



KING'S X SQUARE

International Design Competition

Expression of Interest Document



Camden



ISLINGTON



Transport for London

Design for London



John McAslan + Partners



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CONSULTANTS

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1. INTRODUCTION



King's Cross station, prior to the start of its redevelopment scheme, with the area of the proposed King's Cross Square largely covered with the existing concourse and temporary structures.

King's Cross Square is destined to be one of the great public places in London. Against the magnificent backdrop of the Grade 1 listed façade of King's Cross designed by Thomas Cubitt, this new urban square will be the setting through which in excess of a hundred thousand commuters, visitors and residents will pass each day.

An international, two-stage design competition to design the square is announced. This major design event is jointly led by the London Borough of Camden, and land-owner and national railway agency Network Rail, with additional sponsorship from Design for London, Transport for London and the London Borough of Islington. English Heritage are, of course, taking a keen interest in the space as part of the setting of two Grade I listed stations.

The preliminary first stage seeks Expressions of Interest from architects, landscape architects and urban designers. From these responses a shortlist of six will be chosen to work up concept propositions, with the final decision made by a jury. It is Network Rail's intention to appoint the winner to complete the design of the space, preferably in time for an opening before 2012, following completion of the transformation of the Grade 1 listed King's Cross station, which is currently under construction.

King's Cross Square will be unique in terms of position, multiple functions, and urban place-making potential. A world-class exemplar design is sought. The square will be one of London's most high-profile public realm projects at the start of the 21st century, and as significant to this part of London as Trafalgar Square or Marble Arch are to their West End settings. In the event that King's Cross Square can be completed by the spring of 2012, it will form the gateway of London's most important international rail portal for the London Olympic Games.

The two-stage competition's total design and construction budget is based on a £6m (approximately €7.8m, US\$11.9m) budget at 2008 prices, inflation protected to date of construction.



A contemporary depiction of the scene on the opening day of King's Cross station in 1852. The people and carriages are on what will soon become King's Cross Square.

The competition process is being managed by Malcolm Reading Consultants, in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Competitions Office and Network Rail's lead architects for the King's Cross station redevelopment programme, John McAslan + Partners.

Details and information are available on the competition website: **www.malcolmreading.co.uk/kingsxsquare**

The competition is being conducted in accordance with European Procurement requirements and an advert has been placed on the Official Journal of the European Union.

Competing design teams, or individual designers, must respond to the Stage 1 Expression of Interest briefing document, and complete the pre-qualification questionnaire. The shortlist of up to six designers will be selected from Stage 1 applicants, and the shortlisted designers will be invited to develop concept propositions in response to a more detailed Stage 2 brief. A full site visit will be arranged for those invited to compete at Stage 2, including access to the client team and their technical consultants. An RIBA representative will attend and observe Stage 1 and Stage 2 selection processes.

The membership of the jury will be announced at a later date.

The competition is open to architectural practices, landscape practices, multi-disciplinary design teams, and individual designers. In the event that a practice or established design team wins the competition, they would be expected to assemble a complete project delivery team.

In the event of an individual designer winning the King's Cross Square competition, that designer would be expected to work with a team of supporting professional consultants whose selection would be approved by the RIBA, and by John McAslan + Partners, Network Rail's lead architects for the King's Cross station redevelopment programme.

2. BACKGROUND



A mid-19th century perspective of the original double-vaulted train shed.

The historical provenance of the area around King's Cross dates back to the 4th century when Romano-British inhabitants established dwellings whose remains are associated with the nearby St Pancras old church. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the arrival of canals, then railways. These transformed what was then semi-rural King's Cross into an urban area of slums and workmen's lodgings: the nearby slum of St. Giles was the setting for Charles Dickens' novel, *Oliver Twist*. During the nineteenth century, this area was one of London's poorest districts, and its gritty reputation remained until the 1990s, when redevelopment of the area was outlined, through strategic urban studies, and through development schemes by Argent plc.

