

GOOD OMENs II

Planet Positive Award Submission

*The implementation of cardboard as a
material in set construction*

Michael Ralph *Production Designer*

Bronwyn Franklin *Set Decorator*

Mark Hudson *Supervising Art Director*



CARDBOARD SET DESIGN

The Implementation in a Major Set Construction - GOOD OMENS 2

I am entering the SET I designed and constructed that created a 2-STOREY CITY BLOCK of LONDON during the BLITZ 1941. It was built entirely out of CARDBOARD. I have been a major advocate for the use of cardboard for many years and have unfortunately come up against many obstructions that resisted its implementation. In any industry, to change the “status quo” (even when it relates to “the environment” or “best health practices”), you have to be in a specific set of circumstances that favours budget and timing, I believe that we are in that situation now.

I have finally been able to introduce the use of CARDBOARD in SET DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION on a large scale in a main stream drama series: GOOD OMENS 2, written by NEIL GAIMAN for BBC STUDIO'S /AMAZON PRIME.

This SET, by its example and its success, has changed attitudes in production and proved undeniably that it would be irresponsible to the environment to NOT do everything within our power to develop cardboard as a major material used in set design and construction for all film and television industry productions not only in the U.K. but internationally.

Because of work practices within the industry, occupational work ethics and labour titles having developed through the history of filmmaking, a certain amount of resistance to change endemically exists. The fundamental need to protect existing positions within the workforce hinders the embracement and re-education of these individuals.

I was able to meet fire retardant standards and satisfy all workplace safety requirements. It was delivered with no timber substructure, no scaffold support, no wire or cable suspension, no plywood, no steel strapping, no nails, no power tools, no engineers report, no safety report and no airborne dust or chemical inhalation threats - no masks were necessary during construction.

This was entirely built within FOUR DAYS and removed in ONE. Construction carried out the build while the MAIN UNIT was SHOOTING in the SAME studio. The budget was a fraction of the cost of traditional timber construction and was achieved in days, not weeks.

The finished aesthetic, design value and ambition in-camera were exceptional, and we shocked everyone when, as if like “magic”, we were able to create a world that under normal circumstances would have been outside our schedule and financial reach.

New BLITZ street design in our Soho Set precinct in Pyramid Studios

I designed the Blitz Guest Set for Episode Four to be in the China Town Street and not in the main street which allowed us to see the MAGIC SHOP (a major location in the episode), and gave us a bombed-out London Street to use as a backdrop, also enabling us to walk around in it. The added advantage to isolating the Blitz in this part of the set was that we were still able to shoot contemporary scenes in the bookshop and the main street on the same day without visual interference.

