

**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
21 JUNE 2011**

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**A322 BAGSHOT ROAD RESURFACING PROJECT  
Chief Officer: Environment & Public Protection**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report sets out the background to the cause of the problems on the A322 Bagshot Road. It also appraises Members of the current position.

**2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 During the second severe winter season in succession the A322 Bagshot Road between Coral Reef roundabout and the Swinley Road gyratory system suffered extensive surface course damage which was repaired at considerable cost during March 2011. Traffic management costs alone were in the region of £50,000 to enable the essential patching of both carriageways.
- 2.2 To protect this investment and prolong the life of the road surface for future years, the A322 was included in this year's LTP funded capital works programme. The surfacing technique selected (a two-coat surface dressing) was chosen as the most appropriate to seal the old surface and provide a new surface course with enhanced skid resistance.
- 2.3 Surface dressing has an added advantage of speed of application which, bearing in mind the strategic importance of this road, is a significant consideration. Under normal circumstances a road can be re-opened to traffic at controlled speeds, within hours of the application. The controlled passage of vehicles aids the alignment and embedment of the aggregate (chippings). The process is weather sensitive and is generally only applied from late spring (April) to early autumn (September).
- 2.4 Mindful of the imminent Ascot race meeting, the weekend of the 4/5 June was agreed to be an appropriate time to close the road during the daytime. Advanced notice was given through advisory signs on the approaches. The surface dressing was applied to plan.
- 2.5 The south-bound carriageway was surfaced on Saturday and single lane traffic was allowed to use the road throughout Saturday night and Sunday. The north-bound carriageway was surfaced on Sunday with the final section at Swinley Gyratory being surfaced by mid-afternoon. Lane 2 of this carriageway was opened to traffic later in the evening. It was part of the original plan to maintain single lane running throughout Monday morning (in spite of the possible traffic delays) to continue the process of 'bedding-in' and to permit road sweepers to clear excess aggregate from the closed lanes. Both carriageways were expected to be fully opened to traffic, albeit constrained by the temporary 30mph speed limit, by the peak travel period on the afternoon of Monday 6 June.

- 2.6 By late morning of Monday 6th it had become evident that a whole scale failure of the surfacing had occurred. A significant loss of aggregate had meant that the original road was visible in long stretches in both Lanes 1 and 2 in either direction. Aggregates have continued to be dislodged from the binder material throughout the period since. Road sweepers have had to be deployed to pick up the dislodged material. As time has passed the need has reduced.
- 2.7 Over the Ascot race meeting week the surface has stabilised to the extent that the need for sweeping to remove loose aggregate has reduced significantly. Road signs have been altered to alert drivers to the 'temporary' nature of the surface. 'No overtaking' and 'slippery surface' signs have been installed. The 'loose chippings' signs remain but the advisory 20mph speed limit section of the sign has been removed. The mandatory maximum 30mph traffic signs remain in place.
- 2.8 A meeting between with the contractor and BFC highway maintenance engineers was held on Monday morning (20/6/11) to discuss the nature of the material failure and possible remedial works. Further tests of the larger aggregate used during the surface dressing operation have proved that this contained more than permissible fine material - in essence it was gritty and dusty - preventing the bitumen emulsion sticking to the individual pieces of aggregate, leading in turn to the large scale failure.
- 2.9 A remedial surfacing system has been proposed by RIS which would be applied in two coats over the existing road surface. The system is cold-applied in a modified bituminous emulsion containing small diameter aggregate particles and reinforcing synthetic fibres (a version of the system was used last year to re-surface Opladen Way). The process has the advantage of being sufficiently mobile when first laid to flow into and fill the ruts and hollows left by the failed surface dressing. The system is fully approved nationally; it can be tailored to suit individual roads and is used on motorways. A full written proposal and specification have yet to be received.
- 2.10 The application will require full closure of the road as before to ensure the safety of the workforce and allow time for the material to cure adequately before being driven over. Preliminary planning suggests that each carriageway would need to be closed over successive weekends; the process cannot be completed on both carriageways in a single weekend. It is anticipated that weather permitting, the complete new surface would be laid by each Sunday afternoon allowing several hours curing time before the road would be required to be opened to traffic on the following Monday morning. Road marking will be replaced, at night, using mobile lane closures.

### **3 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 3.1 Not applicable.

### **4 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 The condition of the road surface is such that in order to reduce risk to the motorist the speed limit has been reduced. In addition a lower advisory speed is being recommended. The contractor has accepted liability.

#### Contact for further information

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