

Open Call Rediscovering Notting Hill Gate



View of Notting Hill Gate © Luke O'Donovan

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The commission

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is launching a new design competition, which invites architects, designers, artists and creatives to submit their ideas to reimagine Notting Hill Gate, and contribute to the long term improvements of the area. The council has commissioned London Festival of Architecture (LFA) to run the competition and find a creative team to design and deliver the project.

Notting Hill Gate is a busy town centre, acting as a gateway to popular destination in the area as well as providing a key east/west connection from Kensington Gardens to Holland Park. The street includes a diverse mix of shops, restaurants and cafes that serve the day-to-day needs of the local community. However, the road is heavily dominated by traffic, making the space more of a throughfare rather than somewhere for people to stop and dwell.

The aim of the competition will be to commission an innovative and creative public realm intervention that enhances the spaces along the street and encourages people to spend more time in the area. Proposal should also seek to strengthen the identity of the Notting Hill Gate area as well as align to Kensington and Chelsea priorities for the street such as increased greening and improved wayfinding. The winning team will be encouraged to work with the diverse mix of local residents, business and practically young people from the area to implement a proposal that is truly reflective of this unique part of London.

Up to 6 teams will be shortlisted for the competition, with each team receiving an honorarium of £1,500 to develop their proposal. A winning team will be confirmed in July 2022 and awarded funds up to £100K to develop a fully costed, feasible design that can be delivered in end of 2022 or early 2023.

The competition provides an exciting opportunity for design teams to provide their perspective on what could be a transformational and innovative approach to reimagining Notting Hill Gate in achieving the aims of this commission.

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The Context

Notting Hill Gate is defined as a District Centre in the Local Plan and London Plan. It is located in the northern half of the borough of Kensington and Chelsea – north of Kensington High Street and south of Portobello Road. The centre is the fifth largest in the borough, and acts as the gateway to Portobello Road market to the north and the annual Notting Hill festival. Over 17 million people arriving or leaving from Notting Hill Gate station each year, with many people passing through the centre going to and from work and visiting Portobello Road, making it thoroughfare rather than a place to stop and spend time. The busy roads and high traffic levels are seen as a deterrent to shopping and lingering, for residents and visitors alike.

The Local Plan (2019) notes that the town centre was comprehensively redeveloped in the 1950's and is of a completely different scale and character to the surrounding residential areas; with many of the buildings now dated and deteriorating. The centre suffers from traffic dominance and congestion at the expense of a pleasant pedestrian environment.

The high street itself is a major east/west connect (although not a TfL red route) – this presents particular challenges for high street placemaking as traffic noise and pollution are high. However, the sheer number of people passing through by road and public transport mean there are real opportunities to draw more visitors in and encourage them to stay longer.

An action plan has been developed for Notting Hill Gate in partnership with Centre for London, which will be published in the summer 2022.

