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5 Pancras Square King's Cross Central



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5 Pancras Square is located on an outward-facing site at the junction of Pancras Road and Goods Way, with exceptional views over Camley Street Natural Park (bottom left), the Eurostar terminal (bottom right) and Camden beyond.



Swimming pools, a gym, library, cafe and public-facing services on 4 levels are combined with ten floors of administrative facilities in a single, integrated building for Camden Council, located at the heart of the King's Cross development.

Its cube-like form accentuates the public and office functions, which are separated by a substantial transfer structure at second floor level to achieve long spans over the pools and gym halls.

Whilst the outward facing elevations to west and north are highly modelled with solar shading panels and recessed balconies, the south and east facades are simple and unshaded due to the close proximity of neighbouring developments in the masterplan. The building to the east has yet to be constructed.

A series of spectacular voids animate the circulation spaces and bring daylight deep within the interior. The project has achieved one of the highest BREEAM *Outstanding* scores to date in the UK.



Above: model showing the massing of the new urban block. **Left:** the outward-facing elevations to the west and north are highly modelled, with anodised bronze solar shading panels and recessed balconies; the lower public levels are clad in light precast concrete that reflects the internal structure.

The building's height and bulk were dictated by the King's Cross masterplan but Camden were also keen to demonstrate how mixed uses and the highest standards of sustainability, which they insist upon as a planning authority, could be met in their own project.

Camden's bold decision to relocate at King's Cross during the recession was made possible by rationalisation of Council property and by operational efficiencies created by the new building, all under intense public scrutiny to ensure there was no cost to the public purse. In consequence, the budget conformed to market norms and cost limits were rigorously met by the design and construction team, under the direction of Argent who delivered the building.

Bennetts Associates was involved from the outset, writing the initial Brief for Camden and executing the project jointly for Camden and Argent. The Brief called

for a major leisure centre (including two swimming pools), the library and café overlooking Camley Street park and highly visible public services for information, Council tax, social services and so on. The office space has been designed to meet ambitious objectives for culture change, with a range of workplace types that foster better communication and team spirit.

5 Pancras Square is a confident statement of social, economic and environmental sustainability. Mixed uses aimed at serving the whole local community are prominently displayed; long term flexibility and low operational costs underpin economic performance; very low carbon and high standards of well-being greatly reduce environmental impacts. In particular, the building is integrated with the King's Cross development's power generation network, helping it to reach one of the highest overall BREEAM scores for a building of its type in the UK.



The street-level public entrance provides direct access to the building's leisure facilities (facing page and above).



An event in the children's library





The building has two dedicated public entrances. A triple-height space connects the street level public entrance on Pancras Road with the upper ground level public and administrative entrance on Pancras Square, the setting for some of King's Cross's major new commercial buildings.

The public levels are linked by glass lifts and a concrete staircase that directly corresponds to the external steps along the south elevation, allowing continuity between the internal and external spaces.



The upper ground level public and administrative entrance on Pancras Square



Left: daylight filters down into the basement pools through a cut in the mezzanine level gym floor. Above: the fitness suite on the mezzanine level.

“We are proud to deliver this elegant, highly sustainable building for Camden, which will be used by a whole range of people including some 2,340 office workers, local residents and leisure users. 5 Pancras Square is the latest example of high quality, mixed development at King’s Cross and its facilities cement its reputation as a place to work and live.”

Robert Evans, Partner, Argent



“Our congratulations to all those involved in developing the new King’s Cross building. It is great to see a building that not only shows an absolute commitment to creating a superb space for people to work, take exercise, have fun and relax in, but also one that takes account of the environment and broader aspects of sustainability. An excellent example to others of what can be achieved through the use of BREEAM with a well-informed client and design team.”

Martin Townsend
Director of BREEAM, BRE

The mezzanine level library and cafe, with the platforms of St Pancras Station visible behind. The deep transfer beams that enable the larger spans required for the swimming pool and exercise studios below are also the cue for a clear visual distinction between the public and administrative levels. The lightweight steel mezzanine floors of the public levels are suspended from these transfer beams.

“5 Pancras Square is a fantastic new public services hub for Camden as well as being one of the greenest public buildings in the UK. The building will allow us to make a massive leap forward in how we work efficiently and cost-effectively as a Council to deliver services to residents. The project was funded by a major reorganisation and sale of old office buildings across the borough. This raised money for the build, saving money on future repair bills and reflecting the smaller size of the council due to austerity cuts.”

