

The FLO Assurance and Compliance Manager John Bailey; who is also the 'FLO Competent Person for Premises'; has inspected and investigated the issue raised with reference to the striping on the external reconstituted stone cladding installed at Nine Elms Station. He has also consulted with the Managing Director of Techcrete.

The precast concrete cladding panels for Nine Elms Station are as specified in the NLE Project Specification Volume 5.6 – Architecture – Nine Elms Station-Part 2 [MMD-N203-2360000-ARC-SPC-00004 Revision 5]. The details are covered in section 4.4 entitled 'Stone Cladding [H50]', sub section 4.4.1 'Precast Concrete Cladding 01 [H50 SC01]' states:

"Cladding panels:

- Materials: Stone faced precast panel rainscreen. Suggested aggregates black granite, basalt, marron, jasberg, subject to sample approval. Based on Decomo sample No. 8836 20/2/16 (but with fewer and smaller orange, beige and white aggregate). Colour and size of suggested aggregate to be confirmed by sample approval.
- Finish: matt, subject to sample approval, Anti-graffiti coating to LU requirements."

The panels supplied were manufactured in Dublin by Techrete for Vetter. During a visit to the Techrete manufacturing facility on 12th March 2019 a sample panels was accepted by both FLO and LUL recorded on sample Inspection Form FLO-N203-2360000-QLT-ISP-0042 Rev 2. The acceptance form noted that the anti-graffiti coating had not been applied.

Following installation, it was noted that the polishing lines become visible in certain sunlight conditions particularly when the sun is at lower angle in the sky. The manufacturer; Techcrete; has advised that the polishing lines are more evident in the black polished panels compared to some of the other mix designs and under certain lighting conditions become more prominent.

They confirmed that these honing marks in the panel surface occur during the polishing cycle are an inherent part of the polishing process; they are more noticeable on darker, honed (which results in a matt surface) panels of the type under specified at Nine Elms Station. In conjunction with the equipment supplier the bridge polisher used on the panels is pre-set in terms of the number of passes which each panel receives including the orientation of the passes and the set distance that the head moves across / up the panel to ensure the consistency of finish.

The finished precast concrete surface is manufactured in accordance with BS8297:2017 Design, manufacture and installation of architectural precast concrete – code of practice and referenced standards. There is no standard in terms of finish to polished panels, in fact the effect is not related to surface roughness but a product of the polishing action itself.

The manufacturer has confirmed that this effect is confined to the surface finish only and has no impact on the structural performance or durability of the panels. While every effort has been made to reduce the impact of these marks they cannot be completely removed.

Based on the investigation, consultations and facts detailed above it is evident that this phenomenon is inherent in the majority of precast panels, but more prevalent in matt finishes. It is only visible in limited sunlight conditions when viewed from certain angles.