



80
CHARLOTTE
STREET.



“Each material has its specific characteristics
which we must understand if we want to use it.”

Mies van der Rohe

80
CHARLOTTE
STREET.

FITZROVIA W1

A DERWENT
LONDON
BUILDING

80 Charlotte Street is Derwent London's largest scheme to date. The site formed part of the LMS and Derwent Valley merger back in 2007 and is central to one of our core villages, Fitzrovia. It is known for its rich, eclectic history and has been, and is home, to many creative and independent businesses.

The previous property was developed in the 1960s, being close to the iconic Post Office tower, and was subsequently the home for advertising giants Saatchi & Saatchi. As the sign on the steps said "Nothing is Impossible", so in 2008 we looked both to redevelop this unloved block and to relocate one of our significant occupiers to two new Derwent buildings.

We approached international architects Make and engineers Arup who coincidentally had made Fitzrovia their home since the 1950s. Initial studies considered a major refurbishment but this was soon ruled out in favour of our first net zero carbon, all-electric building. The site was greatly underutilised, giving us the opportunity to double the floor area to 377,000 sq ft.

Whilst planning was complex, the challenge to repurpose a city block provided an opportunity to break up the façade with multiple elevations of rich and different finishes, from hand-laid brick to beautiful concrete, and also retain the 1930s façade on Whitfield Street.

The new property is not just an office, but a home for Arup and London headquarters for internationally renowned management consultants, Boston Consulting Group.

It is also rich in amenities with two new receptions that link to three generous light wells. Private and communal terraces offer stunning views across London and the new pocket park can be enjoyed by all. Inspired by Paley Park in New York, The Poets' Park was named given Fitzrovia's rich literary history.

Charlotte Apartments and Asta House (opposite) formed part of the development, providing much needed affordable and private housing.

Occupiers are becoming more discerning and requiring ever more amenities, so 80 Charlotte Street is also home to Derwent's first Member's Lounge, DL/ 78. It is a wonderful space for occupiers across the portfolio to drop in and enjoy the café, co-working space or make use of the various hireable meeting rooms.

As London continues to attract global companies and their international and diverse talent, 80 Charlotte Street is a new landmark.

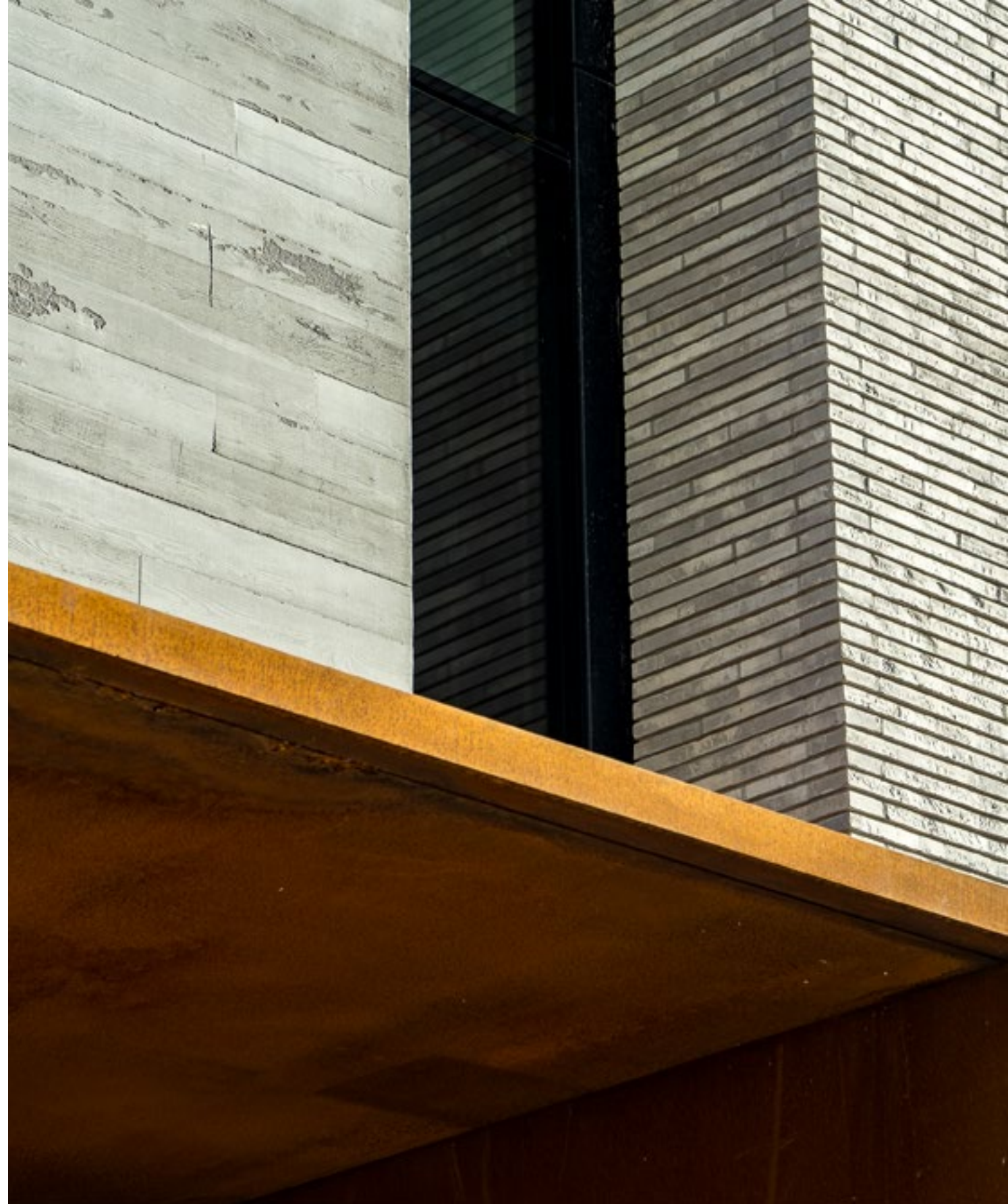
Paul Williams
Chief Executive, Derwent London



