

10 minutes with...

EDWARD CINI

Director, Turner & Townsend, London

Interview by **Samantha Whitaker** Photograph by **Thomas Ball**

The Shard was a beacon in some ways. While the whole financial world was in meltdown, it was one of the only projects to keep moving forward. When we started as project managers in May 2008, MACE were busy demolishing the original Southwark Towers. We had to convert the construction management contract into a traditional fixed-price lump-sum contract — a requirement of the funder — and keep the whole London Bridge Quarter project viable in an extremely unfavourable commercial market. It was a huge challenge.

I'm responsible for the project's commercial management, but as a team we look after finance, cash flow and contract administration. It's a reflection of the strength and depth of Turner & Townsend that we had the right people that could come together to deliver this role on such a complex and multifaceted project. The Shard is the centrepiece, but there is also The Place — which is often overlooked but is an equally fabulous building — and the complex redevelopment of London Bridge train and bus stations. My background is in quantity surveying. I did a part-time degree at Westminster while I was working for a small surveying firm, where I stayed for 14 years. During that time I also became chartered, which was a real goal for me. It gives you a certain amount of confidence, as well as competence. Now I help others with APC training and counselling, and we've actually had several people complete work experience on this project.

I wanted to work on bigger schemes, so I started at Turner & Townsend as a senior cost manager nearly seven years ago and am now a director. I've been site-based working on the Shard for four years. At the beginning, there was an intense period where we were very focused on getting the commercials and the contracts right, as we had ambitious

targets to have the build ready for the London 2012 Games. As the building went up, our role changed to day-to-day management and administration. The high-rise construction techniques and technology on the Shard really pushed boundaries but, for us, the development of the surrounding infrastructure proved the most complex and complicated. Not only did we have to manage interfaces with third parties, such as Network Rail, London Underground Limited and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, we also had to consider the health and safety issues of working within a live environment — for example, we built the new London Bridge train station roof above the old one, and then lowered it down.

Our team has fluctuated over the course of the contract — at the peak we had 25 people, and now we have 15. Some of those people have now moved on to the next phase: the fit-out. This wasn't part of the original appointment, but now the core-and-shell phase is coming to an end, we've been retained to manage the fit-out. We've done a number of floors already, including the show apartments and the viewing gallery. The restaurant tenants have recently been announced, so now we'll be looking to get that fit-out started, too.

The work hasn't really stopped — and for me I think that will continue. This area needed investment and there will be more commercial opportunities on the back of the London Bridge Quarter, which I will help to develop. However, it will be hard to beat the experience I've had on this project. The Shard won't be matched in terms of height — it's pretty much at the limit when you think of flight paths etc — but buildings tend to cluster, and I can imagine more towers going up around it. The Shard is an inspiring example for the construction market of what can be achieved. londonbridgequarter.com
turnerandtowntsend.com



Edward Cini MRICS led the project management team on the London Bridge Quarter development