

Saw Swee Hock Student Centre - LSE

O'Donnell + Tuomey

Sheila O'Donnell, John Tuomey, Willie Carey

O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects were selected as architects for a proposed New Students' Centre through a two stage international architectural design competition in June 2009.

The proposal was to create an active Student Union, using democratic, everyday, unusual architecture of useful beauty, born out of an understanding of context.

The site is located at the knuckle-point convergence of narrow streets that characterise the LSE city centre campus. The faceted façade operates with respect to the Rights of Light Envelope and is tailored to lines of sight, to be viewed from street corner perspectives and to make visual connections between internal and external circulation. The brick skin is cut along fold lines to form large areas of glazing, framing views. Analysis of the context has influenced the first principles of a site-specific architectural design.

The building is designed to embody the dynamic character of a contemporary Student Centre. The complex geometries of the site provided a starting point for a lively arrangement of irregular floor plates, each particular to its

function. Space flows freely in plan and section, stairs turn to create meeting places at every level.

London is a city of bricks. The building is clad with bricks, with each brick offset from the next in an open work pattern, creating dappled daylight inside and glowing like a lattice lantern at night.

The building has the robust adaptability of a lived-in warehouse, with solid wooden floors underfoot. Steel trusses or ribbed concrete slabs span the big spaces. Circular steel columns prop office floors between the large span volumes and punctuate the open floor plan of the café. There are no closed-in corridors. Every office work-space has views to the outside world. The basement venue is day lit from clerestory windows.

Building credentials include BREEAM Outstanding design rating, EPC "A" rating, DEC "A" rating, a first in London. Through robust detailing, building form and orientation, thermal massing, flexibility of building plan and smart systems design, active cooling has been removed. Building energy demands are met through Low/ Zero carbon technologies.

London, United Kingdom
Commission date: 2009
Construction dates: 2011-2014
Client: London School of Economics
and Political Science, Estates Division
Gross floor area: 6,100 m²
Cost/m²: 5,045 €/m²



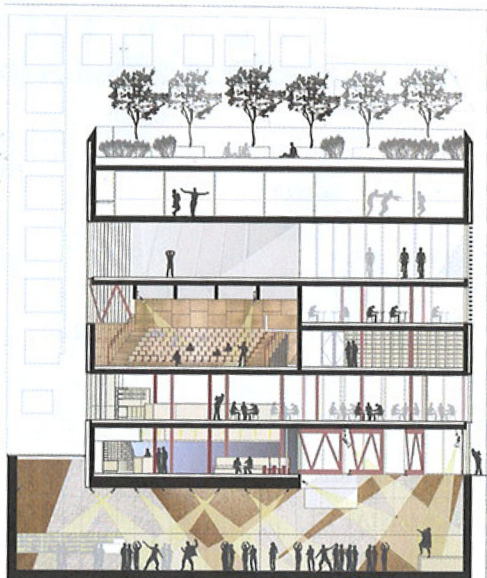
"This is a building quite without precedent. Sheer, origami cliffs of folded, sometimes perforated brickwork respond to the complex rules-of-light governing the development of this extraordinarily compact site in the heart of London. The building hosts myriad uses, from a basement disco to a radio station to contemplative spaces, all strung out like individual pearls along a magical, unfolding 'vertical street'."

Shane O'Toole

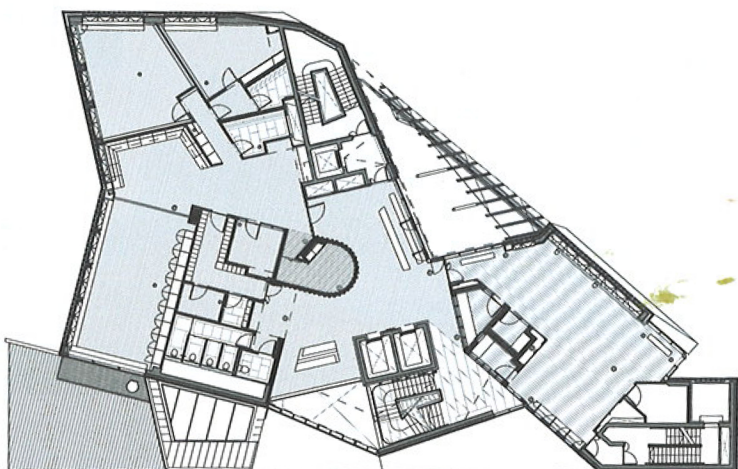




Competition section



First floor plan



Ground floor plan

