

Innovative Retaining
Wall Design with Leca®
Lightweight Fill



Innovative Retaining Wall Design with Leca® Lightweight Aggregate (LWA)



Leca® Lightweight Aggregate (LWA) is a natural, unique and sustainable lightweight clay aggregate. LECA® LWA has remarkable properties which ensure its versatility for use in a vast number of structural and geotechnical applications. It is the only "all in one"

When used against retaining walls, Leca® LWA will reduce the weight acting on the rear of the structure by at least 75%, in comparison to traditional fill materials. This reduction in weight can avoid potential sliding, overturning, slip and tilting or bearing failures and enables savings by increasing spacing between buttressing walls and reducing structural dimensions. The bulk weight of the wall can also be reduced and more cost efficient, attractive materials can be used in place of costly, unattractive structural concrete.

Minimise Differential Settlement

Using Leca® LWA will minimise the differential settlement between piled bridge abutments and the embankment fill. As it is a free draining material, Leca® LWA has the added advantage of eliminating the need for rear wall block drainage.

More than 70 years developing innovative projects

The 'pull out' resistance of Leca® LWA makes it an ideal solution for reinforced soil retaining walls. Particularly when constructed over weak sub-soils or voids, this method has been proven to cut overall construction costs considerably.

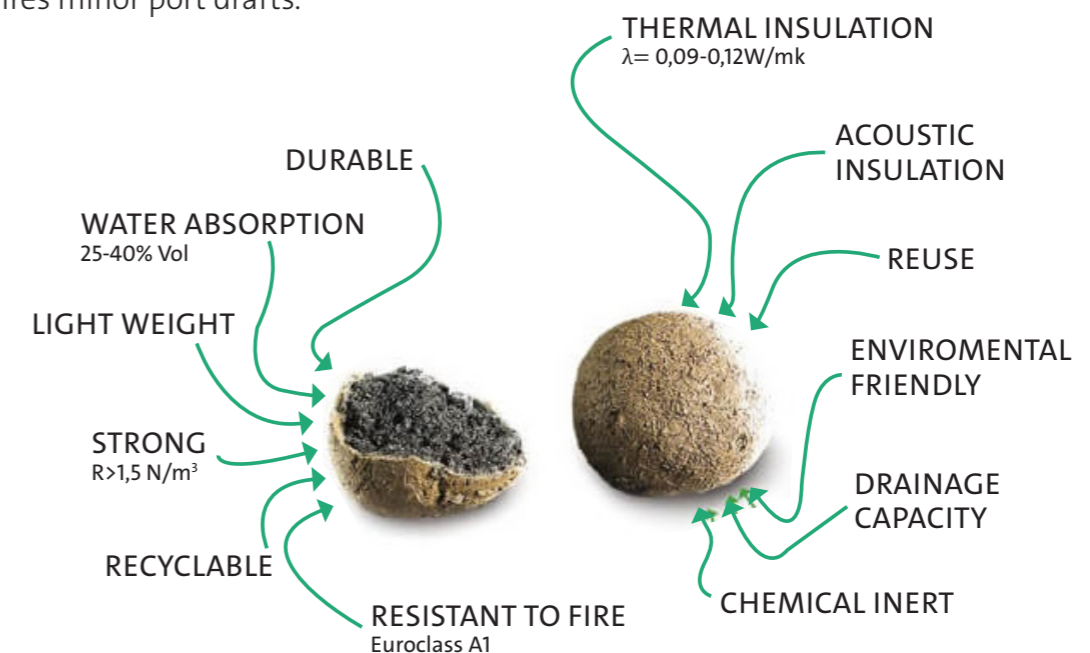
Leca® LWA is used extensively to reduce vertical loading. Structures such as underground parking, tunnels or roof garden benefit greatly from the reduction in pressure and avoid additional costs of strengthening.

Being light weight and round in nature, Leca® LWA can be transported and placed more easily than that of traditional fill in these difficult to access areas.



