Introduction

• Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL) results from the calcination of crushed limestone containing clays (Figure 1 and 2). These are similar to the historic materials in terms of chemical compatibility and therefore adequate to use in conservation works. Different from air lime, NHL binders achieve a faster and stronger set due to the initial hydraulic reactions [1][2].
• Chemical and physical properties of NHL of a given manufacturer can change over time.
• BS EN 459-1:2010 classifies the NHL binders based on standard samples unrepresentative in their nature of the mortars used ‘on-site’ (Table 1).
• Cementation Index (C) (Equation 1) and Hydraulically Index (HI) (Equation 2) were used in the past to classify the NHL raw materials according to their potential hydraulic properties (Table 2) [3],[4].
• Mortars from the same NHL class often exhibit distinct variations in properties, frequently presenting stronger mechanical properties than desired which can be harmful to historic fabric (Table 1[1]).

Materials

• Three classes of binders from 2 different manufacturers (X and Y) were compared.
• X-ray fluorescence and X-ray diffraction were used to characterise the NHL powders.
• The aggregate used was a common available well graded quartz sand.

Conclusions

• BS EN 459-1 although useful for manufactures can be inadequate to be used as a guideline for design and specification of conservation mortars.
• There is the potential that the chemical and mineral composition can be used to predict mortar properties, but it needs to be correlated with the physical properties of the binder.

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References