

Aloft London Excel

Case Study

Architect: **Place Design and Planning**

Contractor: **AT Knott**

Materials supplied:

Alta Quartzite Paving, Oppdal Quartzite Paving and Silver Grey Granite Paving, Cladding, Copings, Benches and Blocks.

In January 2010, CED Stone Group were approached by the award winning, London based designers Place Design and Planning, to help design and specify the natural stone element for the main forecourt and external hard landscaping for the new Aloft Hotel at the ExCeL Centre, London.

After some in-depth consultation with Giles Heap of CED Stone Group, the design was finalised, the order placed by AT Knotts in July 2011 and delivered only four weeks later, in August. The design incorporated long lengths of three different European stones to create a “shimmering” theme that both reflected the shimmering cladding of the new hotel and was technically able to withstand constant use by pedestrians, taxis, mini-buses and coaches, as well as being used for a water feature and a number of large, solid stone benches.



By incorporating riven Alta and Oppdal Quartzites from Norway with their beautiful grey-green colours, wonderful reflectivity and superior technical abilities, alongside a slightly less reflective silver grey granite, we were able to create a subtle palette of shifting colour and texture that changes depending on whether the conditions are dry, dark or wet. This combination enabled the designers to complement the amazing cladding on the building, while retaining the all-important technical attributes that were required for a busy hotel drop-off point.

Although slightly more expensive, we eventually decided to use a Portuguese granite for the block benches, the specially design rills and rough hewn paving/lighting blocks in the water feature. This enabled us to both control the quality of the units and speed up the delivery in a way that could not be done by using granite from China, as was the original intention.

This proved to be a Godsend, when it was discovered that a number of special granite cladding units had been missed from the original order and CED were able to supply these additions within 2 weeks.

The Aloft Hotel scheme is a perfect example of what can be done when a designer teams up with a specialist natural stone supplier like CED, a good contractor like AT Knotts and is willing to think a little outside of the box. Being able to work with Place Design and Planning and to specify some of the more unusual European materials made such a nice change, because Europe has so much to offer.

