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New roof window for historical buildings developed

The VELUX Group has successfully developed an entirely new roof window designed for historical buildings. The new concept meets stricter aesthetic requirements for historical buildings and has excellent technical values. Consequently, the VELUX Group has a unique product platform – the first of its kind.

The Heritage Agency of Denmark has just approved the major renovation of a historical listed residential building in Nykøbing Falster, in the southern part of Denmark. The project includes eight new roof windows developed by leading designers and engineers from the VELUX Group in close collaboration with the acknowledged architect Merete Lind Mikkelsen.

After a three months test period, the installation of the roof windows in the attic of the residential building has been met with great satisfaction. The renovation of the historical building, including the VELUX roof windows, passed the test and gained the recognition by the local authorities concerned.

"This is the first roof window of its kind, and the first installation of this newly-developed roof window in a historical listed building," says the architect behind the new roof window, Merete Lind Mikkelsen, recently awarded for her work with historical buildings by the Henning Larsen Foundation.

A tribute to strong aesthetic traditions and human liveability

The new roof window includes a series of novel features: a wooden internal frame and lining; external frame and flashing parts in zinc that suit the roofing materials typically used in historical buildings; a stepped pane and robust hinges that complement the old cast iron windows; and outstanding surface temperatures and U-values.

"We chose zinc and copper because these metals age beautifully together with old buildings," explains Klaus Lorentzen, Executive Vice President of Global Product Development in the VELUX Group.

He goes on to say that working with building components for historical buildings differs from product development for conventional residential and public buildings in that the centre of gravity of the project is the aesthetic dimension. However, it has been possible to unify the need for the roof window to meet new stricter aesthetic requirements and excellent room comfort just like a modern high tech window.

"This new heritage roof window proves categorically that it is possible to develop roof windows that fully acknowledge the existing materials and aesthetics of historical buildings and, at the same time, ensure high levels of human liveability. This unique combination marks a milestone in the fields of architecture and cultural heritage," continues Merete Lind Mikkelsen.

Development catalysed by stricter requirements throughout Europe

The VELUX Group has enjoyed a strong position in the conservation category for many years. A renewed focus on safeguarding cultural heritage and imposing stricter aesthetic requirements on historical buildings throughout Europe has catalysed the development of the new roof window.

The trend has also moved towards the introduction of more restrictions on how to modify historical buildings, and an increased focus on the energy performance of building components. The new roof window for historical buildings meets the arrival of these new requirements.

"Even though historical building aesthetics and requirements differ from country to country and necessitate local adaptation, the new heritage concept gives us a unique platform to enter a dialogue with heritage agencies across Europe and explore how this new product platform can be put to use," says Klaus Lorentzen.

An obligation to preserve cultural treasures

As a market leader, the VELUX Group has been committed throughout the years to driving innovation forward and pushing back the barriers of product performance and qualities. Product development has always had as its focal point the unique needs of the customer – in this case, the entrepreneurs of the historical building in Nykøbing Falster and the Heritage Agency of Denmark, the authority responsible for approving renovations of listed buildings in Denmark.

"We have the greatest respect for a society's cultural heritage and see it as an obligation to help preserve cultural treasures, not only on Danish soil but on a European scale. This project clearly testifies that it is possible," says Klaus Lorentzen.

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For more than 70 years, the VELUX Group has created better living environments for people around the world. Making the most of daylight and fresh air through the roof. Our product programme includes roof windows and modular skylights as well as a range of decoration and sun screenings, roller shutters, installation solutions and intelligent home controls.

These products help to ensure a healthy and sustainable indoor climate. For work and learning. For play and pleasure. We work globally – with sales and manufacturing operations in more than 40 countries and around 10,000 employees worldwide. The VELUX Group is owned by VKR Holding A/S, a limited company wholly owned by foundations and family. For more information, visit www.velux.com.

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