

# Birkbeck University of London, 373 Euston Road



**Winner of the  
Value Award**

## Project Details

<b>Location</b>	373 Euston Road, London
<b>Contract value</b>	£9.5million
<b>Type of work</b>	Refurbishment and extension
<b>Construction product</b>	Teaching & Learning Centre
<b>Type of Client</b>	University
<b>Start date</b>	April 2019
<b>End date</b>	March 2021
<b>Area</b>	1807m <sup>2</sup>

## Benefits

- **carbon reduction by more than 35%**
- **BREEAM Excellent**
- **creative adaptation of existing 1920s building**
- **continued work during lockdown**
- **collaborative approach**

## Outcomes

Return on Investment is equal to 80% of construction cost outlay.



Reduction in operational carbon through energy-efficient mechanical ventilation, photovoltaic panels, air-source heat pumps, a green roof and rainwater harvesting.



Formularised and captured design approach will be rolled out across the Birkbeck estate.



Sustainably refurbished and reused to avoid removing the existing structure and sending materials to landfill.



Efficient design of the building prevents wasted space whilst ensuring facilities are at its core and are accessible to all.



## Project Background

Conversion plans for 373 Euston Road were not quick nor easy as the value within the site was not immediately obvious. A difficult corner site, next to a busy main road, with the Circle Line running beneath and pre-planning for residential. Converting to education use would mean beginning the planning process from scratch, including section 106 negotiations and delivering an exceptional design that would satisfy Camden planners.

Consideration was given to demolishing and replacing the existing structure to obtain the space and state-of-the-art teaching facility envisaged. But gradually the argument developed that adapting and repurposing the existing structure was more carbon-efficient and one that would bring the old building back to life, in line with the goals and principles of Birkbeck's founders and trustees.

## Delivering Value

Appointing the professional team early in the process to investigate options for the site, meant each consultant was part of Birkbeck's vision and involved in framing the Project Brief. The strong bond established between Birkbeck and the professional team during feasibility, meant it wasn't difficult for parties to constructively challenge or have difficult conversations, driving better value for the client. This frankness was extended to the contractor, once onboard, and meant that the success of the project was informed by everyone's skill sets.

Birkbeck was an intelligent client with a clear governance structure, project sponsor and proactive stakeholder representatives, made up of:

- A Birkbeck sub-committee constantly looking at the future of teaching and driving the brief for teaching spaces and technology.
- Operations stakeholders who specified inter-connectivity with the rest of the estate for fire, cctv, alarm systems etc. so everything could be managed efficiently and remotely from the main Malet Street site.

Continuous interaction with representatives from each group drew out priorities. The cost plan was aligned with the aspirations for each building element and the design developed accordingly.

- Value for Camden Council meant a streetscape-enhancing design which was achieved with the 'gem-like' lecture structure extension – fully supported by the Council's design review panel.
- Value for the contractor meant a design that accounted for the constrained site access, with prefabricated elements, including the CLT and steel items for the extension which could be unloaded quickly and minimised work at height, so limiting road closures.

In order to achieve Birkbeck's vision of a BREEAM Excellent building, the team pooled together knowledge and used lifecycle analyses to develop an overview of the building's environmental impact, along with recommendations on enhancing performance through sustainable alternatives to contribute to reducing operational carbon.

A bold showcase for inclusive, modern education facilities, this project delivers value in a number of ways; social, environmental, monetary and is a deserving winner of the Value award category.