

Westleigh Developments, Nuneaton

INSULSLAB PILOTED FOR AFFORDABLE HOMES

Insulslab has provided an innovative solution to poor ground conditions at a new affordable homes scheme in Nuneaton. Led by Westleigh Partnership Homes for Leicester Housing Association (LHA), Insulslab was a key building block in the conversion of the brownfield site into a £5 million residential development.

As a negotiated design and build fixed price contract, Westleigh Developments was faced with the challenge of preparing the brownfield and sloping site for construction with maximum efficiency and minimum cost. Easily accommodating stepped profiles and delivering the foundation up to ground floor level, Insulslab provided a more cost effective and efficient solution than traditional foundation techniques, such as beam and block or raft.

Giovanni Corbo, Westleigh Developments, comments: "We used Insulslab for the first time at this development as it offered a less intrusive and more economical system than other foundation methods – a high priority when working on a brownfield site. We were particularly impressed with the time and cost savings Insulslab helped us to achieve, especially given the sloping profile of the site."

Comprised of 36 houses and a three storey apartment block, the affordable homes development was targeted with meeting Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. With all plots constructed of timber frame, Insulslab offered a thermally efficient and complementary ground system. Delivering typical U-values of 0.10 – 0.12W/m²K (depending on P/A ratio), Insulslab gives specifiers greater flexibility within the overall design of the thermal envelope.

Constructed of interlocking expanded polystyrene (EPS) pods with steel fibre reinforced concrete (SFRC) poured directly on top, Insulslab is quick and easy to install. Moreover, minimal excavation is necessary as no trenches are required. As well as reducing the amount of cart away from site, the construction of the fully integrated foundation system minimises manual handling, site traffic and labour costs.

Spencer Robinson, General Manager for Insulslab, concludes: “The decline in the availability of land to develop means that brownfield sites will continue to be a target for new schemes. Insulslab is increasingly being adopted by developers for these developments as the system is proven to deliver cost and efficiency savings – two key factors as the construction economy looks to recover.”