

BEST USE OF TIMBER 2016 SHORTLIST

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



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Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

Architecture & Design Scotland
Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

THE SAUNDERS CENTRE

Location: Glasgow
Date Completed: August 2015
Building Type: Education
Architect: Page \ Park
Client: The Glasgow Academy

Main Contractor: Dunne Group Building and Civil Engineering

THE PROJECT

This urban building includes a new auditorium with 178 capacity and support facilities. Suitable for both lectures and small performances, this space is available for use by the wider community complemented by a generous foyer that wraps around the sculptural elliptical form.

Surmounting this floor of teaching, lecture spaces and catering for the shared spaces is a floor each for Physics, Biology and Chemistry. On each upper floor four general teaching labs together with a sixth year lab are arranged along a glazed break out and bay windowed passage overlooking the historic main school.

This overall setting has benefitted from the architects briefing and interiors team working with the school to design every aspect from the laboratory layouts to the break out study spaces. The design of fittings, selection of loose furniture and graphic working of the glazed partitions and signage bring together both the architecture and interior.

The reinforced concrete structural frame is clad in a pattern of precast polished and honed finishes, in a modular assembly that rises from a ground floor pilaster faced open foyer, through a sequence of bay windows to a reinterpretation of the Glasgow dormer at roof level.

The project, situated in a sensitive conservation area, required careful negotiation with both the local authority and residents through the process. The Academy hosted regular community meetings to engage with, inform and mitigate any concerns surrounding the project. This process strengthened these community relationships and allowed the project to progress smoothly.

USE OF TIMBER

The use of timber was restricted to the interior of the ground floor level and main stair. The ground floor was intended to have a warm, natural, sophisticated, civic feel complimenting the elliptical form of the auditorium and views to the planted courtyard garden. This acts in contrast to the sharp, more clinical aesthetic of the lab floors above.

The auditorium exterior walls which face into the main foyer space are clad with vertical timber slats of various depths over fabric covered acoustically absorbent insulation, creating a decorative surface which improves the acoustics within the foyer and acts as a robust finish to this highly trafficked area. Built in seating and exhibition panels are arranged around the foyer perimeter, formed using matching timber.

Within the auditorium, the walls are lined with both absorbent slatted acoustic and veneer faced plywood panels. Again these achieve a robust finish but also help to provide the technical acoustic design of the space. The veneer faced panels also wrap around the upholstered seating.

The plywood veneer paneling continues up the main stair on the walls and, as it forms the cladding of the balustrade, brings a sense of this rich aesthetic right through the building. Glazed screens and doors to the main circulation spaces are made in matching timber.

An enclosed garden extends out from the ground floor foyer with timber clad planters and bench seating. All of the timber is solid oak or oak veneer finished with a matt chalky white lacquer.



Images: Andrew Lee

