

KAWNEER HELPS TO RAISE MANCHESTER'S MEDICAL RATINGS



Curtain walling from architectural aluminium systems supplier Kawneer has played a “fundamental” part in a £39 million research centre that makes Manchester home to one of the largest biomedical complexes in Europe.

Architects Wilson Mason & Partners specified Kawneer's AA®100 curtain walling with top-hung concealed vents, for

all glazed vertical elements of the AV Hill building at The University of Manchester, due to its aesthetics and flexibility.

Practice architect Alan Williams said: “We specified the Kawneer system because it allowed us the large glass panes and differing cappings/appearances and it has been a fundamental part of the design, whether large areas or small feature openings.”

The brief from the university's Faculties of Life Sciences and Medical and Human Sciences was to provide a high-quality building, capable of achieving a “very good” BREEAM rating, which would contain research of a national and global level, on the 3,000m² site of a former car park.

Wilson Mason's design comprises more than 9,000m² of concrete-framed accommodation divided into two elements either side of a 30m-high atrium with a bridge running the full length of the atrium.

It connects the Core Technology Facility, Michael Smith and Stopford buildings, creating a linked complex housing more than 300 research groups. Adjacent to the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research facility and the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals' NHS Trust, it forms a focal point in the university's biomedical corridor.



Named after Archibald Vivian Hill, who jointly won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1922 while he held the Chair in Physiology at The University of Manchester, the building won the British Council for Offices' Best Corporate Workplace in the North award.

"The planners supported the elevational treatment from the outset and the users like the building for its light and airy character," said Alan Williams.

"Quality was the driver and the Kawneer system defines the character of the glazed elements which differ around the building. The façade to Upper Brook Street is a key element of the design, providing an open appearance to the street."

Kawneer-approved installer Anaco Systems, for main contractor Morgan Ashurst, spent nine months installing the capped and toggled silicone-glazed curtain walling, which was up to 30m in height, to internal staircases as well as the external façade, and alongside Kawneer's series 190 heavy-duty commercial entrance doors.

The cramped site meant the project was particularly challenging, with Anaco having to complement traditional scaffolding with the use of special mobile and high-rise tower cranes to lift sections into place.

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Photo: Oliver Foxley, Wilson Mason & Partners

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