

Precast concrete a huge time saver

Karen Phelps

Building with concrete has allowed the Paetutu Housing Development to be completed to a tight time frame, says Homestead Construction project manager Zane Bull.

“We have been able to erect homes quickly allowing multiple contractors to work on the site simultaneously. Once the roof is on and windows are in then we can get started on the interior immediately along with finishing the external claddings. This saves a lot of time compared to conventional timber construction methods. It’s been especially beneficial in the tight labour market in Wellington currently as we have been able to cut down on labour hours,” he says.

Located at 429 Jackson Street in Petone the development includes 56 terraced two-level homes constructed with Homesteads precast construction method ensuring the homes are attractive, low-maintenance, lasting, safe and affordable. Homestead has also completed all the civil construction in partnership with PCL, including soft and hard landscaping offering the client a complete solution. The project is expected to take just over a year to complete and will be finished by the end of 2019.

Homestead Construction was started in the 1970s by the Lawry family who are still at the helm of the business today. From generation to generation the family business has continued to develop its expertise in concrete construction in the Wellington region. Homestead handles everything from feasibility, design and planning assistance, to precast concrete manufacturing and project management of multi-residential and commercial developments.

Most of the precast panels are manufactured in Homestead’s purpose-built manufacturing facility in Levin. Panels are then freighted to site and erected by Homestead’s erection team and cranes, which is used to further improve efficiencies and shorten time frames on large-scale projects.

Zane says the primary characteristics of concrete are strength, energy efficiency, acoustic benefits and faster construction periods. This is the reason it is the construction material of choice on commercial and multi-unit residential projects, he says.

“With multi-residential or light commercial construction projects that may be close to or right on main roads and highways, the benefits of a superior sound barrier and the relatively low cost of maintenance are important so this is where concrete delivers real benefits. Concrete also offers energy efficient properties meaning lower running costs. Concrete provides a natural fire wall and noise barrier for inter-tenancy walls making the use



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of precast concrete for construction projects such as the Paetutu Housing Development a no-brainer.” Precast concrete also offers great design flexibility, which architects love, he says. The Paetutu Housing Development is a good example and boasts a variety of finishes including exposed decorative concrete panels, plaster, timber Abodo and Span-lock cladding.

Current projects Homestead Construction has underway include the Erskine Housing Development in Island Bay comprising 86 townhouses in seven unique precincts on the historic site of the former Erskine College. It is one of the largest projects that Homestead Construction has ever undertaken and is expected to be completed within two and a half years. Also under construction is a school gymnasium and community hall in Palmerston North, a retail shop in Otaki and a 14 unit housing complex in Porirua.



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Paetutu development in Petone includes 56 terraced two-level homes constructed with Homestead's precast construction method.



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