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2013 - TURNING THE CORNER?

As I flew out of London on 27 July for my annual holiday (this time a three week pilgrimage to Sri Lanka), I felt the mood in the UK was sombre but quietly optimistic.

When I came back towards the end of August, all was certainly still quiet on the property/construction fronts, but everything grinds to a halt during the summer anyway, doesn't it? Undeterred therefore and without being noticed or much missed, I spent a couple of days at the Oval Test and resolved to await the August bank holiday and the start of the partridge (and goose and duck) season on 1 September.

Now, less than two months later, the mood is almost buoyant and we do seem to have finally turned the corner.

In the national press, many of the headlines pick up on this feeling of recovery with mortgage lending at its highest since 2008, and no interest rate rise predicted until the end of 2014. Even that confidence bastion against which much else is measured, China, has rebounded from a lengthy slowdown in growth. The statistics office in Beijing recently reported an annualised rate of growth of 7.8% during the third quarter of this year. This follows a 30 month downturn during which growth declined in 9 out of 10 quarters.

Given the headlines, it is no surprise that the UK housing market is buoyant, particularly in London and the South. It has recently been reported that construction output in the UK is at its highest levels since 2008 with a further 19% growth predicted by 2017.

(Continued on Page 8. . . .)



TENDER PRICE FORECAST:

GROWTH FORECASTS



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At long last, some five years after the crash, the indications are that UK economy and the construction industry are beginning to recover some strength and optimism. Overall sentiment turned more positive during the summer with improved economic data being reported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for both the second and third quarters of 2013. GDP growth was revised up to 0.7% for the second quarter of 2013 with the growth being broadly based across all main sectors of the economy.

The recovery in the UK economy appears to have strengthened further during the third quarter 2013 according to a wide range of indicators with the preliminary estimates of GDP indicating that output grew by 0.8% during the three months to September 2013. The UK economy has now grown for three consecutive quarters although output remains some 2.6% below its peak before the downturn. According to the ONS construction output rose 1.9% in Q2 2013 (recovering from a 1.3% fall in Q1 2013) and has shown year on year growth for three consecutive months for the first time since May 2011 driven largely by growth in new housing work. This sector has shown growth of 16.7% in the year to August 2013 reflecting the increased demand arising from improved consumer confidence and easier access to finance via the Help to Buy and Funding for Lending Schemes.

Whilst there are signs that confidence is returning, particularly in London, the outlook across the sectors remains mixed with private commercial work and public sector work lagging behind the improvement in private housing and private industrial. Infrastructure output in Q2 2013 although 17% down on its peak in Q2 2011 remains well above its average level between 2004 and 2008.

Our forecast is for tender prices in London to increase by 3% to 3.5% in 2014, 3.5% to 4% in 2015 and 4% to 4.5% in 2016. The outlook for the regions remains mixed with some regions showing stronger signs of recovery than others. Our projection is for tender prices in the regions to increase by 2% to 2.5% in 2014, 2.5% to 3.5% in 2015 and 3.5% to 4% in 2016.

Despite the positive market factors which have been evident over the past two quarters the recovery remains fragile and the construction industry undoubtedly still faces significant future challenges arising from the reductions in public expenditure, reduced consumer spending, low investor confidence and a subdued private sector.

sources:
Office of National Statistics (ONS): Output in the Construction Industry: August 2013
Office of National Statistics (ONS): Economic Review, November 2013
Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) 18 October 2013



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BIM:
A QUANTITY SURVEYOR'S VIEW : COST MODELLING IMPLICATIONS

It's been over 2 years since we first published the guest article by Nick Allen of Metz Architects on BIM, see Briefing Summer 2011 "Are you ready for BIM". At first as QS's we thought BIM was really only relevant to the design team as it gave them a tool and a process for identifying gaps and clashes within the design.

What was difficult for us to grasp in the early days was how, as QS's, we could effectively engage with the BIM process to enable our skills and service offer to compliment it.

As client QS's there are, in simple terms, four key stages to the cost management of building projects:

- Feasibility cost advice to ensure affordability and a robust business case
- Cost planning as the scheme design evolves and preparation of tender documents to enable market prices to be obtained and checked against cost plan – this stage includes usual risk and value management activities
- Cost management during the build up to settlement of the final account
- Life cycle costing and occupational costing

Architects and Engineers up and down the country have been producing BIM Virtual Prototypes (VP's) based on for example "Revit" software packages and clients and consultants have been dizzily disorientated by the fly through wire frames with pipe and duct service routes shown full size at presentations. The opportunity to genuinely walk through the building, look up into the ceiling void, see clashes of steel frames and ventilation ducts without so much as a foundation being dug, is truly remarkable.

