

Plans for new urban quarter in Dublin recognised at top International competition

A masterplan for the development of a new urban quarter in Dublin's north inner city has been highly commended at the World Architecture Festival Awards in Barcelona.

The Masterplan for Grangegorman, which was designed by architects Moore Ruble Yudell in association with Duffy Mitchell O' Donoghue, was recognised in the category which celebrates excellence in design for future projects and was the only project apart from the category winner to be specifically mentioned.

It was among 272 projects from around the world which were shortlisted for consideration at the Festival. The jury were most impressed with how, in light of the area's history as a closed off institution, the new Grangegorman urban quarter will now open up and connect to the city.

The Grangegorman Masterplan sets out how the 73 acre hospital site in Dublin's north inner city will become a modern urban quarter incorporating the new DIT campus, health facilities and community amenities. It will open up an area of the city which has been an urban void for many years and in the process generate in the region of 4,500 jobs at the construction stage alone.

This major recognition for the plans for Grangegorman comes in the wake of another award which was recently received. In September the American Institute of Architects California Council awarded the Masterplan a 2009 Urban Design Award. This award "recognises distinguished achievements that involve the expanding role of the architect in urban design, city planning and community development".

Commenting on the Grangegorman Masterplan the AIACC jury said "This project takes a piece of land in the centre of Dublin city that was an island and knits it together with the rest of the urban fabric. It is a remarkable, world-class project."

Former Dublin City Manager and Chairman of the Grangegorman Development Agency, John Fitzgerald believes these awards are yet further acknowledgement of the great work carried out by the designers MRY and DMOD, James Mary O' Connor in particular.

He said "To be recognised in this way by two international organisations is testament to the high quality of the Masterplan. Once the building starts it will regenerate Dublin's north inner city and provide badly needed jobs in the construction industry."

He went on "This development has also been identified by Dublin City Council as one of the 14 projects which are critical for the successful future of Dublin and as such is included in the My City Exhibition in the Civic Offices."

The principal designer of the Grangegorman Masterplan James Mary O' Connor, who is originally from the Dublin 7 area, explained that the goal of the design team was to create a place which enriches the fabric of the city, a place of vitality and architectural value to serve the needs of the campus and indeed the entire community.

He went on "We absolutely believe this investment in the education and future of Ireland's young people is critical during these challenging times. We are very honoured to have the Grangegorman Masterplan singled out for commendation from amongst some of the world's best projects.

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