The rhythm, scale and depth of board marked concrete panels create a striking elevation.

Previous page: A suite of carefully selected materials, beautifully detailed, set the building in its context of an island site in Fitzrovia.

Right image: Board marked concrete, brick and Corten steel in harmony.





THE
PORTS
PARK

Hugo Dalton's 'Choreographic Form, 2021' artwork takes centre stage in The Poets' Park.

Previous page:
The Poets' Park is a new public space in Fitzrovia, inspired by Paley Park, New York, bounded by Petersen brick façades.





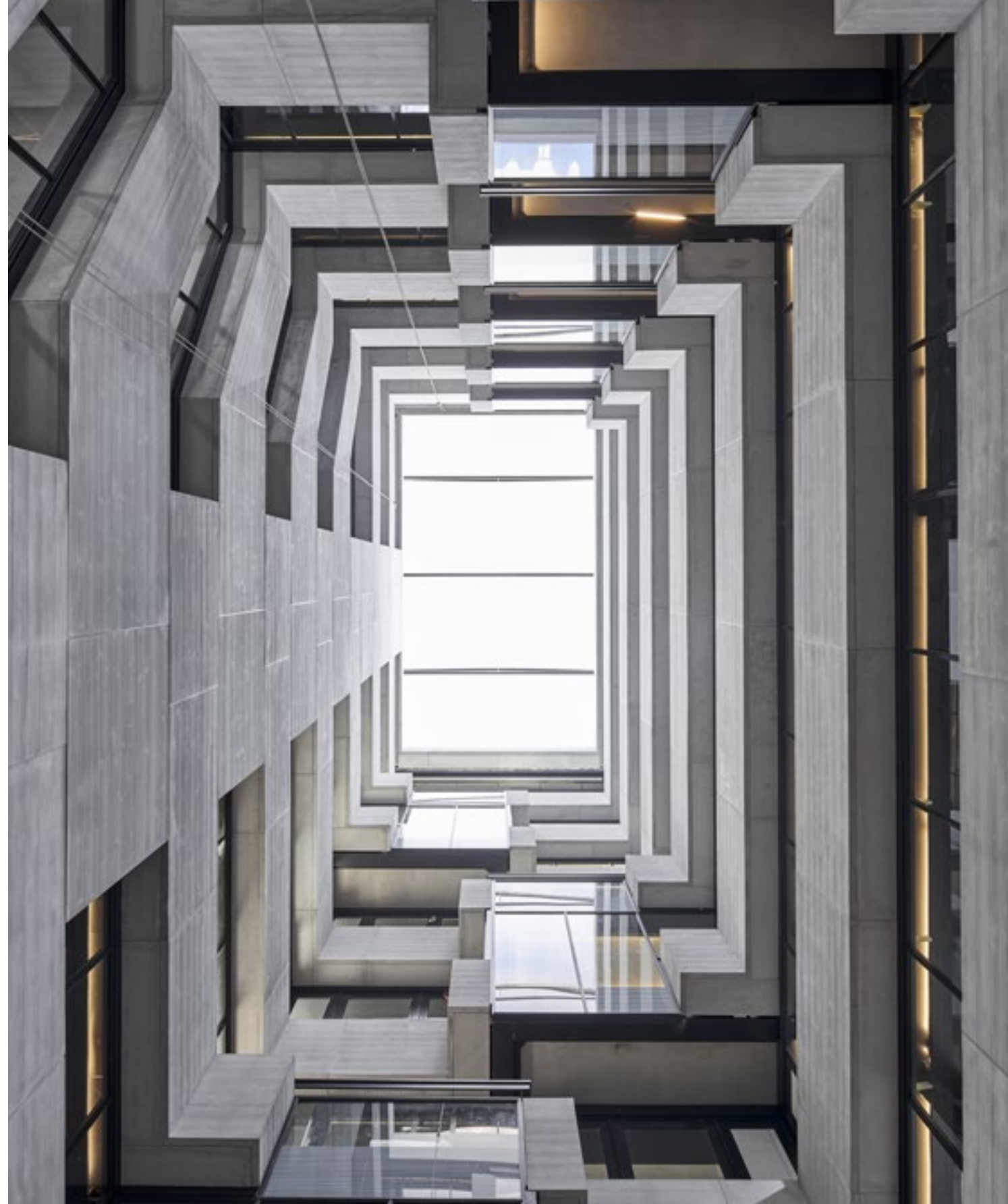
A moment of transition celebrating the legible construction of the building before moving into the reception atrium.

