



# Barbican Renewal

Design brief

barbican

# Foreword

## Reimagining the Barbican for a new generation

The Barbican arts centre opened in March 1982: it is about to turn forty. In those four decades the iconic brutalist building, situated at the heart of the City of London, has become a much-loved and internationally acclaimed multi-disciplinary venue for world-class art, music, theatre, dance, film, creative learning and work with communities. We have welcomed millions of visitors and thousands of artists, all of whom have come together in our spaces and places to share extraordinary experiences in a unique environment.

The Barbican project has been an enormous success, but there is still much to do, and many significant challenges lie ahead. The building has begun to show its age and its outstanding spaces need reimagining for a new generation and a new society.

There have been radical changes in arts practice across our forty years, and many changes too in the way civic buildings need to make themselves sustainable for the future. The ambitions of the Barbican to create a fully inclusive, welcoming environment are also developing, as it aims to become a sector-leading, 21st century arts centre that places our community at its heart.

The need for this project is both urgent and challenging. Among other key themes, we need to consider:

- do the Barbican's spaces welcome in all communities in a truly equitable and accessible way?
- are the building's outstanding venues fit for purpose in the changing world of the arts in the digital age?
- is its use of energy and resources sustainable for a carbon-neutral world?
- how can the original vision of the architects be reinterpreted while respecting the historic listed building?
- what is the Barbican's role in the public realm of the City of London's Culture Mile?
- how can the Barbican help drive the recovery of the arts from the pandemic?
- what should be the relationship of the Barbican to its neighbourhood, the wider City, London and the UK?

The City of London Corporation, as founder and principal funder of the Barbican, is seeking an innovative multi-disciplinary design partner of imagination and expertise to work with us to take forward this exciting project.

We seek submissions from practices working together: architects, engineers, sustainability and heritage consultants and others. We seek practices who can complement our thinking on equality, diversity and inclusion, on new artistic forms and formats, on adapting buildings, on sustainable practices and working methods, with experience of realising a creative vision within a strong framework of value for money.

This will be a complex and detailed project: we are not looking in this initial stage for a finished concept design. We are seeking a team with whom to collaborate. From your submissions, we will select a shortlist of around five teams, request them to develop their thinking, and then select a single creative team to work with us on the scoping, design and realisation of the project over the coming years.

### Tom Sleigh

Chair, Barbican Centre Board

# Vision

## A new vision for a global icon

The Barbican is one of London's most ambitious and unique architectural achievements; it is a global icon of brutalist architecture, renowned for its scale of ambition and consistency of design.

The Barbican's development was a visionary project, with architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon seizing the opportunity to propose a radical transformation of how we live. We're seeking a team that can work in a similarly bold and creative way to deliver an exemplar to the world of how a heritage building can be renewed.

There's a pressing need to make changes to the Barbican building so that it continues to meet the needs of 21st century artists, audiences and communities. We're looking for a team that can develop design solutions that will preserve and respect the complex's original architectural vision and heritage, while adapting it to respond to the creative opportunities and urgent challenges of today's world.

This renewal project will consider the Barbican building in its entirety. It will explore how we can adapt the Barbican's spaces and venues to improve the experience of audiences and visitors at every point of their journey, from the sense of welcome and belonging on arrival to major improvements to wayfinding and look and feel across the building.

It will address the critical need to make major improvements to the building's environmental performance, delivering sympathetic but effective adaptations that help us achieve our ambitious target of reducing carbon emissions from our own operations to net zero by 2027.

And the project will underpin our ambitions to embed equality, diversity and inclusion across our organisation, by ensuring all our spaces are safe, accessible and welcoming for everyone. We want to open the Barbican building up so many more people feel a sense of ownership and belonging in this unique urban environment. To help do this, we need a team that represents a wide range of lived experience, and that can work with us on a sustained programme of outreach and engagement to co-design spaces that meet the needs of local communities, underrepresented groups and those with specific access or other additional needs.

