

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2017**

EMERGING PRACTICE FEILDEN FOWLES WINS DESIGN COMPETITION FOR DINING HALL AT HOMERTON COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



© Feilden Fowles

Homerton College, Cambridge and Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) today [21 March 2017] announced that Feilden Fowles has won Homerton College's design competition for a new £7m showpiece dining hall. Other finalists for this sought-after commission, which attracted huge interest from the UK architectural community, included recent Stirling Prize winner Caruso St John, dRMM, Hall McKnight and Walters & Cohen.

The College enjoys an extremely attractive, arboreal site of circa 25 acres in South Cambridge. The brief to competitors called for 'a spectacular and unique architectural composition that relates to the rich and diverse mix of buildings around it and enhances the natural loveliness of the setting'. The new 300-person hall will provide the backdrop both for formal, set-piece ceremonial events and for daily gatherings.

The initiative is part of Homerton's wider estates strategy to offer students, academics and staff exemplary facilities, and construction is expected to begin in the College's 250th Anniversary Year, 2018.

The College's Estates Project Board served as the competition jury, supported by MRC and Martindales Architects. The Board was unanimous in choosing Feilden Fowles. The runner-up practice was dRMM.

Feilden Fowles described their winning concept design as an Arts and Crafts building of the 21st century, conveying formality at times and comfortable familiarity at others. In their winning submission they said the design 'will celebrate the integrity and inherent beauty of materials and craftsmanship'.

The design, both inside and out, is expressive in form and rich in sensory detail. Visually, it provides an uplifting climax to the College's range of significant buildings along Harrison Drive. Masonry piers set with windows connect the new Hall to its picturesque setting, capturing and framing views for the diners. Above this plinth, a faience and glass corona leads the eye upwards to the wide East Anglian sky.

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Professor Geoffrey Ward, Principal of Homerton College, Cambridge, said:

This development will encapsulate much of what Homerton is about: a creative, inclusive community that is ambitious to contribute to the wider society.

The opportunity to make an environment that is physically beautiful and functions elegantly is a rare privilege, and if on a deep level it can also encourage mutuality, the sharing of ideas and motivations, then it really has the power to inspire current and future generations.

We are particularly pleased to be able to start this work in 2018, when the College will have a year-long public celebration of our 250th Anniversary.

Feilden Fowles' concept design for the dining hall subtly relates to the existing ensemble of buildings and the garden setting, and yet has the poise to convince as a showpiece.

What appealed so strongly about the team's particular approach was their openness to creating many opportunities for dialogue. We are looking forward to working with them as they develop the detailed design.

Deborah Griffin OBE, College Bursar, said:

The College was delighted with the quality, breadth and variety of designs on offer and congratulates the shortlist for their hard work.

Feilden Fowles' emphasis on craft resonated on many levels. This connected with Homerton's much loved Arts and Crafts buildings, but also is an expression of how the College continues to value care and innovation, both intrinsic to our vision for the future.

Fergus Feilden, Director of Feilden Fowles, said:

We are thrilled to win this open competition to design the new dining hall for Homerton College. We feel very honoured to be given the opportunity ahead of more established practices and feel it reflects the genuine openness of the competition process, as well as the College's belief in investing in young talent.

The project offers a unique chance to create a transformational space at the heart of an already stunning site. This is a privilege we do not take lightly and we are determined to deliver a world class facility. We can't wait to get started.

Malcolm Reading, Competition Director and Chairman of MRC, said:

Homerton was a progressive client that wholeheartedly embraced the potential of the competitive process, and we are delighted that the College has selected an emerging practice for this fascinating commission. This is MRC's first competition for a Cambridge College, and we have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

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Feilden Fowles is rapidly making a name for itself as an emerging force, with a reputation for delivering exemplary projects in highly sensitive and challenging historic settings. London-based, the practice was named BD's 'Young Architect of the Year' in 2016. It has won numerous awards including three RIBA Awards, a Civic Trust Award and a RICS Community Benefit Award.

The 'Celebrating Homerton' competition was launched in August 2016. A new model for a competitive process, it combined the advantages of a streamlined invited contest with a wider call for fresh talent. This attracted widespread interest from the architectural community with 155 practices registering their interest in the competition at the first stage; from these 24 were selected for the long-list.

Homerton is among Cambridge's largest Colleges by student number. Its large estate includes the listed Ibberson Building in the Arts and Crafts style and the Gothic Revival Great Hall.

The much loved Great Hall will be renovated in a parallel project and continue to be used for events, performances, and smaller dinners. Feilden Fowles will now develop their concept design in close partnership with the College. Construction of the 1,400 square metre project, which also includes new kitchens and support spaces, is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2018.

Ends.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Homerton College, Cambridge

Homerton is the newest and among the largest of the 31 Cambridge Colleges, having received its Royal Charter in 2010. The College's history dates back to 1768, and it has been located in Cambridge since the 1890s (and in Homerton, London, before that). Formerly an exceptionally highly regarded teacher-training college, Homerton now, as a full College of the University, has students and Fellows studying subjects from Anglo-Saxon to Zoology via Medicine, Engineering and Law, and retains a large number of students studying Education.

The College is located in beautiful, wooded grounds just outside the busy city centre. The campus includes a collection of Victorian, Arts and Crafts and more modern buildings. A new 112-graduate accommodation building was completed in September 2016. The spacious grounds include squash courts, football fields, and an orchard.

In recent years, the College has embarked on an ambitious Estates Strategy, focused on improving and updating its existing facilities, including rebuilding or refurbishing student accommodation. Unlike the majority of Cambridge Colleges, Homerton is able to offer on-site accommodation for undergraduates for four years.

Homerton has a reputation for friendliness, approachability and inclusivity – with a mission based on partnership with the University to serve the needs of society.

The College has a thriving Students Union for both undergraduates and graduates, offering many different sports, clubs and societies. Unique among Cambridge Colleges in founding a famous football club, every year Homerton students play against Leyton Orient Supporters Club for the Challenge Trophy in celebration of the founding of the club in 1881.

<http://www.homerton.cam.ac.uk>

Feilden Fowles

Feilden Fowles were recently named Young Architect of the Year 2016, recognising their expertise and innovation in design across sectors including education, culture, arts, masterplanning and heritage. The London based practice specialises in complex projects and sensitive locations, working with a range of clients, organisations and institutions.

The partnership was established in 2009 by Fergus Feilden and Edmund Fowles, following recognition of their complementary talents through early student collaborations and the successful delivery of their first building, Ty Pren. The practice now delivers a range of socially and environmentally sustainable buildings across a variety of sectors and aims to make architecture that is rich in character and distinct in identity.

<http://www.feildenfowles.co.uk>

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Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic consultancy specialising 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.

MRC is the leading specialist in design competitions in Europe. Recent work includes competitions for the Illuminated River Foundation, the Museum of London, the gold medal-winning UK Pavilion at Milan Expo 2015, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Tintagel Castle Bridge, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's Culture & Education Quarter, the Mumbai City Museum, the Natural History Museum and New College, Oxford.

<https://malcolmreading.co.uk>