

John Harvard Library + Project

Modest investment for maximum effect



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14 August 2010

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Welcome to Southwark

- Population increasing to 282,500 in 2029
- 17.9% under 15 and 72.2% under 45
- Culturally very diverse
- Extremes of affluence and poverty
- Over 100 languages in schools: 43% speak English as a second language
- 12 public libraries plus Mobile and Home Library Services

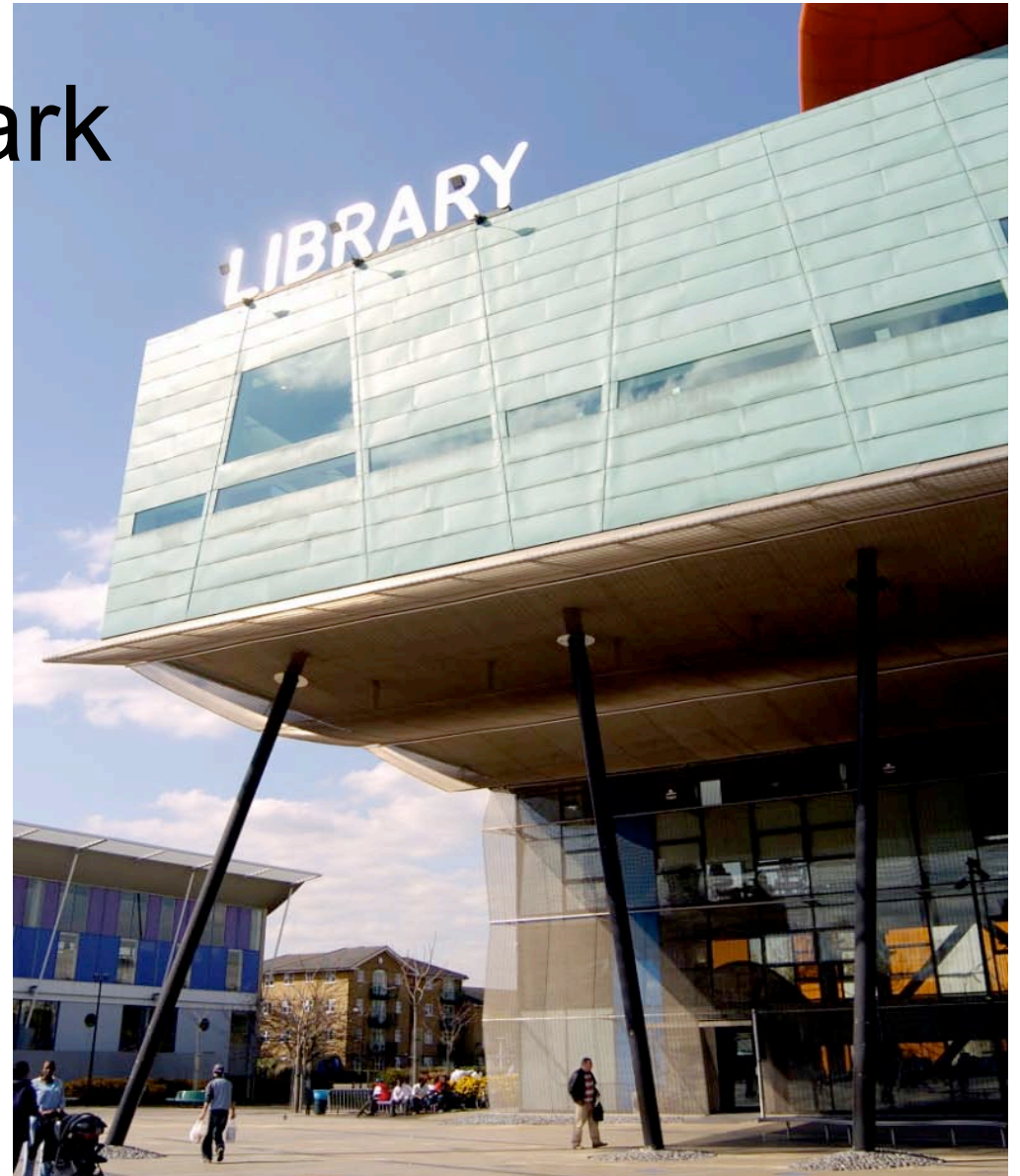
Welcome to Southwark



Tower Bridge



The Globe Theatre



Peckham Library

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JHL at the historic heart of Southwark

John Harvard born here



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JHL at the historic heart of Southwark

- Dickens lived here
- 1937 march against the Blackshirts



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The Big Lottery Fund

- 2007: £80m available to improve libraries
- Renovate and increase services
- Award 2008: £1.4m to JHL
- To be complete by 2011
- To be community driven



LOTTERY FUNDED

Why modernise John Harvard Library ?

- Opened in 1977.
- Poor internal layout, visibility, with side entrance
- Heating, lighting, ventilation out of date
- Public areas poor but well used by local residents, schools, students, workers, tourists.
- Increase usage: become a community space
- Be a model of good practice in community engagement

Why modernise John Harvard Library ?

- Poor access at the side
- Invisible from the street
- Unattractive for visitors



Why modernise John Harvard Library ?

- Dark, dingy interior
- Poor ceiling and lighting
- No ventilation
- Poor technology
- Worn out
- Asbestos
- Problems with anti-social behaviour



What did we achieve?

"a stunning exemplar of what we want to see right across the country....

a very welcoming environment, fantastic layout, great facilities for children and for learning."

Margaret Hodge, UK Culture Minister

December 2009

What did we achieve?

“The public reaction to the library has been phenomenal.

I’ve seen people wandering around the library smiling and saying out loud ‘this is fantastic’.”

A John Harvard Librarian, soon after it opened

The Brief

- Increase public space
- Make safe, welcoming, comfortable place
- Provide coffee shop for browsing and working
- Move entrance to Borough High Street
- Renew mechanical, electrical services, toilets
- Improve meeting room, staff spaces
- Introduce RFID, self service; reinstate wi-fi

Establishing the brief

By engaging with key stakeholders, we:

- Looked** at the library and how it worked
- Learnt** from the staff and public
- Reviewed** with the client aspirations and visions
- Consulted** with the public and staff
- Visited** other new libraries
- Translated** the 'Community Libraries Programme' vision into a fit for purpose building

Community Engagement

Project Management Board, targeting:

- Local schools
- Parents with children with additional needs
- Health sector
- Somali community
- Homeless people
- People with disabilities

All informing design, layout, events, activities

What will the new library offer?

