# Medieval London church suspended on stilts during landmark skyscraper development



A remarkable feat of engineering is underway in the City of London as the 700-year-old Tower of All Hallows Staining Church has been suspended 45 feet above the ground on stilts, allowing major excavations for a new skyscraper at 50 Fenchurch Street. This grade I-listed medieval tower, dating from around 1320, is being preserved amid a £400 million development project led by developer Axa IM Alts and designed by Eric Parry Architects. The project involves excavating and piling beneath the tower to enable the construction of a 36-storey office building scheduled for completion in 2028.

The tower, which is the sole surviving element of the original church and survived the Great Fire of London in 1666 before partially collapsing in 1671, is now prominently suspended above a 60,000 square foot excavation site. This innovative approach enables contractor Multiplex to carry out vital groundwork, performed by Keltbray, without damaging the historic structure. Over 125,000 tonnes of earth have been removed as part of the excavation for the development, which will encompass a 650,000 square foot office tower complemented by retail spaces, a public roof garden, winter garden, and a new public area centred around the preserved church.

In addition to the Tower of All Hallows Staining, the project preserves the nearby grade II-listed Lambe’s Chapel Crypt, dating from 1200, which will be restored underneath the new office tower. The development aims to integrate these historic assets into modern public realm, reflecting a sensitive design philosophy that allows the new building to dwarf the ancient structures without destroying them. Speaking at a "bottoming out" ceremony celebrating the completion of major excavation, Howard Dawber, deputy mayor of London for business and growth, praised the project as a "remarkable" milestone, underscoring its importance as a flagship development for the capital.

The 150-metre tower will be a striking addition to the City skyline, particularly visible from the south side of the Thames. Architectural features include a vertical green wall, bespoke ceramic cladding at ground level, crafted glass detailing on upper levels, and extensive greenery throughout the building. The tenth floor will feature internal and external gardens designed by DSDHA, with more than 40 planted balconies and terraces cultivating over 70 species of plants, enhancing the project's environmental credentials.

The comprehensive project team comprises Multiplex as the main contractor, YardNine as the development manager, Third London Wall as project manager, QS Core Five, and M&E consultant Arup. Workman is responsible for development monitoring, ensuring the construction adheres to stringent preservation and building standards.

