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Google Headquarters Project in London, UK

Introduction

One of the most ambitious project plans the world is going to witness is Google's new headquarters in London's King's Cross, which was once known for being the heart of the Industrial Revolution will become a hub of innovation and entrepreneurship when the project will take the shape. The project will take place by partnering with Bjarke Ingels Group and Heatherwick Studio to provide architect concepts (Partridge, 2022). Outside the USA this building is the first one that will be owned by Google fully the architectural masterpiece is going to be inaugurated in 2024 where we will be seeing a prime office space covering 60,400 sqm which will provide accommodation facilities to 4500 people through an 11-storey building with retail and training centre at the ground floor (BDP, 2023). Apart from that the building is promised to provide modern facilities such as gyms, café, and multi-purpose gaming areas and on the rooftop, there will be running track and recreation amenities for the employees. The tech giant's inauguration will not just benefit the Google employees but the Londoners too and one of the promising areas can be the ground floor that is closely located to King's Boulevard (Parsons, 2022). The giant infrastructure is promised to work for the betterment of the local community and as a part of the business plan the needs and requirements of the local businessmen and entrepreneurs are given emphasis which will eventually assist in eradicating the poverty and inequality in Camden. The Google Headquarters project in London will create a wider impact on the local community. Through this paper, the author will focus on the London-based Google project's planning, risk factors, stakeholder inclination, budget dissertation and a wide-length breakdown of the mega project.

Project Assessment

Objective and Goals

One of the major purposes of the project to be launched is communal well-being by contributing to **knowledge creation** and consciously supporting the knowledge generation in the arena. The King Cross cultural and socio-economic aspects will get a boost through a nurturing and collaborative environment which will attract talent and innovation. **Commitment towards ecological sustainability** is another purpose of the establishment of the building. The three-bay view building is designed to rethink the idea of what an office space looks like and sustainable workplace design (Kings Cross, 2023). By emphasizing

sustainability Google's headquarters have marked an important milestone by keeping its commitment towards green building and providing the community with an enhanced opportunity for enjoying natural resources with active recreation (Prynn, 2022). The building has features like tentlike roofs and photovoltaic tiles with lightweight attributes that will be able to generate 40% of the energy requirements. **Reemphasizing the work environment** is another vision of the project, the interior of the wall looks forward towards the future of the work environment that opts for an optimal and congenial working environment by aligning employees' needs that what they expect from the team members (Partridge, 2022). The idea is to equalise the balance between Googlers' desire to come together as teams with the requirement for an environment that empowers deep-focus work. The working space is designed in such a way it allows a whole 'village' to work under the same sky which promotes innovation and incredibility (Kings Cross, 2023). Developing an **innovation centre** that will be considered a focal point of inventions will encourage people to cooperate and share ideas and creating a tech-based center is one of the prominent objectives.

Project Timeline and Hurdles

The project has faced various challenges from the very start. The project has endured delays and started three years later than it was originally anticipated (Hayman, 2014). The skyscraper drew scepticism even from its allies, Thomas Heatherwick and reluctance to create a private space behind fences for themselves because of its implication challenges. But later in 2015, the designer was persuaded to take the project. By then, Google was already two years behind since the project's inception. The original plan had to be reinvented as the previous one seemed to be too boring and Heaterwick finally came up with extravagant ideas but the cost of it was unknown. The biggest skyscraper was initiated in 2017 and was still years away from its completion, in the meantime, COVID-19 has altered and revolutionized the working pattern and questioned whether the idea to design a vast playground to keep staff in the office is a great idea or not. The meticulous process caused the project delays and by 2024 the skyscraper is expected to be inaugurated (Gartside, 2021). Here discussing the strengths and challenges of the project:

Strengths:

- **Strategic Project Management:** The project is a \$1bn project which has been planned meticulously by keeping all the possible aspects in mind which will be a 6 Pancras square and will create a campus with multi-purpose amenities (Waite, 2021). The

strategically curated planning needs readiness in operation and reduces unwanted delays in work.

- **Robustness and Vision:** The architectural vision is too robust for others to question its implications. Initially, people criticised the fact that a giant playfield is curated for employees but with changing times and as the newest development is taking shape with communal support it has envisioned made the project too larger than life to be true.

