

Tall stories

Five new buildings that will change London's skyline for good...

1 **The Shard**
Location: 32 London Bridge Street, SE1
Architect: Renzo Piano
Developer: Sellar Property Group
Completion: May 2012

At nearly twice the height of the Swiss Re building (the 'Gherkin'), the 87-storey Shard at London Bridge will be the tallest building in the European Union when it's completed in two years time - though smaller than the Mercury City Tower in Moscow, due in 2011.

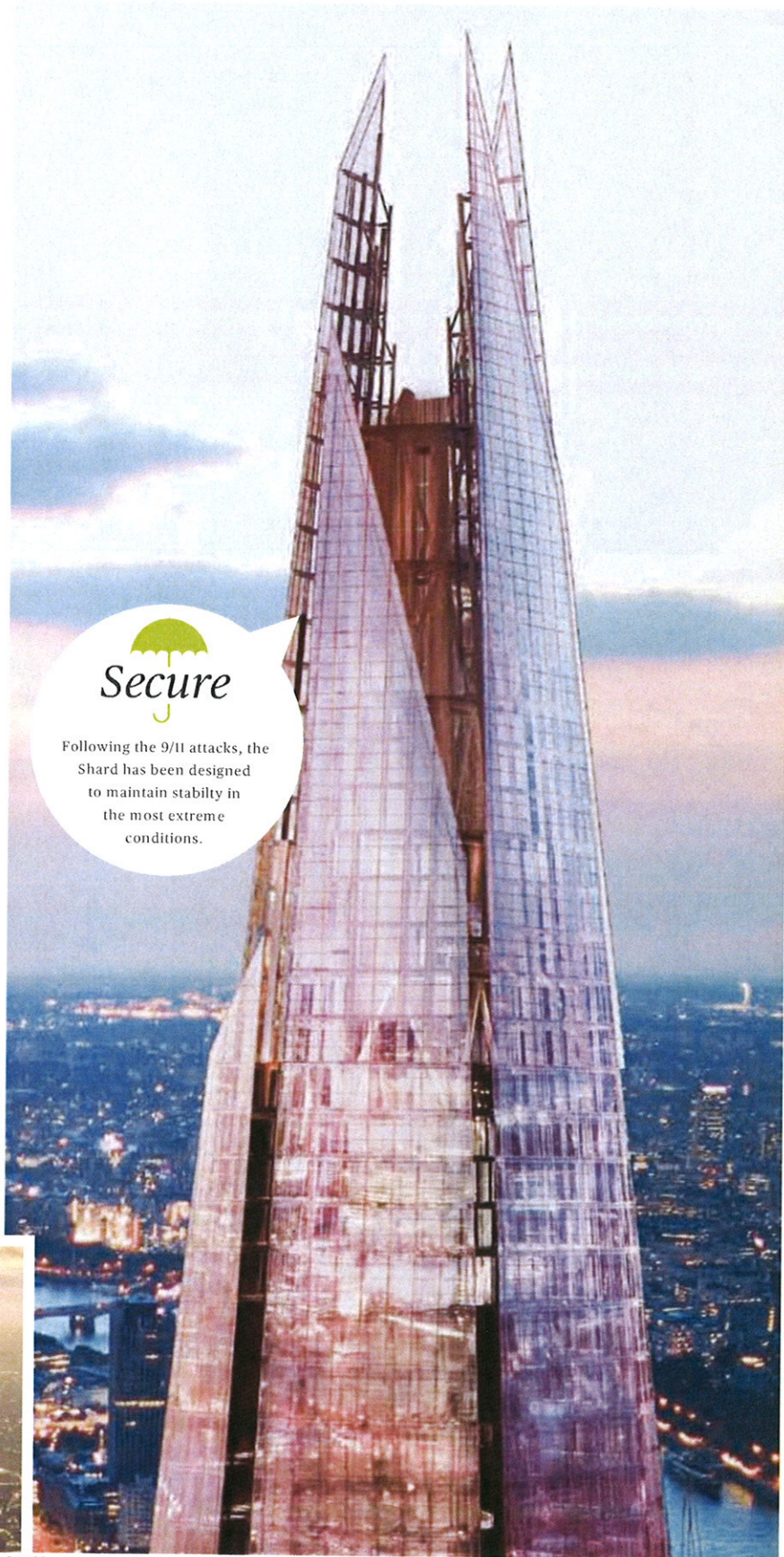
The 'shard of glass' shape came to architect, Renzo Piano, as he illustrated the building to developer Irvine Sellar, on the back of a menu at lunch one day. He stated that office floors should be wider than hotel ones and therefore put in the lower section of the tower. Residential floors are narrower and should therefore be nearer the spire-like top.

