

## ENVELOPE: JERWOOD GALLERY

## Shimmering seascape



The Jerwood Gallery among the net shops.

Every one of the 8,000 tiles used to clad Hat Projects' Jerwood Gallery on Hastings beach has been glazed by hand to produce a dramatic effect

Words Amanda Birch

## Leading the world to a sustainable future

### grasscrete

the environmental paving solution



As an international supplier of grass reinforcement products we are able to say that Grasscrete stands alone in its unique capabilities.



- Ultimate ground support system
- For heavy traffic or high water flow applications with unrivalled performance
- A worldwide network with proven cost effective supply



Also available:

grassblock  
grass and concrete surfacing

grasskerb  
the dry-laid edge solution

grassroad  
plastic grassed paving system

grassroof  
the environmental rooftop innovation

Grass Concrete Limited

Duncan House, 142 Thornes Lane, Thornes, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 7RE England

Tel: +44(0)1924 379443 Fax: +44(0)1924 290289

info@grasscrete.com



grasscrete

40 YEARS  
experience with  
GRASSCRETE

www.grasscrete.com

Hastings may be the site of one of England's most famous battles, but a clash of a different nature is currently being waged in the heart of the East Sussex town. Fishermen are protesting against the new Jerwood Gallery which is being built along the seafront, and anti-Jerwood posters have appeared on the walls of the fishermen's winch huts.

Those opposing the gallery would have preferred the site had remained a coach and lorry park, and fear the gallery will adversely affect local traders and the fishing community. Nevertheless, the development has gone ahead and the £4 million gallery, designed by Essex practice Hat Projects, is set to be complete by late autumn.

The 1,300sq m gallery is in a highly visible spot at the eastern end of a 0.5ha site alongside the Stade, the shingle beach in Hastings Old Town which is home to the UK's largest fleet of beach-launched fishing boats.

To the north of the gallery, where the main entrance is located, the building fronts onto Rock-A-Nore Road and the grade II-listed Georgian East Cliff House with the dramatic rocky East Cliff and its funicular railway rising up behind. The site lies in a conservation area, and includes the remarkable "net shops" used for storing fishing nets and striking in both their blackness and verticality.

#### Eclectic artistic mix

Hat Projects was appointed to design the gallery in 2008, to display the Jerwood Foundation's substantial collection of 20th and 21st century British art. The eclectic mix includes some 180 pieces of art by, among others, Augustus John, Peter Lanyon, Edward Burra and Maggi Hambling, and as a collection has never been on public display. The gallery will also show temporary exhibitions linked to the Jerwood Visual Arts programme, and include a café on the first floor.

The practice has also master-planned the rest of the site, which includes a hard landscaped square, a new community building and WCs designed by Tim

Ronalds Architects, which were completed in May.

The historic site meant the architects had to be particularly sensitive about the gallery's proposed massing and height.

"We couldn't have gone higher than two-storeys as we were conscious of the height of the net shops," says Hat Projects director Hana Loftus, "but at the same time we wanted the building to have a strong civic presence".

The building, which has a blockwork-timber composite structure at ground floor and timber frame at first floor, has been kept deliberately low at the front where the main entrance is located.

Loftus and fellow director Tom Grieve describe the form of the building as a "single mass carved out and wrapped in ceramic cladding". Grieve adds: "Each floor has an L-shaped plan that rotates and interlocks."

**'We wanted to create the sense that the building flows around the corners, creating a monolithic look'**

They were also keen that the gallery's roof was right for the location since the roofscape can be seen from the cliffs. They wanted it to sit comfortably within the town, and not clash with the net shops' distinctive skyline.

Three lanterns clad in dark grey standing seam zinc are located over the Foreshore Gallery, while a series of zig-zag pitches in light grey zinc (incorporating northlights, solar thermal panels on the south side and servicing) are positioned over the two floors to the Collection Gallery.

The choice of cladding was just as critical. The practice's starting point was to study the local context. One approach would have been to mimic the black painted timber of the net shops. But, says Grieve, "we didn't want to ape them for a civic building and we decided early on that we wouldn't use timber".

