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# WALKWAYS: ENHANCING OUR PUBLIC REALM

**T**he quality of our public realm is widely acknowledged as being essential to the creation of environments that people wish to live and work within. Developments that enhance the public realm for users, particularly for pedestrians, can produce measurable benefits to the local economy, health, social well-being and safety.

The Urban Design Team at Transport for London has undertaken a number of studies seeking to measure the value of such improvements to the public realm and provide a valuation toolkit for public realm investment. This research has confirmed that the public value high quality streets and are willing to pay for improvements. It found that there was a positive, significant and consistent value added to private business by maintaining and improving the public realm and the research also confirmed the health and social benefits of public realm improvements particularly pedestrian-oriented environments.

The movement of people from one location to another is central to public realm development. In such situations linkages between buildings or through open spaces become integral to the design of the public realm and the building architecture creating a 'sense of place'.

Major transport interchanges are an increasing focus for public realm developments to improve the social well-being and safety of passengers and to enhance the local environment to the benefit of the local economy and community. Transport

interchanges act as a gateway for the passenger and a poor experience can leave a lasting impression on an individual as they leave or enter a place.

Macemain + Amstad's architectural structures and street furniture give clients the opportunity to add value to their public realm development projects. Continuing investment in laser CNC machining technology and skilled workforce, combined with the elegant

use of modern materials, enable Macemain + Amstad to offer clients a variety of quality products and a bespoke design service. The range of walkways and canopies are playing an increasingly important role in defining the linkages within public realm developments.

Over the last four years the Dublin Airport Authority has invested €1.2 billion in the upgrading of facilities at Dublin International Airport. These new facilities will allow the airport to comfortably handle up to 35 million passengers per year. Central to the development is Terminal 2, an improved internal roads network, a new multi-storey car park and the provision of sites for a new ground transportation centre and a future metro station.

Northamptonshire-based Macemain + Amstad has been an essential part of the delivery team Transforming Dublin Airport, designing a series of walkways to facilitate the movement of passengers through the airport campus. In response to an outline specification provided by Arup, Macemain was appointed to detail design, manufacture and install an enclosed walkway based upon its proven Paragon Walkway System.



Using its in-house 3D design capabilities it was able to develop a walkway design that would provide clear linkages through the airport campus and enhance the experience of the passenger. The detailed design incorporated the following principles.

**Continuity** *A series of curved and straight walkways that provide clear and covered links for pedestrians enabling them to reach their destination.*

Macemain + Amstad provided 400 metres of straight and curved walkways varying in width from 3000mm to 4000mm depending on the pedestrian flows. The walkways create clear linkages for passengers between the bus interchange, car parks and taxi ways through the airport campus.

**Safety** *Materials that are resistant to vandalism and terrorism. Walkways that are free of obstructions, follow the natural topography of the ground, include background lighting and are integrated into the open space to provide natural surveillance and a feeling of openness.* The Paragon Walkways are constructed from

stainless steel, powder coated aluminium, opal polycarbonate sheeting, toughened and laminated glass. The design and materials used facilitated the natural surveillance of the walkways from other areas of the airport campus and buildings increasing the inherent safety of the environment for all passengers.

The modular system employed was easily adapted to the differing gradients and profiles on site and integral lighting was provided that achieved ground illumination and complemented the street lighting scene.

**Comfort** *A comfortable and pleasant environment for passengers providing protection from the rain, wind and sun.*

The roof and side glazing, over the full length of the walkway system, gives significant protection to the passengers from Ireland's wind and rain and the UV stabilised polycarbonate roof provides protection from the sun. The glass and polycarbonate provide a pleasant natural light filter and create a comfortable environment for passengers.

**Pleasure** *An attractive design that enhances the airport campus, complements the new T2 building and contributes to leaving a positive lasting impression on the passengers.*

The Paragon Walkway System provides striking and attractive linkages through the airport campus. The unique wishbone incorporated within the structure creates a distinctive design feature. The stainless steel and glass used throughout the system complements the main T2 building and contributes positively to the local environment creating a sense of place.

David Collins of Arup commented: 'Dublin Airport Authority procured a Macemain + Amstad walkway canopy for Dublin Airport as part of the campus

upgrade projects. Throughout the design and construction phase of the project, the team from Macemain + Amstad were helpful and always had answers to problems to ensure that an optimum design was achieved; that a high quality product was delivered and that the programme was maintained. The completed walkway canopy is to a very high standard and of great benefit to airport users. I wouldn't hesitate in using Macemain + Amstad again.'

Overall, the result is a stunningly light and spacious series of walkways that provide clear links through the Dublin Airport campus. The walkways have been designed to compliment the building architecture and enhance the airport environment adding to the creation of a 'sense of place' for passengers.

It is the design team expertise at Macemain + Amstad in conjunction with long experience in the provision of walkways and creating quality waiting environments that has enabled the company to provide a project management service to its clients that can deliver a striking portfolio of products that can significantly enhance public realm developments.

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**TOP RIGHT:** DUBLIN AIRPORT NEEDED A NETWORK OF WALKWAYS TO TAKE PASSENGERS AROUND THE SITE.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** STAINLESS STEEL, GLASS AND A WISHBONE STRUCTURE AT THE TOP OF EACH COLUMN COMPLEMENTS THE NEW TERMINAL BUILDING.

**BELOW RIGHT:** STEPPING DOWN TO DEAL WITH GRADIENTS ON THE DUBLIN SITE.