

Mayflower Halls Student Accommodation for the University of Southampton, designed by ArchitecturePLB, home to 1100 plus students opened it's doors in September 2014.

ArchitecturePLB, working with developer Osborne, responded to the University of Southampton OJEU by first using our local knowledge and contacts to draw up a shortlist of potential sites. The long list of sites included vacant land adjacent to the Mayflower Theatre, offering an excellent opportunity for a city centre presence for the University. Working with the land owner, Terrace Hill, a successful joint bid was assembled.

The project represents a major development for all concerned. It is the largest scheme funded by Legal and General in the sector, the largest project developed and constructed by Osborne and the tallest building completed by ArchitecturePLB.

The site, described by the local Chamber of Commerce as 'A jewel in Southampton's crown,' had seen numerous attempts at regeneration over a 20 year period. With the backing of the University, a viable use was found which was strongly supported by the Local Authority.

ArchitecturePLB worked closely with Planning and Conservation officers and the City Design Manager, to ensure that the design was appropriate to it's historic setting, within a conservation area and close to a number of listed buildings and park. The resulting scheme has a strong visual identity, which uses massing, proportions and materials to relate to the context, whilst retaining a clearly contemporary language.

ArchitecturePLB, as lead designer, have managed a complex process from inception, through planning and now completion. The large project team, with consultants representing over 15 disciplines, have worked closely with the developer and contractor to ensure that the project was completed efficiently. The University as end-user, was successfully absorbed into the project team, with such close working relationships ensuring that the end product met the University's requirements and aspirations.

A key tool in the successful delivery of the project was the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM). A detailed architectural model was created and, working with the structural engineer and M&E sub-contractor, was fully co-ordinated with the structural and services design. Key outputs from the model have included all general arrangement information, details of major components and setting-out.

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- 01 View from Havelock Road showing Mayflower Gym on ground floor corner.
- 02 An aerial photograph taken once the building had reached its topping out phase.
- 03 Internal courtyard view showing the building in use by one of the first students.



- 01 Internal courtyard area
- 02 Corner detail showing cladding and brise-soleil
- 03 North elevation adjacent to the Mayflower Theatre
- 04 An internal courtyard entrance
- 05 Window detail
- 06 South elevation showing view into courtyard and artist designed gates.

Total Area : approx 30,000m²
 Procurement Type : Develop and Construct
 Local Authority : Southampton City Council
 Planning Approved : July 2012
 Construction Timescale : 20 months

Contractor : Osborne
 Structural Engineer : Waterman
 M & E Engineer : Mecserve
 Landscape Architect : ArchitecturePLB, David Hares and UBU

Three separate blocks make up Mayflower Halls, ranging from 9 to 17 stories in height. The accommodation is typically arranged in 8 to 10 en suite study bed clusters, sharing a communal kitchen and living space. A broad offer of alternative accommodation is available with self-contained single and double room studios being incorporated throughout the blocks.

As the project is now complete, attention has shifted towards information transfer to the University's lettings and maintenance departments.

The scheme utilises a combination of sustainable features including a 'fabric-first' approach to the thermal performance of the envelope, green roofs and water heating provided by the local district heating system. It has received BREEAM Excellent rating at the design stage.

In addition to ArchitecturePLB's key role in the main scheme, we were also appointed directly by University of Southampton to deliver the fit-out of the commercial spaces, which include a large gym, supermarket and learning space/cafe.

Throughout all stages of the project, a focus on the student experience has been paramount. Creating a large community of students in a city centre location requires careful consideration of many aspects including social interaction, identity, welfare and security. The scheme seeks to create a welcoming and safe environment, centred around a semi-private landscaped courtyard, a retreat from the surrounding city centre.

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