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Copper Green House

Copper cladding on the 'Level 6' Green House by Barratt at the BRE Innovation Park demonstrates that there is no reason why meeting the highest sustainability standards should stifle architectural design.

Opened in May this year, Green House is the first house by a "volume" house-builder to achieve the highest *Code for Sustainable Homes* Level 6, an 'aspirational standard based on zero carbon emissions for the dwelling and high performance across all environmental categories'. Designed by Gaunt Francis Architects, it aims to make sustainable housing mainstream and is designed as a test bed for Code-compliant materials, technologies, systems and strategies, with potential for mass production in mind. This prototype building will be rigorously tested over the next two years to assess its design, construction and materials.

Copper was chosen by the architects for its special architectural cladding qualities to contrast with white rendered walls, alongside its sound environmental credentials. The three-storey, three-bedroom family home was specifically designed to look more conventional than its neighbouring projects at the BRE Innovation Park - comprising the most progressive, experimental, sustainable homes in Europe. Green House has proved very popular with consumers as well, winning the 2007 *Home for the Future* competition with 22,000 readers of a national newspaper voting for it.

For its materials, Green House achieved an overall score of 15 credits in the *Code for Sustainable Homes*. The Code makes credits available for use of materials - related to BRE *Green Guide* ratings – applied to key elements such as external walls and roofs which range from 3 for A+ to 0.25 for D and none for E ratings. Various different copper-finished specifications are considered in the Green Guide, including materials for structure, insulation, moisture control and finishes. All the copper-finished roofs and most copper wall cladding specifications considered achieved A+ or A ratings. Even the few build-ups with lower ratings could easily be improved by replacing particular components, without affecting the copper cladding itself.

Further information on Copper in Architecture can be found at: www.cda.org.uk/arch and projects from around Europe are showcased at: www.copperconcept.org.

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