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#CaseStudy

14

The Innovation Factory

////// Belfast

Commercial



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Damien O’Neill | Paving Contractor at Castle Paving



Kingston | Moorland, Fusion | Graphite, Mid Grey & Silver, Country Kerb | Granite Aggregate

Client
Belfast City Council

Concept Architect/Structural Engineer: McAdam Design

Architect
GM Design

Contractor
Heron Bros Ltd

Groundworker
Castle Paving

Products Used:

Fusion | Graphite, Mid Grey & Silver
Chieftain VS5 | Silver
Country Kerb | Granite Aggregate
Kingston | Moorland

Tobermore Provide Paving & Facing Brick Solutions for New Business Hub in Belfast

When Belfast based architecture firm, McAdam Design, was sourcing external building and landscaping products for exciting new business hub, The Innovation Factory in Belfast, Tobermore exceeded expectations with the provision of Kingston facing brick for the building works and a variety of block paving products for the grounds.

The £9.1 million project was part-funded by Belfast City Council, Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for NI, and the construction was managed by Heron Bros Ltd.

Allan Munro, Architectural Director at McAdam Design, explained the aims of Belfast City Council in developing the 55,000 sq. ft. centre: “The primary objective was to provide high quality, supported office space to assist the development of ‘start-up’ and innovation based companies within the Greater Belfast area. The building form was structured to support the establishment of small companies (2-3 persons), provide a platform from which they can expand their ventures whilst continuing

to be supported by the centre. “The ultimate goal is for these small companies to develop sufficiently and relocate to bigger premises and then the spaces within the centre can be used again for new ventures. The building is designed with number of shared areas as a method of creating an environment where brains and ideas can find a common theme, promoting additional enterprises as ‘off shoots’ from the original business cases. It is very much an Innovation Factory in that sense.”

Allan commented on the construction of Forth River: “Construction was a relatively uncomplicated process once we got out of the ground. Given the history of the site and its previous industrial uses, a few unforeseen obstruction issues were encountered during excavations but this was effectively dealt with.”

Tobermore’s Kingston facing brick was specified in the rich blended colour of Moorland for the building works. Kingston is manufactured with a smooth surface finish and as Tobermore source the best iron oxide colour pigments available to produce the stunning colour range,

the product is guaranteed to retain its vibrancy over time. Together with the aesthetic appeal, the availability and cost-effectiveness of Kingston made it an ideal choice for The Innovation Factory.

Allan commented on this decision to employ block paving as a hard landscaping solution: “Block paving products were chosen to create feature elements around the primary building areas and to provide enhanced quality for the users and visitors to the building.

“The landscape concept was relatively simple as we quickly defined that there was an approach to the building that required a higher specification than the remainder of the parking, where a simple ‘black top’ design was used.”

McAdam Design specified Tobermore’s modular Fusion paving system in the striking colours of Graphite, Mid Grey & Silver and large format Chieftain VS5 paving system that incorporates shift protection on five sides of each block in the colour of Silver. Fusion and Chieftain VS5 are manufactured with a granite aggregate surface layer that resembles the contemporary appearance of natural granite. In balance with the modern style of the paving, Country Kerb in a granite finish was chosen as the appropriate kerbing finish.

Allan commented: “Tobermore products were specified as a direct result of previous knowledge of the products and proven performance within the environment that we were designing. This brought full comfort as it was known that they were robust, technically

sound and aesthetically pleasing.

“The selection of the products and colours was supported by the client through presentation and review. The final selection was tailored to a landscape strategy that encompassed furniture, signage and soft landscaping, though planting was kept to a minimum within the parking and perimeter of the site.”

The hard landscaping works were carried out by Castle Paving and completed in Spring 2016. Damien O’Neill of Castle Paving commented on the works: “As it was quite a large project, there was a vast amount of paving to install. I work with Tobermore products on a regular basis so the installation process was hassle-free as always. I think the products selected by McAdam Design really do the project justice and we were delighted with the finished result.”

On review of the completed project, Allan of McAdam Design noted: “The general feedback is that it is a good building that meets the needs of the brief whilst also providing an interesting and appropriate addition to this area of Belfast. The success of The Innovation Factory is demonstrated by the fact it has recently been shortlisted for a CEF award.

“The use of Tobermore products provided a high quality aesthetic to the building and the landscape proposals. The incorporation of these products met the brief, allowing the final development to deliver the all-important aspirations of the client.”

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Allan Munro | Architectural Director at McAdam Design



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