

Wells and Young's Case Study

Client: Wells and Young's Brewing Company
Project: 130,000 sq ft (12,077 sq m) storage and distribution facility
Contract Value: £15m
Location: Bedford, mid-way between A1 and M1 motorway, on the A421 link road, UK
Build period: 7 months
Fit out completion: March 2007



1. Project Overview

Global provider of sustainable logistics space, Gazeley, was appointed by the UK's largest independent brewer, Wells and Young's Brewing Company, to deliver a cutting-edge, sustainable storage and distribution facility at G.Park Bedford. Developed in a joint venture with Simons Estates and the Whitbread Trust, the building combines up-to-the-minute environmental measures with the latest industrial development techniques. Following the completion of the site earlier this year, the development was awarded the title of 'Best Bespoke Development' at the 2007 IAS Awards.

2. The Brief

This new development enabled Charles Wells to expand its business as its current Eagle Brewery facility on Havelock Street in Bedford was nearing capacity.

Furthermore, a new warehouse was required to accommodate Charles Wells's rapid expansion plans following the announcement that it was to join forces with London brewer, Young & Co., to establish a major new national force in the brewing industry.

In order to reduce traffic around the existing Havelock Street site and to provide extra capacity for the business to meet increased demands, Gazeley designed a bespoke facility which would not only support the current and future needs of the business but also demonstrate the latest in sustainable technology.

From a design perspective, the plans for the loading facilities on site also needed to be tailored to Wells and Young's individual

requirements; in particular the design of a special loading platform appropriate for the company to distribute various beer brands using their dray lorries.

There was considerable pressure from the brewer's supply chain for this new facility which meant that Gazeley needed to reduce the speed of delivery of the building to just under 7 months from planning to the completion of full fit-out.

3. Gazeley's Solution

Efficient delivery

In order to deliver the project on time and to the highest standards, Gazeley worked with project contractor, Simons, to develop a schedule which allowed construction of the building's outer-shell and the bespoke fit-out programme required by Wells and Young's to complete in less than 7 months. By dramatically reducing the overall delivery time for the build, Gazeley has also increased cost savings for the customer.

Bespoke design

In order to accommodate the distribution of various beer brands using the company's dray delivery lorries, Gazeley needed to provide a unique loading design for the facility. Unusually, the dray lorries used by Wells and Young's are loaded from the side with pre-picked loads, so in order for this to happen efficiently Gazeley and its team developed a bespoke feature known as the 'Sheep Dip'. This allows the drays to park echelon style within the warehouse with the lorry beds at floor level.

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James Behrens, Development Director for Gazeley comments,
"Our unrivalled customer focus and flexible approach to the bespoke design and build of this project has meant that we have been able to provide a truly unique solution for Wells and Young's to meet the needs of its business. The fully operational state-of-the-art distribution facility has been completed in just under seven months in order to support Wells and Young's current and future expansion programme."

Sustainable approach

As a business, Gazeley is committed to sustainable development and reducing the long-term environmental impact of its buildings. Gazeley's green aspirations are shared by Wells and Young's and as a result, this development has set a very high standard in sustainable design.

The building incorporates a wide range of sustainable measures including, solar panels for lighting, rain water harvesting and recycling and a method of producing and storing 'green' power that can be sold back to the local electricity grid if excess energy is produced. Paul Wells, CEO of Charles Wells Ltd adds,

"This site was the single biggest investment the company has ever made. We were keen to make sure that the building was as sustainable as possible and the result is a distribution centre that includes a number of environmentally friendly features."

4. The Result

The cutting-edge environmental technologies included in the design means that the building will save 208 tonnes in CO₂ each year, which represents an overall 20% annual reduction in emissions. The reduced energy consumption will also provide annual operating cost savings of over £16,200 for Wells & Young.

Richard Burt, Commercial and Property Director for Charles Wells comments,
"We have been very impressed with Gazeley's attention to detail and their client facing attitude. Gazeley and their team of consultants have understood our specific requirements and have sought to provide a building that suits all our operational requirements, while retaining its investment value."

We worked closely with Gazeley to design a building that would meet our specific requirements and have found the team to be extremely helpful during the whole process. They worked with our logistics and property teams to create a building that not only met our occupational requirements, but also a building that could be used for a wide variety of other distribution uses should it become surplus to our needs."