

PRESS RELEASE

Complex Crane Engineering at 1 Victoria Street, London

London, United Kingdom – May 2026. The redevelopment of 1 Victoria Street is transforming the site of an old 1960s office block into a modern, low carbon workplace in the heart of Westminster. The new building is being constructed on the original foundations, avoiding the need for new piling and significantly reducing embodied carbon. This approach, however, created unusual tower crane environments in central London: all cranes had to be installed at B2 basement level, directly on foundations more than sixty years old.

A nine - crane scheme delivered in multiple phases

The project began with demolition works undertaken by our client, Keltbray. To support operations on the confined and complex site, a WOLFF 355 B (TC0) was deployed to lift a range of demolition plant and materials. Throughout the programme, the tower crane handled key items including excavators, tracked loaders, dumpers, heavy skips, generators, and structural steel. Its combination of reach, lifting capacity, and precision proved essential for safely positioning heavy and awkward loads.

Following demolition, four tower cranes were installed at basement level for our client Mace Construct to support slipforming and early superstructure works.

The installation sequence required meticulous coordination. As the demolition crane remained in service longer than anticipated, TC2 was initially erected at a reduced height to prevent any potential clash. Once TC0 was dismantled, TC2 was climbed to its full working height.

As construction progresses, the basement slab will be cast around the crane bases, leaving only the tower openings accessible.

In the next major phase, scheduled for late 2026, the crane scheme will move to the roof. Two WOLFF 630 B and two WOLFF 355 B luffing jib cranes will take over lifting operations for the upper floors and installation of the cladding and building services.

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Engineering Challenges Below Ground

Installing cranes at B2 level on legacy foundations presented a significant engineering challenge. The foundations of the old building are being reused without re-piling, so each crane had to be positioned directly over the original foundation points. As a result, the usual method of anchoring into concrete base foundations was not suitable in this case.

To overcome this, WOLFFKRAN deployed the WOLFF cross frame system. This system is unique in that it allows each of the four legs to be extended to varying lengths, anywhere between six and ten metres for each crane. The entire crane tower was also rotated to align with the available bearing points of the existing foundations below.

For TC2, the constraints were particularly demanding: four different leg lengths were required on a single cross-frame base to achieve correct alignment with the available support points. This configuration demonstrated the full capability of the WOLFF cross frame system to accommodate highly irregular legacy structures.

Planning for Dismantling

One of the most demanding aspects of the project still lies ahead. The basement slabs are being cast very close to the crane tower above, effectively enclosing the cruciform and ballast. This means these components cannot be removed in the usual way using a mobile crane.

WOLFFKRAN will have very limited headroom and working space in the basement. To address this, a combination of ceiling hoists, low-level forklifts and skating systems will be used to extract the central ballast blocks and cross frame in a controlled and measured manner. This will ensure a safe removal process and allow all crane components to be taken out of the building.

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The Vision for 1 Victoria Street

When complete, 1 Victoria Street will provide a modern, low carbon office environment while retaining 52% of the original 1960s structure. The development will offer high quality office space and active ground floor retail, integrated into the historic surroundings near the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey. Occupation is planned for early 2028.

WOLFFKRAN's involvement - from demolition support to the adaptable WOLFF cross frame system - has been central to enabling construction on this highly constrained site, ensuring safe, efficient, and sustainable crane operations throughout the project.

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Crane specifications on this construction site:

WOLFF	Crane base	Jib radius, m	Hook height, m	max. lifting capacity/peak load capacity, t
WOLFF 355 B TC0	Cross frame 8m x 8m	50,0	50,9	28,0 / 6,7
WOLFF 166 B TC1	Cross frame 8m x 8m	40,0	40,0	12,0 / 4,4
WOLFF 355 B TC2	Cross frame 8m x 9m x 10m x 9m	50,0	50,0	28,0 / 6,7
WOLFF 355 B TC3	Cross frame 10m x 10m	50,0	53,5	28,0 / 6,7
WOLFF 355 B TC4	Cross frame 8m x 8m	55,0	55,0	14,0 / 5,3
WOLFF 355 B TC5	spigots bolted to a steel grillage on top of core	40,0	9,0	28,0 / 11,3
WOLFF 355 B TC6	spigots bolted to a steel grillage on top of core	50,0	9,0	28,0 / 6,7
WOLFF 630 B TC7	spigots bolted to a steel grillage on top of core	45,0	9,0	28,0 / 8,7
WOLFF 630 B TC8	spigots bolted to a steel grillage on top of core	45,0	9,0	28,0 / 14,1

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WOLFFKRAN is a leading manufacturer of premium quality tower cranes with a tradition spanning over 170 years. With its own rental fleet of around 800 tower cranes it is also one of the largest crane rental businesses in the world. WOLFFKRAN is headquartered in Zug, Switzerland and has manufacturing sites in Heilbronn and Luckau, Germany. It currently employs a global workforce of approx. 870 people in its two manufacturing sites and its sales and service subsidiaries located across Western and Central Europe, the Middle East and the United States.

PRESS RELEASE – Pictures and captions

Image Source: © Niall McAller Photography



Four WOLFF cranes form part of the redevelopment of 1 Victoria Street, set within the historic surroundings of the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey. Completion is planned for early 2028.



PRESS RELEASE – Pictures and captions



Crane installation at B2 level required alignment with existing piles. The WOLFF cross frame allowed the necessary leg extension and rotation to match the legacy foundation layout.

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The WOLFF 355 B (TC0) lifting an excavator during the demolition works.