

## Flower Cellars

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2013	UK England	Capital & Counties Properties PLC	Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF)

The Flower Cellars in Covent Garden transformed vacant basement and ground floor accommodation into a contemporary cultural centre that is home to the London Film Museum and Balthazar restaurant. With the eatery at ground level, the kitchens and back of house areas are located in the basement adjacent to the museum. Residential premises are located above and around the site, which also accommodates the London Transport Museum.

The original building on the site dates back to 1871 and was part of Covent Garden Flower Market, London's oldest public square, until the 1970s. Maintaining the historical context of the space was an important design consideration, while the key acoustic challenge was protecting the amenity of the residential premises located above the restaurant. Standards much higher than those typically required for planning were adopted.



Balthazar, Covent Garden. Images courtesy of Capco Covent Garden

## Services provided

Sandy Brown was commissioned to provide acoustic advice in relation to the successful planning application for a change of use to allow the introduction of the restaurant, which in turn allowed the redevelopment of the basement area to make it suitable for use by the London Film Museum. Potential noise sources that were considered included:

- external plant
- internal activities in the restaurant and museum
- servicing of the restaurant and museum
- patron arrival and departure.

The scope also included advising on the design and construction of the white box for the London Film Museum and a monitoring role on the restaurant fit out by the tenant on behalf of our client.



## Special acoustic features

The restaurant at the Flower Cellars offers all day dining and is capable of accommodating up to 150 covers. To assess its potential impact and develop appropriate mitigation measures, measurements were taken at an existing establishment with similar conditions to those contained in the proposal for use as a benchmark. In addition, measurements were performed at the site to establish the existing levels of sound insulation. An extensive scheme of sound insulation treatments was developed to ensure that the existing amenity of residents located within the same building and adjacent buildings was maintained. These included the inclusion of heavy independent wall and column linings on large cavities, a high performance sound insulating ceiling, floating floor construction and replacement of the existing windows to create a form of box-in-box construction.

Detailed assessment of location and type of building services ventilation and cooling systems was required to comply with planning requirements and protect nearby noise sensitive premises.

We worked closely with our client and the restaurant tenant to develop a suitable management plan to minimise the impact of servicing and patron arrival and departure based on existing noise surveys that were undertaken to establish the existing ambient noise level in the area. As a busy tourist centre, existing noise levels were high and, while the impact of patrons entering or leaving the restaurant was not expected to be significant, a lobbied door arrangement was adopted to ensure internal noise egress was minimised.