

Cormican team up with Oran Precast to produce Quality Concrete Houses

By Brian Ó'Murchú

Galway builder Tom Mc Gahon, director of Cormican Construction, is one of a growing number of builders now offering precast concrete stairs and first floors to house purchasers. Cormican are currently developing 32 luxury houses in Oranmore Co. Galway, where precast floors and stairs have been installed by Oran Precast.

Mc Gahon cites purchaser awareness as one of the reasons for the decision to go 'all concrete'. 'People, and women in particular, are doing research before they buy and they are particularly interested in concrete first floors and stairs because of sound proofing and fire resistance. No matter how much insulation you put in timber floors they are still noisy'. Test results would support Mc Gahon's argument. Test figures show that airborne sound insulation of a concrete first floor to be in the range of 47db to 52db, whereas a normal timber floor in comparative tests has a rating of only 30db to 38db. 'Although Cormican Construction originally opted for the precast solution for quality and saleability reasons, we are now convinced that this method of construction has in fact brought about significant cost savings when all factors are taken into consideration', said Mc Gahon.

Speed of erection is one of the main advantages of precast floors and stairs. Units are installed in a couple of hours and, once in position they can be immediately stacked with blocks. This means that the bricklayer can immediately begin to construct the upper level external and internal walls while working on a completely safe working platform. Also, the simultaneous installation of concrete stairs provides safe access to the upper floors. In addition to the enormous 'Health and Safety' advantages there are considerable savings to timber floor construction. The concrete floors were installed by Oran Precast who have their own 'Health and Safety' trained installation crews. This means that the carpenter, who is now very costly to employ and in increasingly short supply, is not required on site. 'For 'Health and Safety' reasons and to ensure a quality finish I would normally have to install a temporary chipboard floor and propping and even then you have to watch out for overloading of blocks on the floor', says Tom. 'Also, a temporary stairs would have to be installed and a scaffolding erected.



Floors & Stairs
by Oran Precast

Concrete Houses - Oranmore Co. Galway



A carpenter then has to be re-employed to remove the temporary installation and put finished floors and a proper staircase in place'. This is expensive and disruptive to the construction process. Installing precast floors and stairs avoids all of these problems and brings about considerable cost savings in real terms. When all factors are taken into consideration the cost savings can be as high as 25% compared to timber floors. It is a win win situation: the house buyer gets a far superior product with excellent sound and fire proofing properties and the builder constructs his houses efficiently and safely with no waste of labour and materials due to damage.

The Oranmore houses being built by 'Cormican' also offer concrete block internal walls as standard. Once again this offers considerable sound proofing advantages over standard timber stud construction. 'Building internal block walls allows me to offer an all concrete building solution', said Mc Gahon. 'Kids increasingly have Playstations and Televisions in their bedrooms and being able to offer a construction solution which greatly reduces noise between rooms is seen as a real benefit'.



Safe Working Platform