

MARLDON - CHAMBER STREET

The site was made up of an old railway viaduct built in 1839, which was originally part of the spur off the existing railway viaduct running from Fenchurch Street and Tower Gateway.

The usable areas of the site were tenanted by an old fishmonger's business since 1969, which has now moved on in 2019 to new and more modern premises in Billingsgate. There was also a shed behind the viaduct which made up part of the site. The spur incorporated two arches which come directly off the main railway. The premises were basically derelict.

The brief was to demolish the viaduct and one of the arches whilst retaining the other, to make way for a mixed use

development comprising of two buildings, involving complex structural methodologies and multiple levels of negotiation with the railway. The 'Main Building', which replaces the viaduct, is a brick-clad part 10 and part 11 storey building plus basement providing 34 serviced apartments on the 2nd floor upwards, operating as an extension to the 57 serviced apartments we own and operate in the Rockwell East next door, and 319sqm of net office or Class E floorspace on the Ground and 1st floor.



The smaller building [currently known as the 'Courtyard Building'] is a small 2-storey 'pavilion' style building behind the viaduct, containing 296sqm of Class E space, clad in blackened timber with large curtain walls punctuating the facade.

There is an opportunity to create a small amount of attractive external space behind the viaduct, accessed through the hotel entrance and, through the remaining arch. This will be gated and repurposed; the space will be used by the occupiers of the commercial spaces and the hotel guests and staff. The brickwork on the arch and viaduct wall will be completely cleaned and the external areas will be paved, with planting at this level and at roof levels on the 1st, 2nd & 10th floors across the buildings to enhance the biodiversity here.

Obtaining the permission for these building required multiple levels of negotiations with Network Rail, the listed Church next door, the local planning department, Transport for London and local Highways and the GLA - and the interests of the local community.

The front wall of the viaduct suffered bomb damage during WW2 and is one of the last surviving remnants of the Blitz in Spitalfields. Our original proposal was to take this down and rebuild it within the site as a memorial to the victims of the Blitz. However, we realised through interaction with the community that it was important to keep the wall in situ, so we have incorporated it in to the façade of the Main Building and the memorial will face the street and be accessible to the public. This has been well received and has now been reported on by history blogger Jack (#livinglondonhistory).



This attention to history is also reflected in the design of the whole development. The different bricks and variegated heights of the entire complex stretching round the corner reflect the terraced houses that were demolished to make way for the railway.

The value of the project is around £15,500,000 and we hope to complete at the end of September 2023.

The current build stage we are at is that we have completed the enabling works and demolition, processes which took a great deal of time as we had to agree them with Network Rail, given the proximity of the working railway and an overhead 25000V electrical line sitting on a gantry on top of the retained arch in close proximity to our working area. The site is also entirely landlocked which presents huge logistical problems for the site but we have worked closely with our frame and rebar subcontractors to create a sequence of works that has worked well. We recently completed the substructure works and the frame to 1st floor, and we are beginning to put in the deck for the 2nd floor. A special reduced idling radius tower crane, a Raptor 48, was delivered to site on 11th June.

Marldon employ about between 60-80 building staff at any one time and we employ them on a long term, career basis. This is a family company started by my father, and I remember our senior bricklayer Brian from when I was a child, so I recognise the importance of keeping our men in long term employment, even though I know this is not always the preferred model for contractors. Marldon only develop for ourselves on speculative developments or on developments we intend to keep, so it is sometimes hard to have enough developments running to keep the trades employed within their skillset. As a result, we encourage training around the skillset, encouraging multi-skills and also just also mucking in with things when the occasion demands and when it can be done safely. Safety is always to a high standard, and we also expect a high standard of self-respect and respect for others from everyone on site, which encourages open dialogue about methods of work and standards. We kept our entire construction team going during the pandemic on two major developments, as well as our joinery shop, and furloughed only those who requested it because of their living with vulnerable relatives and the like.

Everybody else we kept going through what was for us an intensely difficult period, and we even moved some of the ladies from our serviced apartments operation cleaning staff on to the sites to save their jobs. I am incredibly proud of the resilience of our whole team in getting through the period and the grit and determination they showed to deliver projects whilst adhering to the rules in very difficult circumstances, and their continued hard work which will see us all through this very tricky economic period that we all find ourselves in now, and the challenges we face moving towards Net Zero and modern construction methods.

P J L
Construction

CONCRETE FRAME • GROUNDWORKS • DESIGN & BUILD

**We are pleased to be associated with
Marldon on the Chamber Street project**

Arquen House, 4-6 Spicer Street, St Albans AL3 4PQ
accounts@pjlconstruction.co.uk www.pjlconstruction.co.uk