

Members News

Eternit claddings help Police, Petrol and Profile

The Government's emphasis on better all-round design, redevelopment or refurbishment wherever possible, and mixed-use and mixed housing schemes for new build has seen some particularly innovative and award-winning applications of claddings.

Testament to this trend are three projects that have used four very different cladding panels from Eternit Building Materials - a stone-like fibre cement cladding for a police station refurbishment, high-pressure laminate and fibre cement weatherboard for an award-winning mixed housing development, and fibre cement profiled sheeting that is normally used only on roofs, for an architect's own, award-winning home.

From ugly duckling to swan

A building once voted the ugliest in the Borders town of Bathgate was given a facelift with

the help of Eternit's fibre cement Natura cladding panels.

Two colours of Natura - grey Anthracite and white Ivory - were used by William Peden Architects for the refurbishment of the police station. Their brief was to replace the 1960s asbestos and glass panels that were too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter with a new frontage that met current building standards.

The new facade comprises a pre-fabricated timber frame containing insulation, vapour barrier and breather membrane. Eternit's lightweight Natura panels, secret fixed onto a hanging rail system of battens, were fixed on site - Anthracite and Ivory striping on the left-hand or operational half of the facade and large panels of Ivory Natura on the right-hand or office section.

William Peden said: "The existing building had been voted the ugliest in Bathgate by the local primary school kids. Eternit's Natura cladding was chosen as it allowed the introduction of colour without resorting to applied surface finishes and also gave a precise and sharp appearance to the facade.

"This is the first occasion where we have utilised an Eternit product as an important element within the building's external facade with significant positive effect upon the building's appearance."

Public/private mix wins award

Two types of Eternit cladding helped win a national award for a groundbreaking public and private sector development that pushed specialist construction methods to their limits.

Two colours of Eternit's high-pressure laminate cladding Lamina External and fibre cement Weatherboard were used on the Chorlton Park housing development in Manchester by the In/veil Valley Housing Association and award-winning private sector developers Urban Splash.

The quality of design by Manchester architects Stephenson Bell won the residential scheme a Housing Design Project Award for outstanding merit. The 20 apartments and four duplexes were built on the site of a disused petrol station, the duplexes clad with Eternit's Dark Grey 6mm Lamina External, fixed with colour-matched screws onto timber battens.

The single main entrance was also clad with Grey Green Lamina External while rear and courtyard elevations were clad in Eternit Weatherboard that was pre-painted white and terracotta.

Project architect David Simister said: "We wanted cladding that complemented the other, natural materials and specified Eternit's

Lamina for many reasons. Because it was primarily a public sector development, cost was quite important to us but longevity, colour fastness and the fact we could fix it with a variety of systems all played a part.

"The Eternit Weatherboard is incredibly cost efficient. Painted, it looks very effective, it's very low maintenance and the board will last forever."

Profiled sheeting wins peer plaudits

A three-storey house that is wrapped in the fibre cement profiled sheeting usually reserved for the roofs of industrial and agricultural buildings has won the architect the admiration of his peers.

Meredith Bowles has built a joint office for his sole practice, Mole Architects, and five-bedroomed home for his family in the Fens village of Prickwillow in Cambridgeshire where both the roof and walls are covered with Eternit's fibre cement profiled sheeting.

The Black House won last year's RIBA Manser Medal and was runner-up Best New House in the RIBA Spirit of Ingenuity Awards. It was also shortlisted for Best Ecological House and Best Timber Frame House in the Daily Telegraph/Homebuilding & Renovating Magazine Awards and for the Norwich & Peterborough Eco-home Award.

The build held many challenges for contractors Thompson Roofing, not least of which was the vertical cladding. Meredith had made architectural features at the corners of the building and the junctions with windows and doors that are traditionally covered in flashings but since they were left uncovered, accuracy was vital.

"I wouldn't hesitate in using the product again. It has a far greater life than steel as corrosion isn't a problem and it looks terrific on the vertical. It just goes to show that a relatively inexpensive product can be pushed a bit harder to become something pretty extraordinary," said Meredith.

Other news from BRE

Small scale, building integrated wind power

Seminar 28th April 2005 at BRE

The UK's renewable energy target for 2010 will mostly be achieved through large-scale renewable energy projects. However, small-scale installations should also play an important role. Renewable energy is an indispensable factor in developing sustainable communities and small-scale production is an effective way for a community to produce its own electricity. Over the last few years, we have seen many developments in the technology of small-scale wind turbines and the number in use has risen dramatically as they become more efficient and cost effective. Building-integrated wind systems have also been the subject of considerable research and show a great deal of potential with many successful prototypes being developed. Sustainable community projects now have feasible options to generate their electricity through small-scale or building integrated wind power.

To give the latest developments in this sector wider exposure, BRE is hosting a one-day event in partnership with the British Wind Energy Association. The event will cover: Market Overview; Case Studies; Grid Connection Issues; and DTI plans and Planning Issues. The conference and exhibition will give delegates knowledge of what technologies are available, and how they can be incorporated into building developments. Contact BRE events for more details. Tel 01923 664800