

An aerial photograph of a slate roof, showing the texture and pattern of the tiles. The lighting creates shadows that emphasize the three-dimensional quality of the slate. The Riverstone logo is centered on the image, featuring the brand name in a white serif font within a white outline that follows the shape of the letters. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the word.

# RIVERSTONE<sup>®</sup>

THE EVOLUTION OF SLATE



**Ahmed El-Helw**  
Founder and  
Managing Director

## Welcome

Hello,

Riverstone is the jewel in the SSQ crown.

It is not slate. It is Phyllite – a metamorphic natural stone that makes for some of the strongest, longest-lasting roofing, flooring and cladding that money can buy.

Over twenty years ago, at SSQ we bought the San Luis Phyllite operation in La Repressa, Argentina, adding world-class Phyllite to our range – and that is how Riverstone was born.

In this brochure, you can read all about Riverstone – its stunning natural aesthetics, its incredible strength and longevity, and its track record of passing the most stringent testing regimes on Earth.

And you can learn about what we do at SSQ to support our customers – including Ultra Cover, which sees us guarantee our finest Phyllite for a hundred years.

If you would like to learn more about what we do, the product we provide, and how we can help you, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Ahmed El-Helw  
Founder and Managing Director

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# Introducing Riverstone

The diamond of the slate world

Subjected to incredible heat and pressure over millions of years, Riverstone delivers outstanding aesthetics and durability.

And that is what makes it one of the hardest, toughest, longest-lasting roofing materials in the world.

On the plains of South America, between the Pampas and the Andes, SSQ found Phyllite – the slate-like Phyllite stone that has gone on to become one of the world's most sought-after roofing, cladding and flooring materials.

It is extremely rare. But at SSQ, we are proud owners of one of the world's few Phyllite quarries in La Repressa, Argentina - and it is from here that we source Riverstone.

Riverstone: sleek, stylish – and extremely versatile

Whether it is as roofing, cladding or flooring, Riverstone graces domestic and commercial buildings all around the world, from America, to Australia, to thousands of homes and businesses throughout the UK.



## 560m years in the making

Like slate, Phyllite is the product of hundreds of millions of years of heat and pressure. In Phyllite's case, those painstaking geological processes continued for millions more years. And the result is a material that is harder, denser and stronger than any of the alternatives – with a grey sheen that is utterly unique, too.

# Why Riverstone

Exclusively sold by SSQ: outstanding quality Phyllite from SSQ's own quarry – one of just a few Phyllite sources in the world.

After supplying Phyllite for more than twenty years, we have the skill and expertise to sort the best from the rest, and offer our customers some of the finest material of its kind.

## Technical credentials:

Riverstone achieves a W1, S1, T1 classification, and surpasses the strictest international quality requirements, including the toughest standards in both the US and UK.

## Proven track record:

The first Riverstone roof was installed in the UK more than 25 years ago, and it's been accepted for use on dozens of

Grade II listed buildings, as well as properties in conservation areas. A reference list of projects can be found at the end of this brochure.

## Life expectancy and guarantees:

Riverstone has been tested to ASTM C406 standard, and has achieved an S1 rating, meaning it's expected to last a minimum of 75 years. At SSQ, we offer a 100-year lifetime guarantee on our Riverstone roofs.

## Equivalent to indigenous slate:

After closely examining SSQ's Riverstone Phyllite and comparing to Delabole, its closest indigenous equivalent, a respected independent geologist concluded the two are aesthetically similar, and that Riverstone could be considered to be stronger and longer-lasting.



# Geology and San Luis quarry

Phyllite is a type of metamorphic rock, that forms when shale is subjected to incredible heat and pressure for hundreds of millions of years underground.

The resulting material is an outstanding natural stone that is perfectly suited to roofing, flooring, cladding and much more.

Harder, denser and stronger than slate, or any of its other competitor materials, Phyllite nevertheless splits easily during processing, and the mica particles on its surface give it an unmistakable 'phyllitic sheen'.

## Thrives under pressure

Phyllite is the result of similar geological processes to the ones that produce other natural materials like slate – except Phyllite undergoes even higher temperatures and greater pressures. That causes the clay present in the material to break down and form mica, which is responsible for Phyllite's satin-like lustre.