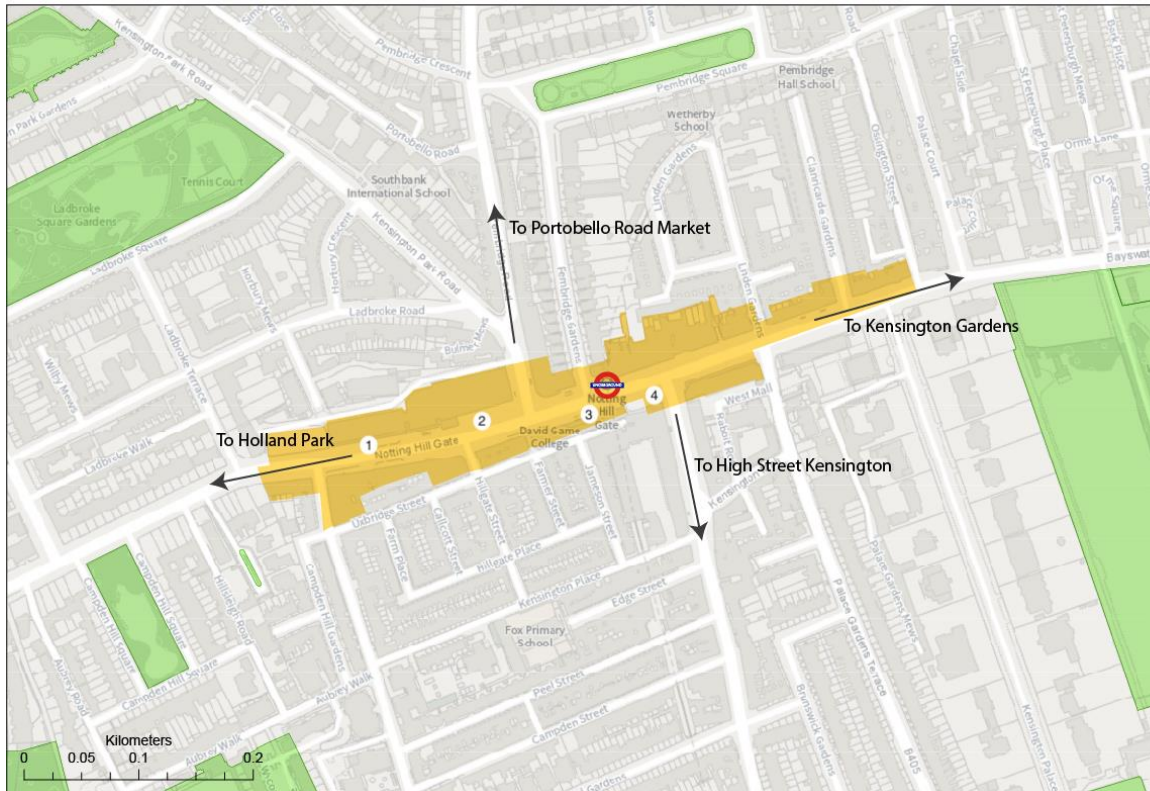
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Client

The Client is the Environmental and Communities Directorate at Kensington and Chelsea Council. The Place Shaping programme will take the lead on the detailed design and delivery stages of the project.

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The Site



Outline of boundary of development area

The site for the design intervention should be located along Notting Hill Gate within the boundary above. Several areas along the round have been identified as possible locations for where the intervention could be implemented, however this does not prohibit ideas that span beyond these areas if they continue to meet the objectives of the brief and are mindful of the operations of the street.

Potential sites could include but should not be limited to the following areas:



1. Pavement space in front of 126 – 138 Notting Hill Gate © Luke O'Donovan



2. Pavement space in front of 87 – 110 Notting Hill Gate © Luke O'Donovan



3. Locations around the exit of the tube © Luke O'Donovan



4. Pavement space in front of 39-41 Notting Hill Gate © Luke O'Donovan

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Design requirements

The competition seeks a creative design that enlivens and improves the experience of people visiting the Notting Hill Gate area. The Council working in consultation with local residents and stakeholders have identified a number of priorities that proposed intervention could look to address. This included:

- Improve the pedestrian environment
- Greening projects – demonstrating the link from Kensington Gardens to Holland Park
- Enhancing and curating Notting Hill Gate identity through culture, lighting and colour
- Way finding and signage
- Ensuring the area is attractive and friendly for children and young people
- Review existing Lighting – ways to make the area safer
- Night-time economy activity
- Review access to the Farmers Market – are there opportunities to improve it?

Possible outcomes could include:

- Modular designed elements that are flexible and that can be replicated elsewhere
- Functional installations that enhances the immediate environment but also that have another purpose – signage/information/seating
- Incorporate the use of colour and/or lighting creatively to add delight to the street
- Interventions that showcase the places unique identity
- Structures that enhance dwell time – places to sit and pause
- Installations that create an actual or perceived buffer between pedestrians and traffic to create a place people will stop and stay rather than simply move through
- Interventions for children
- Installations that support accessibility

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Further design guidance

- Designs must be practical and realistic, whilst responding to the project objectives – evidence should be given that it is buildable within the budget
- Proposals should not include pavilions or follies, and should allow for all elements of the scheme should be visually inspectable at any given time.
- The intervention could consist of a series of smaller creative, physical, design elements. Together all the design elements should be read as a family of objects.
- The winning design will be robust enough to withstand all weather conditions
- Designs should also consider sustainability and eco-friendly materials
- Interventions should not block fire hydrants, fire exits, utility covers, street signage, or any other emergency access

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Budget

The total budget available for delivery of this project is approx. £85,000 + 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 Kensington & Chelsea's internal teams to facilitate the installation.

