

# New Academic Building 24 Kingsway

## Initial Post Occupancy Evaluation



### Report to LSE Estates Excerpt – Highlights and forward pointers

2.2.2009

Confidential

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## HIGHLIGHTS AND FORWARD POINTERS

### 2.1 Significant successes

#### Teaching space

- In its provision of additional teaching facilities of high quality within the School's estate, the initial Post Occupancy Evaluation indicates the NAB's significant success.

*"It's a huge step forward for LSE. A big part of our income is high grad students' fees, and it's good to hear 'I really like this building' from an MSc student."*

*(Academic, Management)*

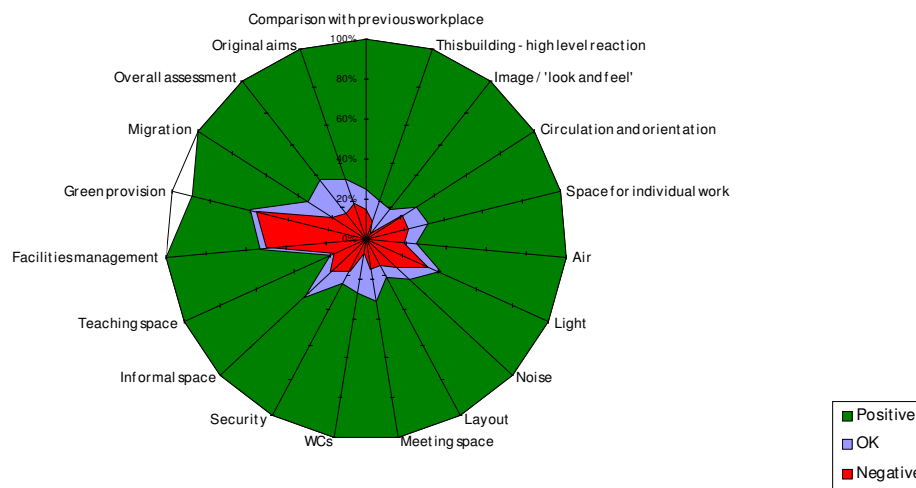
*"It's a fantastic addition, it's wonderful."*

*(Academic, Management)*

#### Beyond teaching space: NAB as a workplace

- The overall response of NAB residents shows a high incidence of perceived positive building performance across almost all headline topics covered by the evaluation.

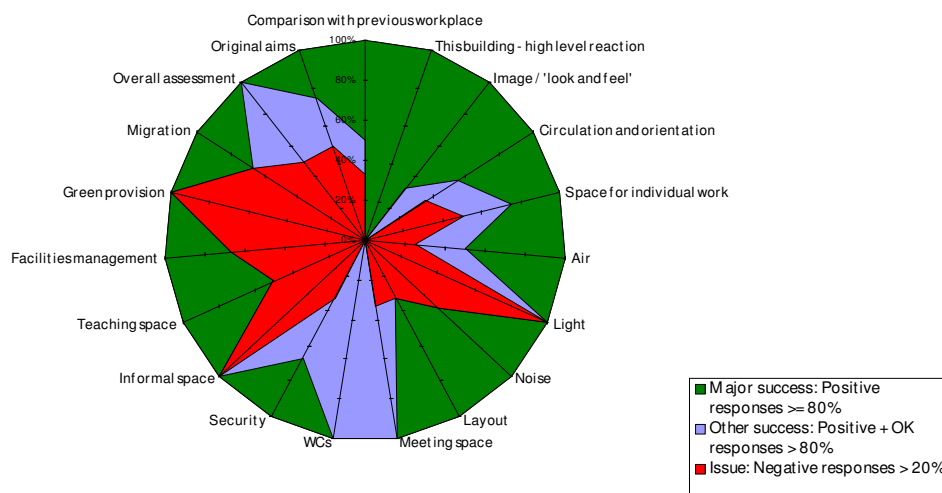
#### Average percentages for all aspects / headline topic (residents)\*



\* White denotes 'Don't know' answer.

- The evaluation both of workspace and other parts of the building by those with workspace in the NAB has generated a wide range of Major Successes and Successes (the former defined by 80.0%+ of users rating an aspect as positive; the latter by 80.0%+ of users rating an aspect as Positive or OK).

