





rio grand

Looking around the new operational premises of multi-national mining and resources group Rio Tinto you would never guess that the company's bold and sensory interior was partly the result of an incredibly stringent environmental fit out.

Coupled with the design remit of an integrated light and open, flexible working environment to reflect the core business and modus operandi of Rio Tinto, the result was a high-spec environmentally-friendly fit out on an impressive scale.

For the 107,000 sq ft building in Paddington, West London, environmental fit out specialist Overbury provided a grand hotel-style entrance on the ground floor, including reception, exhibition space, welcome area and coffee bar. Across the remaining five floors the company created a combination of open workspace, telebooths and capsules for quiet working spaces and meeting rooms, full restaurant, breakout and social spaces, three landscaped terrace gardens and a library and resource centre. ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶



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'While colourful works of art enhance the image and sensory feel of the building, they also tell the story of what we do as a mining group,' explains Cherry DeGeer, Global Practice Leader, Communications. You can tell which area of the building you are in by the artwork. For example, artwork showing abstract images of global operations and products are all displayed as large graphics wrapping around the curved capsule walls in the open-plan offices and in the stairwells, while large printed canvas screens illustrate other strong, colourful and abstract images of our business and decorate the meeting rooms on the ground and fifth floors. The artworks, along with the wood and metal finishes, purposefully add colour, texture and context to what might otherwise be a sterile contemporary work space.'

When looking into creating new office accommodation, Rio Tinto wanted more than just a hint of sustainability, they wanted a first rate job suffused with the highest environmental credentials, both in the

energy efficiency of the new building and the fit out itself.

'A priority for the provision of the new building was responsible waste management,' Neil continues. 'We wanted to minimise the environmental impact of the new offices and so set a recycling target of 75% for the fit out.'

For the entire project 340 tonnes of waste were generated, but 258 tonnes of this – or 76% was recycled.

'We were able to make use of the building being completely empty and segregate waste on site, which isn't always possible on fit out schemes,' Carl tells us. 'Plasterboard, timber, metal and cardboard and paper were separated on site, and re-used as much as possible on the job. Anything that couldn't be put to use on site was distributed among separate skips and taken to a recycling facility.'

The higher rate of recycling was primarily due to the segregation systems on site, the collection of segregated waste by dedicated vehicles to avoid mixing wastes and the extensive processing at a Material Recovery Facility. Pallets and cable reels

were also collected for re-use, and even though these might seem like minor changes, the end result is a massive saving and well worth the extra effort.'

The environmental edge doesn't just stop with the completion of the fit out. A 15,000 litre rainwater harvesting tank recovers surface water from the building's roof for use in all the washrooms. Presence detection and daylight-saving lighting switches off automatically when rooms are empty. Making use of the glass structure, the lighting system also dims lights throughout the building when there is good light outside.

Rio Tinto's employees have also been provided with efficient recycling and multifunctional device (MFD) points to segregate paper waste for recycling, as well as taking machinery away from the main hub of the office to reduce office noise pollution.

The overall feeling of the new building is of light, natural reflective surfaces and contemporary style. Obvious care has been taken into how the space was created and how it will be used.

'Being the sole occupant, Rio Tinto was able to infuse the new building with its own personality,' Carl concludes. 'The result is an amazing first-class environment that celebrates its core business and company achievements and provides comfort, style and efficiency with a high rate of energy-efficiency.' ●

essential ingredients

Client:	• Rio Tinto
Architect & Design:	• Bennett Interior Design www.bennettinteriordesign.co.uk
Main Contractor:	• Overbury Plc www.overbury.com
Project Manager:	• Cushman Wakefield www.cushwake.com
M&E Consultant:	• Watkins Payne www.wppgroup.co.uk
Structural Engineer:	• Scott Wilson www.scottwilson.com
Furniture:	• Ergonom www.ergonom.com Humanscale www.humanscale.com European Design Centre www.edcplc.com
Flooring:	• Domus Tiles www.domustiles.com Shaw Contracts www.shawcontractgroup.com
Lighting:	• Zumtobel www.zumtobel.com