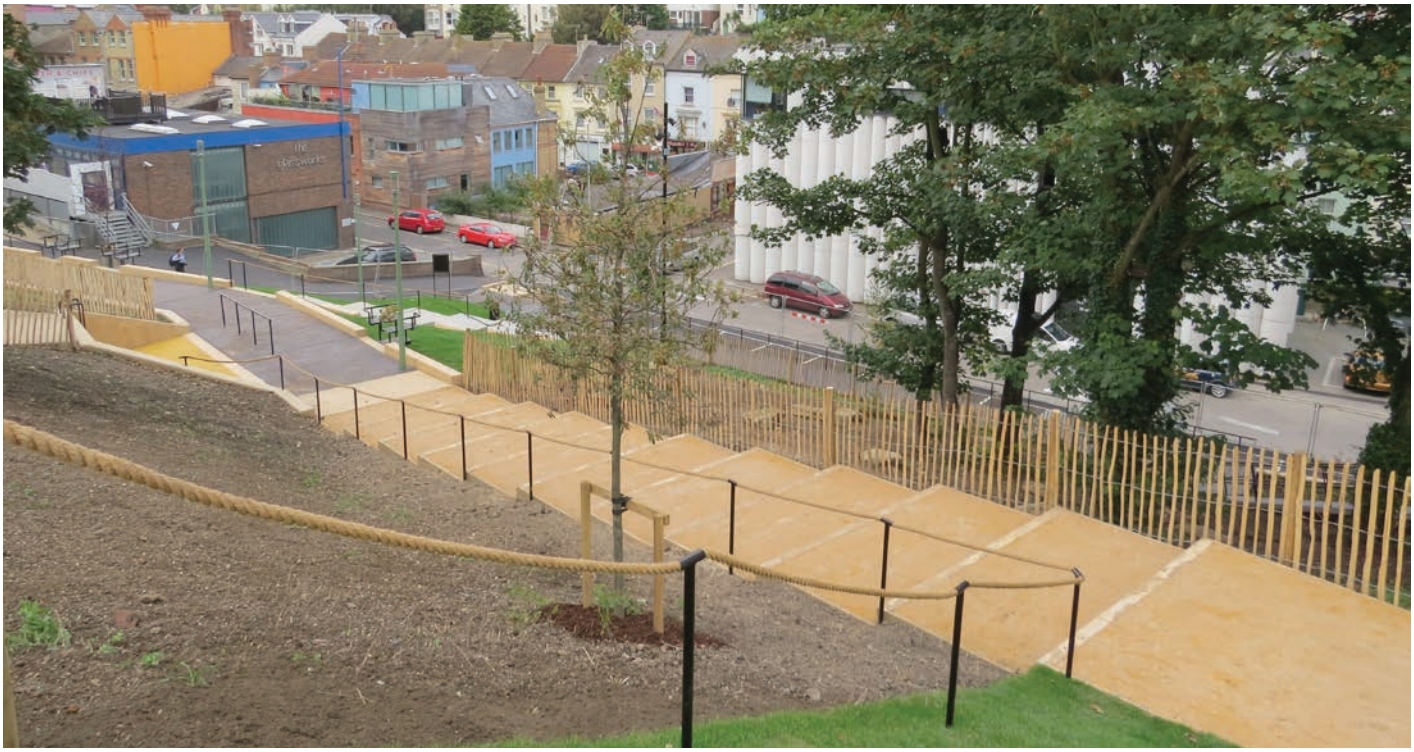
Payers Park, Folkestone, Kent

Project case study



Product

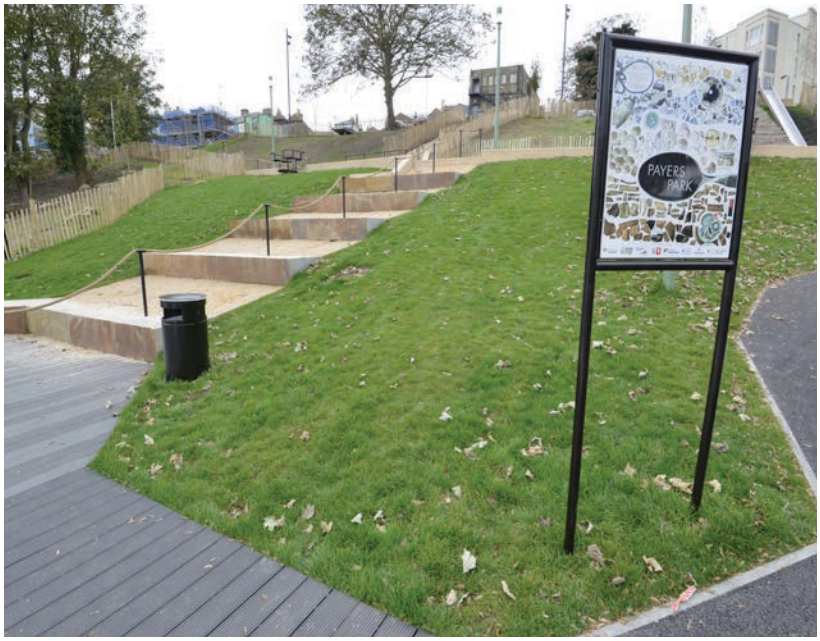
Hanson Colourcrete

Colours supplied

Straw, Deep Yellow and Olive Green

Overview

Coloured concrete supplied by Hanson has been used to transform a disused section of Folkestone's town centre into a new recreational space, as part of a partnership initiative to regenerate the