Overview

- Stability – reduces the risk of embankment landslide and deformation
- Reduced settlements - less damage to road structures, rail beds, pipelines and other structures
- Reduced earth pressure - in structural backfill against foundations, retaining walls and bridge abutments
- Drainage - on sports grounds, fields, slopes and roads
- Insulation - protection for roads surface, structure, pipelines and service mains
- Frost stability - in road and rail beds
- Limited compaction – Exerted energy during compaction is minimal with a reduction in volume of approximately 10 - 12%.
- Low density and ease of handling, coupled with consistent high quality, make Leca® LWA a highly competitive alternative to other lightweight materials
- Requires minor port drafts.





LECA® LIGHTWEIGHT FILL SPECIFIED FOR A RETAINING WALL OVER DELICATE GROUNDWORK CONDITIONS IN BRISTOL

LECA® LWA was recently specified for a retaining wall development on Bath Road, Bristol. This project was a new development on the site of a former petrol station.

Due to the fragile and poor groundworks on the site, a lightweight fill material was required as a backfill against a retaining wall.

Over 280m³ of LECA lightweight fill was used in the new retaining wall which contained delicate piping and cable bedding, so this required a suitable material which was both fire proof, lightweight and robust to pro-

vide additional long term protection. In an engineering development, when using LECA Lightweight Fill against retaining walls, this helped the developers to reduce the weight acting on the rear of the structure by around 75%, in comparison to traditional fill materials.

This reduction in weight ensured that the retaining wall development

avoided potential sliding, overturning, slip and tilting and bearing failures. The bulk weight of the wall was also significantly reduced.

Furthermore, access to the site offered the contractors a difficult situation, where alternative fill material such as traditional rock fill did not offer a feasible solution.



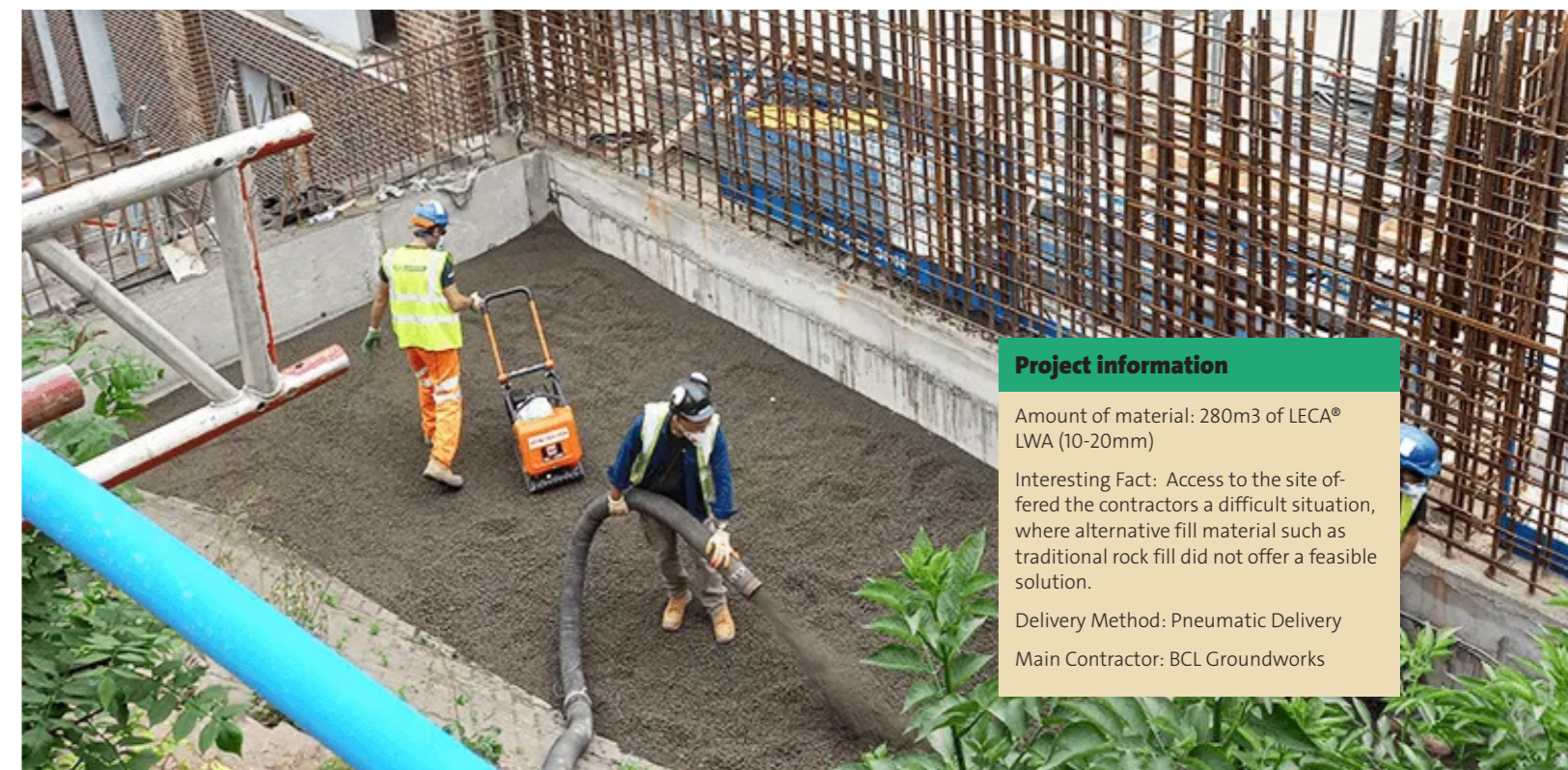
bankment with no direct access for walking floors or tipping trucks and moreover, there was no space on site to be able to create stockpiles of fill material.

