

KAWNEER COURTS THE LAW IN LOTHIAN



Using curtain walling, windows and doors from architectural aluminium systems supplier Kawneer on a new civic centre for West Lothian proved an enlightening experience for architects BDP.

Kawneer's AA@110 65mm mullion-drained curtain walling with concealed vents has been used extensively on the facades and as sloped glazing and

rooflights on the complex which incorporates a new headquarters for West Lothian Council, a new divisional headquarters for Lothian and Borders Police, and six courts for the Scottish Courts Service.

The glazed façade was manufactured and installed over a 21-month programme by Kawneer-approved specialist contractor Charles Henshaw & Sons, with the sloped glazing requiring special box lengths of 205mm reinforced steel to support the larger 7.4m-span of glazing.

This and the façade curtain walling is complemented by blocks of Kawneer's AA@601 top-hung casement windows with concealed vents and AA@603 tiltturn windows, AA@605 low/medium duty swing doors and series 190 heavy-duty and 350 severe-duty commercial entrance doors.

Architect Chris Hughes of BDP said: "Kawneer products were used extensively on the project. Several bespoke details and interfaces were required and we worked closely with Henshaw to ensure the desired visual aesthetic was achieved.

"Through the process of design development, it became apparent that due to Henshaw's and Kawneer's capabilities, their scope could be expanded to areas not previously considered, reducing the number of system suppliers and other subcontractor interfaces, with Kawneer/Henshaw becoming a single point of responsibility."



BDP had been commissioned to develop proposals for a new West Lothian Civic Centre that would bring together a range of previously dispersed public services in a single location “under one roof”.

As well as the council, police authority and courts service, the building is also occupied by the Procurator Fiscal, the Scottish Children’s Reporters Office and Lothian and Borders Fire Service.

The building is divided into three areas – the three-storey linear offices formed from a braced steel frame, the two-storey police and courts area, and the load-bearing masonry single-storey custody suite – each with their own specific client briefing and design requirements.

The completed complex forms an expression of the main functions within, revealing the circular council chamber, courts, large glazed volume of the civic space around the council chamber and the linear office “bars” as distinct architectural forms.

This formal expression is enhanced by three large rooftop glazed lanterns that form chimneys for natural stack ventilation to minimise energy use, and have the added benefit of providing a visual marker for the centre on approach from the town centre to the south from where the trees lining the banks of the Almond largely screen the low-rise centre.

The offices are walk-up three-storey, shallow-plan floor plates linked by an internal linear atrium or street which is top lit and naturally ventilates the offices by means of the Kawneer-glazed lanterns.

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Photo: BDP Architects

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