

Our architects – helping build success

Architects see buildings in a different way.

The earlier they are involved in a project, the more value they can bring. This can be anything from the most effective use of space to access or the fundamental issues around building regulations.

There are currently five chartered architects working within the business, working in project teams to deliver the complex facilities needed to handle our waste.

These buildings include:

Our Silos Maintenance Facility (SMF) provides maintenance and operational support for the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo retrievals.

Architectural input into this vital facility has ensured this striking building offers users a pleasant working environment. Colour has been used to guide people around the workspace, and it has specially placed windows to allow in natural light – a first for a building in this nuclear category.

Our Replacement Analytical Project (RAP) will be the new home to laboratories that analyse materials from across the Sellafield site. It is being built on the side of the existing National Nuclear Laboratory central laboratory facility, on the northern edge of the Sellafield site.

This complex project, being built onto the side of an existing building on a limited patch of land, needed architectural input to ensure that it didn't expand from four storeys to six.

Profile: Jason Boyle

Lead architect Jason Boyle has worked at Sellafield for 14 years, based in our Warrington offices. He's currently working on our Replacement Analytical Project (RAP).

Jason said: "I found out about the role and applied through the Royal Institute of British Architects. I began working on projects like the flask replacement facility (studies phase) and the existing building's spray booth modification, while I trained to become a responsible engineer. I then left capability to work on the Silos Maintenance Facility as the civil structural and architectural responsible engineer for eight years. Following the delivery of this project I went on to become lead architect on RAP where I am today.

"I'm really proud that I was able to bring Building Information Modelling (BIM) to the SMF Project. It meant we were involved in Sellafield's early BIM adoption which led to me being the youngest recipient of Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

“Architecture is important. No other discipline understands how to design a building like we do. Architects understand the macro and micro of buildings and are trained to co-ordinate with all other design disciplines. Architects play a vital role in nuclear design – we start with building flow diagrams, radiological classification of areas, material and people flow which are then turned into the design basis for a building’s layout. Architects understand Building and Planning Regulations but also provide expertise on fire safety in design and specialist finishes. We also take a lead role in sustainable design and specification of Sellafield’s buildings.

“We offer a different aspect to design by thinking about the environment the workers will be working in. And because we are in this unique position, architects at Sellafield can also offer vital expertise and advice to architectural colleagues in the supply chain. We have experience of dealing with both complex projects and nuclear, a real rarity in our world.”

Profile: Mark Alty

Mark is Sellafield’s design capability lead for architecture. He has worked for Sellafield Ltd for the past 14 years and is currently engaged with our Main Site Command Facility project.

He is based at Hinton House in Warrington.

Mark said: “Having worked as an architect across a number of different sectors including private and public housing, education, leisure, civic buildings and student accommodation I joined Sellafield Ltd as a senior architect in 2008.

“Although I have worked on numerous projects, including the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo control room building and Windscale pile chimney decommissioning project, my main role has been providing architectural assurance across the Sellafield security enhancement projects programme. I have also delivered the civil structural and architectural (CS&A) responsible engineer role supporting the provision of unified command and control on site for emergency response in the Main Site Command Facility.

“In 2016 my role broadened and I was appointed to the design capability Lead for architecture role, within CS&A capability, and together with managing a small architectural delivery team provide architectural assurance across a variety of design portfolios.

“The training, qualifications and experience of an architect provide the business with the assurance that building design or modification will be delivered in accordance with current standards and legislation, will be co-ordinated, safe, secure and sustainable.”

Profile: Certina Chan

Certina has been working for Sellafield Ltd for the past year as an architectural graduate. She is currently supplying architectural input to the Civil Nuclear Constabulary Operational Unit project.

She is the company's first architectural graduate and is working out of Hinton House in Warrington.

Her first year with us has already provided opportunities to work across a wide range of projects including the CNC OU, Main Site Command Facility, building regulation regularisation and undertaking a fire safety review of the recent Hinton House refurbishment.

Certina said: "As an architectural graduate within the team, I am accountable for producing design deliverables including but not limited to—3D models, 2D drawing packages, written specifications, and project documentations.

"I am proud of the prudence and attentiveness that we uphold towards both conventional and nuclear safety. Architects and architectural technologists at Sellafield Ltd celebrate 'Safety by Design' in every project, for every practice, and at any scale. By creating evidence-based solutions that safeguard nuclear decommissioning, we contribute to creating a safe and secure environment for both public and our workforce. We always remind ourselves of the collective responsibility for current end-users and future generation, which is in resonance with this year's theme of the World Architecture Day—'Architecture for well-being'. We provide this by adhering to design standards, legal specifications, and site license conditions.

"From a sustainability point of view, architects play a critical role to Sellafield. From study to concept, from spatial coordination to technical design, from construction to handover, from operation to maintenance, from retrofitting to demolition....architects and architectural technologists make informed decisions in every aspect of the building life cycle from cradle to grave, which is essential to the reduction of embodied carbon and clean decommissioning of our nuclear site."