Daily programmes include:

- Under 5's story times, book start
- Homework help
- Family and Adult learning, basic skills support
- Health and well-being
- Reading groups, themed events
- Events for older people
- Volunteers, and work experience

Results

The opening



"We've missed you!
There's so much to
experience at the
new John Harvard
library - will you
come and visit us?"

Samantha Spencer, Library Assistant

Experience the new John Harvard library -
reopening **November 16 2009** at 12 noon

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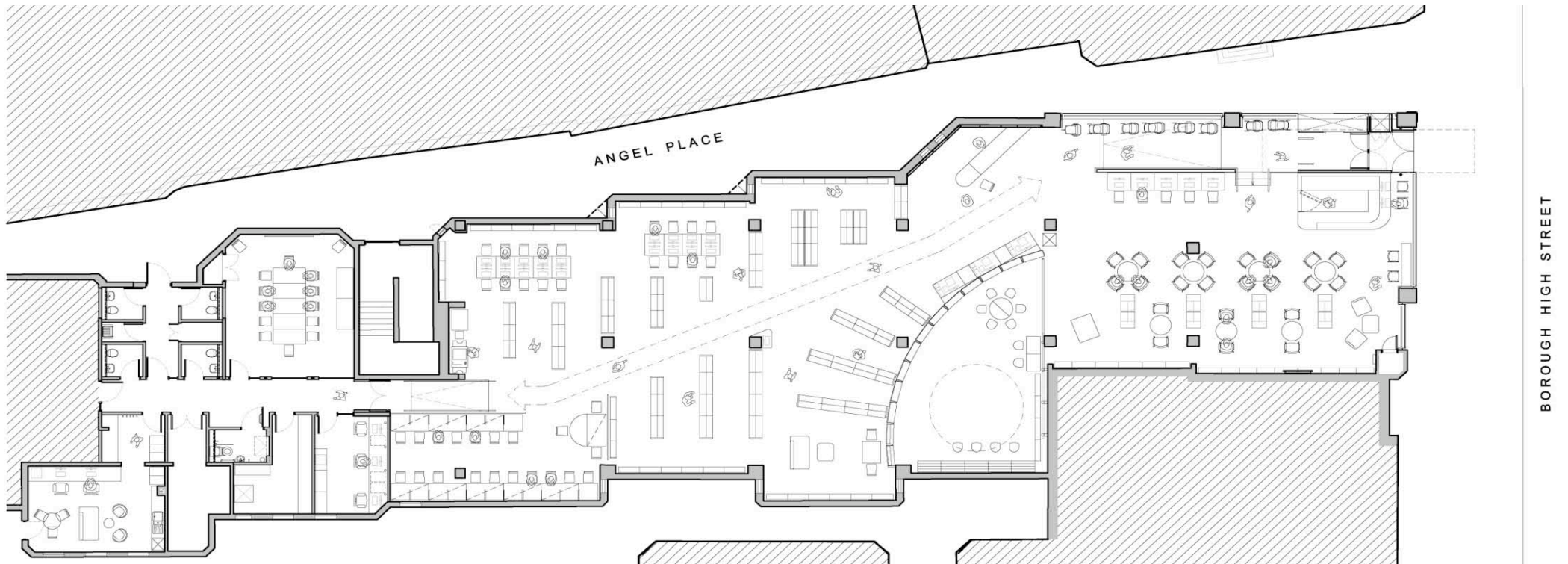
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Results

A simple layout with 10% more space



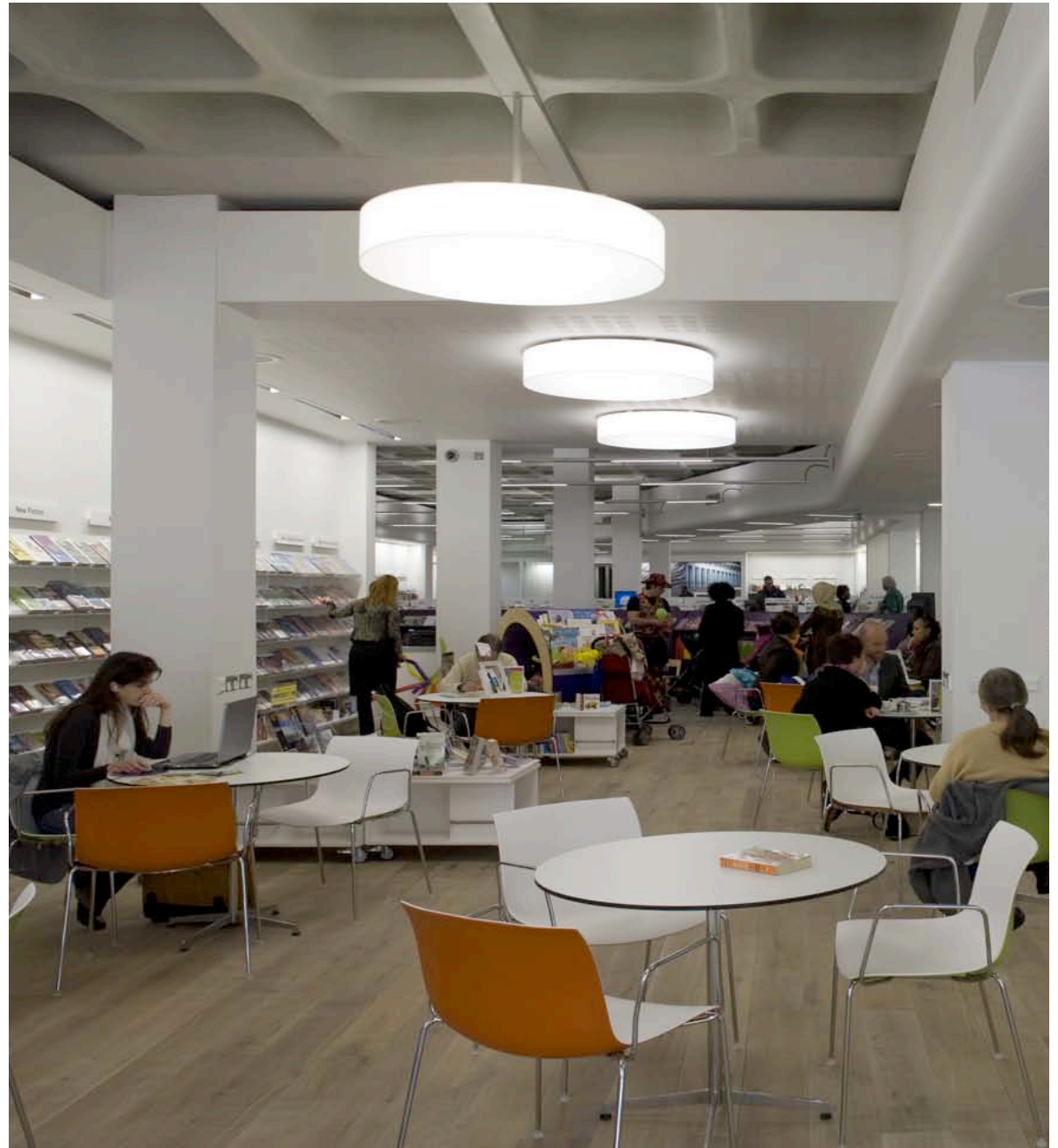
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Results

