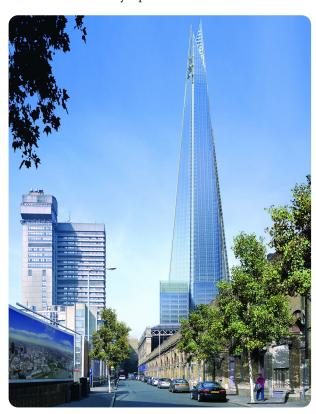
The Shard

A must-see in London > The Shard is definitely one of the most iconic buildings on the London skyline, towering over the city like a glass pyramid. Located at the southern end of London Bridge, the Shard was completed in 2012 reaching a final height of nearly 310 metres, which made it the tallest building in the UK.

Early conception of The Shard > The Shard was designed by the Italian architect Renzo Piano. The story goes that he drew an off-the-cuff sketch of the building on a restaurant napkin during a lunch meeting in Berlin with British entrepreneur Irvine Sellar who wanted to redevelop the area he had bought in Southwark. It was the year 2000 and London was preparing to host the 2012 Olympic Games.



glossary

cantiere

English Heritage: a charity looking after historical sites and monuments in the UK in the pipeline: in

mast: albero maestro

off-the-cuff: improvvisato to overshadow: offuscare,

sminuire

napkin: tovagliolo remark: commento sketch: schizzo

spire: *guglia, pinnacolo*

Inspirational sources > Renzo Piano's design drew inspiration from the architecture already existing near the site where the massive building would be erected: the nearby railway lines, the masts of sailing ships on the river Thames, and the spires of London churches, as painted by 18th-century Venetian artist Canaletto.

The origin of its nickname > The Shard actually resembles a giant mast or spire, but its name derives from a negative remark from English Heritage, who said that the building would be "a shard of glass through the heart of historic London". They particularly criticised its height, which would overshadow the monumentality of St Paul's Cathedral.

A vertical city > The Shard dominates London's skyline: a pyramid of glass, with 73 floors and a spectacular 360-degree conceived view of the city. It is a building with multiple uses: a vertical space where people can live, work, and have fun. It includes business offices, prestigious restaurants and cocktail bars, the 5-star Shangri-La Hotel, an open-air Skydeck on the 72nd floor, and exclusive flats. The construction started in March 2009 and was completed on July 5, 2012.

A sustainable building > The Shard was conceived as a sustainable building: 95% of its construction materials come from recycled sources including steel. The 11,000 glass panels of its façade help reduce heat loss and maximise natural light. Besides this, to meet heating and hot water needs, a natural gas generator was installed in the basement. The Shard also includes sound insulation to reduce noise pollution and rainwater harvesting systems to meet water demand and reduce dependence on external supplies.

Romeo and The Shard

This amazing building has a mascot, Romeo, a fox which was found living on the 72nd floor in 2011.



| 1 | READING | WRITING | Say if the sentences are true | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|--|
| | or false and correct the false ones. | | | |

| 1 | Renzo Piano drew the first sketch of |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| | The Shard on a restaurant menu. |

- 2 Construction works started during the 2012 London Olympics.
- 3 English Heritage did not approve the project.
- 4 The nickname 'The Shard' was chosen to celebrate its unique design.
- **5** At the top of the building there's a panoramic platform.
- **6** Most of the materials used for building the Shard come from recycled sources.

2 READING VOCABULARY Complete the text with one word that fits the gaps.

Manhattan-on-the-Thames

| A skyscraper called One Undershaft | |
|--|----|
| 1 approved by the City of | |
| London Corporation on 13 th December 2024. The | |
| building is 2 to match The Sha | rd |
| and share its title as the 3 | |
| building in the City of London. The building, in fact | , |
| will reach the same 4. (1,015.8 | |
| feet, i.e 309.6 m) of Renzo Piano's iconic structure | |
| and will be located 5the | |
| Gherkin and the Cheesegrater, following the | |
| demolition of the current Aviva Tower. It | |
| 6 have 74 floors, a public garde | en |
| on the 11 th floor, and an educational centre for the | |
| London Museum. Despite the City of London | |
| Corporation's approval, however, the project is | |
| meeting 7 some objections | |
| concerning design and 8visua | |
| impact on the Square Mile (i.e. the historic centre o | f |
| London). Not only, Heathrow Airport raised concer | |
| 9 security, as their radar system | ns |
| could be impacted by the building and prevent | |
| aircraft from being detected. With nearly 600 | |
| skyscrapers in the pipeline of or the UK's capital, th | |
| city is already 10 referred to as | • |
| 'Manhattan-on-the-Thames'. | |
| | |

Adapted from: https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ cp9n19ekx1go

3 SPEAKING WRITING PAIR WORK Go online, find information about an iconic skyscraper in the USA, and present it to your class.