The £85,000 budget outlined includes a maximum £12,500 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 Kensington & Chelsea Council to develop a fully costed, feasible design that can be installed towards the end of 2022 or early 2023.
- 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 (£1500).
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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 brief description about your practice along with any relevant technical experience acquired through previous projects.
- A selection of relevant previous work, including images.
- A short paragraph on why you are interested in being involved in the project. This should outline how your intervention will benefit the wider public realm and how you are going to work with the local community to deliver your proposal if selected. Please include some thoughts about your vision for the final outcome, including any initial written reactions you may have to the brief.
- No design work is required for the first stage.
- 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 £1500 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 A3 boards illustrating your proposal for an intervention to enhance the street along Notting Hill Gate. The boards will be used in a public exhibition on display throughout the month of June.
- 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, maintenance plan and fabrication process.

The shortlisted teams will be asked to present their proposal to the public exhibition, in the site in Notting Hill Gate. 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 architects, landscape architects, designers and artists. We welcome collaborations; however, the project team must include a qualified architect or landscape architect.

The commission provides an exciting opportunity for artists and creatives to be involved in celebrating and bringing attention to Notting Hill Gate. Kensington and Chelsea Council are not looking for fully developed designs as part of this submission, but rather initial ideas and examples of similar projects. Following appointment, the chosen individual / team can work with local stakeholders to develop ideas into more detailed design concepts.

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

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Deadline and submission details

- Deadline for first submission is Midday, Tuesday 22nd March 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: Thursday 10th February 2022

Submissions closed: Tuesday 22nd March 2022

Successful shortlisted practices notified: Friday 1st April 2022

Site visit: w/c 11th April 2022

2nd submission: Wednesday 25th April 2022

Shortlist exhibition: 1-30th June 2022

Final judging / interviews: w/c 11th July 2022

Winner notified: Friday 22nd July 2022

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Judging panel

Rosa Rogina (Director, London Festival of Architecture) (chair)
Sue Harris (Executive Director for Environmental and Communities, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Catherine Faulks (Lead Member for Economy, Employment, and Innovation, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Amy Frearson (editor-at-large, Dezeen)
Anda Winters (Artistic Director & CEO, Coronet Theatre)

Further judges to be announced

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Judging criteria

Round 1 Judging Criteria

- **Practice/Team profile - 40% (30% practice and experience, 10% EDI):** Does the team have skilled professionals for delivering the proposal in line with eligibility outlined in the Open Call? Does the team have a diverse set of skills and experience? Are the previous work experiences and/or their work methodologies and wider design aspirations relevant to the competition?
- **Initial vision - 30%:** Does the proposal's initial written reflection to the brief suggest innovation, surprise and creativity? Does it explore a new and original way to use and engage with the area of Notting Hill Gate?
- **Feasibility - 30%:** Does it propose an approach which seems feasible and deliverable within the budget and set timeframe?

Round 2 Judging Criteria

- Overall design – 25%
- Costs – 20%
- Approach to environment and sustainability – 15%
- Longevity and implications for maintenance – 15%
- Contextual design and public engagement – 15%

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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 your practice/collaboration is appointed to deliver the project it will need to have the following insurance: Employers Liability, Professional Indemnity, Public Liability.
- Significant efforts are made by all stakeholders of the project to ensure wide media coverage.
- London Festival of Architecture, Kensington and Chelsea 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:
www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

Kensington and Chelsea Council:
www.rbkc.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

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Reference

<https://planningconsult.rbkc.gov.uk/connect.ti/nhgSPD/consultationHome>