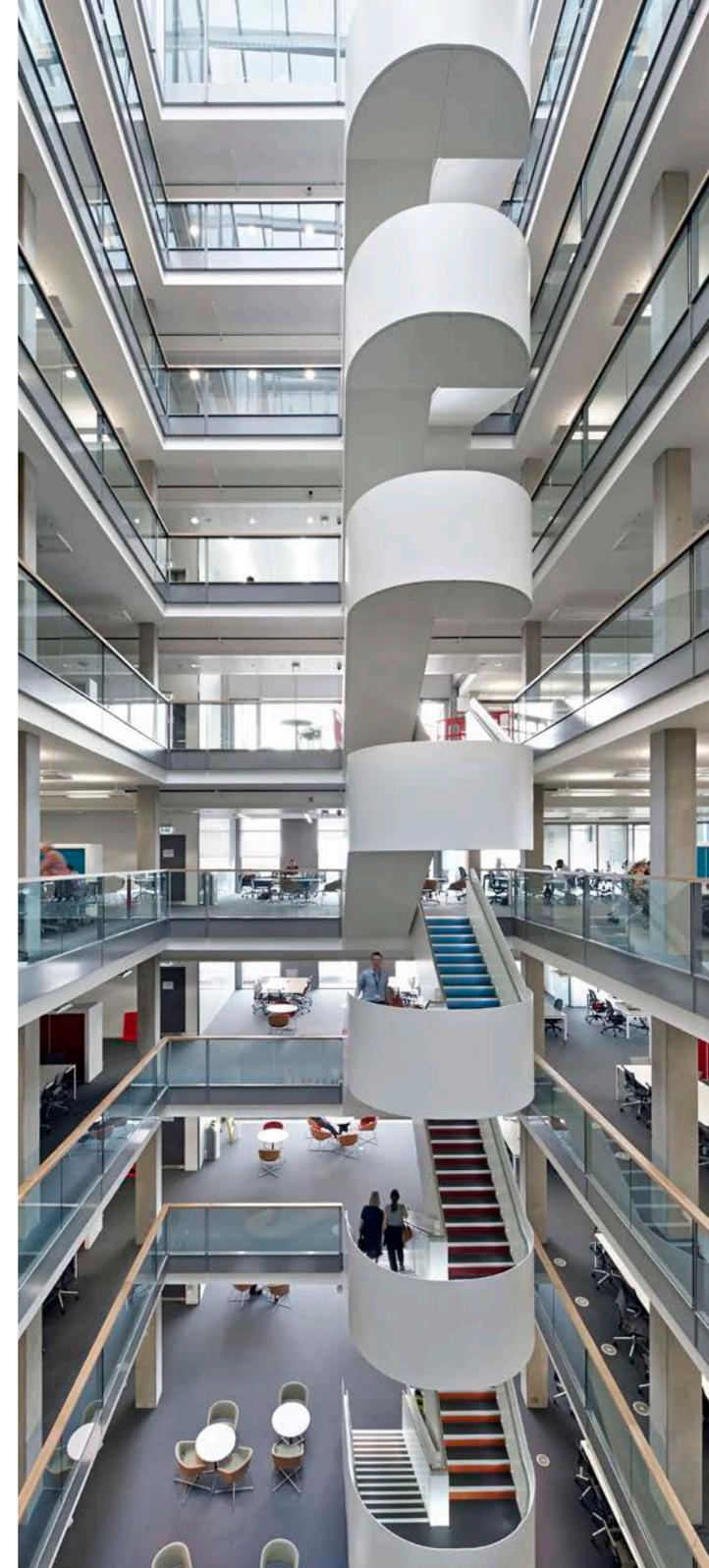
Councillor Theo Blackwell
Cabinet Member for Finance
and Technology



The library and cafe with extensive views over Camley Street Natural Park to the left



The office floor design is intended to foster closer cooperation between teams previously based in separate buildings. A ten-storey open-sided atrium brings light into the centre of the plan and allows visual connection between floors, emphasised by the sculptural stair that ascends through the space.





“Two weeks in and my inbox is lighter and I rarely use formal meeting spaces. I can quickly grab someone for chat or a few of us can get together in one of the breakout areas.”

Staff feedback

“I love the new building. I don’t just feel more connected to the people I work with, with the incredible views across the borough, I feel more in touch with the people of Camden.”

