



Charterhouse Street  
E. Oppenheimer and Son Headquarters, London

Simplifying an office building with a complex geometry to create legible space and an environment increased in efficiency was Eldridge Smerin's intention for the new headquarters of diamond dealers E. Oppenheimer and Son in Holborn, London.

Eldridge Smerin won an invited competition to design the firm's new 15,000 sq ft office premises in 2002. An old bank dating from the 1950s, it offered a labyrinth of spaces, and Eldridge Smerin's strategy involved remodelling the building by opening up the environment, making sure that it expressed the personality of its occupants. This improved the area efficiency of the floorplates,

creating contemporary, naturally lit offices around a new glazed atrium and relocating the main stair core, lift and risers, integrating new mechanical and electrical services. By relocating the main entrance, introducing a glass bridge and glass fronted lift with panoramic views of the newly created void off the reception, enlarging the ground floor windows onto Charterhouse Street, cladding the façade with limestone at ground floor level and making improvements to the exterior landscaping and setting of the building, Eldridge Smerin was able to enhance and personalise the public face of the firm's corporate environment.

This process is a holistic one, extending to offices and meeting rooms which are glass fronted to provide daylight within the depth of the floor plan and to the circulation areas.

Interior fixtures and furniture have been designed by the practice. These are framed in stainless steel with walnut work surfaces and burnished lacquer storage units. A new extension to the building at roof level provides an enclosure for plant and a glazed link to the adjacent building also owned by the same organisation. The project began in January 2003 and was completed in April 2004.

**eldridge smerin**

