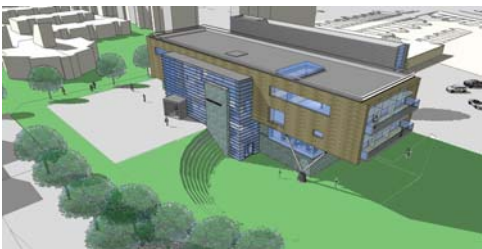


It's time to go Green



University of Manchester SEP
"Very Good"
(Bespoke BREEAM)



St Martins College, Lancaster
"Very Good"
(Bespoke BREEAM)



ISS Lancaster University
"Excellent"
(Bespoke BREEAM)



**Defra/VLA Stewart Stockman Building, Weybridge,
(ACDP3 and SAPO4 laboratories and offices)**
"Very Good"
(Bespoke BREEAM)

When it comes to building design, there's never been a better time to go green.

Green credentials can benefit a business far beyond boosting corporate social responsibility scores.

Businesses that build energy efficiency into the design of their premises can save substantial amounts of money and increase the value of their property assets.

Environmentally friendly architectural techniques can also future-proof a building against forthcoming environmental legislation.

By 2009 energy performance certificates will be required for all commercial buildings, to rate them on their energy efficiency, in line with the EU energy performance of buildings directive.

Two types of certificate will be required for commercial buildings. 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 occupier.

So, what is the most effective way to ensure your building will make the energy efficiency grade?

Look at the basics

Energy efficient design isn't all about fancy add-ons like wind turbines or wood-chips ovens, heaters, boilers/headline grabbing wind turbines. Addressing the fundamentals of the building design itself can reap considerable benefits.

Design methods should be based on maximizing natural gain and orientation. This means making the best use of natural heat sources and sunlight. At the same time, the potential for energy to be lost through the building structure must be reduced by having robust insulation in place and using glazing in a way that maximises natural light but does not absorb too much energy.

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.

Real benefits

There are many methods and techniques available to architects when it comes to developing an energy efficient building. How these are implemented depends on the individual needs of the client. Going green shouldn't be seen as a PR exercise but should realise significant cost savings for the client. It should also increase the appeal and value of a building. The demand for environmentally friendly, energy efficient buildings is increasing. Ignoring this could seriously damage your bottom line.