



Royal Albert Docks Retail and Leisure Complex

London



Our scheme celebrated a unique waterside location and the great vistas it offered. Key to our concept was a curving arcaded galleria encircling a great public place on the waterside

Place
London, UK

Date
1986

Client
Rosehaugh Stanhope
Developments plc
Stuart Lipton

Area
557,500m²

Architect
Richard Rogers
Partnership

Civil Engineer
Ove Arup & Partners

Structural Engineer
Ove Arup & Partners

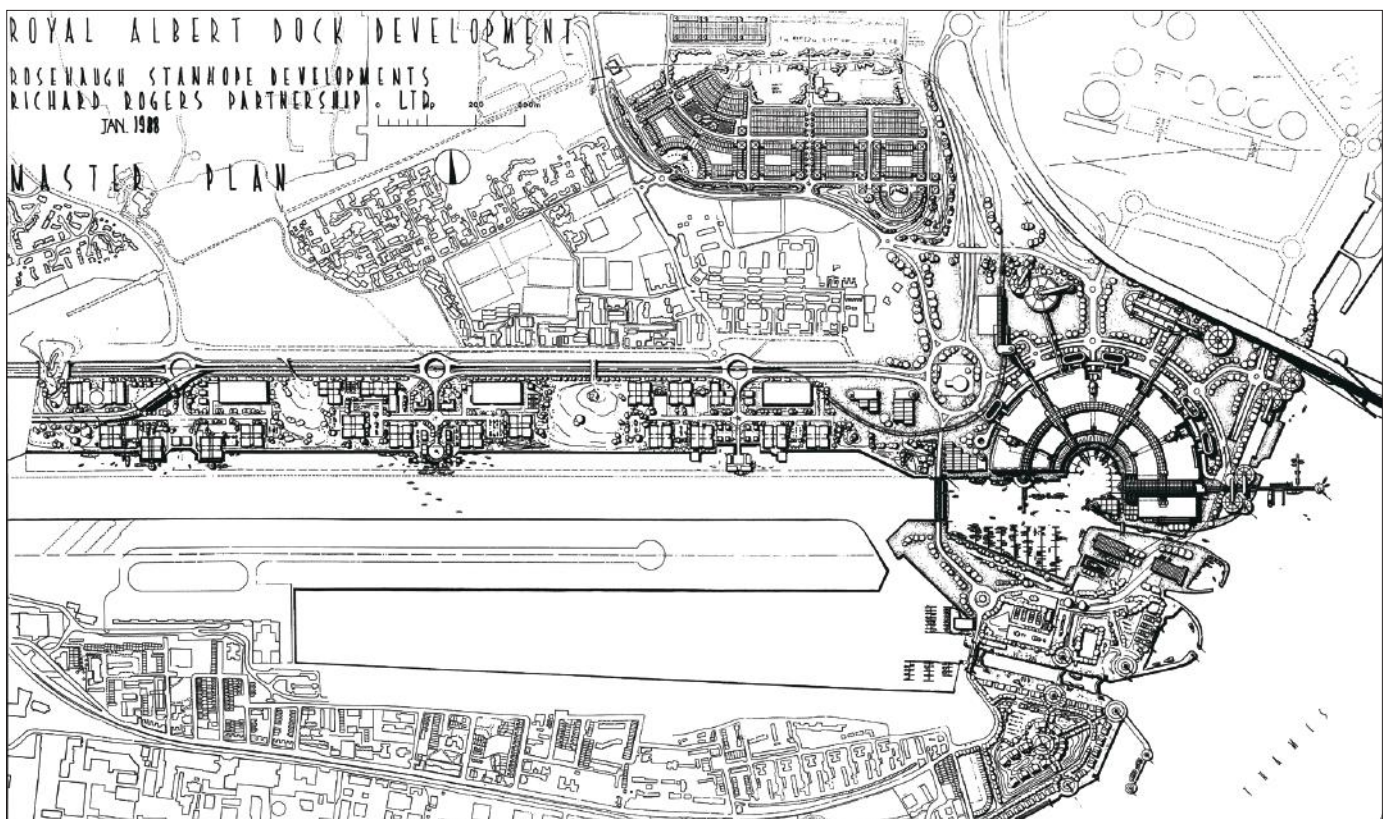
Construction Consultant
Schal

Geotechnical Engineer
Ove Arup & Partners

Landscape Architect
Hanna Olin Limited

Quantity Surveyor
Gardiner & Theobald

Retail Consultant
Edward Erdman



The 'Royals', the Royal Victoria, Royal Albert and King George V Docks, were the largest and most modern of London's dock complexes and the last to close. The last ship left the docks in 1980, leaving a vast tract of land and water (over 400 hectares) available for development. The area stretched from Barking to the Isle of Dogs, comparable to the distance between the Houses of Parliament and Tower Bridge.

Key to RRP's masterplan for the Royal Docks was the creation of an effective public transport system, in order to facilitate the creation of an area of international importance that would generate investment and employment. RRP's design strategy also included services, landscape, development nodes and a clear public domain, alongside major commercial developments – all vital components of what would be a 'unique water-side city'.

Initially, only the infrastructure for this vast scheme was realised, but RRP was subsequently commissioned by developers Rosehaugh Stanhope to design a major mixed-use development along the Royal Albert Dock and adjacent to London's City Airport.

Bordering the 2.5 kilometre long dock, the scheme culminated in a great glazed galleria arcing around a marina. Intended to be the most impressive shopping centre in Europe, the scheme offered a spectacular vista along the entire length of the Royals. Based on the concept of a dynamic public domain, with tented structures along the waterside housing restaurants and other leisure activities, the development was designed as the commercial magnet for the entire Royals complex but the faltering economy of the late 1980s meant that this great civic scheme was abandoned.