Challenges:

- **Maintaining Work Quality:** Because of the high time required to take the planning converted into reality the quality of work can be compromised in that period. To meet the deadline if rushed decisions are made this can lead to huge losses in the long run.
- **External Factor:** External factors like pandemic, and war breakout delays the project competition and can lead to great financial losses (Durdyev and Hosseini, 2020). It may become difficult to make stakeholders' associated.

Budget Scrutiny

For large-scale projects, budgeting is mandatory for using the resources efficiently (Meredith et al., 2020). Here is a tabular representation of monetary distribution to the major areas of the project:

Table 1: Estimated Budget (author)

Particulars	Approx. Amount (in millions)
Construction	£450
Technological Groundwork	£200
Ecological Features	£80
Interior Plan	£80
Contingency Plan	£90
Miscellaneous	£100
Total	£1,000

Construction: Construction occupied almost 50% of the total budget which includes site visiting, planning, human resource enforcing, infrastructural design etc. which comprises almost 450 million.

Technological Groundwork: Almost 15% of the budget was spent on technological groundwork including networking, website development, ensuring communication and other back-end tasks.

Ecological Features: By aligning with other tech giants Google has been determined to reduce its carbon footprint and lean more towards ecological well-being and sustainability. 80 million dollars will be spent on developing a building that is energy-saving and eco-friendly. One of the groundbreaking features of this skyscraper is its environment friendliness (BDP, 2023).

Interior Designing: Interior designing leaves a greater impact on the minds of employees working within the space (Partridge, 2022). The designing and placement of pieces of furniture make a huge difference and for this purpose, 8% of the total budget is utilized.

Maintenance and Miscellaneous: For maintenance and other purposes or to tackle uninvited contingency almost 20% have been allocated.

Stakeholders Analysis

Google Company: Google is the proprietor of the newly developed multi-purpose 11-storey building that will encompass Googlers' local communities in a wide array of dimensions (Parsons, 2022). The company is the main stakeholder who has an interest in the completion of the project. The project timeline was greatly influenced by the company's goodwill and brand positioning.

Employees: Currently Google has 1,74,014 employees serving all over the world. One of the main purposes the building was planned to be developed with such decorum is to ensure employee satisfaction. The building can give accommodation facilities to 7000 employees to all the modern life amenities (Kings Cross, 2023). The working environment will be created with natural daylight and a view outside from every desk so that the employees do not feel worn out (Toherud, 2023).

Shareholders: The investors and shareholders have an important stake in the project and have been providing finance and other material support to the company. The shareholders are counting every minute to get the possible return on their investment.

Development and Technical Team: The development and technical team takes charge of interior designing, architectural details and other technical know-how. Their commitment towards work has a greater stake in the completion of the project. The creation of such an

expensive rooftop garden with an 11-storey headquarters was designed by Heatherwick Studio and Bjarke Ingels Group (Gartside, 2021).

Local Community: The project was developed by keeping in mind the need of the communal interest that poverty and needs. The design includes more than 250 meters of space for shops and the purpose is to create a community that connects local entrepreneurs, retailers and corporations (Parsons, 2022).

Quality Standards

Congenial Interior Design: Google Workspace is fragmented into a neighbourhood where 40 to 80 people can work and where the amalgamation of art and work happens. AKTII is instilled with the architect on the design concept (Toherud, 2023). Clerestories on the office tents shelter the people. The congenial design gives teammates the designated area to work.

Sustainability and Durability: One of the important aspects that will bring revolutionary change is the inclusion of sustainability and durability. The building's interior and exterior design have been done by keeping in mind the availability of daylight, free moving space, with an airy working environment and also taking the multi-use purpose to a whole new level (Waite, 2021). To maintain quality the building incorporated biophilic design principles, to eradicate toxins and ensure the healthiest environment the team vetted thousands of building products and materials — everything from carpet tiles, paints, piping, plywood and furniture were evaluated using the Living Building Challenge (LBC) Red List as a framework. Apart from that the building is expected to receive the platinum certification to become the most massive facility ever to conquer the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) LBC Water Petal Certification (MARTÍNEZ, 2022).

Contributing to Knowledge Quarter: The amalgamation of active and passive environment-friendly designs has ensured that the project fulfils the target of minimum BREEAM 'Excellent' and LEED 'Gold' with an ambition of realizing 'Outstanding' and 'Platinum' respectively (BDP, 2023). The quality of the work will be maintained when the place will be able to contribute as a knowledge quarter for King Cross's growing knowledge-based economy.