## The finest Phyllite, sourced from South America

Phyllite is extremely rare – much more so than slate. But at SSQ, we are lucky enough to own one of the finest Phyllite quarries in the world – San Luis, in La Repressa, Argentina.

It is here that we source our exclusive Riverstone Phyllite and put the extracted material through the most rigorous quality checks, before distributing the very best of it to customers all around the world.



# Comparisons with indigenous slate

For centuries, people across the British Isles have been roofing their homes with slate. Quality natural slate is hard, strong, extremely long-lasting, and often gorgeous to look at.

However, sourcing a replacement roof made of Scottish, Irish, Welsh or Cornish slate can be extremely challenging.

Indigenous slate is extremely hard to get hold of. Many of Britain's traditional slate quarries have closed – or produce so little material that sourcing it is hugely challenging.

But fortunately, Riverstone offers an outstanding alternative.

## Equivalent or superior

Since we first brought it to the UK over twenty years ago, Riverstone has become a popular alternative to some of the country's most beloved indigenous slate.



# An outstanding alternative

So how exactly does Riverstone measure up against Britain's most popular indigenous slates?

As the table below shows, it can deliver almost exactly the same benefits as material like Killaloe, Ballachulish and Delabole can – while being much easier and more cost-effective to get hold of.

That is why when architects, developers, and homeowners around the UK need to replace indigenous slate, it is Riverstone they choose.

	Riverstone	Delabole	Ballachulish	Killaloe
Phyllite Slate	✓	Borderline	✗	✗
Pronounced Grain	✓	✓	✓	✓
True Grey Colour	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pronounced Dressed Edges	✓	✓	✓	✓
Geological Age > 600 million years	✓	✗	✗	✗
Very low water absorption	✓	✓	✓	✓
Very low calcium carbonate content	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pre-holing	✓	✗	✗	✗
Stock on the ground	✓	✗	✗	✗



# Christ's College

Brecon, Wales

Riverstone was entrusted with the task of helping one of Britain's oldest and most prestigious schools.

Christ College in Brecon was established as a Dominican friary in the sixteenth century, before King Henry VIII authorised its conversion into a school. Nearly five hundred years later, it is regarded one of the best co-educational independent schools in the country, with 300 students.

In 2001, the College committed to a more than decade-long roof restoration programme – a challenging undertaking, given that a number of its buildings have Grade I and Grade II listings.

Originally, the school leadership naturally assumed that the existing roofs were made of Welsh slate – but actually, when it came to replacing it, it was discovered many of its buildings were roofed with Cornish Delabole slate instead.

Delabole, like all of Britain's indigenous slates, is now very difficult if not impossible to get hold of – which made Riverstone the obvious alternative.

Riverstone has substituted for Delabole on dozens of projects throughout Cornwall and beyond. But it is also readily available – the SSQ-owned La Repressa Quarry in Argentina could supply as much as the school needed throughout its over ten-year renovation work.

The product was rigorously assessed by the Cadw and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, and approved for use.

<b>Architect</b>	Beacons Construction, Brecon
<b>Roofing</b>	Beacons Construction, Brecon
<b>Type</b>	School
<b>Category</b>	Refurbishment
<b>Element</b>	Roof
<b>Product</b>	Riverstone Ultra



# Testing

Riverstone has been extensively tested to the world's strictest and most respected standards for natural stone.

After rigorous assessment by experts in the field, it has achieved outstanding results.

Riverstone has achieved W1-T1-S1 classification, the highest result possible, in the UK's BS EN 12326 testing.

