the road opens back to vehicular traffic.
- **Health & safety:** The installation should be accessible, safe and secure for members of the public to interact with. The drawings will be checked by a Camden engineer who will also carry out a risk assessment to ensure the project is safe for public use. Interventions should not block fire hydrants, fire exits, utility covers, street signage, or any other emergency access
- **Durability:** You should consider the longevity and appearance of your design according to its planned timeframe, to ensure that no maintenance is required during this period. Subject to durability, parts or all of your intervention may be able to be in place for longer than the festival timeframe and be used as part of other 'events'.
- **Maintenance:** Design should also consider sustainability and require minimum maintenance.

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Budget

The total budget available for delivery of this project is circa £25,000 + VAT, including the cost of implementation - materials and any necessary licences or other capital costs. The winning team will be responsible for leading on the fabrication and installation of the design, whilst working closely with Camden internal teams to facilitate the installation. The £25,000 budget outlined includes a maximum £5,000 designer fee to cover on-going design fees and other costs required to deliver the concept.

The winning team will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

- To work with Camden Council to develop a fully costed, feasible design that can be installed at the end June 2022
- Project management of the installation of winning design

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Submission

This competition has a two-stage submission process.

- Round 1: We will seek Expressions of Interest
- Round 2: Up to 6 shortlisted practices will be invited to develop a design concept, reflective of the honorarium sum (£500).

First stage

The first stage submission should include:

- Full name and contact details including postal address, contact number and email of project lead.
- Brief biographies of all the project team.
- A 200-word description about your practice along with any relevant technical experience acquired through previous projects. Please include images of relevant previous work.
- A short paragraph of max. 300 words on why you are interested in being involved in the project and how you are going to work with stakeholders if your proposal is selected. You may wish to include some thoughts about your vision including any initial written reactions you may have to the brief.
- The submission should be no more than 5MB and 10 A4 pages.

These submissions will be shortlisted by the judging panel. Up to 6 shortlisted practices will then be invited to develop a design concept based on the information laid out in this open call and will be awarded an honorarium of £500 inc. VAT each. The work required for the second phase of the project will be reflective of the honorarium sum.

Second stage

At shortlisting (second) stage we will be expecting:

- Two A2 boards illustrating your proposal
- PowerPoint presentation for the purposes of judging.
- The submission should (but is not limited to) include hand or computer drawn 3D design visualisation, with key dimensions noted, an outline of all materials, budget, and fabrication process.

- Detail of how the team will work with the local community to develop your design ideas if appointed. Proposals at stage 2 should evidence how insights engaging with the local community have influenced the design up to this point.

As part of the festival, we are planning to run a small exhibition with the shortlisted entries. Therefore, as part of your second submission we would like the content you submit for the judges to be useable for public audience.

Submission information

For any questions about the competition or submission process, please email: ellie.pile@nla.london.

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Eligibility

The competition is open to emerging architects, designers, engineers and artists. Collaborations are welcomed; however, the project must be actively led by a named emerging architect, engineer or designer.

Applicants need to fulfil **at least two** of the following criteria to be eligible for this competition:

- being no more than seven years post graduate, from your most recent qualification
- being under 40
- set up your practice / collaboration in the past three years

The judges encourage entries from, or collaborations with groups who are underrepresented in architecture.

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Deadline and submission details

- Deadline for first submission is Midday, 25th February 2022. Submissions received after time this will not be considered.
- For competition enquires please contact: ellie.pile@nla.london
- To send your expression of interest in a PDF format go [here](#).
- The PDF should be no more than 5MB and 10 A4 pages.
- You will receive an email confirming the receipt of your submission.

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Schedule outline

Submissions open: Tuesday 1st February 2022

Submissions closed: Thursday 25th February 2022

Successful shortlisted practices notified: Friday 4th March 2022

Site visit: w/c 7th March 2022

2nd submission: Friday 1st April 2022

Final judging / interviews: w/c 4th April 2022

Winner notified: Friday 8th April 2022

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Judging panel

Judging panel to be announced.

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Further information

- Submissions will be judged on originality, demonstration of creativity, relevance to the brief as well as feasibility and how the proposal works in the context of the site.
- To process entries to this competition we will share your application and any associated personal data provided on the application with our jury and competition partners.
- All applicants will be notified of Stage 1 outcomes, but due to the volume of applications we may not be able to provide feedback to entrants individually.
- The ownership of Copyright of the design will be in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, that is Copyright rests with the author of the submitted design.
- All designs remain the intellectual property of the designer however the winning design will itself when built will be the property of the landowners.
- Please bear in mind the project requires a fast turn around and may have peak moments when your practice will need to dedicate sufficient staff to deliver the project on time, to budget and to the high standard expected by all stakeholders.
- If selected, your practice/collaboration will need to London8e Public Liability (of £5million). If your practice/collaboration does not currently hold the requested level of insurances, you can use part of the project budget for uplifting the existing or getting a new insurance policy.
- Significant efforts are made by all stakeholders of the project to ensure wide media coverage.
- London Festival of Architecture, Camden Council and the landowners reserve the right to use images from the submissions for promotional purposes in press, social media and publications. All endeavours will be made to ensure accurate accreditation.

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Useful links

London Festival of Architecture:

<http://www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org>

London Borough of Camden:

www.camden.gov.uk

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Contact

To submit your entry please go [here](#).

For general enquires please contact: ellie.pile@nla.london

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Disclaimer

The competition organisers are not liable for lost, misdirected, or late entries. Decisions of the jury represent their professional judgments and all decisions are final. While it is the intent to construct the winning scheme, the organisers reserve the right to not proceed with construction for any reason. Material submitted by you shall be your sole responsibility, shall not infringe or violate the rights of any other party or violate any laws, contribute to or encourage infringing or otherwise unlawful conduct, or otherwise be obscene, objectionable, or in poor taste. By submitting such material, you are representing that you are the owner of such material and/or have all necessary rights, licenses, and authorization to distribute it.

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The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) is the world's largest annual architecture festival and will be exploring the theme of 'act' in 2022. The LFA is part of New London Architecture (NLA), and has a mission is to support London's architectural and design talent, enthuse and engage with the public, and find new ways to look at familiar places. In 2021 the LFA explored the theme of care, and celebrated innovation and design through a hybrid programme of activity last June. A year-round programme of design competitions, design charrettes, campaigns and other activities also champions London as the best place in the world to practice and enjoy architecture.

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

Twitter: @LFArchitecture

Instagram: @LondonFestivalofArchitecture



www.camden.gov.uk

Twitter: @CamdenCouncil

Instagram: @wemakecamden

Facebook: @LBCamden

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Reference

<https://news.camden.gov.uk/council-to-receive-funding-to-support-a-green-recovery-in-somers-town/>

<https://phoenixroad.commonplace.is/>

[Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum – Our local Forum \(somerstownplan.info\)](http://somerstownplan.info)

[A Space For Us, a new museum for Somers Town – We Make Camden](#)