Granary Square – A new public space for London opens at King’s Cross

Granary Square, in the canalside heart of King’s Cross, is now officially open to the public. The 8,000 sq m space is similar in scale to Trafalgar Square and sits in front of the award-winning Granary Building, home to Central Saint Martins, and links to the Regent’s Canal. Granary Square has been designed by Townshend Landscape Architects and its completion marks a major milestone at the development. It is the first of 10 major public spaces being created at King’s Cross.

The square has as its central feature a stunning water fountain made by the Fountain Workshop. The fountain has 1,080 individual water jets set in four large bays in front of the Granary Building. When in use, the water jets can be programmed to dance at different heights or simply be left as mirror pools, beautifully reflecting the Granary Building behind. There are two big tanks sitting below the square which together hold 105,000 litres of water – the equivalent of 650 barrels of beer. Once water passes through the fountains it runs back to the tanks, being filtered and cleaned along the way – so the same water can be used over and over again. This recirculation system makes the fountain extremely water-efficient and sustainable.

The heritage aspects of the space have been retained with the old railway tracks still visible, the line of the former canal basin marked out with stone edges and one of the original rail turntables restored and topped with a glass panel so that the mechanism can still be seen. Also inscribed in the ground in the square are words from The Brill, a poem by King’s Cross poet Aidan Dun, who recited at the opening event: “King’s Cross, dense with angels and histories. There are cities beneath your pavements. Cities behind your skies. Let me see!”

An opening event took place on 12 June for all those who have been involved with the King’s Cross development since 1999. The celebration saw almost 1,000 people enjoy three impressive dance performances in the fountains, street food from eat. st and speeches from Sir David Clementi, Chairman of King’s Cross Central Limited Partnership, Roger Madelin, Joint Chief Executive of Argent and Sarah Hayward, Leader of Camden Council and a ward councillor for King’s Cross.

The following contractors are working in partnership to deliver King’s Cross:
David Partridge, Joint Chief Executive of Argent, said: “Granary Square will join London’s other famous squares in the long line of great public spaces in our capital. It is a square for everyone whether they are local residents, other Londoners or visitors and is a new place to meet, relax and have fun.”

“It is the first in a series of 10 major public spaces and places we are creating as part of the 67 acre King’s Cross development, of which 40% will be public space. It represents the heart of the site and is very much a reflection of our vision to create a human piece of city here at King’s Cross.”

Sarah Hayward added: “Over recent months I have watched the King’s Cross development come alive, which is really exciting. I am delighted that this square will be accessible to everyone to meet, have fun and enjoy central London. “This really shows how by working in partnership we can deliver real and lasting improvements to the borough making it a great place to both live and do business.”

The evening opening event also marked the launch of Summer Stories – a series of exciting events which will take place over the next few months at King’s Cross. This includes the Central Saint Martins’ degree shows in the Granary Complex, The Big Dance and Eurostar’s Traction, curated by DJ Gilles Peterson. For more information about Summer Stories visit www.kingscrossevents.co.uk
Green Wall

A green wall has been completed on the side of the Gas Governor building in Goods Way and is now providing food for thousands of bees, as well as a lush green frontage to the road. The wall is south facing and will be in full sun so plants which thrive in sunny conditions are currently growing – which will be reviewed in the future when the new B5 building on the other side of Goods Way has been completed.

The key to any successful green wall system is the water regime. Biotecture, the company which has installed and will maintain it, has built in irrigation hose pipes with drip feed nozzles which deliver minimal but precise quantities of water to points all over the wall. Together with an engineered growing medium, this means that all of the plants have access to the water and nutrients they need.

Rainwater for the irrigation system is being collected from the roof of the Gas Governor building and stored in a tank which is topped up by mains water when there is no rain.

There are 60 to 70 plants per square metre, a lower density than some other green walls, to help the plants, (which include grasses, evergreen and herbaceous perennials and herbs), establish themselves.

Zone B update

A large hole has been dug in the ground in Zone B, between the two stations, to form the basement and service area for the new buildings which will stand here in the future.

The foundations of some of the old gas holders continue to be removed and the final clean up of the site is expected to be completed by December 2012.

Meanwhile the piling of the perimeter wall is almost complete despite the unseasonal weather. The redundant gas governor, which was on the plot of Building B1, has been removed now that the new governor (with the green wall) has been completed alongside the canal.

Groundwork on Buildings B2, B3 and B4 has begun and contractor Vinci has been appointed by BNP PRE for the construction of Building B1, which is due to begin in early 2013.

A new haul road has also been built on the site from Goods Way. This is due to replace the current access point from Pancras Road, which will be closed off during the Olympic Games, except for special deliveries, to help reduce congestion in the area.

Have you seen the boat and the bus?!

