

Michelmersh expands premium product range with Floren acquisition

Floren, a highly acclaimed family owned brick company from Brecht, Antwerp, Belgium has been acquired by Michelmersh to form an integral new brand amongst the Group's renowned premium ranges. Operating since 1896, this fourth generation owned brick factory located alongside the Campine Channel offers a unique tailor-made service, derived from sustainable building solutions and created with the smallest ecological footprint possible. Using the latest technologies whilst adopting the most stringent production requirements, Floren guarantees high quality product standards with extended lifecycle and low environmental impact. Its modernized production methods and continuous product innovations has allowed it to grow into a highly reputable brand, recognised by designers and house builders throughout Europe and the UK.



Investing in energy-saving measures, 2500m² of solar panels installed in 2018.

Floren's strategic programme of investment includes an array of ecological measures to advance the brick making process, such as improvement of insulation to both kiln and dryers, and the installation of a state-of-the-art steering program for the dryers, avoiding energy losses and optimizing the drying curves. Its energy saving measures extends to, 2500m² of solar panels installed in early 2018 to deliver an important part of the factory's electricity consumption using solar energy. This company has gone a step further by creating a vast natural buffer dressed with high-trunk endemic trees and plants of 20 meters in depth and several meters high including a wide moat, surrounding the entire industrial site, to improve the quality of natural habitats adjacent to the factory.

The current production process is largely automated, however, the company deliberately maintained the capacity for human intervention to manipulate each facing brick on a product line to offer a bespoke finish, until it matches the exacting criteria of the client or his architect. A Floren brick boasts low water absorption rates, high compressive strength and high resistance to frost, meaning its physical characteristics offer a natural protection against pollution with no additional treatment required.

In 2018 Floren produced over 19 million bricks adhering to stringent consistency and stability standards such as the BENOR and CE quality labels. Floren is subject to various production audits and environmental controls during the year to ensure it complies with the highest quality standards. This fits hand in hand with Michelmersh's ethos, continuously striving to be a well invested, long term, sustainable and environmentally responsible business.

Produced from its 120-acre site, the broad spectrum of bricks offered by Floren include 70 different colours, in 8 different sizes with an unlimited array of finishes and textures. Floren has the flexibility to deliver a special touch to outstanding designs which delight acclaimed architects and designers across Europe, realising their architectural concepts into buildings that they are truly proud of.



Castor facing brick for Percival Avenue, Colindale, London.

The acquisition will enhance Michelmersh's UK product portfolio and increase the Group's scale whilst also providing access to new European markets, such as the wider Benelux and German audiences. Floren is more than qualified to sit in line with the Company's premium centric market strategy, due to its high-quality product range and desirable aesthetics. Michelmersh continues to be at the forefront of industry innovation and is proud to add Floren to its expanding portfolio as brick specialists, recognised as one of the most trusted names behind today's prestigious built environments. The Group welcomes the Floren team to the business and looks forward to building on the significant success already achieved by its dedicated team in Antwerp.