Another prevalent material in the old town is glazed mathematical tiles. These partly overlap while creating a flat brick-like appearance. Their resistance to wind and sea spray made them particularly suitable for coastal locations. Influenced by these, the practice began to consider glazed tiles for the gallery's cladding, and paid a trip to Brighton to see the black glazed tile cladding to Bennetts Associates' Jubilee Library.

"We really responded to the contemporary use of the glazed tiles and we tracked down Robus Ceramics, which hand glazed every tile," says Grieve.

Jubilee Library had used a relatively thin solid clay tile. But after looking at several different systems and taking into account the gallery site's unforgiving marine environment, the architects selected a more robust 15mm-thick tile, the KeraTwin K15. This is machine engineered in Germany and has extruded perforations to reduce the weight. The tiles are 498mm x 212 to suit 500mm x 220 co-ordinating grid, and feature two extruded grooves on the back which allow the tiles to be hung and clipped onto horizontal aluminium rails fixed back to the structural timber studwork.

#### Overall blackness

The cladding subcontractor sourced a special marine-grade clip made from aluminium and rubber, which enables each tile to be fixed securely to the rail.

Four clips per tile are used and the tiles are fixed with a 2mm joint. The rails have been sprayed black between the joints to ensure the metallic colour of the rail doesn't distract from the overall blackness.

A sample panel of the tiles was made and displayed at the site to show the planners how it would look. It also gave the subcontractor an understanding of how to mitre-cut corners to create a tight joint when wrapping the tiles around the corners of the deep reveals to the frameless windows.

"We wanted to create the sense that the building flows around the corners creating a monolithic look and to also explore the idea of a cut crystal or faceted thing," says Grieve.

A plinth of black/brown coloured glazed terracotta block — 490mm x 65mm face size — was used to encircle the building and varies in height from 400mm from ground level to 1,800mm.

When the scaffolding is finally removed to reveal the shimmering black pewter glazed cladding, the bespoke finish to the tile will refract the changing light and townscape and echo the black weatherboarding of the net shops.



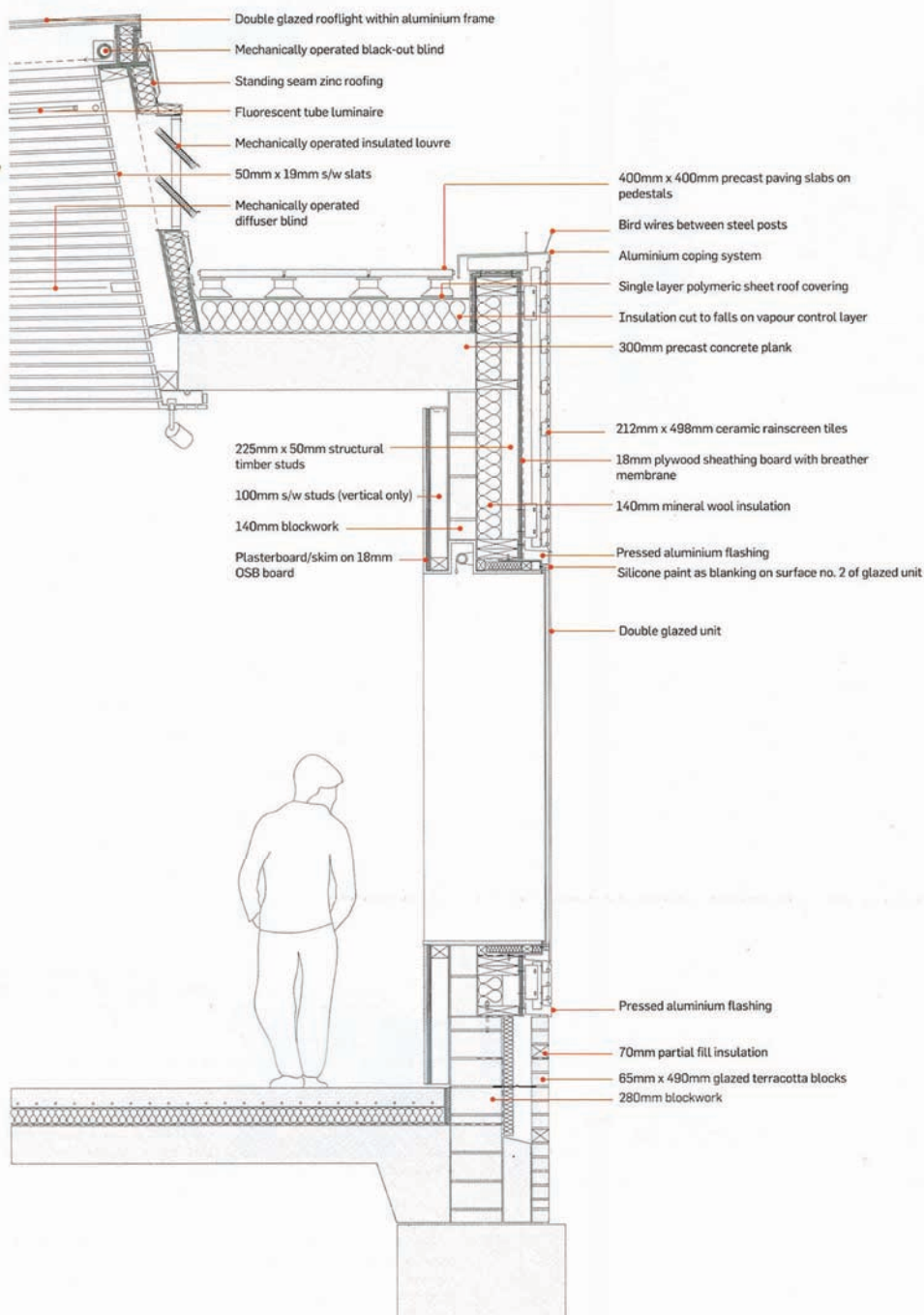
KeraTwin K15 tiles were chosen to suit the harsh sea environment.