area. Its combination of structural integrity, design flexibility and colourfastness provided the ideal building solution for many of the park's structures – from its retaining walls through to its play equipment.



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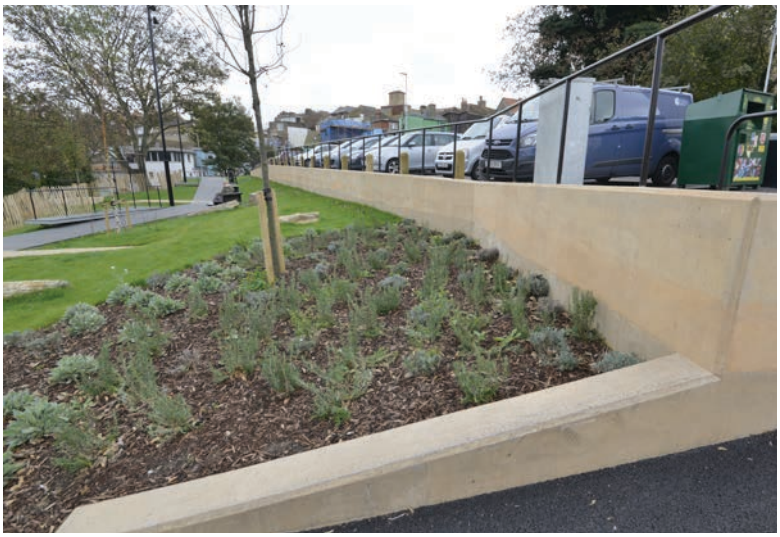
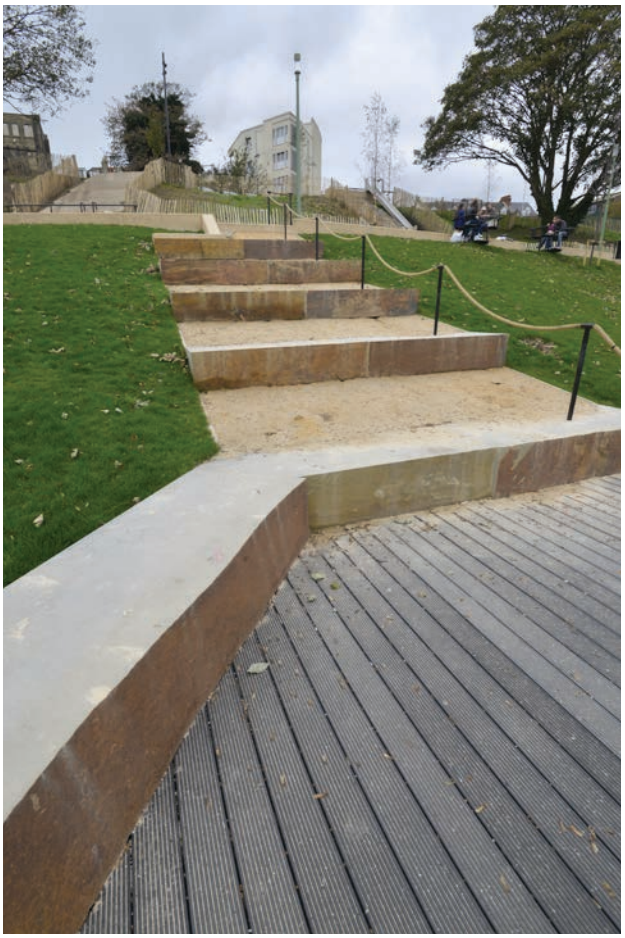
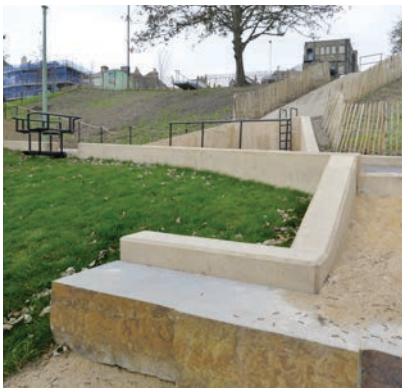
Community recreational space







