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## News release

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### **RIBA South announces Oxley Park is shortlisted for the Manser Medal 2008**



**Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire**

Architect: Roger Stirk Harbour & Partners, London. Photographer: Richard Bryant

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) South today announces that Oxley Park in Milton Keynes by architects Roger Stirk Harbour & Partners has been shortlisted for the Manser Medal, sponsored by The Rooflight Company. The scheme is one of five buildings shortlisted in the UK. The Manser Medal is given for the best one-off house or major extension designed by an architect in the UK.

Oxley Park also won the prestigious RIBA Award this year. The scheme is the fruit of John Prescott's initiative to promote off-site construction of housing. English Partnerships held competitions for the design and construction of prefabricated houses meeting demanding environmental standards. Full height insulated wall panels were erected first, followed by floors and roofs. The pods on the roofs contain solar heaters and heat exchangers for the background ventilation system. The project represents a thorough-going attempt at innovation within the all-too risk-averse

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conventional housebuilders' market. It achieves well- designed and spacious-seeming housing with excellent daylight. It points to one way forward in achieving high environmental standards in quality housebuilding. The scheme is therefore well deserving of an award for its thorough-going spirit of innovation and the élan of its design.

The other four schemes in the UK shortlisted for the Manser Medal 2008 are :

- Private house in Belfast by 'Twenty Two Over Seven
- Garden Apartment in Kensington, London by Gianni Botsford Architects
- Halligan House in St Albans by Simon Conder Associates
- Accordia in Cambridge by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Maccreanor Lavington and Alison Brooks Architects

The Manser Medal shortlist was drawn from the RIBA Award-winning buildings which were announced earlier this year in May. The Manser Medal winner will be announced and presented alongside five other special awards, at the RIBA Stirling Prize Dinner on Saturday 11 October in Liverpool.

The medal is judged by a panel including Michael Manser CBE, former President of the RIBA; Stephen Marshall, Stephen Marshall Architects; Val King, The Rooflight Company and Tony Chapman, RIBA Head of Awards.

Previous winners include The Salt House by Alison Brooks Architects (2007), Holly Barn by Knox Bhavan Architects (2006) and Stealth House by Robert Dye Associates (2005).

Notes to editors

1. For further information or a high resolution image, please contact Carri Crook, Carisma Communications on 01842 815910 or email [carri@carismacommunications.co.uk](mailto:carri@carismacommunications.co.uk).
2. The RIBA Stirling Prize in association with 'The Architects' Journal is the UK's most prestigious architectural prize and is awarded annually to the architects of the building which has made the greatest contribution to British

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architecture in the past year. The RIBA awards programme was re-organised in 2007 in a pyramid structure. The RIBA Awards are judged and presented locally and the RIBA National Awards are judged and presented nationally. The RIBA Stirling Prize shortlist is selected following further visits to winners of the RIBA National Awards and of RIBA European Awards for buildings in the rest of the EU.

3. From 2008 the RIBA Stirling Prize becomes a 'built or designed in Britain' prize, for which only buildings in the UK designed by RIBA chartered members and International Fellows, or buildings in the rest of the EU by practices whose principal office in the UK, will be eligible.
4. The winner of the RIBA Stirling Prize in association with 'The Architects' Journal will be announced at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool on Saturday 11 October, televised on Channel 4 on Sunday 12 October. The 2008 shortlist is: Accordia, Cambridge by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios/Alison Brooks Architects/Maccreanor Lavington; Amsterdam Bijlmer Arena Station, Amsterdam, by Grimshaw/ARCADIS Architects; Manchester Civil Justice Centre, Manchester by Denton Corker Marshall; Nord Park Cable Railway, Austria by Zaha Hadid Architects; Royal Festival Hall, London by Allies and Morrison; Westminster Academy at the Naim Dangoor Centre, London, by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris.
5. The 2008 RIBA Stirling Prize jury comprises of Eva Jiricna architect, Eva Jiricna Architects; Gordon Murray – architect, Murray Dunlop Architects; Shelley McNamara – architect, Grafton Architects; Kieran Long – Editor, 'The Architects' Journal and Diarmuid Gavin – garden designer, Diarmuid Gavin Designs.
6. Established in 1895, 'The Architects' Journal has consistently been at the forefront of architectural publishing. Its weekly news coverage, comprehensive building studies and in-depth technical and practice features make it essential reading for the profession, and its incisive commentary makes it a must-read for opinion formers. 'The AJ' is the UK's leading independent architectural magazine, whose authoritative voice has informed generations of architects. For more information on the RIBA Awards programme visit the AJ website at [www.architectsjournal.co.uk](http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk)
7. All RIBA Award winners can be seen at [www.architecture.com/awards](http://www.architecture.com/awards)
8. The RIBA Awards, the RIBA National Awards, the RIBA European Awards and RIBA Stirling Prize are managed by the RIBA Trust. The RIBA Trust manages the cultural assets of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), including the internationally recognised collections of the British Architectural Library. It is the UK's national architecture centre, delivering the RIBA awards programme; the Royal Gold Medal; International and Honorary Fellowships; a full programme of lectures, exhibitions, tours and other events; and an education programme.

9. Full building citations for the other shortlisted schemes follow:

- Garden Apartment, Kensington, London. This Garden Apartment was created by combining the top two floors of a wide-fronted Victorian villa in Notting Hill, and adding a roof-level volume within the familiar (and planner-friendly) form of a mansard. Carved out of the volume of the building, at its centre, is a deep slot, creating a vertical outside space, around which the living spaces weave. This is topped with a fully retractable skylight, so that the weather can be permitted to come in, or kept out; in the summer it constantly left open. It took clever engineering to allow this atrium to be as transparent and light as it is. This is secret gem, entirely unseen from without, is a tribute to the architect's imagination, ingenuity and persistence.
- Private House, Belfast. The first impression of the building on arrival is restrained and small scale and in reality almost a simple child-like representation of a house gable punctured by two simple deep set windows in a pristine white rendered wall. This simplicity and restraint is part of the building's appeal. The limited palette of materials chosen by the architect leads to a clean and fresh appearance. As you move from the front door through the internal spaces there is a pleasing progression from public to private spaces that is handled simply yet effectively. The house was designed to facilitate the ease of movement inside and outside the house for a member of the family confined to a wheelchair.
- Accordia, Cambridge is high density housing at its very best. Beautifully thought-through houses are linked by a series of public, semi-public and private but visible open spaces, making the whole development a joy to walk through. Houses and flats have good-sized, well-proportioned rooms with views out ranging from the urban views to rural pasture. This development proves that good modern housing sells, that a committed local authority can have a very positive influence on the design, that a masterplan with a range of architects can be successful and that the very best architecture does not need to rely on gimmicks. This will be a project that will be much referred to and used a future case study.
- Halligan House, St Albans is a great example of an architect (a previous winner of the Stephen Lawrence prize with his black rubber house at Dungeness) taking a client brief, a tight site and an even tighter budget and creating an architecturally rich and uplifting house. Single storeyed, timber framed and built round a series of courtyards and outdoor spaces, the basic pallet of materials is used with great care so that the house feels anything but cheap. A delightful house on a difficult site; the clients' first decision – the choice of architect – was the right one. They were in good company: Jacques Herzog recently chose Simon Conder as the only British architect to work with his practice on a major housing scheme in China.