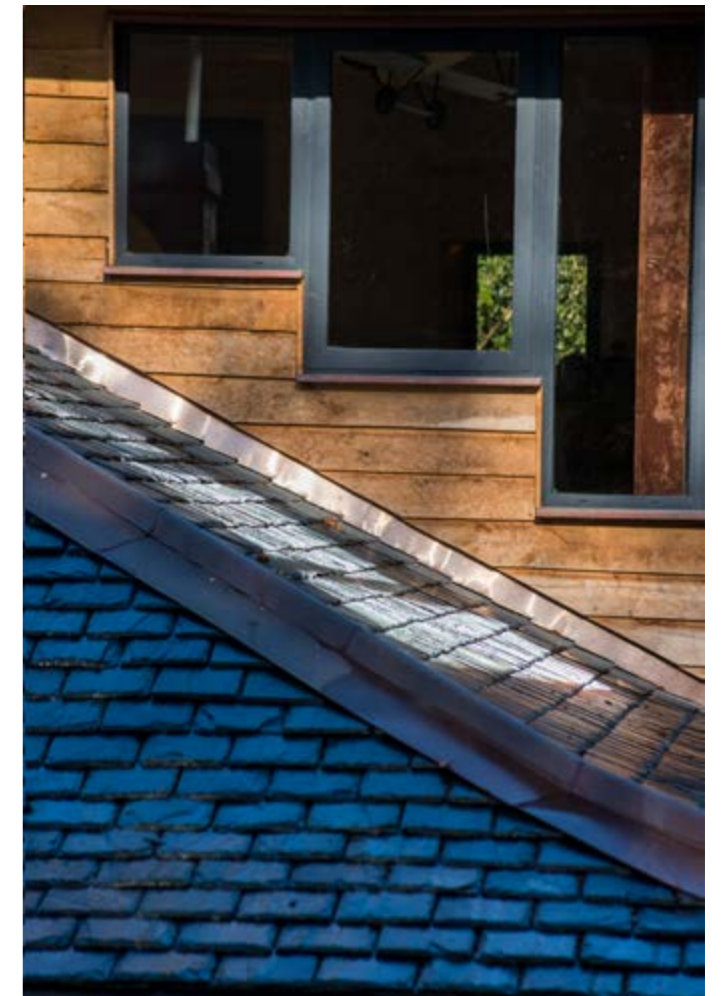
It has achieved Grade S1, again the highest result possible, when tested to the US: ASTM C 406 standard.

Riverstone also demonstrates exceptionally low water absorption, far outperforming test requirements. It can withstand extreme freeze-thaw cycling, as well as salt exposure, that can weaken more absorbent slates.

It exhibits excellent resistance to acid and weather damage, making it suitable for the harshest of climates, and nearly impervious to atmospheric pollutants.

Riverstone also achieves T1 standard, meaning that it will not severely weather or oxidise.





## Case Study

# Summer House

Cheltenham, Gloucester

Phyllite is the ideal stone for any design challenge or artistic feature – and Riverstone Phyllite slate offers superior performance for the most demanding requirements.

Set in stunning natural surrounds in the heart of leafy Gloucestershire, Summer House is a striking family home that blends the classic and the contemporary – combining modern touches with traditional materials like timber and stone.

That made it the perfect candidate for a pristine roof made of Gruesa-grade Riverstone. Nearly nine thousand pieces of outstanding Argentinian Phyllite were expertly fitted in what was sometimes a challenging installation – the slate was unusually thick, of a grade rarely used outside of Scotland.

The result was an immaculate roof perfectly in keeping with its charming surroundings.

Phyllite is the ideal stone for any design challenge or artistic feature. Riverstone Phyllite slate offers superior performance for the most demanding requirements.

<b>Architect</b>	Jonathan Rhind Architects
<b>Roofing</b>	Jeremy Limbrick and Simon Bence Roofing
<b>Type</b>	Housing
<b>Category</b>	New Build
<b>Element</b>	Roof
<b>Product</b>	Riverstone Gruesa
<b>Scope</b>	c.8,700pcs



# Ultra Cover from SSQ

A roof is a serious investment – and that means you want a material you know is going to last.

That is why, at SSQ, we have introduced Ultra Cover – a comprehensive package of guarantees designed to ensure our products last longer than the building they are installed on.