Alongside delivering architecturally sensitive improvements to our venues, there is a huge opportunity to bring currently underutilised spaces across the Centre to life. The Barbican contains many spaces that currently don't meet their full potential, and we believe with the right interventions, our car parks, Exhibition Halls and other public and outdoor spaces could be adapted to deliver so much more in support of our creative and commercial ambitions.

As the Barbican enters a period of significant change, we're looking for a team that can propose radical and original solutions to reimagine the possibilities of an arts and learning centre for a new generation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

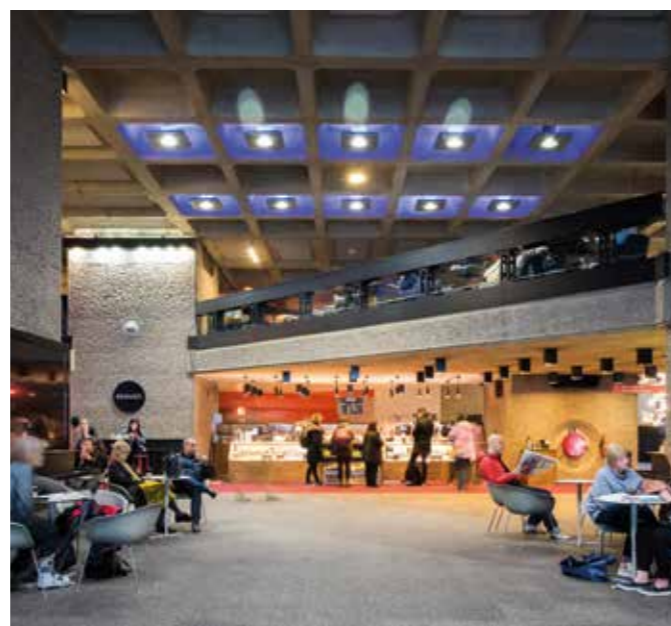


Photo © Max Colson



Photo © Max Colson

# The Barbican building and urban context

## A celebrated development at the heart of Culture Mile

A Grade II listed building, the Barbican is one of the world's most celebrated examples of Brutalist architecture. The Centre was designed by architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon as part of the Barbican Estate, a utopian vision to transform an area of London left devastated by bombing during the Second World War.

The Barbican Centre was opened by HM The Queen in 1982, who declared it 'one of the modern wonders of the world'. The Barbican's spectacular spaces and unique location have made it an internationally recognised venue, set within an urban landscape acknowledged as one of the most significant architectural achievements of the 20th century.

The arts centre building comprises:

- the Barbican Hall (1,943 seat concert hall)
- the Barbican Theatre (1,156 seat theatre)
- The Pit (164 seat studio theatre)
- Cinemas 1 (280 seat), 2 (153 seat) and 3 (153 seat)
- Barbican Art Gallery, and a second gallery The Curve
- public spaces
- a library
- the Lakeside Terrace
- a tropical glasshouse conservatory
- event and conference facilities, including the Barbican Exhibition Halls on Beech Street
- three restaurants
- car parks

The Barbican Renewal project forms part of the City of London Corporation's ambitious vision to ensure the Square Mile is the world's most innovative, inclusive and sustainable business district, as well as an attractive place to work, live, learn and visit. This includes ensuring a vibrant offer that engages workers, visitors, learners and residents; and delivering outstanding environments that support people and businesses with sustainable buildings, high quality streets and public spaces.

The Barbican is a key partner in the City of London Corporation's ambitious Culture Mile, a cultural district stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate. The five founding partners of Culture Mile, the City of London Corporation, Barbican, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and Museum of London are together with the local community creating a vibrant, creative area in the north-west corner of the Square Mile.

Culture Mile's work includes delivering major improvements to the public realm to embed creativity throughout the area, strengthening connections between communities and neighbours, through deepening collaboration between commerce and culture, and delivering learning programmes that develop the skills needed to support creativity and social mobility.