**PROJECT TEAM** Architect Hat Projects, Client Jerwood Foundation, Structural engineer: Momentum, Environmental & acoustic consultant Skelly & Couch, Quantity surveyor Pierce Hill, Access consultant People Friendly Design, CDM co-ordinator Pierce Hill Project Services,

Main contractor Coniston, Cladding subcontractor ICS, Glazing subcontractor Prima Systems; SUPPLIERS Cladding system Agrob Buchtal (EH Smith), Ceramic tile bespoke glaze Robus Ceramics, Plinth 'Feletto' smooth block GIMA (James & Taylor), Curtain wall glazing system Schüco

### Detail facade section



Special clips are used to fix the tiles to the aluminium rails.

## SHOWER POWER

The new Shower Heat Recovery Unit (SHRU60) from Itho delivers great energy savings for every home.

- Provides energy savings of up to 60%
- SAP Q eligible
- Fits easily into new and existing homes
- Requires no regular maintenance or user interface
- Manufactured from copper

**WRAS**  
APPROVED  
PRODUCT

## WIN!

We're giving away 3 pairs of tickets to enjoy a day Powerboating to celebrate the launch of the SHRU60.

For a chance to win, or more information, visit our Competition page at [www.itho.co.uk/competition](http://www.itho.co.uk/competition)



### DEVELOPING THE GLAZED CERAMIC TILES

It took Kent-based Robus Ceramics three months to hand glaze the 8,000 ceramic tiles that now make up the cladding for the new Jerwood Gallery in Hastings. But to get to that stage was very time-consuming.

"To get the right shiny pewter metallic glaze with its black undertone was a long process," says partner Rose Robus.

"The colour relies on the oxides floating just beneath the surface of the glaze which gives its unique quality and reflects the light."

A glaze is developed in order

for samples to be submitted and is then tweaked over a period of several months. Every glaze has its own unique firing cycle and Robus says getting this right is the most challenging aspect of the process.

Before firing, each tile is hand dipped, to give it its unique hand-finished quality. "There are so many issues that affect the quality of the glaze," says Robus.

"It could be the flues at the roof of the kiln which have to open and shut at key stages to get the glaze right."

The glazing process



Rose Robus demonstrates how tiles for the Jerwood Gallery are hand glazed before firing.

required a kiln being heated up to 1,070°C and the tiles fired over a 24-hour period.

Once the glaze sample was approved, the ceramic tiles were sent to Ceram, a materials testing company in Stoke-on-Trent.

It carried out a freeze-thaw test and a bond adhesion test. The tiles passed both of these tests.

Robus says that she has never done a glazed tile for a building located close to the sea before, and will be interested to see how the glaze adapts and changes over time.