A cafe for browsing
and work



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Results

A safe, integrated children's area



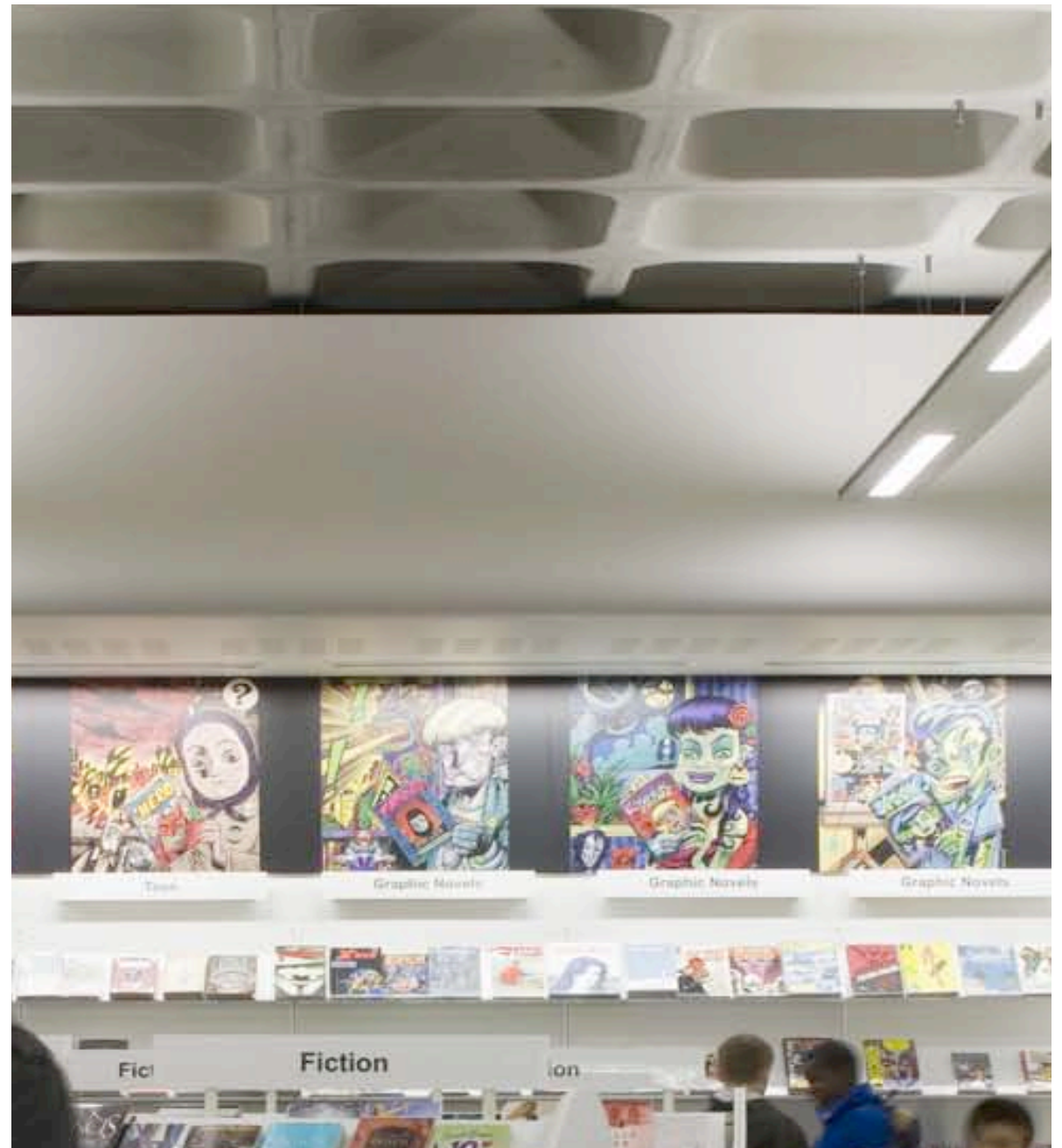
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Results