You may have spotted a red double-decker bus on King’s Boulevard displaying what will be the future A to Z street map of the area. The King’s Cross bus (together with a floating office on the Regent’s Canal, Regeneration House and the 4th floor of the Granary Building) is temporarily providing our on site meeting and marketing space now that the German Gymnasium is no longer available. The bus is parked on King’s Boulevard and has a viewing platform on the roof so that visitors can look out over Zone B construction. The King’s Cross Visitor Centre in the Granary Building is open daily from 10am to 6pm for members of the public who want to know more about King’s Cross.
The first of three Jenbacher Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems, supplied by GE, has been installed in the on-site energy centre.

The deal between GE and the King’s Cross Central Limited Partnership is focused on the long term sustainability of the development and the first engine is due to be commissioned this summer.

Once commissioned, the CHP engine will supply 100% of the development’s heat and offset almost 80% of its electrical power demand. All of the 70 buildings at King’s Cross, including all new homes and offices, will be connected to the District Heating System and, when complete, carbon emissions are expected to be a third less than ‘business as usual’ and up to 60% less than 2001 levels.

The CHP engine, affectionately known as the Pink Panther, has been uniquely painted pink to support Breast Cancer Research.

To celebrate the engine’s arrival in May, members of the team working on the project completed a 750 mile charity bike ride in nine days from Innsbruck in Austria, where the engine was built, to its new home at King’s Cross. The team were aiming to raise more than £30,000 for Breast Cancer Research and Global Generation, a local charity in the King’s Cross area which runs the Skip Garden on site and gives young people opportunities to play a part in creating a sustainable future.

You can still support the cycle team by visiting their Just Giving page here: www.justgiving.com/teams/PinkPanther

Construction work at King’s Cross will continue during the summer and the Olympic Games. However, King’s Cross has had discussions with Camden Council, Transport for London, the Olympic Delivery Manager and our four principal contractors regarding working practices in and around the development during the Olympic Games, to reduce the traffic impact of the site at what will be a very busy time.

Construction work and deliveries to and from the site will, where necessary, begin earlier and end earlier (6am to 3pm) to avoid peak busy periods in the day. As a result, if we need deliveries to take place to and from the site, they will not cause additional congestion issues in the local area.

The following programme/actions will also be implemented for the duration of the Games:

• There will be no site entrance in use during the day on Pancras Road, to keep this road free flowing for both pedestrians using the station to travel to and from the Olympics Park, and for traffic.
• All access to Zone B, the site directly between the two stations, will instead be off Goods Way, to keep Pancras Road free.
• All work on the square outside King’s Cross Station will be suspended during the Games.
• There may be some site works at night – these will however not involve any noisy activity.
• Some deliveries to and from the site may also take place at night to further reduce any traffic congestion.

This programme will take effect for the duration of the Games.
First residents move into King’s Cross

The first homes, in Building R4 on York Way, have been completed and residents are now moving in.

The 117 affordable, shared ownership and supported homes have been built in small groups around the three cores creating a sense of community on each floor. Some of the flats are dual aspect, with amazing views of London from the upper floors. The homes are all connected to the development’s district heating network and have high levels of insulation and ventilation. The ground floor contains several retail units and there is a large roof garden on Level 10 for the shared ownership residents which will be planted with the help of Global Generation. Bird and bat boxes have been designed into the building and there is a green roof, with native species on part of the building. Camden Council is allocating all of the 78 homes to people on its housing list and One Housing Group, through its agent Site Sales, is advertising the 24 shared ownership homes. For information, visit www.onenewhome.co.uk

King’s Cross is becoming a destination for food lovers

The restaurant and bar Caravan, currently in Exmouth Market near Farringdon, will open a second site in King’s Cross in July, in the Grade II listed Granary Building.

With space for 80 diners, the interior design of Caravan will reflect the area’s Victorian industrial heritage, with a coffee roastery and large open kitchen that will give the feel of a working factory environment. A large bar will provide a focal point, divided in two with half of the bar dedicated to all-day dining and half to the coffee bar. Outside seating in Granary Square will make the most of the south-facing site.

The coffee roastery will supply the restaurant and coffee bar with Caravan’s seasonally changing espresso blends. Coffee-making equipment will be available to buy, including Caravan’s own blends, and there are plans for coffee-making and roasting workshops.

In addition to this, the popular street food market, eat.st on King’s Boulevard, is now open five days a week, and is increasing its daily trader’s numbers to between four and seven. Yellow tables and chairs have been put up along the street and in the coming weeks there are plans for buskers, who will be auditioned and given performing slots during trading times.
Central Saint Martins put on a fashionable show

42 BA Fashion graduates took part in the Central Saint Martins fashion show at the end of May. The magnificent show made the headlines and also made the most of the cathedral-like space, The Crossing, inside the Granary Building. In June the students’ end of year work was on view to the public, attracting thousands of people to King’s Cross.

