



SPECIFICATION



TIMBER

Feilden Fowles
The Harris Partnership
Feilden Bradley Clegg Studios

It's time for timber-framed construction in the UK to stand tall and be counted, writes Owen Pritchard



AJ SPECIFICATION

Vienna might have meant nothing to Ultravox but not so for timber construction. The city has given the green light for an ambitious project that should help change how architects – and more crucially clients and the public – think about timber-frame construction.

Dubbed 'The Plyscaper', the £44-million HoHo Wien, will stand 84m tall in the Seestadt Aspern area, and include office spaces, apartments and a hotel, with 76 per cent of it using timber construction. Developers are keen to point out it will save 2,800 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, when compared with a concrete counterpart.

I'd argue that timber-framed construction remains unfashionable in the UK despite its long history. Timber's aesthetic qualities and sustainability credentials are well documented, but in cities we continually turn to concrete and steel for the structures of our buildings. Projects similar to HoHo – such as the 34-storey supertall building designed by CF Møller for a building society in Stockholm in 2013 and Michael Green's 20-storey tower in Vancouver – are examples of how architects are starting to think big again using timber. We already have a nine-storey timber-framed building

in the UK thanks to Waugh Thistleton's Stadthaus (*pictured*), but it would be great to see someone go even higher.

This month we publish three projects that use timber construction. Following on from the #GREATSCHOOLS campaign in our sister title the AJ, we include two schools by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and Feilden Fowles. They may differ in scale, but they show how building using timber can be approached in an environment that needs its architecture to be robust but tactile; both celebrate the aesthetics of wood in very different ways to provide a learning environment that meets budgetary and pedagogical requirements – a vital formula in such a fraught process as school building.

In this month's Overview we look ahead to the publication of the *National Structural Timber Specification* later this year. Providing best-practice guidelines, it will define erection methods and tolerances, facilitating the specification of timber and comparisons of its performance against other materials. *Clarification, AJS 0415: The Brands Gallery was designed Coppin Dockray Architects and The Bridge was designed by Threefold Architects. Bathroom Brands products are displayed in The Brands Gallery.*

AJ Specification

Telephone House, 66-77 Paul Street,
London EC2A 4NQ T 020 3033 2736

Editorial enquiries

E firstname.surname@emap.com
T 020 3033 plus extension below

Editor Owen Pritchard (2946)

Art editor Tom Carpenter

Head of production Alan Gordon (2731)

Production editors

Russell Cox, Cecilia Thom

AJ Editor Rory Olcayto (2724)

AJ Art director Brad Yendle (2729)

Chief executive officer Natasha Christie-Miller

Managing director, architecture group

Richard Breeden

Commercial director James MacLeod (2939)

Business development manager

Lydia Handley Millard (2863), Sunny Patel (2897)

Senior account manager

Hannah Buckley (2941)

Account managers

Oliver Gower (4258), Hugh O'Neill (2962)

Classified sales Richard Spanton (2979)

Event manager Stephanie Geisler (2951)

Production manager Laura Barretto (2684)



The Architect's Journal is registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. ©2011. Published by EMAP, part of the EMAP network. Printed in the UK by Headley Brothers Ltd.

