



Brief for Creative Wayfinding Commission to the Stratford Original Business Improvement District

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1. Statement of Purpose

The Stratford Original Business Improvement District (BID) began its five year term on 1st April 2015 after a successful ballot in November 2014. Part of the BID proposal presented to businesses was to “making the town centre more welcoming” through the delivery of creative wayfinding solutions.

Stratford Original Business Improvement District (BID) wishes to commission a creative wayfinding scheme for Stratford Town Centre and to implement one project. The scheme should help direct visitors to a few key destinations in the Town Centre which the BID and BID board members feel could use wayfinding support.

2. Background information

A Business Improvement District is a precisely defined geographical area within which the businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment. BIDs do not affect the level or quality of service provided by the local authority to the area.

A BID is initiated, financed and led by the commercial sector, providing additional or improved services as identified and requested by local businesses, to the baseline services provided by the local authority in that area. There are now over 210 BIDS in the UK and over 45 in London of which Stratford Original is one.

Stratford Original is the first BID to be established within the London Borough of Newham. Stratford Original is primarily a town centre and high street location with a range of national multiples and independents. The Stratford Centre (the town centre’s shopping centre) is also included within the BID area.

There are currently 245 members of Stratford Original from three main sectors:

- Retail (125)
- Office (71)
- Hospitality (34)

3. Context

Stratford Town Centre is undergoing a process of major change and redevelopment. Starting before the London 2012 Olympics, the area and has seen the introduction of several large institutions such as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Westfield Stratford City Shopping Centre . The BID are keen to see that throughout this process and into the future small businesses and cultural institutions are supported and promoted among these major players.

At present, the Town Centre is dominated primarily by a few large-scale developments which funnel pedestrian movement and dominate Meridian Square, a key arrival point. Westfield Stratford City, opened in 2011, is the largest shopping centre in Europe, with over 1.8 million square feet of retail floor area. The older Stratford Shopping Centre, built in 1974, provides a key route from Meridian Square through to the High Street, as well as providing a unique local retail offer.

Stratford is also a cultural hub in east London, with a successful Theatre Quarter made up of cultural institutions including the longstanding Theatre Royal East, Stratford Circus Arts Centre and Stratford Picturehouse Cinema.

Several upcoming developments will be the site of the new Olympicopolis development which will bring a new V&A Museum to Stratford in 2018, and has been pegged as a new “Cultural Quarter”. The Olympic Stadium will soon be home to West Ham Football Club from 2016. Transport for London and LB Newham are currently working on a scheme to redevelop the gyratory that surrounds the Stratford Shopping Centre, expected to be delivered in 2019.

4. Aims and Purpose of this Commission

Creative wayfinding in Stratford Town Centre should increase the visibility and awareness of the diversity of offer in Stratford Town Centre alongside the major commercial centres such as Westfield Stratford City Shopping Centre and the Stratford Shopping Centre, and help to orient visitors. It should also align with the BID’s aim to promote Stratford’s unique identity and to encourage visitors and residents to explore and spend time in the Town Centre.

The project should represent Stratford Town Centre’s rich cultural heritage and past, whilst also establishing a bold identity for the future of the town centre vis a vis its changing context and the presence of major institutions.

As a first step in establishing a pedestrian wayfinding strategy that supports smaller destinations in the Town Centre, Stratford Original wish to commission a designer to

- 1) develop a high-level wayfinding strategy, and
- 2) design and deliver one characterful, creative, and distinctive wayfinding intervention at Meridian Square.

The ambition is that this current commission, a high-level strategy and one wayfinding product, should form part of a more robust strategy and scheme for creative wayfinding for Stratford Town Centre, to be commissioned at a later date.

High-level wayfinding strategy

For the current commission, the high-level wayfinding strategy is envisioned as a short document including maps setting out wayfinding information and placement locations to support wayfinding to local destinations in Stratford Town Centre. The strategy should focus on the "island" site (shown in the map) and its connections to the wider area within walking distance. This is not expected to be a fully developed strategy document, but is intended to establish the context for the first wayfinding intervention and to lay the groundwork for the future.

Wayfinding intervention

Like the high-level strategy, this wayfinding intervention should be considered as a first step to the more robust wayfinding strategy and scheme to be commissioned and rolled out at a later date. The creative wayfinding intervention should be bold and clearly visible among the busy and cluttered town centre landscape, whilst also remaining sympathetic to the site. The

scheme must also complement existing wayfinding schemes such as Legible London whilst bringing attention to key destinations in the Town Centre and Theatre Square. Wayfinding is not expected to include maps, but should have directional information to point visitors to key destinations. Freestanding street furniture including fingerposts as well as murals, paving slabs, floor graphics, and projections have been considered, and the commissioning team is very open to creative solutions that utilise the existing landscape.

The proposal would need to take account of the planned redevelopment of the Stratford gyratory and other ongoing and upcoming projects in the areas proposed by Newham Council and private parties. Any proposals for street furniture or public art will have need permission of LB Newham Planning and Highways teams. Along with the commissioning team, the appointed designer or design team may be asked to attend a small number of meetings for early project reviews with LB Newham Planning and Highways as well as with Transport for London to ensure that the wayfinding intervention would be realisable and congruous with current and upcoming proposals for the local area.

The successful proposal will need to address a number of different situations on the ground, so the selected designer will need to understand the place well enough to appreciate local wayfinding challenges and propose potential solutions.