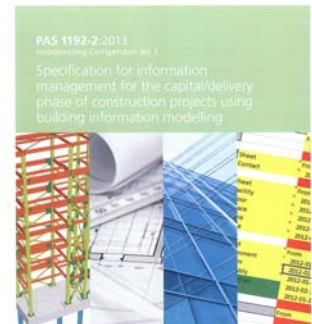
Our mission therefore at MDA over the last couple of years has been to utilise the new BIM 3D, 4D and 5D world and link into our lines and columns Excel based 2D world.

We have been very fortunate to work with clients who have embraced the BIM process and are now seeing the true benefits. A document worth exploring for the uninitiated is the BSI PAS 1192-2:2013 publication "*Specification for information management for the capital/delivery phase of construction projects using information modelling*" not a very snappy title but an excellent publication setting out the process and protocols.

What has been quite interesting is the shock of what handling virtual prototypes and model data can do to the average QS IT system – these files can be massive (200-300 meg) and exchanging information can be a nightmare if your IT system is not capable of handling the size of data. Our first task was to ensure that the systems were robust enough to play.

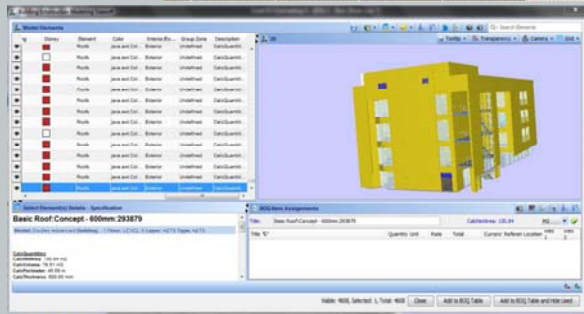
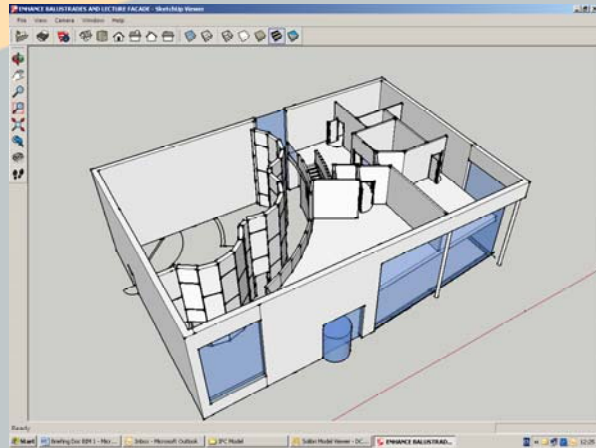
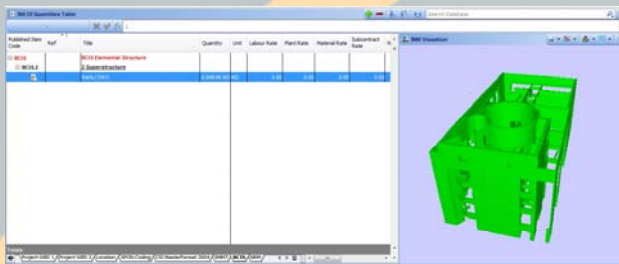
Feasibility

We can import VP's and there are a number of viewing packages (Sketh up, Solibri model viewer) which enable viewing on screen and an early model can then be interrogated in terms of size, position on site, storeys etc and a number of options can be generated. Early indicative quantities can be "taken off" or gross floor areas established very quickly from the model. Having models in IFC (Industry Foundation Class) format enables smoother data exchanges between different proprietary software applications.



BIM:
A QUANTITY SURVEYOR'S VIEW : COST MODELLING IMPLICATIONS

A number of systems including Nomitech's "Costos" (www.nomitech.eu) and Ripac's "DimensionX" (www.cssp.co.uk) software packages are available for the QS to use and are adaptable for a variety of estimating formats and contents using either pre-packaged cost data or bespoke cost databases.



Cost Planning

As the VP is updated the estimating systems can match the level of detail produced in the model and taking off quantities from the model is extremely quick. The model is dismantled on screen once elements have been taken off – we have found that the model needs to be classified to "BICS elements" in order that an elemental take off can be done efficiently and link in with our cost database.