Suitability of LECA Lightweight Fill

The unique engineering ability to pneumatically deliver LECA Lightweight Fill at an accelerated rapid rate of 1m³ per minute and over a distance up to 50m ensured that BCL Groundworks could effectively provide a suitable backfill for the proposed retaining wall. This was delivered over 3 phases.

535 M³ OF LECA® LWA

The self-compaction properties of LECA Lightweight Fill also provided support for the project as the material could be quickly compacted with a simple wacker plate, which was in operation during the delivery phase. This reduced the man power required – supporting the on-site social distancing restrictions - and accelerated the completion of the project.



Project information

Amount of material: 280m³ of LECA® LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: Access to the site offered the contractors a difficult situation, where alternative fill material such as traditional rock fill did not offer a feasible solution.

Delivery Method: Pneumatic Delivery

Main Contractor: BCL Groundworks



Project information

Amount of material: 48m³ of LECA® LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: This project was developed to provide robust support for a new retaining wall, reducing vertical pressure in the area, whilst providing an effective water management system

Main Contractor: GRAHAM Construction

RETAINING WALL DEVELOPMENT IN MANCHESTER

LECA® Lightweight Fill was specified for a retaining wall development in Manchester. The engineering purpose of this new development was to provide robust support for a new retaining wall, reducing vertical pressure in the area, whilst providing an effective water management system - to safely manage water runoff and act as a flood prevention solu-

Due to LECA® Lightweight Fill having the ability to delay water runoff by a principle known as water detention. Proper detention provides a steady and manageable flow of water and reduces the risk of flooding, because of LECA® Lightweight Fill's highly porous internal structure and an abundance of voids between the grains – applying the material will help detain a flow and thereby reduce the peak intensity of runoff from an area. Thus, the developers through specifying LECA® Lightweight Fill found a suitable solution to diminish the intensity of water from severe storms

and moderate loads through slow release of water during and after a serious downpour.

Based on the steep embankment



within this residential area in Manchester, it was crucial for the developers to ensure that the fill material within the retaining wall acted as a robust mechanism to prevent any future risk of landslide.

Steep Embankment

Furthermore, due to the delicate steep embankment and residential area, alternative material was deemed unsuitable due to access restrictions. Through using LECA® Lightweight Fill, the engineers were given the opportunity to pneumati-

a piping system with a 5" hose at a rate of 1m³ per minute - fed through the LECA pneumatic delivery truck (See image above)

However, the biggest advantage of the pneumatic delivery was the time saving, as the LECA® Lightweight Fill was delivered specifically in place where required, with reduced man power.





When completed in 2018 Crossrail will increase London’s rail-based transport network by 10%. The route will pass through 37 stations and run 118 km (73 miles) from Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west, through new twin-bore 21kms (13miles) tunnels below Central London to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east.

With new construction and significant alterations needed to existing stations, rail-track and bridges, the Crossrail project is a significant test of modern infrastructure work and materials. Leca® LWA is playing a part in this giant construction programme.



