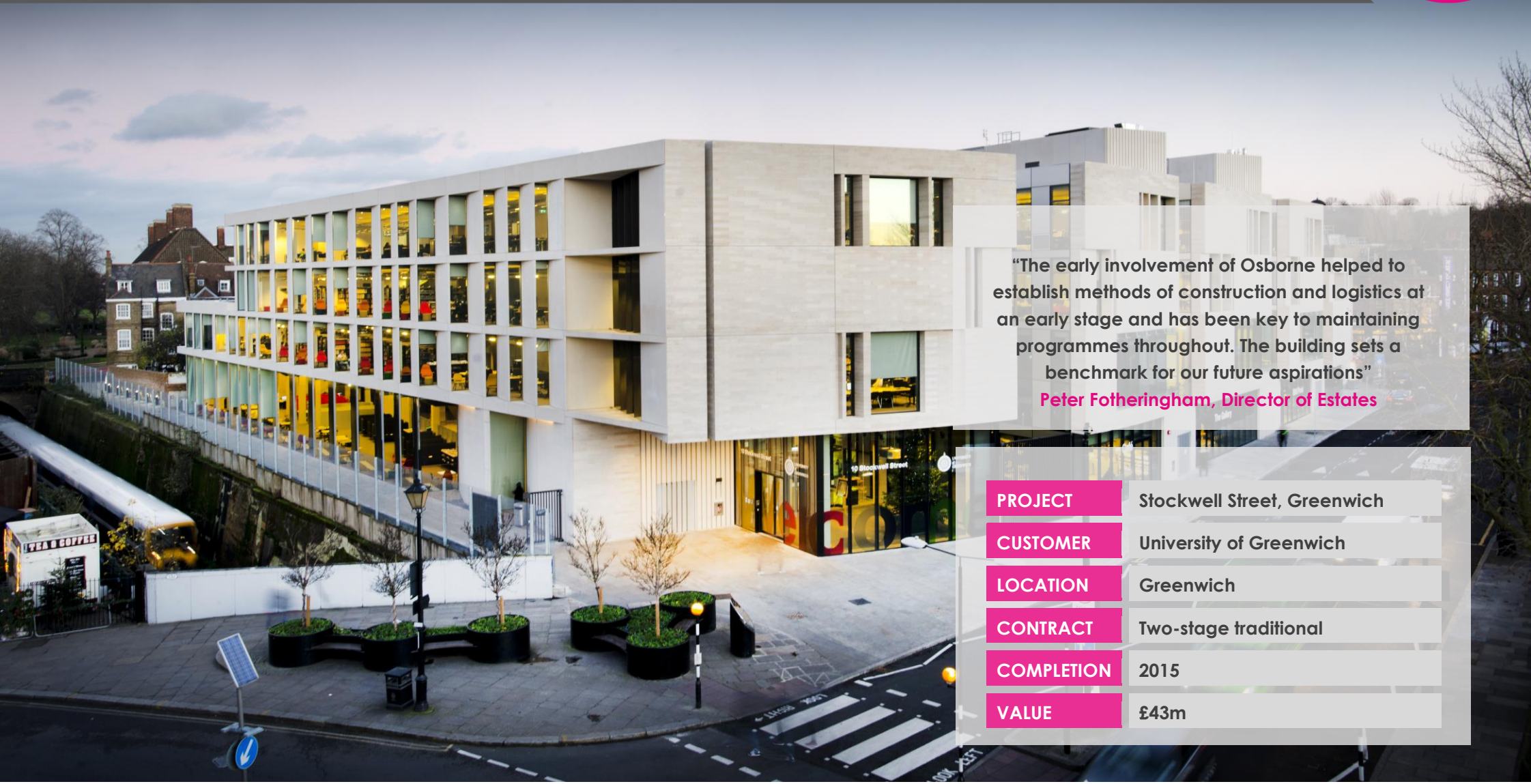
Sustainable higher education development achieves BREEAM Excellent accreditation



"The early involvement of Osborne helped to establish methods of construction and logistics at an early stage and has been key to maintaining programmes throughout. The building sets a benchmark for our future aspirations"
Peter Fotheringham, Director of Estates

PROJECT	Stockwell Street, Greenwich
CUSTOMER	University of Greenwich
LOCATION	Greenwich
CONTRACT	Two-stage traditional
COMPLETION	2015
VALUE	£43m

Issue

The University of Greenwich appointed Osborne to complete the new £43m School of Architecture and Learning Resource Centre. The decision to work with Osborne was based on the depth of knowledge and innovative approach suggested that helped the University realise their wider ambitions for the project. They wanted a state of the art building that represented an advance in thinking and design as an architectural college to raise their profile in the architectural community.

Alongside this very clear aspiration there were several key practical aspects that were regarded as important for the new building:

- Incorporate cutting edge technology for students
- The facility needed to be accessible to students and the wider community 24 hours a day
- The building needed to be sustainable

Solution

Early involvement enabled Osborne to develop the most effective methods of construction to create innovative solutions required to deliver an exceptional built environment, in keeping with the reputation of the University and its unique location in the Greenwich Maritime UNESCO World Heritage site.

Space was optimised within the new buildings to create a full height atrium as well as exceptional teaching and production facilities. These reflected many of the emerging technologies as well as traditional skills, including digital studios, TV production and editing suites, animation studios and model making workshop.

Retail space, a café and an art gallery named in honour of Stephen Lawrence, are all open to the public as well as students and allows the public to enjoy exhibitions and view student work. Teaching facilities were enhanced and extended by creating 14 individual roof gardens including an apiary, English garden habitat, and wildlife pond with time lapse photography capability.

Outcome

On a physical level, the project created a building that extended the teaching facilities and restored the traditional street scene along Stockwell Street. But there were a series of additional elements that became very apparent through the development of this particular project and the very specific objectives of the customer.

State of the art construction can also be very sustainable in its nature. The new facilities are packed with innovation and ground-breaking features, including tiered flat roofs to form live teaching spaces and the first development in the world to house an aquaponics bio-reactor. These innovative features ensured that the building received a BREEAM Excellence accreditation.

A statement building can also be practical. The full height atrium was always set out as the centre-piece statement of the new building, but this has not come at the expense of excellent teaching space or facilities that are accessible for both students and the local community.

The aspirational starting point for the college was never overlooked which is reflected in the series of awards and accolades it has received including the RIBA National Award 2015, RIBA London Award 2015, being a Stirling Prize finalist for 2015, and making the shortlist for the BCIA 2015 Building Project of the Year (£10 m to £50m).

In terms of interpreting and enhancing the needs and ambitions of the project, Stockwell Street set a new benchmark, in the eyes of the customer, for the benefits of early and informed contractor engagement.