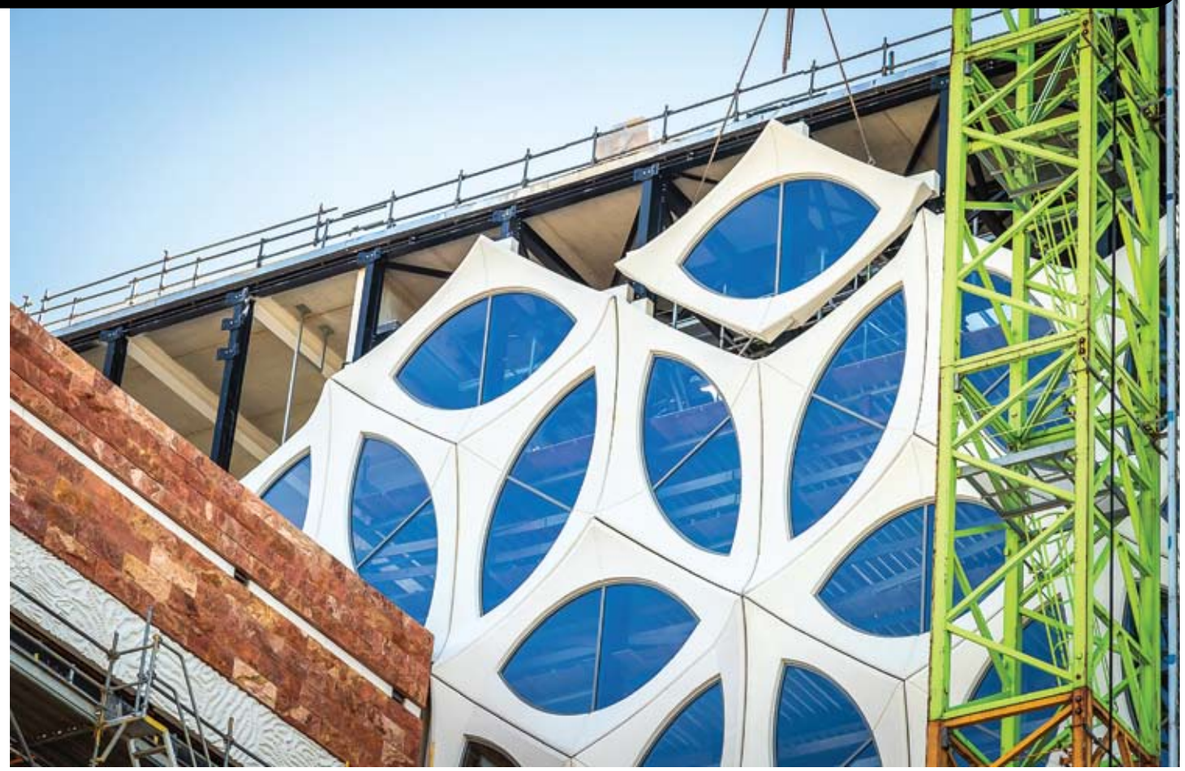
# Paving a sustainable way forward



## Already established as a global pioneer in the field of white cement, **Cementir** is now embarking on an ambitious ten-year plan that will see it become an even more sustainable entity

For Cementir, the world's leading name in white cement through its global brand Aalborg White®, 2019 was a positive year marked by a number of important events, both from a product development and an operational perspective. Reflecting on the last 12 months, and the last time the company featured within the pages of *Construction & Civil Engineering* at the turn of 2019, Cementir's Chief Sales, Marketing & Commercial Development Officer, Michele Di Marino is happy to update us on the progress it has made.

"The last time we spoke, the company was in the process of acquiring and integrating several new positions across Europe and the United States, and strengthening in other key locations globally. At the same time, we also underwent something of an internal reorganisation that would see us setting up new initiatives in the areas of innovation, digitalisation, product development, commercial activity," Michele begins. "So, for us, 2019 was a time in which we consolidated many of the decisions taken in the last three of years, and the results have been very positive indeed."

**Image above:**
**Architect: Neutelings Riedijk**
**Structural engineer: Lievense**
**Contractor: JP van Eesteren**
**Prefab: Hibex B.V.**

Arguably one of the most significant developments for the company in 2019, however, has been its renewed focus on becoming an industry leader when it comes to sustainability. "Delivering sustainable products, solutions and processes across multiple strands – from $CO_2$ emissions reduction to corporate social responsibility and community engagement – will form the bedrock of what we do as a business for the next five-to-ten years," Michele adds.

