COMMENDATION

334 Oxford Street, London

PROJECT TEAM

Architect: Allford Hall Monaghan Morris

Structural Engineer: AKT II

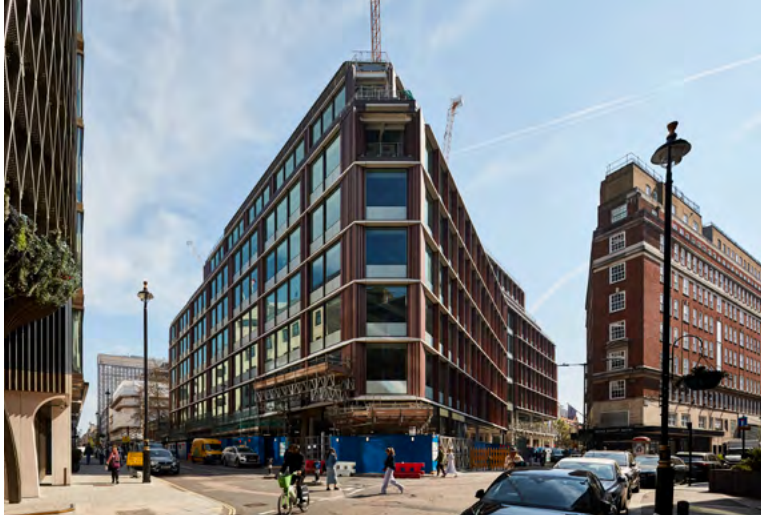
Steelwork Contractor: Severfield

Main Contractor: Bovis

Client: Capital Real Estate Partners

JUDGES' COMMENT

"Breathing new form, function and life into a very tired old department store, this impressive project showcases how, through intelligent analysis and site investigation, new and existing steelwork can combine on a large scale to create a new look, flexible and holistic building at the heart of a heavily constrained site."



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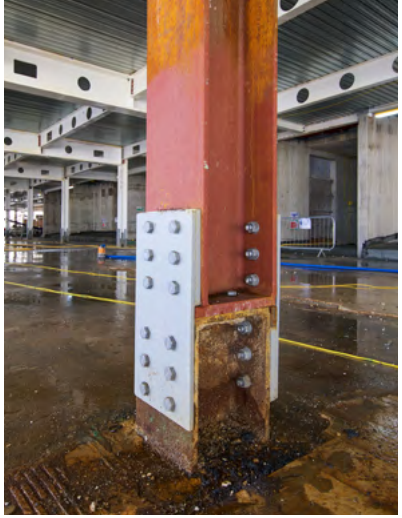

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334 Oxford Street transforms the former six-storey Debenhams flagship store into a mixed-use development with retail accommodation at basement, ground and first-floor levels and offices above. The deep retrofit retains substantial elements of the existing structure while introducing a new central core, deeper basement, extended floorplates and three additional storeys.

Combining retained and new steelwork enabled the building to be extended while creating open office spans, perimeter terraces and a more flexible structural grid. The lightweight steel extension limited strengthening requirements and helped accommodate differential settlement between the existing structure and new construction.

Understanding the retained frame was a major engineering challenge. Many primary members were concealed by encasements, façades and walls or absent from original records. Six floors were surveyed to establish the positions and dimensions of columns, beams and slab edges, allowing interfaces to be developed as the existing structure was progressively exposed.

Each finding led to specific requirements for strengthening, metal-deck support and façade connections. Bespoke new-to-existing connections were designed to work with the riveted historic steelwork while achieving the required structural performance and a refined finish. Standardised extended fin plates could be cut to suit verified site positions, providing flexibility where existing geometry varied.

Cellular beams integrate building services within the structural zone, preserving ceiling heights and supporting flexible commercial floorplates. S460 steel was used for new columns, reducing steel tonnage by 71t, saving 37.1tCO_2e and increasing lettable area.

Construction logistics were demanding on Oxford Street. Three tower cranes were used, including one supported by the existing frame. Retained steelwork was strengthened to resist both permanent loads and temporary crane forces during construction, demonstrating how the existing structure contributed throughout delivery.

The structural steelwork achieved an embodied carbon figure of 83kgCO_2e/m² for modules A1-A5. 70% of the new steel was produced using electric arc furnaces (EAFs), while reused enabling-works steel was incorporated where appropriate. New members were hard-stamped to support identification and potential reuse in the future.

The development is targeting BREEAM Outstanding for its offices and a NABERS 5-star Design for Performance rating. It is also designed to be WELL-enabled.

334 Oxford Street demonstrates how detailed surveys and carefully designed new steelwork can extend and modernise an existing building while retaining parts of its original structure. The careful integration of existing and new steelwork enabled extensive change while retaining valuable structure, reducing material demand and creating a coherent framework for the building's successful next life.