



Common Ground in Sacred Space

Brief for heritage content development and creative design and fit out at Newcastle Cathedral

1 Introduction

This is a second call for interpretation design services at Newcastle Cathedral. Heritage designers, thematic content developers and digital creatives are invited to respond to our revised brief to deliver a people focused, multi-sensory visitor experience at Newcastle Cathedral.

Since 2017, our Design Team has been working on capital development plans for the refurbishment and remodelling of Newcastle Cathedral's interior and exterior spaces. PLB Projects Ltd was appointed to lead on an Interpretation Plan with developed designs to support our Round 2 HLF grant application, *Common Ground in Sacred Space* (a £5.9m proposal for capital works and activities). Further to an award of £4.2m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund in March this year, the Dean and Chapter now seek to build on PLB's initial proposal by appointing a heritage interpretation company or a consortium **with a distinct creative approach to heritage content development and sensory engagement** to lead on:

- a) creative content development and design and fit out in the Nave (see 4.1 below)
- b) creative content and design of exterior interpretation to be executed as elements of the re-landscaping works (see 4.2 below).

The appointed contractor(s) will take the existing RIBA Stage 3 Interpretation Plan as a starting point for the rapid review, refinement and refreshing of the concepts prior to progressing detailed design and fit out. The Interpretation Plan outlines the Cathedral's long and fascinating history and heritage assets, the project's anticipated outcomes, the Client's design parameters and possible story lines.

We wish to develop an accessible, flexible and engaging interpretive scheme **which places the distinctiveness of Newcastle's remarkable people memorialised in the**

Cathedral's ledger stones at its heart. The role includes working with the wider Design Team on the interface required to deliver coordinated capital works.

2 Background

Newcastle Cathedral is Grade I listed and dates back to the early 12th Century. Over its 900 years it has been at the centre of the civic life of the city as evidenced by the memorials and tombs which fill it and together reveal much of the heritage story of Newcastle and the wider region.

Our Vision is to bring 900 years of history into the 21st century by reviving the medieval role of our unique building as a distinct space for worship, civic events and activities. The transformed Cathedral will be a dynamic hub engaged with the community and business as well as a special place of prayer and spiritual discovery.

In order to achieve this vision, we have developed the *Common Ground in Sacred Space* (CGISS) project and propose to make this vision a reality through focusing on the redevelopment of both the internal and external cathedral spaces and revitalising our staff and volunteer team to create broader and deeper engagement with audiences/communities (both current and potential).

The overarching aims for this project are:

1. The opening up of the nave to create a stunning open and flexible space for modern worship and community events amid a historic backdrop
2. The preservation (by relocation within the Cathedral), **interpretation and display of the unparalleled collection of historic ledger stones in order to reveal their stories**
3. To provide a radical welcome to an increased number of visitors and communities through an enhanced and empowered volunteer programme, and the creation of new visitor facilities in the Cathedral Hall complex
4. **To reveal the history of the Cathedral and its role in the City through the centuries via new, engaging interpretation and activities**
5. **A complete refresh of the churchyards to create engaging spaces** for relaxation, performance and activities
6. Provision of a programme of activities and **events which will involve all ages in journeys of learning and discovery**
7. To stabilise and enhance the Cathedral's fabric through the replacement of the current ineffective and obsolete heating system in the Nave and the relaying of the floor in that area
8. To develop partnerships to drive up awareness of, and engagement with, the heritage of the City of Newcastle and its wider environs, not least linked to the **stories contained within the Cathedral itself**

9. To develop a sustainable business plan for the operation of the Cathedral, based on an organisational step change to focus on resilience and management of risk

3 Audiences

The interpretation will be aimed at the following visitors:

- Families and local residents (with related schools' programme)
- Domestic and international tourists

with special attention to the interests of heritage and spiritual seekers.

Extensive audience research by PLB, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and Bowles Green is available for consultation.

4 Interpretation Brief

- 4.1 In close liaison with the Client and with the Design Team (including Cathedral Architect and Cathedral Archaeologist) we are seeking a full detailed design and build service for:

- The Cathedral east entrance welcome area
- The Cathedral Nave

The appointed company will undertake a rapid review of the Stage 3 interpretive content and approach. **We are looking for creative and artistic approaches to engage visitors in a multi-sensory and unique experience.** A number of volunteer expert historians are available to inform the narrative of the stories we may tell but the appointed company will have strong skills in creative content development and will lead on themes and ensuing narrative.

The review will be followed by full design and fit out of the interior spaces. This second phase will see the current cost plan revisited to provide high quality, robust design output which engages all our visitors.

The interpretation must be light touch and flexible, mobile and adaptable. It will need to respond to the Cathedral's sacred setting where there are frequent large acts of worship which include music, commemorative and national events.

