Described by Elizabeth I as ‘the fairest, goodliest and most famous parish church in England’, the Grade I listed St Mary Redcliffe church, both a national landmark and a living church, is the equivalent of many European cathedrals and one of the largest parish churches in England.

The development project, the focus of this design competition, will give the church much needed visitor amenities, step-free access, and a community hub.

The initiative will run concurrently with a wider regeneration project, the Redcliffe Neighbourhood Development Plan, which positions the church as the focus of a new urban village in Bristol’s city centre.

Fifty-three practices entered the competition. The shortlist of five teams was announced in February 2016, with the second stage concept designs displayed in the Church and online in April and May 2016. Purcell was announced as the winners in June 2016.

The Reverend Dan Tyndall, Vicar of St Mary Redcliffe, said:

“The balance of different design judgements was fascinating: some re-animating formal processional routes, some conceiving the garden as a dynamic focus and some reconnecting the church to the urban context, anticipating future changes in the current road layout.

“Purcell demonstrated the deepest understanding of the site and context and the opportunity at St Mary Redcliffe. We found their scheme to be crisp, integrated and compelling. A particular strength was the dispersal of accommodation across three locations, helping to tie the disparate northern and southern parts of Redcliffe together.”

Purcell will now work with St Mary Redcliffe to develop the design, apply for HLF funding, and deliver the project.