

LONDON SCOOPS

STIRLING PRIZES

Capital wins with best new building and cleverest new house

LONDON swept the board at the prestigious Stirling Awards at the weekend, with the Stirling Prize going to a new Maggie's Cancer Centre in Hammersmith, writes *Philippa Stockley*. The two-storey, building, designed by Richard Rogers's firm Rogers, Stirk, Harbour and Partners, sits on a busy road but is surrounded by gardens and has quiet internal courtyards.

The centre's Scandinavian-style interiors, centred around a kitchen, are designed to make patients feel "at home" in a healthy oasis away from the bustle of London and is one of six Maggie Centres built in honour of Maggie Keswick Jencks, who died from cancer in 1995.

Another award, the Manser Medal, goes to the very best of UK housing. Competition was fierce this year, from an all-glass house perched high up in Highgate, by Eldridge Smerrin, to dRMM's Sliding House in Suffolk, where a wooden "barn" structure slides on rails over another house made entirely of glass. But the winner was a brilliant example of design's ability to thrive on



A rear view shows the scale of The Gap House, which is only 8ft wide at the front

and transcend difficulty. Architect Pitman Tozer, a two-man team, took a plot only 8ft wide at the front, between two stucco Bayswater houses, and squeezed in a house that, because of the shape of the gap, widened at the back.

Where once there was a rotting cottage they created 2,000sq ft of family living space on four floors. A previous developer had given up trying. The Gap House cost £500,000 to build.

Judge Michael Manser said: "Once again the medal has been won by an intelligent, simple, practical, high-quality design that makes most of the house-building industry look inadequate."