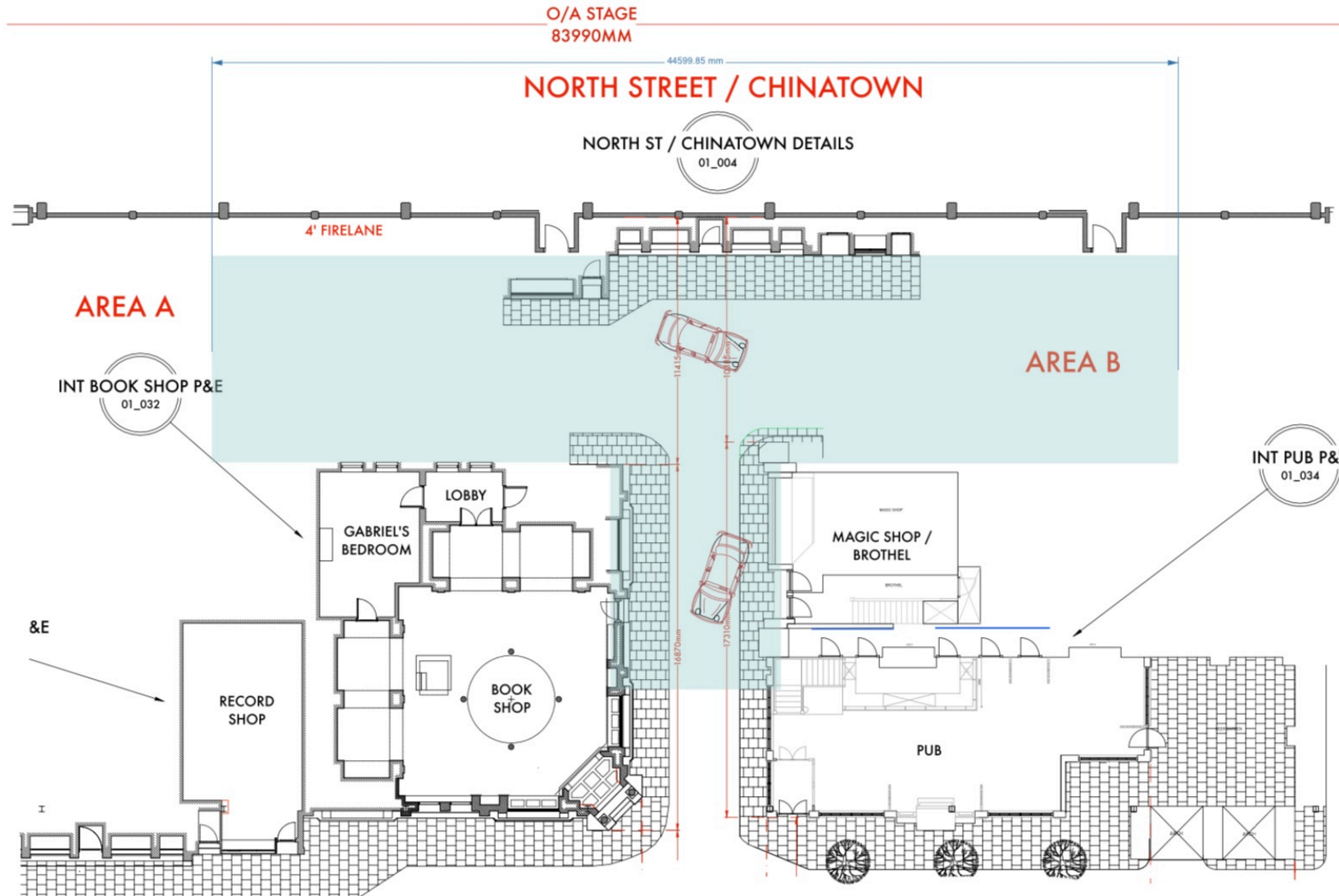
We extended the painting of the bitumen road onto the studio floor in both directions and built the three-storey cardboard facades and the destruction along it on both sides to create our own 1940s street length. The cardboard rubble covers up the lack of gutters and pavement.

I have shown the Blitz Street in the floor plan below and attached four pieces of concept art, two photos from actual set construction and two showing the finished set during shooting.

“In an industry that in recent years has been encouraged to reduce its environmental impact, cardboard could be a game-changer. It’s 80% cheaper than a traditional wood or MDF set, it has a carbon footprint that’s 90% lower, and it’s 100% recyclable.”

