

Press release

18 March 2002

Bishops Square Development, Spitalfields

Planning application has been submitted to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for the 250 million mixed-use development between Bishopsgate and Spitalfields Market. The development, which includes offices, affordable housing, shops, cafes and large public spaces is part of the ongoing renewal of one of Londons most historically important neighbourhoods on the border of the City of London and the East End.

The building will replace the modern annexe to Spitalfields Market. The main market buildings, including the listed nineteenth-century Horner buildings and the 1928 buildings along Brushfield Street will be retained. Four office blocks of varying heights will run east to west across the site creating a stepped profile to provide an appropriate change in scale from the tall buildings on Bishopsgate to the lower buildings around Spitalfields. The blocks, with six, ten, thirteen and eight storeys respectively, step down at the edges of the site to ensure maximum daylight penetration to the surrounding buildings. The office blocks are linked by three glazed atria, which bring daylight into the office spaces.

The design aims to make the site as accessible and permeable as possible with a large part of it given over to public thoroughfares and more than 3000 square metres of open public space. A new street Market Street lined on both sides with shops, will be created linking Bishopsgate with Spitalfields opening up open new views of Hawksmoors masterpiece Christchurch. A large open public space Bishops Square will be created

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between the new building and the existing buildings along Bishopsgate. The square will be animated with groups of trees and tables from a new cafe at the end of Market Street. An additional public space, Crispin Square, which will be sheltered by a lightweight, glazed canopy, will be created between the offices and Spitalfields Market.

The office buildings structure is supported by steel columns at 6-metre centres. The concrete floor slabs are chamfered where they meet the fully glazed facade to minimise their visual impact. The northern facade has a generous setback at ground level to create a covered arcade for the shops and cafes. The roof will be landscaped with natural stone paving, brick, pebbles or shingle, timber decking, grass and shrubs.

To the north of the office building, two stories of apartments will be built above an existing steel and slatted wooden structure that currently encloses the access ramp to the Bishopsgate buildings. The apartments will have terraces overlooking Elder Gardens, and shading louvres that will echo the language of the slatted wooden structure below. A new two-storey building, housing a cafe and restaurant will complete the parade of shops on Brushfield Street. Its materials will complement the brick and stone facades of the retained buildings along Brushfield Street.

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