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Four winning concepts in Old Street roundabout contest announced

21 March, 2018 By Merlin Fulcher

Islington Council has revealed the four winning ideas in its competition to find concepts for the £1 million transformation of Old Street roundabout

The winning schemes – drawn up by Dar, Gpad London, Nicholas Hare Architects and EPR Architects – were chosen from a longlist of 39 submissions, which included Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, Zaha Hadid Architects and Hawkins\Brown (*full longlist below*).

The four selected designs were praised by the judges for striking the right balance between 'iconic and achievable' and creating 'flexible and inclusive spaces, prioritising people and pedestrians, [and] making cyclists feel welcome'.

However, according to the local authority, a separate tender process with the same judges and 'informed by the open call process' will now be launched to take the project forward.

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The competition invited multidisciplinary teams of architects, artists, designers and technologists to submit 'exciting, bold and iconic' proposals for a new gateway structure or public artwork reflecting the area's identity as a hub for digital innovation.

The project is part of ambitious plans to close the north-western arm of the congested roundabout to create a new pedestrian plaza and entrance to the busy underground station. It is supported by the Mayor of London, Transport for London (TfL) and Hackney Council. Proposals were permitted to exceed the £1 million budget if suitable options for additional funding were identified by the applicant.

Judging the competition were Claudia Webbe, Islington Council's executive member for environment and transport; Feryal Demirci, Hackney councillor and cabinet member for neighbourhoods; Will Norman, London's walking and cycling commissioner; and Allison Dutoit from Gehl Architects.

Webbe said: 'Old Street is an iconic place, known across the world as a vibrant hub of technology and culture, and it inspired many bold and exciting design ideas for our open call.

'In an extremely competitive field, the judging panel has selected the entries that we believe offer the best ideas to create an 'iconic gateway' for Old Street with a much improved environment for local people, cyclists and commuters, alongside the wider transformation of Old Street. We thank everyone who took part in this open call and has played a part in helping to shape the future of Old Street.'

Norman said: 'Our transformation of Old Street is going to make this notorious roundabout easier, safer and more pleasant for Londoners to walk and cycle. It's a great example of what we're looking to achieve right across the capital.

'Islington's open call has been a great way to generate designs to further enhance this new public space. I'd like to congratulate the four winning designs on their innovative ideas.'

Demirci commented: 'Together with Islington Council we are creating a low emission neighbourhood in Shoreditch, with ultra-low emission streets, roads closed to through traffic and improved public spaces.

'However, the main roads also need to be made safer, so I'm looking forward to seeing Old Street transformed from a dangerous roundabout into a space which is safer and more pleasant to walk and cycle across.'

Old Street Roundabout is on the boundary of the London boroughs of Hackney and Islington at the junction of Old Street and City Road. It was created in the 1960s as part of an inner-city road improvement programme.

The complex – also known as Silicon Roundabout for the area's density of high-tech start-ups – includes underground shops and station ticket hall, and a rooftop bar. The junction itself has been the site of many cycling accidents.

Five years ago, Architecture 00 mooted plans to [transform the roundabout into a 'start-up city'](#); while three years ago alma-nac, Ben Adams Architects, BuckleyGrayYeoman, Farrells and Hawkins\Brown participated in a separate [call for concepts](#).

The latest project is part of plans to close the north-western arm of the roundabout and reintroduce two-way traffic. The closure – due to be implemented in 2019 – will create a pedestrianised peninsula and an improved entrance to the underground station, along with segregated cycle lanes and crossings.

Among the longlisted teams selected from more than 120 entries to the Islington Council-backed commission were AHMM, Zaha Hadid Architects, Hawkins\Brown, Mae, Tonkin Liu, Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt, EPR, GRID, Pilbrow & Partners, shedkm, and Gibson Thornley.

The 39 designs featured in a public exhibition inside AHMM's White Collar Factory (2-4 Old Street Yard) earlier this year.

The winners

'Old Street Circus 2050' by Dar (led by Dar Landscape Design Team, with Perkins+Will, Portland Design, Elementa Consulting, Currie & Brown, Maffeis Engineering)

The Dar vison is to reclaim the roundabout area for people and to transform it into a genuinely useable, inclusive, healthy and safe public space hosting a wide range of activities such as film screenings, concerts, street-markets and festivals. The Dar proposal includes an iconic sculptural ring of light that will incorporate art, dynamic information, advertising and green infrastructure to create a new landmark for London.

'Old Street Digital Garden' by Gpad London (with Eyekon)

A forest of lights that generate electricity enveloping a new pavilion, a water feature, and a 'digital totem' shaped by turning the existing advertising screens on their ends to house an automated cycle parking structure.

'Old Street Park' by Nicholas Hare Architects (with Price & Myers, Hoare Lea, FIRA)

A flexible, green, smart public space for cyclists, residents, workers, and visitors that harnesses the social, environmental and economic aspirations of the area for the Old Street community.