The finished building therefore will follow that model - a dramatic, tapering tower that will dominate the London skyline for years to come. Offices will be housed up to the 28th floor, then the Shangri La hotel in the middle, before the residential space at the top. There'll be four floors of viewing galleries for visitors to use, with access from London Bridge station.

Piano says that the Shard will use an advanced type of glass with a low iron content, claiming that, "If you use low iron glass you end up with something that's like a crystal. It's going to be more vibrant and changing. So depending on the day, the light and the position of the sun, the building will look different." Currently under construction, the core should reach the 72nd floor sometime this month.

With a building this high, productivity is a big issue. This has been solved with canteens inside the tower every 10 storeys, so brickies never have to travel more than five storeys to get their bacon sandwiches.

www.shardlondonbridge.com



Following the 9/11 attacks, the Shard has been designed to maintain stability in the most extreme conditions.



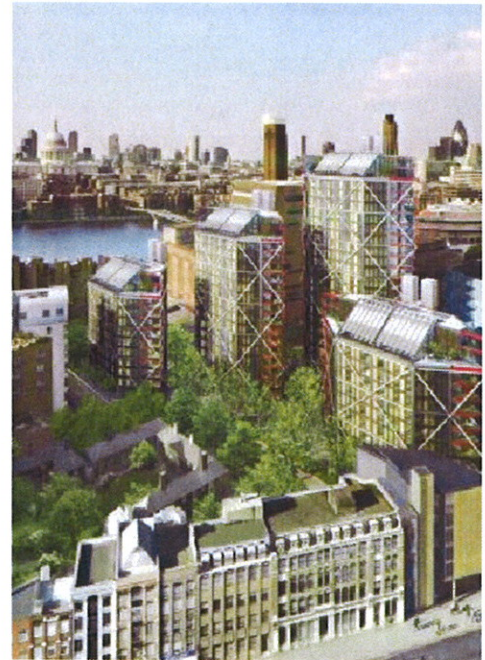
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2 One Hyde Park

Location: 68-114 Knightsbridge, SW1
Architect: Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners (formerly Richard Rogers)
Developer: A consortium including Candy & Candy
Completion: End of 2010

If you're a Russian oligarch and your idea of home is a sprawling apartment of 27,000 sq ft (the equivalent of about 27 'normal' terraced houses) and getting your room service via a tunnel from Mandarin Oriental next door, then consider a penthouse at One Hyde Park for £140m. If you're not *that* rich, the other 85 flats start at guide price of circa £6,000 per sq ft, which for a 1,000 sq ft apartment, still works out at £6m, six times that of the Henson Building in Camden (see page 32). The scheme consists of four hexagonal blocks linked by stair and lift cores, with the idea being to maximise residents' views. The flats will have top-of-the-range kitchens and bathrooms, but bedrooms and living areas will be left for the residents' interior design teams to finish off. It also comes with 'posh concrete' columns, containing crushed limestone for whiteness and mica for sparkle.

www.onehydepark.com

3 Neo Bankside

Location: Sumner Street, SE1 (behind Tate Modern)
Architect: Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners (formerly Richard Rogers)
Developer: Native Land/Grosevenor Estate joint venture
Completion: End of 2010

Forget art, try architecture. That's the aim with Neo Bankside, a large, mostly-residential scheme of 229 flats in four hexagonal high rises (the tallest being 24 storeys) behind the Tate Modern, plus a smaller five-storey building on Southwark Street.

