

Retrofit

**Pollard
Thomas
Edwards**



Leading by example

Introducing retrofit



There is a simple truth about construction: no maintenance, no building. This is why, too often, demolition is optioned – simply because of a lack of care. In theory, every building is potentially immortal; in practice too few last for even half the life of a typical British citizen.

We have been unlocking the potential of existing buildings to provide great new spaces to live and work since our foundation in the 1970s. From simple house-to-flat conversions to large scale reuse projects repurposing warehouses, hospitals and factories, working with existing buildings has always been central to our practice.

More recently, we've focused on workplace retrofits and large scale urban renewal, integrating restored structures within bigger new build projects.

Leading by example



Retrofit is centred on a culture of care, on how we look after the things we build. It honours the already made, by making it even more durable than before. And cuts carbon emissions in the process.

In our experience architectural and urban design retrofit strategies are popular with domestic and commercial tenants because they conserve and enhance existing neighbourhoods and workplaces and renew the fabric that maintain their communities.

Indeed our own workplace – a timber mill, terrazzo factory and a props workshop in previous incarnations – is an ongoing retrofit project, augmented over the years as owners and tenants have come and gone.

Case studies

Our practice was founded on working with existing buildings, from converting Thameside warehouses and abandoned hospitals into sought-after homes, to making retrofitted workspaces in redundant large-scale industrial structures, and bringing listed heritage buildings back into use.

 website

 video

 publicity

Pollard Thomas Edwards



Deptford Market Yard

Lewisham

“ The London high street voted one of the world’s coolest. ”

PTE transformed a derelict rail-yard into a vibrant paved and planted courtyard leading to the new Station Square. PTE’s restoration of the existing carriage ramp includes upper level landscaped public spaces, with steel and glass bridges linking to the lower floor commercial spaces of Octavius House, a new 8-storey mixed use building.



Old Barnsbury

Kings Cross

“ The transformation of The Barnsbury Estate is a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve the lives of residents and the local community. ”

Barnsbury Estate is a masterplan for transforming an entire housing estate in Kings Cross. The proposals for more than 1,000 homes include repairing and enhancing the existing, '30s-built homes of Old Barnsbury, and the redevelopment of post-war buildings at New Barnsbury. PTE's design was approved by residents in a ballot that returned a 73 per cent yes vote.



City Park West

Chelmsford

“ City Park West is a shining example of urban renaissance, innovative design and fantastic partnership working. ”

Two commercial blocks form part of the overall masterplan for a new urban quarter next to the railway station in Chelmsford City Centre. The existing heritage buildings are sited within a conservation area, and were delivered as commercial office space, with a Category A fit-out.



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Diespeker Wharf

Islington

“ The nicest meeting rooms in Islington, with a view to die for. ”

PTE acquired the site beside the Regent's Canal in 1994, and completed the restoration and conversion of this listed Victorian terrazzo factory for its own headquarters. In 2021 PTE re-shaped the studio building to reflect contemporary flexible and collaborative working practices through a comprehensive renovation, including upgrades to infrastructure and access.



Gunpowder Mill

Waltham Abbey

“ Not only is the new building itself an uplifting place in which to work, it has provided an inspiration to help the company grow and flourish. ”

Hill's spectacular headquarters were crafted from two derelict historic buildings and a new glazed office wing, in a sensitive landscape setting of water meadows. The Power House and Water Tower were formerly part of the Royal Gunpowder Mills.



Spillers Mill Cambridge

“ This landmark development
has transformed the gateway
to the City. ”

Spillers Mill is a late nineteenth century industrial building which is classified as a Building of Local Interest. Our approach was to remove poor quality additions, reinstate the original parapet line, and maintain the existing window detail: original double-height openings at street level were exploited to provide double-height commercial space. Nineteen spacious apartments for private sale were created on the upper floors, including duplexes and penthouses – one of which extends upwards into the original turret.



Case studies

Somethin' Else
Hackney



Cambridge House
Southwark



Anchor Brewhouse
Shad Thames



The Granary
Barking



Hornsey Road
Inslington



Brockwell Lido
Lambeth



Old Royal Free Square
Islington



Woodside Square
Muswell Hill



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