

Planning given for retrofit of landmark City office at 60 Queen Victoria Street

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Planning permission has been given for the 180,000sqft retrofit of 60 Queen Victoria Street in the City of London.

The refurbishment of 60 Queen Victoria Street retains the architectural spirit of the original building while bringing the development up to modern standards, boosting the project's wellness and sustainability credentials.

The design minimises changes to the exterior architectural language of the 1997-99 Peter Foggo-designed office building while substantially improving environmental performance. The reworking of the interior and addition of the rooftop pavilion create flexible floorplates and enhance the amenity offering.

One of the most significant features of the building is its façade, with the pre-patinated bronze giving the development a distinct identity. The original language of the exterior of the building has been maintained but brought in line with modern requirements through the removal of the brise soleil screens that obscured the windows.

This change recognises improvements in glass technology and the surrounding development, which means the building now receives less direct sunlight than when it was originally built. The design also responds to changes in City planning policy and the feedback from existing tenants regarding the negative impact the screens had on the amount of natural light and views from the building.

The existing, obscured ground-floor elevations feel disconnected from the street. Therefore, the new design reworks the ground floor, with an enlarged reception that creates a hospitality-led experience and introduces a co-working hub to shape an energetic arrival. Further rethinking how people enter the

building, a dedicated cycle entrance has been introduced, with direct access to the extensive end-of-journey facilities, which have replaced the car parking at the lower ground level.

The process of rethinking the inner workings of the building can also be seen on the levels above, with the floorplates reconfigured to create 115,000sqft of flexible, lettable spaces. Typical floorplates are around 12,800sqft and these are rationalised by the removal of the northern core and the remodelling of the central core. Infilling the existing stepped façade also further opens up the floorplates and creates the opportunity for a new external terrace on each floor.

Space has also been added to the development in the form of a lightweight, steel and timber rooftop pavilion. This faceted and chamfered form has been shaped to be discreet, creating opportunities for expansive terraces and urban greening that boost the project's wellbeing strategy. Distinct in materiality to the rest of the building, the pavilion is designed to be a new addition that is in keeping with the existing building.

The design includes a careful retention strategy and improves the building's performance through high-performance glazing and a new all-electric MEP. This, combined with an uplift in biodiversity and people-centred spaces, results in a design that targets ambitious sustainability and well-being accreditation, including BREEAM Outstanding and NABERS 4.5*.

David Ardill, partner at Sheppard Robson, said: "We treated the idiosyncratic building – which has many enduring qualities – with a great deal of respect, retaining the spirit of the original building while upgrading its performance and tuning the building to ensure it appeals to the demands of the modern tenant."