



Case Study



Huntley Wharf,
Reading

Aspiring for *technical brilliance*
and *heritage preservation*

Constrained by *available space*
and *logistical planning*



Streamlined by *Innovation*,
Delivered by Sapphire.

“ I found the Sapphire team to be very professional, proactive and helpful. We have had a very good collaboration throughout and felt the team at Sapphire successfully managed to meet both architect’s and client’s expectations. ”

Mara Dumitru, Technical Coordinator, Berkeley Group PLC





Huntley Wharf, Reading

Client: Berkeley Homes (Western) Limited
L&Q Group

Contractor: Berkeley Homes (Western) Limited

Architect: PRP Architects

Location: Reading, Berkshire

Balconies: 153 balconies



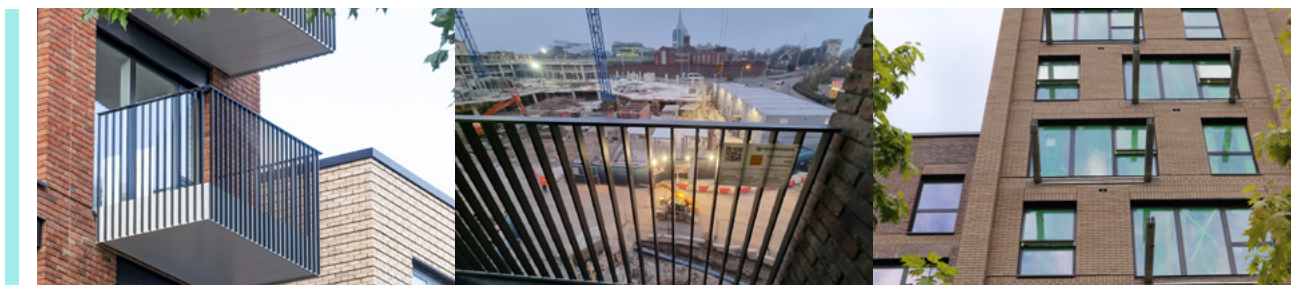
History

Huntley Wharf in Reading stands on the historic site of the former Huntley and Palmer biscuit factory, once a bastion of Britain's biscuit empire, famously supplying millions of biscuits to Allied troops during WW1 and WW2. Nestled beside the Kennet and Avon Canal and facing the former Reading Prison—home to a Banksy artwork—the redevelopment of this site into a modern residential area sought to pay homage to its rich historical context. The architectural language and balcony finishes were pivotal in conveying the site's heritage, as envisioned by PRP Architects and desired by Berkeley Homes. Capturing the essence of the site's past, while providing contemporary living spaces, became a central theme in the project's development.



Streamlined by Innovation, Delivered by Sapphire:

Sapphire Balconies, based in Reading, engaged early with Peter Brett Associates, PRP Architects, and Berkeley Homes to ensure that the balconies would reflect the architectural vision and historical significance of the Huntley Wharf site. The collaboration focused on integrating the balconies seamlessly with the building facade, respecting the architectural heritage and the canal-side setting. Through innovative design solutions, Sapphire was



able to manufacture offsite brick columns for corner balconies, inset balconies, and balconies with brick slip fascias. These components were mechanically fixed offsite with brick slips, enabling them to blend effortlessly with the rest of the brick facade, mirroring the industrial aesthetic of the former factory.

One of the project's challenges was the proximity of one of the tower crane locations to a stack of balconies, which punched through the podium slab. This could have necessitated the costly and disruptive relocation of thousands of pounds of M&E ductwork. Sapphire's site support team devised an inventive solution, proposing the use of a compact spider crane to install the balconies from below. This approach not only preserved the integrity of the existing infrastructure but also reduced costs and simplified the installation process, showcasing Sapphire's ability to overcome complex logistical challenges through creative problem-solving.

The Huntley Wharf project stands as a testament to the collaborative spirit and innovative solutions that Sapphire Balconies brings to modern developments, marrying historical reverence with contemporary design and functionality. Through their early and proactive engagement with project stakeholders, Sapphire ensured that the balconies contributed meaningfully to the architectural narrative, enhancing the living experience while honouring the site's rich heritage.



NBS Specification

Huntley Wharf, Reading

Manufacturer Sapphire Balconies Ltd 11 Arkwright, Road Reading, RG2 0LU
0344 88 00 553
support@balconies.global
www.balconies.global

Reference Glide-On™ aluminium Cassette® balconies with a mix of laser cut aluminium panels and vertical bar balustrades

Balcony anchor Cast-in M30 & M16 anchors incorporating thermal breaks

Arms 2-piece galvanised steel

Cassette® structure Standard 400mm modular Glide-On™ Cassette® balconies

Soffits Polyester powder-coated aluminium-controlled draining soffits

Deck finish Vista® aluminium decking fixed with hidden clips

Toprail Profiled polyester powder-coated aluminium using a sloped profile directed back towards the balcony for safety

Guarding 40x12 polyester powder-coated aluminium vertical bar balustrades with laser-cut aluminium panels

Base fixing Mechanically fixed to Cassette®

Fascias Polyester powder-coated aluminium fascia trim to conceal the edge of balcony frame fascia raised above the level of the decking to provide a safety kick plate for vertical bars

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