

Murrays' Mills, Manchester Life Framework

Reviving a relic of the past

£22m

/ Project value

January 2016

/ The build commenced

July 2017

/ The duration

Resurrecting the world's oldest surviving steam-powered cotton mill, while preserving its historic 19th Century features, the Murrays' Mills project is a £22 million innovative design-led development of a stunning Grade II* listed building. Housing 124 distinctive one, two and three bedroom apartments, the Phase One scheme, completed within 18 months, retains the historic fabric of the building, including the original stone circular staircase, amidst contemporary new build technology.

The brief

The focus was on sympathetically revitalising this irreplaceable heritage site and transforming it into an emerging residential area of a thriving, modern Manchester. Delivering cutting edge standards of new build development, the vision was for Murrays' Mills to help meet the growing demand for high quality accommodation in the city.



“The transformation of Murrays’ Mills is a significant milestone in Ancoats’ emergence as a desirable and vibrant neighbourhood, it is a brilliant way to address the demand for central accommodation in a way that preserves and carefully evolves our former industrial areas.”

Sir Richard Leese
Leader of Manchester City Council

The challenges

As a Grade II* listed building, preserving the special character of this historic relic from the industrial revolution required creativity, skill and expert care from our team throughout the design and construction phases. Careful planning, and robust communication, with the client (Manchester Life), and the relevant local authorities, was critical to the successful completion of this transformative development. Located on a constrained city centre site within a ‘Conservation Area’, traffic management and the phasing of works had to be carefully managed throughout the entire 18-month programme.

The solution

As a leader in restorative projects, we understood the importance of balance in the creation of 124 modern, aspirational homes while simultaneously safeguarding the heritage of this iconic piece of history. This knowledge influenced the design, construction and finish of Murrays’ Mills, which have become a catalyst for future regeneration in the emerging East Manchester location. The historic canal basin in the centre of the site became the centrepiece of the new landscaped space and, as such, all 124 apartments of the 13,282m² building, were designed around the features and character of the Mills. Emanating from the project, an Advanced Apprenticeship scheme was developed in partnership with Manchester College. This Level 4 Programme facilitated four local apprentices to gain substantial industry experience.

Outputs & Benefits

- / **Heritage Expertise:** The transformation and refurbishment of a Grade II* listed building
- / **On Time:** The project was handed over on time
- / **Investing in the Community:** Integrating with the Ancoats community, our team implemented a number of CSR initiatives throughout the 18-month development including supporting the local charity ‘42nd Street’ in the refurbishment of its premises



For more information on how we're delivering lasting impact:

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