- 4.2 We also seek detailed design services for **churchyard interpretation** in close liaison with the Client and with the Design Team, especially Landscape Architect HarrisonStevens who will deliver the interpretation as part of their contract, manifested for example in the paving and street furniture. This external interpretation will show the Cathedral 'inside out', linking themes and design motifs from the interior with an encircling churchyard 'ribbon'. The Landscape Architect's Stage 3 report details the design approach to be taken and this is being further developed currently at RIBA Stage 4; the Interpretation

contractor(s) will provide the creative content including artwork, narrative text and images.

- 4.3 The interpretation will allow our wide range of visitors to engage fully with the Cathedral's heritage through layered interpretation suited to a number of learning styles.
- 4.4 The interpretation should address issues in our Access Audit and respond to recommendations made by our Access Consultant and also gathered through consultation with visitors who have additional needs.
- 4.5 The contract will require consideration for surfaces/finishes, and a range of engaging interpretative media to include digital/non digital media and appropriate robust interactives which engage a number of senses.
- 4.6 The appointed company will provide both detailed visuals of the interpretation and also digital specifications to assist the Client in understanding the scheme.
- 4.7 Fully coordinated construction drawings in association with other members of the Design Team will be required to inform first and second fix M&E.
- 4.8 The appointed company will research information sources to develop the story line and should allow, as appropriate, for picture research and reproduction fees, story boarding and interpretive scripting, illustrations, graphics, and digital media which could also be applied to subsequent retail merchandise, educational resources (trail, guidebook) and Cathedral digital platforms.
- 4.9 Due regard should be taken of the Cathedral Fabric Commission England's note regarding PLB's Stage 3 report: "We continue to feel that the interpretation stations should be made as inconspicuous as possible, consistent with their function". Note that this view should be balanced with The National Lottery Heritage Fund's expectation for interpretation which engages a wide range of visitors and also with the Client's desire for contemporary design with 'wow' factor which 'gives people a reason to visit'.
- 4.10 Due regard should be taken of the Cathedral Fabric Commission England's instruction: "The design of the interpretation units should relate to the wider proposals for the interior...The final designs for the interpretation should be informed by the design of liturgical elements [newly designed liturgical furniture, ambo and altar]....Sufficient time should therefore be allowed to develop a consistent set of designs, with the involvement of the Cathedral Architect".
- 4.11 The appointed company must consider sustainability during the design, specification and procurement stages.

- 4.12 The appointed company will work with the client to minimise management and maintenance issues and running costs by ensuring robust design and product and by forecasting a costed maintenance/replacement schedule for components used in fit out.
- 4.13 The appointed company will provide a detailed programme for the design and fit out. There is a requirement for full coordination with the Project Manager and Design Team Lead to ensure a smooth interface with the capital works (Nave works scheduled for completion at the end of December 2020 and interpretation to be completed by end of February 2021).
- 4.14 The appointed company will act as contract administrator for the interpretation and be responsible for the appointment of any sub-contractor used to undertake specialist work or fit out.
- 4.15 The interpretation will need to work hand in hand with wayfinding for the Cathedral and grounds and with the Cathedral brand. It will also relate to the retail and hospitality point and with the Cathedral's audio-visual system and so the appointed company will liaise with appointed wayfinding, retail, AV and data consultants, as required.

5 Outputs

Phase One: Content creation

Phase Two: Design and fit out

- 5.1 The appointed company will provide a rapid review of creative content to include:
- Understanding and mapping (locating) stories and thematic content 'on the ground'.
 - Ensuring the development of people / character stories and a direct personal storytelling approach to produce effective engagement
 - Agreeing the layering of content across the finally selected media.
 - Agreeing the selection of stories and thematic content – prioritising image / audio / digital / stories and themes
 - The design of flexible light-touch, sensory interventions, capable of being adapted and added to over time.
 - Production of revised / refined schematic diagrams, as required
 - Production of new moodboards and visual references
 - Updated / revised spec for story units / focal points
 - Revised graphic approach and samples

- Updated and revised cost plan – with media options where relevant to enable client input and selection
- Updated and revised programme for detailed design spec, content development, design production and installation on site

This process will ensure a smooth transition to:

5.2 RIBA Stage 4 detailed design including selection, research and development of detailed stories and supporting imagery, graphic design, image research and procurement, illustration / photography / film / sound procurement where applicable, all content development (including digital) and detailed design and specification.

RIBA Stage 5 (copywriting, image acquisition, testing, build / create product / media and content)

RIBA Stage 6 (installation and handover with prepared operational / maintenance manuals, supplier list etc.)

5.3 In achieving the above, the appointed company will work with the Design Team making recommendations for lighting specifics and M&E interface inside the Cathedral.

5.4 The company will test story content and creative ideas with stakeholders using mood boards/other visuals to explain and promote the scheme.

