

MATERIAL
CONSIDERATIONS
A LIBRARY OF SUSTAINABLE
BUILDING MATERIALS

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CASE STUDY

INN AT JOHN O' GROATS



Architecture &
Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba





With thanks to Pip Rustage and GLM for photography

Timber Technologies

The new build element of the Inn is a highly insulated timber frame with timber cladding. Timber was chosen as a result of the client's requirements for sustainability, the tight budget and programme, and the conceptual references to scandinavian fishing villages.

Various construction methods were considered including closed panel systems and Structural Insulated Panel Systems. Traditional timber frame construction proved to be most economical and allowed for use of a timber kit manufacturer 15 miles from site, and small local contractors for erection.

The timber selected for the cladding was Scottish Larch from Russwood. This is locally sourced, durable and economical. Although other timbers are more durable, the local source was considered highly important by the client and the expected lifetime was considered acceptable.

Timber Related Features

The timber selected for the cladding was Scottish Larch meaning it was locally sourced, durable and economical. The paint was vacuum applied in the factory to achieve the most durable finish for an exposed location. Several cladding patterns were also used in a variety of width combinations including shiplap, square edged and open rainscreen. Each pattern required custom detailing for openings and corners and for junctions between the different cladding patterns. These were developed in consultation with Russwood's technical expertise to allow for movement and adequate ventilation.

CASE STUDY

INN AT JOHN O' GROATS

Name of Building

The Inn at John O' Groats

Date Completed

September 2013

Building Type

Hotel

Location

John O' Groats, Caithness

Architect

GLM

Main contractor/ Timber Supplier

GLM

Timber Cladding – Russwood

Timber Kit – Norscot

Awards

Winner of the RIAS Best use of Timber Awards 2014

Background to the Building

John O' Groats and its dilapidated eyesore of a hotel narrowly missed receiving the 2010 Carbuncle Award. From this inauspicious position the client's brief was to design a building which would establish John O' Groats as a desirable destination.

The design of the Inn responds to its harbour front location with a street frontage of brightly coloured gables in contrast with the stark white of the restored Victorian Hotel. Inspiration came from Scandinavian fishing villages and traditional British beach huts. The bold facades provide a welcome splash of colour in a sometimes bleak landscape.

The building is an evolution of the 'aparthotel' concept using arrangements of locking doors allowing variable configurations: studios, one to four bedroom apartments and separate hotel style rooms. The fenestration provides different framed views from each apartment – dramatic sea views from the living spaces, quieter inland views from the bedrooms, and angled glimpses framed in small square openings. Bedrooms are intentionally compact to give priority to dramatic kitchen/living spaces with high vaulted ceilings.

In addition to the locally sourced timber cladding, local materials and references are used throughout the interior including lobster creel light fittings, wool fabric walls by ANTA of Tain and local poetry hand painted on the risers of the stairs.