



Regal House

Covent Garden, London

Project Case Study

Client: Capital & Counties Properties PLC

Installed: 2017



Project Details

To coincide with the 500th anniversary of Covent Garden we were commissioned by Capital and Counties to create a vertical park at the gateway to the area.

Our package was to develop the whole of the façade to Regal House along both Long Acre and James Street. This included a full structural assessment and strategy as well as looking at the potential planting palette and designs.

We were asked to include a number of additional features including retrofitting a rainwater harvesting system into the basement of the building to use to irrigate the living wall and providing a full dynamic lighting strategy for the building. We also designed and specified some bespoke LED lit balcony planters.

The planting brief was to provide as much colour as possible taking into account the façade orientation and local conditions. Planting selection was to provide for both biodiversity and air quality improvements. This was with a view to providing for native birds and invertebrates in particular as well as flowering plants that would provide some nectar.

This vertical park at the gateway to Covent Garden is formed of over 8,000 plants from 21 different varieties and provides a real wow factor to the area and is in keeping with the history of Covent Garden. For the client it gave them the facelift the building needed.

Highlights

- ◆ Approx 200m² of living wall on two aspects – West and North
- ◆ High profile location wrapping around the corner of Long Acre and James Street
- ◆ Provides a real wow factor to anyone coming out of Covent Garden tube station
- ◆ Full works including steel structure to support the living wall by Biotope
- ◆ Integrated and illuminated window planter boxes for additional dressing
- ◆ Fully maintained by Biotope since installation

The scheme was originally granted temporary planning permission for 2 years as the client's long term plan was to replace the building. After seeing the transformation of the existing building and the success of the new look Capital and Counties applied for and were granted permanent planning permission for the green wall in 2019 and put their plans to redevelop the site on hold.

As part of this second planning application Biotope were able to provide a full report on the previous two years maintenance performed on the site including maintenance visit reports, plant replacements and irrigation logs.



As a turnkey package we took a three pronged approach to taking the project forwards. Firstly we looked at the structure of the existing building with a view to seeing how we could best support the living wall. Secondly we looked at the potential to irrigate the living wall from rainwater and thirdly we looked to develop the planting design to match the expectations of the client whilst being bound by the environment and aspect of the living walls.

"The living wall on Regal House has totally transformed the building. It's going strong and we're currently working with Biotecture on several other proposals for living walls which is itself an endorsement"

- Amanda Stevenson, Head of Sustainability | Capital & Counties Properties PLC

To enable the planting design we carried out desktop shade studies to mimic the environment throughout year. This informed the plant palette. We then offered two design choices and the client selected an organic curvilinear planting design that would add the appearance of dynamic movement to the building. Plants of similar form and /or colour were selected for the two aspects to provide uniformity of design.

