

Former Monk Bridge Doncaster Steel Works

Submitted by

Highline Investments

Category

Game Changer

Introduction to the nominated company / project / development / deal - please provide a high level overview of the company / project / development / deal including relevant financial information (100 words):

CJCT with Galliford Try have been on site since 2020 following unanimous approval from LCC for the regeneration of the former Monk Bridge Doncaster Steel Works in 2017.

The brownfield site is bisected by the defunct Grade II listed 1846 Gritstone viaduct and has lain dormant for decades. The proposal brings the viaduct back to life as an elevated linear public park offering direct access to a highly efficient, 665 home, residential development; the viaduct arches are repurposed as commercial units at grade.

The proposal promotes its unique context and will provide catalyst for the wider redevelopment of the area.

Tell us why the nominated company / individual / development / deal should win this award (500 words):

There are many unique places in any historic city, and across the North of England a landscape of partially, and fully, derelict industrial sites left by the Victorians, is studded with a range of magnificent built forms from viaducts to mills, canals to towering chimneys.

Over the last decade the city of Leeds in Yorkshire has undergone a period of relative stagnation, with most of these fringe former industrial sites standing idle as car parks, or passing between developers as the credit crunch took hold.

Some lay empty for decades, but many are finally being considered for development again due to their proximity to the city centre, and the necessity for new housing as the region experiences an early 21st century growth boom.

Among these sites is the former Monksbridge Doncaster Steel Works, itself built on the site of the redundant Leeds & Thirsk Railway, which includes a stranded, but magnificent, Grade II listed Gritstone viaduct crossing both the River Aire and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. The viaduct itself is over 300m long; as broad and long as the main street 'Briggate' in the heart of the city. Designed by Thomas Grainger, a noted Scottish engineer, in 1846, this unique ghost railway structure is immediately adjacent to a full brick Engine 'Roundhouse' and, uniquely, a 'Half Roundhouse' together creating what Historic England called a; "*Nationally significant cluster of Railway Heritage*".

Our brief, was to breathe life into this place, and create a new public park on top of the Victorian mega structure, surrounded by 665 new homes and linked to new bars, cafes and restaurants in the arches

below.

The opportunity is here to create a true landmark space at high level, set in its context of new development (over 80% of the surrounding land is due for redevelopment currently) and linking to the Wellington Place to the East. The viaduct itself is an agent for radical regeneration and renewal; both its upper deck, a green tranquil landscaped public space, merging into the private gardens and terraces for residents at the western end, and the 18 arches, many converted to allow new bars and restaurants.

The heart of the development, which we call 'the stitch', will be linked to a spectacular lower level public space contained by a glazed gridshell ETFE atrium roof between the 'spur' to the north and the body of the viaduct to the south.

Working with a massive existing listed industrial artefact like this needs a carefully tuned response to both scale and materiality, and the diagrams here show a clear evolution from a linear series of blocks, responding to the form of the viaduct by pivoting and rotating to create spaces between both viaduct and new built form, sculpting the ends of the blocks to respond to the southern aspect and views, and finally by climbing in scale to a tower of 21 storeys overlooking the River and the city.

The buildings themselves are clean, minimal brickwork, soft red/brown in colour with dark ceramic clad bases, each column fluted, with a dark salt glazed finish that reflects the viaducts rustic stonework. The language of the blocks is one of depth, recess windows and simple black metal work Juliette balconies.

Splayed end terraces turn to the axis of the viaduct and capture the sun, while the proposals for the taller block at the canal edge express their significance on the skyline of the city with a vertical upper crown and expressed balcony corners referencing late period British brick modernist architecture of the 1950's.

The whole development will be connected back into the city via a series of cylindrical salt glazed ceramic clad lift and stair towers, lit as torches and allowing flow from Whitehall Road, and the Leeds Station back through the neighbouring Wellington Place, which will be home to over 8000 office workers, to arrive here at the heart of a community which will attract around 1500 new residents.

The Junction, as the development will be known, will become a destination for the city, the region and beyond. The planning committee panel were clear in their praise for the design team and the developer:

"The most exciting scheme to be brought before this committee in my 30 years as chair"

The Chairman of LCC Planning Committee, Councillor James McKenna

Please list any other companies involved in this project / development / deal:

Architect	Carey Jones Chapman Tolcher
Contractor	Galliford Try
Quantity Surveyor	Gardiner + Theobald
Structural Engineer	Roscoes
MEP Engineer	Buro Happold
Planning Consultant	ID Planning
Landscape Architect	ARES Landscape Architects