

BEETHAM TOWER, HOLLOWAY CIRCUS (AREA C)

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Beetham Tower (Birmingham) is a 122 metre tall skyscraper completed in 2006 in Birmingham city centre. It is named after the developers, Beetham Organization, and is designed by Ian Simpson and built by Laing O'Rourke. It can also be referred to as the Holloway Circus Tower after its address.

It has 39 floors, and is the second tallest building in the city after the British Telecom Tower. The lower 19-floors are a Radisson SAS hotel, which opened to guests on 16 January 2006 whilst the upper floors were still being furnished. The upper 20 floors contain 158 apartments.

It is a sheer, utterly dominating shape - faced in fritted glass panels, some coloured pale blue curving disdainfully away from its neighbours to each side. From the south it appears cornered in a rundown city-centre pocket of down-at-heel 1960s buildings, roundabouts and dual carriageways (Photo 1). I find it a bit scary to look up at, especially when viewed from outside the Hill Street entrance to New Street station where it towers above the nearby low buildings (Photo 2).

It was built on a very small plot resulting in a remarkably thin east-west profile shown in the view from beside the intertwining ribbon statue in Hurst Street (Photo 3). Because of its height it pops up in all sorts of scenes across the city centre as shown in the view over the tram passing by the entrance to Grand Central Station (Photo 4).

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