Project Review – Queen Mary University London

Competition: March 2011 Project Size: 400m²

System: Ali Glass, Bespoke Curtain Walling, HPL Architect: Wilkinson Eyre Architects Contractor: Kind Build

The Mathematics Research Centre and Astronomy Unit at Queen Mary University of London draws academic visitors from all over the world.

Being one of the largest mathematical science departments in the UK, the redevelopment encompassed a visually stunning façade designed and manufactured by Aliva and installed by Blink Glass.

Blink Glass' extensive experience in technical and creative glass made them the natural partner for Aliva to install this glass façade.

The façade was developed using the Ali Glass Tardis system also incorporating a bespoke curtain walling system. The plinth section was completed using Ali HPLS high pressure laminate system and the areas around the foyer in a white rendered finish.

"Our extensive experience meant we were able to easily handle the technical and logistical challenges faced on this project to ensure the installation went smoothly and to the time scale set."

Rod Milicevic, Head of Creative Solutions – BLINK.

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The façade includes laminated glass in a rhomboid shape, with a side length of 1.2m, the inner glass layer being 10mm thick, the outer panel 6mm thick with a clear SGP interlayer between. There is a screen print featuring 3 different RAL colours on the outer surface. Ali Glass Tardis anchors have been used to invisibly fix into the back of the inner glass panel. The weight of the glass panels and substructure is approximately 50 kg/m2. High performance K15 phenolic insulation was used to insulate the building.

These heavy panels again provided no problems for Blink's installation experts, coupled with tight working spaces, adverse weather conditions in the winter months and tight tolerances the team easily rose to the challenge.

> "Working with the team from Aliva and Blink glass was very easy on such a technically demanding project. The finished product was visually stunning and the logistics and installation management was very well executed."
>
> *Lee Nightingill - Kind build*

The bespoke curtain walling system consists of inclined glass panels up to 4 m high providing challenges for the Blink Glass installation team which they easily overcame. Stainless steel pressure plates are included to cope with wind loads. The curtain walling and rainscreen are designed so that the finish between the two is flush.

Blink glass worked closely with the project team to ensure the installation of the façade and curtain walling went smoothly and to deadline.

The project was completed in March 2011.

For more information on Blink Glass call 0845 0745 736

The new entrance to the department takes the form of a single storey structure with Ali Glass panels, the form of which has been generated by a pattern developed by the famous mathematician, Sir Roger Penrose. As well as creating the geometry of the glass panels, a smaller scale subset of Penrose tiling is also applied to the other panels of glass as a graphic pattern. Aliva also designed the bespoke curtain walling system, with large inclined glass panels across which the pattern continues.

One of the challenges faced by Blink's installation team was the assembly of this complex glass configuration in multi facet and on multiple planes, ensuring the desired look was achieved without encountering problems which could of delayed the project. Blink's extensive experience with glass installations gave the project team excellent delivery to a specific time table.

Key Installation Challenges:

- Tight working spaces
- 500kg units
- Assembly of a glass jigsaw in multi facet and multiple planes
- Winter weather conditions
- Tight tolerances