5.5 The appointed company will work with the Design Team to provide narrative, detailed design drawings/art work, text, graphics etc. for the small landscape interpretation scheme to be integrated in HarrisonStevens' landscape design (RIBA Stage 4-5) and works package.

6 Company skills/experience

6.1 The selected company must be able to demonstrate the appropriate skills, attitude and experience to deliver the creative content and design and installation, including:

- relevant design/interpretation experience in the heritage/cultural sector
- a broad understanding of heritage management and the informed conservation/ interpretation process
- a broad understanding of heritage interpretation and an appreciation of the Cathedral's liturgical setting
- a flair for creative/artistic content development and multi-sensory engagement
- tried and tested experience of designing and delivering successful creative interventions in large historic buildings
- a positive attitude to problem solving
- the ability and enthusiasm to engage with stakeholders and consultees in a constructive and supportive manner

- the ability to present complex and specialised information in a simple and informative way to the client team
- a clear process for internal and external communications
- a clear project management structure including defined roles and responsibilities and sufficient capacity to deliver the programme according to identified milestones

7 Timescale

Key milestones are:

August 2019	Interpretation company/consortium appointed
Sept - Oct	Start up meeting, rapid design review and content development
Nov 2019 – Spring 2020	RIBA Stage 4 Detailed design, Locating stories, Graphic design, Content and methods of delivery, Narratives
Spring – Summer 2020	RIBA Stage 5 Copywriting, Image Acquisition, Test,
Jan – Feb 2021	Build, Install, Handover
Easter 2021	Cathedral re-launches

Capital Works

Sept 2019	Tender issued
Nov 2019	Main contractor appointed
Jan – December 2020	Capital works

Tenderers should note that the Stage 3 Interpretation Plan has informed RIBA Stage 4 M&E and landscaping design development and the main contract tender package. Some provisional sums may be allowed for interface works arising from the interpretation but tenderers will be asked to work within the M&E and landscaping design parameters already specified where possible.

8 Project Management & Communication

- 8.1 The selected company will need to liaise with the Cathedral capital development's Project Manager, Lindy Gilliland, with client users and the Design Team.
- 8.2 The work will include contact with a range of internal and external stakeholders including the Project Delivery Board, The Fabric Advisory Committee and consultees.

- 8.3 The selected company will be fully briefed by the Client team on work to date, conservation issues arising from the Conservation Management Plan, interpretive vision and historical sources for developing creative content.
- 8.4 Informal enquiries about the contract and tender process can be made to Lindy Gilliland (Project Manager) or Alice Massey (Project Support Officer). Tel: 0191 232 1939 or email cgiss@stnicholascathedral.co.uk for any supporting documentation.
- 8.5 The Cathedral's audience research, Stage 3 Interpretation Plan and RIBA Stage 3 reports as well as the Cathedral's Visitor Engagement Strategy are available for consultation by companies interested in tendering.

9 Publication, Copyright and Acknowledgement

The selected company will give Newcastle Cathedral the copyright for the interpretation design and build scheme. Newcastle Cathedral and the appointed company will have equal publishing rights.

The interpretation scheme should duly acknowledge The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

10 Budget

A project budget of no more than £193,500 is available for this piece of work, to include, fees, inflation and contingency. This budget does not include wall and floor finishes or landscaping components as these elements are itemised as additional sums in the main contract.

11 Bidding Requirements, Process and Award Criteria

Companies interested in the project should submit the following by **5pm on Monday 19 August 2019**:

1. An outline of the proposed approach.
2. Track record of the bidder delivering similar or related work.
3. Outline of proposed key milestones for the project.
4. Details of the key personnel to be involved (including c.v.s and information about any personnel to be subcontracted to fulfil the requirements of the brief).
5. A resource schedule.
6. Costs to be charged (excluding VAT) and day rates of all personnel involved. Additional charges, e.g. travel and subsistence, should be itemised.

7. The tender price should indicate the split between design and management services and the production and installation of the physical works, also detailing what works are included under each heading.

The afternoon of Wednesday 28 August 2019 has been selected for the Client to meet with tenderers to discuss applications which fit the assessment criteria most closely.

The procurement process will be compliant with The National Lottery Heritage Fund's and Newcastle Cathedral's procurement procedure requirements. The Cathedral will award this contract according to the following criteria:

- Price & value for money (30%)
- Methodology and quality of proposal (including creativity, design flare, programme, approach, resourcing, etc.) (35%)
- Experience (25%)
- Compliance with contract requirements (10%)

Proposals will only be considered if they are sent by email, marked "Tender: Heritage Creative Design and Fit Out", to the Project Manager, Lindy Gilliland, no later than 5pm **on Monday 19 August 2019**.

Email: cgiss@stnicholascathedral.co.uk

12 Payment

Payment stages will be agreed to coincide with design completion and then after installation and acceptance of the works in 2021.

Common Ground in Sacred Space is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.