

Press release from Jan de Beer, cell 082 456 3677:

S.A. Vitreous Enamel Steel Cladding For Historic Liverpool Tube Station

Vitreous enamel steel cladding supplied by South African producer, Vitrex, was exported for the refurbishment of the historic 19th Century Hamilton Square Station, part of a large-scaled project to improve all five Liverpool city centre Merseyrail loop line stations.

Vitrex cladding was already installed at Liverpool Central (2012), Lime Street (2013) and James Street (2013) stations, and Vitrex has started supplying vitreous enamel steel cladding also for Moorfields, the fifth, and final, station to be upgraded and scheduled to reopen in April 2016.

The aim of the R860 million overhaul of the tube stations, owned by Merseyrail, is to improve facilities for the increasing number of passengers as well as modernise the stations with better flooring, brighter lighting and improved passenger information to plan their journeys throughout the stations, says Cristian Cottino, Sales & Marketing Director of Vitrex. Merseyrail's chain of combined ticket offices and convenience stores have also been upgraded.

Cottino says the Hamilton Square cladding contract, secured by David Shepherd of Vitrex Europe and Middle East, called for the provision of 1 000 square metres of mainly 'Singapore White' heavy gauge vitreous enamel steel panels, and also 'Slate Grey' panels for the intersections of adits and platforms. The contract included the supply of curved panels, which had to be fitted with acoustic linings, for the platforms of the 130-year-old station.

The panels were designed and specified by the Berkshire, UK, company, SAS Project Management, which also installed the cladding panels and light boxes along the platforms, tube tunnels and commuter walkways. In addition, SAS Project Management (which collaborated with Vitrex on the cladding installation at the other Liverpool CBD stations), also installed 2 000 square metres of bespoke linear plank ceilings and upstands along the Hamilton Square station.

Vitreous enamel steel cladding panels have been widely exported by Vitrex for several decades now, particularly for installations at rail stations in the UK, Ireland and the Far East. "An important reason is that vitreous or 'porcelain enamel steel' cladding, as it is sometimes called, has specific properties that make it the ideal solution in terms of durability, particularly in high traffic areas such as underground stations," Cottino explains.

Among these benefits are:

Low maintenance: The wide variety of colours available is permanent, non-fading and the surface requires only simple, periodic maintenance;

Corrosion proof: The panels do not rust, even in extreme marine conditions. The coating is resistant to most alkalis, acids, organic solvents and unaffected by kerosene and vehicle emissions;

Hygienic: The absence of pores on the smooth, hard surface eliminates absorption of dirt and grease, and reduces the presence and growth of bacteria and mould;

Resistance to abrasion: The hardwearing surface is resistant to abrasive materials with a surface hardness rating of between 6 and 7 on the MOH scale (Quartz has a rating of 7).

Vandal-proof and impact resistant: It is extremely difficult to permanently mark the surface with knives, keys and screwdrivers. Unwanted graffiti and spray paint can easily be removed;

Non-combustible: Classified as 'Non-combustible (A1)' in accordance with ISO Standard EM 13501-1, the panels will resist heat of up to 650 degrees Celsius and continuous temperatures of up to 400 degrees C;

Thermal shock: Resists extreme temperature differentials and will withstand rapid cooling by water spray from 400 degrees C to room temperature over a 30-second period;

Vermin-proof: The surface is impervious to attack by rodents and boring insects;

Acoustic and thermal insulation: Specific performance requirements can be addressed at the design stage.

Environmentally friendly: The panels have a working life of over 30 years with minimum maintenance required. They also do not need strong chemicals for cleaning, and are fully recyclable.

Ends

Caption (for all pics of new station):

Historic Hamilton Square Station has become the fourth Liverpool tube station to be clad with vitreous enamel steel cladding supplied by the South African company, Vitrex.

Ends

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