5. Study Area

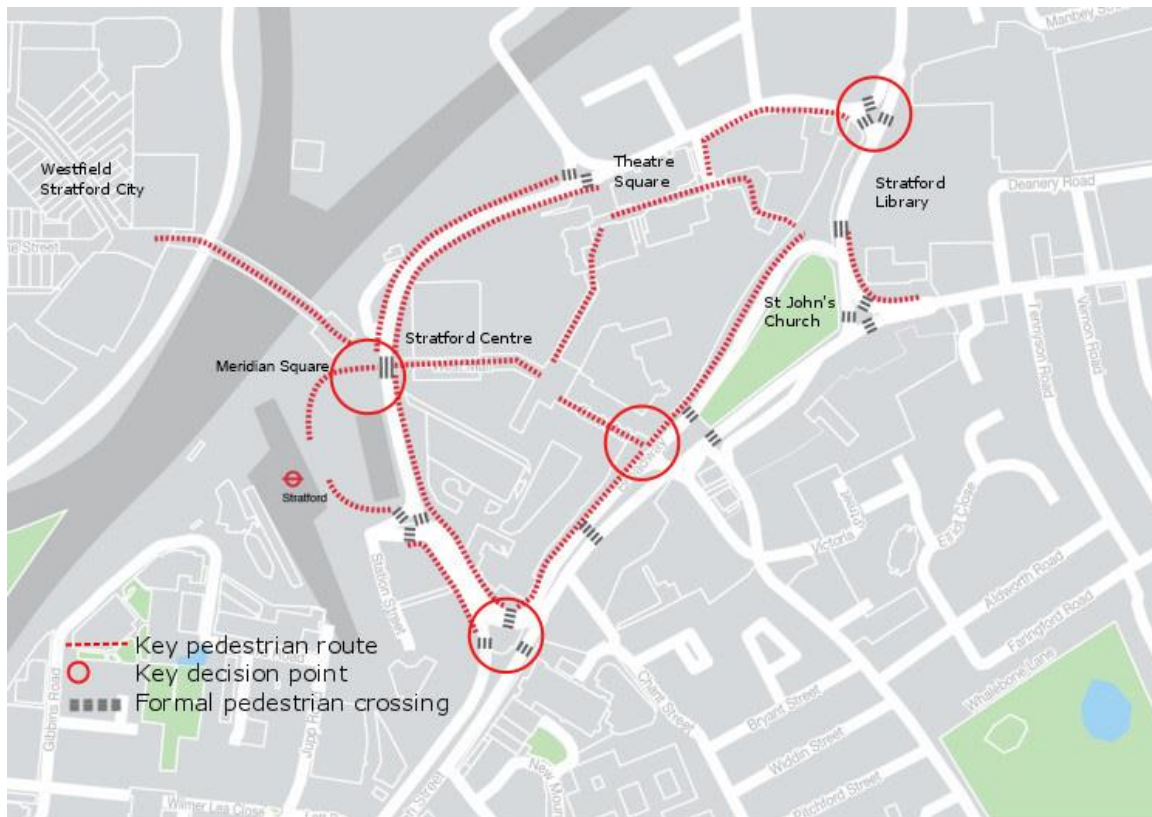
For this commission, the BID would like to focus on the centre of BID area – the so-called ‘island site’ location of the Stratford Centre and Theatre Square, and east-west connections between Stratford Station and the High Street. This is the area where poor site lines and competing messages from surrounding developments make wayfinding very difficult, but where there is potential for leading the greatest amount of footfall. A map of key pedestrian routes and decision points can be found overleaf.

Meridian Square in particular is a key arrival point to Stratford, as a major interchange station in east London, with a major Bus Station as well as London Underground services, Overground, and Docklands Light Railway. Over 53 million passengers pass through the station annually. The crossing between Meridian Square and the Stratford Centre sees over 6,000 people per hour during the weekend afternoon peak period. This level of activity quickly diminishes away from this site; pedestrian crossing across the Broadway for this same period is just over 300 people per hour.

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Map of key pedestrian routes and decision points



6. Budget

The indicative value for this commission is £15,000. Costed proposals should include all design fees and time, travel costs, materials and production costs. This does not need to include VAT.

7. Selection process

A selection panel will be made up of key partners will assess submissions. The panel will comprise representatives from Stratford Original BID, High Street businesses, Theatre Square businesses, LB Newham, and Transport for London.

8. Selection criteria

Submissions will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Quality and originality of proposed approach 40%
- Track record and ability to delivery projects of this type in the public realm 40%
- Value for money 20%

9. Proposed programme

March 2016 – Open call for submissions

14 March 2016 – Deadline for questions to info@stratfordoriginal.com, directed to Sophie Tyler

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- 1 April 2016 – Deadline for submissions, 5pm GMT
- w/c 18 April 2016 – Selection panel meets
- w/c 25 April 2016 – Interviews (if appropriate)
- May 2016 – Commissioning and Inception Meeting
- Autumn 2016 – Delivery of project

Please note that this project is envisaged to be delivered by autumn 2016, as noted above. Any planning permission or approvals will be sought by Stratford Original, with cooperation from the commissioned designer.

10. Submission Requirements

If you wish to be considered for the Stratford Creative Wayfinding Commission, please submit a proposal including:

- a statement of interest in the project that also includes your proposed approach to the high level strategy and to the design and delivery of the first project (no more than 1 page A4 each)
- Up to 5 examples of previous work, with information on each project describing location, cost, and time frame.

Your submission should be in pdf format of no larger than 10MB.

Proposals and accompanying material must be submitted by **Friday 1 April 2016 at 5pm** to info@stratfordoriginal.com.