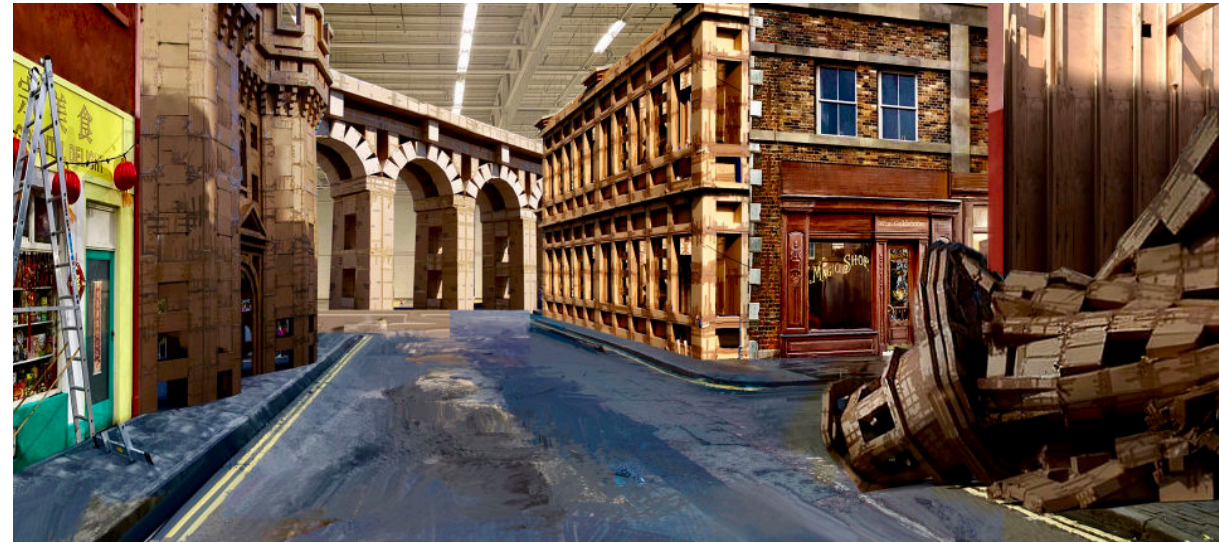
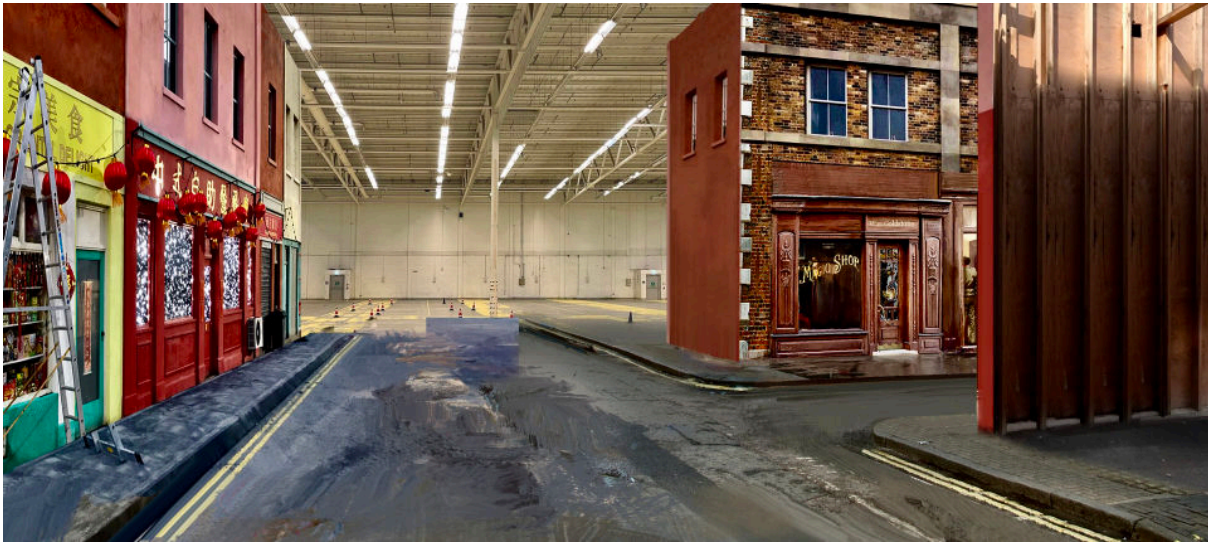
EXT_SOHO BUILD_STAGE PLAN

SCALE: 1:100@A0



LONDON BLITZ DRESS AREA

Concept Art



Cardboard Box Set Build

