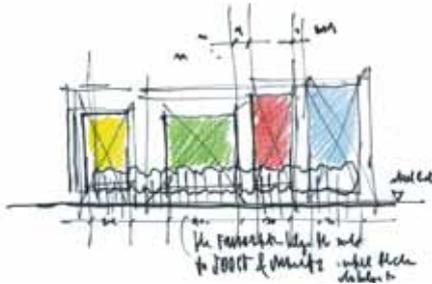


2002 - 2010

Central St.Giles

mixed-use development

London, UK



Situated between Covent Garden and New Oxford Street in central London, the Central St Giles development replaces a massive, unloved, impenetrable block of former government offices, with a permeable, vibrant, sculptural mix of volumes containing offices, apartments, restaurants and retail. Central St Giles fits well with its urban context, responding to the shapes and colours that surround it.

Client

Legal & General
with Mitsubishi Estate Corporation
Stanhope PLC

Renzo Piano Building Workshop,
architects
in collaboration with
Fletcher Priest Architects (London)

Design team

J.Moolhuijzen, M.van der Staay (partner and associate in charge), N.Mecattaf (associate) with L.Battaglia, S.Becchi, A.Belvedere, G.Carravieri, E.Chen, D.Colas, P.Colonna, W.Matthews, G.Mezzanotte, S.Mikou, Ph.Molter, Y.Pagès, M.Pare, L.Piazza, M.Reale, J.Rousseau, S.Singer Bayrle, R.Stampton and M.Aloisini, R.Biavati, M.Pierce, L.Voiland; O.Auber, C.Colson, Y.Kyrkos (models)

Consultants

Arup (structure and services); Davis Langdon (cost consultant); Bovis Lend Lease (pre-construction advice); Emmer Pfenninger & Partners (façades); P.Castiglioni / G.Bianchi (lighting); PRP (fit-out for affordable residential); Charles Funke Associates (landscaping)

Surrounded by conservation areas (although not one itself), it was essential that this sizeable new development fitted in to the scale and streetscape of this old area of central London. Breaking up the solid island site into a series of volumes, respecting surrounding building heights and creating access onto and through the development were just some of the ways this was done.

Glass, steel and ceramic are the principal materials used in its construction. The 22 brightly coloured facades, made of 121,000 glazed ceramic tiles, are perhaps the most striking feature of the project. Ceramic sections in yellow, red, orange or lime green alternate with recessed glazed facades to fragment each building's overall mass. Roof terraces and the buildings' irregular shapes add to the impression of a collection of smaller buildings side by side, echoing the variety of building styles found locally.

The two buildings, one residential and one for offices, surround a new public courtyard, the heart of the Central St Giles project. Here, around a big oak tree, restaurants and cafes spill out into the open and animate the space. Pedestrian access onto the island site is encouraged via five passageways, creating a number of new linking through-routes.

The ground-floor restaurant units are conceived to be as transparent as possible. Fully glazed in low-iron glass, the 6m high facades give views into the courtyard and through the development, particularly from St Giles High Street, emphasising the permeability of the site.

The complex includes 8400 sq m of residential space: 56 private apartments and 53 affordable housing units occupy a 14-storey building on the western edge of the site. The 38,000 sq m of office space is divided over ten floors, each with a generous 2.9m ceiling height. The offices also benefit of a roof terrace on floors seven to ten where rainwater is collected and stored for irrigation.

Central St Giles scored an "Excellent" BREEAM rating for sustainability: 80% of heating is from a Biomass boiler, rainwater is collected and reused, and the planted roof terraces add to local biodiversity.



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