

recently completed:
Capella, London



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With a mix of social and market homes at the heart of the King's Cross masterplan, Capella provides a place for urban parkside living in one of London's most exciting neighbourhoods. Three key materials, in cream and green, have been employed to create a carefully considered facade with its own strong identity. The completed building is an important milestone in our twenty-year involvement in the evolution of King's Cross.

Capella is one of the last building residential buildings to complete in King's Cross. It joins an architecturally eclectic collection of residential buildings, grouped around Lewis Cubitt Park on the northern side of the masterplan. A mixed tenure apartment building with three retail units and tenant amenity on the ground floor, Capella provides 120 market and 56 socially rented flats across 14 storeys.

The neighbouring buildings may be stylistically and materially varied yet they function as a family; a good example of how the masterplan's parameter plans work not to dictate style but rather influence massing, orientation, and frontages. Capella's material response to the Lewis Cubitt Park context is specific and deliberate. The cream brick, white balconies and light green sinusoidal surfaced concrete panels of the facade nod to the light elevational tone of the Luma building diagonally opposite and act as a counterpoint to the otherwise predominantly dark palette around the park.

The 'L' shaped building hosts a variety of apartment types ranging from single studios to four bedroomed family apartments, and including duplexes and split level. This variety manifests itself in the facade composition facing east across the park, where the balcony rhythm





adjusts to reflect the apartments planned over two floors, and a series of deeper L-shaped balconies are attached to the one and a half height apartments. The vertical and horizontal balance of the facade composition is described in the weight and rhythm of the masonry piers rising through the height of the building, and the contrasting lines of white precast balconies which complete every third floor. This triple height order contains the intermediate and more delicate white metal balconies which project in front of the olive green coloured window frames separated by light green concrete panels.

To the building's north a balconied facade is bookended by the framed elevations on Chilton Square and Keskidee Square. The nine-storey south-facing facade meanwhile is staggered to give each of the flats here a view east towards Lewis Cubitt Park. The twelfth floor is topped with five two-storey houses with private roof top gardens that articulate the skyline.

Inside, the lifts and stairs from the two lobbies lead to simple double-loaded apartment layouts accessed from wide corridors which, where possible, are daylit. The 33 different apartment types all lead to balconies or terraces which often exceed the minimum required dimensions. Johnson Naylor is responsible for the spatial planning and interior design of the market apartments and ground floor tenant amenity. Both tenures have access to and share a 260 square metre planted roof garden.

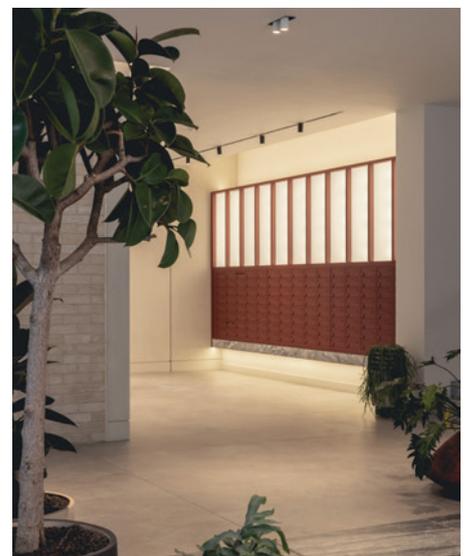
Though the building's plan is rational and efficient, the building form and its facades are intentionally picturesque. The interior is planned to make a clear and pleasant route from the front door and lobby to each apartment and, once inside, provide apartment plans that are straightforward, easy to use and enjoy the best possible views. The outside is intended to offer a cohesive tenure-blind composition which responds to each part of the building's context and contributes not just to local placemaking but to King's Cross as a whole.

Angie Jim Osman, Partner at Allies and Morrison said "We relished the opportunity to work with King's Cross Central Limited Partnership (KCCLP) and the consultant team to design and deliver high-quality mixed-tenure homes for this prominent site, one of the last at King's Cross. The design combines a well composed and efficient plan with carefully detailed and animated elevations that focus on providing light and views to all 176 apartments, for a diverse set of residents to enjoy for many years to come."

Graham Morrison, Partner at Allies and Morrison said *“As the Google building completes King’s Boulevard to the south of King’s Cross, Capella completes Lewis Cubitt park in the north. It follows the masterplan’s design principles to make a space, support the context and fulfil its brief in a straightforward and efficient manner. Its terrace of towers defines the edge of Lewis Cubitt Square and its tenure blind form adjusts to and completes Keskidee and Chilton Squares. It has been fulfilling to start the masterplan with a sketch and to finish it with one of our buildings.”*

