



Welcome!

Welcome to the first Community Newsletter about our plans for MSG Sphere – a state-of-the-art music and entertainment venue that would not only bring the world's biggest acts to Stratford, but would also create significant benefits for the local community.

We are excited to announce that The Madison Square Garden Company (MSG) has submitted a planning application for MSG Sphere, now validated by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), and available to view on the authority's planning portal [here](#) via the reference number **19/00097/FUL**. The LLDC will now conduct a consultation in line with its normal process.

In this first edition of our Community Newsletter we want to share the latest information on the project, the feedback we have received, and how we are responding to questions raised. Also included is information about our pop-up event at Westfield Stratford City shopping centre.

Pop-up information event Westfield, Stratford

We are hosting a pop-up stand at Westfield Stratford City shopping centre to share the latest information about the project and answer questions from members of the community. This will take place over four days between Wednesday 27 and Saturday 30 March. For more information, visit www.msglondonconsultation.com. We hope to see you there.

Of those who responded to our plans:



86% said they supported a new music and entertainment venue coming to Stratford;



93% supported the creation of new jobs and opportunities for local people;



91% supported the creation of new pedestrian bridges and walkways for public use; and



87% welcomed new cafés and restaurants.

Engagement to date

To date, we've engaged with more than 3,000 people through our two in-person consultations and our dedicated website to better understand priorities and questions. We have also met separately with many more local community groups and residents over the past year to discuss our evolving plans.

Truly making a difference

Over the past 12 months we have been working with the Newham community on a number of initiatives (you can see the highlights on page 4) and we are committed to doing more as part of our ongoing plans. We want to invest in the area and continue to work with local organisations to develop a long-term Community Investment Programme, with the goal of making a genuine difference. We would love to hear from you about how we can best do this.



Public exhibition truck in Stratford – July 2018.

MSG and the Community

Our vision is to create a thriving destination that would revolutionise live entertainment, bringing unforgettable music and entertainment moments for fans, as well as providing jobs, new gathering places, improved transport routes and other benefits for the local community. If our plans are approved, MSG Sphere would be a long-term investment in the future of Stratford and London. MSG is not using any public funding for MSG Sphere.

We want to be a long-term partner in the Borough of Newham and deliver benefits and investment for local communities.

Supporting thousands of jobs

MSG is committed to recruiting locally and working with Newham Workplace and other employment teams within the LLDC boroughs to provide skills and training opportunities to local people. This includes a £2.1m contribution to Newham Council towards employment and training initiatives to reduce worklessness. MSG asked two leading companies – Volterra and Ernst and Young – to conduct comprehensive economic impact analyses. Volterra estimates that the project would support up to 1,000 direct construction jobs on site per year over the three-year project and up to 1,200 direct ongoing jobs once the venue opens. Because MSG Sphere would be a premier destination, attracting people from other parts of the UK and around the world, Ernst & Young projects the new venue will have a larger effect from direct, indirect and induced impact, with the support of up to 4,300 jobs annually during the construction phase and up to 3,200 jobs every year once the venue is open.

We want to make sure that jobs go to local people, where possible, so we've made the following commitments:

- Working with Newham and the LLDC to set specific targets for how many construction and operational jobs will be filled by residents of the London Borough of Newham – the target we have committed to as part of our plans is that 35% of all construction jobs and 35% of all operational jobs will be filled by Newham residents;
- Engaging not only with Newham, but other boroughs as well – Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest – so many jobs go to qualified local residents, which is compliant with MSG's worldwide policy;
- Employing a dedicated MSG team to work actively with local recruitment and business schemes to identify residents for short- and long-term employment opportunities.

Paying the London Living Wage

We want to be an employer of choice in Newham and all full-time and part-time staff directly employed by MSG will be paid at least the London Living Wage.

Investing in local roads, highways, and bridges

MSG would make significant investments to transform an inaccessible site into a central destination that brings the eastern and western sides of Stratford together through infrastructure, road and highway works. These substantial improvements would create a better environment for pedestrians, cyclists and any visitors to our venue, and include:

- Three new pedestrian bridges – two from Montfichet Road and one from the Town Centre Link – that will improve connectivity between Stratford Town Centre and the Olympic Park;
- An improved pedestrian-friendly junction at Angel Lane; and
- Enhancements to Montfichet Road, including reducing the number of traffic lanes, widening the footways and creating a dedicated cycleway.

A boost to local businesses

Also projected by Ernst & Young is that, once open, MSG Sphere would generate £2.7bn in positive UK economic impact (GVA) over a 20-year period – £2.5bn of that in London. This includes more than £50m in revenue every year for local businesses in Newham.

A venue for the community

MSG's plans for MSG Sphere include a smaller venue, which would hold up to 1,500 people. Part of our commitment to the community is to make this smaller venue available to local communities rent-free for a minimum of ten days every year. We will also contribute up to £5,000 per event towards venue operating costs.

A world-class venue

Featuring an iconic spherical shape, the main venue would have a scalable capacity of up to 17,500 seated, or 21,500 where there is a mix of seated and standing.

Inside, the venue would utilise cutting-edge technologies to create immersive experiences that completely transport audiences, including:

- The largest and highest resolution LED screen in the world;
- An adaptive acoustics system that delivers crystal-clear audio to every guest;
- Wireless connectivity that delivers 25 megabits per second, allowing greater interaction among guests and more immersive entertainment experiences.

