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Eilean Donan Castle Visitors Centre Kyle of Lochalsh, UK

Eilean Donan Castle, located at the Kyle of Lochalsh in the Highlands is one of the most iconic castles in the Scotland. Originally inhabited in the 6th century, the first fortified castle at the site was constructed in the 13th century. The castle is uniquely positioned on an island where three great sea lochs meet, offering breathtaking scenery. This picturesque setting has made it a popular venue for weddings and a favored location for filmmakers, featuring in movies such as the James Bond film "The World is Not Enough."

Eilean Donan Castle attracts around 600,000 visitors annually. Over the years, there has been a significant increase in visitors, this surge in tourism necessitated further expansion of the visitor areas.

The new extension is built on two floors. The first floor is divided into three spaces: a manager's office at one end, a boardroom at the other, and a central, roof-lit open-plan office space for the sixty-strong castle team.

The ground floor features an automated ticketing facility, newly introduced multi-language audio guides for foreign visitors, and a food preparation area for the new 'street food' offering, which reduces the need for internal café space by allowing visitors to dine outside.

In 2019, the Eilean Donan Castle Visitors Centre underwent significant development, which included the use of Sylva™ CLT Floors, Roofs, and Walls. Given the remote location

The use of prefabricated elements was key in the development of the Eilean Donan Castle Visitors Centre, given its remote location. The elements were off-site manufactured and then transported to the site in just three deliveries, minimizing disruption to the local environment and reducing logistical challenges.

Overall, using prefabricated Sylva™ CLT elements facilitated a smoother, faster, and more sustainable construction process, ensuring that the Visitors Centre could be built to high standards despite the challenges posed by its remote location. This method also underscored the project's commitment to sustainability and innovation in building practices.

About the architect

Architect Lachie Stewart of ANTA Architecture has a deep, historic connection to Eilean Donan Castle. His great grandparents, Craig and Bella Gilstrap, were instrumental in restoring the castle in the Arts & Crafts style during the 1920s. Lachie Stewart has been directly involved with the castle for nearly 30 years, beginning with restoration works in the early 1990s. He designed the first visitor centre in 1998/99 and oversaw its extension in 2005. His long-standing relationship with the castle has ensured that each development respects its historical significance while incorporating modern amenities.

Yes, the Eilean Donan Castle Visitors Centre has won a notable award. It received the **Structural Timber Awards 2020 Retail & Leisure Project of the Year**. This award recognizes excellence in the use of timber for construction, highlighting the project's innovative and sustainable building practices.

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Structural Timber Awards 2020 Retail & Leisure Project of the Year



Photo credit: John Paul Photography

General

Delivery year

2019

Building type

Others

Area (m²)

300

Storeys

2

Products

Products and Services

Sylva™ CLT Floors and Roofs, Sylva™ CLT Walls

Product volume (m³)

150

Number of deliveries

3

StoraEnso

Team

Partner of Stora Enso

Eurban

Developer

Eilean Donan Castle

Architect

ANTA Architecture

Structural Engineer

Price & Myers
Eurban

Specialist Timber Subcontractor

Eurban