

Creagh Concrete installs SpanTherm floors in the Wirral

Although new to the UK market – having been introduced just last year – Creagh Concrete’s SpanTherm is already being specified and installed in new projects, enabling housebuilders to meet the code for sustainable homes from level 3 right up to code level 6.

Based in Northern Ireland, Creagh Concrete is installing the floors in the final phase of a major new housing development of 155 homes on Merseyside. The properties are being constructed on a former school site in New Hey Road, Woodchurch, Wirral, and are being jointly developed by Wirral Partnership Homes (WPH) and Mansell Construction. WPH will own 131 of the properties that will be available at affordable rents, with the remainder being offered for private sale by Mansell. The development has created ten jobs for local people working with Mansell Construction that include apprenticeships, labouring, driving and administrative posts. WPH chief executive, Brian Simpson said: “This scheme will complement the rich heritage of homes in Woodchurch while caring for the environment. This is our largest development scheme to date and really is a flagship site”. Architects are Nicol Thomas of Oldham and the scheme includes 3550m² of SpanTherm floors with a U-value of 0.12W/m² K. The homes have been designed to comply with Lifetime Homes standards and the Code for Sustainable Homes.

SpanTherm is a pre-insulated precast concrete flooring system designed specifically for residential and mid-sized commercial ground floors. The composite slab combines structural concrete and high-performance EPS (expanded polystyrene) insulation to provide a superior structural thermal floor. The flooring system can be installed by crane or ideally mechanically placed, using lorry-mounted cranes to improve health and safety on site, reducing labour, waste, risks and cost. As a result, the thermally efficient and affordable floor is installed quickly and without fuss. Based upon a design that has had many years successful use in Holland, it achieves insulation levels of 0.1Wm²K and can be rapidly installed without the need for large mobile cranes. Also, because it is not pre-cambered, it works with just a thin self-levelling screed to give an immediate flat floor ready to accept whatever finish the customer requires.

Supplied in widths of 1200, 900, 600 and 400mm and depth of 375mm, SpanTherm is relatively light and manoeuvrable and, thanks to a clever system of isolated bearing points, significantly reduces the potential for cold bridging at its bearing position, unlike many other types of precast ground-floor system. In addition, as it is designed and made to order, there is no waste and it is quicker to install with no need to store insulation materials on site. All of the elements are made to be installed directly from delivery vehicles onto prepared bearings and once the joints are grouted the floor is complete and ready for wall construction to start. It really is as simple as that.

The contract is a reflection of the fact that in 2011 Creagh Concrete demonstrated its confidence and faith in the future with the opening of a new precast concrete manufacturing facility at Hoveringham, Nottinghamshire, specifically to produce the new SpanTherm range along with other structural elements that form part of Creagh’s extensive precast portfolio. Eventually, the new facility will employ more than 50 people from the local area and will be capable of manufacturing up to 400K m² of SpanTherm and other flooring products per year. Since its introduction into the UK in 2012, the system has grown in popularity by virtue of its simplicity and speed of installation and many major names in building and design are now seeing the benefits of incorporating the system into their buildings.

Founded in 1976 with its head office in Toomebridge in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, Creagh Concrete is today one of the largest and most innovative producers of concrete products for markets throughout Ireland and the UK, including construction, civil engineering, house building, gardening and agricultural. The company is accredited to ISO 9001:2008,ISO 14001:2004,OHAS 18001:2007 and BES 6001.

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