“A delightful addition to the banks of the Lee”

Perrott’s Inch Bridge, University College Cork was the overall winner at the Irish Concrete Society’s 37th Annual Awards, which took place in March at the Clayton Hotel in Dublin. Concrete report.

S
ome 280 guests attended the 2019 Irish Concrete Society Awards evening, which celebrated excellence in concrete design and construction. This was the 37th Annual Awards evening and the event is always one of the highlights of the construction industry’s calendar. The main awards jury consisted of Karen McEvoy of Beulsco McEvoy Architects, Des Mulcair of Roadbridge and Jerome O’Brien from JB Barry and Partners.

The jury reviewed a total of 25 projects nominated in three categories of main awards — Element, Infrastructure and Building. There were also nine projects nominated for the seventh International Award, which is sponsored by Enterprise Ireland. In addition, the winner of the annual Sean deCourcy Student Award was announced.

Spraying at the awards evening, Eamon Booth, chairman of the Irish Concrete Society, said, “Since its inauguration in 1977 our awards evening has become a highlight of the construction industry calendar and the awards themselves are widely recognised for the exceptional quality standards and levels of excellence they represent, in concrete design and execution.

“This year, we received an exceptional standard of nominations across all of the various categories and I commend all the entrants for their skill, ingenuity and resourcefulness on display in the array of outstanding projects that are showcased in the competition.”

Winner – Infrastructure Category

UBC 434 Oisberstown Underbridge, Co. Cildare

The Oisberstown Underbridge Project was part of the new Saline Bypass Scheme. It consists of a twin box underbridge to take the new dual carriageway under the Dublin – Cork twin-track railway line.

A 35m-long by 35m-wide cofferdam was constructed over the footprint of the proposed bridge across the railway lines. This involved the installation of 199 1200mm-diameter rotary piles ranging in depth from 10 to 81m with 2m rock sockets.

The bridge structure consisted of 26 reinforced concrete units cast on-site at the southern side of the railway. Each unit had a footprint of 12.5 x 5m with wall heights to 7.5m and weights ranging from 140 to 320 tonnes.

The bridge was installed during a 72-hour track possession over Easter Weekend at the end of March 2018.

The winner was chosen from five projects.

The jury said, “The designers and contractors of the winning project in this category were presented with a challenging logistical problem – how to construct a new road bridge under an existing busy rail line that could only be closed for a short period.

“The judges were impressed with the near-unique solution of bespoke large-scale interlocking precast concrete U sections, which were installed quickly in the challenging time frame and resulted in a robust, durable structure with excellent finishes.”

Winner – Building Category

Cliffs of Moher Coach Park Reception Building

This category winner was selected from 11 entries. The works at the Cliffs of Moher included the construction of a new reception building, public toilets, plant rooms and walkways, expanding the existing coach parking facilities and associated civil works including the installation of new automatic bollards to allow for ease of payment for coaches on arrival.

Prior to construction of the new building, the existing site had to be cleared. This involved partial decommissioning and demolition of a live wastewater treatment plant.

The building was designed to blend in with the local surroundings and, like the main visitor centre, it was curved and seeded so it becomes part of the landscape. The entire building was formed in in-situ concrete with elements of rainscreen cladding and glazing. Internally, all walls are as-struck concrete; ceilings and floors are polished finish.

The awards jury commented, “As the sensitive landscape along the coast of Clare to which visitors flock to view the Cliffs of Moher, this project seeks to minimise its visual impact on the setting, creating a wicker enclosure of concrete, incorporating reception...”
Any colour you like
Pigments from old toner powder

Sea defence/marine construction
Shakespeare Beach, Dover

Batching plant and concrete equipment
Mortar and silos – the perfect mix