

17 Devonshire Square



Trident acted as Project Manager, Contract Administrator, Cost Consultant and Party Wall Surveyor on the comprehensive refurbishment of 17 Devonshire Square, a 30,000sqft period property close to Liverpool Street mainline railway station. The result is a transformation from a tired and inefficient building to rejuvenated and flexible Grade A office accommodation and retail space which is efficient both in its use of space and its sustainable features. Following its refurbishment, the building's office and retail space has appealed to a variety of sectors in the city and on the city fringe.

Project Management

All areas of the building were refurbished to meet Grade A office specification standards. The project included the relocation of the core, infill of a light-well and installation of a new electrical sub-station, lifts, staircore, central plant and a new balcony was created at fourth floor level.

The refurbishment enables the property to be let to either a single tenant or let on a floor-by-floor basis. Thus the mechanical and electrical systems suit both single or multiple occupancy.

For ultimate flexibility, project was completed as a CAT A installation, enabling tenants to fit out to their requirements. The office spaces were configured as open plan with only the segregated common parts being those for cycle storage, showers, central plant, management staff breakout spaces and welfare facilities.

The high quality finishes result in increased longevity and therefore reduced lifecycle costs. Finishes were chosen for ease of maintenance, to further reduce costs and increase practicality.



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Contract Administration

As the contract administrator, Trident's role involved administering the contract, ensuring that both the client and contractor complied with the terms of the contract, issuing payment certificates in accordance with the timescales set out in the contract, issuing contract instructions, assessing of any delay notices, ensuring that insurance policies were in place and monitoring the works to ensure they were completed in accordance with the specification and drawings.

Cost Consultancy

Trident's role as Project Cost Consultant comprised establishing a project cost plan to control cost and monitor design development during the pre-contract stage. This included an evaluation of several building components including whether to retain and refurbish or replace the existing windows and also the choice of system for heating and cooling the building. The project was procured using a single stage method with a traditional lump sum contract. The documentation was well defined to ensure that the client had control of the building specification whilst allowing some flexibility for future letting. During the works, any variations were closely monitored and budget costs were provided in advance of works being instructed to ensure that the Client was kept fully informed of the forecast contract sum at all stages. The rigorous approach to managing cost and collaborative approach with the project team ensured that the project was delivered successfully within the Client's approved budget. This was undoubtedly a success for a building that was completely remodeled and extended both horizontally and vertically on a tight City Centre site.

Party wall negotiations

With the property bounded on three sides, extensive liaison and Party Wall Awards were required. This included awards for adjacent excavations and party structure works with 14 adjoining owners.

Conservation issues

The Victorian property is located in the Bishopsgate conservation area. This imposed restrictions, for example regarding the façades. The project scope included the replacement of single glazing with double glazing. Existing sash window frames were retained and new glazing units installed to avoid compromise to the aesthetics.

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Artwork

To create a powerful initial impression, the reception was enhanced with a bespoke piece of artwork commissioned to reflect the building's history, that of the surrounding area and the journey of the building. Comprising thousands of copper disks to represent coins and in the shape of a section of fabric (in recognition of the location in the financial and former textile district), the installation forms a wave shape, with fluctuations in both depth and height to represent the journey of the property through its refurbishments and reconfigurations over time.

Sustainable features

The office area achieved an EPC rating of C. Natural light has been increased with the addition of new windows to the rear elevation and glazed curtain walling (where permissible within planning constraints). Lighting activation is via a PIR system with a manual override switch. An additional energy saving feature was incorporated to adjust lighting levels according to external daylight.

The project was future-proofed with the installation of double glazing, additional roof insulation and new energy efficient plant. Plant was replaced in its entirety, with the selection of new plant governed by efficiency and sustainability.

Accessibility

The redevelopment ensured that the building is fully accessible and compliant with both the Equality Act 2010 and Part M of the Building Regulations. A platform lift was installed at the front of the building, incorporating a bespoke design of railing, balustrade and floor finish to comply with the listed status.

Commercial benefit

The redevelopment increases the building's Net Internal Area by 3,500 sq ft (17%) and thus maximises rental levels. Additionally retail uses were introduced at the basement, lower ground and ground floor levels to further increase capital values and better provide for the local area in addition to occupiers. Five of the six floors are now let and negotiations are taking place regarding the retail space. The client has achieved its intended letting rates.

Conclusion

In summary, 17 Devonshire Square represents a sensitive conversion of a historic building into a desirable, flexible and fully functional office space which has been proven to appeal to a range of tenants. Additionally, the provision of retail / café space substantially benefits an area defined by its quality office space but previously lacking in supporting services.

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