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MAXIMISED GARDEN SPACE THANKS TO THE STEPOC SYSTEM FROM IBSTOCK

Case Study.

An architect's detached property on the outskirts of Manchester made for an ideal home, apart from its sloping back garden which dramatically reduced the area of lawn that could be practically used.

The client bought the house two years ago but couldn't utilise a large section of the extensive rear garden as it was part of an old railway embankment. However, this situation is being rectified by installing the STEPOC system – a precast concrete block retaining wall from leading building materials manufacturer Ibstock.





He commented: “The rear retaining wall runs for 80 metres and is being created using STEPOC in four stages – with work on the last section starting in mid-January this year. The ground was showing signs of gradual slumping and there were a lot of trees that were not in the best shape and had to be removed. This included a mixture of species including Elm, Sycamore and Beech, but we will be replacing the trees once the work is completed.”

Daniel Blythe, Istock Infrastructure Business Partner, commented: “The STEPOC system makes it possible to build almost anywhere, enabling plots previously thought too difficult to develop a viable proposition as it requires no mortar, no drying time and no waiting. It is solid as a rock and no specialist skills are required for installation – so general labourers with no bricklaying skills can do the work.

“The client clearly wasn’t getting the most out of his garden and he employed Bolton-based Redford Construction to carry out the work which has required 50 tonnes of STEPOC blocks to do the job. STEPOC are hollow blocks which allow for reinforcement bars to be inserted and for concrete to be pumped down through the interconnected cavities in the blocks.”

Redford Construction Director Stuart Jenkins said: “The ground was shifting quite a bit and there were also a lot of trees. We sought advice from a structural engineer as it was clear a substantial retaining wall was needed and the STEPOC system was agreed to be the best solution of the options considered.

“We dug a toe into the actual ground, and it was important to accurately place the starter bars into the foundation. The first course of blocks was laid into the mortar and they needed to be completely level. The next step was to drill and fit in the vertical bars – in all we built-up 11 courses using STEPOC.”

Aidan is very pleased with the progress made so far and the end is now in sight. He added: “The garden will be backfilled to make it level and, ultimately, we will create a terrace. The STEPOC system was the best for the job because of its usability, the minimisation of waste and reducing the amount of materials to be brought on-site like shuttering and plywood.”

To find out more about the STEPOC system, click on this link:
<https://www.istock.co.uk/products/retaining-walls/stepoc>



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