PRESS RELEASE: 21 November 2013

Revamped Leicester Square wins UK’s most prestigious landscape award

Leicester Square City Quarter, London has been named winner of the 2013 Landscape Institute President’s Award. Burns + Nice, the landscape architects behind the reshaping of the central London site, were selected from 41 landscape projects competing for the prestigious landscape award. Other entrants included Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, the Olympic Park design for the 2016 Rio Olympics and Gorky Park in Moscow. The winners received their award at a lunchtime ceremony hosted by Wayne Hemingway MBE.

Leicester Square and its nine side streets form one of the most intensely used urban spaces in London. The square also acts as a green oasis within London’s busy West End. Despite being a major entertainment and tourist destination, the area had become disconnected from its surroundings, rundown in appearance and a place where antisocial behaviour had become a serious issue.
The new design, inspired by the late 19th century form of the central garden, includes new railing and gates framed by a sinuous white ‘Ribbon’. The Gardens and ‘Ribbon’ are framed by a carpet of dark granite, the shape of which creates a legible link to the surrounding square.

Speaking about her choice for the President’s Award, Landscape Institute President Sue Illman, said: “Burns + Nice has amply demonstrated how thoughtful modern design, which is practical and robust in its concept but elegant in its detailing, can not only provide a new type of urban square, but can also demonstrate how improvements to the quality of the environment can act as a catalyst for change and regeneration. The ribbons of seating and planting, and the reflections of water and fencing, have radically changed the quality of this most difficult space.

Leicester Square and the surrounding streets, accommodating more than 500,000 visitors daily, has long been an essential stop on any tourist map, but Burns + Nice has now created a place worthy of such attention.”

The 2013 Winners:

**President’s Award**

Burns + Nice for Leicester Square City Quarter

**Gold Medal for lifetime achievement**

Robert Carson, MBE

John Hopkins

**Adding Value Through Landscape**

Winner: Beam Parklands - a new 53 ha park for East London - by Arup with the Environment Agency and Land Trust

Highly Commended: The redevelopment and modernisation of Heworth Grange Comprehensive School in Gateshead by Capita

**Communication and Presentation**

Winner: Aecom’s Global Cities Programme - communicating urban visions and frameworks across landscape, urbanism, infrastructure, engineering, economics and ecosystems

Highly Commended: Aecom’s winning design for the 2016 Rio Olympic Park

**Design for a Small-scale Private Development**

Winner: NEO Bankside, London - a biodiverse landscape for the luxury, high-rise housing development next to Tate Modern – by Gillespies supported by Growth Industry

Highly Commended: Embassy Gardens Marketing Suite - a landscape to tell the story of the future Linear Park for London and what it will be like to live there - by Camlins

**Design for a Medium-scale Private Development**
Winner: The landscape in the first phase of the 400-home ICON development in Somerset by Grant Associates

Design for a Large-scale Private Development

Winner: Accordia – the transformation of former government offices into sustainable city living in Cambridge - by Grant Associates

Design for a Small-scale Public Development

Winner: Sammy Ofer Wing, National Maritime Museum – the creation of two water features and a 160m rill within the Greenwich World Heritage Site - by Churchman Landscape Architects Ltd

Highly Commended: The creation of a new public square for Newcastle University Student Forum by Southern Green Ltd

Design for a Medium-scale Public Development

Winner: Leicester Square City Quarter – the transformation of a previously hostile and disconnected environment into a green oasis within London’s busy West End - by Burns + Nice Ltd

Highly Commended: Ebrington Square, Derry-Londonderry – the creation of a 'Peace Bridge' and new cycle/pedestrian connection on a former military site - by Optimised Environments Ltd

Design for a Large-scale Public Development

Winner: Gardens by the Bay – a landmark project in Singapore, including themed gardens, conservatories and aerial walkway - by Grant Associates

Highly Commended: The restoration of the ecosystem and landscape at Datong Wenying Lake, Datong City, China by Aecom

Highly Commended: The rehabilitation of Shek O Quarry, Hong Kong following years of industrial use by Urbis Ltd

Heritage and Conservation

Winner: Stewart Park, Middlesbrough – a project to safeguard a designed landscape in Middlesbrough - by Southern Green Ltd

Highly Commended: The restoration of Lichfield Historic Parks Project by Chris Blandford Associates

Highly Commended: The Restoration of Priory Park, Reigate by Land Use Consultants

Highly Commended: Victoria Park, London – the restoration of London’s first public park - by LDA Design

