Reducing costs for tenants with an energy saving solution at Gli Orsi

A common challenge in the property industry is that buildings which are designed to meet high standards of eco-efficiency do not always perform well in practice, and this is often a result of the building not being used in an efficient way by its occupiers.

Gli Orsi in Italy was developed by Sonae Sierra and inaugurated in 2008.

Although the shopping centre was developed in accordance with our environmental standards, its electricity consumption in operation has been relatively high; in 2010 Gli Orsi consumed an average 601kWh per m2 of mall and toilet area compared to a portfolio average of 514kWh during the same time period.

Gli Orsi shopping centre consists of four main buildings. We identified that the high demand for electricity was specifically connected with building A, which had a total annual consumption of 3,501,000kWh, accounting for 67% of the shopping centre's total electricity consumption. Within this building, there was a chocolate store which required high levels of cooling.

Having identified the reason for the particularly high electricity consumption in this building, we engaged with the tenant to seek a solution which would enable us to improve the shopping centre's environmental performance and at the same time allow us to reduce service charge costs. We found that the best approach was to install a small dedicated cooling system in the chocolate store which would avoid the need to keep the main chillers running to meet this one shop unit's cooling needs.

This initiative resulted in considerable benefits: on a like-for-like basis, we reduced the total electricity consumption of building A by 31% in comparison with 2010 during the winter months, enabling the shopping centre to save 536,000kWh of electricity and avoid costs of €64,000 on its energy bill. Moreover, Gli Orsi was able make a saving of

around €180,000 on its service charge, mainly as a result of reductions in energy consumption achieved, and this saving will be passed back to tenants through a credit note in 2012.