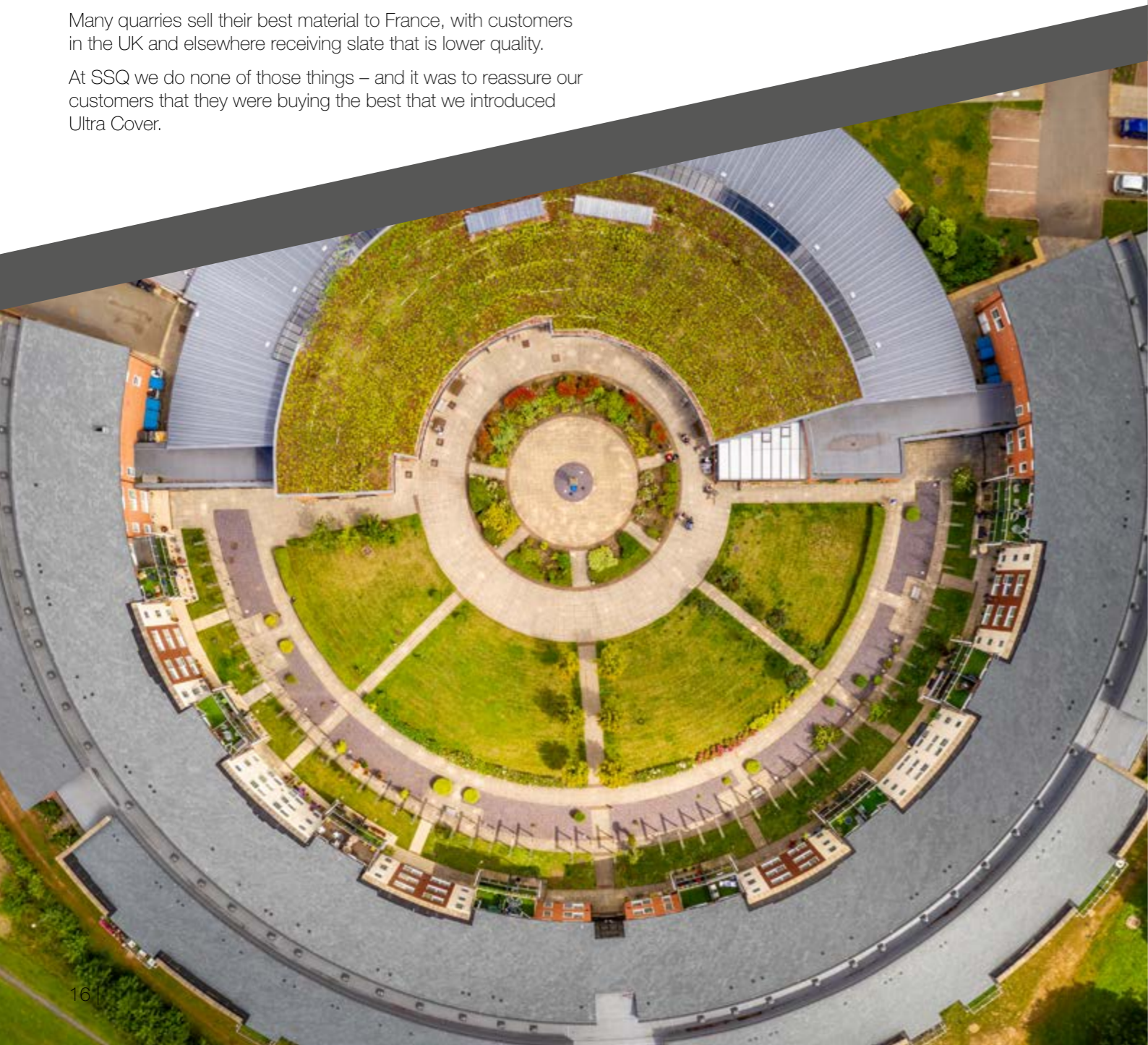
## Why is it needed?

Because there are thousands of companies selling slate all around the world – but sadly, some are not as reputable as others.

In any quarry, between 85 and 90% of the material produced is not good enough quality to be used for roofing. However, some businesses go on and sell this sub-par slate into the roofing market anyway, resulting in roofs that quickly rust, delaminate or otherwise fail.

Many quarries sell their best material to France, with customers in the UK and elsewhere receiving slate that is lower quality.

At SSQ we do none of those things – and it was to reassure our customers that they were buying the best that we introduced Ultra Cover.



## Ultimate peace of mind

Ultra Cover seeks to address five key areas that are crucial to the health and longevity of a quality Phyllite roof.