As the model develops full BQ's can be generated and classified in a number of ways, elemental, works packages and the like.

Cost Management

Our experience so far has been on the Pre-Contract aspects of the process but recognise that handling the VP and reviewing it with any post contract changes will be a natural progression.

Life Cycle Costing

Clearly the BIM VP if updated during the BIM process and if produced as an 'as built' model will be a phenomenal tool for those who have to maintain buildings long after the builder and Design team have gone in terms of planned and reactive maintenance to the buildings components.

We were extremely pleased to see that the RICS (www.rics.org) has developed the first BIM Manager Certification in response to the industry need for a universal study on which to assess the skills of construction professionals in using BIM.

It is still relatively early days but we see a change in the way buildings are developed and costs and risks managed through the design stages using BIM – the software is available, the hardware is available and the time is right to move BIM forward for all the team including the design team's favourite member, the QS.

Rob Kennedy is on MDA's BIM panel.

PROJECT UPDATES:

ACROSS MDA

MDA are proud to have secured involvement on a number of high profile and flagship projects over the recent months:

PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:
*Abstract Securities (Croydon) Ltd:
 The Renaissance Building,
 Croydon*

ARCHITECT:
Andrew Lett Architects

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS:
Mott Macdonald

COST MANAGEMENT/QUANTITY SURVEYOR:
MDA Consulting

MAIN CONTRACTOR:
Bowmer & Kirkland



MDA was appointed in 2011 for this flagship project in Croydon.

Location, Quality, Affordability

Completed in the summer of 2013, Renaissance is the first speculative office building in Croydon for over two decades. An impressive 99,083-sq ft, five-storey office building, offering exceptional quality at an affordable price.

Prime location

Renaissance benefits from a prominent and key location in the centre of the Croydon's Central Business District. The building is adjacent to East Croydon station and has direct access to it via the new Dingwall Road footbridge. It is also directly opposite the proposed Ruskin Square redevelopment.

Impressive design

A striking double-height entrance to the building has been created on Dingwall Road. The approach is across a paved entrance plaza before entering a stylish, 1,668-sq ft reception area where three 13-person lifts enable access to the four light and spacious upper floors. Renaissance is a Grade A specification, designed to minimise occupier running costs, making occupation reassuringly economical.

BREEAM "Excellent"

Renaissance achieved this standard and a score of 76.26%, the second highest BREEAM 2011 design stage assessment score. A fantastic outcome.

PROJECT UPDATES:

ACROSS MDA

PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:
De Montfort University: The Fletcher Building

PROJECT MANAGER:
MACE

ARCHITECT:
CPMG

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS:
Curtins

COST MANAGEMENT/QUANTITY SURVEYOR:
MDA Consulting

MAIN CONTRACTOR:
yet to be appointed



MDA has been appointed by De Montfort University (DMU) to work on a new £32m Landmark building at its Leicester city centre campus. The project has high building information modelling requirements and our appointment was strengthened due to our expertise and cutting edge knowledge in this field.

The commission will be led by Rob McGuinn, Director and Will Eccles, Associate both based in our Leicester office.

The work will involve demolishing large parts of the existing Fletcher low-rise building as well as the refurbishment of the Fletcher tower block and remaining parts of the low-rise. A new building will be created close to the waterfront opposite Western Boulevard.

Plans to create a “green lung” in the heart of the campus are also moving ahead. Some of the former Gateway College buildings will be removed and the centre of the campus around Mill Lane will be landscaped to create an impressive outdoor social space for students, staff and members of the public to enjoy.

The Fletcher Complex will be a new base for the Faculty of Art, Design and Humanities. The plans will add extra break-out areas for students, utilise the university’s proximity to the River Soar, and improve the existing Fletcher Tower. The proposals form a phase in DMU’s long-term plan, to re-connect the city centre to the waterfront creating a series of linked public open spaces through the De Montfort campus.

Through an extensive OJEU process, DMU has commissioned MDA to provide Cost Consultancy Services; CPMG architects to provide architectural services; MACE to provide project management; Pick Everard to provide mechanical & electrical engineering services; and Curtins Consulting to provide structural engineering services.

MDA has worked extensively with De Montfort University since 1993 and we are extremely pleased to have won this commission in the face of a very stiff competition.

