

The London Transport Museum, Covent Garden

Architects Avery Associates have transformed the newly reopened museum over the last six years.

The Grade II listed flower market building in Covent Garden, built by Cubitts and William Rogers in 1872, provided in many ways a perfect setting for the museum. The building not only had the big volumes needed to display what is one of the world's finest public transport vehicle collections, but its location in the heart of London added extra meaning to the story as London was more often than not the world pioneer for many of the vehicles and systems on display.

However, the building did have its drawbacks. It had been built as an open-sided glass-roofed market hall so the large areas of single-glazed roofing meant that it not only suffered severely from heat loss and heat gain, but leaked and let dust and ultraviolet radiation in too – all a very real threat to some of the older artefacts in the museum's collection.

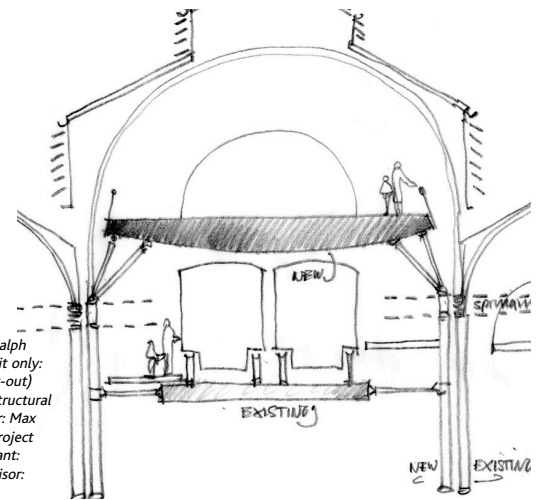
Furthermore, as it had not been built to precise levels or dimensions and also sat directly over another public venue, the Theatre Museum, the opportunities to provide underfloor services or foundations for heavy exhibits or additional floors were severely restricted.

Nevertheless, a substantial new gallery has been inserted at high level within

the roof space and a new lecture theatre has been excavated out from under what had once been the canopy for off-loading the flower carts. This has enabled a new entrance to be built with a bookshop and café with a presence, for the first time, on the Covent

Garden piazza. In achieving this, the entire roof fabric of the building has had to be upgraded to bring the 19th Century construction up to 21st Century standards and in so doing, the opportunity has also been taken to engineer a passive venti-

lation system for the building, augmented in very hot weather by mechanical fans powered from what is probably the largest array of photovoltaics ever to be fitted on a listed building in London.



Architects: Avery Associates Architects, Contactor: Wates, Exhibition Designers: Ralph Appelbaum Associates; (World City Exhibit only: Conran Design Group), Shop and Café (fit-out) designers: Lumsden Design Partnership, Structural Engineer: Buro Happold, Services Engineer: Max Fordham, Quantity Surveyor: Walfords, Project Manager: Drivers Jonas, Acoustic Consultant: Sandy Brown Associates, Planning Supervisor: Epsilon Management services Ltd.

