

# EIGHTY STRAND

## CASE STUDY



**Sentinel**  
Contracting plc

### CLIENT

Sir Robert  
McAlpine

### SECTOR

Mixed-use  
scheme

### SERVICES

Commercial  
Decorating

### REGION

City of London

### SIZE

470,000 sp. ft

### PROJECT VALUE

£63 million

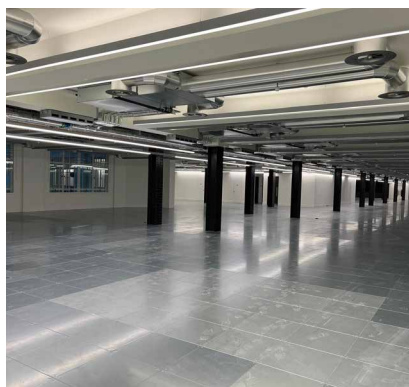
## Project Overview

It was a pleasure and a privilege for Sentinel to be invited to decorate the revitalised Eighty Strand mixed-use development in the heart of London. As one of the capital's leading specialist decorating sub-contractors, this is the type of project we relish – a prestigious and high-profile transformation of a historic building in one of London's most famous streets.

Eighty Strand's own website describes the building as "a London icon transformed" following the £63 million refurbishment of this Grade II Listed structure, which has sat proudly between the Strand and the River Thames since it was completed in 1931.

This building, also known as Shell-Mex House, is a notable example of art deco architecture. It sits within the Savoy conservation area, which added to the requirement for the development, while substantial, to be sensitive of the building's heritage and compliant with local planning regulations.

Our client, PDP London, was commissioned by main contractor Sir Robert McAlpine and building management company Strandbrook to deliver a comprehensive upgrade of the building while retaining the grandeur and style of the original.



## Project Brief

The overall aim of the project was to bring a contemporary look and feel to an iconic City of London building with a history stretching back almost a century.

This was to be achieved by transforming four floors of office space and significant upgrades to communal areas. Among the features delivered by this substantial work are:

- **The Pavilion:** The building was reorientated so that the main entrance is now on the Strand, rather than facing the Thames at what is now the rear of the building. Visitors now approach the building through glass pavilions set in a courtyard where the peaceful ambience offers a haven from the bustle of one of the world's major cities.
- **Pavilion Reception:** When you visit Eighty Strand, you are greeted in an elegant lounge area filled with light.
- **The Lobby:** Ideal for meetings and social gatherings, this is another new space that delivers style and class.
- **The Glasshouse Garden:** This is the centerpiece of the new building, a conservatory-style space next to the Strand that offers green surroundings and comfortable seating to add to the tranquil, welcoming feel of the new communal levels on the ground floor.

## Challenges / Solution

The most testing challenge we encountered in this project was in our work on the existing windows. The frames had to be preserved as part of the new design, and the previous decoration had used lead paint.

For more than 50 years, lead has been recognised as a material that is hazardous both to people and the environment. All our preparation work in getting the frames ready for our teams of specialist decorators had to take this into account, which meant the process took a little longer than normal.

Meanwhile, under the terms of the service programme agreed, we had to complete the decoration of all ceilings before other services could be installed. We were acutely aware of the need to work as quickly as possible while delivering the level of service you'd expect from a specialist decorating contractor with extensive experience.

We were not the only sub-contractor to encounter issues. Large quantities of materials containing asbestos had to be removed before work could proceed.

To add to the difficulty faced by all operatives working on this central London site, the project began just as the Covid-19 pandemic arrived in the UK in early 2020. Measures put in place to ensure social distancing were successful, with no time lost to absences or isolations caused by the coronavirus.



## The Result

Sentinel is exceptionally proud to be able to report that, despite all the challenges associated with this flagship project, all the decorating work was completed on time and to our usual high standard.

Our on-site supervisor, Abbey Dell, was presented with an award for her role in ensuring all our snagging was completed in a timely manner. All on-site handovers and completions were achieved on schedule, which was a major achievement considering the potential caused by the presence of lead paint on the original windows, and the impact of a global pandemic.

The decoration work of Sentinel is now enjoyed by users throughout the building, including in the office areas, the mezzanine and the basement.

We were delighted that the quality of this showcase central London project was recognised when it was shortlisted for two prestigious construction industry awards. Eighty Strand was shortlisted in the Workplace £10m And Over category at the 2023 AJ Retrofit Awards. It was also a finalist in the Restoration category at the 2024 CIOB Awards.