PROJECT UPDATES:

ACROSS MDA

PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:

Bath and North East Somerset Council : Grande Parade and Undercroft



MDA has been appointed to provide Quantity Surveying services for the first phase of this prestigious project in the centre of Bath overlooking the historic Pulteney Bridge, which will rejuvenate the river frontage including the Colonnades, undercroft and vaults in addition to the land adjoining the Boat Dock.

The project forms the first phase of a major scheme that is to redevelop the riverside Colonnade next to Parade Gardens to attract high-class shops, cafes and restaurants and expanding the 30-stall market. Public access is to be improved with new access gained from Grande Parade and Pulteney Bridge. Future phases will see the revamping of Newmarket Row, with housing, leisure facilities and cafes.

The project will create a new fully accessible destination point for tourism and business. It will:

- Retain the Guildhall as the Headquarters of the Council
- Bring redundant space back into use for community and commercial benefit
- Enhance the Bath Markets
- Maximise heritage potential



PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:

Leicester Cathedral: King Richard III Tomb for Re-interment

MDA is very proud to announce that we have been appointed by Leicester Cathedral to provide Quantity Surveying services for the works required to create a tomb for the re-interment of Richard III.

The king, who died in battle in 1485, was discovered by archaeologists under a city car park in Leicester in September 2012 and made headline news. Richard III was the last Yorkist King of England, whose death at the age of 32 in the Battle of Bosworth effectively ended the Wars of the Roses.

The plans are to lay the King to rest beneath a raised tomb inside a remodelled Leicester Cathedral, in order to accommodate the tomb for the King, surrounded by a quiet, elegant, contemplative space. Works include a new floor, lighting and stained glass windows.

The project will be led by Rob McGuinn, Director, based in our Leicester office.

PROJECT UPDATES:

ACROSS MDA

PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:

Travis Perkins: New Headquarters and associated buildings



MDA is appointed to provide Quantity Surveying services for the new headquarters of Travis Perkins in Northampton.

The project has high Building Information Modelling requirements and our appointment was strengthened due to our expertise and cutting-edge knowledge in this field, which are also being utilised by the Leicester project team on the Louvre, Abu Dhabi project. Therefore our cost analysis will be performed as the design develops and to check adherence to budget / cost targets, instantly in line with design changes.

MDA will work alongside Travis Perkins to deliver a world class headquarters, that will provide the right environment and ambience that reflects their brand and expertise as a leader in the provision and supply of building materials.



PROJECT

CLIENT & PROJECT:

Dudley College: "Dudley Advance"

The Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology

In the previous edition of Briefing, we updated you on our involvement at Dudley College, explaining the £28.0m of new buildings in the 'Dudley Learning Quarter', known as 'Dudley Sixth' and 'Dudley Evolve'.

Since the beginning of this year, MDA has secured our ongoing presence at the college, for the next development stage, "Dudley Advance", providing Quantity Surveying services on the STEM Assured and IMechE approved centre.

BIM protocols were used to develop the design of the building with a Virtual Prototype (VP) being issued to the tendering contractors as part of the tender information.

This centre of excellence will be for the provision of Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology, due to be completed by September 2014. We assisted the college in securing a Government Enhanced Renewal Grant, which will part fund the £6m Dudley Advance. The building will comprise 2,800m² of specialist teaching space, over four floors and will contain facilities for the study of engineering and advanced manufacturing including mechatronics, electrical engineering and engineering science, as well as traditional machine tool based engineering and state of the art CNC/CAD technologies.

We will work closely with the college who will be providing first class facilities, where engineering skills can be taught to the best possible level and compliment the suite of vocational training facilities already at Dudley College.

Front Page continued

2013 - TURNING THE CORNER?



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We noted via our Twitter account on 1 October that activity in most regions of the UK was now on the increase. This is right, there is clearly more work around. The first signs are also there that contractors are becoming more choosy and it is getting harder to compile tender lists. On a recent scheme in London we approached over fifteen prospective tenderers before we were finally able to complete a list of four. All of the refusals being labelled with “too busy”, “no estimating resource”, “job too small”, phrases (excuses!) not heard for at least six years. Times really are changing once more.

As we touch on in this edition of Briefing, costs and tender prices are increasing. Contractors who priced schemes in competition two years ago are now finding it difficult to let sub-contract packages within their tendered allowances – claims and disputes will surely follow.

