



Energy Performance Certificates

LOCAL ARCHITECTS URGE LANCASHIRE BUSINESSES TO LOOK AT ENERGY EFFICIENCY AS ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION LOOMS

Preston-based architectural practice, Wilson Mason is urging businesses in the region to consider the energy efficiency of their premises in light of soon-to-be introduced energy performance certificates.

An EU directive, due to be implemented by spring 2008, will require energy performance certificates for all commercial buildings, to rate them on their energy efficiency.

Asset certificates will measure the inherent energy performance of the building, based on its design. The way in which the building performs and is managed will be recorded by an annually renewed operating certificate.

Asset certificates must be made available when buildings are constructed, sold or rented out – to the owner, prospective buyer or tenant, as applicable. Being energy efficient will instantly become a selling point for any commercial building and a primary concern for any buyer or occupier.

Wilson Mason says, "Businesses that are having new premises built or (refurbished) must seek to maximise the energy efficiency of their properties if they want to save money in terms of energy usage, and increase the appeal of their building to future investors."

"We know from experience that the demand for smaller carbon footprints and energy efficient architecture is increasing. Building design that helps to minimize energy consumption and the resulting environmental damage will not only provide businesses with a more robust corporate social responsibility record but will improve financial strength too."

Wilson Mason advise businesses to consider energy efficiency now, in advance of energy performance certificates being rolled out. They point to a number of design elements that can help to improve efficiency: "Addressing the fundamentals of the building design can reap considerable benefits.

Natural heat sources and sunlight should be exploited. At the same time, the potential for energy to be lost through the building structure must be reduced by having good insulation in place.

Energy consumption and costs can also be greatly reduced by looking at heating and air conditioning. Harnessing thermal heat from the ground is an alternative heating method, for instance. And solar shading on windows reduces heat inside a building, thus lessening the need for air-conditioning.

Natural ventilation is also important and should be a design consideration for those wanting to avoid costly climate control bills."

Wilson mason has recently built an energy efficient global technology centre for client Victrex plc, at Fleetwood, and several other energy efficient projects are under construction.