A place for
teenagers with
commissioned
artwork



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Results

Efficient technology
for all



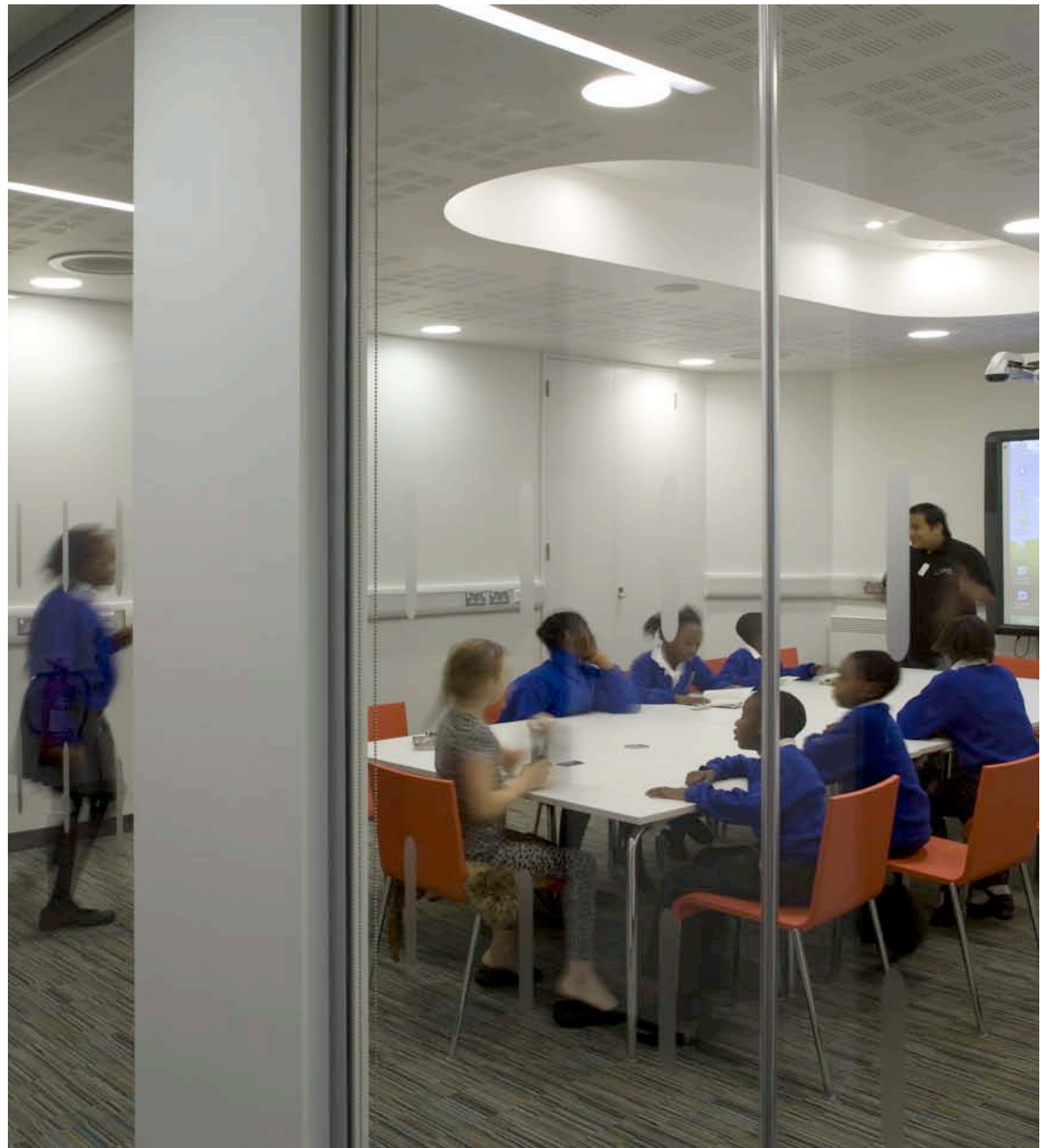
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Results

Good meeting/
training room that is
light and open



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Results

A place for quiet work, reading and study



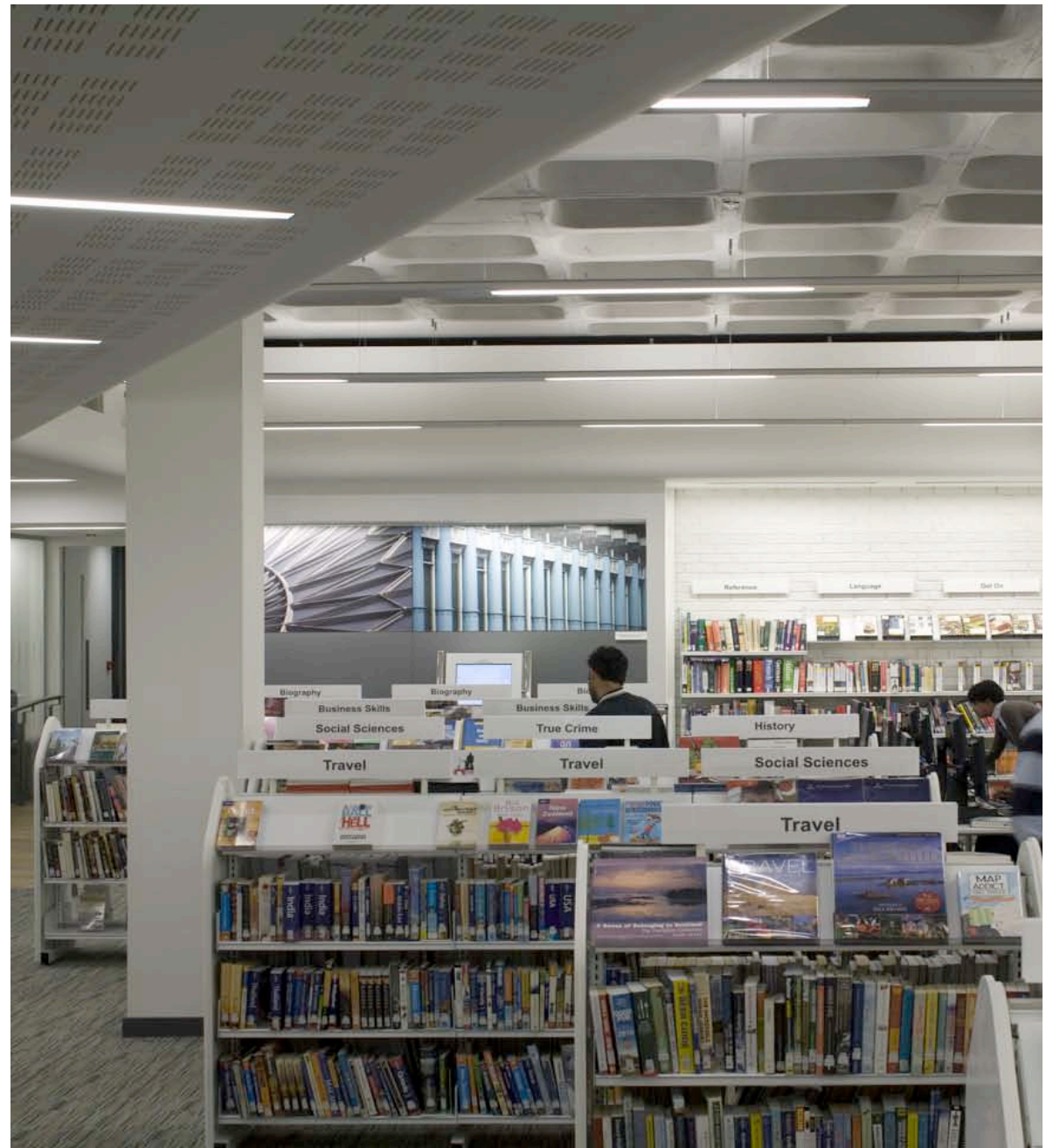
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Results