We are at the beginning of the next cycle, and I suspect by the start of the next partridge season in 2014, we will be well into it and starting to repeat many of the mistakes of the past.

However, we must guard against over confidence as there are still a few dark clouds hovering that could hold us all back:

- the US debt crisis and ongoing Congressional wrangling over the budgets
- Europe according to one commentator is still held together by sticking plaster
- the Middle East
- the debt mountain both nationally and at company level

I must not go on as I am under strict instructions to make this article positive and not dampen the mood, so suggest we all watch this space and let events unfold.

P.S. I love partridge so if anyone needs a lunch guest to make up a four, I am your man!





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GUEST ARTICLE:
LOVELL CONSULTING: CAPITAL ALLOWANCES

When to call in a capital allowances Specialist?

Many construction professionals have some knowledge of capital allowances. This can be helpful as it flags the benefits of tax savings to clients. Though as, Alexander Pope mentioned, *'A little learning is a dangerous thing'*

This article flags why allowances are helpful to tax paying clients. It sets out some potential traps, opportunities and outlines when it is appropriate to call in a specialist.

Why Bother?

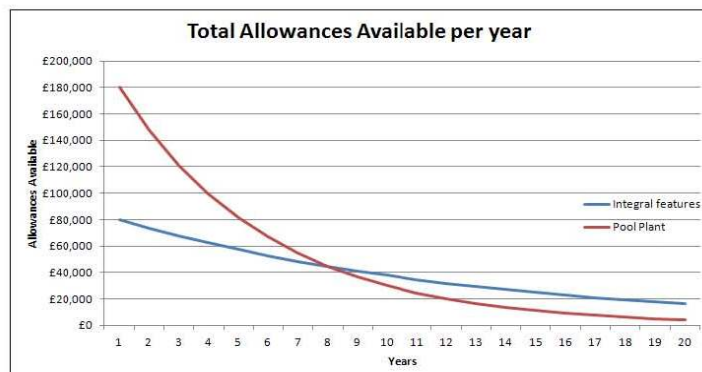
Some clients and advisors take the view it is too complex to bother with. There has to be some sympathy here as on one hand Government creates initiatives to save tax but on the other it makes the legislation complex and each year the legislation changes.

However it is worth persisting as this is a completely safe and legitimate means of reducing taxation. Successive Governments have widened the scope for capital allowances into energy efficient plant and remediating contaminated land. In fact it is currently very generous and since 1 January 2013 the first £250,000 of capital allowances are available as a tax deduction in one year. This will apply till 1 January 2015.

Some areas of tax avoidance have become political unpalatable but in this area the Government is actually seeking to encourage claiming of these allowances to help boost UK capital expenditure.

The value of capital allowances depend on the effective tax rate of the entity claiming. For instance £1m of allowances will save £450,000 of tax over time to a 45% tax payer. Conversely the value will drop to £200,000 to a company paying tax at 20%.

Allowances are provided over time and expenditure needs to be segregated into allowances qualifying at different annual rates which are currently energy efficiency 100%, land remediation 150%, pool plant 18% and integral features 8%. An example graph of the rates of allowances is detailed below assuming total allowances of £2m for a 20% tax payer with £1m as integral features and £1m as pool plant.



GUEST ARTICLE: **LOVELL CONSULTING: CAPITAL ALLOWANCES**

As well as claiming capital allowances on current projects it may be possible to claim allowances now on properties purchased or refurbished many years ago.

Be Careful giving advice!

A recent tax case *Mehjoo v Harben Barker* illustrates advisors sometimes need to refer in other tax specialists. In this case Harben Barker failed to introduce a non domicile tax specialist and as a result was successfully sued by the client for providing negligent advice. This means that all advisors need to know the limitations of their knowledge and when to call in a specialist. This applies equally to construction advisors. We have seen instances where QS firms or Engineers have completely miscalculated the availability and quantum of allowances.

I have seen many cases of construction professionals still giving incorrect advice and allocating construction expenditure based on case law and legislation that was changed more than 5 years ago. Unless you follow legislation on an almost weekly basis it is dangerous to give advice. Make certain that if you are segregating costs against a proforma type spreadsheet that this follows current legislation.

Another example of bad practice is failure to understand the differences between what is a repair for tax purposes and perhaps a more narrow property definition of repairs. For instance replacing single glazing with double glazing is a repair for tax purposes, which may be considered an improvement by the property advisors.

