

Press Release

For Immediate Release:

Holburne Museum gets the go ahead

A landmark decision in Bath last night saw Eric Parry Architects' extension to the Holburne Museum of Art receive planning consent.

The scheme, which will secure the future of this important museum, was resubmitted in September following a surprise initial refusal. In response to some of the concerns expressed the practice made some amendments to the design, with an overall reduction in height of around a metre, a reduction in the size of the reflecting pool in the surrounding gardens and a change in the colour of the ceramic. A new window overlooking the garden has also been introduced.

Eric Parry, Principal of Eric Parry Architects commented: "We are all absolutely thrilled that consent has been won, this is a major achievement for both the practice and the Holburne Museum. It hasn't been an easy process but last night's decision marks a key turning point in the history of the Museum."

Alexander Sturgis, Director of the Holburne Museum said: "This is a wonderful decision for the future of the Holburne Museum. Our current building, in its extraordinary site, is one of our great assets but it is in desperate need of repair and too small for all we need and wish to do. Eric Parry's beautiful extension will provide more space for every aspect of our activity from exhibitions to education but the project will also allow us to restore the existing building and help the Holburne fulfil its exceptional potential. We are thrilled that the committee's decision will enable us to continue to work towards this goal".

David Posnett, Chairman of the Trustees added: "We have been working to secure the future of the Holburne Museum for the last seven years and the restoration and expansion of the Museum are essential for its survival. We now have the plans in place, with a jewel-like extension designed by one of the country's best architects, which will allow the museum to thrive."

The three-storey extension will provide an extra 800 square metres of gallery space to house the collection which has grown by some 2,000 exhibits since the Museum opened in 1916. It will transform the visitor's experience with improved facilities, a lift which will (for the first time) allow the Museum to be fully accessible to all, and a garden café opening onto the park. The project will reunite the historic Sydney gardens with the city by recreating the clear axis between Great Pulteney Street at one end and the gardens at the other.

Ends

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Eric Parry Architects

Notes to Editors:

Eric Parry Architects is an established and award-winning practice with a growing portfolio of notable work.

Current projects include a new recital hall for Wells Cathedral School, Somerset – the UK's leading specialist music school - and the most significant renewal project currently being undertaken in London, the restoration and redevelopment of the historic St Martin-in-the-Fields Church in Trafalgar Square. The practice has recently been completed a major new office development at Aldermanbury Square in the City of London.

The practice undertakes a broad range of work, varied in scope and scale. It has won numerous awards, including an RIBA Award for Bedford Music School in 2007, an RIBA Award and an AIA Design Excellence Award in 2003 for the design of the office building at 30 Finsbury Square, London, which was also short-listed for the prestigious Stirling Prize in the same year. The Spa at the Mandarin Oriental, Hyde Park was awarded Best Leisure Design at the FX International Interior Design Awards in 2001 and Foundress Court at Pembroke College, Cambridge University, won an RIBA Award in 1998.

The practice is based in Finsbury, London, and employs over 50 staff. EPA also has an office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the practice has designed a number of residential schemes.

Eric Parry has a key involvement in all projects, particularly in their design development stages. He is keenly interested in the bridges between theory, practice, space and society.

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

The Holburne Museum of Art, Bath

The Holburne houses an extraordinarily rich collection of fine and decorative art, including nationally important collections of Renaissance bronzes and maiolica, of silver and porcelain and of paintings and miniatures. The Holburne has at its heart the personal collection of Sir William Holburne which was bequeathed as a kernel of Bath's first public museum in 1883. In every area he acquired works of exceptional significance and beauty such as Susini's refined bronze of a *Kneeling Woman Bathing*, or the Diana and Actaeon plate, a rare and early example of maiolica. His silver collection is remarkable and his group of 17th century Dutch and Netherlandish painting, including two significant works by Pieter Breughel the Younger, and a fine group of Dutch Italianate landscapes are still the most important in the west of England. Since Sir William's death the collection has grown by some 2,000 objects which have enlarged the scope of the collection and given it a renowned strength in British Painting, with works by Raeburn, Ramsay, Stubbs, Turner and Gainsborough. Housed in the eighteenth-century Sydney Hotel and set within the park of Sydney Gardens, it is Bath's most beautiful museum.

For further information on the Holburne Museum of Art, please contact:

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