### Slate quality

To qualify for Ultra Cover, a roof has to use ultra-grade Riverstone, the highest quality Phyllite we offer. Installed on prestigious projects around the world, it has even been accepted for use in some conservation areas and to replace indigenous slate

### Market-leading fittings, fixings and ancillaries

We have developed an exceptional roof installation system made up of a whole range of quality components – including dry fix ridge & hip kits, hip trays, a choice of breather membranes to suit project requirements, dry verge, ventilation, slate hooks, batten, copper nails and more

### Workmanship

Ultra Cover roofs are installed by one of our network of comprehensively vetted SSQ Assured Installers  
Surveys during installation: An Ultra Cover roof is independently surveyed several times during the installation process, as well as by SSQ representatives

### 100-year guarantees

We are so confident in the quality of the material we provide, and the skill of our SSQ Assured Installers, that we guarantee our Ultra Cover roofs for 100 years – considerably longer than the lifespan of the average building



## Case Study

# Broad Meadow

Dudley, West Midlands

Broad Meadow, in Dudley, the West Midlands, is not your typical retirement complex.

Often, developments like these are bland and functional, built to very conservative designs.

But the architects behind Broad Meadow had other ideas. They wanted something bold and distinctive – and the striking, circular building that resulted stands out as one of the most iconic of its kind.

However, the development wasn't without its problems.

Key to the building's appeal was a pristine slate roof – one that had to be applied with painstaking care and attention at a challenging low pitch.

But years on from that original installation, the roof started to leak. The building's owners had no choice but to get the entire thing replaced – and it was then they turned to SSQ for help.

Four thousand square metres of SSQ's Riverstone Phyllite were fitted at an extremely low pitch. Given the extensive

investment they made in the project, and the issues they'd experienced with the previous roof, the client was extremely keen to ensure they were protected with extensive guarantees.

Ultra-Cover provided them with the ideal solution, with the full roof system covered by a Latent Defect Insurance policy, that also covered the installation and design of the roof too.

<b>Roofing</b>	RS Miller Roofing
<b>Type</b>	Retirement Home
<b>Category</b>	Refurbishment
<b>Element</b>	Roof
<b>Product</b>	Riverstone Ultra
<b>Scope</b>	c.100,000 roofing slates



# Selections

One of Riverstone's greatest advantages is that it retains its strength even when split extremely thin. We offer Riverstone in several selections – including Ultra-grade, the thinnest, highest-quality Phyllite we provide.

## Ultra

### 5 -7 mm

- Thickness 5-7mm
- Weight 40KG /M<sup>2</sup>\*
- Very smooth texture
- Extremely flat, uniform thickness
- Simple & fast installation
- Minimum sorting required
- <3% wastage
- 100 year guarantee
- Complies with ASTM C406 - Grade S1



## Heavy

### 8-9mm

- Thickness 8-9 mm
- Weight 55KG /M<sup>2</sup>\*\*
- Relatively smooth texture
- Some thickness and flatness variation
- Requires an experienced roofer
- Precise sorting required
- >5% wastage
- 50 year guarantee



## First

### 6 - 8 mm

- Thickness 6-8mm
- Weight 42KG/M<sup>2</sup>\*
- Smooth texture
- Moderately flat, slight thickness variations
- More complex installation
- Moderate sorting required
- 5% Wastage
- 75 year guarantee



## Montana

### 7-9mm

- Thickness 7-9mm
- Weight 44KG /M<sup>2</sup>\*
- Relatively smooth texture
- Some thickness and flatness variation
- Requires an experienced roofer
- Precise sorting required
- >5% wastage
- 50 year guarantee



