

## Bow's Belle

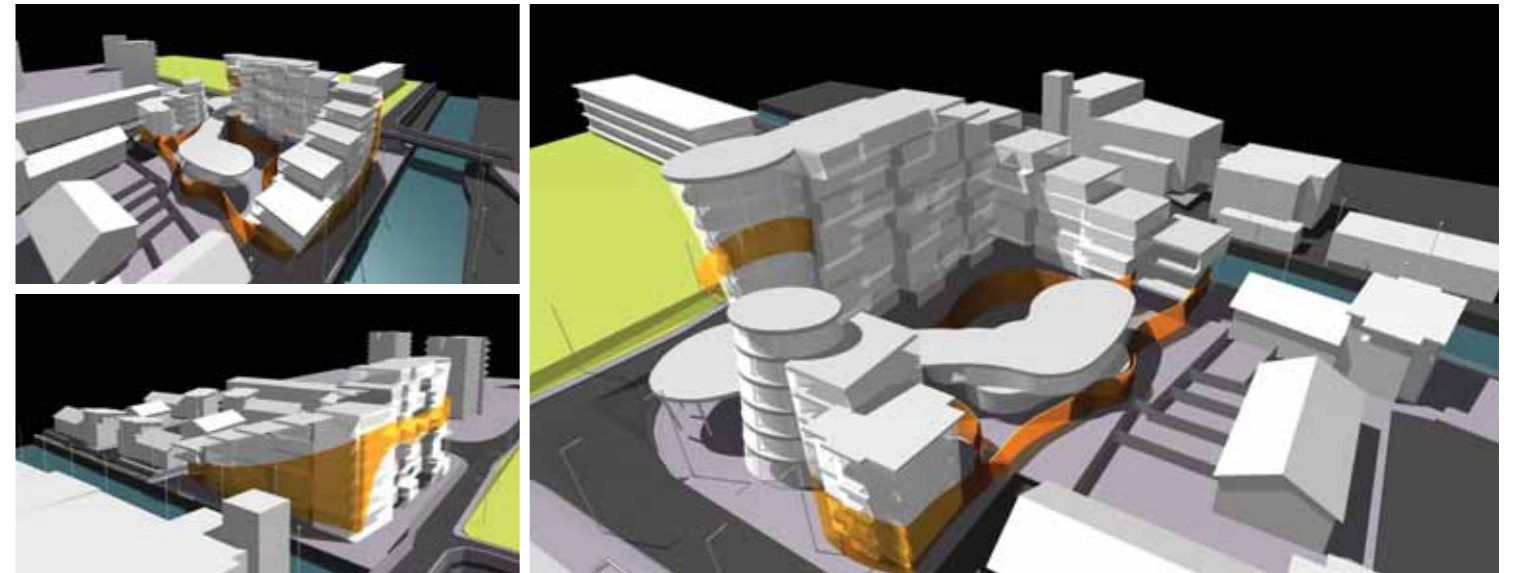
They all say that the 2012 Olympics will have a positive effect upon the construction industry as a whole, yet has there been any evidence of this?

Well we thought so, when we looked at PENSON's latest scheme neatly placed near to the fringe of the Olympic village in Bow, East London.

PENSON's large mixed-use scheme will create 200 residential family orientated apartments, a large supermarket, scooter & bike shops, dry cleaners, a bar or two, a restaurant and a substantial centralised landscaped space that reconnects the Lime Cut Canal to Bartlett Park.

One feature that caught Urban Designs eye is the huge, soft, yet vibrant façade facing the Lime Cut Canal, which soars 9 floors high by a length of 15 apartments. This slightly curved façade is to be made with a perforated material that will react beautifully to daylight and internal artificial light. So what's the twist? Well PENSON have planted huge coloured images of Marilyn Monroe onto this particular façade to create "Bow's Belle".

