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Grafton sees off star names to land £100m LSE prize

21 April 2016 | By David Rogers

Beaten firms include Levette, Herzog & de Meuron and Chipperfield

Grafton Architects has scored a major coup after beating a raft of top names to a £100m scheme for the London School of Economics.

The Dublin-based practice beat Herzog & de Meuron, Amanda Levette's ALA and David Chipperfield for the work at 44 Lincoln's Inn Fields in central London which will be known as the Paul Marshall Building – named after a hedge fund manager who is worth an estimated £300 million.

Others to miss out were Diller Scofidio & Renfro which had bid with Penoyre & Prasad and Niall McLaughlin which had teamed up with Scott Brownrigg.

The win marks Grafton's second UK project after a £55 million project for Kingston University in south-west London was given planning last summer at the second attempt.

The LSE's director of estates Julian Robinson said: "We believe Grafton's design has the potential to provide LSE with a distinctive and seminal piece of university architecture, which expresses the values and aspirations of the School. Combining modernity and tradition we felt it would enhance Lincoln's inn Fields and connect well with the rest of LSE. It's an inspiring design."

In a statement, Grafton, known in the competition as Team D, said: "We are absolutely delighted to be given this opportunity to build in this unique location in Lincoln's Inn Fields, across from the wonderful Sir John Soane's Museum, for a visionary client such as LSE."

It is the LSE's third international design competition as part of its estate improvements programme which has seen another Irish firm, O'Donnell & Tuomey, complete the award-winning Saw Swee Hock Student Centre while work on Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners' Global Centre for Social Sciences building is currently on site at its Aldwych campus.

As well as Robinson, the jury included RIBA president Jane Duncan and president of the LSE Craig Calhoun.

^eThe competition attracted nearly 90 expressions of interest and Robinson admitted choosing a shortlist was "the hardest one yet".

Marshall recently gave £30 million – the university's largest private donation – for the creation of the Marshall Institute for Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship.

The LSE bought the eight-storey building in 2013 from Cancer Research UK. Its replacement will house the academic departments of accounting, finance and management and research centres, including the Marshall Institute. It will also contain teaching, sports and arts facilities.



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[Keith Roberts](#) | 21 April 2016 12:29 pm

Sir John Soane would be delighted too!

Keith Roberts.



[SituatAnist](#) | 21 April 2016 11:21 pm

Thank goodness Scott Brownrigg were knocked out. They are not a design house as their total fail on Istanbul Grand Airport shows, Hopefully the terminal will be passed to Aecom with a significant designer of record..

Scott Brownrigg were once a good name but now.....



[Austin Clegg](#) | 22 April 2016 8:53 am

@ Keith Roberts– I think not. Soane was a Classicist and this sort of building is about as far from the Classical tradition as it is possible to go, particularly with its arbitrary geometries and the apparently random wilfulness of the composition.

Soane loved colour, ornament and clever references to ancient architecture and culture, none of which are evident here, quite the contrary.

[Peter Tanczos](#) | 22 April 2016 10:31 am

"which will be known as the Paul Marshall Building – named after a hedge fund manager who

is worth an estimated £300 million."

No doubt as a reward for his contribution to society



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