

# Paul Vick architects

**Creates returns through its unique approach to identity, connection, resilience and regenerative design.**

**Winners of Build's  
Best Commercial Architecture Firm 2023, London,**

**Their planning permission record is impressive. The building even more so.**

**Each project is more than a job, it is a journey and an adventure. They play with light, colours, and textures to create exceptional structures. We're sure to see more than its commercial services flourish for the years to come - Judges.**



Fig 1

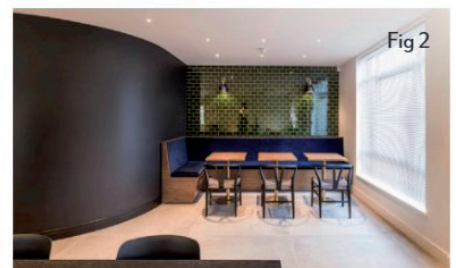


Fig 2

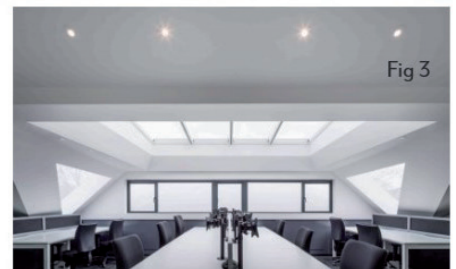


Fig 3

Fig 1. The glass bridge lights up the connection for the global HQ of a London telecoms company. Photo Mel Yates. Fig 2. New refectory provides a number of types of seating and was carefully sized, including curved wall around a new stair to create space and identity. The varied seating types allow staff to meet with clients, or each other 1 on 1 or in small groups or as the whole office. Photo Mel Yates. Fig 3. Bringing their 100% planning permission record to bear, the architects secured an additional floor of office space with creative use of natural light. The new space was created above the original requirements of the brief. Photo Mel Yates.

The glass bridge that lights up at night (figs 1 to 3) was created as a key expression of identity for the global telecoms HQ that numbers Governments and City fintech companies on its client roster. The 15m long design is deceptively simple, with every joint, support, light fitting and even rainwater management carefully curated. The design employs different translucencies (for privacy) and texture, and the angle and landscape are formed to provide a passive approach to sun shading.

Designed to offer resilience and make the most of the existing building's fabric, the bridge and layouts reduce the number of receptions, increase useable space and forge connection between teams – social, economic and environmental sustainabilities. A number of concepts were developed for a new refectory. In its final offering it has the ability of both self-service and catered kitchen, laid out so that staff can meet each other one on one, in small groups or as a whole office and also to bring clients. The architects secured an additional floor of office space above the brief through their combined planning and design expertise – Paul Vick Architects has 100% planning permission on listed, unlisted, and new build.

'Our 100 % record in planning permission is important, as it can facilitate extra scope and dimension for a project, as well as allowing it to be built at all,' says Paul Vick. 'It is a definition of viability, the basis for serious funding, and clients often get more than expected, improving profitability and return.'

The designs are surprisingly prescient of Covid and its effects, perhaps less so when you consider that the same level of care is put into the detail designs as for a private commission. The practice describes the office as a 'parallel home' but at scale. When designing, the practice was aware that a sense of belonging is essential to staff retention and the office 'tribe' functioning well together.

Paul Vick architect's pedigree includes the innovation hub for Innovation Warehouse and the City of London at Smithfield, which has been described as the first of its kind for the co-working model and all that followed. Given the practice's depth of approach to 'thought-through space' the designs also embody how the innovation hub goes about scaling innovation and capturing the secret sauce where space improves business growth.

The practice describes their approach as 'cultural commerce', at the 24acre, grade 2 listed C19th Royal Ordnance Depot in Northampton – the only one of its kind. With their client Michael Chittenden, they completed a mixed use vision regenerating the whole site followed by a number of specific projects (inc retail, accommodation for business travellers, and visitors' centre) and more recently completed the refurbishment and change of use for a 3 storey, C19th listed clothing store to open plan office space with café and landscape. The detail draws out the colourful marks and patinas of the building's history including leaving in place the heavy, blast proof, iron doors. At the 5acre, sister site (the Magazine Store where the explosives were kept) they are developing a regenerative vision including many modalities of work. The first project is a small recording studio.

Paul Vick architects are Chartered RIBA architects. Paul Vick, RIBA, MSc Dev Prac is also a Fellow of Royal Society of Arts.

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