Similar in appearance to the Rogers-designed Lloyds Building in the City, (the one with the service pipes on the outside) the support structure of steel bracing at Neo Bankside is external, avoiding the need for internal structural walls and allowing natural light to come through. The scheme incorporates glass lifts in transparent shafts, roof gardens and green touches like solar water heating from roof panels and a system for using collected rainwater for irrigating landscaped areas. Very much in keeping with the *Umbrella* ethos.

Neo Bankside will be next to the new Southwark entrance to Blackfriars Station and just a couple of minutes across the Thames via the Millennium (no longer wobbly) Bridge. Will this prevent the good folk north of the river from considering residents of Neo Bankside as south Londoners? It's doubtful. It is in Millwall's catchment area after all.

www.neobankside.com

- 01 London post-Shard
- 02 The Shard will change colour depending on the position of the sun
- 03 The view from Neo Bankside takes in the City and the Tate
- 04 The Shard in its present state
- 05 All is Leafy at One Hyde Park
- 06 Neo Bankside on Southwark St



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4 Charlotte Building
 Location: Gresse Street, W1
 Architect: Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands
 Developer: Derwent London
 Completion: Just completed

If you like the art deco *Daily Express* buildings in London and Manchester, then the façade of the new Charlotte Building should be worthy of your admiration.

This 41,000 sq ft office block, located in winding 18th Century streets just north of Oxford Street, also shares a dramatic reception in common with the *Daily Express* blocks and has stylish, coffered lighting. With its central position and beautiful design, this is somewhere that at *Umbrella* we'd love as our workplace.

The fully glazed exterior boasts curved corners and dotted patterning on the glass to lend a pop art, 3D effect. On the top floor, the glazing is set back, giving access to a terrace, from which one gets a good view of London and the nearby BT Tower. The Charlotte won the RIBA London Award 2010 - and with environmental features that reduce the need for air conditioning and keep noise levels down, we can see why.

www.charlottebuildingwl.com



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5 The Henson Building
 Location: 30 Oval Road, NW1
 Architect: Tate Hindle
 Developer: London & Newcastle
 Completion: Just completed

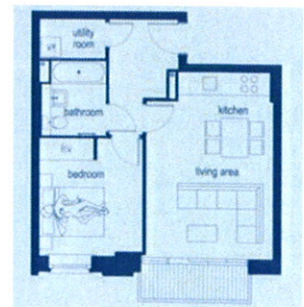
Named after *Muppets* creator Jim Henson, this building brings New York loft living to Camden Town in this converted Victorian building. Oval Road itself crosses the Regent's Canal at Southampton Bridge, just past Camden Lock, and the building reflects the area's industrial past.

The site was originally a railway store for the nearby Camden Goods Yard, now the site of a Morrison's supermarket and The Roundhouse, another former railway building. It was later occupied by Jim Henson's Creature Shop where the puppets, animatronic characters and effects for films such as *The Dark Crystal* were produced.

The sixth-floor building has 46 flats, including newly erected penthouses, two of which are 4,000 sq ft duplexes - ideal for millionaire rock stars who want to stay in Camden without slumming it. Internally, brick walls are exposed and stainless steel kitchens are used everywhere. All very cool.

The marketing brochure depicts a copulating couple on the bed of one of the floor plans, but there's no mention of the convenience of having Morrison's around the corner, a massive selling point in *Umbrella*'s view. And a sure-fire way to impress any lady of taste.

www.thehenson.co.uk



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- 07 The Charlotte Building
- 08 Rounded corners at the Charlotte
- 09 Henson Building apartment
- 10 The Victorian exterior of the Henson Building
- 11 The Henson's copulating couple show up on-plan