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News from Design & Engineering Solutions Edition 02

ATKINS

## The changing face of Atkins in design

**Also inside:** Panama – a new city ◦  
D&ES sustainability showcase ◦  
Graduate forum ◦ Laura Calvo  
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Langley-Poole

## SONJIANG HOTEL CARVED OUT OF A QUARRY



A stunning new hotel near Shanghai, China will showcase Atkins' sustainable design credentials on the world stage. This five-star 'green' hotel being built on the site of an abandoned water-filled quarry features a grass roof and will exploit the site's geothermal heat to generate electricity and heating. A naturally-lit internal atrium incorporates the existing rock face with its waterfalls and green vegetation.

The futuristic hotel, set to open in 2009, features underwater public areas, guest rooms and conference facilities for up to 1,000 people and sport and leisure centres. The hotel design concepts were paramount in beating off competition from around the world to win the contract.

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## DEFRA HQ

Atkins refurbished Nobel House in Whitehall, using sheep's wool instead of synthetics in cavity walls. The project achieved a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environment Assessment Method) rating of 79.9%.

Its sustainable features include:

- A gas-fired combined heating and power plant which provides 25% of the electrical load, plus hot water and additional cooling.
- Light-sensitive automatic controls which govern an intelligent electrical lighting system, minimising demand for excessive interior lighting.
- 70% of all construction waste was reused or recycled.
- Biodiversity is enhanced through a roof garden.

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## WWF (WORLD WILDLIFE FUND)

Atkins have carried out a design feasibility study for the WWF's new UK head office. The site will be ecologically enhanced by planting indigenous trees that will result in a building and working environment that underlines the WWF's socio-economic and environmental credentials.

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Please note: This information is intended for internal news only.

Many of our projects have set benchmarks in sustainability and have won various industry accolades. Taking into account the growing realisation that sustainability is no longer optional, we want to ensure that it becomes a natural embedded part of the work we do and never a secondary add-on.

There are various sustainability forums throughout Atkins including SUSNET – Atkins Sustainability Network: <http://communities.eu.atkinglobal.com/sites/susnet/default.aspx> where you can find more information and ways to get involved. o

# PANAMA A NEW CITY

**Being commissioned to design buildings and mixed-use developments is part and parcel of working life at Atkins. The chance to design a brand new city from its infrastructure upwards is an amazing, once in a lifetime opportunity.**

Atkins has designed a master plan for a city, to be built on the former Howard US Air Force base in Panama. British developers London & Regional Properties won the deal to transform the 2,000 hectare site which has been designated by the Government of Panama as a Special Economic Area on account of its strategic importance to the country.

Panama, which lies between the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, is rapidly becoming an attractive destination for international trade – one of the key economic drivers being the current expansion programme for the Panama Canal which will significantly increase the country's trading capacity. The site of the former airbase occupies a strategic location next to the Pacific

entrance to the Canal, on the opposite side of the Bridge of the Americas to Panama City.

Work on this project is a good example of the boundaryless approach that has been a key component of the D&ES strategy. Now in its early stages, over 50 Atkins employees in twelve specialist areas across the company have been working on the project. These have included urban designers, planners, architects, transport planners, aviation specialists, economists and utility engineers.

Commenting on the project, lead director Richard Alvey said:

“Our vision is to create a world class commercial and business hub, capitalising on the infrastructure of the former airbase and the site's strategic location close to the Panama Canal.

“Based on the principles of sustainable development, the master plan provides for employment areas, highly sought-after residential neighbourhoods and quality tourism/leisure uses.

This will be set within an ‘ecologically inspired’ landscape of hills, forests, mangroves, wetlands and beaches, managed to encourage biodiversity. Our overall objective is to create a development that is an exemplar of best practice.”

During the 40 year period of the master plan, the housing might accommodate about 84,000 people and the commercial floorspace could generate some 40,000 jobs – over half of which are expected to be in the key economic sectors of logistics, ICT (Information & Communications Technology) and high value manufacturing. The ability of the new city to attract high value jobs would enable the primary objective of the Special Economic Area to be met – that objective being to promote inward investment and thereby reinforce one of the strongest economies in Central America. ○

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