The Barbican sits at a key location on Culture Mile's culture 'spine', which connects the Barbican with the Museum of London's new home in West Smithfield, alongside new Elizabeth Line stations at Farringdon and Moorgate. Major plans are already underway to transform the public realm in this area of the City, including interventions to reduce emissions through the Beech Street corridor and improve ground level connections to develop a welcoming, creative and pedestrian focused identity.

The Barbican Renewal project forms part of this wider transformation of the area, with the project needing to reflect and respond to the developing identity, ambitions and connections of Culture Mile.



Photo © Max Colson

# About the Barbican

## An internationally renowned and locally-focused Centre for arts and learning



Photo © Lee Mawdsley

The Barbican is one of the world's leading arts and learning centres. Our programme pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts, while our creative learning programme underpins everything we do. Every year over a million people attend our events and we welcome hundreds of artists and performers from across the globe.

We believe in creating space for people and ideas to connect through our international arts and learning programme, community events and commercial activities. It's our responsibility to offer the widest possible access to culture, giving everyone the opportunity to encounter and enjoy creativity.

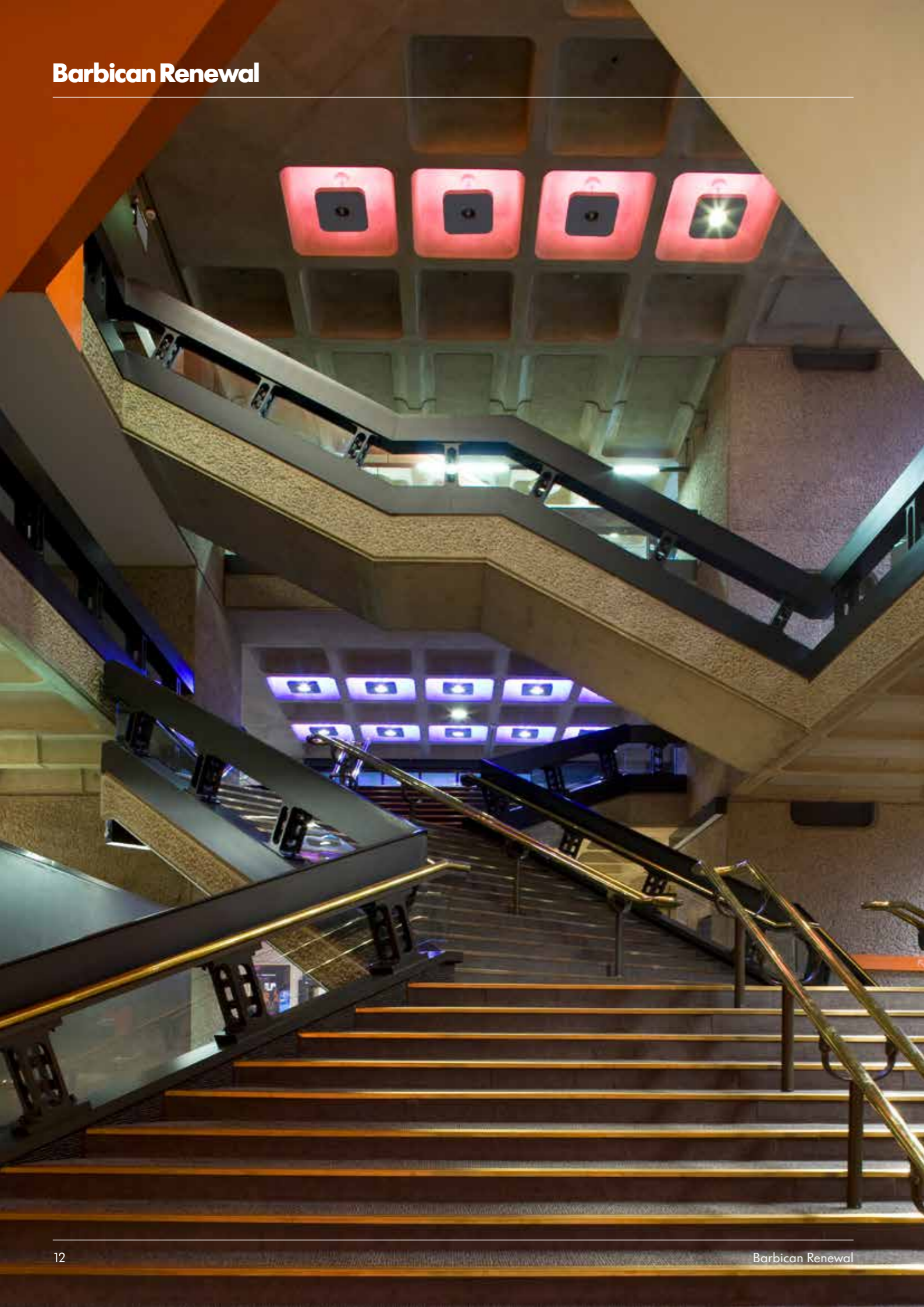
We want to be a place that invites fresh perspectives and provokes conversations. We're committed to identifying new talent, nurturing emerging artists and supporting innovative work that reflects and responds to today's world.