Risk Analysis

Cost: One of the crucial risks to withstand is the budget overflow that has been estimated. In such a big project, a lot of unexpected occurrences may instigate budget failure and as a result, the cost may increase than what was expected. The project's initial plan was designed by Gillespies which was different and later another lavish and sophisticated design was suggested by Heatherwick Studio and Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) with a natural theme and all the materials sourced through a healthy material program (BDP, 2023). All of these increased the cost of the project.

Technological hurdles: Technology if implemented properly can prove to be the solution to every issue and as the project strongly leaned toward technological aspects, some issues related to technical glitches. A skilled technical team is required at the back end to support the smooth implementation of work (Smith et al., 2014).

Construction Delay: The project initially faced a three-year delay in project initiation and later had to face work delays due to COVID-19 restrictions (Hayman, 2014). The project faced criticism and backlash for incorporating such idealistic factors into its plan. Also, the project implementation can face unwanted challenges due to such delays and making stakeholders convinced can be tough.

Compliance with Rules and Regulations: Compliance with rules and regulations can be a plausible risk for such projects and as a result of monetary penalty, irregularities and alterations can occur (Smith et al., 2014).

Resource Management

The basic resources required for such a big project are highlighted here:

Human resource: Human resource management is the most critical responsibility to carry out. No plans can be carried out without minimum human intervention. To carry out a project of 1 billion dollars all the talented knowledge workers have been gathered under one unified wing. The professionals from every field were involved and proper management of those workers is a challenging task.

Financial Resource: Financial resource management is one of the important aspects to consider and maintain throughout the project lifespan (Durdyev and Hosseini, 2020). The budget allocation shows where the financial resources will be utilized in important sectors. From developing a blueprint to site visiting and implementing the vision into reality allocating a

sufficient number of finances is significant. The project also maintained a contingency fund to ensure any sort of unwanted hazards could be tackled.

Material resource: The material resources that were used in the project were chosen strictly based on the sustainability factor. The ecological imbalance and workers' health were given the most priority when choosing the material for the building. The team gave their best effort to ensure the materials were used for positive impact and complement the wider community economic area.

Conclusion

One of the greatest events to take place in 2024 is the new and innovative building comprising six Pancras Square the current building can house 7000 Google employees altogether. The first ever building owned by Google outside the USA and aesthetically one of the finest infrastructures. The campus is so enormous that 4000 people can work under one roof. After completion, the place will be a knowledge hub for both the employees and local people. One of the noteworthy aspects of the project is its emphasis given to the development of the local community. The retailers and businessmen in Camden can collaborate with the office and the purpose of this is to stay relevant and complement the community. Another important aspect is emphasized is the eco-friendliness of the building. Advanced technology is used in the project, but the theme of natural essence and rural spirit is also incorporated. The development will be flourished from King's Cross Boulevard.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided in order to enhance stakeholder satisfaction and guarantee the achievement of project objectives: timely preparation for unforeseen challenges, proficient communication, and the production of superior deliverables.

1. **Implement Quality Assurance Processes:** The success of any project is contingent upon quality control (Meredith et al., 2017). The successful completion or exceeding of predetermined standards for project deliverables is ensured by the implementation of rigorous quality assurance procedures. By incorporating quality checks at each phase of the project, prospective problems can be detected early on, thereby mitigating the necessity for revisions and ensuring the timely delivery of outcomes of superior quality. Consistent with attaining project success, minimizing errors, and increasing stakeholder satisfaction, this recommendation is implemented.

2. Develop comprehensive contingency plans: As the project is so important, it is very important to have a clear plan for resilience and what to do if something goes wrong. Maintaining consistency and flexibility in the midst of challenges are ensured through planning for and anticipating unforeseen circumstances or setbacks.
3. Creating Transparent and Efficient Communication: It is essential that communication remains open between the project teams, the outside world, and project stakeholders (Smith et al., 2014). Implement a systematic feedback system that encourages regular participation and offers timely resolution of issues. This facilitates collaboration, regulates uncertainties, reconciles conflicts, and guarantees that every stakeholder is adequately informed and actively engaged. The incorporation of diverse types of feedback enhances project outcomes and cultivates a sense of stakeholder proprietorship.

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