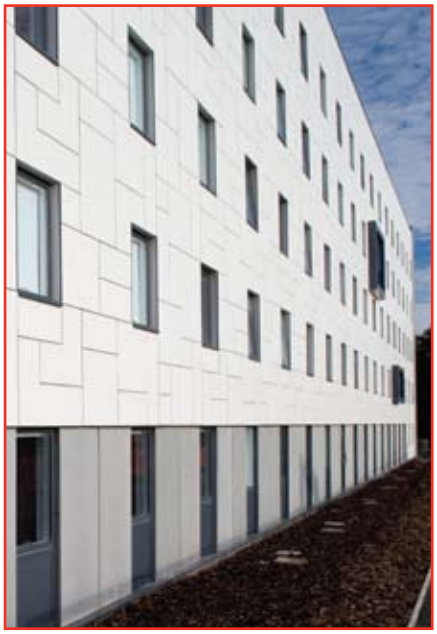
University's Chinese lantern shines with Eurofox

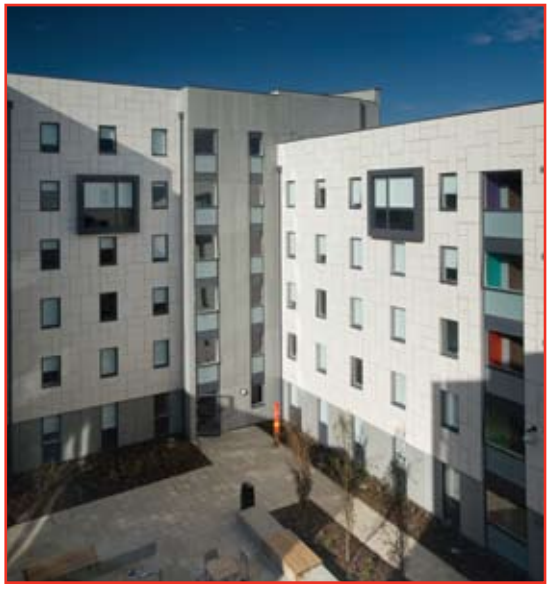
Photos courtesy of Blue Pearl Photographic & LSI LLP

Designing a new student accommodation and learning centre for international students at the University of East Anglia (UEA), LSI Architects wanted to create a modern structure that would reflect the global character of its users. They settled upon a gracefully curved structure based on a Chinese lantern. To achieve the exterior effect, they specified rainscreen cladding held in place with an innovative adhesive fix solution all supported by Eurofox Engineering's (MTK) cladding support system.

Part of a wider development of the university's buildings being Masterplanned by LSI Architects, the £23 million International Centre project has seen the construction of a building that will be home to students from around the world preparing to study in the UK. A combination of residential accommodation, teaching and laboratory spaces and lecture halls, it provides young international students with a foundation year to perfect their English



Project:	University of East Anglia
Location:	Norfolk
Architect:	LSI Architects
Product:	MTA (Structural Adhesive) Rainscreen cladding support system



and acclimatise to life at the university. Structured around an enclosed courtyard to achieve the Chinese lantern effect, the development, delivered by main contractors R. G. Carter, has already won a coveted NAA Craftsmanship Award for its innovative design.

The curves and brightly coloured panels of the frontage of the building were of key importance in achieving the unique effect. A combination of Trespa Meteon HPL and cement based Petrarch cladding panels were selected for their versatility and colour. To provide a seamless fix of the Petrarch cladding, congruent with the concrete finishes to buildings elsewhere on the UEA campus, Eurofox Engineering's MTK (Structural Adhesive) rainscreen cladding system was specified.

The system is a vertically orientated MacFOX bracket and rail system. One part of Eurofox Engineering's innovative range of cladding support systems, the MTK system is specifically designed for structurally bonded secret fix installations. To fix the Trespa rainscreen cladding panels the Eurofox Engineering supports were complemented by SikaTack Panel Adhesive from global manufacturer of building materials Sika. Capable of bearing astonishing loads, this secret fix elastic bonding agent allows for cladding panels to be attached to supports without the need for unsightly and costly mechanical fixings.

The Eurofox Engineering MTK system represented a complete cladding support solution. Eurofox brackets in a size range from 90mm to 120mm were provided, allowing a cladding zone from 90 to 160 mm to be achieved. Efficiently manufactured to the projects exact specifications, the supports were easily fixed to the substrate of the structure using pre-drilled holes.

Ease of use or 'buildability' is a key feature of Eurofox Engineering's products. As part of its services, Eurofox provides a range of assistance to specifiers. From calculating the structural requirements of the frames and supports to providing highly detailed drawings of the optimum setup of the system and helping installers complete the work quickly and efficiently . Eurofox commit themselves to making the exceptionally workable installation of the system even quicker and more efficient for the cladding installer.

Combined with SikaTack Panel Adhesive, the Eurofox Engineering system proved an effective and highly workable method of installation. Used in conjunction, Eurofox MTK brackets and SikaTack Panel Adhesive are a long lasting means of securing rainscreen cladding that is capable of bearing high load weights and stresses. Usable on a wide range of cladding materials, the bracketing and support system is manufactured in compliance with BS EN 755 and both products have achieved BBA (British Board of Agrement) certification.

The use of Eurofox Engineering's systems had further advantages for the University of East Anglia. Designed with sustainable principles in mind, the adhesive fix helps limit cold bridging to provide more effective energy saving temperature control to the structure. The MTK cladding support system is also easily recycled, being aluminium, so can be reused at the end of its life for 5% of the energy required for its original production.

Now complete the project provides a secure yet enjoyable environment for students to accustom themselves to living away from their families. Officially inaugurated and now home to 300+ students, the Chinese lantern boasts an impressive and stylish exterior thanks to Eurofox Engineering's ingenious engineering support.

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