

Ayton Asphalte

The Royal parks and Kew Gardens' Palm House are among an increasing number of high profile areas surfaced with Clearmac – a high quality naturally coloured asphalt.

Clear vision for surfacings

May Gurney has recently picked up the pace of a quiet expansion out of its East Anglian base, where it has a long established reputation for quality construction service delivery, into an increasing number of national markets. Among its other successes, the company is now recognised as one of the UK's largest surface dressing contractors, with a 40 year track record on contracts from Yorkshire to the south coast.

Part of this drive is spearheaded by Ayton Asphalte, May Gurney's specialist asphalt and macadam products arm. May Gurney's contracting arm and its specialist subsidiary together boast that they can pave anything from motorways to cottage driveways with value for money, quality products, from its own comprehensive range of approved products.

Coloured asphalts are growing in popularity and demand, with Ayton Asphalte's Clearmac range of naturally pigmented resin bound surfacings almost doubling in the last year. This pace looks set to continue for the company.

"Clearmac is proving popular with a growing number of clients who want a quality job that also looks good."

Ian Findlater

May Gurney Highways & Utilities managing director Ian Findlater said: "Clearmac is a premium quality product which is proving popular with a growing number of clients who want a quality job that also looks good. Aesthetics are increasingly important and Clearmac offers almost limitless possibilities.

"As well as clients like the National Trust, private property owners and developers are keen users. Allowing the natural colour of the aggregates to show through means specifiers can be sure the surfacing complements and enhances architectural or natural features of surrounding environments.

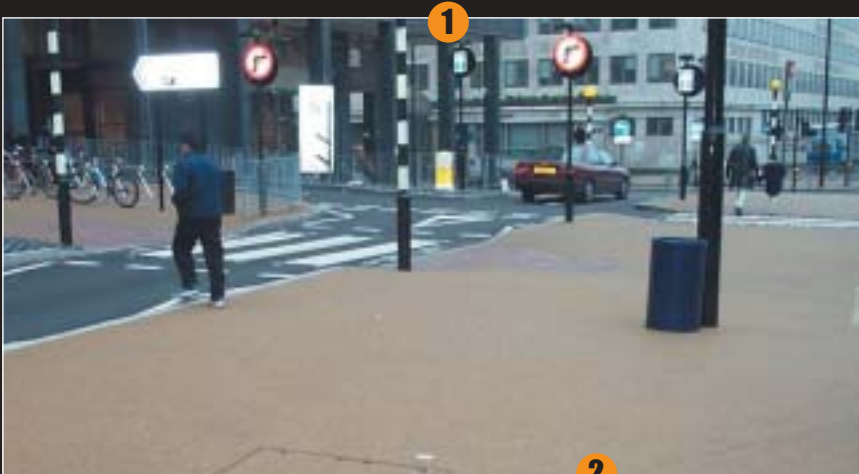
"We have used the full range of colours which can be achieved with aggregates, from deep russet reds to natural gravels to grey greens." Ayton Asphalte will also produce bespoke solutions for particular uses.

The company has been involved in research and development of resin based materials for some 25 years. Hot macadams are manufactured at the company's Costessey coating plant with the bitumen replaced by a clear resin binder.

Clearmac can be applied either hot or cold, or the clear resin coated chippings can be added to hot rolled asphalt (HRA) surfaces to provide a highly durable decorative finish in more heavily trafficked areas. When applied hot, Clearmac is marketed as an aesthetically pleasing, environmentally sympathetic alternative to bituminous and other hard surfacings.

"It is ideal for lightly trafficked areas like pedestrian precincts, playgrounds and forecourts," says technical sales manager Robin Knevitt. "It is a highly durable surfacing which performs similarly to conventional macadams in those uses, so should not be used where it will be subject to point loading." The macadam is generally laid in a 25mm layer on a bituminous base course, using the same equipment as for hot applied bituminous macadam, but with a few inherent differences in technique.

Where hot application is not appropriate or where point loading is an issue in areas like



1. Clearmac can be applied hot or cold depending on the application



2. Ayton Asphalt states that it can pave anything from motorways to cottage driveways with value for money, quality products.



3. Many high profile areas throughout the UK have been surfaced using Clearmac.

driveways, then cold applied Clearmac is the solution. The cold applied material is manufactured using a graded aggregates mixture bound with a synthetic resin binder system. The resulting hard wearing, open textured surface is resistant to the weathering effects of UV radiation from sunlight, and to softening or degradation from oils, fuels and certain solvents.

The cold applied material is spread by rake to the required depth – 15mm to 20mm – and compacted with a light roller and float. Traffic has to be kept off until the surfacing has cured, which may take several hours in warm, dry weather.

Ayton Asphalt says under normal use Clearmac’s life span will be at least equal to a conventional bitumen surfacing made with the same aggregate.

Reinstatement is a straightforward process, and Ayton Asphalt offers a comprehensive service, using hot or cold applied Clearmac depending on site location and areas involved.

Findlater says: “Clearmac has been something of a closely guarded secret reserved for our clients, but the time is right to market it to a much wider client base. The market is looking for quality products like this and everybody is trying to produce something to satisfy that demand.

What Clearmac offers is a premium product which justifies its price and which has a long track record of successful use. We have been using the hot macadam for 25 years and the cold applied version for about eight years, so we know all there is to know about its application and performance in use.”

Laying Clearmac is best reserved for those with an adequate skill level. “The ultimate aesthetic finish, as well as the technical performance is critical. It is important that Clearmac is applied carefully, especially the cold product. Thankfully, we have a skilled and experienced workforce who assure our clients of the best results,” says Kneivitt.

Findlater concluded: “Planning authorities like it as it is a natural looking product that can be made to look like a natural gravel surface. Our next step may be to licence or franchise its application throughout the UK, but we will be very careful about quality control.”

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