V&A’s Exhibition Road project receives backing

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The V&A’s Exhibition Road development will create a new purpose-built underground gallery for the museum’s internationally renowned exhibitions, a magnificent courtyard space and a new entrance from the recently landscaped Exhibition Road on the west side of the museum.

The V&A has already secured over £30million towards the £42million total from donations by the Monument Trust; the Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation; the Headley Trust; the Garfield Weston Foundation and other donors. The HLF grant would mean that the project has nearly 84% of its funding in place, with just over £7million to raise before opening in 2017.

Martin Roth, V&A Director, said: “We are delighted to have been given this support from HLF for the Exhibition Road Project. It is an essential development for the future of the V&A which will transform the way we present our major exhibitions as well as how we welcome our increasing number of visitors. This grant would take us a large step towards achieving the £42million needed to deliver the project and we are all working hard to secure a second round pass.”

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “This is a visionary project which will create an open courtyard that has up until now been hidden from public view, a world-class exhibition space and a much-needed new entrance on Exhibition Road. We were impressed by the museum's careful phasing of a number of innovative ideas and, whilst this is only the first step in securing a full grant, we are pleased to be green lighting these initial plans.”

The Exhibition Road scheme, designed by AL_A, will transform a previously inaccessible back-of-house space into an open courtyard for installations, events and a café, and will create a new relationship between the heart of the V&A and the rest of the reinvigorated cultural quarter known as Albertopolis. The V&A is currently enjoying more visitors than ever before and the project is vital to sustain increasing audience numbers.

The large, uninterrupted major exhibition space will allow the V&A significantly to improve the way it designs and presents its world class exhibition programme. The project will also reveal the beautiful Victorian facades on the west side of the V&A’s Grade I listed buildings which have been restored to their former glory but never before been on public view.

AL_A won the international competition to design the project in March 2011 and have since been progressing the design. Planning permission was awarded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in July 2012. Enabling work to divert services within the site was completed in June. The next phase of work is temporarily to remove the Aston Webb screen to allow access for building work. The main construction work is due to start in early 2014 and complete by the end of 2016, opening to the public in 2017.

Further information

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