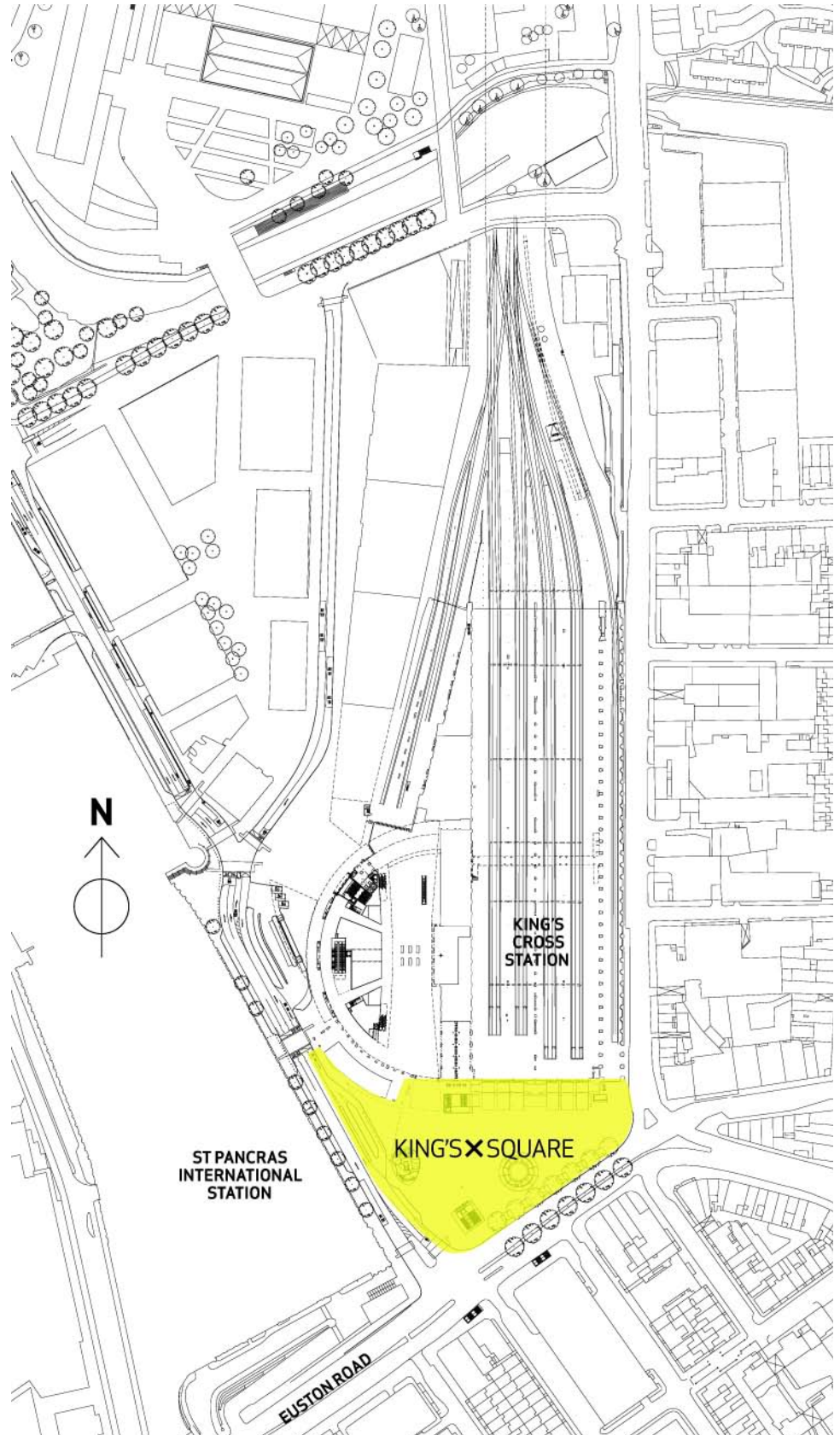


A general view of the King's Cross area, with the King's Cross Central development to the north, St Pancras International to the west, and King's Cross station to the south. The King's Cross Square site is highlighted in pink.
Image: courtesy of Argent plc.

Today, this urban milieu is being transformed by two massive urban regeneration schemes. The Regents Quarter scheme, injecting new energy and activity into the area aligned with York Way, northeast of the station, is well underway; and the King's Cross Central development, on a massive tranche of land north of the station, will start on site soon. The recently completed St Pancras International station scheme, immediately adjacent to King's Cross station, has made the two stations into a rail and Underground interchange of even more importance to London, and to travellers bound for Europe.

The King's Cross area is, increasingly, becoming a favoured location for the creative industry, and the presence south of Euston Road of the Bloomsbury campuses of University College, London, and the nearby British Library, adds to the area's increasingly cosmopolitan atmosphere. There is no doubt that when the King's Cross Central and Regents Quarter schemes are completed the area will become more culturally vibrant and diverse, and commercially valuable.

Plan of the location (not to scale)



3. DESIGN BRIEF



An indicative visualisation of part of the groundplane of the King's Cross Square site.

To create a new public plaza immediately south of King's Cross station, approximately 7000m² in area. The site is bounded by the Grade 1 listed King's Cross station to the north, by Euston Road and York Way to the south and east, and by Pancras Road and the Grade I listed St Pancras International station to the west.