Left image: The rich palette of materials continue internally to create a dramatic arrival.



The reception atrium floods the building with light and carries fresh air to the floor plates from which balconies break out into the dramatic volume.

Image overleaf:
The reception with its Donald Judd inspired desks and 'Dinesen' timber floor offers access to the internal feature staircase and Bar 80 on the ground floor.





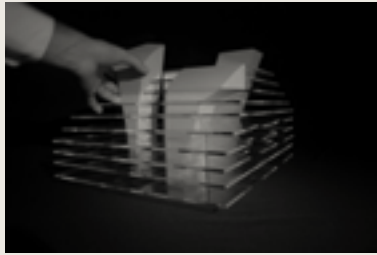
80
CHARLOTTE
STREET



80 Charlotte Street tells the story
of a changing neighbourhood

I remember presenting 80 Charlotte Street to a small group halfway through our design work. It's fair to say they pretty much disparaged everything – all the key design moves. We were left reeling slightly, but Simon Silver was delighted. He said, “Good! That means we’re on the right track!”

That sums up the process for 80 Charlotte Street. We weren't aiming for the standard. It wasn't about delivering what was already in the market. It was about challenging, innovating and exploring. Going against the status quo. It was enormous fun to create something new.



Early model inspiration by Make Architects

The whole process was one big collaboration between Make, Arup, Derwent London, specialists, artists and craftspeople, and we were all focused on one collective goal, and it shows. The completed building was ahead of its time – despite starting almost a decade before completion (as we had to wait for vacant possession) – and the collaborative design process was fundamental to its success.

We had many models, mock-ups and samples to illustrate spaces, details and junctions – models on the tables, full-size mock-ups on the floor and some taped to the walls. This emphasis on the 3D naturally led to full-size mock-ups on-site. We placed models on the street to be seen in daylight, from a distance and at different angles, and we got a lot of stares from the neighbours as we analysed and refined. That was another key element to the architecture – rather than adding and augmenting the ideas over time, we extracted and simplified. Honing and sharpening the narrative to become more precise and targeted.



Inspiration for exterior – Annabelle Selldorf's Zwirner Gallery in Manhattan

The same materials and forms flow from outside to in; the Corten box entrance reappears as the reception desk; the external weatherboard concrete façade frames become air plenums wrapping the atria; the timber weatherboard concrete walls flow into long planks of oak timber on the entrance floors; and caged lift cars become caged light fittings on the office floors. The materials were chosen to age gracefully, with minimal maintenance, and with a clarity of detailing that celebrates the honest construction and functionality of the building.

