

PRIME
MINISTER'S

AWARD

BETTER
PUBLIC
BUILDING

2004

cabe



Office of Government Commerce



CITY & ISLINGTON COLLEGE LIFELONG LEARNING CENTRE

CLIENT:
City & Islington College

PRINCIPAL DESIGNER:
Wilkinson Eyre Architects

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR:
Geoffrey Osborne

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER:
Arup

CONTRACT VALUE:
£8.6 million

Wilkinson Eyre Architects was commissioned to redevelop an urban site in Finsbury Park, north London as this 7400m² Lifelong Learning Centre, which also includes a new public branch library. At the core of the scheme was a Victorian school building which was adapted and reused. Additionally, the architects designed new accommodation to wrap around it, creating a strong dynamic between new and old and characterised by an airy feel and seamless use of public art. The new street frontage features a set-back arcade with a dramatic, glazed slot above the entrance which leads into a central atrium space. Other key elements include high-level clerestory windows, enabling the building to be naturally ventilated.

The learning centre project shows how robust design quality can be achieved within a tight further education budget, how a client, design team and contractor can maintain a relationship through tricky value engineering exercises, and how Victorian stock can be successfully adapted to suit modern uses.

The Judges said - 'This example of part-refurbishment, part-rebuild is an exemplary case of blending old and new. But it is also a perfect example of an education project doing so much to kick-start the urban regeneration of the area in which it sits.'