

Idom Merebrook enters a new phase 'just for the record'

Written by Luke

Tuesday, 21 April 2015 10:31 - Last Updated Tuesday, 21 April 2015 10:33



Idom Merebrook, one of the UK's leading environmental consultancies is due to start their second phase of work on The Old Vinyl Factory site, in Hayes, Middlesex. Idom Merebrook has been working on the site since 2012, and both Kent and Derbyshire offices have been involved with The Old Vinyl Factory project, which is the former home of EMI and His Master's Voice.

The team has been retained by leading contractors Willmott Dixon as geo-environmental consultants for the Gatefold Building, and also by Purplexed LLP in a joint venture between Cathedral Group PLC and Development Securities PLC, as environmental consultants on the wider Old Vinyl Factory site.

Idom Merebrook's remit and scope of work has grown extensively over the last three years to support the developer's sustainability and environmental strategies, which have been a priority across all phases of the £250 million development.

The majority of the 17-acre site in recent years has become a dilapidated and run-down, however developers have drawn upon the area's rich musical heritage to create a vibrant and animated vision for the future. The regeneration project comprises 650,000 sq. ft. of business space, over 500 new homes, a multiplex cinema, 30,000 sq. ft. of family restaurants, cafés and bars, a green-energy production centre and 180,000 sq. ft. of vinyl themed public space.

Once the world's most renowned centre for record production, the architectural design resurrects and celebrates the site that has given rise to some of the most iconic artists of the 20th century including: The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd.

The site has also been one the most significant employers in the area with over 14,000 people working there during the record industry heyday. It is the intention to return to this level of

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employment, bringing much needed economic growth to Hayes town centre.

To further enhance to the musical themed surrounds, the buildings on the Old Vinyl Factory site have been named according to their former functions including: the Shipping Building, where records were stored before being dispatched and the Gatefold Building, a seven-story block of flats alluding to the gatefold sleeves of EMI's vinyl releases.

Also aptly named, The Groove is a long pedestrian walkway designed to link the town centre and railway station, and a statue of 'Nipper' the iconic terrier captured looking into an Edison Bell cylinder by artist Francis Barraud's in 'His Masters Voice' is to be reinstated back in his rightful home in a new plaza which will be named Vinyl Square.

The musical artistry and creative design sits on the site's sound environmental credentials established by Idom Merebrook's environmental engineering team, who have overseen the land remediation on the Gatefold site. They have also completed remedial strategy documents for the wider Vinyl Factory site, with the second phase of works due to start in May.

Focusing on land investigations and ground works the remit has included environmental audits, site investigations and remedial design to ensure the land is fit for purpose for mixed commercial and residential use. The new Gatefold Building currently under construction and due to be completed next year has undergone detailed quantitative risk assessments, the team has also overseen remedial works to enable the construction of 132 residential units, café, community room, retail associated car parking and landscaping.

In addition, Idom Merebrook has assisted with value engineering decisions to maximise the retention of materials on site and prepared a validation report for the remedial works, which included pumping and treatment of contaminated groundwater. The team is also tasked to prepare a final validation report to demonstrate that remedial measures have been successfully implemented.

Nigel Huish, Managing Director, Idom Merebrook commented:

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“This is a remarkable project to work on, the design and renovation of the buildings harks back to the site’s musical roots and captures the spirit of the time. Our responsibilities have grown with the development and several of our divisions have been involved. We look forward to seeing the end result which will undoubtedly do justice to the EMI era.”

For further information on Merebrook Consulting visit www.idom.com