



The Lead Sheet Association



Rolled Lead Sheet enables seamless extension to Lewes Old Grammar School

Lewes Old Grammar School has been a feature on the high street of the East Sussex county town since the 18th century.

When the school identified the need for additional classroom space, it was decided to build an extension housing two new science classrooms above an existing two-storey science block built in the 1970s. There were planning obstacles to the scheme, partly due to the adjoining building being listed, however eventually the scheme was passed thanks to the innovative proposals put forward by Liam Russell Architects, to ensure a solution that was aesthetically pleasing as well as using local materials that would blend in with the historic town surroundings.

A curving roof of rolled lead sheet over a lightweight timber-framed structure was designed, with the lightness a key factor as the existing foundations on which the two storey science block was built would have to take the additional weight of the extension as well.

Although the project was mostly new-built, the design took into consideration the need to integrate the new classrooms with the building below. The lead work was interspersed with panels of local flint, and the existing windows were replaced to relate to the new structure. The key design principle, agreed with English Heritage, was to wrap the lead cladding and flint panels down to the heads of the ground floor windows.

In total, around 360 square metres of code 5 lead sourced from Associated Lead Mills was used on the project, with Hodges and Marten as the lead contractor.

The work was completed in time for the school's 500 year anniversary, and the school can now be sure that not only does the extension look great and fit well with the historic buildings and surroundings, but its aesthetic appeal and performance will continue to last for the next hundred years or more.

For more information about using Rolled Lead Sheet to BS EN 12588 visit the LSA website at www.leadsheet.co.uk



Liam Russell explained the importance of using lead on the whole project:

"The use of lead was key to the acceptance of the design, as both lead and flint are traditional to the area and imbue a feeling of quality and a conscientious approach to the work. Lead and flint used in a contemporary idiom, and improvement to the existing building, were critical in obtaining the support of English Heritage and Lewes District Council for the project. All parties felt that lead was the most true, high-quality material to work with, in particular when dealing with a legacy as long as the school's."

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