



The inn immediately after the fire



After restoration

LEISURE PROJECT

CITY ARMS INN

Canterbury

CLIENT:

ENTERPRISE INNS

ARCHITECT:

CALFORDSEADEN

COST:

£800,000

History

The City Arms public house is one of Canterbury's many medieval timber-frame houses. Several are clustered alongside the City Arms in Butchery Lane and in nearby Mercery Lane. Beer has been served on the site of the pub for 400 years. It now has a beer cellar, a long narrow bar on the ground floor, a commercial kitchen on the first floor and a flat on the top floor.

Fire Damage

In the early hours of 3 July 2001, the pub and its three neighbours were devastated by fire. Little remained apart from the brick chimneys and some of the timber structure. Reconstruction of the inn was a balance between traditional techniques and modern standards.

Restoration

As much of the original wooden structure as possible was retained. The pub was rebuilt with modern oak timbers spliced to the original, using traditional detailing, with a modern fire-resisting party wall construction.

Water-mist Fire Protection

The original layout which was rebuilt has one staircase, still leaving only one escape route from the upper flat. A water-mist fire protection system using plastic pipework threaded through the structure ensures fire safety. The system has been approved by Kent Fire Brigade in other historic buildings in Canterbury as an alternative to sprinklers.