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Doing Justice to the Rolls Building.

Woods Bagot, the international design practice, has been appointed as the architect on the scheme to accommodate the new Business Courts for the Royal Courts of Justice in The Rolls Building, Fetter Lane in the City of London.

On completion, the building will provide 260,000 sq ft of office space, of which Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) will occupy 145,000 sq ft. The HMCS will occupy the basement to the fourth floors, which will provide 29 courtrooms, 12 hearing rooms, 45 public consultation rooms and administrative office space. The remaining 115,000 sq ft will be available for commercial let.

Describing the overall development, Graeme Rapley, Principal at Woods Bagot, said: "The Rolls Building represents a major urban intervention that delivers an exciting contemporary design sensitively created to embody and interpret its historic Victorian context.

"Through the development of a rich layered envelope, the building demonstrates how one can successfully integrate a large commercial office building into a varied urban context and at the same time show empathy with neighbouring conservation areas and listed buildings such as the former Records Building (now part of Kings College). The urban design inherent in this composition integrates an unusual parcel line, creating a public realm which is both legible and inviting.

'The façade pays homage to its neo gothic neighbour, with a stone clad structure providing a vertical emphasis at the corner. On the North and South elevations, bay windows are designed with side panels of stone to provide the maximum of stone finish to the oblique view, while actually maintaining a substantial area of full height glazing when viewed from inside or at 90 degrees from outside.

The sustainability and energy conscious performance which are embodied in the façade and in the environmental building systems design are aimed at reducing the buildings energy consumption to a level some 20% below current 2006 Building Regulation.

In addition to a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating some 80% of the materials to be used in the fit-out of the building are to be 'A' rated in accordance with the BRE Green Specification.

Working within the site's demanding contextual constraints set by Rights of Light, Town Planning, English Heritage, the new development still achieved an increase of net area on the site of approaching twice the existing, well exceeding the viability criteria for a redevelopment of the site. The configuration of the floorplate and the displacement of cores have been able to meet the requirements of the courts for optimising floor space. The plan layout achieves exceptional efficiency and creates a vibrant workplace atmosphere. On the limits for a three-core plan, the tightly planned layout achieves 87% net to internal gross area on a typical floor with all internal areas of the Rolls Building organised and configured to provide maximum natural day lighting to all occupants.

The Rolls Building seeks to take its place as a sustainable City of London landmark of lasting quality.”

For the Royal Courts of Justice, The Rolls Building will contain various aspects of commercial dispute resolution, including the work undertaken by the Chancery Division, Commercial Court and the Technology and Construction Court.

Delancey and funds advised by Invista Real Estate have signed the agreement with Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) to develop the new Business Court at The Rolls Building, Fetter Lane in the City of London.

Commenting on the signing, Lord Falconer, Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, said: “The new Business Court will house a world class institution to match the UK's world class reputation for business law which attracts cases from across the globe. The new building will greatly improve current facilities and we are working closely with Delancey and Invista Real Estate to deliver a high specification for court users.”

Work on site is due to begin in early 2007 with the new courthouse expected to be operational by 2010.

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About Woods Bagot

International design practice, **Woods Bagot** provides its clients with innovative design solutions that are both functional and inspiring. This is demonstrated by the successful delivery of a range of high profile projects within the commercial workplace, hospitality, mixed-use, education and science sectors.

Established in 2001, Woods Bagot's London studio has a dynamic team of 85 professionals. Since its inception, its young, integrated team has developed a diverse portfolio of significant projects including:

- Piccadilly Tower, Manchester
- Liverpool Central Village
- Multiplex headquarters, London
- Rolls building, London
- Eversheds LLP new London headquarters

About Delancey

Delancey is an investment advisor with a reputation for consistently delivering significant returns across a wide spectrum of real estate and asset backed opportunities on behalf of its international investor base.

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