Contractor Feedback

Robert Corney, Technical Director Rail and Civil Structures at Hyder Consulting, explains: “We had to create a 2.5m high by 4m wide core embankment on top of an existing embankment which had step sides and was in close proximity to adjacent properties. We therefore required vertical sides of a retaining wall to form the higher level onto the embankment, and wanted to keep the additional surcharge as low as possible to prevent overloading the existing embankment. We therefore developed a solution using a modular block retaining wall which was easy to handle and construct considering the access constraints and used in conjunction with the Leca® LWA fill.”

A totally natural product, Leca® LWA is formed by heating and firing natural glacial clay in a rotary kiln at temperatures up to 1150°C. This process transforms the clay into lightweight ceramic granules with a hard shell and porous core. With a bulk density of just 0.3 tonnes per cubic metre, Leca® LWA has excellent insulation properties, is free draining, fire resistant, frost resistant and chemically inert with no hazardous properties. Used as a lightweight aggregate fill in many civil engineering and construction applications Leca® LWA reduces the weight on weak substrates and against retaining structures by up to 75% over traditional fill and eliminates expensive settlement delays, is easily handled and quickly installed.

Section Engineer Scott Exell of main contractor Hochtief is pleased with the material’s performance; “Leca® LWA proved easy to handle and we used it here in conjunction with Anderton Concrete’s block and geogrid system”



Project information

Amount of material: 60m3 of LECA® LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: With new construction and significant alterations needed to existing stations, rail-track and bridges, the Crossrail project is a significant test of modern infrastructure work and materials.

Main Contractor: HYDER Consulting

TRENCHERS FOOTBRIDGE | SLOUGH

THE LONDON CROSSRAIL EAST-WEST RAIL NETWORK CREATION IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN EUROPE PRESENTLY AND CERTAINLY THE MOST COMPLEX IN THE RECENT HISTORY OF THE UK RAIL INDUSTRY.



settlement at formation compared to traditional fills. It also interacted with the Tensar elements of the structure without difficulty.”

Contractor Feedback
A Tensar Geogrid wall system in conjunction with Leca® LWA was designed and subsequently constructed to raise the ground level and form the platform surfaces.

More than 14,000m³ of Leca® LWA was required for the Murrayfield tram stop construction which was shipped directly into the Port of Leith Docks ready to be trucked to the site as and when required.

Andrew Henry, Construction Manager GRAHAM Construction pointed out the advantages of Leca® LWA. “Faced with the complications of the Murrayfield site, especially the potential expense of excavating unsuitable ground, Leca® LWA has proved exactly the right choice of material for

this technical project. Access to the platform site was difficult but Leca® LWA is a versatile and easy material to handle and this enabled us to meet the project targets.”

A totally natural product, Leca® LWA is formed by heating and firing natural glacial clay in a rotary kiln at temperatures up to 1150oC. This process transforms the clay into lightweight ceramic granules with a hard shell and porous core. With a bulk density of just 0.3 tonnes per cubic metre, Leca® LWA has excellent insulation properties, is free draining, fire resistant, frost resistant and chemically inert with no hazardous properties. Used as a lightweight aggregate fill in many civil engineering applications Leca® LWA reduces the weight on weak substrates and against retaining structures by up to 75% over traditional fill and eliminates expensive settlement delays, is easily handled and quickly installed



EDINBURGH TRAMWAY | MURRAYFIELD STADIUM | EDINBURGH

RUGBY FANS WILL ALIGHT FROM THE EDINBURGH TRAMWAY SYSTEM RIGHT OUTSIDE THE HALLOWED GATES OF THE FAMOUS MURRAYFIELD STADIUM, HOME OF SCOTTISH RUGBY, THANKS TO THE ADVANTAGEOUS PROPERTIES OF LECA® LWA. THE TRAM STOP IS A KEY PART OF THE NEW INNER CITY TRAMWAY LINKING EDINBURGH AIRPORT WITH THE HEART OF THE CITY.

GRAHAM Construction, responsible for the creation of the Murrayfield tram stop as part of the Edinburgh Trams Project, faced challenges on the project not least of all the ability to raise the structure seven metres above the existing ground level. Normal traditional fill would have imposed severe overburden threatening the stability of the existing Network

Rail line and other established buildings.