A safe environment
with good visibility



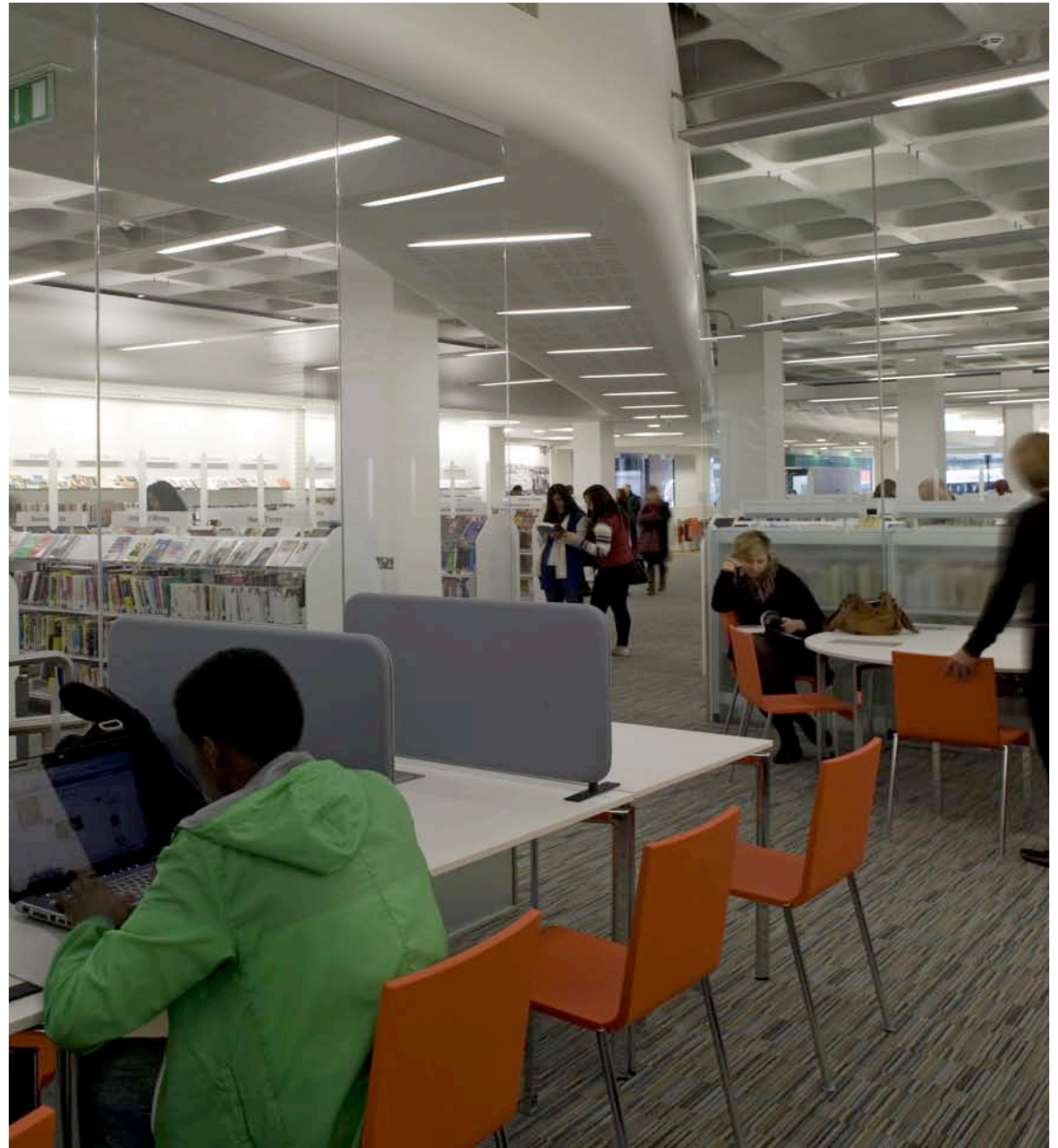
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Results

High ceilings and
lots of light and
views out



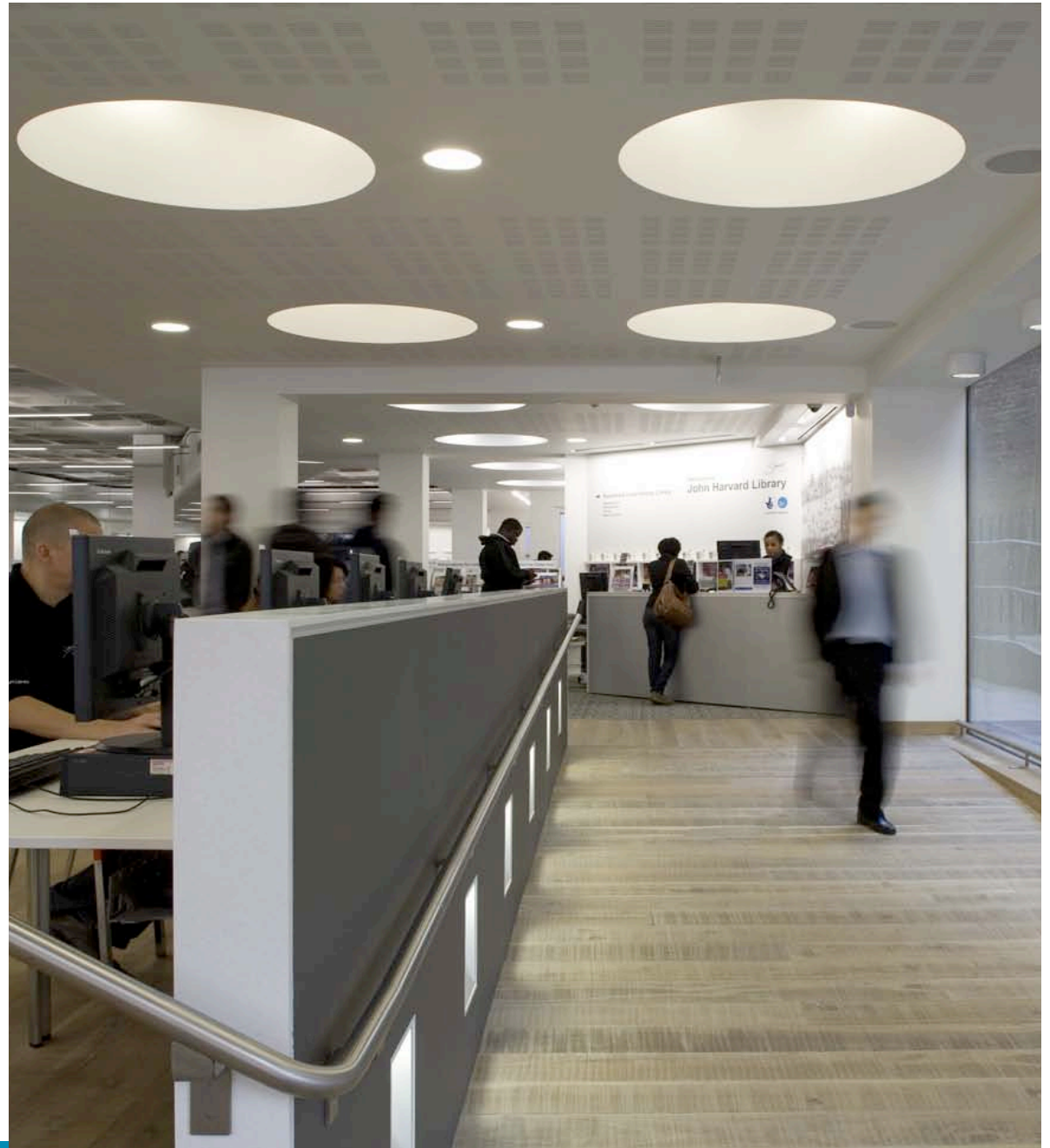
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Results

