



Case Study



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ANDREW SIMMONS – OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, SSHL



Bespoke Document Storage Solution

The Customer

For the last decade Sentinel Secure Holdings Ltd (SSHL) has provided a premium document storage and archive management service to London's business community. Customers include law firms, international banks, architects and the media. This premium service includes a retrieval and delivery facility within a guaranteed two-hour time limit anywhere in central London.

The Challenge

Following a compulsory purchase order served on their Stratford premises last year to make way for the new fast track Channel Tunnel link to St. Pancras, a decision was made to consolidate all five of SSHL's document storage centres under one roof. The challenge was to find a suitable location close to the City, and to select a company capable of designing, manufacturing and installing a bespoke storage solution for the millions of boxes of archive documents. To compound the challenge the boxes needed to be stored in a way that allows for easy retrieval as well as maximising the number stored.

To complicate matters further the chosen location, a new 11,191m² purpose built warehouse adjacent to the A2 in the Kidbrooke area, was not going to be finished before the D-day imposed

by the compulsory purchase order to move out of Stratford. Consequently, an interim storage warehouse in Deptford was required, in which the chosen storage supplier would also be required to install racking and shelving.

Andrew Simmons, Operations Director for SSHL put the contract out to tender to his existing supplier and all of the leading storage solution providers. "We needed a partner, rather than a supplier," he explained. "We were under pressure from the compulsory purchase order and the situation demanded a swift reaction. We were looking for a storage partner we could completely trust to get on with the job quickly."

The Solution

Apex Linvar won the contract; Andrew Simmons explained the reasons why: "At

my initial briefing meeting with Apex Linvar they asked the most pertinent questions and as a result they came up with the best answer to our problems within the time limit. It is a tailor made storage solution engineered to our requirements to the last millimetre."

"Although our minds were pretty much made up, we visited Apex Linvar's

Milton Keynes manufacturing plant and that gave us even more confidence in Apex's ability to get the job done. Our choice was based on attention to detail, the best product, the ability to react quickly and experience of this size of task. We were confident that Apex Linvar would deliver in each and every area. In short, they would do the best job for us."

The Installation

With such a tight schedule, work began on the storage solution for the interim location from the date of order. "Downtime was exceptionally low," remarked Simmons. "We had to move and re-store 4,000 tonnes of documents in 33 days into the

temporary warehouse – looking back it was madness but with the help of Apex Linvar we achieved our goal."

Now that the new building is finished, Phase 1 of the Apex racking and shelving system is complete. Phase 2 is being built and there is one more phase to go culminating in a state of the art document storage centre capable of holding over two million boxes of archive documents.

Phase I consists of 40 rows of back to back Apex racking in a multi-tier arrangement with five in-rack floors. The boxes themselves are stored in a double-deep arrangement, two high per shelf. The height of the racking varies with the roof pitch to maximise the cubic

capacity of the warehouse, rising to 15.5 metres storing up to 54 boxes high on 27 shelves. Each floor is accessed via two permanent lifts, built to hold three roll cages each, to transport the boxes.

To brighten the environment within the warehouse a light grey paint scheme was chosen. Open steel mesh flooring helps to increase the light and ensures that in the event of a fire, smoke will be seen as it rises to the floor above. Intelligent zonal fire sprinkler systems have been installed on each level.

continued overleaf



Left:

Galvanized shelving and in-rack sprinklers on the ground floor.

Right:

Multi-tier racking extends from floor to ceiling.



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The Result

"We wanted to equip our new warehouse with the best possible storage system for the vital documents we hold for our clients," said Andrew Simmons. "Using Apex Linvar, we've not only obtained the best product and the best design for our storage solution, we've also acquired a partner who has helped us to deal with the inevitable pitfalls along the way. What's more, we are confident they will be more than capable of growing with us in the future."

Integrated stairwell access to the in-rack floors.



Apex Linvar, Garamonde Drive, Wymbush, Milton Keynes MK8 8ND
Tel: +44 (0)1908 561222 Fax: +44 (0)1908 567455
email: enquiries@apexlinvar.co.uk www.apexlinvar.co.uk