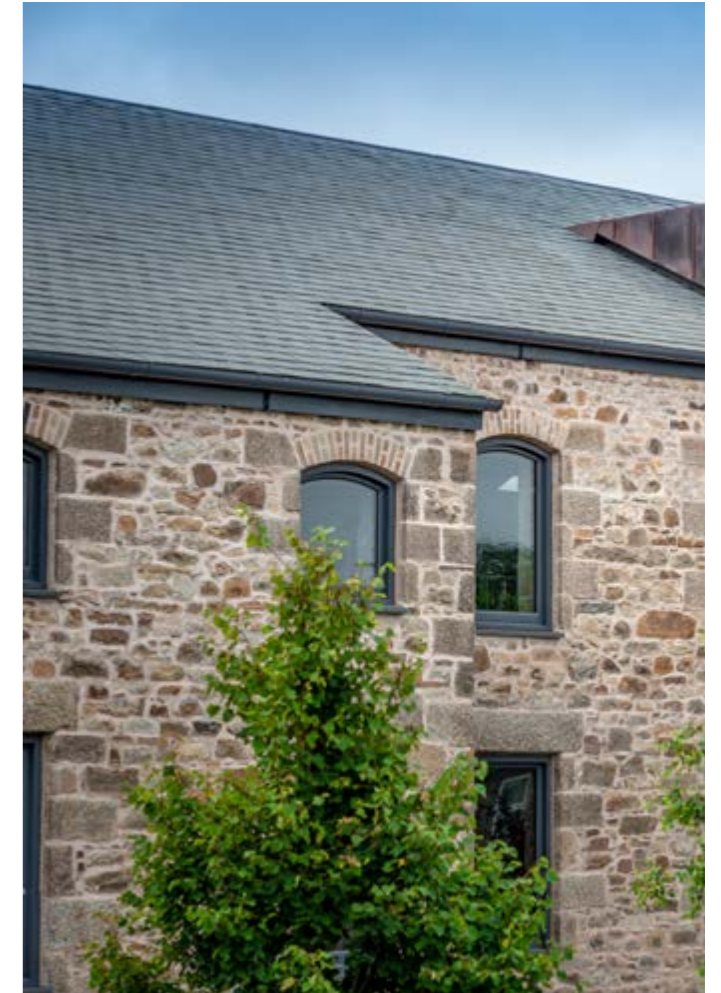
Size (inches)	24 x 12	20 x 12	20 x 10	18 x 12	16 x 10	16 x 8	14 x 8	12 x 8
Size (mm)	600 x 300	500 x 300	500 x 250	450 x 300	400 x 250	400 x 200	350 x 200	300 x 200

Please contact us if you require other sizes, thicknesses or shapes. All dimensions and weights are nominal approximations. Slates are cut to metric measure.

\*Based on 500x250 | \*\*Based on 400x250

Notes

Colours and textures have been rendered as accurately as possible; the photographic process and the nature of natural stone prevent exact representations. Being a natural product, slate's physical and chemical characteristics can vary.



Case Study

# Kresen Kernow

Redruth, Cornwall

Kresen Kernow is the state-of-the-art facility that houses the world's largest collection of Cornish documents, books, maps, and photographs, dating from 1150 to the present day.

The site provides a suite of public search rooms, conservation and preservation workshops, exhibition spaces, education rooms, and associated staff and volunteer facilities, while a new two storey extension provides archive storage in closely controlled environmental conditions, designed to BS5454 conservation standard.

For the roof, the building's designers wanted the closest match possible to Delabole – the indigenous Cornish slate that's now extremely difficult to source.

That made SSQ's Riverstone Ultra Phyllite the obvious choice. Aesthetically and geologically similar to Delabole, according to independent experts, Riverstone was available without the years-long lead times associated with much indigenous slate.

SSQ were also able to assist the project's architects with gaining planning approval, providing local authorities with slate samples, full technical specifications, and an NBSH62 planning statement

<b>Architect</b>	Purcell
<b>Type</b>	Public Building
<b>Category</b>	Refurbishment
<b>Element</b>	Roof
<b>Product</b>	Riverstone Ultra
<b>Scope</b>	2500m <sup>2</sup>

# Riverstone around the world

At SSQ, we started out bringing the very best quality slate and natural stone into the UK.

But as the years have gone on, we have seen demand for Riverstone soar from architects, roofing contractors and homeowners all over the world, too.

Riverstone Phyllite has been used to stunning effect on projects in New York, Berlin, Helsinki, Hong Kong, as well as across America and Australia.



