

Pro Landscaper

Concept to Delivery

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DESIGN, BUILD,
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MATT KILLINGLEY

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MARKET REPORT

**WHAT NEXT FOR
THE NURSERY
INDUSTRY?**

***Winter
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Ahead of the curve

BLUE TULIP GARDEN DESIGN

OLD MEETS NEW

GUSTAFSON PORTER + BOWMAN

London's New Ludgate development successfully softens the edge between public realm and private project



PROJECT DETAILS

Project value
£2m

Build time
March 15 to June 16

Size of project
7,000m²

The City of London is dominated by tight urban areas with a poor interface between the streetscape and commercial sites. This is particularly visible in terms of paving, where York stone often ends abruptly when meeting more contemporary paving used on commercial schemes.

New Ludgate sits in the heart of this urban fabric, surrounded by three main roads and pedestrian traffic from nearby transport links at City Thameslink and London Blackfriars. An opportunity to redevelop the site allowed Gustafson Porter + Bowman to create a space for the public to enjoy. Recognising the context rather than ignoring it enhances the project's sense of scale and softens the edge between public realm and private development.

The brief

The brief for New Ludgate was to unite two distinct commercial office buildings by reintroducing a historic existing alleyway and incorporating a new public ground-level piazzetta, while additionally developing a south-facing roof terrace on the development's fifth floor. The piazzetta seeks to



tie the new development seamlessly into the surrounding urban fabric and character.

The design

The design draws on the history and context of the site, recalling similar hidden passageways in London, and opens a new additional west-east pedestrian route through the urban block. On the development's fifth floor, Gustafson Porter + Bowman developed a large south-facing roof terrace for office workers, which benefits from day-long sunlight. The aim was to create a boundary between the natural oasis of the roof terrace and its urban context without creating the feeling of being 'in a fishbowl' and overlooked by adjacent buildings. Comprised of dense planting arranged in colourful bands of perennial plants, ornamental grasses and evergreen structural planting, this screen grounds the user to their own context rather than being exposed by 'the big view'.

Site history

The site was once occupied by the Bell Savage Inn, a public house and coaching inn, and 'Lud Gate', which provided access to a prison. Both were accessed by passageways.

In the second half of the 20th century the old medieval layout of the city was disintegrating as



large 'super-block' developments cut across ancient thoroughfares and reduced the number of alleyways.

The New Ludgate development responds to the City Corporation's ambitions to reintroduce these lost routes which are now of great value to the working population, allowing for breakout spaces from offices amongst cafes and shops. Today, this is once again a place to pause within a frenetic environment.

Piazzetta concept

A small piazzetta on Old Bailey marks the entrance to a west-east passageway which links Old Bailey to Limeburner Lane and makes a transition from the traditional pavement of York stone to dark granite.

Design development led to a bold

3D development allowed for accurate stone cutting, reducing wastage on site, and improving quality control of the installation.

Piazzetta design

The design began with Neil Porter's hand-drawn sketches and through subsequent modelling culminated in precision cutting of the stone, requiring close contact and →

geometric paving pattern which takes inspiration from fashion designer Alexander McQueen and the 20th century artist MC Escher.

Gustafson Porter + Bowman's design team was certain from the outset that it did not want to use a standard piece of paving on the scheme, and through lengthy design iterations developed a set of nine mosaic pieces which give a crafted and unique quality to the space.

- 1 Photo of fifth-floor roof terrace looking west
- 2 Complete aerial plan of New Ludgate showing fifth-floor roof terrace and piazzetta
- 3 A set of nine mosaic pieces give a crafted quality
- 4 Planting with St Paul's Cathedral in background
- 5 A small piazzetta on Old Bailey marks the west-east passageway entrance
- 6 The considered positioning of street furniture and trees increases the sense of space



collaboration with the wider construction team.

The seemingly random geometric paving leads pedestrians to a focal point at the centre of the piazza, marked by a mature *Liriodendron tulipifera* and surrounded by integrated solid granite seating, itself a subtle extension of the paving pattern.

The complex existing street levels required Gustafson Porter + Bowman to undertake complex 3D reviews to tie the new development into the surrounding streetscapes and road levels.

The considered positioning of street furniture and trees in the piazza increases the sense of space and creates a vibrant new meeting and gathering place in the city.

