



Broadwick House

London, UK



Location
London, UK

Date
1996-2002

Client
Derwent

Cost
£6.9 million

Area
3,200m²

Structural Engineer
Arup

Services Engineer
BDSP

Cost Consultant
Davis Langdon & Everest

Project Manager
Buro Four Project
Services

Acoustic Consultant
Arup

Main Contractor
John Sisk & Son

Awards

2004
Civic Trust Award – Commendation

2003
RIBA Award

2001
Estates Gazette Architecture Award

The building that now stands on the site aspires to everything the company ever desired when we made the decision to develop this site. It is a wonderful addition to Soho.

S P Silver, Executive Director, Derwent

Bespoke office buildings, like Lloyd's of London or Lloyds Register, are often mould-breakers. The speculative development sector tends to be more cautious and certainly less likely to challenge planning constraints, which reduce the potential for innovative design. In this light, Broadwick House comes as something of a surprise. The building was commissioned by a developer and stands in the Soho conservation area, where straightforwardly 'contextual' design had previously been the norm. The planning negotiations for the project were protracted but the result is a strikingly contemporary structure that enhances the neighbourhood.

The site is on a corner of a city block, with thoroughfares on all four sides. To the east, it abuts Berwick Street, with one of London's best-known street markets.

Neighbouring buildings range from Georgian town houses to 1960s high rise flats and 1980s Post-Modernist office blocks. Into this diverse scenario, the practice's scheme introduces an element of calm, rationality and urbanity. By concentrating service cores on the western edge of the block, clear, well-lit and highly transparent office floors are created behind fully glazed façades. Energy efficiency is ensured with the provision of solar performance glazing, in conjunction with external shading devices and motorised blinds. Ground floor façades are set back to facilitate passage along the crowded streets – ground floor and basement areas are allocated for retail and restaurant use, whilst at the fifth floor, the building steps back to provide outdoor terraces. A distinctive element of the scheme is the double-height space set below the great arched roof, affording spectacular views over London's West End. The glazed lift tower on Broadwick Street is a memorable urban marker, a celebration of movement typical of RSHP.