



WESTSIDE METRO TRAMWAY, BIRMINGHAM

PRODUCTS: Bedding: PAREX FBC Fine Bedding Concrete (silo supplied)
 Bonding: PAREX Bond Plus Mortar
 Jointing: PAREX Granatech

SIKA PAREX STREETSCAPE RANGE PAVES THE WAY FOR EXTENSION OF 'SECOND CITY' TRAM ROUTE

Products from Sika's Parex Streetscape landscaping range were included within groundworks specified as part of an extension to Birmingham's tramway route, a vital transport link to the city centre's regenerated main square and other popular visitor destinations.

Three materials from the BS 7533-compliant Parex Streetscape range were selected for the two-stage Birmingham Westside Metro Extension: Parex Fine Bedding Concrete; Parex Bond Plus Mortar, and Parex Granatech Jointing Mortar.

Phase one of the tramway route, which opened to passengers ahead of schedule in December 2019, travels for 840m from the city's Grand Central Station, past Birmingham Town Hall and onto the recently redeveloped Centenary Square. For the tramway extension's second phase, the 1.35km route runs from the landmark 'Library of Birmingham'

in Centenary Square to the Hagley Road rail terminus – situated on the city's outskirts in Edgbaston – whilst stopping-off at some of the city's landmark retail and cultural areas along the way.

The Birmingham Westside Metro Extension project is managed by the Midland Metro Alliance (MMA), which consists of the West Midlands Combined Authority and a consortium of design experts and rail consortium specialists. In conjunction with the MMA design team and Hardscape, Sika's Parex Streetscape team worked to ensure the continuity of paving units and mortars to blend with the new tramway into the adjacent and recently completed £16m refurbishment of Centenary Square, which used the same Parex Streetscape products and colour ranges.

CENTENARY SQUARE REFURBISHMENT

The redeveloped Centenary Square contains one of the largest natural stone paving areas (14,000m²) in England. In addition, it includes a number of key visitor-friendly features such as a shallow reflective pool with shooting water jets and towering lighting 5,000 new plants, as well as integrated seating for the future staging of outdoor shows and cultural events.

Hardscape natural stone paving units and Sika Parex Streetscape Mortars were chosen following the joint construction of an impressive sample panel. The selection of Sika Parex Streetscape materials had practical and aesthetic purpose. Whilst the bedding and bonding mortars provided a safe, solid foundation for the continuous, articulated paving, Sika Parex Granatech jointing mortar supplied the ideal natural tone to complement the granite surface's multi-coloured finish in red, black, white and buff.

To limit the space taken up by material storage on the site, the Sika Parex Fine Bedding Concrete was supplied in replenishable bulk silos. This helped to ensure a guaranteed consistent product with a controlled workability and reduce the dust on the busy city centre

site. Their use also meant that there were fewer vehicles delivering to the restricted site, aiding safety and manual handling on the site.

Waste packaging was also reduced, as the product was delivered by specialist tanker vehicles which refilled the silos at regular intervals to ensure product continuity. Sika Parex Bond Plus mortar was installed in two layers to ensure a strong bond between the concrete roadbase, the bedding mortar and the underside of each paving unit. The newly-laid paving units were then jointed with Sika Parex Granatech high-strength jointing mortar. This was slurry-applied and cleaned with a mechanical belt cleaner prior to final setting.

Completed in July 2019, Centenary Square lives up to Birmingham City Council's promise to create a 'world-class space and population destination' as part of its Big City Plan. This, in conjunction with the tramway scheme, phase two of which is due to open for passengers later this year (2021), means the first-class guidance and materials supplied by Sika Parex Streetscape will have played a significant role in delivering one of the most adventurous regeneration projects in the Second City's recent history.

Client and Design:
Midland Metro Alliance



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