Fiona Naylor, Founding Partner at Johnson Naylor said *“The foundation of a successful home is the creation of the interior volumes - plan, form, proportion and flow. True collaboration with the design and construction team is critical to achieving excellence and maintaining the integrity of the design. Collaborating with Allies and Morrison holistically from the original masterplan massing has allowed the integration of our thinking on the internal space to link seamlessly with the vision for the building’s exterior. The project marks the culmination of Johnson Naylor’s extensive involvement in King’s Cross since 2013, having previously worked on four other buildings: ArtHouse, Tapestry, Plimsoll and Fenman House.”*

Anthony Peter, development director at Related Argent, the developer and asset manager of King’s Cross, added *“Capella is the final residential building to complete at King’s Cross, bringing us another step closer to the overall completion of the estate. It has been wonderful to watch this beautifully designed building go from a wire-framed block within a masterplan to a living, breathing building that people can now call home. It is also the final piece in the jigsaw for Parkside, the area around Lewis Cubitt Park, which really elevates and enlivens the northern part of the estate.”*



Location	London NC1
Uses	Residential
Client	KCCLP
Status	Completed
Size	21,840 sqm GEA
Team	Architect: Allies and Morrison, Interior Design: Johnson Naylor (Market homes and ground floor amenity), Allies and Morrison (Affordable homes), Structure and Civils: Ramboll, Services: Hoare Lea, Landscape: Todd Longstaff-Gowan, Facade: FMDC, Waste and Transport: Arup

ABOUT ALLIES AND MORRISON

Allies and Morrison is a practice of architects and urbanists based in London, Cambridge and Manchester. We design beautiful buildings that have long life and can adapt over the generations. We also shape enduring places whether new pieces of city or settlements at any scale. All our projects are concerned with the crafting of detail and an appreciation for the uniqueness of each context.

Allies and Morrison was first appointed by (then) Argent in 2000 as co-architect with Porphyrios Associates of the developer's masterplan bid to secure rights to develop the King's Cross site. Allies and Morrison has remained active in its design for the subsequent two decades as masterplanner, as site-wide design guardian and as architect of five of the buildings within the development.

King's Cross has twenty new streets and lanes, ten new open spaces, including five new London squares. There are fifty new buildings, twenty refurbished historic buildings and structures and the largest collection of BREEAM Outstanding buildings anywhere. More than 40% of the 27ha site is open space hosting 600+ plant species and 400 trees.

The King's Cross masterplan was shortlisted for 2024's Stirling Prize, the UK's most prestigious architecture award.

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ABOUT JOHNSON NAYLOR

Johnson Naylor is an interior architecture and design practice based in Clerkenwell, London. Founded in 1990 by Brian Johnson and Fiona Naylor, we have developed a reputation for delivering inventive, contextual and elegant design. Working from first principles, our approach is collaborative, rational and open. We nurture talent, champion appropriate design and create commercially successful spaces.

We work with over 20 professional design staff from a range of disciplines - Architects, Interior Designers, Furniture Designers and Graphic Designers. We see design as a dialogue and our large open plan studio encourages communication and the exchange of ideas. We are specialists at deciphering complicated projects, space plans and schemes that need to be re-interpreted or remodelled. We apply intelligence and sensitivity to create enduring interiors that respond to their unique context and surroundings. Our designs are layered and maintain an inherent level of quality in every detail.

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ABOUT KING'S CROSS

King's Cross is London's creative neighbourhood and home of the extraordinary. It comprises 67 acres of inspiring businesses, outstanding architecture, destination retail and dining and a vibrant cultural scene. The area's industrial past has inspired the 50 new and repurposed buildings, including Coal Drops Yard, the iconic Gasholders London and the Granary Building. The estate also includes 27 acres of public space, ranging from parks, streets, squares and gardens, with Granary Square and its iconic fountains at its heart.

King's Cross has almost 1,750 private, rental, student and affordable homes and once complete, 41,000 people will live and work in the neighbourhood. King's Cross is a hub for creative and innovative businesses in London with 4.25m sq. ft. of office space and capacity for 30,000 workers. It is home to start-ups, SMEs and world-renowned brands such as Meta, Google, Havas, Universal Music and AstraZeneca. Boasting 500,000 sq. ft. of shops, restaurants, cafes and bars, King's Cross is also alive with the capital's best places to eat, drink and shop, welcoming over 19 million visitors each year.

The King's Cross estate, which is owned and managed by King's Cross Central Limited Partnership (KCCLP), is committed to reaching net zero carbon by 2035.

KCCLP is made up of pension fund AustralianSuper and clients of the international business of Federated Hermes. AustralianSuper owns a 74% stake in KCCLP. AustralianSuper manages more than AUD\$342 billion in members' retirement savings on behalf of more than 3.4 million members from more than 478,000 businesses (as at 30 June 2024). The Fund is an active investor across global financial markets, real assets, private credit and private equity, with the aim of delivering sustainable, long-term performance for its members. AustralianSuper is the 16th largest pension fund in the world by total assets, and the fastest-growing among the global top 20 (Thinking Ahead Institute, Global Top 300 Pension Funds, based on 5-year CAGR 2019-2024).

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