Staff feedback



Left: the provision of a more flexible working space for the client has enabled new ways of working.
Above: break-out space/tea point.

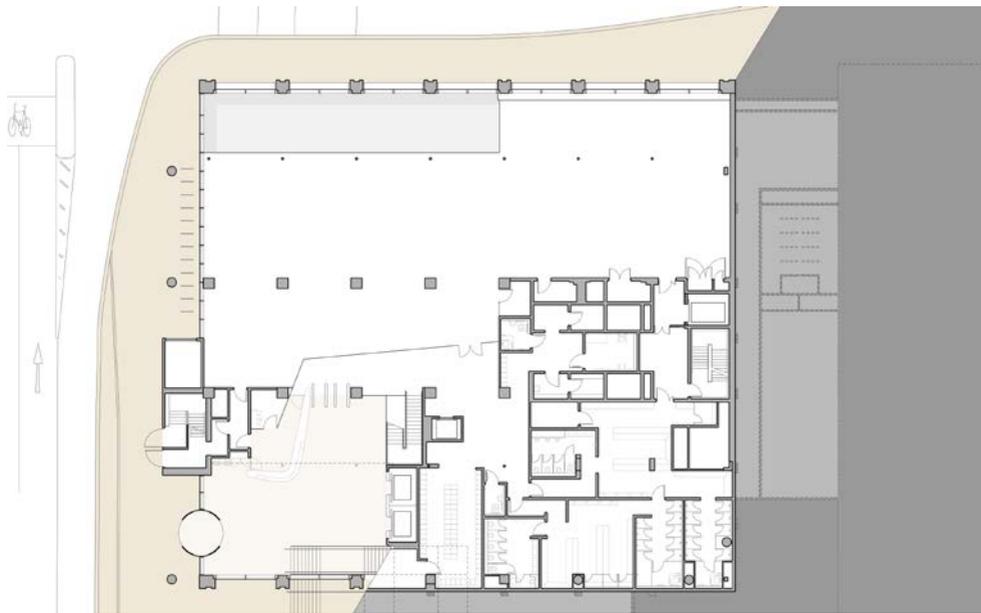


August 2010

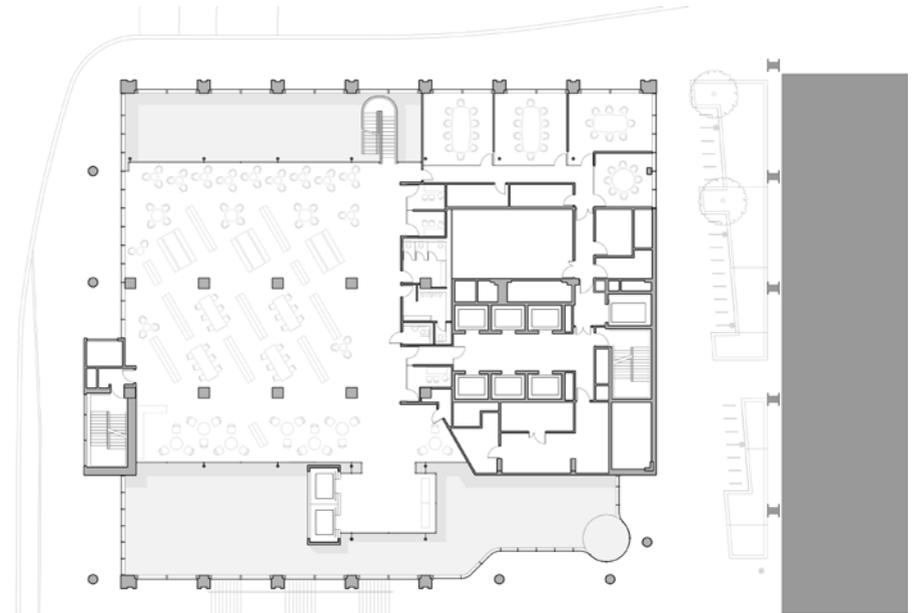
General view of the site looking south prior to redevelopment, with both King's Cross and St Pancras stations in the background. The site of the future building is located immediately to the right of the gas holder which was taken down before commencing the building works.