I have set out below some examples of when it will be beneficial to advise that the client takes specialist advice. It can be dangerous in this area to try and do DIY capital allowances analysis. Specialists can normally identify more allowances and are able to more easily reach agreements with HMRC.

Opportunities to consult a capital allowances specialist?

The key triggers are set out below when clients carry out one of the following:-

- **Purchase of a commercial property**
- **Construction expenditure and the cost records are poor**
- **Expenditure on unusual building features and a specialist tax opinion is required**
- **A review of the tax computations indicates limited allowances claimed on historical expenditure**
- **Contaminated land being cleaned up**

Case studies

The following case studies highlight the benefit of bringing in a specialist capital allowances advisor.

Purchase of an office for £1m

Relatively few clients are still aware that they may claim allowances on part of the price paid when they purchase a building.

A Client bought an office and there was a tax election for £2. In this case the client was only expecting allowances of £2. However due to a change in tax legislation the new owner could claim more allowances for integral features that the seller could not have claimed. This resulted in extra allowances for the buyer of £150,000. Allowances on purchased buildings depend on the tax history but for an office or hotel could be as high as 40% of the price paid.

GUEST ARTICLE: LOVELL CONSULTING: CAPITAL ALLOWANCES

Refurbishment of a restaurant for £0.5m

A restaurant was refurbished and the invoices from the builder just stated 'building works'. Requests for more details provided scant further information. A capital allowances specialist segregated expenditure providing a report identifying allowances of £400,000. This is an example where a QS may be able to work alongside a tax advisor or capital allowances specialist to identify this expenditure.

Reviews of expenditure over many years often indicate that little allowances are claimed on construction expenditure. It can be possible to claim allowances retrospectively. For instance if this restaurant example had 6 similar sites, the additional allowances could have been £2.4m – a tax saving of 0.5m.

Unusual building features

The building works may include some green energy plant which qualifies for 100% enhanced capital allowances. Examples include CHP plant, heat pumps, water efficient toilets, LED lighting and some hand dryers. A specialist can draw attention of these allowances to the project team.

The building works could also contain some glazed partitions and a mezzanine. Overall you are not sure whether they meet the requirements of the tax legislation. A capital allowances specialist will be able to advise whether they meet the requirements of legislation and practice.

Non qualifying cumulative additions £2m

A review of a new client indicated that there were cumulative non qualifying leasehold improvements of £2m. Allowances had only been claimed on accounts coded fixtures and equipment. A specialist reviewed the additions incurred over a 4 year period and identified additional allowances of £1.2m which was mainly part of the building project and advisory fees.

House developer contaminated land

House developer had some clean up costs relating to Japanese Knotweed and oil pollution. This had not been identified for 150% contaminated land relief. A claim was made for this expenditure which resulted in a tax saving of £100,000.

What kind of specialist do you need?

There are a variety of capital allowances specialists. Ideally they should be dual qualified and experienced in both surveying and tax. Competent firms typically have teams combining chartered surveyors and chartered tax advisors and are experienced in analysing costs and dealing with both HMRC and Valuation Office. Also they will fully disclose their analysis to HMRC. Competent firms have typically been working for 5 or more years. In recent years some marketing based firms have sprung up and we recommend that you are wary of instructing sales based firms who may have limited technical expertise.

Conclusion

The case studies have demonstrated the potential to provide excellent service to client's by reviewing current and historical opportunities. The benefits of bringing in competent capital allowances specialists have been explained. It is likely to result in stronger client relationships and provide clients the ability to legitimately reduce taxation in a way that the legislation was intended.



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PROJECT COMPLETION: THE GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL

The 91 bedroom Great Northern Hotel (GNH) at Kings Cross opened at the beginning of 2013 following a complete refurbishment and fit-out. MDA acted as Cost Consultant and Employer’s Agent for the scheme.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

The GNH site is part of the 4 million ft² Kings Cross Central development which is being undertaken by King’s Cross Central LLP, and the GNH was acquired by our Client (Aries/Robson Asset Management) with a view to providing a unique hotel offering at the southern tip of the development.

The Hotel had originally been constructed in 1854 as one of the first railway terminus hotels, designed by Lewis Cubitt, who also designed the main Kings Cross station.

CHALLENGES

The team first became involved with the scheme in 2008, and as with any project of this nature, a number of feasibility options were prepared and costed, to allow an informed decision to be made about the optimum solution for this complex site.