Consulting engineers to this project, Parsons Brinkerhoff, determined that the replacement of traditional fills with Leca® LWA was the preferred option to overcome bearing and settlement issues associate with the soft ground conditions underlying

the site. Tristan Morgan, Geotechnical Engineer at Parsons Brinkerhoff, said: “One of our main issues was to get such a large earthworks structure founded within the underlying soft ground conditions without significant ground improvement being undertaken. The light weight attributes of the Leca® LWA satisfied these criteria, with significantly lowering bearing/

Project information

Amount of material: 14000m³ of LECA® LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: A Tensar Geogrid wall system in conjunction with LECA® Lightweight Fill was designed and subsequently constructed to raise the ground level and form the platform surfaces

Main Contractor: GRAHAM Construction,



VICTORIAN RETAINING WALL ROCHDALE, MANCHESTER

AN ATTRACTIVE VICTORIAN RETAINING BRICK WALL HAS BEEN IN PLACE FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS IN SPARTH BOTTOMS ROAD. THE 144M RUN OF WALLING VARIES IN HEIGHT ALONG ITS LENGTH UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 5.5M.

The wall supports a pavement serving two blocks of terraced houses and accommodates numerous services including gas and water. The wall is also crossed in two places by sewage pipes. It is thought that over time, the weight of the traditional backfill, mostly sand and gravel, coupled with dysfunctional drainage, resulted in excessive pressure on the back of the

wall, which then caused overturning of the masonry retaining wall. Further movement could have put the properties adjacent to the top of the wall at risk.

Remedial work was required by the Impact Partnership, an innovative joint venture company between Mouchel Group, Agilisys and Roch-

dale Metropolitan Borough Council, who specified the use of lightweight Leca® LWA 10-20mm aggregate as the ideal material to replace the traditional backfill. Impact Partnership delivers highways, property and ICT services to support the regeneration of the Borough.



The existing wall was over 100 years old

Overview of Project

The principal contractor, A.E. Yates Limited, of Bolton, excavated to a depth of two metres behind the retaining wall into the existing backfill which was then replaced along the entire length of the wall with 650m³ of Leca® LWA. The retaining wall also had a reinforced concrete toe constructed to the front and was extensively cleared and pointed before being finished off with a new pedestrian guard rail to the top of the structure. Leca® LWA is an expanded clay formed by heating and firing natural glacial clay at up to 1150°C. This process transforms the clay into lightweight ceramic granules that have a hardshell and porous core. The material is extremely light with a bulk density of just 0.3 tonnes per cubic metre. It was delivered to site on 60m³ tippers and stored during the construction process to enable continuity of work.

Jonathan Parker, of A.E. Yates Limited, said: "I'm impressed. This product is easy and clean to use and has allowed us to work to the 16-week programme which would have taken far longer had we replaced the original backfill material like for like and of course we would have incurred compaction issues. Leca® LWA overcomes settlement periods and reduces the number of site deliveries of the material which makes this a very environmentally friendly solution. We have covered the material with a basic geotextile membrane and type 1 subbase ready for finishing. There has been minimal disruption for the residents of Sparth Bottoms Road and this Victorian edifice is now safe, sound and in good condition."

Alan Lowe, senior engineer, Impact Partnership, said: "I am very satisfied with the performance of this material because of its quick and easy placement, particularly when working around existing services and in the confined working space we have on this scheme."



Project information

Amount of material: 650m³ of LECA LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: The principal contractor, A.E. Yates Limited, of Bolton, excavated to a depth of two metres behind the retaining wall into the existing backfill which was then replaced along the entire length of the wall with 650m³ of Leca® LWA.

Delivery Method: 4-Wheel Tippers

Main Contractor: A.E. Yates Limited



THE CONTINUATION OF THE EDINBURGH TRAM DEVELOPMENT

OVER 11,000M3 OF LECA® LWA HAS BEEN SPECIFIED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE EXISTING EDINBURGH TRAM NETWORK, WHICH HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY THE MAIN CONTRACTOR SACYR FARRANS NEOPUL (SFN) ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL. THE PROJECT IS DUE FOR COMPLETION IN 2023.

