

MERIT

PUMA Flagship Store, London

PROJECT TEAM

Architect: Johnson Pinney Architects

Structural Engineer: Eckersley O'Callaghan

Main Contractor: Goodman Hichens PLC

Steelwork Contractor: Malci Construction

Project Management: Mett Build

Client: PUMA UK Ltd



PUMA Flagship Store occupies the basement, ground and first floors of an existing commercial building on Oxford Street, with four storeys of offices remaining occupied above. The refurbishment transforms the retail frontage through a new 10m-high glazed façade, extensive alterations to the entrance steelwork, a mezzanine extension and exposed feature staircases.

The principal structural challenge was replacing the entrance's heavy, fragmented appearance with a slender exposed steel frame while continuing to support the occupied building. Rather than removing the existing three-storey columns, the design retained, reshaped and strengthened them, reducing waste, temporary works and disruption on one of London's busiest streets.

Existing information was limited and important steelwork remained concealed. Intrusive investigations, surveys and monitoring established the frame's geometry, condition and structural role. The entrance columns were also assumed to contribute to the building's lateral stability, requiring the modified frame to resist both vertical and horizontal loads while improving on the original performance.

Renovation was completed progressively in situ. Each column was carefully trimmed one side at a time, with new steel plates progressively welded in place to maintain structural adequacy throughout construction. Temporary shoring and lateral restraints controlled instability and buckling risks, while unforeseen connection conditions required design adjustments as construction progressed.

One level of horizontal beams was removed to increase light into the store. The glass façade was structurally separated from the entrance frame, spanning from top to bottom without intermediate out-of-plane restraints and remaining self-supporting in plane. This reduced sensitivity to movement and allowed the steelwork to be optimised for its primary load-bearing role.

Extremely tight tolerances between the façade and exposed steel demanded repeated surveys and close coordination as construction progressed. The resulting box-column appearance, sharp corners and concealed connections create a clean composition in which the complexity of the alterations is largely invisible.

Internally, a large exposed steel staircase and cantilevered mezzanine extension contribute to the flagship store's architectural identity. Steel provided the slender sections, precise finishes and installation flexibility required within the constrained programme and occupied building.

The retained-column solution produced 37tCO₂e of A1-A5 emissions from new plates and temporary works, a 43% reduction from the estimated 67tCO₂e associated with complete column replacement.

PUMA Flagship Store demonstrates how careful analysis and in situ steelwork alterations can transform an existing building while preserving offices above. Its refined façade and exposed staircase conceal a technically demanding intervention delivered through precision, sequencing and collaboration on Oxford Street.

JUDGES' COMMENT

Retention of the structural steel supporting four storeys of occupied offices above was made possible through intelligent analysis and painstaking in situ remodelling of structural members and connections. A new landmark along this primary shopping street, the 'effortlessness' of the end result conceals the technical and erection complexities that were overcome.