Landscape Policy and Research

Winner: Harrogate Green Infrastructure Guide by Harrogate Borough Council

Highly Commended: National Character Area Project: a new integrated framework for landscape planning by Natural England

Neighbourhood Planning

Winner: The David Livingstone Centre Landscape Masterplan – a new landscape of art, trails, play and education for South Lanarkshire Museum - by Erz

Highly Commended: Bridgcroft Housing Development, Herefordshire – the UK’s largest Passivhaus housing scheme in a rural setting - by Churchman Landscape Architects Ltd

Strategic Landscape Planning

Winner: Network Rail National Lineside Vegetation Management Strategy by LDA Design

Highly Commended: ‘The City in the Forest’ Moscow City Region Plan – a masterplan which makes use of Moscow’s close relationship with its boreal forest - by Gillespies

Highly Commended: Harlow Open Space Study and Green Infrastructure Plan by Land Use Consultants

Urban Design and Masterplanning

Winner: The Connected Croydon Programme - a £50m programme of public realm and landscape projects for Croydon - by Croydon Council

Highly Commended: Northumberland Street, Newcastle Public Realm Vision – a 10-point plan to revitalise the street - by J&L Gibbons Landscape Architects

Highly Commended: New Islington – the development of a sustainable community in one of Manchester’s worst estates - by Grant Associates

Highly Commended: Gorky Park – creating an important new park for Moscow - by LDA Design

Science, Management and Stewardship

Winner: The creation of new perimeter screening at Bayston Hill Quarry Southeastern Extension by SLR Consulting

Highly Commended: Management Plan for Black Brook Corridor – long-term strategy to safeguard the mix of habits, heritage and landscape character of the Black Brook Corridor in Merseyside - by TEP

College of Fellows Award: Climate Change Adaption

Winner: Gardens by the Bay – a landmark project in Singapore, including themed gardens, conservatories and aerial walkway - by Grant Associates

Student Dissertation

Winner: Enabling Creative Independence in Child’s Play by Jono Burgess
Highly Commended: Re-evolution of the corporate landscape: converting Luserna San Giovanni townscape with the Caffarel Chocolate Factory in Italy by Martine Sechi

Highly Commended: Urban Wilderness – the value of post-industrial landscapes in providing a new form of urban wilderness by Sophie Tombleson

Highly Commended: Temporary Landscape and the Post-Industrial City – a study of post-industrial Glasgow - by Lisa Jeffrey

Student portfolio

Winner: Zhongyi Zhang, MA Student, University of Sheffield

Highly Commended: Bethany Gale, MA Student, University of Greenwich

Highly Commended: Sophie Tombleson, MSc Student, Edinburgh College of Art

2013 saw the introduction of some changes to the award categories. A new award for ‘Adding Value through Landscape’ has been included. There is also a new ‘Science, Management and Stewardship’ category to replace the ‘Landscape Science and Ecology’ category. In addition, the design awards now distinguish between public and private work at differing scales, with six awards given.

Now in their seventh consecutive year, the 2013 Landscape Awards were presented by Wayne Hemingway MBE at a lunchtime ceremony on Thursday 21st November at The Bloomsbury Big Top, Corum’s Fields, 93 Guildford Street, London WC1N 1DN. Visit www.landscapeinstitute.org for more details.

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For further information, interviews and images please contact Sarah Harrison, on behalf of the Landscape Institute, on 07768 372892 or email sarah@sarahharrisonpr.com

Notes to Editors:

- The Landscape Institute Awards are presented to encourage and recognise outstanding examples of the work of the landscape profession. The Awards aims to promote the art and science of landscape architecture; advance the knowledge and understanding of the discipline; celebrate professional expertise and reward schemes that demonstrate a high level of commitment to sustainability

- The Awards are sponsored by Aggregate, Brett Landscaping, English Heritage, Ground Control, Hardscape, Marshalls, McParland Finn, Wienerberger, Vectorworks

- The Landscape Institute (LI) is the royal chartered body for landscape architects. It represents professionals in the UK working across planning, design and the management of urban and rural landscape

- The LI campaigns to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for public benefit and is part of the government’s Green Infrastructure Partnership
Now in its seventh consecutive year, the LI runs the Landscape Institute Awards which recognise outstanding examples of the work of the landscape profession. In 2012 the winner of the President’s Award was LDA-Design with Hargreaves Associates, Arup and Atkins, for the Olympic Park.

Visit wwwlandscapeinstituteorg for more information or follow the LI on twitter: @talklandscape