# Custom House redevelopment gains planning approval to blend heritage and hospitality



Jastar Capital has secured planning approval for the sensitive refurbishment and redevelopment of Custom House, a Grade I listed building on Lower Thames Street in the City of London. This project aims to transform the historic riverside landmark, which was vacated by HMRC in 2021, into a prestigious 179-bedroom hotel complemented by extensive restaurants, bars, and public spaces. The approval by the City of London’s Planning Applications Sub-Committee marks a significant milestone for the building’s future, with work expected to commence in 2026.

Custom House’s transformation into a hotel is led by Orms Architects and Designers, alongside conservation specialist Richard Griffiths Architects. The redevelopment focuses on preserving the building’s rich Regency architectural heritage while introducing contemporary amenities tailored to enhance its prime riverside location. Key features of the scheme include a spa with a 25-metre swimming pool, sauna, and steam room housed in the vaulted basement, alongside diverse dining venues located within the historic King’s Warehouse. The long-derelict Long Room will be refurbished to create one of London’s largest and most prestigious event spaces, complete with views across the Thames.

The redevelopment also emphasises public accessibility and cultural engagement. Plans include the creation of a new public quayside featuring 160 metres of river frontage, improved landscaping, and an inclusive cultural programme. This will incorporate heritage displays, a curated library, guided historical tours, and a community engagement space designed to open Custom House’s grandeur to a broad audience. According to Jay Matharu of Jastar Capital, the project aspires to re-energise this stretch of the Thames riverfront and make the historic building an accessible cultural destination for Londoners and visitors alike.

Historic England has expressed strong support for the project, highlighting Custom House as a “sleeping giant” with untapped potential. Tom Foxall, Regional Director at Historic England, noted the collaboration between parties to develop plans that both respect the building’s Grade I status and introduce public river access, which has long been encouraged. This balance between preservation and revitalisation is central to the project's ethos, ensuring the long-term safeguarding of the custom house’s architectural and historical significance.

Over the past two years, the design proposals have undergone extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including heritage bodies such as The Georgian Group, SAVE, LAMAS, and the City of London Archaeological Group, as well as former customs officers and community representatives. Furthermore, environmental goals have been integrated into the development, aiming for a BREEAM Excellent standard through the removal of harmful modern interventions and the establishment of a car-free site.

Jastar Capital’s vision for Custom House aligns with broader trends in adaptive reuse of London’s historic buildings, blending cultural heritage with modern hospitality and public amenity. This redevelopment is expected to contribute significantly to the evolving Thames riverside landscape, offering a rare and evocative blend of historical grandeur and contemporary urban vitality.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[7]](https://www.cityam.com/new-plans-submitted-for-custom-house-hotel-development/), [[2]](https://benews.co.uk/plans-submitted-for-redevelopment-of-listed-city-office-building-into-a-hotel/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[4]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article), [[5]](https://www.orms.co.uk/projects/custom-house)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[2]](https://benews.co.uk/plans-submitted-for-redevelopment-of-listed-city-office-building-into-a-hotel/), [[6]](https://thefinancialanalyst.net/2025/04/02/historic-london-landmark-set-for-hotel-and-public-spaces/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[4]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article), [[6]](https://thefinancialanalyst.net/2025/04/02/historic-london-landmark-set-for-hotel-and-public-spaces/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[4]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[4]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article), [[5]](https://www.orms.co.uk/projects/custom-house)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london), [[3]](https://www.realpm.co.uk/projects/custom-house-hotel), [[6]](https://thefinancialanalyst.net/2025/04/02/historic-london-landmark-set-for-hotel-and-public-spaces/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.e-architect.com/london/custom-house-city-of-london> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://benews.co.uk/plans-submitted-for-redevelopment-of-listed-city-office-building-into-a-hotel/> - In April 2025, Jastar Capital submitted plans to redevelop the Grade I listed Custom House on Lower Thames Street into a 179-bed hotel. Designed by Orms and Richard Griffiths Architects, the proposal includes a spa, health facilities, diverse dining options in the King’s Warehouse, and an event space in the Long Room. A newly landscaped public quayside aims to enhance the Thames Path, providing a previously constrained stretch for public use. The development seeks to revitalise the historic building while preserving its heritage. ([benews.co.uk](https://benews.co.uk/plans-submitted-for-redevelopment-of-listed-city-office-building-into-a-hotel/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.realpm.co.uk/projects/custom-house-hotel> - Real PM is overseeing the refurbishment of Custom House, a Grade I listed building in the City of London, into a hotel-led mixed-use development. The project, led by Jastar Capital, involves transforming the historic structure into a 179-bedroom hotel with public spaces, cultural offerings, and a spa and health centre. The development aims to revitalise the building while preserving its historical significance. ([realpm.co.uk](https://www.realpm.co.uk/projects/custom-house-hotel?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article> - Orms and Richard Griffiths Architects have replaced Squire & Partners in plans to convert the Grade I-listed Custom House into a 180-bed hotel. The new proposals, submitted by Jastar Capital, aim to preserve the building's heritage while introducing modern amenities. The design includes a food and beverage space in the King’s Warehouse, an event space in the Long Room, and a public quayside along the Thames. ([bdonline.co.uk](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/orms-and-richard-griffiths-architects-replace-squire-and-partners-on-custom-house-hotel-plans/5135367.article?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.orms.co.uk/projects/custom-house> - Orms Architects is leading the refurbishment of Custom House, a Grade I listed building in the City of London, into a hotel. The design focuses on preserving the building's heritage while introducing modern amenities, including a 179-bedroom hotel, spa, and public spaces. The project aims to revitalise the historic structure and enhance its riverside location. ([orms.co.uk](https://www.orms.co.uk/projects/custom-house?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://thefinancialanalyst.net/2025/04/02/historic-london-landmark-set-for-hotel-and-public-spaces/> - Plans have been submitted to refurbish Custom House, a Grade I listed building in the City of London, into a 179-bed hotel with spa and restaurant facilities. The proposals include public access to historic spaces, galleries, and a curated historical library. This development could set a precedent for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in London. ([thefinancialanalyst.net](https://thefinancialanalyst.net/2025/04/02/historic-london-landmark-set-for-hotel-and-public-spaces/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.cityam.com/new-plans-submitted-for-custom-house-hotel-development/> - New plans have been submitted to redevelop Custom House, a Grade I listed building in the City of London, into a hotel and spa. The proposals include a 179-bed hotel, spa, and restaurant, alongside a public access scheme. The building was vacated by HMRC in 2021, and the new plans aim to revitalise the historic structure. ([cityam.com](https://www.cityam.com/new-plans-submitted-for-custom-house-hotel-development/?utm_source=openai))