

# BEST USE OF TIMBER 2013 SHORTLIST

AS PART OF THE ANNUAL RIAS AWARDS SCHEME, FORESTRY COMMISSION SCOTLAND AND WOOD FOR GOOD HAVE COMBINED TO SPONSOR A NEW AWARD AIMED AT ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE USE OF TIMBER IN NEW BUILDINGS IN SCOTLAND



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## ROSSLYN CHAPEL CONSERVATION & VISITORS CENTRE

**Location:** Roslin, Midlothian  
**Date Completed:** November 2011  
**Building Type:** Visitors Centre  
**Architect:** Page/Park Architects  
**Client:** Rosslyn Chapel Trust  
**Main Contractor:** CBC (Glasgow) Ltd  
**Timber Supplier:** via Carpenter Oak & Woodland

### THE PROJECT

The visitor centre facilities at Rosslyn Chapel are set within the site of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The existing facilities were under pressure coping with a high volume of visitors. The new visitors centre provides sufficient space for groups of visitors, an interpretive exhibition, education, retail, café and staff accommodation. The green oak frame maximises the flexibility of the internal layout and creates a much-needed feeling of space within the small building. The warm tones of natural oak compliment the restrained palette of locally sourced materials including copper roofing, Caithness floors, Clasach stone and tan leather sliding screens.

The portal frames to the side aisle and central pitched roof work compositely to achieve a tie free internal volume, where the lattice roof structure and lenotec panels are visually expressed within the telescopic form of the new extension roof. The arrangement of stepping side aisle beams and columns defines the spatial quality of the single volume from a lofty entrance, towards the cosy café.

### USE OF TIMBER

In response to the craftsmanship of the chapel stonework the decision was made to use Green Oak. It was selected from European Sources with seasoned Scottish Oak used for display furniture. The idea for the latticed timber roof was drawn from a stone portal leading into the chapel grounds, which has an intricate lattice pattern over the gateway.

Both traditional Oak framing techniques and stainless steel mechanical jointing methods have been exploited to create a contemporary design. The upper frame consisted of a lattice of rafters in heart cut, Green Oak, connected with bespoke bolts, spacers and expressed 'pigs nose' fixings. The same size timber sections were used to create the eaves and ridge beams, which were bolted through steel ridge connector plates and fins sitting on top of the columns to the lower Oak frame. Shakes and fissures add to the tactility of the Oak as a finished material, where visitors can sense the life of the tree that it once was.

Photography: Andrew Lee