A central pillar to achieving its goals will be Cementir's continued investment in value driven innovation, and its subsequent introduction of new solutions. At the time of our last look at the company, it had just launched its Aalborg Extreme™, ultra-high performance concrete (UHPC) premix, the first product to fall under its AalborgINWhite® range, and based on a refinement of Cementir's patented binder technology, Futurecem®.

Futurecem® is based on the synergetic combination of limestone and calcined clay, the pairing of which helps to replace a significant quantity of clinker in cement. "We regard our Futurecem® technology as being a vital ingredient in delivering greener, more sustainable solutions," Michele continues. "The energy savings facilitated by the lower use of clinker inevitably results in relevant $CO_2$ reductions, while the materials used are made up of largely available, sustainable, natural resources. Such are the positive credentials of Futurecem® that it has been highlighted as a contributor to a more sustainable future by the likes of the European Cement Association (Cembureau) – where it was mentioned in its Green Roadmap – and in reports from the European Commission and the International Energy Agency (IEA), as regards to calcined clays technologies.

Perfectly suited to the production processes of the company's precast concrete customers' plants, Aalborg Extreme™ has gained good traction since its introduction, and in December 2019 it was joined by a second UHPC premixed product, Aalborg Excel. "Similarly based on our Futurecem® technology, Aalborg Excel™ is a complementary product to Aalborg Extreme™, in that each possesses unique properties, high compressive strength, and excellent tensile strength, shrinkage and durability. With its self-levelling properties and long open time, Excel™ is the perfect fit for architectural applications with thin and complex geometrics," Michele explains.

Within its AalborgINWhite® range, Cementir is also pressing ahead with the imminent launch of a premix solution for 3D printed concrete, Aalborg Explore™. Having first looked into the technology some four years ago, the company has since taken the time to study, access and understand the opportunities it presents, and following extensive R&D work, it feels that now is the right time to proceed. "The 3D printed concrete market is still in its infancy, but there are a lot of start-up businesses now emerging and we can see a number of future application opportunities in the construction industry for this technology," Michele says.

A further technology that is relatively young in terms of its


wide-scale adoption that Michele is keen to mention is magnetic cement, particularly as it relates to its ability to charge electric vehicles. “We are very excited to be working on magnetic premixes to enable the ‘real-life’ implementation of the technology, in co-operation with a German start-up company by the name of Magment,” he details. “Magment has patented a new, global material with the properties of concrete that can enable a focused magnetic field in order to enable both static and dynamic charging of electric vehicles. With demonstration projects involving this technology currently taking place all over the world, the potential for it is massive, and we are thrilled to be playing a part in its development.”

As is the case with most well-run businesses, Cementir has a three-year plan that sets out its goals for the immediate future. Where it differs slightly is in the fact that, running parallel to this, it also has a road map in place taking it up to 2030. “This road map sets out up our plans for the strategic development of Cementir, focusing on key themes such as internal growth and – of course – sustainability, which we have committed an additional €100 million towards over the next three years,” Michele states. “One of our targets for the next ten years is to achieve a group-wide $CO_2$ reduction of 30 per cent, and all of our activities today incorporate this goal. Investment wise, we will continue to bring in the best new processes and technologies to create ever-more environmentally friendly solutions, while internally we aim to make further progress in the adoption of alternative fuels and in improving waste recovery.

“People wise, we will maintain our investment in training, development and our work through our Cementir Academy programme. Then, in addition to our internal efforts, strategy wise we will also continue to look for opportunities to achieve external growth. We are definitely interested in ways in which we can increase our presence in the Asia Pacific region, for instance, by strengthening our strategic presence and our production and logistic network.

“In conclusion, I expect 2020 to be the year in which we set about on the path towards a new age for Cementir, one that is driven by the core themes of innovation, growth and sustainability!” ❍

**Cementir**
**www.cementirholding.it**
**Services:** Cement and concrete production



**SIKA**

Sika is a specialty chemicals company with a leading position in the development and production of systems and products for bonding, sealing, damping, reinforcing, and protecting in the building sector and motor vehicle industry. Sika has subsidiaries in 101 countries around the world and manufactures in over 200 factories. Its more than 20,000 employees generated annual sales of CHF 7.09 billion in 2018.

**Concrete** - Sika develops and markets a complete range of admixtures and additives for use in concrete, cement, and mortar production. These products enhance specific properties of the fresh or hardened concrete, such as workability, water tightness, durability, load-bearing capacity, or early and final strength. The demand for admixtures and additives is currently on the rise, particularly due to the increased performance requirements placed on concrete and mortar, especially in urban areas and for infrastructure construction. Furthermore, the growing use of alternative cementitious materials in cement, mortar, and therefore also in concrete, is increasing the need for admixtures.