We're internationally renowned and locally-focused, presenting a bold year-round programme across our stages, screens and galleries, and seeking opportunities for collaboration with artists and local communities.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra; Associate Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra; Associate Ensembles the Academy of Ancient Music and Britten Sinfonia, Associate Producer Serious, and Artistic Partner Create. Our Artistic Associates include Boy Blue, Cheek by Jowl, Deborah Warner, Drum Works and Michael Clark Company. The Los Angeles Philharmonic are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the Australian Chamber Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble.

The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.





# Project aims and scope

## Creating a place for connection

The Barbican Renewal project will reimagine the Barbican as an international model of an open, connected and sustainable building.

Guided by ideas of inclusive design and the original utopian ideals on which it was created, the Barbican will be a place where bold international programming, work created by and with communities, and public discussion and debate, happily and visibly coexist. The renewal project will look at every aspect of the Barbican building as we look for a flexible design solution that protects and enhances this extraordinary building for future generations.

As we rebuild following the COVID-19 pandemic, this project will reimagine what a truly public space can be, delivering a building that is accessible and welcoming both to the people who use our foyers and public spaces and to those attending and participating in our wide range of cultural events.

Our building will become a place for connection, where people can come together, exchange ideas, forge communities and share experiences. Our venues will encourage innovation and collaboration, ensuring the Barbican remains at the forefront of creative development over the coming decades, enabled by commercial spaces that deliver outstanding experiences and support our business model.

The scope of the project will primarily focus on the core Barbican Centre building, though proposals and recommendations are also encouraged for additional areas where opportunities may exist to enhance connectivity and public experience, including the Barbican Exhibition Halls, the entrance to the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the wider public realm surrounding the Centre.

All changes to the building will be developed in consultation with relevant heritage experts and organisations.

Environmental sustainability is central to the project, with the ambition to make major improvements to the environmental performance of the building to meet the Barbican and City of London Corporation's target of reducing carbon emissions from our own operations to net zero by 2027.

The project will deliver a building that is fit for the next 40 years. It will enhance our position as one of the world's great arts and learning institutions, where excellence in programming, learning and community activity is enjoyed equally by all, and ensure our spaces and wider environment are attractive to visitors in an increasingly competitive marketplace.



