

British Gypsum, Robertsbridge

Flat Roof Refurbishment & Safety Upgrades



BACKGROUND

British Gypsum's manufacturing facility in Robertsbridge is a large-scale industrial site operating a continuous production line. Following condition assessments of the existing roof coverings, a comprehensive refurbishment programme was developed to address ageing materials, improve long-term waterproofing performance and enhance roof safety, while ensuring the uninterrupted operation of the facility throughout the works.

Inspire Contract Services were appointed as Principal Contractor to deliver this high-risk project, taking responsibility for all site management, access provision, health and safety coordination and programme control. The existing roof comprised a three-layer felt system incorporating cork insulation, which had reached the end of its service life and required full removal back to the structural deck.

Given the live manufacturing environment beneath the roof and the extended duration of the programme, meticulous planning, phased working and robust safety controls were essential to minimise risk to personnel and prevent disruption to ongoing production activities.

The scope of works comprised the refurbishment of approximately 9,700m² of flat roof area, including removal of the existing roof system and installation of a new high-performance built-up felt solution. All works were delivered in a fully phased manner to ensure the building remained operational throughout the 18-month programme.

CLIENT	British Gypsum
SECTOR	Industrial / Manufacturing
LOCATION	Robertsbridge, East Sussex
SOLUTION	BUFR & Safety Upgrades
SIZE / VALUE	9,700m ² / £2.0 Million



Key elements of the works included:

- Provision of full access scaffolding and roof edge handrails to the main roof areas to facilitate safe working at height.
- Installation of internal safety netting beneath the roof structure to provide fall protection while working above an operational production line.
- Careful stripping of the existing three-layer felt system, including removal of cork insulation, with localised repairs carried out to the underlying metal deck where required.
- Installation of a new Bauder built-up felt roofing system, incorporating Rockwool insulation to improve thermal performance and fire resistance.
- Formation of new detailing to perimeters, penetrations and roof interfaces in accordance with Bauder technical guidance.
- Installation of a permanent handrail system to all roof areas, providing compliant and safe access for future inspection and maintenance.

THE RESULT

The completed roof refurbishment provides British Gypsum with a durable, high-performance roofing solution designed to deliver long-term waterproofing, improved fire performance and enhanced safety across the facility. The new Bauder built-up felt system, combined with Rockwool insulation, offers a significant upgrade to the original roof construction while extending the service life of the building envelope.

Given the high-risk nature of the project and the requirement for the production line to remain operational at all times, careful planning and rigorous safety controls were critical to the project's success. Inspire managed all works as Principal Contractor, implementing comprehensive access systems, internal safety netting and strict control measures to protect both operatives and site personnel below.

Through detailed phasing, close coordination with the client's on-site team and continuous monitoring of works, the programme was delivered safely and efficiently over the 18-month duration. The installation of permanent roof safety systems further ensures that future maintenance activities can be undertaken safely and compliantly.

This project demonstrates Inspire's capability to deliver complex, large-scale industrial roof refurbishments within live manufacturing environments, while maintaining the highest standards of safety, quality and operational continuity.

