

Plot 9a, First Street, Manchester



Photo credit: BAM Construct

The First Street site in Manchester dates back to 1825, when, for over 100 years, it was home to the Gaythorn Gas Works. Gas production continued until 1929, by which time the plant was outdated, and so was converted to a gas distribution point, containing several large storage gasometers.

After closure of the works and extensive remediation, the site was initially used as car parking, but later in the early 90's the first building was erected. Later renamed as 'First Street' or No.1 Tony Wilson Place, it was constructed for the British Council, who occupied it from 1992 to 1995, before it passed in 1997 to British Telecommunications Plc, who leased the building, until it underwent a complete refurbishment in 2007.

Around 2010, a further remediation programme prepared the remainder of the site for redevelopment, and with a Manchester City Council endorsed masterplan in place, the area is now

established as the First Street neighbourhood. The location boasts a range of amenities, including a 4-star hotel, a cinema, various bars and restaurants, premium office facilities, and a multi-story car park. The area has its own plan aligned to Zero Carbon 2038 called – Sustainable 1st.

Main contractor BAM Construct UK, on behalf of Ask Developments and its JV partner, The Richardson Family, appointed Bauer Technologies to design and install CFA piles, to act as bearing piles, and a contiguous piled wall for the Plot 9A development of the First Street project.

Once finished, the development will offer a sustainable 10-story office building, featuring a subterranean carpark, a ground-level reception area, adaptable workspace on the first floor, and office space on the higher levels.

Bauer's scope of work was divided into two Phases; Phase 1 commenced 10th October 2022, and was completed

18th November 2022. Phase II commenced 6th February 2023, with works completed 3rd March 2023.

Phase I saw Bauer install 76no. 600mm CFA piles, and 168 no. 750mm CFA contiguous wall piles, as well as 5no. 750mm diameter CFA tower crane piles, with additional reinforcement included in the 600mm wall to cater of the crane large base to the south of the building footprint. For Phase II, Bauer installed 114 no. 600mm diameter CFA bearing piles, and 1 no. working test pile, taken to 3450kN Design Verification Load (DVL), once the basement area had been excavated by others.

The project had many challenges, including restricted access on phase II of the project, as work had to be undertaken within the building's basement, and having to undertake CFA drilling into competent Sherwood sandstone rock, up to 13m depth from the basement level to support the building core.



Bauer also had to complete the test pile on a tight schedule, to allow BAM Construct to complete its follow on works sooner; to enable this Bauer designed the surrounding bearing piles to act as reaction anchors, and programmed the test pile to be installed early in the phase of works.

Works were completed as per the specification, and to the complete satisfaction of BAM Construct and Ramboll, the building design consultant. In addition, all works were completed

with adherence to the site's "Sustainable 1st" plan, something that Bauer Technologies was able to achieve, being the first geotechnical contractor in the world to be accredited the BES 6001 sustainability certificate.

With the project demanding that sustainability had to form part of the project's construction, as well as in its use; Bauer Technologies used only audited local suppliers, the latest most fuel-efficient equipment, and utilised the bearing piles as reaction piles for

the test pile.

It was announced in August 2022 that from August 2024 the Government Property Agency (GPA) has taken a 25 year lease on the entire building, which will accommodate around 2,500 staff. It is expected that £31m in economic benefits will be generated by the relocation from London to Manchester of over 700 civil service roles, which forms part of the Government's Places for Growth initiative.

Principal Contractor:

BAM Construct UK

Building Design Consultant:

Ramboll

Piling Contractor:

BAUER Technologies Limited

Contract Period:

Phase I: 10 Oct 2022 to 18 Nov 2022

Phase II: 6 Feb 2023 to 3 March 2023

Bauer's Scope of Works:

Phase I:

- 600mm (76nr) and 750mm (168nr) CFA contiguous wall piles

- 5nr 750mm dia. CFA tower crane piles and additional reinforcement in the 600mm wall

Phase II

- 114nr 600mm dia. CFA bearing piles;
- 1nr working test piling taken to 3450kN DVL