Photo © Max Colson

The project will focus on:

**1. Openness, Connectivity and Accessibility**

Celebrating the Barbican’s architectural heritage while opening up and improving connectivity and accessibility throughout the building

This will include:

- Accessibility, equality and inclusion – delivering a leading example of inclusive design, the project will:
  - be underpinned by a sustained programme of outreach and engagement, co-designed and delivered with local communities, underrepresented groups with protected characteristics and those with specific access or other additional needs. This work will continue through the lifespan of the project and will be critical in ensuring design proposals support our developing strategies for access, equality and inclusion and maximise the project’s social sustainability and value
  - incorporate whole building improvements to ensure all public, backstage and venue spaces are safe, accessible and welcoming for everyone, and helping to increase representation across our artists, audiences and building users
  - make a positive contribution to equality, diversity and inclusion in the architecture and design sector. This includes ensuring diversity of experience and perspectives within the design team and measures to support rebalancing of representation within the architectural industry

- Further information about inclusive design approaches can be found in the Mayor of London’s Good Growth By Design Guidance and Supporting Diversity Handbook, Design Council’s Inclusive Environments Hub and Arts Council England’s Creative Case for Diversity.

- Visitor experience – design solutions that meet and exceed visitor expectations throughout the building. This will include major improvements to:
  - Silk Street and other building entrances to improve street level and highwalk level visibility, accessibility and sense of welcome and arrival
  - signage and wayfinding to help visitors feel confident, comfortable and relaxed when navigating the building
  - visitor flow and connections between spaces and venues, while maintaining and enhancing public spaces to deliver wellbeing benefits and provide opportunities for rest and pause
  - look and feel across the building through lighting, furniture, acoustics and other key design interventions that enhance overall quality of experience and consider how spaces can deliver increased wellbeing and accessibility benefits
  - upgrading of facilities such as toilets, improving our bar and restaurant offer and delivering changes that offer new opportunities for commercial income generation
- Connection to wider area – improving the connection between the Barbican and the wider urban environment in which it is situated. This will include improvements at street level to enhance visibility, as well as making wider recommendations about how to better link the Centre to the wider public realm including transport hubs and other key cultural, commercial and public buildings as part of the development of the City of London’s Culture Mile



Photo © Lee Mawdsley

**2. Flexibility and Future proofing**

Enhancing our world class venues and bringing underutilised spaces back to life

This will include:

- Space review - undertaking a full building review to define how we can adapt and reimagine spaces to contribute to our creative, commercial and emerging civic ambitions. This will include a focus on currently underutilised areas such as our car parks and Exhibition Halls, alongside outdoor, public, shared and back of house spaces to see how design interventions could deliver greater public benefit and support our organisational and commercial aims
- Creating flexible spaces – adapting and creating new spaces within the Barbican Centre building that can be used flexibly for a range of activities. This will include:
  - the creation of dedicated space for learning and community activity
  - space that supports commercial income generation
  - space that can be quickly and easily altered for a range of creative activity across different artforms (e.g. exhibitions, studio space, rehearsals, performance, residencies, artist development)
  - new proposals for back of house and office spaces that reflect future working trends and encourage a creative and collaborative organisational culture
- Enhancing our world-class venues – delivering architecturally sensitive improvements to our renowned venues. This will include modernising interior, front of house and backstage spaces to meet audience and artist expectations, alongside upgrading technical infrastructure and increasing flexibility of use to ensure our venues keep pace with evolving creative practice and the full range of innovative artistic work that we present
- Digital infrastructure – incorporating state of the art digital technology across the Barbican building to support our increasing digital and online offer and connect with a global audience. This will create socially inclusive opportunities to engage with the Barbican through live streaming, content creation, and opportunities for online and in person interactions with our programme and building

**3. Sustainability**

Making our building fit for the future

This will include:

