

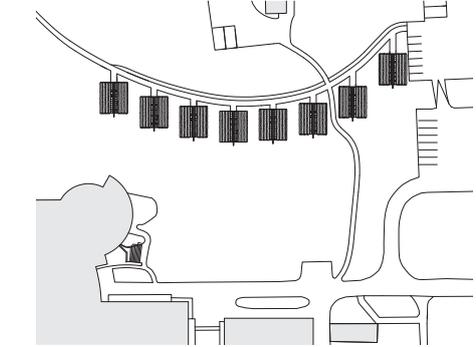
Creative Units in Aberystwyth, Wales





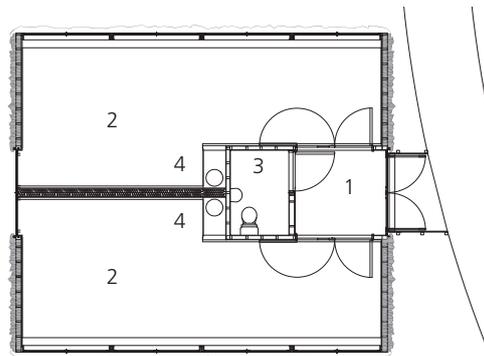
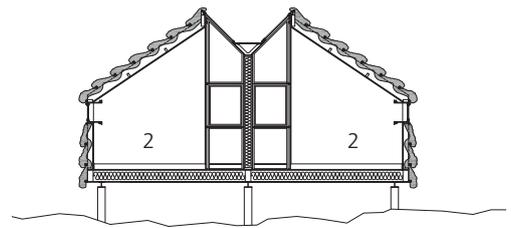
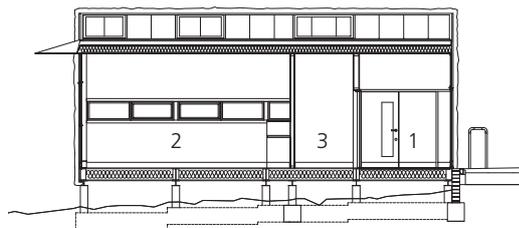
Inspired by the world of fashion: layers of ultra-thin, crinkle-look stainless steel sheet clad these new studio spaces.

The University of Aberystwyth is breaking new ground with the 16 artists' studios now built as part of its Arts Centre complex. These workshop spaces are made available at low rent to individual artists and art businesses as a place to work and interact within a creative community. The studios are arranged in pairs in eight identical buildings, cottage-like in shape, curving gently in a line on the wooded campus. A glazed wedge carved out of the apex of each building admits essential



Site plan scale 1:2500

light and ventilation; down the long sides a horizontal strip of glazing provides an additional visual link with the outside. Just as innovative as the concept behind this new facility at the Arts Centre is the design of the stainless steel skin of the studios: ultra-thin sheets of rolled stainless steel appear to have been crumpled and loosely pressed onto the timber frame, giving a futuristic appearance to the complex.



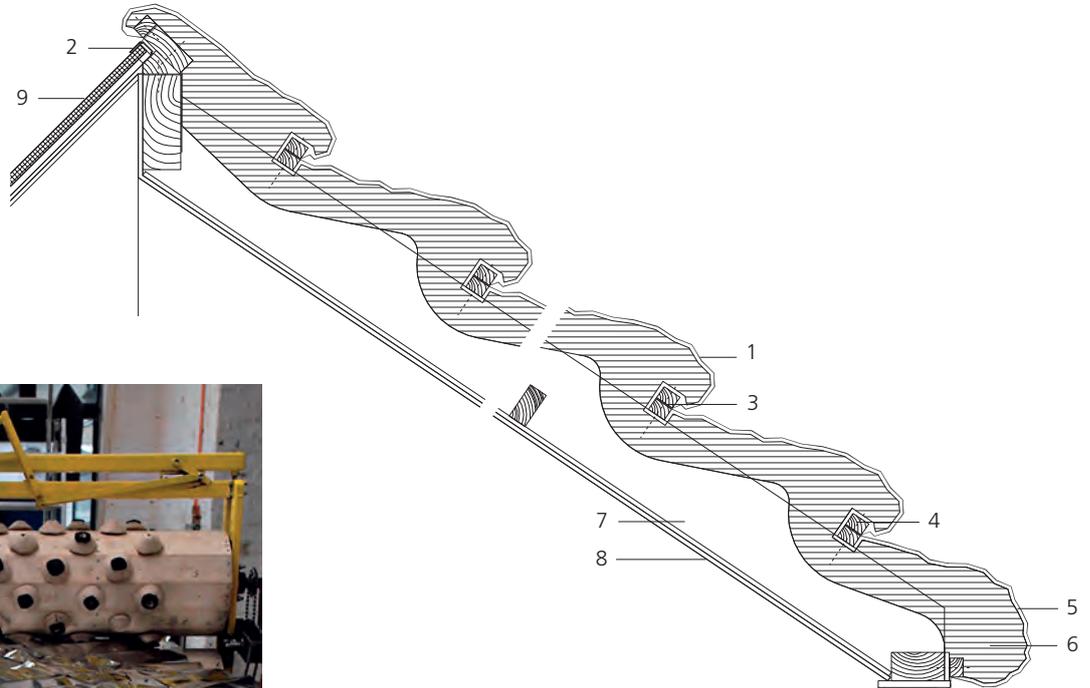
Floor plan · Sections
scale 1:200
1 Entrance area
2 Studio space
3 Disabled toilet
4 Kitchenette

The architects were keen to exploit the benefits of stainless steel but also keep costs low to suit the tight budget. So the steel chosen (grade EN 1.4404) was rolled to a thickness of just 0.127 mm. Before fitting, the sheets were given their distinctive crinkle-effect using a roller with large rubber knobs. Then the one-metre wide strips of stainless steel were mounted horizontally onto the timber frame, starting at the bottom. Above the strips of windows at the sides the cladding was continued up over the roof, the ends of the strips wrapping down over the

front and rear of the building to form a diagonal structure on the gable ends. This kind of 'façade system' allows the sheets to be connected, for example to the windows, without any difficulty. After fitting the foil envelope, two layers of CFC-free foam were sprayed onto the inside of the sheets to brace the structure and provide thermal insulation. The unconventional design of these studios lends a very special character to the Arts Centre, further enhancing its reputation as one of Britain's leading flagships for the contemporary arts.

The colours of the sky and surrounding woodland bounce off the fractal surfaces of the stainless steel.





Sectional detail scale 1:20

- 1 0.127 mm stainless steel sheet, EN 1.4404, bright-annealed surface
- 2 Cover sheet, stainless steel
- 3 Continuous sealing strip between sheets of stainless steel
- 4 35/50 mm roof batten
- 5 10 mm rigid polyurethane foam
- 6 150 mm polyurethane foam
- 7 Timber frame
- 8 Interior lining: 12.5 mm plasterboard, vapour barrier, 9 mm OSB
- 9 Skylight

Their three-dimensional shape gives these thin sheets strength and guards against further unwanted deformation.

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