

ACO drives high quality drainage solution for regeneration project

A market walk for MonoDrain™ – ACO's one-piece solution steps up town centre regeneration



In 2018, Corby town centre was in need of renovation. With more council planners calling for sustainable, urban developments, it became clear that the town's Market Walk Shopping Centre needed to be updated, both functionally and aesthetically. Midlands-based O'Brien Contractors were tasked with transforming Market Walk's outdated multi-story carpark on Market Walk into a flexible, functional and long-lasting alternative.

Corby's Market Walk Shopping Centre had struggled to sustain high numbers of visitors in recent years. Given the diminishing footfall, the council approved plans to transform Market Walk by creating flexible lease retail units and changing the multi-storey car park, which was considered an eyesore in the town, to a 400-space ground floor car park in order to help revitalise the shopping centre.

With approximately 18% of the city centre's shops closing in the past five years alone, the

importance of regenerating the shopping centre and encouraging customers to visit was of high importance to sustainability of the local area. With this in mind, the project aimed to transform the space to encourage more people to visit the centre, and focused on improved parking spaces, increased retail units, and the addition of a 'green wall' to improve the visual aspect of the entrance.

In order to effectively accommodate the drainage network, O'Brien Contractors, who won the tender

to renovate the car park area, turned to ACO Water Management. ACO's design team worked closely with O'Brien to modify the channel layout to deliver an efficient surface water management system for the car park.

The challenges of regeneration

The Market Walk Shopping Centre project required the demolition of the existing multi-storey car park, which would then be replaced with a tarmac surface for visitors to park. Taking into account the unique site layout and design challenges of installing effective channel runs in the existing space, O'Brien Contractors worked with ACO Water Management from the onset to ensure that a suitable solution - with minimal outlets to complement the site's layout - was planned effectively before being put into place.

One of the challenges that O'Brien Contractors had to overcome was finding a channel drainage system that was robust, easy to install, and resistant to damage. After a thorough planning process, O'Brien Contractors made the decision to install ACO MonoDrain™ throughout the project due to its cost-effectiveness and suitability for public access areas.

ACO MonoDrain™ is a one-piece channel drainage system, featuring Heelguard™ inlets and certified as Load Class D 400, which made it an ideal drainage solution for pedestrian and parking applications. In addition, MonoDrain™ was ideal for use in the busy, town centre car park as the one-piece channel removes any risks of the gratings becoming damaged, dislodged or stolen thanks to an integral anti-theft design.

A suitably resilient channel

Manufactured from Vienite®, ACO's high strength recycled polymer concrete material, the MonoDrain™ channels not only met the local council's environmental needs to adapt and build resilience to climate change and local flash flooding, but also offered a product that was four times stronger than traditional concrete channels.

Due to the resilience of the MonoDrain™, installers were able to efficiently fit the system without any problems. Guy Baker, engineer at O'Brien Contractors, said: "The installation of the MonoDrain™ channels was simple, and many members of the team told me that it's been the best drainage channel they've worked with. Fitting drainage channels in a tarmac car park can be difficult as the product can get damaged if the product is too brittle; we found that the MonoDrain™ channel was resistant to the usual chips and cracks that sometimes occur during installation."

The drainage channel requires less concrete haunching than equivalent systems, and so saved on overall installation costs. Additionally, the one metre length was quicker to install than standard

0.5m sizes, and with the added benefit of having no grates to install, even more time was saved during installation.

An effective solution

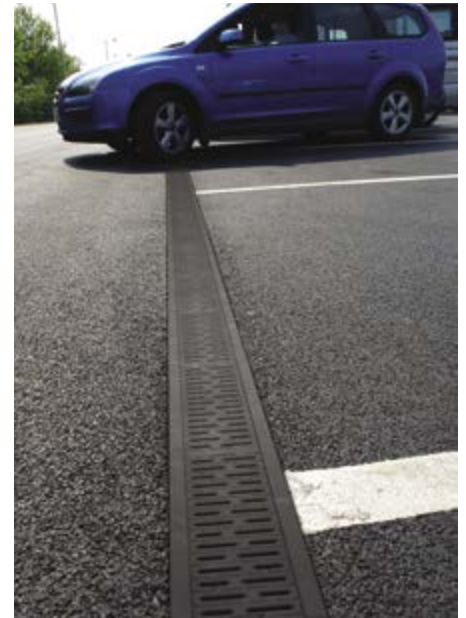
The finished car parking space was not only much more aesthetically pleasing than the old multi-storey, but it was also functional and safe for those visiting the town centre.

Guy Baker commented: "We chose to work closely with ACO because its products are high quality and, after working with the company on previous projects, we knew that the design team would be able to advise us on the best way to utilise the MonoDrain™ channels for this project.

"Overall, we're pleased with the MonoDrain™ channels; the product proved to be the right solution for Corby's Market Walk shopping centre thanks to its robust nature and ease of installation. The finished drainage channels look great too, and compliment the overall finish of the redevelopment project well."

Martin Hewish, Design Services Advisor at ACO, added: "It was vital that the drainage design aspect of this project was optimised for minimal outlets to fit to the layout of the site.

"With this in mind, we suggested the MonoDrain™ channels for both durability and cost-effectiveness. We worked closely with the engineers to offer practical solutions for the MonoDrain™ installation, such as altering the layout slightly to accommodate the drainage system within the new car park area.



This consultative approach ensured we could minimise the outlets and make it as economic as possible, providing an efficient system for the parameters the contractors were working within."

The project was completed in December 2018, and the Market Walk Shopping Centre is now open for business.

To find out more about ACO MonoDrain™, please visit www.aco.co.uk/products/monodrain



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