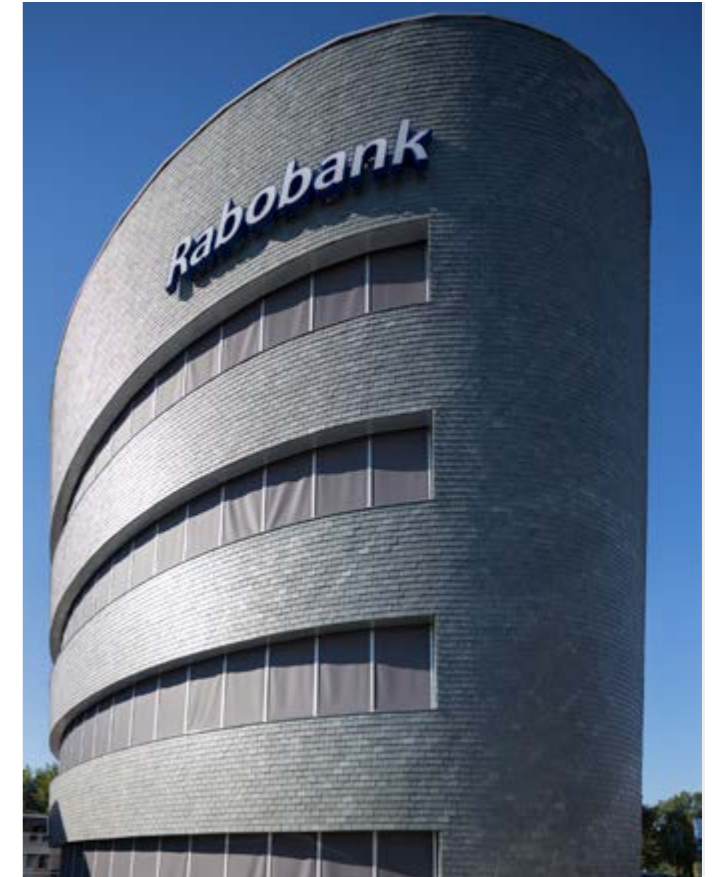
These are just some of Riverstone's international highlights.



Private residence, Kaunas, Lithuania



Tower Hill First Presbyterian Church Red Bank, USA



Rabobank, Netherlands



Private residence, Helsinki, Finland



Private residence, Brittany, France

## Thrives under pressure

Phyllite is the result of similar geological processes to the ones that produce other natural materials like slate – except Phyllite undergoes even higher temperatures and greater pressures. That causes the clay present in the material to break down and form mica, which is responsible for Phyllite's satin-like lustre.



## Case Study

# Dundurn Walk

Perthshire

Located at the eastern end of Loch Earn in the Lock Lomond and Trossachs National Park, Dundurn Walk is just an hour's drive from both Glasgow and Edinburgh. The 16-plot residential development is made up of four-bedroom detached homes along with a farmstead development of three-bedroom houses.

The development sets out to capture the character, construction-quality and finish found in other Victorian-era houses in the area, recreating these qualities in contemporary homes. Not surprisingly, its location meant using materials in keeping with the area: SSQ Riverstone Ultra roofing slate.

Dundurn Walk has received more than its fair share of media attention, as local legend tells that a large stone in the middle of the site could not be moved as it would disturb the fairies living under it. The stone is staying, and is now Dundurn Walk's focal point.

<b>Developer</b>	Genesis Properties, Elgin
<b>Architect</b>	Genesis Properties, Elgin
<b>Roofing</b>	Genesis Properties, Elgin
<b>Type</b>	Housing
<b>Category</b>	Newbuild
<b>Element</b>	Roof
<b>Product</b>	Riverstone Ultra
<b>Scope</b>	c.67,000 roofing slates

# About SSQ

## The natural stone pioneers

The SSQ story is one of passion, perseverance and a love for natural materials that has lasted four decades.

When our founder, Ahmed El-Helw, started Spanish Slate Quarries UK Ltd in the early 1980s, he was just one man with a phone book.

But a burning desire to bring the world's best slate and natural stone products to customers across Britain and beyond sustained him through early setbacks – and eventually saw SSQ become one of the world's leading suppliers.

## A labour of love

### What is it that sets SSQ apart from the competition?

For us, this is not just a way to make a living. Anyone who has ever met one of our sales managers or come on an SSQ CPD will tell you that it is a passion.

From the Managing Director down, we are driven by a heartfelt belief in the materials we provide – and a desire to see them benefit architects, contractors and homeowners all around the world.

### Unparalleled expertise

Work with a product long enough, and you get to know it inside out. But where some businesses are extremely protective of that knowledge, at SSQ, we want to share our four decades of expertise with as many people as possible.

More than anything, we just want to see more roofs, floors and building projects in general that use outstanding quality slate and natural stone.

### Consistency and quality

A lot of companies supply slate and stone. Some even have exclusive relationships with extremely reputable quarries – like SSQ do with the renowned Del Carmen quarry in North-West Spain.

But very few own quarries of their own. At SSQ, however, we do.



