

Case Study: Victoria Gate Arcade, Leeds

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Photos: Jack Hobhouse

Kawneer glazing systems feature on the Victoria Gate Arcade in Leeds

Kawneer's curtain walling, framing and doors have been used exclusively in two rooftop restaurants and the upper floor of the new Victoria Gate Arcade, a £165 million award-winning addition to Leeds' vibrant shopping scene, anchored by the largest John Lewis department store outside of London.

Building: Victoria Gate Arcade

Location: Leeds

Architect: ACME

Main Contractor: Sir Robert McAlpine

Installer: Bennett Architectural Aluminium Solutions

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The flagship Victoria Gate Arcade building, with a striking diagrid façade of polished and acid-etched concrete or reconstituted stone, sits between a multi-storey car park and the arcade which is clad in “pleated” bricks and features a geometrically intricate curving glass roof (installed by Seele) linking the John Lewis store to the city’s Victoria Quarter which was acquired by developer Hammerson in 2012.

A masterplan by ACME architects which was approved in the same year, allowed for a first-phase 42,000m² development of the two-storey, two-street arcade with 30 retail units, restaurants, cafes and a casino, the 21,000m² five-storey John Lewis store, and eye-catching car park for 800 cars. Windows, doorways and materials were all designed with care to form an overall design which celebrates the historic use of superior materials and finishes. Designed and planned using BIM by main contractor Sir Robert McAlpine, the Kawneer systems in the two rooftop restaurants were installed by Bennett Architectural.

These included AA®100 SSG (Structurally Silicone Glazed) curtain walling with regency gold anodised diagrid pressings, AA®720 doors with fully-glazed external features and AA®100 capped curtain walling (as clerestory windows) to the John Lewis rooftop restaurant and atrium. The arcade rooftop restaurant also features AA®100 curtain wall screens including feature curved glass units in channel glazing. In addition, the upper floor windows of the arcade feature Kawneer’s AA®100 faceted SSG entrance screens to the new casino and terrace, the ACS framing system to the multi-storey car park screens and doors, and AA®720 glazing into concrete sub-frames as the rooftop glazing. The upper floor windows are also created from a bespoke SSG carrier frame in the concrete sub-frames with bonded glass units and film glazing.

ACME’s director Friedrich Ludewig said: “Anodised aluminium was used throughout the scheme for most of the metal elements and for the glazing and doors. The Kawneer systems met the aesthetic and performance requirements well, especially the curtain walling to the John Lewis restaurant. This was a key design feature that needed to be right.”

Rob Bennett of Bennett Architectural said: “The John Lewis rooftop restaurant presented some significant challenges for the Kawneer AA®100 curtain wall system as well as from an engineering standpoint. Due to the complex geometry of the diagrid pattern, in conjunction with what was in effect, a freestanding wrap-around curtain wall, our design team had to engineer bespoke connection details, specialist support brackets and a hybrid carrier system that was integrated into the AA®100 system. We worked in conjunction with a specialist glass engineering company to achieve this innovative solution. We also used the latest AutoCAD and Revit 3D software to model the complete screen, including all the AA®100 components which included compound mitre-cut profiles, bespoke connection details and bracket preps. The model also included the glass units, diagrid support brackets and pressings to make clash detection possible and ensure all items fitted prior to scheduling and manufacture. The project highlighted not only our innovation and technical competence but the flexibility of the Kawneer curtain wall system and the support provided by Kawneer’s technical department.”

Victoria Gate won Retail Project of the Year at the World Architecture Festival and two awards at the 2017 Brick Awards - Commercial Building and Innovative Use of Brick and Clay Products. It was also commended worldwide as an urban regeneration project.

Please contact our Architectural Services Team if you have a project you would like to discuss: Tel: 01928 502604 / Email: kawneerAST@arconic.com

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