

# Case Study: Sibson Building, University of Kent

100/Sept17



Photos: Quintin Lake

## Elements from all the Kawneer ranges feature on the Sibson Building

Architectural glazing systems, some of them bespoke, by Kawneer have helped a new £26 million, 8100m<sup>2</sup> hub building meet its university's aspirations for a project of the "highest technical quality." The Kawneer solutions at the University of Kent's Sibson Building were installed to a BREEAM "Excellent" design by architects Penoyre & Prasad.

**Building:** Sibson Building

**Location:** University of Kent, Canterbury

**Architect:** Penoyre & Prasad

**Main Contractor:** Willmott Dixon

**Installer:** JPJ Installations

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# Kawneer helps Garden of England university to bloom

The Kawneer systems at the Sibson Building comprise AA®100 zone and mullion-drained curtain walling, AA®541 top and side-hung casement windows, structurally silicone glazed vents, series 190 heavy duty commercial entrance doors and AA®720 doors which are future proofed against expected changes in thermal regulations up to 2019. In addition, Kawneer produced some new bespoke 300mm deep vertical and horizontal fin profiles in bronze, silver and Regency gold finishes to create deep window reveals and control solar gain on the first floor of the 8,100m<sup>2</sup> building.

The Kawneer systems were installed to a BREEAM "Excellent" design by architects Penoyre & Prasad over five months by a team of 28 from approved specialist sub-contractor JPJ Installations for main contractor Willmott Dixon. The challenge for Willmott Dixon was to provide a new five-storey academic building on a split-level site with 150 linear metres of ground retaining sacrificial sheet piles. It also had to include 150 offices, three lecture theatres, seminar rooms, a double-height atrium space and fully-functioning kitchen and dining area.

The new building for the university's Business School and School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science is located towards the northern edge of the Canterbury campus. The facility creates a vibrant new campus destination and allows two of the university's most successful departments to expand and improve their current activities. The hub of teaching, learning and working brings academics, students, researchers and administrative staff together, creating an environment that actively fosters engagement between the students and staff bodies within the two schools.

Lecture theatres, seminar spaces, Bloomberg suite, café and social learning spaces are organised on ground and first floor around a dramatic top-lit concourse. The schools' individual receptions and admin areas link directly to upper floors that provide workspaces for academics and post-graduate researchers. Flexible floorplates to the upper floors allow the two schools to expand or contract depending on need.

Set within a woodland, the building's form ensures it is never fully visible from any viewpoint, thereby lessening its overall visual impact and preserving the majority of the trees. At lower floors, viewed between tree trunks, the elevations are highly glazed with the Kawneer curtain walling, and welcoming with a café that opens out onto a south-facing terrace. At upper floors, seen through the tree canopies, elevations of anodised aluminium curtain walling (not Kawneer's) pick up on the tree trunks and dappled light of the surrounding woodland while the stagger and colouring of the Kawneer fins approximate the non-linear systems of nature. A series of interventions integrate the building into the campus and the ecology including new cycle and pedestrian pathways and green roofs that help increase biodiversity.

Senior architect Michael Fostiropoulos said: "Kawneer's ability to produce bespoke adaptations of its standard profiles played a crucial role in delivering our vision for the cladding design. Beautiful curved glazing at the corners of the building and large-scale shop front style glazing at the ground floor ensured Sibson met our client's aspirations for a project of the highest technical quality. The façade plays a central role in expressing the building as embedded in its woodland surroundings. In addition, sustainability played a key role in us specifying aluminium. With lower embedded carbon emissions and higher recyclability than most alternative metals, the material contributed to Sibson achieving BREEAM Excellent accreditation."

Please contact our Architectural Services Team if you have a project you would like to discuss: Tel: 01928 502604 / Email: [kawneerAST@arconic.com](mailto:kawneerAST@arconic.com)

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