

Watermark

A WATERFRONT SCHEME THAT MAXIMISES ITS POSITION

Client: Westmark Developments Ltd

Location: Cardiff Wales

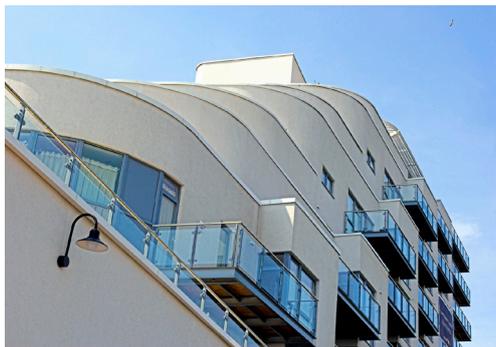
Project Value: £8M

Introduction

This scheme forms a link between the development of Prospect Place and the proposed Cardiff International Sports Village. The design was inspired by the panoramic views across Cardiff Bay, and back towards the inner harbour. The layout and geometry offers water views to the vast majority of apartments, through the creation of a 'saw tooth' plan, creating a series of stepped south-facing terraces. The building appears layered and sculptural, while maintaining a relatively simple and efficient plan form.

The Site

The site, bounded by Ferry Road to the West, Cardiff Bay to the East, 'Prospect Place' and the Peripheral Distributor Road to the North and the 'Cardiff International Sports Village' (CISV) to the South, is of a regular configuration with limiting dimensions, capable, nonetheless, of facilitating the opportunity to connect to, and continue, the existing 'bay-side' revetment boardwalk and cycle way structure being provided as part of the CISV and 'Prospect Place' schemes.



Building Design

The angled and saw-toothed arrangement of apartments to the bay-side elevation, coupled with the addition of balconies, and the regular rhythm of set backs associated with the cascading / stepped solution has created an inherent layering to the building. The resulting architectural composition is one that exudes a particular dynamic, nautical (ship-like) quality – a quality which relies on rich sculptural form, rather than extensive applied detailing or mixing of cladding materials. To further accentuate this quality, and to reinforce the nautical theme of the building, a limited palette of materials has been chosen. These are, in the main, white rendered cladding, aluminium windows, doors and louvres, stainless steel and glass balustrading, steel ventilation grilles and obscured vertical glass panelling.

The inherent layering and sculptural quality of the building has been extended to all elevations. The Ferry Road side expresses a fusion between the horizontal plinth zone of the under-croft car park and the vertical core elements of the lift, staircases and entrance / atrium, accentuated by the rhythm of the cascading / stepped solution and the effective deep reveals and parapet containment of the ancillary and apartment accommodation situations. The "Prospect Place" side expresses the dynamic, geometric form of the cantilevered 'prow' of the building through the relationship between the ancillary accommodation within the under-croft car park and the regular apartment and penthouse accommodation. The CISV side expresses the continuing recession of sun terraces through the cascading / stepped solution with the open corner arrangement of the under-croft car park entrance.

It is recognised that the building, where possible, should not present a utilitarian ventilation solution of open grilles and blank walls to the under-croft car park plinth. Instead, a composition of obscured vertical glass panels, recessed openings and seating features, combined with grille zones that intrinsically form part of the elevational treatment of each facade, provide the building with a visually stimulating solution. Moreover, the grille zones, obscured vertical glass panels and recessed seating features will provide the opportunity for Public Artwork that will not only enhance the architectural qualities of the building, but provide visual interest at street and bay-side walkway level for pedestrians and cyclists alike. (As a reference to the original Redhouse, it has been suggested that the navigation light which used to be attached to the corner of the building, to aid ships and boats as they passed through the bay, could be replicated as a feature of the new building).

Each apartment reception space has been afforded a high degree of full-height glazing associated with either a sun terrace or a large balcony. This has been balanced against bedroom spaces which have either, more modest, by contrast, eye-level ribbon windows (Ferry Road side) or full-height windows (Cardiff Bay side). As a consequence, the apartments benefit from both significant external amenity space and panoramic views across Cardiff Bay, Cardiff city centre, the CISV and the Inner Harbour.