The engineering and architecture are truly symbiotic, inspired by each other and fine-tuned to simplify the structure and allow it to speak for itself. We worked closely with Arup throughout, in particular with James Thonger's vision right from the start to make the building all-electric. This seems obvious now, but at the time, the industry was still fixated on gas and wood pellet boilers. James insisted that going all-electric would be truly sustainable, because less carbon would be emitted as Britain's power grid transitions to renewables – stunningly simple and now emulated widely.



Original building showing aerial view

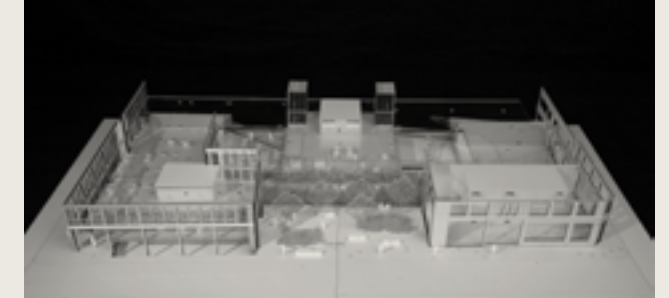


Fitzrovia map from mid 18th century

Of course, Arup and Make are both native to Fitzrovia, so we're very familiar with its bohemian background. Formerly home to Dylan Thomas, Virginia Woolf and Thomas Paine to name a few and its eclectic mix of architecture and communities. Anthony Hill, who lived on Charlotte Street until his death in 2020, was a leading member of the constructionist group of geometric abstract artists that emerged in Britain in the mid-1950s. His works resonate wonderfully with our simple geometric approach and use of honest materials. As a nod to his influence, some of his relief construction pieces are displayed in the atrium.

It was fundamentally important that the building attract the right tenants and, though large in scale, still feel embedded into the grain of Fitzrovia – the retained façades are crucial to this. We'd have liked to retain more of the original structure, but sadly it was constructed in the post-war economy with what became known as 'Weetabix' concrete, due to its crumbly nature. Decisions on what to keep and replace were taken slowly and thoughtfully – an approach which heavily informed the final design.

The building was also informed by the mix of uses. During our planning consultation, the commercial and F&B scope extended to include residential across private, private rented and social uses. We also found a home for a public open space too, continuing Fitzrovia's trend for hidden gardens and squares. It was a welcome challenge to make it truly mixed-use and combine all the ingredients that make a city sing.



Early mock-up model by Make Architects

80 Charlotte Street was such a unique opportunity and we're enormously grateful to have been part of the process. The building demonstrates innovative, sustainable design that challenges structural conventions and respects its surroundings, and it was an absolute joy to design.

Sean Affleck
Director, Make Architects

Steel frames and pre-cast concrete planks form the stylish canvas of the floor plates. The carefully co-ordinated mechanical services are augmented by openable windows.





Well designed breakout space in Lee & Thompson's lower ground office.

Above image: The removal of pre-cast concrete planks create double-height spaces and offered Boston Consulting Group the opportunity to connect between floors.

Right image: Arup ground floor office with impressive 'town hall' interconnecting wooden staircase.







Balconies break out onto the atriums, which bring natural light into the floor plates.

Previous page:
Rational and co-ordinated construction create flexible and adaptable floor plates for the buildings occupiers.





Sunken seating area within the rooftop terrace.

Previous page:
Terraces planted with wild flowers attract wildlife and afford views across the city.





A new Fitzrovia café with a terrazzo floor and bespoke leather banquettes offers an amenity for both the building and the public.

Previous page:
DL/78.Fitzrovia – a hybrid space for connection and collaboration, with meeting rooms gathered around a double-height space.

Image overleaf:
A composition of new and existing, board marked concrete and 'hit and miss' brickwork frame an existing refurbished brick façade, housing a new entrance from Whitfield Street.



