



Powerproject®

Durkan uses Powerproject by Elecosoft to construct award-winning approach

DURKAN

The story in 60 seconds: Industry-leading construction firm, Durkan, delivered a 354-home development in just 139 weeks using Powerproject by Elecosoft.

Detailed planning capabilities empowered the project's director to suggest innovative techniques that shortened lead times. Also, real-time scheduling enabled the firm to complete two blocks 16 weeks ahead of schedule.

In recognition for this impressive project, Durkan received a Gold Medal at the 2020 UK Construction Manager of the Year Awards.

Strong reputations are built on solid foundations – quite literally in the case of construction and housebuilding firm, Durkan.

The family-owned company has been in business for more than 50 years, growing success through exacting standards and a forward-thinking approach.

Durkan's commitment to innovation runs through every aspect of its development programmes, which are driven by cutting-edge technology.

The company has been using Powerproject project management and scheduling software for more than a decade – most recently to plan an ambitious 354-home

development scheme, which clinched a Gold Medal at the 2020 UK Construction Manager of the Year Awards.

Essential for constructing every element

In the last half century, Durkan has delivered over one million square feet of commercial space and 30,000 new homes.

"I rely on Powerproject... It's an essential tool for every part of our business, from tendering, design and costing through to surveying and construction."



Powerproject has been critical to ensuring many of these developments are completed on time and on budget – as Project Director, Patrick Phillips, explains:

“I joined Durkan 14 years ago and we’ve been using Powerproject as long as I’ve worked here,” he shares. “It’s an essential tool for every part of our business, from tendering, design and costing through to surveying and construction.

“On a personal level, I rely on Powerproject as a resourcing tool, to see how we’re progressing with developments and to reschedule work or labour where needed. It’s very advantageous to the planning process.”

Making smart decisions from the start

The strength and flexibility of Powerproject was demonstrated in a recent £67 million development project that Durkan undertook for Southern Housing Group.

Patrick and his team had just 139 weeks to deliver a four block, 354-home scheme in Ilford. Not only did they meet this ambitious timeline – they actually delivered two out of four blocks ahead of schedule, leading to Patrick being crowned Gold Medallist at the 2020 UK Construction Manager of the Year Awards.

Throughout the project, Patrick combined innovative techniques and Powerproject’s capabilities to ensure the development could be delivered quickly and cost efficiently.

“It was an extremely tight and aggressive programme, but we used Powerproject to manage resourcing,” Patrick explains. “I had a good team around me, and we had the right planning and project management software to enhance productivity, speed and efficiency.”

From the outset, careful planning was required to ensure construction ran smoothly. The site had only one access route, which was close to both the busy North Circular Road and a local supermarket.

“We used Powerproject to manage access to the site, ruling out certain times where traffic would be heavy, or the road would be blocked with delivery lorries,” Patrick shares. “This meant the programme ran smoothly, and it also helped with local relations, as our machinery wasn’t preventing access to nearby facilities.”

With site access at a premium, Patrick and his team needed to be strategic in their use of resources – moving away from crane-assisted construction to build the core walls with slipform concrete. They also chose mast climbers rather than

scaffolding, creating platforms that transported workers and materials to their location.

“Managing the mast climbers effectively was very important, as all of our tradespeople wanted access to them,” Patrick says. “With Powerproject, we could schedule programmes for each mast climber to identify who could use it and when, making sure the whole development flowed. It was a very useful tool for this section alone.”

Innovating ahead of schedule

Powerproject proved instrumental in Patrick’s decision to create the core walls with slipform concrete – the first time Durkan had ever used this approach.

“Having software that allowed us to amalgamate design and production and do detailed planning up-front influenced many of our key decisions,” he comments. “For example, when we looked at traditional crane-based methods, the time frame came out at 62 weeks.

“However, when we implemented slipform into the programme, we gained ten weeks, as we could pour over one floor per day. Powerproject enabled us to pull the whole timeline forward.”

Modelling the project in advance also gave Patrick and his team the confidence to commit to tight production schedules.

“We knew it was a tall order to deliver a four-block housing development in 139 weeks. But Powerproject showed us in black and white that our timescale would work.”

Extending the Powerproject community

A combination of strong leadership, collaborative teamwork and dynamic software enabled Durkan to exceed project deadlines, delivering two out of four housing blocks 16 weeks ahead of schedule. And Patrick’s use of Powerproject was central to this success, as he could track progress in real-time and make strategic scheduling decisions.

“It was a huge advantage to see exactly how the programme was moving forward and reschedule elements as needed,” he shares. “At any point in time I could use Powerproject to see exactly where we were and where we needed to reduce or increase resources.”

Naturally, the rapid speed of delivery led to compliments from the client. However, Durkan’s use of dynamic project management and scheduling software caught the attention of fellow tradesmen as well – extending the Powerproject community.

“We’re always trying to convince our subcontractors to use Powerproject, so they can work out exactly what resources they need to hit our timescales,” Patrick concludes. “It’s a fantastic tool.”

“Powerproject enabled us to pull the whole timeline forward, gaining 10 weeks.”

More information

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