

CASE STUDY

TIMES SQUARE 160/162 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET & 8 ST ANDREWS HILL, LONDON EC4

An exciting, multi-million pound demolition project situated on Queen Victoria Street close to the heart of the City of London where the safety of the public and surrounding buildings loomed large in the list of priorities.

Client:

QVS Developments Ltd

Principal Contractor:

Cantillon

Quantity Surveyor:

Gardiner & Theobald

Contract Duration:

40 weeks

Contract Value:

£1,900,000



An island site containing three inter linked multi-storey buildings of different vintages with markedly differing styles of construction, the project was bounded on all sides by some of the most heavily trafficked roads and pavements in the Capital.

Add to this the presence of significant amounts of potentially dangerous asbestos insulation, two live electricity sub-stations within the site, a very busy Public House tucked into one corner, and the fact that one of the buildings to be demolished was not vacated until near the end of the contract period, and you begin to get an idea of some of the complexities of the job facing the Cantillon team.

Phases One and Two, which ran almost concurrently, saw the demolition of a six-storey steel frame and reinforced concrete office block and a former printing works with extremely thick (up to 500mm) heavily reinforced concrete floors. Phase Three, the block which remained live for most of the project, was a more modern structure, comprising a steel frame with lightweight concrete infill.



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As the buildings all fronted onto the surrounding roads and pavements, Cantillon first encased the site in a tough protective cocoon of Powerclad sheeted scaffolding. Where the pavements had previously been, these were replaced with bright, well lit, safe protective covered walkways for the public.

Preliminary works were then carried out. The Cantillon team stripped out everything that was moveable or detachable from the heart of the buildings, including all asbestos (removed in accordance with current legislation), timber, plastic, glass, metal, toilets, radiators and so on. Nearly everything that could be was salvaged or recycled, except for the asbestos, which was disposed of at a specially licensed tip.

Then came the hard work, the safe, controlled deconstruction of the buildings. After extensive planning and design sessions the Cantillon team lifted mini excavators fitted with super strong hydraulic hammers up to the top floors of the buildings. There they set to work to progressively unbuild the structures, working their way downwards, breaking out the floors, walls, beams and columns in a carefully designed sequence.

Safety on the project was a high priority and, working closely with the Health and Safety Executive, the Cantillon team developed a new method of edge protection for both the men and the machines. This helped to ensure that the tight constraints of the programme could be met, and more importantly, met safely. As the demolition of the buildings progressed downwards, additional safety propping was put in place to protect the Public House in the corner of the site.

Once the buildings had been reduced to a suitable level, all manpower was removed from the buildings and a specially designed 360° tracked excavator fitted with a super long arm, at the end of which was a rotating hydraulic pulveriser was employed. This meant that the remainder of the buildings could be demolished quickly, safely and efficiently and at a remote distance – thereby keeping men and machinery out of any potentially dangerous or hazardous situations.

At the end of the day, the site was left clean and level and handed over to the Client for the construction of their new development.

We made finalist in the category 'Demolition Contractor of the Year' in the Contract Journal Industry Awards for this project. We also received the highly coveted Gold Award (with Honours) under the Corporation of London's Considerate Contractor Scheme.



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