



Open Call Arch 42 Gateways, Nine Elms



© Luke O'Donovan

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The commission

The Northern Line Extension (NLE) and the opening of the new Nine Elms underground station will transform how people experience the Nine Elms area, how they travel to and through it. The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) and Wandsworth Council are inviting expressions of interest to this new competition to create visually attractive gateways at the entrances to Arch 42, to improve visibility and draw people's attention to a new pedestrian and cycle route being created between the new Nine Elms station and the emerging neighbourhoods to the north of the railway line. Arch 42 will open up a new connection between the new and existing communities and this exciting commission is the chance to conceive and deliver a design intervention to help make the new route successful.

Arch 42 is strategically located within the Nine Elms movement network and has been identified in the Vauxhall, Nine Elms, Battersea (VNEB) Opportunity Area Planning Framework as one of a number of key north-south routes which need to be opened or improved in order to help define Nine Elms as a successful place. Building on the success of the Happy Street project by Yinka Ilori, delivered in 2019 in collaboration with LFA, this design competition seeks

original and highly visible entrance and placemaking enhancements for Arch 42 which will engage, delight and offer benefits to residents, local businesses and visitors. Most of all, they will promote access and active travel, encouraging people to explore the area on foot or by bike. We are inviting architects, landscape architects, designers and artists to submit design concepts that will transform the aesthetics of the entrances to Arch 42 into attractive and welcoming gateways in an important Nine Elms neighbourhood undergoing major transformation.

A temporary exhibition of shortlisted entries will be on public display in late November, with an opportunity to register comments and feedback. The intention is that following a two-stage competition judging process and public engagement on submitted proposals, the winning team will be revealed in December 2020 and, subject to the Council's procurement and governance procedures, will be awarded a design fee to develop a fully costed, feasible design to be installed in Summer 2021.

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The Context

Two hundred years ago the Nine Elms area was home to agriculture and market gardens. The riverfront boomed with trade. The South Western Main Line (SWML) was developed between 1838-40, sparking the industrial transformation of the area with acres of rail sheds, and gas works appearing through the 19th Century, joined by automobile and other light industry into the 20th. The Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens entertained the masses from the 17th to the 19th centuries, lending the area social and cultural as well as industrial importance - the heritage of which we feel proud today. Battersea Power Station was completed in 1955 and has dominated the landscape ever since as an icon of pioneering industrial design, remaining one of London's most-loved landmarks and a constant feature of the city's skyline.

Today, the Nine Elms and Battersea area is being transformed into a dynamic, successful mixed-use district with diverse opportunities for people to make their home, build their business or enjoy the best of London's culture and entertainment. The scale of change is evident in the immediate surroundings of the site. New Covent Garden Market is being redeveloped on the south side of the railway arches as London's finest fruit, veg and flower wholesale market. On the north side, the site is in a close proximity to the U.S. Embassy and newly built residential-led mixed-use developments. With the growing number of residents and visitors to the area, the site represents a challenging environment to connect pedestrians to a new underground station.



View of the existing context from the Covent Garden Market site – the new residential developments/neighbourhoods can be seen emerging to the north of the railway viaduct

Arch 42 is one of a series of arches forming a section of the Victorian railway viaduct carrying the South Western Main Line through Nine Elms and into London Waterloo station. The viaduct is a significant barrier to movement in the local area, creating severance between the areas to the north and south of the railway line. Most of the arches in this section of viaduct are occupied by small commercial food and catering businesses, related to the nearby New Covent Garden Market (NCGM) or are used for storage.

TfL's programmed completion of the NLE works, and line opening is Autumn 2021. As part of the NLE, TfL is also delivering public realm improvements to the area immediately around the new station in Pascal Street and Pascal Place, including widened and repaved footways, tree planting, cycle parking, new seating and wayfinding.

TfL is also carrying out works to open up Arch 42 and improve its internal environment so it can be safely used as a through route for both pedestrians and cyclists. New paving, signage, tree planting, new highway lighting and the refurbishment of the internal arch brickwork will improve the physical environment and user experience. In addition to the works described above, a route will also be provided across the NCGM site to link the station and Arch 42.



Artist Impression of TfL's refurbishment works of the internal arch brickwork to improve the internal environment and user experience



Artist Impression of TfL's refurbishment works on the exterior, which include constructing a ramp on the north side for DDA compliant access to the arch from Ponton Road and wayfinding signage close to the entrance

TfL's work does not include the treatment of the external faces of the arch, therefore without the additional enhancements the opportunity for placemaking improvements could be lost. TfL's arch works are currently scheduled to finish at the end of December 2020.

Network Rail is very supportive of the refurbishment of Arch 42 so it can be used as a new pedestrian and cycle route, as well as the idea of additional enhancements to the arch entrances. As the asset owner and rail infrastructure maintainer it is critically important for the timely delivery of the project to retain their support.

