



The restored windmill

HISTORIC PROJECT

BRIXTON WINDMILL

Brixton, London

CLIENT:

LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

ARCHITECT:

DANNATT, JOHNSON ARCHITECTS

COST:

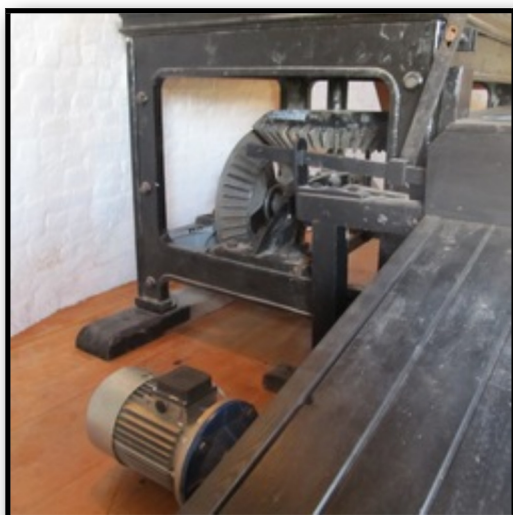
£250,000

Ashby's Mill

Built in 1816, and operated by the Ashby family for its whole working life, the Grade II* listed Brixton Windmill is the last surviving of the twelve working windmills in Lambeth. After the area became too built up for wind to turn the sails the mill was converted to run off a steam, and later gas, engine in 1902. It finally closed in 1934, since when it had fallen into a state of decay, being placed on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register in 2002. Now in the hands of the council a long campaign by The Friends of Windmill Gardens resulted in a Heritage Lottery grant, which allowed the mill's restoration.

Renewal

Such was the decay of the windmill that all existing services had to be stripped out and a comprehensive restoration programme undertaken. This included specialist millwright advice to bring the mill back into working condition, as well as stabilising the structure (it was found the mill had no foundations!) The decoration and structure of the mill were repaired and renewed inside and out.



The provender mill within the windmill

New Services

As part of the restoration a new three-phase electrical service was installed, as well as a water supply for use on public open days. Both of these required careful trenching through the still open public park in which the mill sits. The lightning protection system was repaired, which involved innovative connection methods to ensure continuity between the freely rotating mill cap and static tower, and similarly with the sails. The mill was also provided with a fire alarm system, linked to a remote control room to alert of any alarm, and a security alarm to the doors. New lighting and general power sockets were installed, chosen to be waterproof to deal with the damp conditions expected in the mill. External lighting was set around the mill to illuminate it at night.

Award Winning

In 2012 the project won the Restoration or Conservation category of the prestigious Museum + Heritage Awards for Excellence