

“The new electric clamp trucks have been a big success already. We’ve considerably reduced diesel consumption and we’ve also seen a specific energy consumption (SEC) reduction at both sites since we started using them. They’ve been such a hit that two more electric vehicles have been brought in at our Maltby and Ninfield sites, and we’re hoping to convert remaining diesel machines in the future.”

Paul Plumridge, RTU Operations Manager

Planet

Climate Action Improving Efficiency

At Ballidon and Newark, we manufacture concrete blocks that are designed with dense aggregate to create durable, longer-lasting blocks for many different types of building applications, including housing, commercial buildings, industrial construction and more.

Two of our Dry Silo Mortar (DSM) sites invested in new dryers that will deliver a host of financial and sustainability benefits. Our Glasgow and Meriden sites manufacture DSM for the construction and building industries, and play a vital role in supplying DSM to major housebuilders in the Midlands, South West and Scotland. Both in operation for more than 20 years, the dryers are an important part of operations at both sites.

Dryers are used to remove moisture from the sand to below 0.5% moisture content for the specification of the material. The dried sand is then mixed with cement and other additives to produce DSM, which is then sold to customers across the country.

In 2024 we replaced the old equipment with a new fluidised bed dryer manufactured by TEMA. The new system has been designed with thicker stainless steel to allow the burner to operate at a higher temperature, which means it can now accept sand with a higher moisture content and increase throughput efficiency. The maximum drying air temperature has increased from 450°C to 600°C, which is reducing the power consumption per tonne of dried product and therefore improving fuel efficiency.

Andy Holmes, mortar engineering manager, said: “Even though at the time our dryers were market-leading and efficient, we have reached the stage whereby modern alternatives will significantly improve our output and fuel consumption moving towards a greener future. We’re now looking forward to installing our next dryer at Colchester later this year.”



The packs of manufactured blocks are transported from the factory to the yard, where they are stacked before being loaded on to crane lorries ready for delivery to our customers. The vehicles used in this process therefore have an important role to play, so both sites trialled the use of electric clamp trucks in place of the previously used diesel trucks.

The electric clamp trucks bring a host of benefits – as well as being much better for the environment, they result in lower running costs, are quieter to operate, and are more efficient than the diesel trucks which had limited capacity, since they can pick up four packs of blocks at a time.

Ballidon and Newark were chosen to trial the new electric clamp trucks as these two sites are at the forefront of our strategy to achieve Net Zero.