

23rd July 2018

Response to Portsmouth Water's proposal to use Instarmac's permanent cold-lay surfacing material (Ultracrete Instant Road Repair 6mm cold-lay asphalt) as a first time permanent reinstatement in footways.

“Conventional hot-lay bituminous materials generally require heated and/or insulated transport and are especially difficult to lay when the required quantity is small or the site is remote from the nearest coating plant. Cold-lay surfacing materials can be formulated to give a performance equivalent to hot-laid materials, yet remain workable for several days, at least, without degradation during storage and transport. Such materials may allow a higher degree of immediate permanent reinstatement in small or remote excavations that represent much of an Undertaker's workload. Such materials are termed Permanent Cold-lay Surfacing Materials (PCSMs)”. Extract from the **Code of Practice 3rd Edition (England) April 2010 New Roads and Street Works Acts 1991 Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways**

The above extract is a good summary of the incentive to take forward this initiative. Not only is the process of buying small quantities of conventional hot asphalt expensive, it creates inherent difficulties when in attempting to produce a durable end product.

The cold-lay technology upon which the Instarmac product relies is fluxed bitumen described within its promotional material as *“specially formulated bitumen, containing polymers and flexibilisers”*(sic). Instarmac are reticent to offer more information of the precise detail of the additives for commercial reasons.

Other than the modified bitumen, the product contains 65psv aggregate and is manufactured in accordance with BS EN ISO9001, 14001, and OHSAS 18001. The management systems of Instarmac Group Plc have been assessed and registered as meeting the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001: 2008 by National Quality Assurance Ltd (Certificate 6987/1).

The product is HAPAS (Highway Authorities Product Approval Scheme) certified, certificate number 01/H060 which states inter alia:

“In the opinion of the BBA, Ultracrete Instant Road Repair 6mm, when assessed in accordance with the Guideline for the Approval and Certification of Permanent Cold-Lay Surface Materials (PCSMs) and used in accordance with the provisions of this Certificate, is suitable for use as a permanent cold-lay surfacing material in footways, footpaths and cycle tracks.”

The proposal to use such an established and recognised product in the proposed scenario is not in my view contentious. The HAPAS certification and robust quality management systems in existence give confidence as to the suitability of the product and the production control of its manufacture.

As with all such materials the provision of compliant material is only the first step in producing a durable reinstatement. The care and attention paid to the placing and compaction of the product is essential. However whilst it is still important that correct

installation procedures are followed with this product the fact that temperature is not a factor does remove a significant risk to the successful compaction of the asphalt and therefore the durability of the repair.

I recommend the approval of the use of this material. (All other aspects and requirements of relevant specifications to remain unaffected by the acceptance of this material).

Tim Doyle
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