

BATTLE McCARTHY[©]

Consulting Engineers & Landscape Architects



PROJECT:

London School of Economics: New Academic Building

CLIENT:

London School of Economics

ARCHITECTS:

Grimshaw Architects

BM SERVICES:

Building Services Engineers & Environmental Analysis

VALUE:

£30m

DATE OF COMPLETION:

2008

DESIGN BRIEF

The new academic building has a major role to play within the existing LSE campus, in that it is intended to express the university's presence within the urban context - bridging the urban nature of Kingsway and the open nature of Lincoln's Inn Fields, whilst becoming a key teaching area and flagship building for the central London campus.

Sustainable design is key to the re-use of the original 1916, Sir Henry Tanner designed building, including use of natural ventilation, passive and active low-energy systems, optimised daylight penetration, high levels of insulation, utilisation of thermal mass and groundwater cooling.

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DESIGN INITIATIVES/ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

The design seeks to create an internal street at ground floor level, of which the focus is a triple-height atrium space, enhanced by increasing the existing lightwell and the addition of a glazed roof. The feeling of a street is achieved by positioning the main entrances to the building, centrally within the Kingsway and Lincoln's Inn Fields facades - as a result of analysis undertaken by Space Syntax.

The street culminates in the central atrium and "The Sounding Board" which is the backdrop to the space - formed by a figure which is a seemingly continual element, linking the atrium floor, access to the lower-ground floor lecture and function spaces and the glazed atrium roof - framing the two mezzanine gallery levels and backlit rear wall 'en-route'. A terraced seating area at the centre, leading to a cafe, provides an informal congregation space; which is naturally lit via the glazed lift shaft - providing a glimpse of the outside world.

Stairs from the ground level link the internal street to a large function space on the lower-ground floor which, in-turn, links to four lecture theatres. These theatres can seat 650 people, with the lower-ground floor level as a whole being able to accommodate 1000 people - not only students, but also sponsors, alumni, members of the public, government and private sectors.

The building envelops many key environmental features. 'Free' energies, such as natural ventilation - drawing fresh air from Lincoln's Inn Fields and daylight, are fully exploited - providing a series of spaces that have a natural feel to them; reducing energy usage and improving educational performance.

The forecourt facing Lincoln's Inn Fields contains a tiered seating area to the north, revealing a lecture theatre below, whilst the southern section holds a cafe terrace framed by glass boxes - which allow a visual connection between the lower-ground floor and street level.

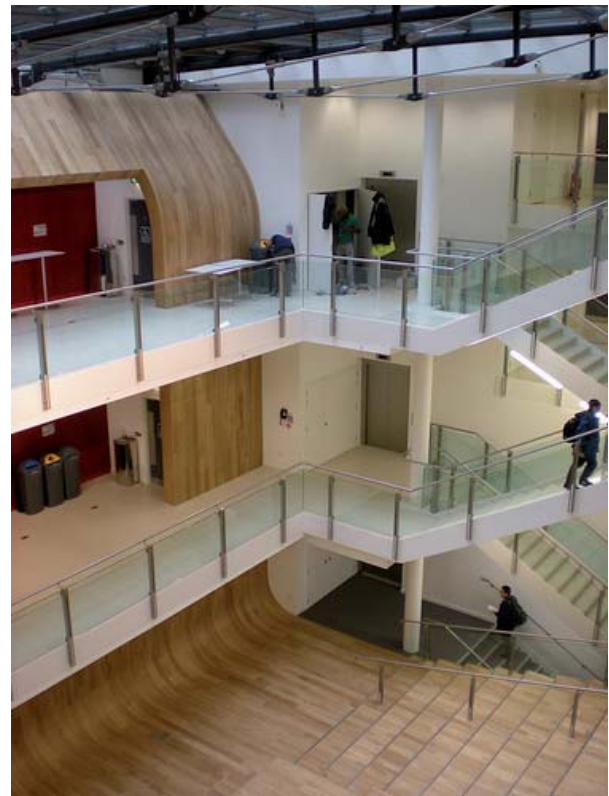
New Academic Building was awarded a BREEAM Excellent rating in 2008 under the 2005 Design & Procurement Bespoke Assessment.



Central atrium



Cafe & 'Sounding Board'



Circulation space