The aim of the Tram development is to create a sustainable solution for clean, green and accessible public transport, significantly reducing the impact on air quality through the reduction in vehicle congestion, with a move towards a net zero carbon emission future for Edinburgh. In addition, it is expected to deliver significant social and economic benefit to the immediate area and to Edinburgh

as a whole.

For this development, LECA® LWA was specified as a lightweight solution to provide a robust foundation support for the track bed between two existing retaining walls whilst not applying excessive pressure to the ground and adjacent retaining walls, it reaches up to 4m high over variable ground conditions, including loose sand and

soft clay/ silt. The LECA® LWA has allowed the project to move forward whilst maintaining the existing structures previously installed by others and minimising the ground consolidation.

Based on a historical Tram Project in Murrayfield, where LECA® LWA was successfully applied to provide lightweight ground support. The specific

compaction rates of LECA® LWA and the reduction in bearing pressure at base provided a key property for the specification of the material, with the design specification requiring a Type 1 fill to be placed over the LECA® LWA.

11,000m3 of LECA® LWA was delivered by ship directly into the Port of Leith in Edinburgh - helping to minimise the carbon footprint of delivery – reducing the number of trucks required to travel and deliver onto the project site in Edinburgh.

Sacyr Farrans Neopul Feedback

Sacyr Farrans Neopul, Neil Fullerton, Construction Manager, said “Through past relationships and projects, it was a clear advantage to engage and collaborate again with LECA UK when faced with the groundworks design challenge on the project. The need to maintain the use of the existing retaining walls and minimise any further ground consolidation was critical to delivering this area of the track without causing any undue effect on the walls. The need for the supply of the key product on programme was vital to SFN as these works were on the critical path, it was then delivered on time efficiently via ship to the quayside only a few meters from the worksite.”



LECA UK Technical Sales Manager, Robert Branford, said “We are delighted to have been specified for this continuation of the Edinburgh Tram development and working with the contractors Sacyr Farrans Neopul Construction team. We are pleased to see that the unique properties of LECA® LWA have been a decisive factor by the designers in being specified for this significant project.”

“We have worked with Farrans Construction on many geotechnical projects in the past including bridge, highways and rail developments - so

it has been a pleasure for LECA® LWA once again to be considered as a groundwork solution and to engage with a fantastic team on this development. The fact that this project aims to reduce the carbon emissions in the city centre, is something that as a Saint-Gobain company, we truly value in terms of a sustainable future. We hope the residents of Edinburgh enjoy this historical development for many years to come and the sustainable benefits are embraced for the future.”



Project information

Amount of material: 11,000m3 of LECA®LWA (10-20mm)

Interesting Fact: The specific compaction rates of LECA® LWA and the reduction in bearing pressure at base provided a key property for the specification of the material

Delivery Method: Walking Floor

Main Contractor: Sacyr Farrans Neopul (SFN) on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council



Improving living conditions and protecting the environment

Our products are bringing a number of advantages to the construction market, within the housing, infrastructure and water management sectors. They cater for comfort and wellbeing through positive thermal and acoustic insulation within our homes and living spaces.

We also see the benefits for our products within infrastructure design creating load compensation, reduced load on structures and offering effective drainage properties. Furthermore, we see the positive impact our products on the work environment and transport due to its unique combined lightness and strength. Our sustainable products are often recognized as achieving more with less.

Our organizational ethos of sustainability and protecting the environment is more than the effective engineering results of specifying our products – it is also what we do in our manufacturing processes. We recognize the environmental impact generated within our industry and we are focused on improving our environmental footprint through consistent optimization within all industrial processes throughout the total life cycle of our products.

But we do not rest on laurels on where we are today, we have clear plans of where we want our industry to be tomorrow. Reducing our industrial CO₂ footprint 50% by 2030, in comparison with 2017, is only our initial goal, we want to go beyond this. And for LECA sustainability is much more than CO₂ footprint and that is why we are developing transparent information on the full life cycle of our products.

We use energy to expand our aggregate but we are looking at the benefits in the total life cycle of our product – accounting for all the benefits generated during transport, installation and the user phase we believe we go far beyond the basic energy consumed to produce our products.

Through assessing the life cycle of our products it is clear that we are producing a sustainable building material. And importantly, not forgetting the end of the life-cycle of our lightweight aggregate, which can be removed and simply reused in the future, thanks to the material's unique and highly sustainable properties.

