

Densification measures are one solution to the problems of urbanization, by creating inner-city living space where there was none before. The smallest of gaps between buildings is utilized, perimeter block developments are completed, courtyards filled in, houses heightened and smaller structures replaced with larger ones. The architectural approach to each project is as unique as its context: In some cases, a self-contained element that clearly sets itself apart from the existing built environment is most suitable; in others, the best solution is the re-interpretation and development of the existing context.

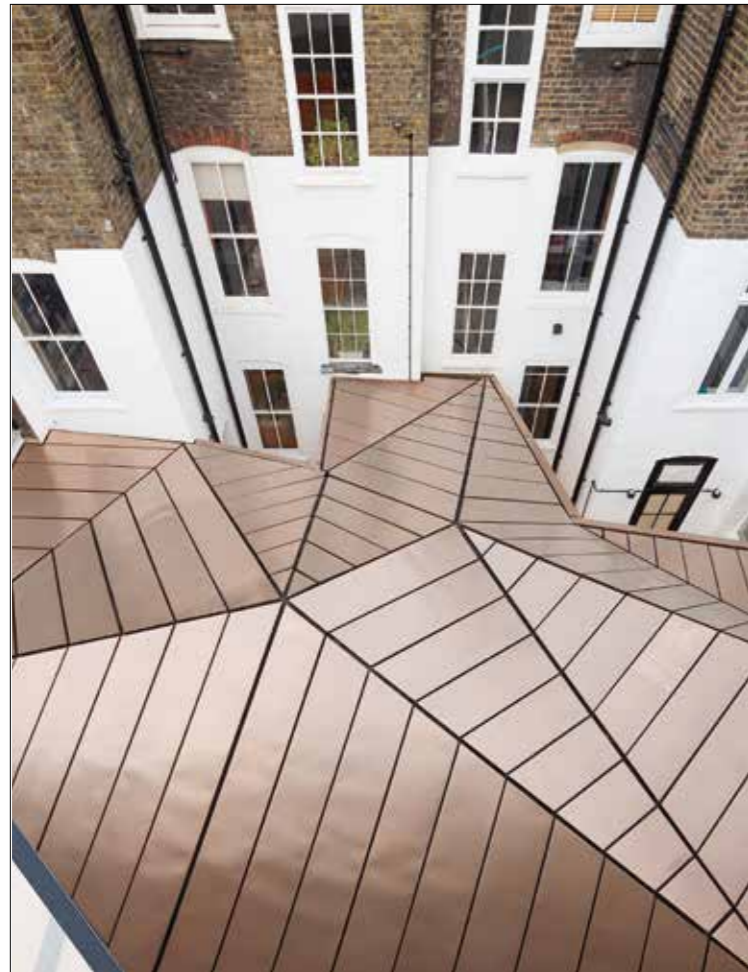
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DESIGN SOLUTIONS FOR URBAN DENSIFICATION





GREAT JAMES STREET EMRYS ARCHITECTS

LOCATION: LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM | COMPLETION: 2013 | CLIENT: LOREM IPSUM
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS: ELIOTT WOOD PARTNERSHIP | PHOTOGRAPHER: ALAN WILLIAMS



Two Grade II* listed Georgian properties that have been the head offices of GMS Estates for generations have been redeveloped for the 21st Century. A maze of unconnected post war extensions and dark lower ground spaces has been replaced with two storeys of striking contemporary work space. 32-33 Great James Street comprises two five-storey terraced townhouses built between 1720 and 1724. The terrace is one of the few remaining intact Georgian streets in London, close to Grays Inn in Bloomsbury. The properties suffered bomb and fire damage during the Second World War and were patched up shortly after with a series of rear extensions. This annex contained poor office accommodation and some areas were in such bad

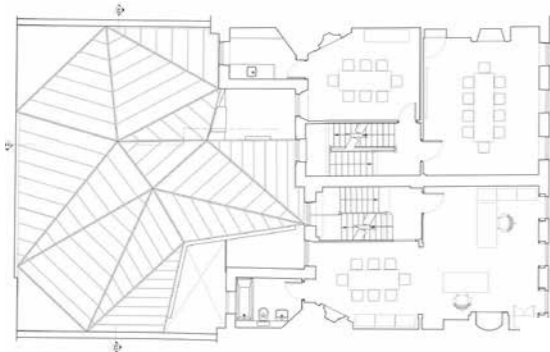
condition that they were only suitable for storage. GMS Estates are landowners and landlords who own many properties in Central London and take pride in keeping them to a high standard. Having recently completed several refurbishments of residences and offices for the rental market, they realised that their own accommodation was hampering their productivity and staff well being. The boardroom at 32 Great James Street was spectacular with original oak panelling and portraits of previous company chairmen, accessed from an oak panelled staircase. However, other areas of the building were jammed with staff in various rooms on different levels. Internal communication involved moving up and down the stairs, opening fire

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ROOF DESIGN
CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE ROOF SHAPE WERE PULLED UPWARD INCREASING THE INTERNAL FLOOR TO CEILING HEIGHTS. THE CONTEMPORARY FOLDED ROOF FORM IS COMPLEMENTED BY THE USE OF A COPPER BRONZE ALLOY IN A FLUSH RAIN SCREEN ARRANGEMENT.



FACTS
SIZE: 400 SQM
TYPE OF BUILDING: LOREM IPSUM
FUNCTION: LOREM IPSUM
FURTHER FACTS: LOREM IPSUM
SUSPENDISSE DOLOR IPSUM

doors and bumping into tired office furniture and trailing wires. The team felt disconnected from each other. Many rooms lacked adequate natural light and felt oppressive. Some of the post war extensions were damp and warren like. Furthermore, the organisation was growing and could not easily be contained within the existing structure.

The GMS brief to Emrys Architects was to identify ways of better utilising the property within the

constraints of the existing listed buildings and their outbuildings. They required Great James Street to be a flagship headquarters and although steeped in tradition, GMS happily embrace contemporary architecture. The client wished to break out from the confined spaces of the Georgian terrace to allow easier communication between each other whilst retaining some delineation between departments.

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HOUSE FOR TREES VO TRONG NGHIA ARCHITECTS

LOCATION: DISTRICT TAN BINH, HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM | COMPLETION: 2014 | CLIENT: LOREM IPSUM | FURTHER PARTICIPANTS: LOREM IPSUM | PHOTOGRAPHER: HIROYUKI OKI

Under rapid urbanization, cities in Vietnam have diverged far from their origins as sprawling tropical forests. In Ho Chi Minh City, for example, only 0.25% area of the entire city is covered with greenery. An over-abundance of motorbikes causes daily traffic congestion as well as serious air pollution. As a result, new generations in urban areas are losing their connection with nature. House for Trees, a prototypical house within a tight budget of 156,000 USD, is an effort to change this situation. The aim of the project is to bring green space back into the city, accommodating high-density dwelling with big tropical trees. Five concrete boxes are designed as „pots“ to plant trees on their tops. With thick soil layer, these pots also

function as storm-water basins for detention and retention, therefore contribute to reduce the risk of flooding in the city when the idea is multiplied to a large number of houses in the future. The house is located in Tan Binh district, one of the most densely populated residential areas in Ho Chi Minh City, where many small houses are crowded together. The site is a remnant landlocked block within this suburb, accessed only by a small pedestrian lane. Resonating with this urban tissue, the house is designed as an accumulation of small fragments. Surrounded by typical Vietnamese row houses on all sides, House for Trees stands out like an oasis.

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