



22 Bishopsgate

Location

22 Bishopsgate,
London

Background

Over the last 17 years, Squire Energy has built an excellent reputation for providing the gas infrastructure to some of the City of London's highest profile buildings. So, when it came to selecting a gas installer to work on The Pinnacle – a proposed 945ft tower block in the heart of the financial district, SEL was the natural choice.

The site has had a complicated journey to fruition, spanning nearly fourteen years, but despite a false start, and several changes to the design and construction teams, Squire have remained an integral part of project from start to finish. The completed skyscraper – now named 22 Bishopsgate – was completed in early 2020.

The brief

Having previously worked together on projects including Amazon's UK headquarters Principal Place, Multiplex teamed up with Squire Energy once again to provide the gas infrastructure on the project. The scope of the work included the isolation and diversion of the old gas supplies prior to demolition of the existing buildings on site, and installation of an elevated gas pressure supply – a request by the client to reduce the need for gas pressure boosting.

gas connections providing gas to the existing structures and diverting the gas supply to adjacent properties.

The second stage was setting up a gas supply for the new building. The level of gas the new skyscraper demands required a complex reinforcement of the National Grid's network to support it. The Squire team worked closely with the National Grid to produce a design study, which concluded that a medium-pressure gas main was required.

The project

Squire Energy's work on the project was carried out in three stages, beginning in 2007 with the demolition. SEL was tasked with isolating 12

SEL began the installation in 2011, routing the gas main along Bishopsgate to an external pressure-reducing governor in the footpath.

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From here, a low-pressure gas supply was fed into the gas meter room in the basement of the building. The low-pressure supply would allow the gas to reach up to 70mbar (compared to the standard 21mbar) reducing the size of the internal pipework and successfully eliminating the need for gas boosters, satisfying the client's request.

Unfortunately, the financial crash of 2008 and the recession that followed had a significant impact on construction in the capital, and eventual budget constraints and letting commitments caused building work to be halted in 2012. The concrete shell of the first seven stories already constructed stood on the site for three further years before being demolished.

It wasn't until 2019 that property companies Lipton Rogers and Axa IM – Real Assets committed to completing the £1bn development, albeit with a simpler design than the original 'helter skelter' exterior. With the new building design, came a new name – 22 Bishopsgate.

Squire Energy came on board to resume its work on the project. Despite the change in building design, the previous gas installation design was still applicable, and some of the existing infrastructure remained. This posed an unusual challenge, as the pressure-reducing governor installed during phase two in 2011 had been left in the ground unused for nine

years. Nobody could be certain whether it would still function correctly until the gas was commissioned. Thanks to an extensive refurbishment by Squire Energy it was restored to full working order, saving the time and money required for installation of a new governor.

Thirteen years after starting work on the project, Squire completed its final work on the installation in January 2020. "We're thrilled to have successfully completed another prestigious project in City of London." says Squire's Senior Project Manager John Clifton, "Despite the challenges involved, the Squire team went above and beyond to deliver the work efficiently and to the highest standard. We look forward to working on further projects with Multiplex in the future."

