



Hambleside Danelaw Ltd
Press release – 25 November 2009

Building Regulation proposals still far too complex to impact positively on environment, says sustainability award winner

Hambleside Danelaw, the British roofing products manufacturer which has won national awards for its approach to sustainability, has warned that the government's latest proposals to amend Part L of the Building Regulations may make little difference in terms of encouraging energy savings and cutting carbon emissions.

The independently assessed carbon negative company agrees with its partners in the National Association of Rooflight Manufacturers (NARM) that the continued over-complicated approach to regulation makes it difficult for Building Control to improve the poor level of compliance throughout the construction industry.

The complexity also means that it is hard for the industry to support architects and designers who are committed to energy efficiency.

While it agrees with the general aim of a 25% target emission reduction (TER) for non-domestic buildings, Hambleside Danelaw feels strongly that the absence of a transparent notional definition for large span buildings from the proposals makes it impossible to comment on whether this goal is sufficiently ambitious. Therefore the definition of a notional building should be clear and explicit, and for large span buildings it should accommodate all possible different uses, such as retail, distribution and manufacturing.

Hambleside is highly critical of proposals to define warehouses as 'non-lit' when most warehouses are now built and toplit with a modern generation of rooflights that can spread diffuse natural daylight throughout a building.

Technological advances need to be recognised

Hambleside Danelaw believes that the proposals do not adequately recognise the recent technological advances in automatic lighting control systems and building products such as rooflights that can really make a positive impact on the green agenda.

For example, it says that the U-value limits for rooflights are too low and could actually lead to an increase in CO₂ emissions from buildings. Rooflight U-values also need to be based on the whole unit including the frame, because more heat can be lost through certain non-thermal frames than through the actual glazing.

A proposal to restrict the total rooflight area to 15% of a roof because of fears of overheating also completely fails to recognise the reflective properties of modern GRP rooflights and ignores independent research which says that a much more important consideration for overheating is the building's overall ventilation strategy.

Hambleside Danelaw supports the NARM view that technological advances and the need for best practice in all elements of building construction offer a so far missed opportunity to simplify the Building Regulations, at the same time as making the requirements tougher.

NARM wants to see the regulators return to an 'Elemental Approach' and a prohibition on efficiency trade-offs between elements. For many buildings, this means specifying separate performance requirements for each element of the envelope and each building service and control system.

Hambleside's vice-chairman Robin Jeffery said: "Four years ago when Part L was last being reviewed, we warned that over-complexity in the Regulations would do nothing to tackle the widespread lack of compliance, but lessons don't seem to have been learnt. During that time, the threat of climate change and the need to become more energy efficient has become even more acute and yet we are still seeing an inadequate and unimaginative response from the government.

"The outcome of this consultation should be a complete overhaul of the approach to regulation and a major switch of emphasis to incentivise the industry to comply via the tax and business rates system."

Hambleside Danelaw is regarded as a leader in bringing innovative energy efficient building products to the market. In 2006 it won a Queen's Award for its Insulator rooflight range and its new Insulator Lighting Control System, which is under development and will be able to reduce the need for artificial lighting inside a building by as much as 50%, has just won a Green Apple award from the Green Organisation.

ENDS

Contact Aidan Relf on 07710 305182

Notes to editors

1. Part L consultation

Hambleside Danelaw's views are in support of the NARM response to the government's consultation on 'Proposed changes to Part L and Part F of the Building Regulations', which closed recently – see: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partlf2010consultation>
<http://www.narm.org.uk/home/home.html>

2. About Hambleside Danelaw Ltd

Hambleside Danelaw Ltd (www.hambleside-danelaw.co.uk) manufactures Glass Reinforced Polyester (GRP) rooflights and other roofing and ventilation products in Daventry and Inverness. As part of the Hambleside Danelaw Group with headquarters in Waterlooville in Hampshire, its turnover is currently around £9 million a year and it employs approximately 70 people. The Group was established in 1975 with its first factory at Inverness for manufacturing GRP products becoming operational in 1978. In addition to winning numerous environmental awards, the factory has attained BS 14001:2004 in recognition of its environmental management systems and has now been independently assessed as carbon negative. In 1992, the Group began producing in Daventry non-GRP products primarily for

roof and cavity wall ventilation and in September 2007 it opened a new state-of-the-art facility in the East Midlands town. Hambleside Danelaw has since achieved the BS EN ISO 18001:2007 standard.

In 2006, the Group won a Business Commitment to the Environment award, presented by Rt Hon David Cameron MP, as well as the Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation for its Insulator GRP thermally efficient rooflight. The Group has regularly won UK national Green Apple awards for Environmental Best Practice and it was recognised again in 2008 by The Green Organisation as 'Green Heroes' and more recently as a **4-star Status green company**. Hambleside Danelaw has been awarded three Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland (VIBES) awards in five years in the medium sized companies' category. In 2007, the Group was accredited with the Planet Positive mark by leading carbon solutions company dcarbon8 (<http://dcarbon8.com/>) and it collected the Scottish Natural Heritage Award for Excellence in Environmental Sustainability. An independent audit by dcarbon8 found that Hambleside Danelaw reduced its carbon footprint at its two factories in 2007 by over 20%.