

Name of Project

The Mailbox, Birmingham

Client

Birmingham Mailbox Ltd and Crosby Homes

Architect

Weedon Partnership

Engineer

Curtins

Quantity Surveyor

Faithful & Gould

Project Description

Refurbishment and extension of a former Royal Mail sorting office into the largest mixed-use building in the UK, including 144 luxury residential roof-top apartments

Contract Value

£50 million

Contract Period

Aug 99 - Apr 01

Main Contractor

Carillion Building

Contract Form

JCT 98 Two Stage Design & Build



This demanding design & build contract comprised the transformation of an 850,000 sq ft Royal Mail sorting office into a 1.5m sq ft multi-use development with retail, leisure and office sections, residential apartments, a hotel shell, basement car parking, and external works including the creation of a new public square and upgrading of existing paving and street furniture from the front of the Mailbox to New Street station.

The project was procured through a two stage tender route with Carillion winning the first stage in open competition. One of the reasons we were selected was our open approach to partnering and our ability to work as a team with the client's designers and advisors. Carillion's team then worked side by side with the client to develop the design, tender the works packages and agree a contract sum.

This was the biggest multi-use development in Europe at the time, involving major structural changes to the original building. Our innovative procedures for the sequencing of demolition works allowed us to work from the top down to create the street, and simultaneously from the bottom up to build the car park. We had to demolish and reposition existing floors to provide car parking in the basement.

The whole life-cycle of the building was considered during the second stage process. We considered the difficulties inherent in high-rise access and provided an external cladding system which was as maintenance-free as possible. A zinc-cladding system was used which doesn't need repainting, therefore saving on maintenance costs for the building.

The Mailbox is a prime example of Carillion's ongoing contribution to Birmingham's regeneration. The scheme has opened up this area of Birmingham to pedestrians, shoppers and developers and has expanded Birmingham's city centre retail area.