

Press release

19 November 2003

Foster and Partners Wins Brief for Showcase Development in Hastings

Foster and Partners has been selected, as the result of an extensive architectural competition, as the preferred bidder to create a showcase physical development for Hastings, East Sussex.

The development will comprise a new office and hotel commercial development centred around a grand civic space in Hastings Pelham Square. The site is adjacent to the seafront, historic Pelham Crescent and the former church of St Mary in the Castle, beneath the cliffs crowned by Hastings Castle. Foster and Partners will now develop its concept into a detailed design.

The winning concept presents a striking contemporary development that complements the historic architecture of Pelham Crescent and creates a valuable public leisure space.

The final selection was made after rigorous analysis of design submissions from three short-listed architectural teams: Lifschutz Davidson, Foreign Office Architects and Foster and Partners. The selection panel covered local interests and design expertise, comprising representatives from Pelham Crescent residents, Castle Ward Forum, Hastings Borough Council, English Heritage, The Regional Design Panel, Arts Council England (South East) and Hastings and Bexhill Task Force.

The panel evaluated each design teams creative concept and implementation plan. It also took account of extensive public feedback, gained from an exhibition in October which attracted over 2,000 visitors and provided 1,300 forms of written feedback. The public poll revealed a significant majority in favour of Foster and Partners design.

Jeremy Birch, Leader of Hastings Borough Council and a selection panel member, comments: "Its been so rewarding to be able to consult the people of Hastings and assess some outstanding designs for such a significant civic and commercial development. The concepts from the short-listed teams were all first class. And, in Fosters winning submission, we have the early designs for a fantastic centrepiece that will help us create the new image our town needs to increase visitors, investment and jobs."

John Shaw, another panel member and Director of Sea Space - the organisation working to facilitate regeneration in Hastings - comments: "This is a huge milestone in our efforts to bring a new vibrancy to Hastings. Fosters submitted a superb architectural concept. Ive no doubt that they will work with us and the local people to take it forward into a showcase development which will be a powerful stimulus for jobs and economic growth."

Nigel Dancey, Project Director at Foster and Partners, comments: "This is fantastic news. Were honoured to be given the opportunity to regenerate this part of Hastings and help forge new links between the town and the sea. Our project will create a dynamic new focus for Hastings urban life."

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For more information and images of the winning design, please contact Tariq Khwaja at Sea Space on 07833 336 271 or e-mail tariqkhwaja@seeda.co.uk, or Elizabeth Walker at Foster and Partners on 020 7943 6000 or ewalker@fosterandpartners.com.

Editors Notes

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) convened the Hastings and Bexhill Task Force in September 2001. Members include SEEDA, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, GOSE and English Partnerships. Having developed a regeneration strategy known as the Five Point Plan, the Task Force (through SEEDA) was allocated 38million over 3 years by government towards implementing the plan. The Task Force set up Sea Space - Hastings and Bexhill Renaissance Ltd in the summer of 2003 to deliver projects contained in the strategy.

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is one of the nine English Regional Development Agencies and became fully operational in April 1999. Its mission is to work with its partners to make the South East of England a World Class Region, achieving sustainable development and enhanced quality of life, as measured by:

- economic prosperity;
- environmental quality
- social inclusion - ensuring opportunities and meaningful employment for all.

SEEDAs five statutory objectives under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998 are:

- to further economic development and regeneration;
- to promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness;
- to promote employment;
- to enhance the development and application of skills;
- to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

Photographs of the Foster and Partners design models are by Nigel Young.