

BEST USE OF TIMBER 2017 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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RIAS



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

Architecture & Design Scotland
Ailtreachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

COMIELAW STEADING

Location: Anstruther, Fife
Date Completed: August 2016
Building Type: Workplace
Architect: Konishi Gaffney Architects
Client: Balcaskie Estates
Main Contractor: Algo Design & Build

THE PROJECT

Comielaw Steading is a B-listed farm with U-shaped plan dating back to the late 17th Century. No longer serving an agricultural purpose, it had been slowly falling into disrepair. Typically steadings are converted into houses, but the resultant high prices mean they are often purchased as holiday homes, or by commuters to larger towns; increasing traffic and reducing investment in the local community.

This project was an attempt to address the problem of rural farm steadings in a sustainable way. In order to preserve its heritage while sustaining local economic development the client proposed to convert the steading to form 12 affordable office, studio & light-industrial units.

The buildings were repaired and upgraded; insulated, rewired and waterproofed to current building standards. Materials chosen were sympathetic to the original utilising traditional, local techniques and through phased construction small local contractors were used further supporting the area's economy.

Shared infrastructure allows low upkeep costs with a biomass boiler providing heating and hot water using waste material from the farm estate. The units are now let to an eclectic mix of tenants including a design studio, photographer, guitar maker, stained glass artist and furniture maker.

USE OF TIMBER

The use of timber cladding allowed an economical farm construction to be elevated to a higher level of quality and interest delivering a strong architectural concept and aesthetic. The low-tech construction also engaged with local vernacular techniques and skills, and through the use of local contractors and suppliers benefited the local economy.

The project utilises a generic agricultural barn system with a portal steel frame and an off-the-shelf insulated panel system with standard details that can be easily constructed by local builders. This system features standard generic details and the idea for the project was to enrich this design through overcladding the replacement shed in large section (150x50mm) timber boarding, detailed with a long-short hit and miss vertical pattern.

The details for the timber were developed to provide texture to the construction and the cladding was designed to continue over the windows to provide privacy whilst still allowing light into the building and views to the surrounding landscape. The black finish is a play on a local rural typology and gives the new building a strong and robust presence whilst also allowing it to sit quietly in the rural environment. A traditional coal-tar paint was used to both preserve the timber and accentuates the grain.

Images: Konishi Gaffney Architects