This is the last thing Urban Design expected to see when we heard about this cool project, but it kind of seems correct to run with something so vibrant whilst it has a direct relationship with 2012. The Lime Cut Canal will reflect the facades random light show during the night, as the apartments lights are switched on or off randomly. The façade will bring life and vibrancy. It will also bring shade internally and will offer to each flat, a spectacular view and a unique edge to the interior design. Every apartment will have a unique section of the façade to personalise both the internal and external identity. The façade also provides privacy to each balcony overlooking the canal. This façade is very cool and highly functional; it even acts as a windbreak to protect some of the higher balconies.



We are also intrigued by other ideas within this scheme. The efficient use of the site is commercially driven, in that the Supermarket is within a semi-basement structure. Below this, lays a basement car park and services section. Above the Supermarket is a sustainable roof, which creates a very large garden space open to the public and serves the previously mentioned connection to the Lime Cut Canal. This space will provide a real soul to the entire scheme, it brings the Canal

into the scheme and glimpses of water are opened up to Bartlett Park.

The interesting ideas continue with passive ventilation within the staircase cores and some exterior walls, which are of course very environmentally correct ideas. The use of ground heat will be maximised to provide more than the desired levels of renewable heating, is very ethical. Using the Lime Cut as a source of cooling is under discussion with the relevant authorities and to top >> 30





this all off, PENSON is very keen to utilise their very innovative foam core construction to create another key façade that has so far, been kept a little secret.

PENSON's drive for more inherent sustainability shines through with the building. Whilst other key buildings in London are adding in Lee Penson's words "strap-ons" such as wind turbines and solar panels, PENSON are trying very hard to build in much more inherent "sustainables". This ranges from all kinds of ideas that relate to the buildings manufacture.

This attitude strives to affect the specification of all materials, but in a sensible way that progresses the whole sustainability forum. There is not one single piece of superficial cedar cladding on this scheme. Not one single wind turbine, no CHP or other piece of tempting equipment currently on the shelf.

As PENSON state, "currently the ethos of planning s106's that strive to create renewable energy in London are actually sometimes very hard to conform to. For example, we have been asked to troubleshoot another project in the City, where the only way of producing 10% renewable electricity is through a 5.5m diameter turbine that soars 9.9m above the roof of an existing 5 storey building and guess what, they will not give the client planning for the turbine, yet, still demand that the client sticks to a strict S106 clause seeking 10% renewable heat and electricity. It's nonsense."

So from the outset of designing Bow's Belle, PENSON are striving to work with the LPA to ensure that the building at heart uses far less electricity and heat in other means, whilst, using the correct form of equipment to create renewable energy in the correct way.

PENSON's attitude is that this building will not be covered with wind turbines, they are not particularly pretty, they age visually and in 5 years time London will be an eyesore if there are wind turbines bolted to every nook and cranny.

Internally, each flat is highly tuned with intelligent layouts that create a high density of development in relation to the site area. The apartments are mixed up in terms of 1, 2 or 3 bed units and it is anticipated that 30% of the residential units will be social or key worker housing. Some key units are in part double height with spectacular views across Bartlett Park and the Lime Cut.

Each unit comes with a scooter or folding bike within its price. The folding bike fits neatly into a special compartment within each apartment where as the scooters, are parked at the base of every stairwell at basement level, where they are safe and dry. This keeps the scooters out of sight from the landscaped gardens and provides direct access to the scooter-servicing centre. The scheme will have some car parking for both the Apartments and Supermarket.

Bow's Belle is very clever, distinctive, stimulating and highly commercial. PENSON has thought about it very shrewdly using their stamp of being highly creative to focus on creating value, density and marketability for their private client. What is pleasing to see is that the scheme offers so much to everyone that will be affected by the building. The public, the owners, the shoppers, the scooter owners everyone. Passers by will get an uplift as they walk or drive by.

The client is so pleased with PENSON that they have awarded the entire package of Architecture, Structures, Project Management, for both the developments of Bow's Belle and the new site in North London for the client's relocation of their current business with an overall package worth £48 million in constructive value,

We wait with great excitement for completion and if PENSON's other recent completed projects such as London Buses HQ, Brighton & Hove's "Time Machine" HQ are to be used as benchmarks for neat, creative, refreshing and shrewd commercial architecture, then Bow's Belle is certainly going to be worth keeping an eye on.

We are sure Marilyn would be proud of Bow's Belle.