81 WHITFIELD STREET



Team

Client

Derwent London

Architect

Make

Services Engineer

Arup

Structural, Geotechnical & Façades Engineer

Arup

Lighting Designer

EQ2 Light

Landscape Architect

del Buono Gazerwitz

Building Control

BRCS

Party Wall Surveyor

Botley Byrne

Rights of Light

Gordon Ingram Associates

Planning Consultant

DP9

Main Contractor

Multiplex

Project Manager

GVA Second London Wall
(now known as Avison & Young)

Quantity Surveyor

Aecom

Construction Legals

Charles Russell Speechlys

Property Legals

Berwin Leighton Paisner

Art

Hugo Dalton
Metal Sistemi

Joinery

Benchmark for DL/78.Fitzrovia
Atlantic

Tannery

Bill Amberg

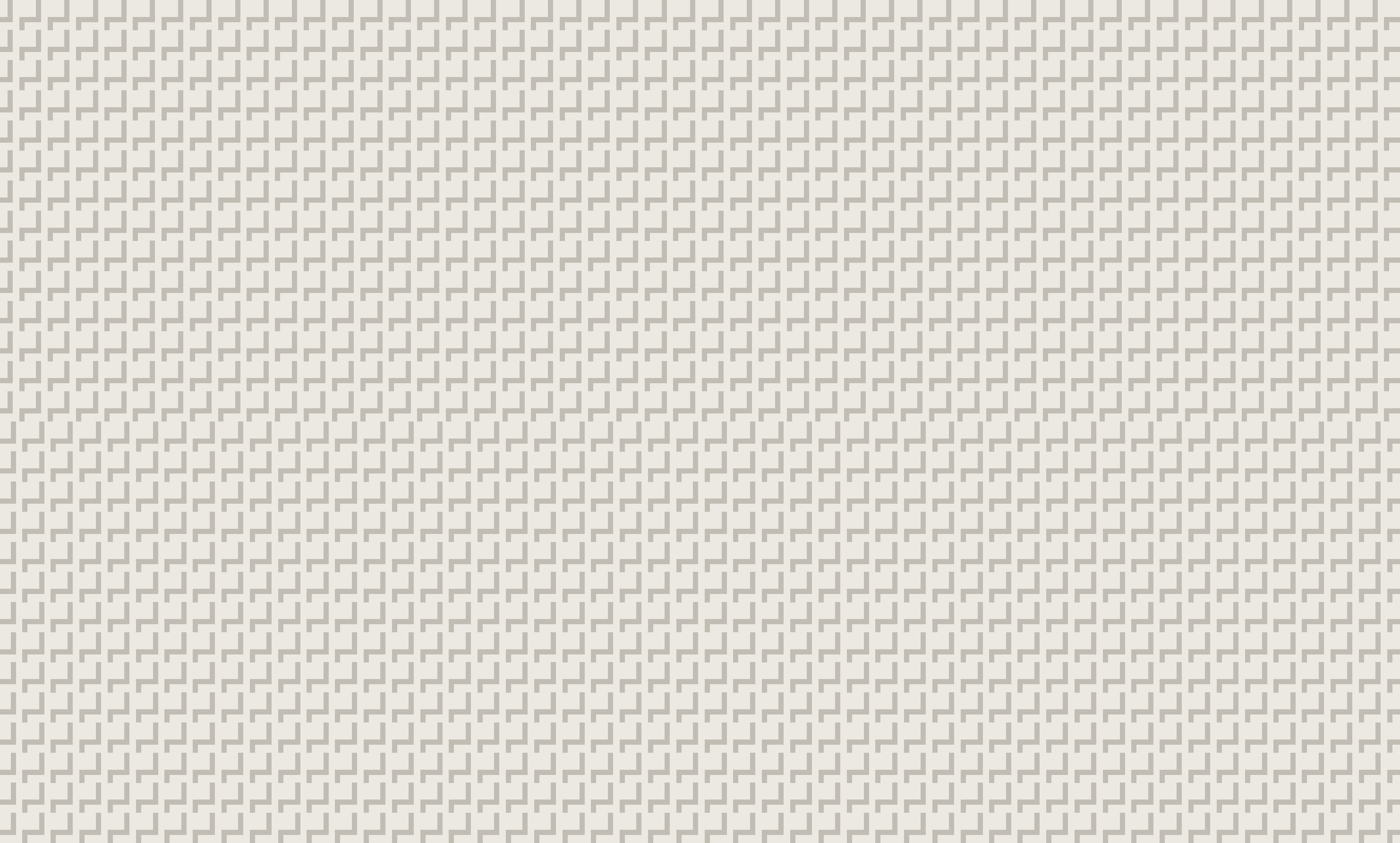
Photography

Jack Hobhouse
Hufton & Crow

The retained brickwork corner façade is home to residential apartments and Officina, offering authentic Italian fare on the ground floor, which opens up onto The Poets' Park.

“Architecture should speak of its time and place,
but yearn for timelessness.”

Frank Gehry





DERWENT
LONDON