# Reference list of projects

## Heritage projects



University Of Bristol's HH Wills Physics Laboratory  
Tyndall Avenue, Bristol, BS8 1TL

- Ladock School House - Ladock, Truro TR2 4PL
- Building 41, Woolwich Creative District - Number 1 Street, Woolwich Arsenal, Woolwich, London, SE18 6ST
- Residential Barn Complex - Duporth St Austell Cornwall
- York House - St Clare Street Penzance
- New Tea Rooms - Iford Manor Bradford on Avon
- Salston Manor Hotel - Ottery Saint Mary EX11 1RQ
- THE PIG-at Combe - Gittisham, Honiton, EX14 3AD
- Bodmin Jail Attraction - Berrycoombe Rd, Bodmin PL31 2NR
- Stonafor Farm - Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7PE
- Buller House - The Quay, East Looe, PL13 1AL
- Enys Barns - Enys Gardens, St Gluvias, Penryn TR10 9LB
- Trewenna Manor - Cornwall, UK
- Blachford Manor - Devon, UK
- The White Yarn House - Devonport, Devon, UK
- Rill Farm & Barns - Buckfastleigh, Devon, UK



Kresen Kernow  
Little Vauxhall, Redruth, Cornwall  
TR15 1AS



St. Paul's Church  
1 Church Rd, Charlestown, St. Austell,  
Cornwall PL25 3NS

## Church projects



The Parish Church of Saint Mary's  
Malpas  
4 Llanover Cl, Newport NP20 6GR



United Church of Christ the  
Cornerstone  
Tregadillett, Launceston, Cornwall,  
PL15 7EX



Flimston Chapel  
Pembroke, SA71 6EB



Woodside Green Christian Centre  
1 Woodside Green, South Norwood,  
SE25 5EY



Craigneuk and Belhaven Parish Church  
Trevaunance Cove, St. Agnes, Cornwall, TR5 0RT

## Private projects



Compton Place  
Church Hill, Stalbridge, Dorset, DT10 2LS

- Blue Waters - Market Place, Marazion TR17 0AR
- Dundum Walk - St Fillans, Crieff, Perth and Kinross PH6 2NA
- Dunning Park - Dunning, Perth PH2 0TA
- Flockhouse Steadings - Kelty, Fife, KY4 0HY
- Sunleigh Apartments - Livermead Hill, Torquay TQ2 6QP
- Point Neptune - St Catherines Cove, Fowey PL23 1JH
- Lisburne Square Apartments - Torquay, Devon, TQ1 2PS
- Elvestone Apartments - Fore Street Hill, Budleigh Salterton, Devon, EX9 6HD
- Rhymney Conservation Area - 2-8 The Terrace, Rhymney, Tredegar, Wales NP22 5LY
- Green Close - Old Church Rd, Mawnan Smith, Falmouth TR11 5HX



The Courtyard  
Pavilion Rise, St Austell, PL26 6DH



Trevegean Farmhouse  
Trevegean, St. Just, Cornwall TR19 7NX

## Education projects



Barrow Hill Primary Academy  
Station Road, Barrow Hill, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 2PG



Minchenden School  
High St, Southgate, Enfield, Greater London,  
N14 6BS

- Fenwick Primary School - 1-3 Kirkton Rd, Fenwick, Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire KA3 6DH
- Priory C.I.W. School - Pendre Close, Brecon, Powys, Wales LD3 9EU
- Pendoylan C.I.W. Primary School - Pendoylan, Vale Of Glamorgan, CF71 7UJ
- Christ College - Brecon, Powys, Wales LD3 8AF

## Commercial projects



Prestonpans Library  
West Loan, Prestonpans EH32 9NX

- Ravenswick Hall - Swineherd Ln, Kirkbymoorside, York YO62 7LR
- Portstewart Golf club- 117 Strand Rd, Portstewart BT55 7PG
- Harbour Office - Padstow Harbour, Cornwall PL28 8BY
- Trevithick Caravan Site - Newquay, Cornwall
- National Maritime Museum - Discovery Quay, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 3QY
- The Institute Padstow - Cornwall, UK
- Royal Dundee Infirmary - Barrack Road, Dundee, DD1 9ND



Epiphany House  
Cathedral Offices, Turo, Cornwall TR1 3DR



Holland Park Ilchester Place  
Stable Yard, Kensington, London W8 6LU





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