# Grafton Architects wins approval for 'seminal' £100m LSE building

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Grafton Architects has won unanimous approval for a £100 million redevelopment of the London School of Economics' (LSE) Paul Marshall Building

The practice, working with engineers AKT II, landed the job following a major international competition last year, in which they were selected ahead of the likes of Amanda Levete's AL_A, New York-based Diller Scofidio + Renfro, David Chipperfield Architects, Herzog & de Meuron and Níall McLaughlin Architects.

The new block, named after a benefactor of the LSE, will replace 44 Lincoln's Inn Fields – an eight-storey post-war office complex purchased by the university two years ago.

In the report to Westminster Council's planning committee, which waved through the application last night, officers lavished praised on the designs, saying: 'Given the reputation and track record of the architects and clients, it is considered that the new building has the potential to be one of the most significant buildings in the City and a landmark for many years to come.'

Director of estates at the LSE, Julian Robinson said: 'This is a major milestone in the delivery of our ambitious Estates Strategy, which seeks to create a world class estate and a university quarter fully integrated with the public realm.

'Our design brief called for a seminal university building and Westminster City Council have recognised that a combination of an outstanding architect and a committed client will deliver this vision.'

The contest for the buidling was the third major RIBA-backed competition run by the LSE for landmark schemes on its Aldwych campus.

Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara of Grafton Architects

In 2009 O'Donnell + Tuomey was selected to design the award-winning £24 million Saw Swee Hock student centre and in 2013 Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners saw off Grafton Architects, Heneghan Peng, Hopkins Architects and OMA to land commission for the LSE's new [£120 million Global Centre for Social Sciences](#).