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WELSH SLATE
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Welsh Slate products help strike the balance between design and crime

Architectural products feature on the new HQ of an international crime agency.

Natural slate walling and decorative aggregates from Welsh Slate are bringing a soothing calm to the new headquarters of an international crime agency.

The manufacturer's Cwt-y-Bugail blue/grey pillared and rustic walling and Cwt-y-Bugail blue/grey pillared and rustic blocks in various sizes, have been used for and around a 232m² feature waterfall at the new €105 million offices of Eurojust, which combats serious cross-border crime and organised crime within the EU.

The walling and decorative aggregates are part of Welsh Slate's architectural portfolio of products that also includes flooring and paving.

The new building enables the agency's Netherlands personnel to relocate from two locations to just the one, in The Hague's World Forum/International Zone area.

Developed by the Central Government's Real Estate Agency, the Ministry of Justice and Security, and the municipality, the stringent security measures and complexity of the location required a carefully integrated design solution.

Mecanoo architects have designed a headquarters building that is an elegant composition of two volumes – a high-rise tower and a low-rise plinth on the park side - in which the rhythm of pure white composite façade elements gives the building a timeless, classic beauty. Windows are subtly tilted horizontally or vertically, reflecting both the sky and the surrounding landscape.

Mecanoo designed the landscape as one of undulating dunes with grassy vegetation and wild flowers, in collaboration with landscape architects DS Landschaparchitecten. By incorporating the security requirements within the landscape design, the building has retained an open character.

Inside, visitors are welcomed into a spacious, double-height lobby from which there is a gradual transition from open spaces to more private areas. A wide staircase, overlooking

the dune landscape, descends to the conference centre. Higher levels feature contemporary office environments to encourage cooperation.

Eliano Felicio, marketing communications manager for Mecanoo architects, said: "We're positive about the stone as it delivers the intended atmosphere and most of all responds to the security requirements that such a complex building demands."

Frans Rombouts, manager for main contractor Heijmans who partnered with de Enk Groen & Golf on the landscaping element, said: "The contract was awarded on the basis of economically most advantageous tender, with the construction quality being a major contributing factor."

The Welsh Slate walling and decorative aggregates were specified by Heijmans, supplied through Lei Import in The Netherlands, and installed by Roys Maatwerk.