

Case Study: University of Wales, Newport

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Kawneer systems help university with BREEAM and transparency

Kawneer's AA®100 curtain walling, AA®601 top-hung casement windows and AA®605 low/medium duty swing doors and series 190 heavy-duty commercial entrance doors helped the redevelopment of the University of Wales Campus, Newport achieve a BREEAM "Excellent" rating.

Building: University of Wales

Location: Newport

Architect: BDP

Main Contractor: Willmott Dixon

Installer: AB Glass

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Kawneer helps with major redevelopment of Newport

Kawneer's AA®100 curtain walling, AA®601 top-hung casement windows, and AA®605 low/medium duty swing doors and series 190 heavy-duty commercial entrance doors, feature on all elevations of the striking £35 million University of Wales campus building on the banks of the River Usk, next to the city's new landmark footbridge, housing the university's Faculty of Arts and Business. This creates a magnet for cultural activity along the riverfront as well as a centre for enterprise that embraces a contemporary arts centre, extensive exhibition space and a national photographic archive.

Designed by BDP Architects and a collaboration between the university, city council and Newport Unlimited, the urban regeneration company for the city, the new campus is part of a major redevelopment of Newport's city centre. The glazed elements were installed by approved specialist contractor AB Glass for main contractor Willmott Dixon Construction, who specified Kawneer systems with secondary steelwork to achieve the required spans (typically 10.5 metres at ground floor and up to 17 metres at first floor).

A BDP senior architect said this combination was in preference to a steel curtain wall system as it was the "most economical solution". She said: "Until working on Newport, the design team had thought that a steel curtain walling system would be the most economical solution for large spans as it negates the need for secondary steelwork. But current market trends are proving that aluminium and secondary steelwork is just as competitive and a solution favoured by contractors so will probably be specified more and more very early in the design. As the concept of the building was to be transparent and open we wanted to retain as much curtain walling as possible and the Kawneer systems have certainly complied with the aesthetic requirements of the project. We had to use a high acoustic and solar performance for the glass as the building is on a very exposed, tight urban site next to a busy road."

The Kawneer systems interface with brick, zinc and timber soffit. In semi-circular floating pods suspended from the first floor slab at the front of the building, much attention was paid to the isolation of these structures and the curtain walling to minimise movement on the latter. At roof level, the glazing disappears above the timber soffit to give the effect of the curved roof floating over the building. By extending the curtain walling in this way and concealing it, BDP was able to step the top transoms to follow the roof line rather than having it curved if it was exposed.

The university's director of facilities management, Stephen Godber, said: "During the entire design and construction of the City Campus we sought a high-quality design and fittings at an affordable cost for the university as a public sector body. We are delighted with the final project as a whole and the choice of suppliers by BDP and Willmott Dixon."

The new £50million campus will comprise film and sound studios, facilities for computer games design, forensic computing labs, state-of-the-art design studios, as well as lecture theatres, library information services, study spaces, seminar rooms, restaurant facilities, an academic "hot-house" for research and a rooftop conference and boardroom.

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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