King's Cross Square will be a unique addition to the capital's palette of memorable street scenes. The Square will generate the setting for the iconic grandeur of King's Cross station and play an important place-making role at a major urban junction where social and commercial activity has, in the past, been regarded as rather chaotic.

King's Cross Square will be the new arrival threshold for King's Cross station, designed by Cubitt in 1852, and currently undergoing a major programme of restoration and improvement. The Square will be used daily by hundreds of thousands of railway and London Underground travellers. It will also be crossed by thousands more pedestrians passing along the Euston Road, one of London's key east-west axes, and by those on their way to the Regents Quarter and King's Cross Central.

Network Rail regards the King's Cross station scheme, in association with the adjoining and recently completed modernisation of the equally historic St Pancras International station, as one of their most important ongoing projects. The successful design of King's Cross Square is therefore critically important to the functionality, and presence, of these two architecturally iconic stations which, together, host more than 100 million people a year.



A visualisation of the station's western concourse by John McAslan + Partners, showing its relationship to the groundplane between St Pancras and the King's Cross Square site.



The scale and geometric drama of King's Cross station's forthcoming new western concourse, by John McAslan + Partners, will create the first piece of iconic railway architecture in the 21st century.

However, the new square needs to be viewed in wider strategic terms as a major London space that will also greatly benefit its local context. In particular, the successful designer will have addressed the question of how King's Cross Square might influence, or contribute to, future regenerative changes to Euston Road, and along its southern margins. A wider design context is thus suggested on the location plan, and the successful designer will want to address features within this that are capable of change, particularly the Underground entrances on the south side of Euston Road.

In summary, the direct challenge for designers is to create a new London square that meets the required functions associated with Network Rail's operation of King's Cross station; handles significant flows of pedestrian traffic through its programming, arrangement or surface treatment; and creates a clear sense of public space that is connected to the place, the buildings and the area around.

Design responses that include artists working in the public realm are encouraged. It is anticipated that elements such as finishes, lighting and signage would benefit from an integrated approach with an artist. There is currently no additional budget available for a separate public art programme.

There are three fundamental constraints to consider in developing a conceptual scheme for King's Cross Square.

- 1.** The site is constrained by a complex overlay of adjoining owners, traffic routes, pedestrian desire lines and the presence of London Underground concourses, less than 1.5m below the surface of the site at certain points. Other existing permanent and protuberant features, such as ventilation conduit, London Underground entrances, and the fire-fighting access point, must also be considered as part of the design challenge and part of the solutions.
- 2.** The construction of King's Cross Square will take place during a period to be scheduled between January 2011 and January 2013. London hosts the 2012 Olympics, and if it is not possible to schedule and complete the scheme between 2011 and the start of the Olympics in the summer of 2012, the winning design must consider an appropriate interim surface treatment that will be durable for at least one year, and have a pleasant or perhaps graphically interesting appearance, rather than an obviously expedient one. The cost of this temporary surfacing would be met by a secondary budget, separate to the King's Cross Square budget.
- 3.** Security and safety are key factors. The square is adjacent to London's busiest transport interchange and must be capable of providing for normal and emergency situations. In addition, it will be a public space, accessible 24 hours of the day and must respond to the sense of place demanded by the setting.

Shortlisted entrants will receive detailed briefings on these constraints as part of the second stage of the competition.

4. GUIDANCE NOTES

Shortlisted candidates will be required to provide a simple cost analysis as part of their eventual concept design. It should be noted that this will be an obligatory part of each submission.

Only candidates who respond in accordance with the submission requirements will be considered. During the pre-qualification stage Network Rail personnel, its consultants, and jury members should not be contacted, as this may lead to disqualification from the competition.

If you have any questions relating to this document please contact Malcolm Reading Consultants by email at:

kingsxsquare@malcolmreading.co.uk

Overseas competitors should note that, for Customs purposes, no commercial value should be assigned to any postal or courier documentation for the Expression of Interest. This may cause your submission to be delayed, or returned to you unopened.

Please provide four bound copies of your response to the core information section (6a), and a PDF version on CD-ROM disc; this element must be in A4 format, and not exceed 20 pages. In addition, please provide separately two bound copies of the questionnaire (6b).

Submissions will not be returned to originators.

Competition deadline. King's Cross Square submissions must be received by: 12.00hrs GMT on August 1, 2008.

The submissions must be marked 'Expression of Interest' and sent or delivered to the following address:

**King's Cross Square Competition
Malcolm Reading Consultants
45 – 46 Berners Street
London W1T 3NE**

5. PROGRAMME

This timetable covers both stages of the design competition. Each competitor who is invited to partake in Stage 2 will receive an honorarium of £6,000 (+ VAT) as a contribution towards the cost of preparing their design submission.

