

Unilever House Blackfriars, London EC4, United Kingdom



Client

Unilever plc
(Bovis Lend Lease / Stanhope JV project)

Value

£72 million shell & core (including Cat A)
with £18 million Cat B fit-out (in negotiation)

Area

35,969 m² / 387,167 ft² (gifa)

Schedule

October 2004 – March 2007

Duration

114 weeks

Architect

Kohn Pedersen Fox

Engineer

ARUP

Quantity Surveyor

Davis Langdon/Mott Green Wall

Images:

Historic Apse and entrance (before and after)



Unilever House was originally built in the 1930s and sits on a busy corner site next to Embankment and a 5* hotel.

The Global Headquarters was rebuilt by demolishing the current internal structure behind the retained façade and creating an open-plan office space. Our approach set new standards in sustainability.

The final building has a full-height (8 storey) glass atrium with 6 glass lifts, a restaurant on level 8 and a Green roof garden on level 9. The internal design creates four suspended meeting areas ("flying carpets") accessed by walkways from levels 5 through to 8.

The focus on sustainability affected timber procurement, recycling, community liaison, logistics and design.

Materials were salvaged and recycled including the historic stone Apse and doors in the Boardroom, the fireplace (which weighed 3 tonnes) and rose wood panels were stored and reused. The temporary accommodation and site offices were fitted out with furniture reclaimed from within Unilever House.

The original restaurant was "rebuilt" behind the reception area, to provide facilities for the workforce, and members of the Unilever catering staff were employed by Bovis Lend Lease, rather than lose their jobs during the construction period.

Other pieces of furniture have been donated to charitable organisations and schools and a complete Lecture Theatre (which was only installed in 1995) was transported to a culture centre on the Isle of Wight.

Because of the very tight city centre location, a Consolidation Centre was set up in Greenwich (outside the congestion charge zone) where all the materials were stored until actually required on-site. Waste was also taken back to this depot for processing, before final disposal. The Consolidation Centre has since won several awards.

Showing the suspended meeting rooms