For more information on the public realm strategy, part of Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea Opportunity Area Planning Framework go [here](#).

For Arts and Culture in Nine Elms Autumn 2020 – Spring 2022 Cultural Action Plan go [here](#).

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Client

The Client is the Nine Elms Delivery Team, part of the Economic Development Office at Wandsworth Council. The delivery team will take the lead on the design and delivery of the additional enhancements to Arch 42 - taking forward the commission and selection of the concept designs planning, detailed design and delivery.

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The site



South entrance to the Arch © Luke O'Donovan

The site is in close proximity to a 24/7 working market and other smaller operational businesses situated in neighbouring arches. Currently, the immediate environment on both sides of Arch 42 is unattractive and of poor quality. On the south side, the track structure projects beyond the arch opening itself creating a rather dark and gloomy undercroft, which means that the arch is not clearly visible from the street and it can be easily missed within its surrounding context. The overhanging railway structure is a wrought-iron grillage with surface-mounted service conduits and pigeon deterrent netting fixed to them. Generally, the environment feels neglected, and could feel intimidating to someone approaching this area at night-time.



North Entrance to the Arch © Luke O'Donovan

On the north side, the character is different in that there is no overhanging railway structure above. To deal with a 2m ground level change between the north and southside of the arch, TfL's work involves the construction of a ramp on the north side for DDA-compliant access into the arch from Ponton Road, and the introduction of wayfinding signage close to the entrance. However, the arch's location within the section of Ponton Road that runs parallel to the railway line means it is not immediately visible in long views when approaching from the north and the east, or in the long views from the western end of Ponton Road. We hope that the commission can address these challenges.

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Design requirements

The competition seeks a creative design solution that will enhance the 'gateways' at each end of Arch 42 so that they highlight and draw people's attention to both the arch and to the route. The interventions will have a powerful placemaking role that will help animate the street scene on either side of the existing railway viaduct, to create a welcoming public urban realm and sense of place.

The competition will be delivered in a two-stage process.

1. We will seek for Expressions of Interest, including a written reflection on the competition brief.
2. Up to 6 shortlisted practices will be invited to develop a design concept reflective of the honorarium sum (£500 inc. VAT per shortlisted practice). This should include cost breakdown, proposed work stages, approach to project delivery and to future community engagement.

The design proposals developed during the second stage of the competition could include any appropriate robust creative solution, for example painting, graphic design, lighting or tiling on

both facades of the arch. Applicants should consider free standing elements to avoid the need to fix to the existing railway infrastructure.

The shortlisted applicants will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

- Provide design option(s) for visually attractive gateways at the entrances to Arch 42 on either side of the railway line, to improve the visibility of the new route and animate and activate the spaces directly outside. Low maintenance proposals are favourable – and we will ask you to estimate on-going maintenance costs.
- Take part in a stakeholder engagement exercise where proposals will be made available to local residents and businesses and interested council departments, to view and who will be able to comment on the design teams ideas, with the feedback being considered by the judging panel as part of the decision-making process.

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

- To work with the Nine Elms Delivery Team to develop a fully costed, feasible design that can be installed in summer 2021.
- Project management of the installation of winning design
- Undertake community engagement

The key objectives of the project are:

- Define and celebrate the new route between the new Nine Elms underground station and the river, encouraging people to walk, cycle and explore these new and vibrant neighbourhoods in a healthier way
- Improve the visibility of the arch's location and draw people's attention to the new route to maximise its potential to open up new parts of Nine Elms.
- Make it easier for people to move around Nine Elms and help them to make the most of the new connections that are being created between the older and emerging communities and giving people better choices for how they travel across the area.
- Help people to orientate themselves around a part of Nine Elms that is transforming how it looks and functions
- Help create a greater sense of place, and foster civic pride and strengthen the local area identity as part of the wider Nine Elms regeneration

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Further guidance

- The redesigned arch facades should act as a welcoming gateway to the area for local residents and visitors
- The designs must be deliverable within the constraints of the environment and will need to consider access, material specification and power source constraints (particularly to the southern side)
- Designs should not rely on connections or support from the railway infrastructure and should allow full access to inspect and maintain the Network Rail structure.

- The railway viaduct is owned by Network Rail and the artwork or design will require approval from Network Rail and Wandsworth Council and any parties within lease hold interests in the property/asset.
- Any winning design will be robust enough to withstand all weather conditions
- Designs should also consider sustainability and require minimal maintenance
- The Work is expected to be in place for 15-20 years
- Local community engagement is critical to the success of the Work. Shortlisted applicants will have an opportunity to meet local residents, traders and/or other stakeholders during a guided site tour. Should a guided site tour not be possible due to Covid-19, alternative digital briefings will be organised.

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Budget

The total budget available for this project is circa £165,000 Inc. VAT to include all fees, fabrication and installation.

The fabrication and installation of the winning design will be subject to separate tender exercise in line with Wandsworth Councils procurement rules.