- Carbon reduction and environmental impact – making major improvements to the environmental performance of the building to meet the Barbican and City of London Corporation’s target of reducing carbon emissions from our own operations to net zero by 2027 and to our wider supply chain by 2040. More information can be found in the City of London Corporation’s Climate Action Strategy. This reduction in carbon emissions will be delivered alongside wider environmental sustainability improvements across the Barbican building, with teams encouraged to propose measures to improve climate resilience, urban greening and energy reduction
- Upgrading our operational infrastructure – delivering a replacement and upgrade programme for major components of our core operational services to bring them up to 21st century standards. This will be informed by a detailed condition survey and will include upgrades to heating, cooling, electrical and plumbing systems, control equipment, lifts and escalators, and catering, front of house and backstage facilities
- Spaces to support income generation – supporting our long-term financial sustainability by creating, adapting and upgrading commercial spaces to improve visitor experience and generate income to support the Barbican’s future business model. This will include enhancing the quality and commercial potential of our restaurant and bar offer, the creation of high-quality event and retail spaces and interventions to maximise the potential of unique and underutilised spaces such as the Conservatory, car parks and Exhibition Halls

# Project funding and budget

**In February 2021, the Policy and Resources Committee of the City of London Corporation committed to a major renewal of the Barbican Centre as part of its commitment to embedding culture at the centre of the Square Mile's post-Covid recovery.**



Photo © Lee Mawdsley

The budget for the project is subject to approval by the City of London Corporation, and the successful design team will be asked to develop a range of options for the project that would be deliverable at different budget levels and in a phased way if needed.

For the purpose of the design team selection process, we're asking interested bidders to consider and propose a number of outline design options that would be deliverable within a construction budget range of £50m to £150m.

The commercial elements of tender submissions will be assessed against an indicative construction budget of £100m.



# Selection process

## Delivering an open and inclusive selection process

The City of London Corporation will be undertaking a two-stage procurement procedure to appoint the multi-disciplinary design partner for the project. This will be delivered in accordance with public sector procurement guidance. The selection process will incorporate:

### Stage 1

A Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) that includes technical weighted questions for a multi-disciplinary design partner. Once responses to this have been assessed, the five highest ranked bidders will be invited to tender. The selection criteria for this stage is based on relevant experience and project examples, ability to meet the brief and equality and inclusion.

Information about who has submitted a SSQ response will be treated confidentially and will not be shared publicly.

### Stage 2

An invitation to tender (ITT) will be issued to the shortlisted bidders, who will then submit their responses for evaluation, including their proposed multi-disciplinary design team.

The selection criteria for this stage is based on:

- Response to brief, including outline options for design solutions, how these could be delivered within the project budget, how proposals meet sustainability and inclusive design requirements, and approach to engaging stakeholders throughout design development
- Organisation, management and team, including proposed structure of multi-disciplinary design team
- Equality, diversity and inclusion, including how broad representation will be ensured the project team, proposed action to rebalance diversity within the design field, and interventions to support equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the life of the project
- Commercial

Bidders will also be assessed through a presentation and clarification interview by a panel including external industry experts.

An honorarium of £20,000 will be provided to each of the five shortlisted bidders.

A bidders information event with the Client will be held for the shortlisted bidders. This event will provide an opportunity for clarifications, in addition to site visits during the tendering stage.

Full procurement information, including the SSQ and ITT documentation, are available on the [capitalEsourcing](#) site. Bidders wishing to submit a SSQ should follow the instructions as set out in the contract notices on capitalEsourcing.

**To ensure we maximise social value through the procurement process, we actively encourage collaborative bids from design consortiums, particularly those that include emerging practices and widen representation within the project team. In addition, previous experience sections of the selection criteria are open to bidders who can demonstrate transferable skills that show their ability to meet the requirements of the brief.**

### Key dates

Deadline for Stage 1 Standard Selection Questionnaire submission: 21 October 2021

Invitations to tender issued: mid-November 2021

Bidders information event: late November (exact date tbc)