Fronting onto the Regent’s Canal and next to York Way, Shrimpy’s is open daily for lunch and dinner in the newly created King’s Cross Filling Station. Previously the site of a petrol station, the garage shop has been transformed into the restaurant, which is run by the people behind Bistrottheque, in Bethnal Green. The forecourt canopy remains, creating a covered outside space where a cultural arts programme, run by Office of Change, will take place.

The design of the King’s Cross Filling Station is by award-winning architects Carmody Groarke and includes a translucent, curvaceous fibreglass wrap around the site which is illuminated at night and will be recycled at the end of the project. The semi-permanent structure will exist for about two years before new homes are built on the site as part of the King’s Cross development. Overlooking the canal, it brings a new social and cultural venue to King’s Cross.

B2 Column set to take a stand on-site

One of the finished cast iron columns, which will be part of Building B2 on King’s Boulevard, is due to arrive on site shortly.

The impressive column, 6m in height and weighing 2.5 tonnes, is one of 400 being cast for the building in Hargreaves Foundry in West Yorkshire. The first column is being put up as part of a public display surrounded by information panels on the hoardings on King’s Boulevard, in line with where it will eventually stand.

Go and find out how it was made and the role it will play in the new building.

David Partridge, from King’s Cross Central Limited Partnership said: “We were keen to find an imaginative interim use for the petrol station site and the extraordinary design which has been produced has surpassed our expectations alongside a really interesting programme for the building.”

Shrimpy’s restaurant, inside The Filling Station

The former Petrol station on Goods Way, is now a stunning canal side venue

King’s Cross Filling Station - a new social and cultural venue

Employment Opportunities

As more of the King’s Cross development is completed and buildings open, there will be an increasing amount of job opportunities available.

There continue to be construction jobs and apprenticeship placements (see back page for contact details) but jobs are also being created elsewhere on site. Where appropriate, these will be advertised through local Job Centres.
Junction Proposals

1. Canal Street / York Way
   Works commenced in late 2011. Public opening mid 2013. Initially this will be a priority junction. Traffic lights to be installed when Zone W is developed.

2. Plot R4 / Plot R5 / York Way
   Not a signalled junction, Operational by late 2012.

3. Plot R2 / York Way
   Road junction removed.

4. York Way / Copenhagen Street

5. Wharf Road / York Way
   Existing traffic signals switched off in July 2011 and removed.

   Amend traffic lights when junction is re-configured as part of the development of the petrol station site (includes a right hand turn south down York Way from Goods Way). Approximate implementation in 2015.

7. King’s Boulevard / Goods Way / Regent’s Canal Bridge
   Temporary pedestrian lights in September 2011. Zebra crossing now operational. Upgrade to full signal junction when King’s Boulevard opens to buses and taxis (earliest 2014).

8. Camley Street / Goods Way / Pancras Road
   The existing traffic signals have been re-configured.

9. Pancras Road / King’s Boulevard
   Traffic signals installed. Full signal junction when King’s Boulevard opens to buses and taxis (earliest 2014).

Contacting Us

There is a dedicated website and freephone helpline during normal working hours, Monday to Friday. If somebody cannot answer immediately, there is an answerphone facility. Freephone Helpline:

0800 328 8840

www.constructionatkingscross.com

Training and Jobs

As part of our commitment to deliver local benefits, the Construction Skills Centre on York Way, run by contractor Carillion, offers advice and information on finding work in the construction industry local to King’s Cross. It also provides apprenticeships for people aged 16-19 who are out of work or carrying out unskilled work. For more information call:

020 7974 5161

Who is backing the scheme?

67 acres at King’s Cross are being developed by the King’s Cross Central Limited Partnership (KCCLP), which brings together:

• Argent King’s Cross Limited Partnership
• London & Continental Railways
• DHL Supply Chain

For information on the future of King’s Cross, please visit our marketing suite, which is open to the public Monday to Thursday 10am - 6pm, Friday 10am - 5pm:

King’s Cross Visitor Centre
The Granary Building
1 Granary Square
London
N1C 4AA

020 3479 1795

www.kingscross.co.uk

Scope of Works

The development at King’s Cross will bring enormous and continuing benefits to the area. Safety and cleanliness are two of the local residents’ main objectives, but this development will offer a lot more. It will provide some 2,000 homes and serviced apartments, employment for thousands, schools, shops, food and drink outlets, cultural and community uses, health centres and many other facilities.

Over 40% of the development will be public realm. Much of the area’s heritage will be maintained by refurbishing 20 historic buildings and structures, including the listed Gasholder triplet.