The budget outlined above includes an indicative maximum amount of £40,000 (Inc VAT) to cover on-going design fees and other management costs required to deliver the winning concept.

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Submission

This competition has a two stages submission.

This first stage submission should include:

1. Full name and contact details including postal address, contact number and email of project lead.
2. Brief biographies of all the project team.
3. A 200-word description about your practice along with any relevant technical experience acquired through previous experience; please include images of relevant previous work.
4. A short paragraph of max. 300 words on why you are interested in being involved in the project and, how are you going to work with the local community to deliver your proposal if selected. Please include some thoughts about your vision including any initial written reactions you may have to the brief.
5. No design work is required for the first stage.

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; therefore, we will be expecting the equivalent of an A2 board explaining your proposal. This can come in the form your practice feels will most effectively communicate your design to the judging panel.

On Tuesday 29 September 2.00-3.00pm LFA and Wandsworth Council will host a Zoom session to discuss how to put together a successful competition submission. This will also be an opportunity to ask questions specific to this competition process. If you would like to join please email: hannah.askari@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.

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Deadline and submission details

- Deadline for first submission is Midday, Friday 23 October 2020. Submissions received after time this will not be considered.
- For competition enquires please contact: rosa.rogina@nla.london
- Please send expressions of interest in a PDF format via: <https://www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/arch42/>
- 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 22 September 2020

Zoom session: Tuesday 29 September 2020

Submissions closed: Friday 23 October 2020

Successful shortlisted practices notified: Friday 30 October 2020

Site visit / Round 2 questions: w/c 2 November 2020

2nd submission: Thursday 26 November 2020

Exhibition of shortlisted entries: Monday 30 November – Sunday 6 December 2020

Winner notified: w/c 7 December 2020

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Judging panel

David Bickle (Partner, Hawkins\Brown)

Louise Dransfield (London editor, Estates Gazette)

Yinka Ilori (Designer)

Christopher Mansfield (Chartered Engineer, Network Rail)

Alex Rinsler (Nine Elms Strategic Lead for Culture, Wandsworth Council)

Tamsie Thomson (Director, London Festival of Architecture)

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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.
- 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 Wandsworth Council.
- 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.
- Significant efforts are made by all stakeholders of the project to ensure wide media coverage.
- London Festival of Architecture, and Wandsworth Council 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>

Nine Elms on the South Bank
<http://www.nineelmslondon.com>

Wandsworth Council
<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk>

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Contact

To submit your entry please visit: <https://www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/arch42/>
For general enquires please contact: rosa.rogina@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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London Festival of Architecture

The London Festival of Architecture celebrates London as a global hub of architectural experimentation, practice and debate. The festival returns to the capital from 1-30 June 2020 with a lively and diverse programme of public events across London exploring the theme 'power'. The London Festival of Architecture began in 2004 and has since grown to become Europe's biggest annual architecture festival. The festival attracts a vast public audience – 800,000 people in 2019 – and a global media audience of millions. The vast majority of events are free and are staged by a core festival programming team working alongside architecture and design practices and practitioners, leading cultural and academic institutions, artists and many others. In 2017 the London Festival of Architecture was named by Mayor of London Sadiq Khan as one of his design advocate organisations and is working alongside the Mayor's team to champion architecture, provide expertise and guidance, and help to make London a better city.

www.londonfestivalofarchitecture.org

Twitter: @LFArchitecture



Nine Elms
On the South Bank

Nine Elms and Vauxhall

The Nine Elms and Vauxhall regeneration area sits across the boroughs of Wandsworth and Lambeth. It includes Battersea Power Station to the west, Albert Embankment to the east and has 3km of river frontage. It is undergoing critical regeneration at significant scale and will deliver 20,000 new homes, 6.5m sq.ft. of commercial and cultural space and acres of revitalised and new public realm. Its masterplan ensures multiple developers work together and its cultural strategy makes it accessible to all.

www.nineelmslondon.com

Twitter: @NineElmsTeam

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Reference

Happy Street by Yinka Ilori, Thessaly Road (2019)



© Luke O'Donovan



© Luke O'Donovan

In July 2019, the transformation of a south London railway bridge by visual artist Yinka Ilori was unveiled. Happy Street was the outcome of a design competition organised by the LFA and Wandsworth Council, and part of an initiative to improve the public realm around Nine Elms and Thessaly Road as a key transport route.

Happy Street is Ilori's first public realm commission and is a key part of Wandsworth Council's work to transform the gloomy underpass beneath the Thessaly Road Railway Bridge into a bright and welcoming environment for existing communities, pedestrians and cyclists, on a key route between Wandsworth Road and Nine Elms Lane.

Together with the team at Wandsworth Council, Ilori has worked closely during the development of the project with local residents and nearby St George's C of E Primary School, helping to empower people to engage with and shape their local neighbourhood as it continues to undergo major new development and change.