

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF LONDON APPOINTS MALCOLM READING CONSULTANTS TO RUN WEST SMITHFIELD INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION



Image © MRC/Luke Hayes

- Architectural competition for a new museum supported by the Mayor of London
- Two stage competition will be launched in February 2016
- Winner to be announced in the summer of 2016

The Museum of London announced today that Malcolm Reading Consultants, the leading organiser of architectural competitions, has been appointed to manage its search for an architect to design its proposed new museum at West Smithfield.

The site at West Smithfield is located in the City of London and covers approximately 25,000 sq m. It comprises the vacant Smithfield General Market, the vacant Fish Market, the Red House, Iron Mountain, the Engine House and other elements. These buildings, most of which are Victorian, sit at the Farringdon Road end of West Smithfield, where records show there has been a market for nearly 1,000 years and archaeological remains go back to the Bronze Age.



The vision for the site is to bring these buildings back into sensitive and active use to tell Londoners and visitors to the capital about their city, their history and their lives as well as showcasing finds from the largest archaeological archive in the world.

Funded by the Mayor of London through a £200,000 grant, the international design competition will be in two stages. A panel will be announced to take forward the selection process. Following a shortlisting in the spring, the winning architect will be announced in the summer. The aim is to achieve planning permission, raise the necessary capital funds and deliver the new museum in 2021.

This announcement follows on from the news in December 2015 that the City of London Corporation, which owns the freehold to the Smithfield markets, had acquired the leasehold interest from TH Real Estate for West Smithfield.



Sharon Ament, Director of the Museum of London, said:

Now that the City of London Corporation has acquired the leasehold, we can move forward with growing confidence to create a new museum in West Smithfield.

The next step is to select the best possible architects to take on this challenging and exciting brief. So the search is about to begin to find world class, outstanding and inspiring architects who will deliver a design which combines stunning modern vision for a new museum with West Smithfield's sensitive heritage. We hope to tantalise the world's most creative architectural minds with the prospect of working with us on this project.



Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said:



Behind every great building is a great architect, so finding the right one for the new Museum of London in West Smithfield is of utmost importance. We are providing support for this competition so that the museum can conduct a global search and ultimately create a major cultural destination and a new landmark for the capital.





Mark Boleat, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee at the City of London Corporation said:



Smithfield is one of the most architecturally and historically important areas of the City. Therefore it is absolutely crucial for the Museum of London to find an architect who will be mindful of Smithfield's heritage and propose designs which will enhance the area. This is an exciting challenge for any architect. I have every confidence that the Museum of London will be able to pick from the best in the field to find the right team for the job.



Malcolm Reading Consultants has over 18 years' experience of running high-profile international open competitions. The consultancy's portfolio includes projects for the Guggenheim in Helsinki, Natural History Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum, King's Cross Square and Queen Elizabeth Park's Culture and Education Quarter, 'Olympicopolis'.

Malcolm Reading, architect and competition organiser, said:



The museum's ambition to make West Smithfield its new home, and create a dynamic cultural destination, is inspirational. It's a challenging site with a strong identity and a robust setting. This is a project which will intrigue the global design community.

ENDS



CONTACT:

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Architects wishing to receive the launch flyer for the International Design Competition should contact Malcolm Reading Consultants by email only at museumoflondon@malcolmreading.co.uk.



NOTES TO EDITORS:

About The Museum of London

The Museum of London tells the ever-changing story of this great world city and its people, from 450,000 BC to the present day. Our galleries, exhibitions, displays and activities seek to inspire a passion for London and provide a sense of the vibrancy that makes the city such a unique place.

The museums are open daily 10am – 6pm and are FREE to all, and you can explore the Museum of London with collections online – home to 80,000 objects with more being added.

www.museumoflondon.org.uk

About Malcolm Reading Consultants

Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic architectural consultancy which specialises in the selection of contemporary designers. MRC believes in the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration – either at the local level, or internationally.

The consultancy offers 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 Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's Culture & Education Quarter, the Mumbai City Museum, the Natural History Museum, the UK Pavilion at Milan Expo 2015, New College, Oxford, the Cadogan Estate, Marlborough College, Aberdeen City Garden project, the Victoria & Albert Museum's Exhibition Road project, the UK Pavilion for the Shanghai Expo and the Glasgow School of Art.

www.malcolmreading.co.uk

About The Cultural Hub

The City of London Corporation has a long history as a leading investor in the arts including the Barbican, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and Museum of London in the Square Mile. Together they are working to transform the area from Farringdon to Moorgate and the evolving cultural hub to create an unparalleled destination that is an internationally renowned, distinctive, vibrant and welcoming centre for the arts, heritage, learning and entertainment. A potential new Centre for Music and new Museum of London are a key part of the vision for the cultural hub and will help to redefine this area of the City well in to the future and reinforce the City's central role in the cultural life of the country.