

Maintaining the architectural vision behind London School of Economics' redevelopment

The internationally renowned London School of Economics (LSE) undertook an extensive redevelopment program of their Centre Buildings area, with the aim of providing a state of the art education facility for academic research, teaching and study. CoxGomyl's experienced team were called upon to deliver practical and reliable solutions to the numerous building access challenges presented by the new bold architectural vision; particularly the practical difficulties involved in deploying the Building Maintenance Units and incorporating them within the building structure.

The new building provides modern offices for the Directorate and a number of academic departments, a wide range of flexible teaching and learning spaces for lecture style presentations, collaborative activities and individual study, as well as a café and publicly accessible roof terraces on levels 2, 6 and 12. The winning design by Roger Stirk Harbour + Partners encompasses two towers of thirteen stories and six stories respectively which are linked by a dramatic, flowing atrium structure. Utilising an unusual approach to structural stability, the building features external diagonal bracing which also defines the visual aesthetic of the exterior. A unique part of the design is an open internal staircase which physically and visually links the various levels in dramatic lines, which in turn form a key focal point of the exterior facade.

The building access system CoxGomyl developed for this project encompasses two Building Maintenance Units (BMUs) located at roof level and at the level 6 terrace. The top roof level BMU travels on twin tracks, providing an 11.3 metre outreach along with jib slewing and luffing. The complexity of the facade surface, in particular the numerous 'brise-soleil' sun shades protruding from the building, made it impossible to attach restraint pins to the facade. CoxGomyl designed and supplied a bespoke specialist long reach tool which allowed for restraint pins to be safely and securely attached. The level 6 BMU is the first of its type to be installed in the UK, which meant the CoxGomyl team were required to work closely with all stakeholders to navigate a successful deployment. Most notably, the BMU operates above the atrium structure and cannot land on the glass panels even in the case of an emergency. A special rescue strategy for this area was therefore developed with ventilation openings above the atrium roof allowing for operators to evacuate safely.

CoxGomyl's expert team are vastly experienced and their reputation solidifies their problem solving approach to delivering safe, high-quality and cost effective building access systems for a wide range of structures.

FACTS & FIGURES

Commencement	2017
Completion	2019
Building Height	65m
Floor Count	13
No. of BMUs	2
Outreach	11.3m & 3.42m
Building Type	Commercial

