

Left, right and below right: Operator Donnie Bruce praises the long-reach Hitachi 350, claiming that the controls are smooth and precise, which is ideal for this application.

Below left: 40,000 tonnes of stone are being used for the core of the sea wall structure, which will be protected by large pieces of rock armour.



long-reach excavator. The controls are also very smooth, have a nice feel to them and are very precise, particularly useful when you're swinging and placing stone and rock armour with a 22-metre reach. This 350 has also been very reliable, as it has not missed a beat in over 1100 hours of hard work."

This long-reach Hitachi has been fitted with a Topcon 3D GPS guidance and control system, which has proved invaluable when excavating and placing rock armour under water. It has also been fitted with a slew and height limiter system, as some of the work is adjacent to a main railway line. The presence of this rail line

resulted in the installation of cofferdams, to ensure the land does not slip while material is being extracted to a depth of 5m. AFP supplied DEME with site supervisors and labourers to bolster their team overseeing and undertaking this specialist work.

Part of DEME's stipulations for their sub-contractors is that machine cabs are upgraded, not simply to rely upon the manufacturers' standard positive pressure heating and ventilation system. Third party equipment is fitted to positively pressurise the cab, to help ensure that no dust particulates, gases or contaminants enter the cab. AFP and DEME shared the cost of this additional investment in safety kit, part of a wider collaboration on this project.

DEME's Hendrik Nollet commented, "I'm pleased to report the project is on time and budget. Part of this success has been the fantastic communications we have formed with the whole AFP team, right from the start of strategic planning, through to our daily team briefs, so everyone's on the same page of what we need to get done in a safe and efficient manner. The most important factor is our health and safety culture and record on

AFP CONSTRUCTION

Albert 'Fred' Parker (AFP) moved to the UK from Ireland in the 1950s, working his way up from labourer to site agent on projects throughout Scotland. In 1976 Fred and his wife Mary made the brave decision to branch out on their own and formed AFP Construction (Bishopton) Ltd. Although finances were initially tight, their first machine was a 1960s JCB 2B backhoe loader, which incidentally is going to be restored to its former glory in 2024. By the end of the decade things were looking up and in 1979 the business purchased a new Bedford truck, a JCB 3C backhoe loader, compressors and a new car.

Son Kevin joined the business at age 16, followed by his sister Fiona, both of whom now run the business. The decision to expand from construction into plant hire was made back in 2016, and the fleet has grown rapidly over the last few years.

In addition to a cross hired-in long-reach Hitachi 210 and another Ammann roller, at the time of our visit to this remediation project, AFP was using the following machines on site;

1	Komatsu PC290i
2	Komatsu PC210i
2	Komatsu PC210
1	Hitachi long-reach ZX350
1	Kobelco SK140 & Engcon
1	JCB JS160 & Engcon
2	Doosan wheel loaders
7	Hydrema dump trucks
1	200hp tractor & bowser
1	13t Ammann drum roller
1	Bomag 120 roller

CONCLUSION

As DEME Environmental ramps down its successful operation on site and the remediation works are completed, AFP Construction is in a good position to pick up further work on this vast site, which is now owned by the local councils. The development plans include new road and rail bridges to a large green open space, which includes waterfront pedestrian and cycle paths. A 45-acre chunk of the site will be turned into a mixed-use industrial and commercial development, including storage, distribution, industrial, business and office space. This will generate over 600 jobs