'The Iris' by EPR Architects (with Martin Richman, Wayfindr, Modus Operandi, Gillespies, Entuitive, Materials Council, Stage One)

A piece of metropolitan land art centring around 'The Iris', a reflective lens facilitating interaction, inclusive gatherings, performances, play and relaxation.

The longlist

LEAD ARCHITECT	FULL TEAM	PROJECT TITLE

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Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) and Derwent London	Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM), Derwent London	AHMM AND Derwent London proposal for Old Street Roundabout
Atelier Chang	Atelier Chang, Bongsu Park, Oliver Curtis, Alex Doss, ClearLED, Pavegen	Tale Points
Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt Architects	Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt, LT Studio, University of Reading, Spacehive, Heyne Tillett Steel, Max Fordham, Charcoal Blue, Peter Brett Associates, Professor John Worthington MBE	Introvert-Extrovert
Brodie Plant Goddard	Brodie Plant Goddard	Nexus
Coffey Architects	Coffey Architects	Old Street Cloud
Cove Burgess Architects	Cove Burgess, Eco Cycle, Pell Frischmann	Silicon Hill
D*Haus Company	D*Haus Company	The Stone Circus
Dar Group	Dar, Perkins+Will, Portland Design, Elementa Consulting, Currie & Brown, Maffeis Engineering	Old Street Circus 2050
Djao-Rakitine	Djao-Rakitine, Arup, Urban Intelligence	Old Street Public Square: Gateway to Smart Tech City
EPR Architects	EPR Architects, Martin Richman, Wayfindr, Modus Operandi, Gillespies, Entuitive, Materials Council, Stage One	The Iris
Es Devlin Studio	Es Devlin Studio, Google Arts and Culture	The Infinite Library
Fereday Pollard (01)	Fereday Pollard	Art & Technology Hub
Fereday Pollard (02)	Fereday Pollard	Self-sustaining Botanical Farm with Art and Technology Platform
Fluid	Fluid, Trinity Design, Structure Mode, Momentum, SEAM, CAS (Contemporary Art Society), London Wildlife Trust, Arup Digital, ISOBAR	Old Street Pier
Gibson Thornley Architects	Gibson Thornley Architects, Kinnear Landscape Architects, Arup	Urban Oasis

LEAD ARCHITECT	FULL TEAM	PROJECT TITLE
Gpad London	Gpad London, Eyekon	Old Street Digital Garden
GRID Architects	GRID Architects	Hydroponiqa
Hawkins\Brown	Hawkins\Brown, Weber Industries, Studio Dekka, Melanie Wilson	Old Street Common
Horden Cherry Lee (HCL) Architects	HCL Architects	Silicon Circus
Intervention Architecture	Intervention Architecture	Lover's Knot: At Light's Edge
JaK Studio	JaK Studio, Seymour Powell, CAR, JaM Management, CollectConnect, Light IQ	COMM.ON
Mae	Mae, Planit IE, Max Fordham & Partners, One Works, Changebuilding	Old Street Common
Markwick Architects	Markwick Architects, Thomas Leung	Sustainable Urban Form
MRZ.ES	MRZ.ES	Sustainable Urban Form
MAX Architects	MAX Architects, Wildstone	Bildpunkt (Pixel)
Naza Architectura y Diseño	Naza Architectura y Diseño, Consultants: Leandro Morillas Moreno, Tarick Chahade, Philipp Schäfer, Rogelio Perez Barja, Gema Pariente Sánchez, Iván del Río, Javier Campillo Puente	Tech Forest
Nicholas Hare Architects	Nicholas Hare Architects, Price and Myers, Hoare Lea, FIRA	Old Street Park
Paul Cocksedge Studio (with Ben Adams Architects)	Paul Cocksedge Studio, Ben Adams Architects	Illuminated Arches
Perserverance Architects	Perseverance Architects, Taylor Whalley Spyra, Furness Green Partnership, Ares Landscape Architects, Creatmosphere	Silicon Towers
Pilbrow and Partners	Pilbrow & Partners, AKT II, Space Syntax, Motion Transportation, FutureCity	The Deck and Screen
Ruben Ramos Jimenez	Ruben Ramos, Lara Rooke, Ignacio Manrique, Maria Alonso, Xavier Tomassetti	Living the Leaves
shedkm	shedkm, Uniform, BCA Landscape	A New Old Street: Where Promenade Meets Playground
Spaced Out	Spaced Out, Kisset Co, Andie Scott	Sowing the Seed
Sustrans	Sustrans, Lumenpulse Group	Hello, World!

LEAD ARCHITECT	FULL TEAM	PROJECT TITLE
Thor Architects	Thor Architects	Old Street Landscape Gateway
Tonkin Liu	Tonkin Liu, Arup, SEAM, Integration	Old Street New Tree
Urben Limited	Urben Limited, Miriam+Tom, 18 Degrees, Momentum Transport	The Stage @ Silicon Roundabout
What if: projects	What if: projects	Old Street Arena
Zaha Hadid Architects	Zaha Hadid Architects	Hect Aire