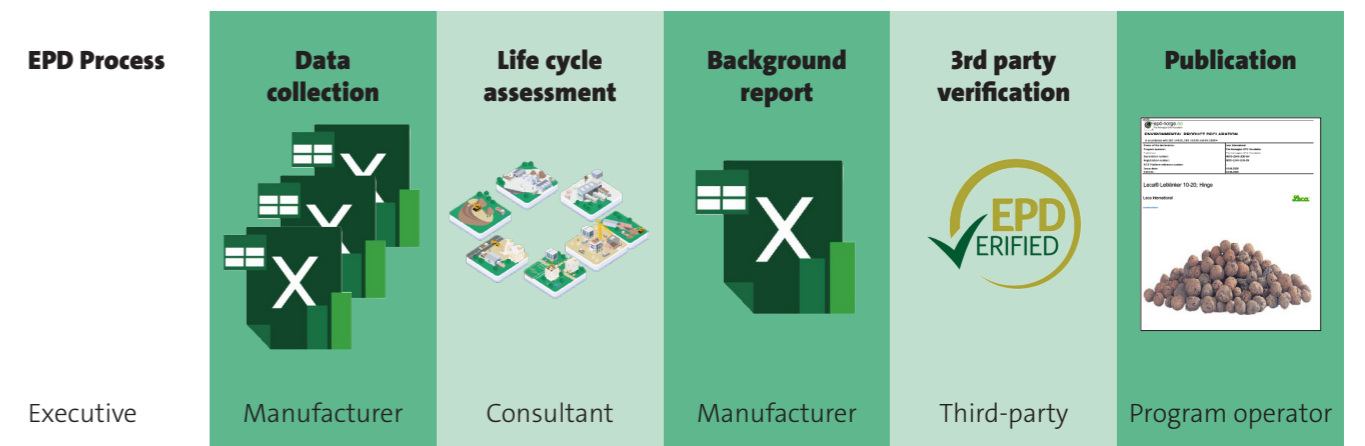
LECA® LWA is a product of today, with a strong history, and fully prepared for the needs and challenges of tomorrow. But we are not resting on our laurels. We want to take an active part in creating a sustainable future with a sustainable product.



Kim Rosenbom
Business Development and

Focus on the Environment

LECA has a strong commitment to the environment. Every day we extract clay from nature to produce our main product, Leca® LWA (Lightweight Aggregate). Even if we transform 1m³ of clay into 5m³ of sustainable construction material it is fundamental for us to understand the full life cycle impact of our products. Therefore, we are working on the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of our products which will allow us generate the Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) – a transparent way to present the cradle to grave information for all our products, from all our



An EPD is an independently verified and registered document that communicates transparent and comparable information about the life-cycle environmental impact of products in a credible way. EPDs are produced accordingly with the ISO International Standards, ISO 14025, based on the Product Category Rules. For Lightweight Expanded Clay the related CEN Standard is: EN 15804:2012 + A1:2013.



We are the number #1 supplier of Expanded Clay Lightweight Aggregate in Europe in Infrastructure, Housing and Water Management.

We are present in 12 countries with production sites in Denmark, Finland,

LECA is part of the Saint-Gobain Group which is committed to bring more sustainable products and solutions to the construction sector.

To understand why these commitments are so important for us, we invited Eric du Passage, Sustainable Business Manager at Saint-Gobain, to share with us Saint-Gobain's sustainability view.



FIRST OF ALL, ERIC, WHAT DOES SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION MEAN FOR SAINT-GOBAIN?

By publishing its new GROW & IMPACT strategy for the period 2021-2025 in October 2021, the Group shared its new vision: to be the world leader in sustainable construction. But what are we talking about? A new building or renovation project can be described as sustainable if, over its entire life cycle, it has a reduced impact on the environment while contributing to improving people's health and well-being. And this without any prejudice neither for the quality or for the economic value of the property. For Saint-Gobain, the sustainable dimension of a building is prioritised around 4 pillars: Energy & Carbon, Resources & Circularity, Health & Safety on the jobsite, and Health & Wellbeing for the occupants. We can see LECA's contribution in each one of this pillars.

THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR REPRESENTS 38% OF THE WORLD'S CARBON EMISSIONS, HOW CAN THIS BE REDUCED?

