

Beak Street, Beak Street, London



Challenge:

Create a bespoke and unique design for the 40 Beak Street project in Soho. This new mixed-use building aimed to stand-out amongst various other recent developments seen in the East End of London.

Solution:

From the heart of the financial district to the increasingly fashionable East End, London has witnessed many innovative developments over the last few years. But even among this frequently illustrious company, the recent project at 40 Beak Street is clearly something special thanks to a cutting-edge design that ensures the street-corner development will provide an arresting architectural focal point for decades to come. A glazed brick facade incorporating brick products from a leading supplier contributes significantly to the impact of 40 Beak Street, whose five storeys include a restaurant at ground level, several floors of offices, and a roof-terrace. Reportedly the first new build property of its kind in Soho in recent memory, the complex was designed by Stiff + Trevillion, with Veretec, and also drew on input from leading artist Lee Simmons, who devised the stunning decorative corner reveal/cornice. It was always clear that brickwork was going to be a critical element of the project, with Stiff + Trevillion director Michael Stiff remarking that the design “is steeped in the heritage of Soho” – of which brickwork is a crucial part. The choice of materials therefore needed to be complementary to those used in nearby buildings, although at the same time “everything from the glazed brick elevation to the door handles [was to be] unique to this building.” The search for perfection was such that the architects and clients Enstar Capital/Land Cap all visited the specialist brickworks at which the final choice of glazed bricks was produced. A bespoke colour of glazed brick was determined to suit the design – and also reference the glazed brickwork at the base of nearby buildings – with participants eventually identifying “a colour palette of varying shades of blue/green/turquoise colours within individual bricks as it progresses up the external façade of the building”. Explaining the choice of brickwork, a representative of the architects says the glazed brick facade yielded “opportunities to experiment with colour, iridescence, and reflectivity [that contribute] to the vibrancy and creative appeal of Soho. Furthermore, there was a very local historic precedent for glazed brick at 50-54 Beak Street.” Slim brick types are



increasingly synonymous with elegant new buildings, so they were a logical choice for 40 Beak Street, where they help to give the façade a satisfyingly elongated look. The use of angled glazed bricks and brick clad soffits also serves to provide variety and interesting design details. Windows and decorative balustrades with a contrasting powder-coated metal finish, as well as specially-commissioned cast aluminium artworks, also play their part in a building that has attracted a great deal of interest from businesses and individuals including .

Architect: Stiff + Trevillion, Veretec and leading artist Lee Simmons

Brick:

Glazed Bricks