The daring suspension of All Hallows Staining Church on steel stilts is not only a bold emblem of collaboration between historic preservation and modern urban development but also a visible symbol of London’s capacity to honour its past while building for the future.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article), [[2]](https://news.sky.com/story/medieval-church-tower-suspended-45ft-above-ground-in-never-seen-before-feat-13437109), [[4]](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/bulletin/news/london-all-hallows-staining-church-skyscraper-b2833094.html), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/fenchurch-street-city-city-of-london-construction-people-b1249338.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article), [[4]](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street), [[6]](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/bulletin/news/london-all-hallows-staining-church-skyscraper-b2833094.html), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/fenchurch-street-city-city-of-london-construction-people-b1249338.html)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article), [[4]](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/700-year-old-church-suspended-on-stilts-at-eric-parrys-50-fenchurch-street-tower/5138403.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.sky.com/story/medieval-church-tower-suspended-45ft-above-ground-in-never-seen-before-feat-13437109> - A 700-year-old church tower in the City of London has been suspended 45 feet above the ground as part of a building project. The tower of All Hallows Staining Church was balanced on stilts above a 60,000 square foot excavation site at 50 Fenchurch Street. A 'bottoming out' ceremony was held after the removal of over 125,000 tonnes of earth to make way for a 650,000 square foot office tower. The development is due to be completed in 2028. ([news.sky.com](https://news.sky.com/story/medieval-church-tower-suspended-45ft-above-ground-in-never-seen-before-feat-13437109?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/bulletin/news/london-all-hallows-staining-church-skyscraper-b2833094.html> - The medieval All Hallows Staining church tower has been suspended 45 feet above ground on stilts in London, described as a 'never-seen-before feat of engineering'. This suspension facilitates the excavation of 125,000 tonnes of earth for the basement levels of a new 36-storey skyscraper at 50 Fenchurch Street. The tower, dating from around 1320, is the only remaining part of the 14th-century church, having survived the Great Fire of London in 1666 but collapsing in 1671. Upon completion of the basement construction, the tower will be reunited with ground level and integrated into a new green public space. The 50 Fenchurch Street development, due for completion in 2028, will feature offices, ground-floor shops, a public roof garden, and a 360-degree public realm experience. ([independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk/bulletin/news/london-all-hallows-staining-church-skyscraper-b2833094.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street> - A 700-year-old church tower on stilts took centre stage at an unusual bottoming out ceremony for the Fifty Fenchurch Street development in London. The Tower of All Hallows Staining Church remains suspended above 60,000 sq ft of excavation following the removal of 125,000 tonnes of ground material for a 36-storey office block to be built around it. AXA IM Alts’ £1bn office building at Fifty Fenchurch Street has been designed by Eric Parry Architects to dwarf, but not destroy, the 14th-century church tower. Together with the reinstatement of Lambe’s Chapel Crypt beneath the new office tower, the preservation of the All Hallows Staining Church is part of new public realm for the scheme. Main contractor is Multiplex Construction Europe; YardNine is development delivery partner on the project with Arup as the lead engineering consultant. Keltbray has carried out the piling and excavation works. A bottoming out ceremony at Fifty Fenchurch Street on Tuesday 23rd September gave visiting dignitaries the opportunity to see the medieval structure stranded on 45-foot tall stilts. Completion is scheduled for completion in 2028. ([theconstructionindex.co.uk](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/fenchurch-street-city-city-of-london-construction-people-b1249338.html> - A 700-year-old church tower has been suspended 45 feet above ground as part of a major City of London building project. The tower of All Hallows Staining Church was balanced on stilts above a 60,000 square foot excavation site at 50 Fenchurch Street in what developers called a 'never seen before feat of engineering'. A 'bottoming out' ceremony on Tuesday came after the removal of more than 125,000 tonnes of earth underneath the tower to make way for a 650,000 square foot office tower. The tower is the last remaining part of the church thought to have first been built in the 14th century. All Hallows Staining Church survived the Great Fire of London but much of the structure later collapsed. The project will also work around the nearby Grade II listed Lambe’s Chapel Crypt. Howard Dawber, deputy mayor of London for business and growth, who attended the ceremony, said: 'Fifty Fenchurch Street is a remarkable project and I am delighted to attend this unique ceremony that marks a significant construction milestone for this 36-storey flagship development.' ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/fenchurch-street-city-city-of-london-construction-people-b1249338.html?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street> - A 700-year-old church tower on stilts took centre stage at an unusual bottoming out ceremony for the Fifty Fenchurch Street development in London. The Tower of All Hallows Staining Church remains suspended above 60,000 sq ft of excavation following the removal of 125,000 tonnes of ground material for a 36-storey office block to be built around it. AXA IM Alts’ £1bn office building at Fifty Fenchurch Street has been designed by Eric Parry Architects to dwarf, but not destroy, the 14th-century church tower. Together with the reinstatement of Lambe’s Chapel Crypt beneath the new office tower, the preservation of the All Hallows Staining Church is part of new public realm for the scheme. Main contractor is Multiplex Construction Europe; YardNine is development delivery partner on the project with Arup as the lead engineering consultant. Keltbray has carried out the piling and excavation works. A bottoming out ceremony at Fifty Fenchurch Street on Tuesday 23rd September gave visiting dignitaries the opportunity to see the medieval structure stranded on 45-foot tall stilts. Completion is scheduled for completion in 2028. ([theconstructionindex.co.uk](https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/bottoming-out-celebrated-at-fifty-fenchurch-street?utm_source=openai))