Shortlisted competitors will be expected to attend a briefing day in London, and submit design proposals to comprise: 3x A1 boards, a short accompanying report, elemental cost breakdown and indicative fee proposal. Details will be confirmed in the invitation to tender issued to the shortlisted competitors.

The competition timetable (subject to alteration) is attached

Activity	Date(s)
Pre-qualification period	05.06.08 – 01.08.08
Evaluate questionnaires	02.08.08 – 04.09.08
Invite shortlist to tender	05.09.08
Competition stage	05.09.08 – 31.10.08
Competitor open day	19.09.08
Mid stage interviews	03.10.08
Evaluate submissions	01.11.08 – 12.12.08
Negotiate and appoint	15.12.08 – 19.12.08

6. PRE QUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

6a) Core Information

Interested parties should provide a group response to the following questions:

- 1.** List the team or designer and briefly explain ethos, history, and key relevant projects.
- 2.** Describe your design methods and principles for projects of this type and indicate what might be achieved in the King's Cross Square scheme. It is emphasised that these indications need not be developed in detail in this first stage of the design competition.
- 3.** Set out, using images, explanatory texts or captions, completed projects or proposed schemes whose characteristics have a functional or placemaking relevance to King's Cross Square. These examples must be the specific work of the design practice, and clearly identified as completed projects, ongoing projects or design proposals.
- 4.** Explain your practice's approach to sustainable design, and environmental sustainability.

6b) Questionnaire

The Lead Consultant is required to complete the following questionnaire. When using separate sheets to expand on answers, please make it clear to which question the response relates.

SECTION 1 – COMPANY INFORMATION

- 1.** Company name
- 2.** Trading address
- 3.** Main contact
- 4.** Registered address (if different from 2)
- 5.** Telephone number
- 6.** Email address
- 7.** VAT registration number
- 8.** Company status (Partnership, Limited Company etc)
- 9.** Please provide details of any parent company or ultimate holding company
- 10.** If a Limited Company, please provide registration number and date of incorporation
- 11.** Please state how long the company has been trading in this capacity
- 12.** Please list the full names of all the Directors or Partners in the organisation

- 13.** Please state if any Director or Partner has been involved in any company that has been declared bankrupt or been put into Administration, Liquidation or Receivership
(If YES please provide details)
- 14.** Please state if any Director, Partner or employee is related to an employee of Network Rail
(If YES please provide details)
- 15.** Please state if any Director, Partner or employee has any involvement with other companies who provide, or which are tendering for provision of, services to Network Rail
- 16.** Has a contract ever been terminated or not renewed due to failure to perform?
(If YES please provide details)
- 17.** Please state whether the organisation has incurred damages in respect of a contract in the last three years
(If YES please provide details)
- 18.** Please provide a copy of (or extract from) your organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy.
Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED
- 19.** Please provide a copy of (or extract from) your organisation's Health & Safety Policy.
Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED
- 20.** Please state whether your organisation has ever been prosecuted under Equal Opportunities legislation
(If YES please provide details)
- 21.** Please state whether your organisation has ever been prosecuted under Health & Safety legislation
(If YES please provide details)

22. Please provide details and supporting documentation of any quality assurance accreditation that your organisation holds. If none is held please provide details of your quality assurance policy and procedures.

Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED

23. Please provide names, and contact details, of three past/recent clients including contract value. Unless specifically requested otherwise, Network Rail will assume the right to contact any of the listed clients for a reference.

SECTION 2 – FINANCIAL INFORMATION

24. Please provide your organisation's bank details, including name and address and contact number for your branch

25. Please provide copies of summary accounts for the last three years

Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED

26. Please provide a statement of annual turnover for the last three years

Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED

27a. Please provide details of relevant insurance held and enclose a copy of certificates

Employers Liability Insurance:

Insurer:

Policy Number:

Extent of Cover:

Expiry Date:

27b. Public Liability Insurance:

Insurer:

Policy Number:

Extent of Cover:

Expiry Date:

27c. Professional Indemnity Insurance

Insurer:

Policy Number:

Extent of Cover:

Expiry Date:

- 28.** Please provide details of any claims which have been made against your organisation in the last three years, also please provide notification of any claims that are pending
Delete as appropriate ENCLOSED NOT ENCLOSED

Evaluation criteria and weighting

The Expressions of Interest will be assessed on the basis of the following Selection Criteria:

- 1.** Track record of delivering design excellence, inventiveness and flair – 25%
- 2.** Track record of delivering similar projects on time and on budget – 25%
- 3.** Description of possible design approach, and understanding of key issues – 25%
- 4.** Demonstration of awareness of sustainable development issues – 15%
- 5.** Finance, certification and policies – 10%