There will be a wide variety of content – providing something for everyone – including concerts, immersive experiences, family shows, corporate events, award shows, product launches and select sporting events.

The outside of the venue would be wrapped in triangular LED panels which, when active, will display a range of static and moving images showcasing content linked to the artist or production inside, information on future events, and from marketing partners. In addition to the main venue, there would be a smaller music club/nightclub, retail space, a café, restaurants, and attractively landscaped publicly-accessible outdoor spaces, including an urban square, park space, nature play space for children, seating areas and an outdoor gym.

Responding to questions raised during consultation

We had a very positive response to our two rounds of community consultation last year. We have set out some of the key questions posed and our response to those topics in the adjacent column.



Artist's impression of proposed venue.

Stratford station

Some residents were concerned about the potential impact on Stratford station. We want MSG Sphere to be a venue that guests can get to and from quickly and easily without disturbing the surrounding neighbourhood. A detailed transport assessment has been conducted that tested different scenarios at peak transit times and also when there are events at the London Stadium. Our plan includes primarily scheduling events to run at different times to peak rush hours. And when MSG Sphere events coincide with other events at London Stadium or Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, or with peak shopping periods at Westfield Stratford City, we will work with our partners on a combined events plan and crowd management strategy. We will also be making a significant contribution to improvements at Stratford station that would enhance the experience of all station users.

Maryland station

Some residents were concerned about the impact on Maryland station. Detailed modelling of people movements showed that Maryland station is unlikely to see significant demand from the majority of MSG Sphere visitors as it is not as practical or convenient as Stratford station. Furthermore, Maryland station is also already undergoing improvements as part of the introduction of Crossrail.

External illumination

MSG Sphere has been designed with a fully-programmable exterior that gives us complete control over the light that is emitted. The external surface of MSG Sphere and other light emitting displays will be controlled with set operating hours and luminance levels to ensure we prevent significantly impacting neighbouring buildings.

Noise

MSG Sphere has been carefully designed to limit the impact of sound entering and exiting the venue. The MSG Sphere site is surrounded on all sides by active railway lines, so designing a venue that would prevent sound from entering was a key part of developing our plans. Our design complies with all existing regulations and put simply, we do not want sound travelling out of the venue and impacting our neighbours, just as we do not want noise from a passing train to ruin a performance.

We also understand there may be some concerns from our neighbours about noise caused by crowds travelling to and from an event. To address this, we are developing a comprehensive operating plan for crowd management that ensures visitors to MSG Sphere get to and from local transport as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible, causing minimal disturbance to local residents.

Community initiatives

MSG is committed to becoming a key long-term partner in Newham and East London, and creating a destination that will deliver important benefits for the local community.

Here are some examples of the community programmes we have worked on with local schools and other groups, and look forward to continuing if our plans are approved.



Participants of the MSG Next Generation tour in November 2018.



Newham students taking part in the New York Knicks basketball clinic.

MSG Up & Coming

Up and coming artists and the grassroots venues they play in are essential to London's thriving music scene, and MSG launched a programme to support them in August 2018. Each month, a Spotify playlist of London artists is curated by the MSG Team. Artists and their gigs are promoted by MSG on social media, and many gigs have sold out as a result. One artist is selected by an industry expert and named 'MSG Up & Coming Artist of the Month'. The artist then receives an award and further promotion.

MSG Next Generation

MSG Next Generation is a programme designed to inspire young people to explore career opportunities in the live events and entertainment industries. As part of the launch in November 2018, we worked with leading music industry professionals to tour seven Newham schools and colleges, delivering career sessions to over 300 14-18 year olds.

We would like to build on the MSG Next Generation tour by creating an ongoing educational programme that would help young people develop the skills MSG Sphere will need to employ. We aim to deliver on this initiative in conjunction with local schools and universities and are currently finalising our plans.

New York Knicks in London

The MSG-owned New York Knicks played in the 2019 NBA London Game in January, and we hosted several special events for the local community, including:

- A basketball clinic with the New York Knicks for 60 children from three Newham Schools – Brampton Manor Academy, Rokeby School and St. Bonaventure's – where students that participate in the Jr. NBA Basketball England League got a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to practice their shooting, passing and dribbling skills directly with the pros.
- An MSG Next Generation panel at Lister Community School, where staff members from the Knicks and MSG shared insights into the exciting opportunities that come with careers in the sports and entertainment industries.
- A coaching session with Knicks legend John Starks at the Sarah Bonnell School in Newham with Newham All Star Sports Academy's CABNAB ("Carry a Basketball Not a Blade"), a local organisation that motivates and mentors students through basketball. At the event, Starks spoke on the importance of teamwork during his illustrious career, and also provided hands-on basketball tips.
- A night of basketball, as 18 Newham schools and our Community Heroes winners, as well as representatives from many local businesses and community organisations, were our guests at the 2019 NBA London Game to cheer on the Knicks.

Newham Community Heroes

- MSG partnered with the Newham Recorder to launch the Newham Community Heroes Awards, seeking nominations of people in Newham who have made an outstanding contribution to the Borough. More than 115 nominations were judged by MSG and the Newham Recorder, and five inspiring residents were named Newham's Community Heroes. Each winner was featured in the Newham Recorder and on MSG's social media, and won a pair of tickets to see MSG's New York Knicks basketball team when they played in the 2019 NBA London Game in January.

Get in touch

If you would like to hear more about MSG Sphere, our plans in London, and our Community Involvement Plan, please don't hesitate to contact the project team on:



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