Easy accessibility for all



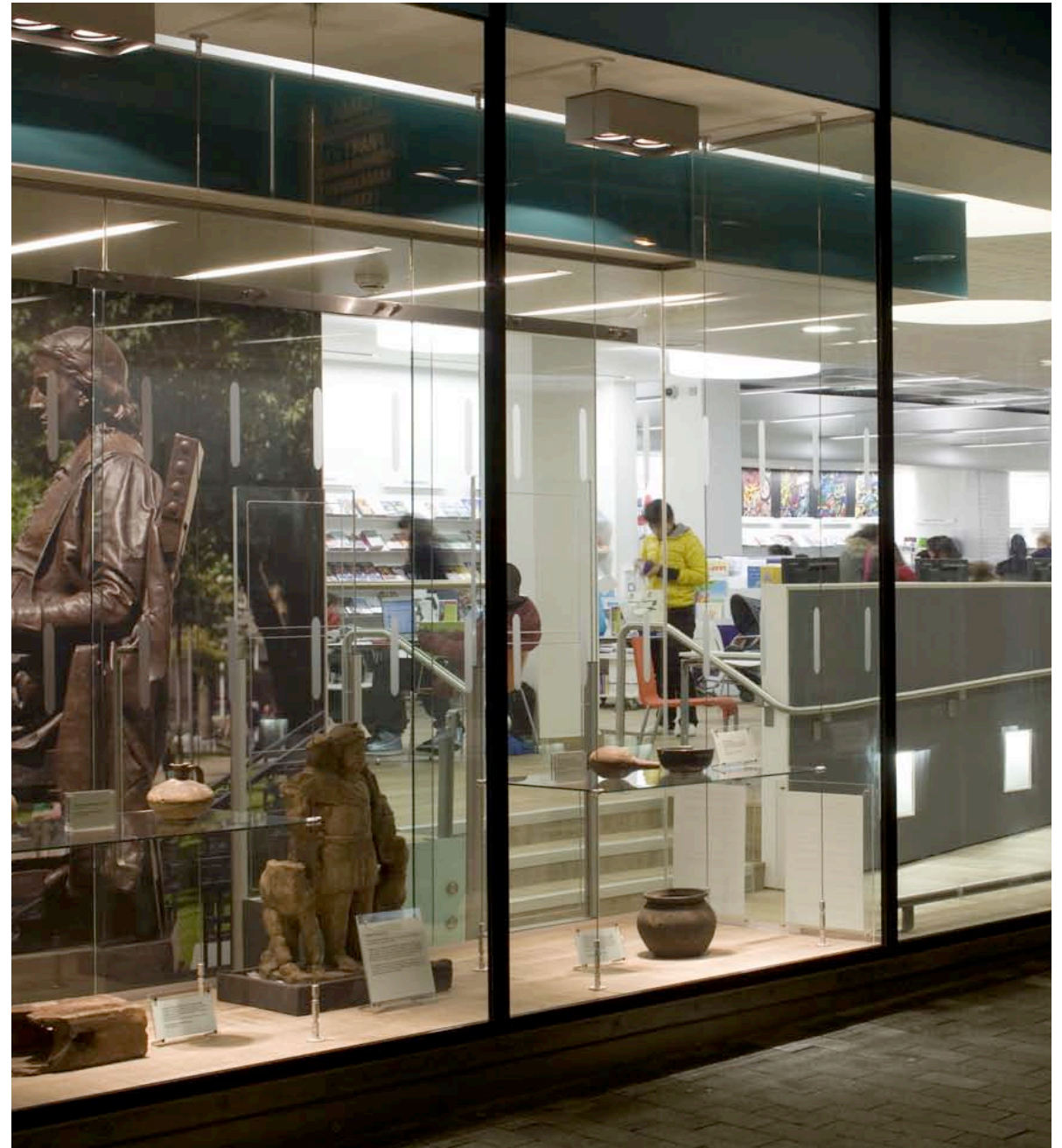
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Results