This is the result of two sources of emissions, 27% is related with the energy consumption during the use of heating, lighting, etc. and 11% is related to the production, transport and the end of life for building materials. It is necessary to change the construction practices to guarantee energy efficiency of the building and have construction materials with a low carbon footprint. SAINT-GOBAIN is decarbonizing its transport, manufacturing processes and raw materials, for example by using more and more recycled material. Ambitious targets have been defined on scopes 1, 2 and 3 for 2030. LECA is changing the energy source of its production process to more sustainable ones, which will have positive impact on carbon footprint of Leca® lightweight aggregate (LWA) and Leca® blocks.



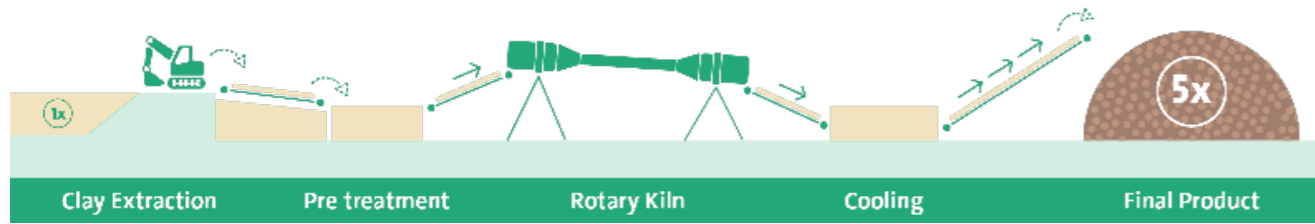
CAN YOU DISCUSS THE 'RESOURCES & CIRCULARITY' PILLAR?

As is well known, construction accounts for around 40% of the world's natural resource consumption and solid waste generation; there is a need to significantly reduce the use of water and non-renewable resources - to recover waste and to make better use of existing buildings.

For example, SAINT-GOBAIN reduces the water footprint for its products, and develops dry solutions that minimize water consumption on site. On the other hand, one way of avoiding the resources exploration is through the circularity of the existing materials, thanks to reuse or recycling. At LECA, for example, it is possible to incorporate waste materials from other SAINT-GOBAIN industries, such as ISOVER, GLAVA, ECOPHON, into the manufacturing process.

When we talk about extending the life of a building we can see a significant environmental benefit. Being able to change the purpose of a building, for example from commercial to residential use, avoids early deconstruction. Deconstruction must be favoured over demolition: this is a way to reduce the quantities of non-recovered waste and to increase recycling or reuse. Today, at Leca Sweden, there is a concept called Leca Tur & Retur that makes it possible for Leca to buy back material from the market that can be reused in a future project.

Leca® LWA production process



Clay extraction: The clay is extracted from clay pits normally located close to the plants, thus keeping haulage costs and carbon emissions to a minimum. The clay pits are restored and rehabilitated to both preserve biodiversity and create new natural habitats.

Pretreatment: The clay goes to the production line where the mechanical treatment took place and some additives are added to the clay.

Rotary kiln: The kilns are heated to temperatures up to 1.150°C and this process transforms the clay into various sized lightweight aggregates with a hard ceramic shell and a porous core. The raw material is expanded approximate 5 times during the kiln process.

Cooling: A correct cooling process is essential to ensure a high-quality product. This process is made with air.

Final product: A sustainable light weight aggregate made for housing, infrastructure or water management applications.

Comparing to traditional filling material Leca® LWA is fast and easy with the following characteristics:

- Lightweight
- Resistant
- Durable
- Improve drainage
- Thermal insulation

Leca® In-Office CPD Available Now

We offer UK wide in-office CPD seminars (with lunch included) which provides an in depth study of Leca® LWA and its unique properties within structural and geotechnical applications.



Visit www.leca.co.uk to organise a free appointment



Key areas covered:

Geotechnical Engineering

(Highways, Rail, Bridges, Pneumatic Infill of Redundant Structures)

Water Management

(Landscaping, Flood Prevention)

Coastal Protection (Sheet Pile, Caisson Structures)



IN-OFFICE CPD PRESENTATION

LECA® Lightweight Fill within Structural and Geotechnical Applications



 leca.co.uk