Roof terrace concept

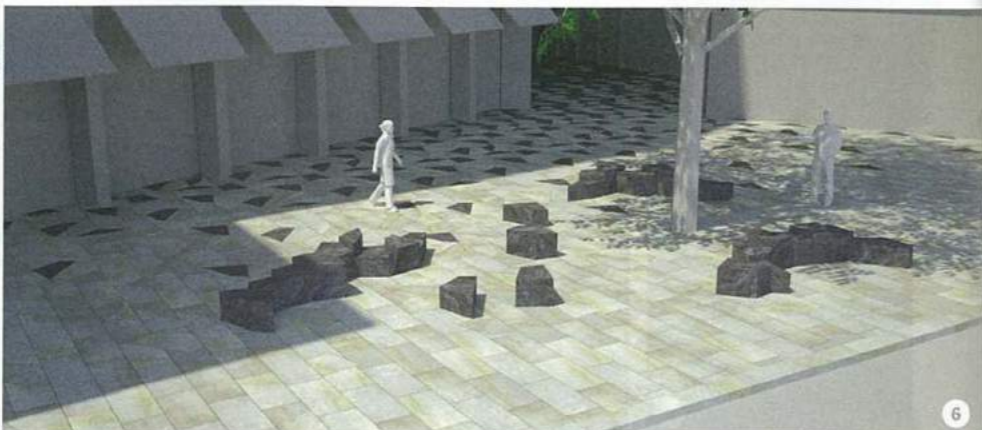
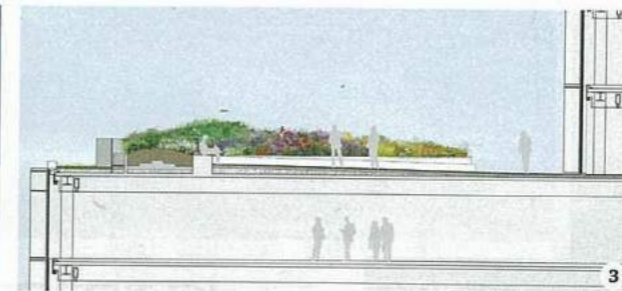
New Ludgate sets a standard for terrace gardens throughout London, dominating the view from the upper floors and creating a rich and vibrant place to sit or entertain.

The terrace includes a dense planting scheme which varies in height and corresponds to an understated colour scheme for pockets of the raised flower bed, which is wrapped in a sinuous white Corian bench. Both subtle and sculptural, its form continues to wrap around the very edges of the terrace while its varied height creates ample soil depth. The design of the planting bed allows for two channels which give spectacular views for the building's users to St Paul's and the City of London beyond.

Additional green roofs were designed and installed on the top floors of each building, integrated with the photovoltaic strategy on these levels. Gustafson Porter + Bowman's 3D design files were used by the manufacturer at construction stage which ensured a consistency in the realisation of the design from concept through to installation.

Roof terrace planting

Plants are grouped together according to colour and form. Bands of yellow flowering evergreen *Euphorbias* contrast with the tall blue flowering spikes of *Eryngium*, *Echinopsis* and *Aster*, while low hummocks of flowering thyme are seen against the towering purple balls of *Alliums*. All are framed by the plumes of tall grasses.



- 1 Ornamental grasses in addition to plants
- 2 3D modelling showing massing of flower bed and wrapping form
- 3 Section of fifth-floor roof terrace in relation to building
- 4 Planting alongside entrance to terrace from the fifth-floor
- 5 Fifth-floor roof terrace, as viewed from St Paul's Cathedral
- 6 Concept rendering for final design
- 7 Planting detail and distance from building
- 8 Bold geometric paving takes inspiration from Alexander McQueen and artist MC Escher

REFERENCES

Landscape design
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Plants
Coblands
 www.coblands.co.uk

Deepdale
 www.deepdale-trees.co.uk

Lindum
 www.lindumgreenroofs.co.uk

Robin Tacchi Plants
 www.robintacchiplants.com

Van den Berk
 www.vdberk.co.uk

Stone
Gormleys
 www.gormley.co.uk

Marshalls
 www.marshalls.co.uk/commercial/natural-stone

ABOUT GUSTAFSON PORTER + BOWMAN

Gustafson Porter + Bowman is an award-winning landscape architecture practice which has received public acclaim for creating authentically engaging spaces within a global portfolio. The development of our design work has continuously pushed the boundaries of what constitutes the field of landscape design and our work is known for its sensual and sculptural features.
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