Project description

Payers Park, designed by urban design specialists muf architecture/art, provides a place to play, exercise and relax for Folkestone's residents, visitors and shoppers.

The brief was to create a new focal point for the community that would act as a safe access link through the town centre.

Set in a steep sloping valley side, Payers Park required the use of heavy building materials with the structural capabilities to cope with the complexities of the site. Colour and aesthetic were important considerations in developing its exposed structures, which needed to closely match local clays and sandstones in the town, such as Greensand and Gault clay.

Colourcrete was selected due to its strength, durability and low maintenance. With five standard colours in the range and up to 800 shade variations, it provided the widest choice of colour possibilities.

Hanson worked with muf architecture/art, design and build contractors Ground Control and engineers Haskins Robinson Waters to select three concrete shades – Straw, Deep Yellow and Olive Green – to complement a wider colour palette and blend in with the natural landscape. The latter two shades were produced as bespoke mixes to help meet the design concept.

Colour was added to the concrete mixes through a unique, fully automated liquid pigment dispensing system which allows the exact dosage to be applied, ensuring that batches produced at different times consistently match. Liquid pigments, containing the highest solid content, dispersed easily in the concrete mixes to produce three high intensity colours, which are UV stable.

All three colours were incorporated in the park's retaining walls – which give the appearance of ruins or excavations hidden under deposits of soil. The walls, which sit within the site's slopes, were used to support levelled areas where accessible public routes have been created.

A specialist retaining feature wall using all three concrete shades was also cast in one lift without the adverse merging of colour. This was achieved through controlled placement and compaction techniques applied on site to set the three Colourcrete shades in layers – the darkest colour on the bottom and the lightest on top – to mimic a geological timeline within the soil. The Olive Green shade was additionally used within sprayed concretes to form four stepped concrete dishes against the slope.

The design process was developed in partnership with the Folkestone Triennial and the Creative Foundation, which commissioned the project, The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England, Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative, Kent County Council, the Creative Foundation and Shepway District Council, which manages the park.