

Lafarge Aggregates

Options added to Lafarge coloured asphalts

Growing demand for surfacings coloured to suit their surroundings and for demarcation has led Lafarge Aggregates to expand its range of high performance coloured asphalts.

Variety has become an essential component of Lafarge Aggregates' range of coloured asphalts, due to growing emphasis on good urban design and road safety. The firm's customers are increasingly looking for aesthetic appeal combined with the demarcation functions of coloured surfaces, so further options have been added to Lafarge's Axopave asphalts.

There are now four varieties of coloured asphalt within the Axopave range. Technological advances have enabled Lafarge to add materials with a gravel appearance or exposed aggregate finish – Axostone and

Axogold respectively – to its already established Axocolour and Axotint products.

"Our clients are using coloured surfaces for a number of different purposes," says Lafarge's National Commercial Development Manager Jim Wilson. "Green or red asphalt is often required for surfacing and marking out bus lanes, cycleways and the entry and exit points of junctions to alert drivers to potential danger. But it is the aesthetic benefits, particularly appearances natural and sympathetic to local surroundings, that are becoming notably popular."

All four of Lafarge's coloured asphalt products have been developed to provide more durable alternatives to resin based coloured overlays. Highway authorities and private sector clients need to add colour to road surfaces that can also stand up to the rigour of heavy use.

Asphalt's inherent durability gives it the edge over resin based overlays and with an expanding range of options for aesthetics, Lafarge is providing surfaces designed to suit exact requirements.

The most conventional material is Axotint. This consists of asphalt pigmented with red iron oxide to give a traditional dark red surface, complemented with pink granite from Lafarge's Mountsorrel quarry in Leicestershire. Alternatively, a range of colours can be provided – typically green, red or buff yellow – with Axocolour, which uses a clear binder mixed with pigment to produce the desired colour.

Axostone and Axogold are the result of a technique which exposes the surface of the aggregate. A natural stone effect is created in

A buff coloured Axostone surface has been laid on Oxford's Cornmarket Street to blend with surrounding stonework

the case of Axostone, or the same process is applied to conventional black asphalt to produce Axogold.

"We can offer customers something a bit different or a colour matched exactly to requirements," says Wilson. "Driveways can be laid with a gravel or natural stone appearance and the durability of a strong asphalt, for instance. Or, a high street can be coloured to suit the stone used to build local buildings. There is an option for virtually any need."

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Wilson highlights Rushton Hall as one example. The 500 year old manor house has recently been refurbished for use as a conference and banqueting centre. Rushton Hall's driveways are black and its parking areas have been treated with Axogold to produce a natural grey stone appearance. "Axogold has given a more durable alternative to surface dressing and a unique appearance for Rushton Hall," Wilson says.

Colour matching has become a central part of the coloured surfacing service Lafarge provides for customers. In Oxford, Lafarge has developed and laid a buff coloured Axostone surface on Cornmarket Street, for Oxford City and County Councils. An appearance sympathetic with the Yorkshire flagstone paving of Cornmarket Street's footways was desired, with strength and durability to withstand use by heavy goods vehicles and emergency services.





Golden gravel, pigmented binder and Somersham aggregate produced an Axostone surface to satisfy stakeholders and planning conditions at Kelham

Lafarge developed a series of Axostone asphalts with subtle colour variations and laid them in trial sections for the clients to choose their preferred option. This was a buff coloured stone mastic asphalt containing mixed gravel, a clear binder and a small quantity of yellow pigment with an exposed stone finish.

“We have provided a similar service for property developer Jelson this year, for a prestigious development in Kelham near

Newark. A series of barns and farm outbuildings have been converted into luxurious homes and we have provided a bespoke Axostone surface for the driveways,” says Wilson.

Surfaces paved to complement the colour of the existing buildings and natural surroundings was a planning condition of the Kelham development. Sandstone is the prominent local stone and building material, so Lafarge developed an Axostone surfacing

using a golden gravel from its Somersham quarry in Cambridgeshire. Several variations of colour were developed again, using different pigments, aggregates and amounts of surface stone exposure.

The Kelham project also involved a number of stakeholders and interested parties, including the local planning authority whose approval of the surfacing material was needed by Jelson. All seem to have been satisfied, because the natural gravel Axostone surface has now been laid and according to Wilson, has received only positive feedback.

“We are very pleased with the outcome. The result is a surface that is very durable and looks good against the backdrop of the stone buildings,” says Wilson.

Lafarge’s range of coloured asphalts is being supplied primarily from the firm’s Stevenage asphalt plant as this site is fully geared up with the necessary equipment. Delivery range of Axocolour and Axostone is longer than conventional asphalt due to the clear binder’s properties that inherently retain heat and workability.

“Realistically, we can supply from Stevenage to anywhere from the top of the Midlands down,” says Wilson. “Other varieties in the Axopave range can be supplied from virtually any Lafarge plant.”



Parking areas at Rushton Hall have been marked out with the natural stone appearance of Axogold