

INDUSTRY TECHNICAL UPDATE

Irish Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to the Marketing and Use of Aggregate Concrete Blocks to EN 771-3

In April 2022, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) published 'A Guide to the Marketing and Use of Aggregate Concrete Blocks to EN 771-3 in Ireland'. This Guide provides guidance to economic operators (manufacturers, importers and distributors) on the marketing of aggregate concrete blocks to I.S. EN 771-3:2011+A1:2015 (Specification for Masonry Units – Part 3: Aggregate Concrete Masonry Units (Dense and Lightweight Aggregates)) (the harmonised European standard under the Construction Products Regulation 305/2011). It also outlines the responsibilities of specifiers, designers, builders, certifiers and end users for compliance with the Building Regulations 1997 to 2021. Roadstone DoPs, which are in line with the DHLGH Guide, are available for download at www.roadstone.ie <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/45415-a-guide-to-the-marketing-and-use-of-aggregate-concrete-blocks-to-en-771-3-in-ireland/>

In November 2022, the Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland (ACEI) published an Advice Note on certain matters relating to concrete blockwork (aggregate concrete masonry units). The ACEI recommends the following for blockwork with a high risk of saturation and freezing:

- Blocks used below or near external ground level and in external walls should have a declared mean compressive strength $\geq 13\text{N/mm}^2$.
- Concrete blocks should be Category 1 masonry units of approved manufacture to I.S. EN 771-3:2011+A1:2015 (Specification for Masonry Units – Part 3: Aggregate Concrete Masonry Units (Dense and Lightweight Aggregates)). Solid blocks for all rising walls and external walls, both the inner and outer leaves, should be Group 1 masonry units and should have a declared mean compressive strength of $\geq 13\text{N/mm}^2$, tested in accordance with I.S. EN 772-1:2011+A1:2015 (Methods of test for masonry units. Determination of compressive strength).
- Refer to Table 14 of S.R. 325:2013+A2:2018/AC:2019



(Recommendations for the Design of Masonry Structures in Ireland to Eurocode 6) for mortar strength class to meet specific durability requirements. Mortar of a higher strength class than M4, [1: 1: 5 to 6] will frequently be required. (e.g. Mortar of Compressive Strength Class M12, [1: 1 to ¼: 3] should be used in conjunction with concrete blocks of declared mean Compressive Strength of $\geq 13\text{N/mm}^2$ where there is a high risk of saturation and freezing for work below or near external ground level.)

https://www.acei.ie/ws-content/uploads/ACEI_Blockwork_Advice_Note_10.11.22.pdf

Met Éireann Climatological Note No. 17 - Distribution of Driving Rain in Ireland

Met Éireann and The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage funded a research project to update 'climate maps and data to support building design standards in Ireland', which was published in June 2022. The motive of this research was to produce driving rain intensity indices according to I.S. EN ISO 15927-3:2009 (ISO, 2009) and based on hourly data from the latest climate normal data for the period 1991 to 2020 for use in building design to enhance resilience in support of climate change adaptation in Ireland.

https://www.met.ie/cms/assets/uploads/2022/09/FINAL-REPORT_Distribution-of-driving-rain-in-Ireland.pdf