September 2013
View looking north over
Camley Street Natural Park
and the Regent's Canal,
during construction

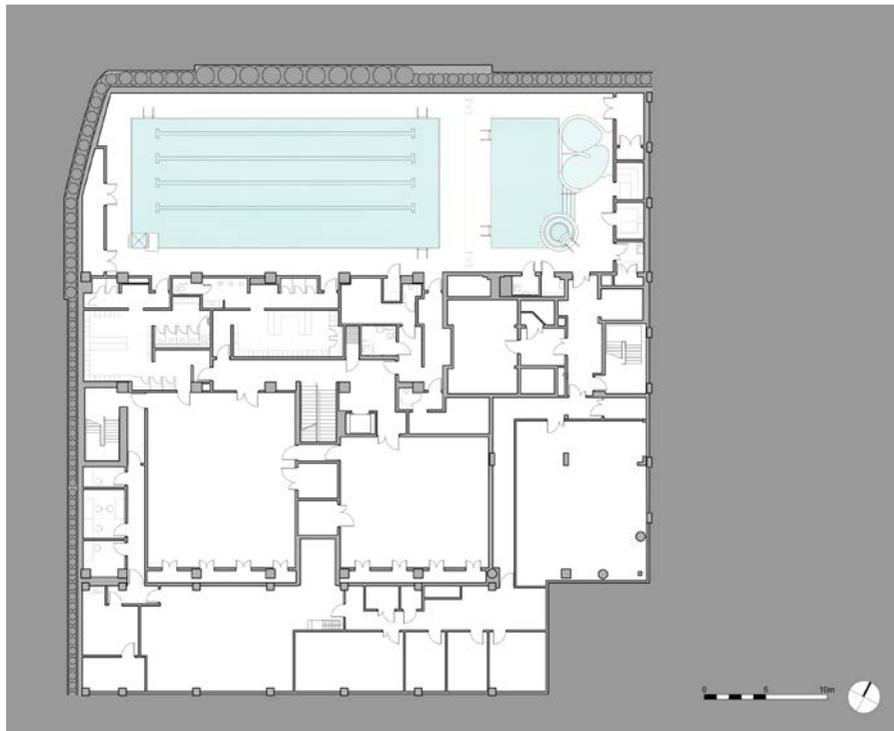




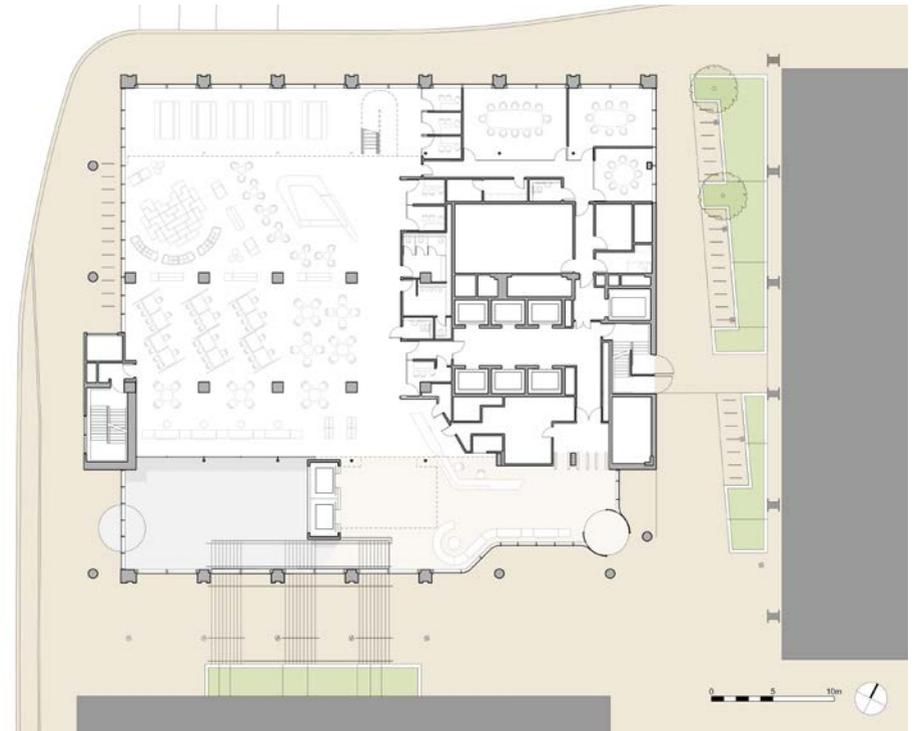
Lower ground floor plan



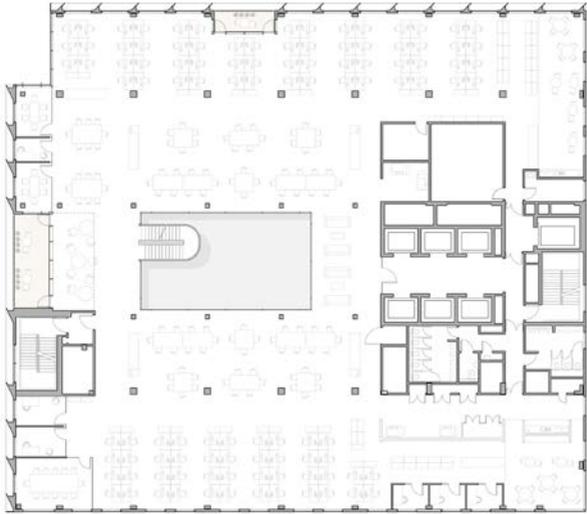
Level 1 plan



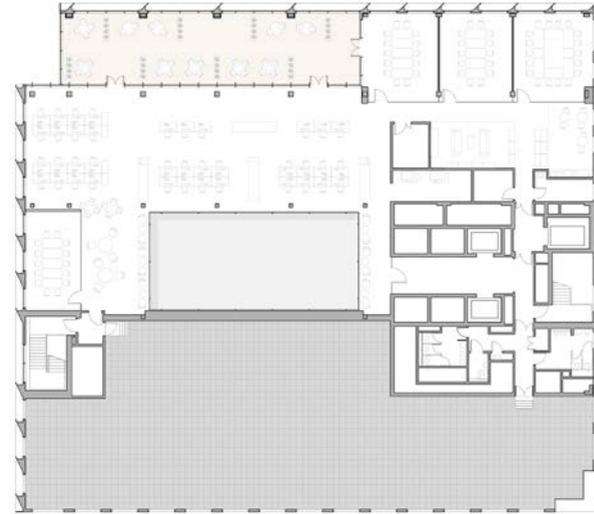
Basement level floor plan



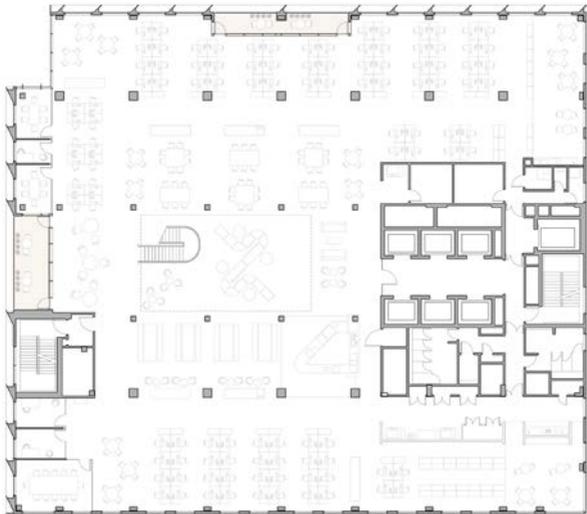
Upper ground floor plan



Level 6 plan



Level 11 plan



Level 2 plan



North elevation



TEAM

Client

The London Borough of Camden

Architect

Bennetts Associates

Developer

Argent/King's Cross Central Limited Partnership (KCCLP)

Contractor

Kier Group Plc

Quantity surveyor

Gardiner and Theobald

M&E engineer

Grontmij

Structural engineer

AKT II

Leisure facilities architect

LA Architects

AWARDS

BCI Awards 2015: Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award

BCI Awards 2015: Health and Safety Award

BCI Awards 2015: Best Practice Award

Camden Design Awards 2015: winner

Construction Manager of the Year Awards 2015: Gold medal winner (£60m+ category)

Guardian Sustainable Business Awards 2015: Impact Award

RIBA London Regional Award 2015

RIBA London Sustainability Award 2015

RICS London Awards 2015: winner, Commercial category

Building Awards 2015: Sustainability Project of the Year

LABC Building Excellence Awards 2015: best inclusive building, London region

Construction News Awards 2015: winner, Sustainable Project of the Year

NLA Awards 2015: commended, Public Buildings category

BREEAM Awards 2013: Best of BREEAM (other buildings) 2013

