

CASE STUDY

# UNIVERSITY HOUSE, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM





# KAWNEER SYSTEMS HELP REJUVENATE THE UK'S OLDEST BUSINESS SCHOOL

Architectural glazing systems by Kawneer were specifically selected for a £18.5 million extension to the UK's oldest business school for their ability to meet the building's design aesthetic and high-performance requirements. Multiple Kawneer products, including two curtain wall systems, two door products and three window variations, were used by main contractor Morgan Sindall Construction for the University House project, a gateway to the University of Birmingham's city centre campus.

The University House building is steeped in history and heritage as it was originally established as the School of Commerce in 1902. The Grade II listed Business School building was formerly the first halls

of residence for female students and was converted to its current use in the 1960s.

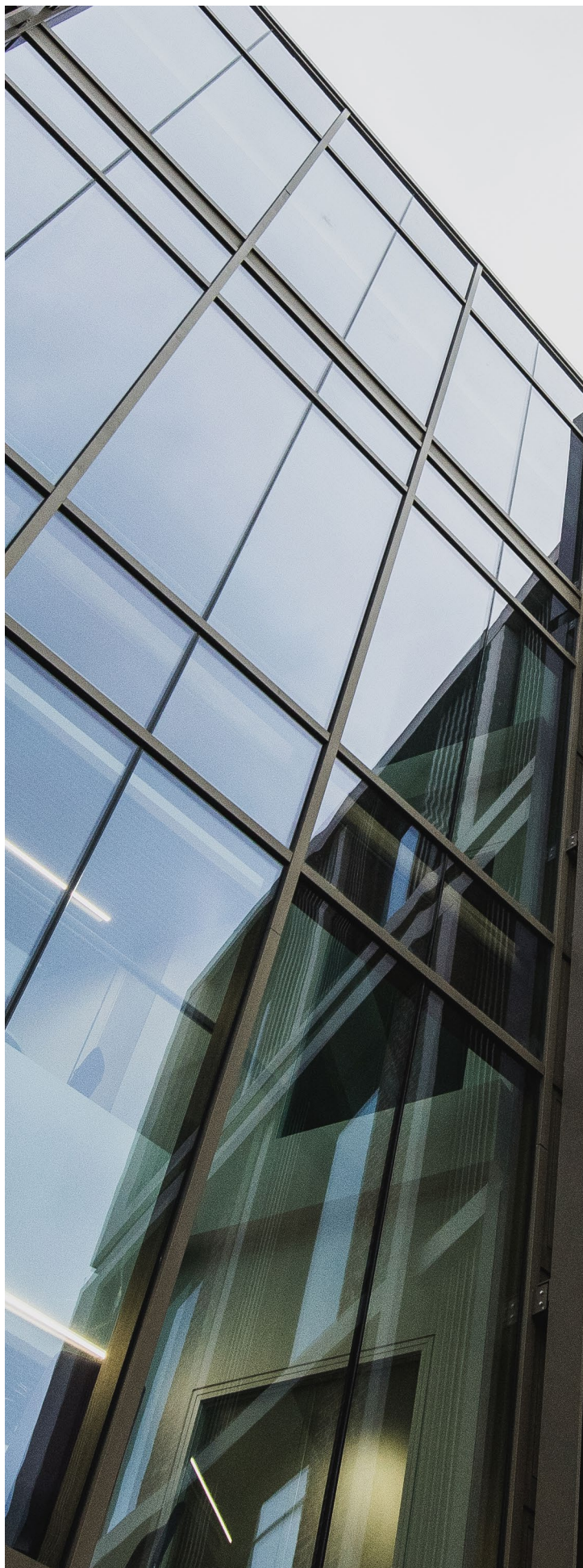
The new 3,000m<sup>2</sup> extension features Kawneer's AA®110 and AA®100 mullion-drained curtain wall systems with capped and capless mullions as well as AA®100 zone-drained fully-capped curtain wall.

The AA®100 system, with 50mm sightlines, was used in all areas with the exception of two full-height curtain wall screens which featured on the building's 'social space' characteristic that utilised the AA®110 system with 65mm sightlines.

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In addition, Kawneer's series 350 and AA®720 HI thermally-superior entrance doors were used alongside AA®720 HI windows as fixed lights, side-hung open-in inserts and electrically-operated bottom-hung open-in inserts.

Glancy Nicholls Architects were appointed to design a building that provided a cellular and multi-occupancy space for the school's academic staff, with student break-out spaces along with refurbished professional services, staff offices and enhanced café and catering facilities.

There were a number of challenges on site with available space as it was situated adjacent to the original building, surrounded on two sides by heavy perimeter landscaping/trees and bordered by a formal lawn. Glancy Nicholls designed and developed a series of offices located around a central atrium space, with connections back into the existing building at ground and first-floor levels.

Glancy Nicholls director Simon Jesson said: "The Kawneer systems were selected by the sub-contractor to meet the stringent thermal performance requirements along with the high-quality detailing required by the planners.

"To maximise the daylighting the elevation incorporated large windows but also required user control of the ventilation as well as glare control. The system was able to provide the aesthetic requirements for incorporating silicone jointing to minimise the impact of the frame on the proportions of the windows.

"The relationship to the brickwork cladding, the stone and the glass-to-glass corners on the bay windows was managed efficiently with the necessary trims and recessed details to maintain a clean-looking façade."





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The Kawneer glazing systems were installed by specialist subcontractor and Kawneer dealer Duplus Architectural Systems.

Simon Jesson added: "Planning sensitivities were considerable with the massing of the building required to be sited adjacent to the listed building without dominating the elevation, but being contemporary with high-quality materials, in this case multi bricks and an Indiana limestone cladding system, complemented by the anodised bronze high-performance windows.

"The south elevation was a considerable challenge, with projecting bay windows that allowed daylight and a view of the formal lawn but were screened to

adjacent landowners. The triple-glazed glass-to-glass corner projecting past the line of the cladding was a key design feature."

He concluded: "The client is really pleased by the overall look and feel of the building. The elevations are a contemporary aesthetic which complement the existing listed building."





Please contact our Architectural Services Team if you have a project you would like to discuss:  
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