The biggest challenges surrounding the scheme involved incorporating a 21st century product into a 19th century structure, and this was true for many areas of the project:-

- a heavily serviced building in terms of en-suite bathrooms, air conditioned rooms, modern data/AV installations, etc (this included the construction of an entirely new roof to cleverly conceal all new air handling plant)
- acoustic standards required by both the Building Regulations, and the expectations of a modern customer – this was relevant both within the hotel, and at the perimeter (the main Kings Cross taxi rank is now located immediately outside the main façade of the hotel)
- thermal insulation standards / performance (whilst minimising any impact on usable floor space)
- fire separation, protection and means of escape issues
- disabled access and means of escape provisions
- the food and beverage expectations of the 21st century consumer, which meant the introduction of new commercial kitchen and cold room areas, to service the new 80 cover bar, and 90 cover restaurant (“Plum + Spilt Milk”, named after the original colours of the Flying Scotsman’s dining cars, and operated by Mark Sargeant).

There had been no major refurbishment works undertaken to the building in the recent past, and very little accurate record information existed about the building, which gave rise to uncertainties about the exact structural form, suspected contamination issues, etc, A package of Early Works was undertaken as an enabling contract in advance of the main works to “inform the design” and to ensure that the building had a reasonably clean bill of health before the main works started.

PROJECT COMPLETION: THE GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL



These issues were all coupled with a very congested Central London site, complex Planning, Listed Building and Conservation Area consents, as well as liaison with Argent, Network Rail, British Transport Police and others, to ensure a “joined up” approach to the development.

The main works were on site for 18 months (completing in January 2013), and following periods for soft opening and staff training, the Hotel opened for trading in March 2013.

With the new Kings Cross Square now having been completed and opened in September 2013, we feel sure that the Hotel will go from strength to strength, particularly with its un-rivalled footfall - thought to be 150,000 per day through Kings Cross station alone. Combined with its immediate proximity to St Pancras International station (less than 20m to the Eurostar!), it makes an ideal stopping point for both European and UK travellers.

Following five years of involvement with the scheme, we are extremely proud to have been associated with the successful completion of the Hotel.

The Hotel has also been well received by both the public and the press - former RIBA President Maxwell Hutchinson said in a recent radio programme for the BBC that the GNH had been “restored beautifully”, and the scheme has also been short-listed for the New London Architecture Awards in 2013.

Other recent accolades include:-

- Voted ‘Best New Hotel’ at this year’s Johansens Condé Nast awards
- Voted ‘Best Hotel Interior’ for 5 star hotels in the UK at the International Property Awards
- Listed in The Sunday Times 100 Ultimate UK Hotels
- Finalist in European Design Awards for both the best new hotel and the best new restaurant

The project team also included:-

- Lead Architect - Dexter Moren Associates
- Interior Architect and Interior Designer - David Archer Architects
- Structural and Services Engineers - Ramboll
- Contractor - Mace
- FF&E Consultant - Yoo Furnishings

MARKETING ACTIVITIES: 2013: A TURNING POINT

BRIC networking events

The London events continue to be very popular and have grown consistently throughout their inaugural year. We have partnered with a new venue, Davy's Tapster near St James, which offers a laid back informal atmosphere for clients and industry peers to catch up over a few drinks and nibbles. These events will continue to roll out to all regional offices also.

Site Finding Activities

Since January this year, we have been working closely with land agents to acquire knowledge of sites to introduce to both existing and possible new clients, predominantly in the residential sector. We have had a number of successes, with 3 new projects secured and a very promising pipeline.

Women in Property

The South Coast branch is now into its second year, with interest increasingly growing. In September 2013, we launched a breakfast seminar programme at Stanmer House, Brighton, which commenced with Richard Hawkes, Architect, talking about the build of his own PassivHaus, featured on Grand Designs. It was a very well attended event and we look forward to rolling out the rest of the series, to be held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

New clients and growth of opportunities

In January this year, we reported that based on the feel of our own market intelligence, that 2013 was going to see a rise in number of opportunities and new work secured. 2013 has been a very positive year for MDA and the uplift in the market has boosted the moral and efficiency of the design teams that we continue to work with, delivering first class quality projects to our clients.

Twitter

MDA continues its activities #MDAtoday, reporting on our internal news of projects won, events and awards to name a few examples.

BRIEFING PRODUCTION TEAM

Steve Banks, Rob Kennedy, Maria Billings

Thank you from **Briefing** to all our article authors and contributors

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