Great views in from
the street



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Results

A welcoming
entrance in the right
place



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Problems encountered

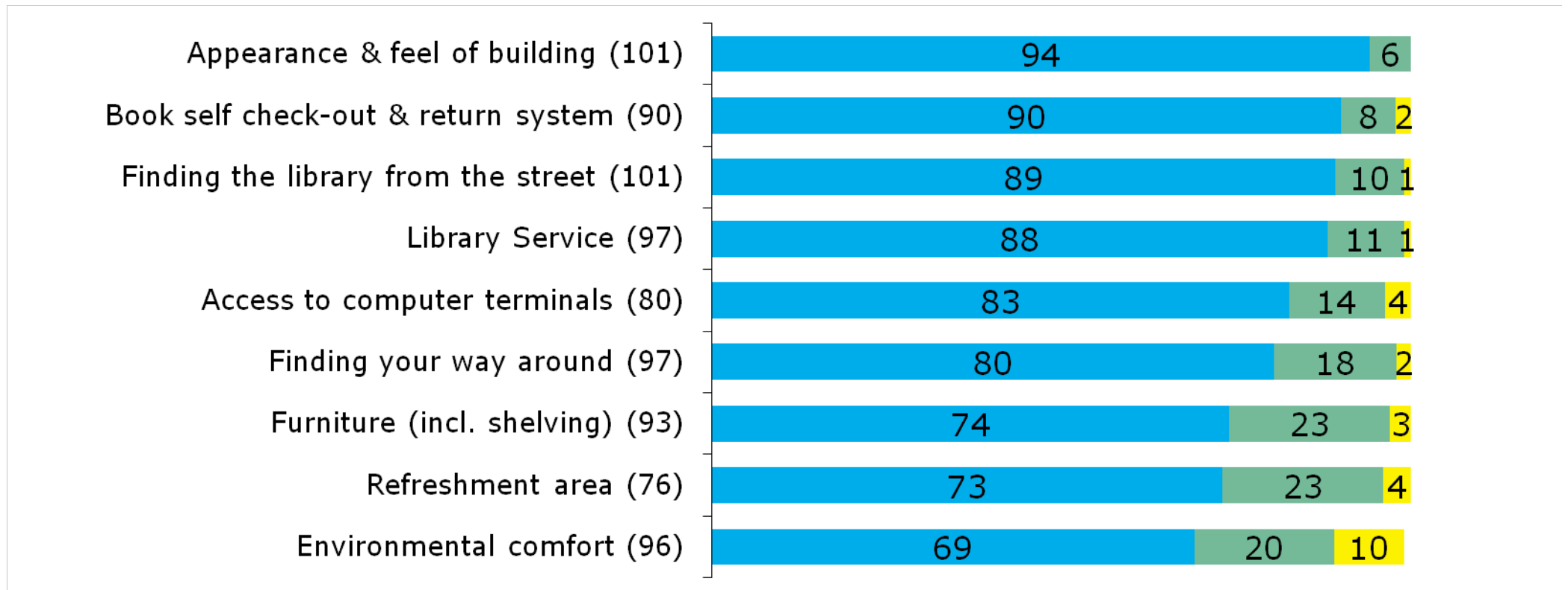
- More asbestos than we thought
- Poor quality of existing building fabric
- Discovery of basement under new slab
- Delay in reconnecting electricity supply

Lessons Learnt

- Be prepared for the unexpected
- Refurbishments are **never** straightforward
- Keep a contingency: time and money
- Keep your community up to date with progress
- Keep your staff involved

Review in use: hugely positive

An independent look – 8 months on.....



Review in use: hugely positive

“It’s a wonderful community space - I come here every opportunity I have”

“I love the airy feel. It’s bright and welcoming”

“The original library was boring to look at, this one is great”

“Wouldn’t it be great if this could happen throughout the borough?”

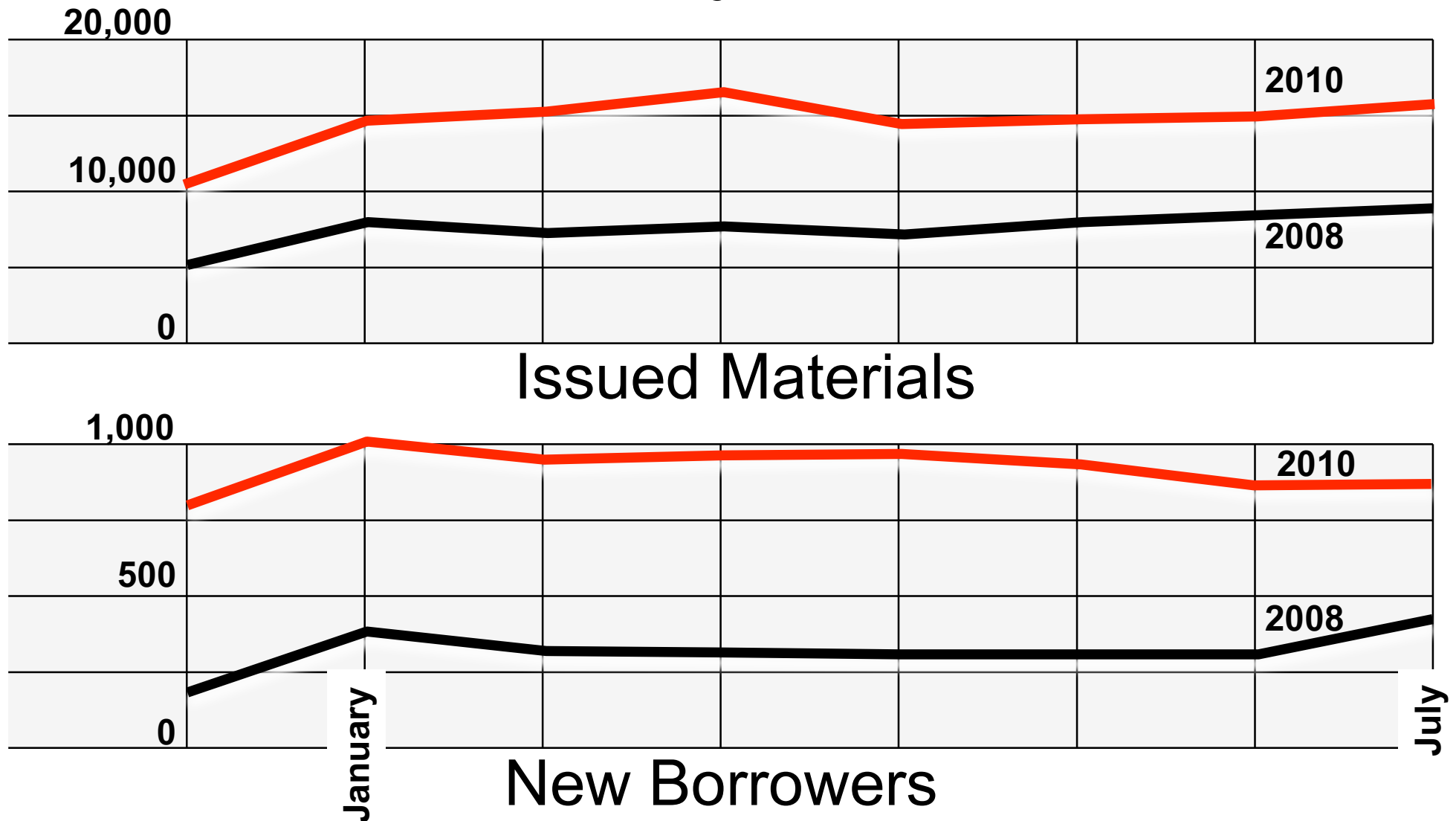
Review in use: hugely positive

“Checking out of books is much faster than the old system. Very impressed!”