Deadline for Tender Submissions: December 2021

Interviews: January 2022

Design team appointed: February 2022

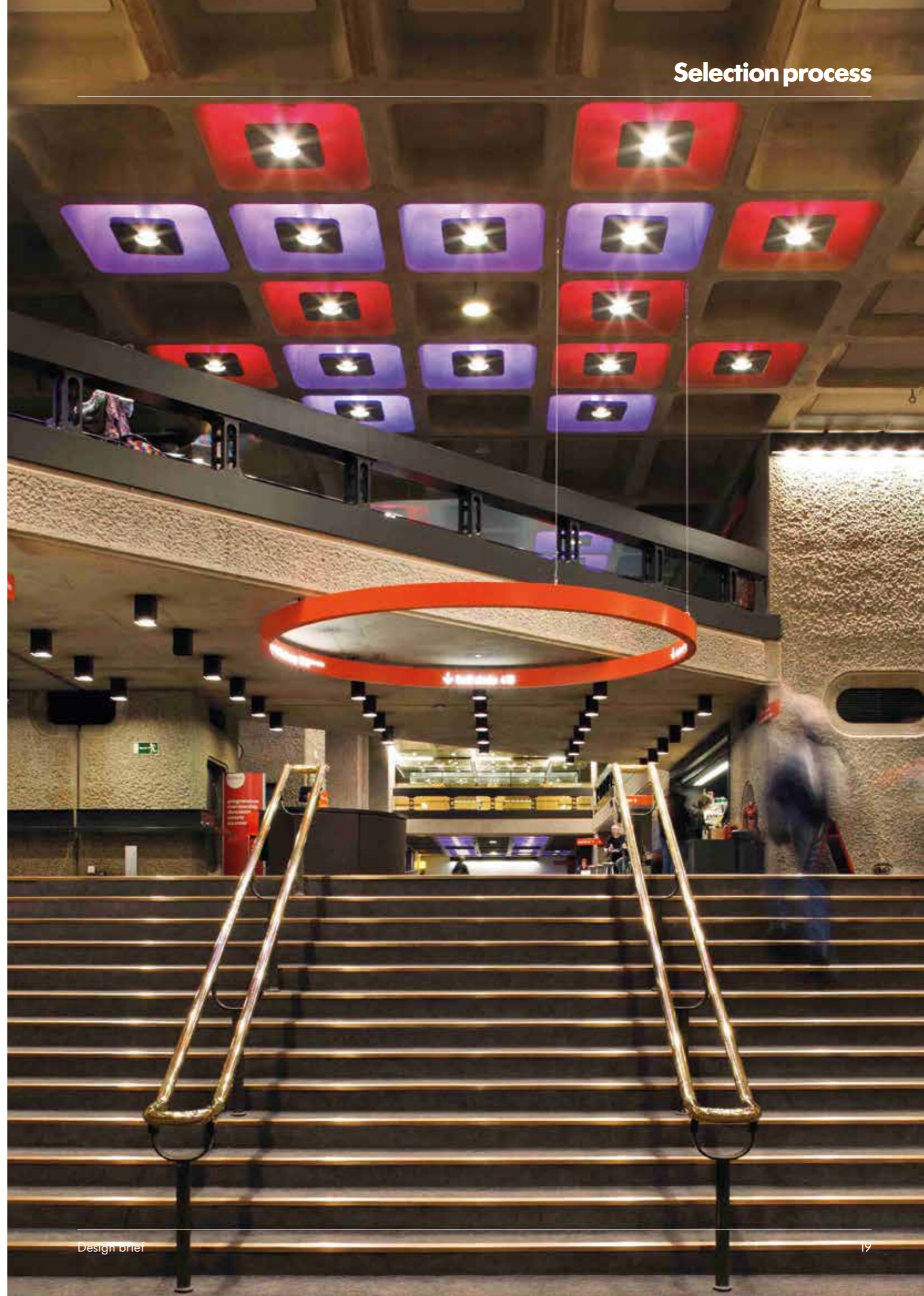


Photo courtesy of the Barbican Centre

