LAUNCH OF THE CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL LANDSCAPE DESIGN COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Design teams invited to rethink how visitors and pilgrims approach the Cathedral

Canterbury Cathedral is delighted to announce a design competition to find an outstanding team to revitalise the landscape immediately in front of the main Cathedral entrance.

The competition is an opportunity for designers to reconsider the way visitors first encounter England's leading Cathedral and Mother Church.

Part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Cathedral's Precincts were last remodelled in the 1940's. The Cathedral is looking for a creative team who combine sensitivity to the classic and historic qualities of the space with an ability to meet modern expectations.

Brigadier John Meardon, Receiver General of Canterbury Cathedral said,

'More than a million visitors enter the Precincts every year and the setting of the Cathedral is their first contact with this numinous and astonishingly beautiful building. The welcome we offer them should show us at our best. We are grateful to Peter Baldwin and Lisbet Rausing for generously funding this competition, which is one strand of our programme to conserve and share this building with a wider audience.'

Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is managing the competition on behalf of the Cathedral and further details of the project and how to register for the competition are available on the dedicated competition microsite:

http://competitions.malcolmreading.co.uk/canterburycathedral

Malcolm Reading, Chairman of MRC and organiser behind recent design competitions for the V&A, the Cadogan Estate and the Olympic Park Legacy Company, commented:

'It's an unusual challenge for a team, mixing landscape and place-making with a respect for a setting with the highest heritage protection. This is a space that needs to be welcoming, offer sanctuary and also opportunities for celebration. We are hoping for collaborations that balance a rich mix of different skills with sensitivity to the needs of visitors, pilgrims and the church community.'

A creative exploration of the project is strongly encouraged along with interesting multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Competitors have until July 17, 2013 to enter the first stage of the competition. All entrants must follow the registration procedure as explained on the competition website.

From the responses a shortlist of five (the competition's second stage) will be chosen to work up concept propositions (for which an honorarium will be paid to the unsuccessful teams).

The shortlist will be announced in the late Summer and the winning team announced in the Autumn.

For competition press enquiries, please phone Catherine Homsey, in the first instance, on 0207 831 2998 or contact by email at canterburycathedral@malcolmreading.co.uk

For press enquiries relating to Canterbury Cathedral, please contact Chris Robinson, Estates Surveyor and Public Relations Officer by phone on 01227 862740 or by email at Press.Office@canterbury-cathedral.org

AVAILABLE IMAGES

Resolution: 300 dpi
Size: 3.1mb (30cm by 20cm)
Caption: Site Plan

For images: please email Oliver McGhie at ollie.mcghie@malcolmreading.co.uk

Resolution: 300 dpi
Size: 4.7mb (30cm by 20cm)
Caption: SW Wide View of Canterbury Cathedral

Resolution: 300 dpi
Size: 6.2mb (20cm by 30cm)
Caption: SW Porch of Canterbury Cathedral

Resolution: 300 dpi
Size: 6.6mb (30cm by 30cm)
Caption: Ariel View of Precincts

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The site is within the Precincts, adjacent to the West Front and Christ Church Gate. The Grade I listed Cathedral is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- The extent of the site affected and budget for the eventual works will be defined in part by the winning team, and is expected to amount to roughly £1 million.

- Canterbury Cathedral is England's first Cathedral and Mother Church of the Anglican Communion. Created for worship, learning and discovery, it was founded by St Augustine, the first Archbishop, in 579 AD. St Augustine's original building lies beneath the floor of the nave– it was extensively rebuilt and enlarged by the Saxons, and the Cathedral was rebuilt completely by the Normans in 1070 following a major fire. There have been many additions to the building over the last nine hundred years, but parts of the quire and some of the windows and their stained glass date from the 12th century. The Cathedral was run by as a monastery by Benedictine monks from the 10th century to 1540, when the monastery was closed on the orders of King Henry VIII. Responsibility for the services and upkeep of the building was then passed to the Dean and Chapter. During the Civil War of the 1640s, the Cathedral suffered damage at the hands of the Puritans; much of the medieval stained glass was smashed and horses were stabled in the nave. After the Restoration in 1660, the building was repaired. In the early 19th Century, the North West tower was found to be dangerous and it was demolished in the early 1830s and replaced by a copy of the South West tower, giving a symmetrical appearance to the west end of the Cathedral. In the course of the Second World War, the Precincts were heavily damaged by bombing and the Cathedral's Library was destroyed. Today, the Cathedral stands as a place where prayer to God has been offered daily for over 1,400 years. The Cathedral currently welcomes over a million visitors a year. In March 2013, it was the setting for the enthronement of the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury, and head of the Church of England, the Most Reverend Justin Welby.

  For more information please see **www.canterbury-cathedral.org**

- Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic architectural consultancy, which specialises in heritage master-planning and the selection of contemporary designers. Highly experienced in both these areas, we are enthusiastic advocates of the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration – whether at the local level, or internationally. MRC has advised on some of the leading heritage projects in the UK, notably Westminster Abbey, the National Maritime Museum and St Martin-in-the-Fields, the latter winning the European Union's prestigious Europa Nostra award.

  We also offer a service to find the very best designers for clients with new building projects, whether through open-international, or private-invited competitions. Recent work in this area includes competitions for the Cadogan Estate, the Olympic Park Legacy Company, the Aberdeen City Garden project, the Victoria and Albert Museum's Exhibition Road project, the UK Pavilion for Shanghai Expo 2010 and the Glasgow School of Art.

  www.malcolmreading.co.uk