“A wonderful improvement - great to have it open again”

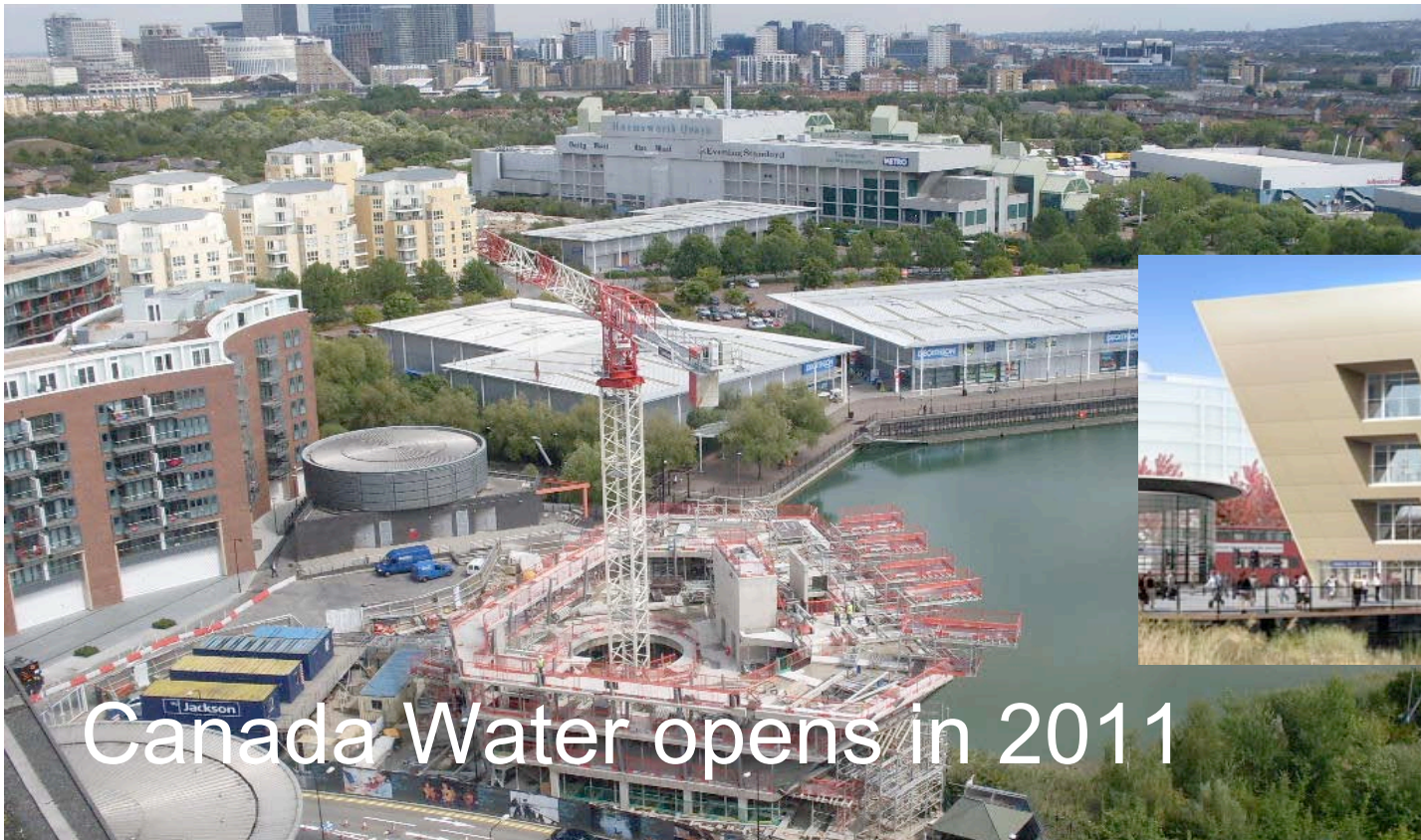
“I’m very happy with the library and all its facilities: long live public libraries!”

Use has dramatically increased



What next for Southwark?

- Continuing Community Engagement
- Ongoing Customer Satisfaction Surveys



Canada Water opens in 2011

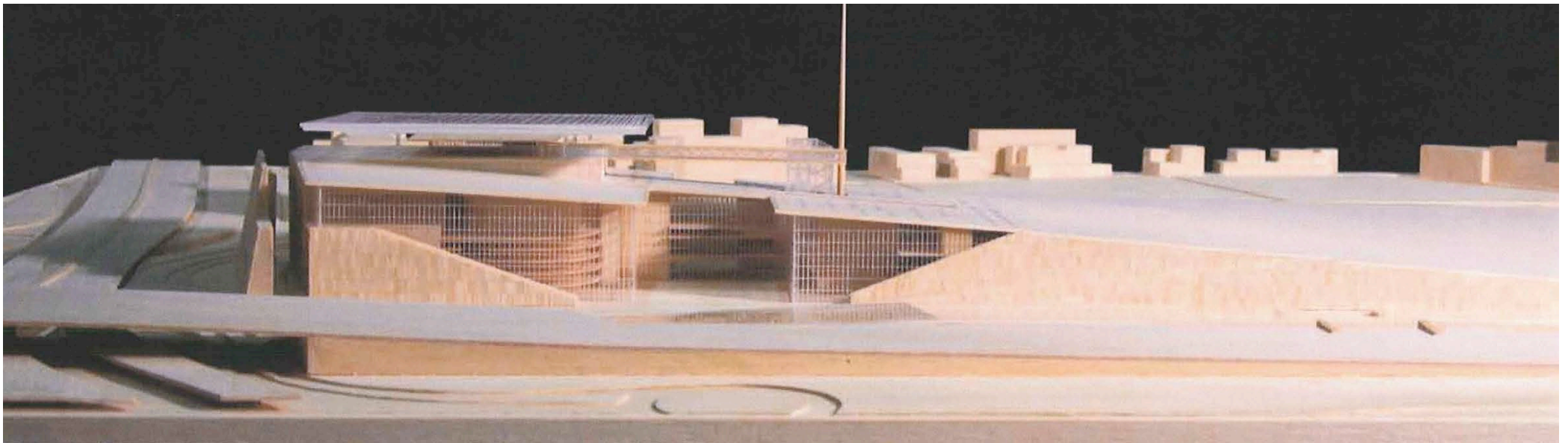
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What next for AMA?

- The National Library of Greece
- Financed by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation
- Working with the British Museum and the Renzo Piano Building Workshop



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Thank you



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