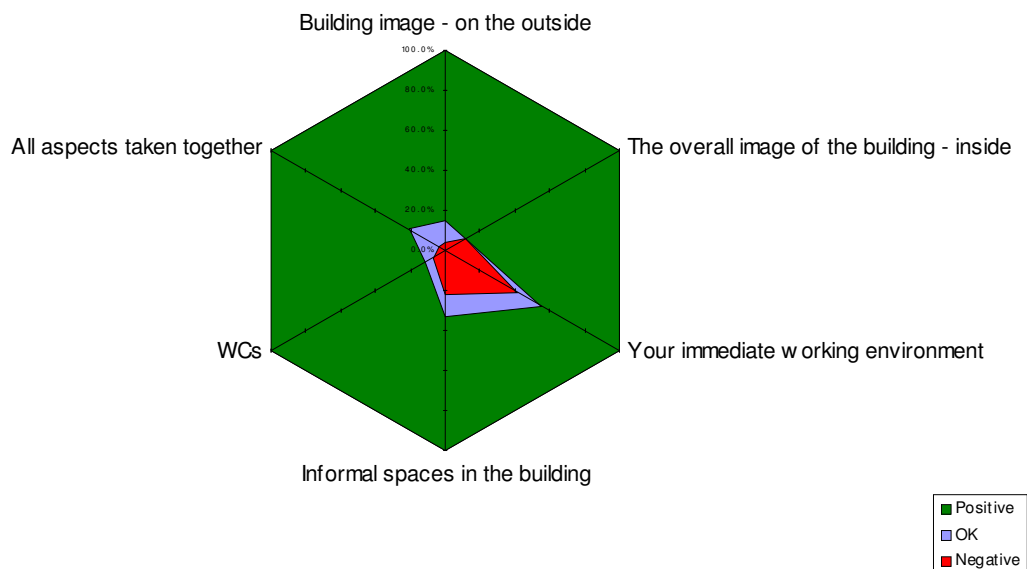
**Classification profile for all aspects / headline topic (residents)**



- A notable success of NAB relative to other buildings formally evaluated by POE is the users' view of the building's internal environmental conditions in respect of air. Whilst one aspect of air (temperature level) is still identified as an Issue by both NAB residents and - for two of the three index teaching spaces - by those taught there, the level of negative reporting contrasts with benchmark POE data, which frequently identifies a high level of user dissatisfaction with most aspects of thermal management. Reinforcing this point, it is notable that the threshold that defines an evaluated aspect as an Issue ( $>20.0\%$  rating an aspect as Negative) has just been crossed in respect of the resident NAB users' report on air temperature (Negative: 23.0%).
- Another notable positive relates to storage for books. In devising the space standards for NAB, there was considerable discussion regarding the book collections of academic staff, and some view that office sizes should be driven by the requisite shelf space to accommodate these. In the event, the evaluation suggests that contraction in number of volumes kept at the School has not made a material negative difference.

### Comparison with previous accommodation in the School

- The comparison of users' workspace in NAB compared to their previous LSE workplace has mostly returned a strong majority verdict of Better Now.



- Notwithstanding the NAB's successes, users' 'immediate work environment' is identified as a weaker aspect in this comparison (Worse now: 40%), followed by 'informal space in the building' (Worse now: 22%). The comparison of data between the user constituencies suggests that those who express relatively less satisfaction with the new condition are academic staff, followed by administrative staff (although twice the proportion of administrative than academic staff report that the building has a negative effect on their effectiveness).

## 2.2 Points for improvement

- The action-oriented classification (graph, page 4) is useful in focusing on the Issues identified by the evaluation. In reviewing those aspects on which users are less satisfied, it is encouraging that several are amenable to cost-neutral flexing, or to intervention at relatively little cost. The data indicate numerous opportunities in respect of NAB's informal space, green provision, facilities management and space for individual work.

- Improving satisfaction on these aspects and facilitating gains in perceived effectiveness from the NAB is important, the more so as 2/5 of the resident sample report their immediate working environment as worse than previously, and 18.0% of the academics and 38.0% of the administrative staff report the NAB as influencing their effectiveness negatively.

*“No grand vision of the building can justify not being able to work properly.”*

*(Academic, Law)*

- The action strategy for achieving these gains is skilled change management with the key user groups, focusing on their requirements whilst simultaneously recognising and mediating both departmental aims and the needs of other users.
- The POE outcome on light also contrasts with recent POE benchmark data in identifying an Issue on every aspect of lighting evaluated under the headline topic.
- Tuning on the aspects of light, noise and circulation will require focused attention on future projects. However, there is also scope to achieve gains on these aspects in NAB, through the focused change management work that is indicated as necessary.
- The action to improve ratings on migration does not concern direct support to building users in the move to NAB (which was warmly applauded), but a reconsideration of the user guide / welcome pack in a future move.

*“Brilliant: the efficiency, the effectiveness, everything delivered to the right room.”*

*(Academic, Management)*

*“The way they organized that was fantastic, wonderful.”*

*(Academic, Management)*

## 2.3 A stack of distinct buildings

In a general sense, the NAB operates as three distinct buildings – from Lower Ground up to and including the Second Floor as one, from the Third to the Seventh Floor as a second, and the Top Floor as a distinct zone that thus far has relative low recognition and use by users.

The effective separation between the teaching and office floors of the building should be viewed as a successful project outcome, given that the promise of this effect and the insulation of the office space from noise generated by students circulating in the teaching space was a strong criterion in the School community's preference for the Grimshaw competition submission.

Any anticipation that use of the lower parts of the building would be monopolised or dominated by the occupants of NAB's upper floors is not currently borne out; users on the upper floors do not perceive the social spaces in the lower parts of the building as relevant to their requirements (they want informal collaborative space on their respective floors), and much of the teaching by faculty from the Management and Law departments is undertaken in other LSE buildings. At present, therefore, other School constituencies are enlisted in using the building, giving positive substance to the briefing aim that NAB link with the rest of LSE, and helping to avert or diminish the potential sense of 'them and us'. This may alter should future teaching for Law and Management be concentrated in the NAB.