

# Head and Shoulders Above the Competition

Paul Vick architects, which holds a 100 per cent planning permission success rate on over 100 permissions including new build, listed and unlisted buildings, has a commitment to research. In addition, by creatively bringing together forward-looking technology and knowledge to advance a broader knowledge of architecture, the practice aims to deliver beautiful buildings with improved performance to meet clients' short and long term needs.

**E**stablished by Paul Vick in 2007, the practice's major driving force is based around a desire to see architecture embrace the demographic, environmental and technological opportunities of today. Nine years later, their reputation within the industry is stellar and the precision with which the firm go about their projects is second to none despite its youth.

Originally from near Dartmoor, in the southwest UK, Paul graduated from Cambridge University, UK in 1991. After a year in professional practice based in Paris, he undertook his second degree in architecture at Oxford Brookes University, UK with an exchange to Washington DC, USA for eight months. Concurrently, he set up six months of fieldwork at Tsinghua University, Beijing, PRC during which time he completed his Masters in Development Practices, before returning in 1996 to establish his own firm.

Paul's experience has included projects addressing some of the most significant commercial, cultural and social challenges in Europe, including The British Museum Masterplan, The Whitecity development and Portcullis House. A variety of projects in UK, USA, Hong Kong and PR China including cultural, education, health care, offices and retail, sports facilities, light industrial and residential also form part of the portfolio.

The entire catalogue of Paul Vick's work, both public and private, reflects a level of skill, devotion and experience that is not specifically restricted to one single project, but is representative of the firm as a whole. As Paul Vick commented, "we want to provide a deeper experience of what architecture can be, with the aim of making it attractive and relevant for longer. This improves our clients' assets accordingly.

"Our initial input is often strategic and is a review with the client about whether the aims of the project align with their wider intentions.

The practice's first public work, a theatre and ICT suite, was RIBA shortlisted, as well as the practice being shortlisted for Architect of the Year.

Strong technical skills delivered a building that has subtlety and a powerful identity.

*"We identify where value lies for our clients' industries now and in the future. We then work with clients to locate and define the opportunity and create an architecture that delivers this cultural transformation."*

A house that does away with the myths of low energy and sustainability also demonstrates Paul Vick's determination to break new ground within the industry. Sustainability is understood in many ways and as well as meeting low energy AECB standard, the home is for 'First Age' to 'Third Age' living. The tactility and attention to detail of the work is again evident.

Paul Vick wrote a vision for the Diocese of London and the practice has been working for a number of years on the well-known, Grade Two, C19th St Paul's Knightsbridge in Westminster helping define its future architecturally. The integration of art, its logistics as a public building and a social response see a new civic face being developed.

Other work includes the development hub for Innovation Warehouse/ Corporation of London at Smithfield Market. Both formal and less formal spaces are used. Innovation Warehouse has delivered a number of profitable businesses. Designs for a mini-department store for 'the oldest retailer in the world' just off Bond Street and designs for possibly the largest daylight photographic studio in the world is also ongoing.

Paul Vick Architects boast an extensive background in research, which has been ably applied to the firm's work on buildings in private, cultural and commercial sectors, giving unprecedented experience. "We do not assume that because it has been done one way before that it will suit your project this time. From an outline brief, feasibility studies follow, more design, tender and a presence on site. A pragmatic approach and strong industry links give us the tools to innovate to the benefit of any project, large or small."

Asked what the best thing a client has said about their work, Paul Vick concludes, "the client's hugely satisfying comment on completion: 'I didn't know design could do this.'"

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