

## Ringway

# Aesthetic finish brightens asphalt's appeal

Vivid colours and elaborate patterns can be applied to asphalt surfacing on cycle lanes and footpaths using a range of processes called StreetPrint.

**A** ribbon of bright blue surfacing was created through east London this summer to encourage use of a new cycle route between Barking and Tower Gateway. For the most part, this cycle lane appears on footways beside the A13 and it is on these paths that StreetBond SP150 has been used to create a bold blue finish.

StreetBond is an asphalt painting system; one option within a suite of surfacing products collectively branded StreetPrint and on offer from Ringway's surfacing partner Eurovia Specialist Treatments.

The StreetBond paint system has been developed to withstand trafficking of bicycles and not deteriorate in bright sunlight. In east London three coats of colour were applied to the cycleway using a specially formulated

acrylic resin paint designed to be durable, resistant to fading and to offer good skid resistance. A fine sprinkling of granite throughout the paint mix provides added grip beneath the tread of narrow tyres.

StreetBond was originally developed for use on footways and larger pedestrian areas. Its application on Route Three of London's new 'Cycle Superhighway' network this summer was the first time the paint system had been used on a cycle lane in this country, according to Eurovia Specialist Treatments Divisional Manager Paul Goosey.

"Extensive testing was carried out over six months at a laboratory in Kent and at our depot in Dagenham to ensure that StreetBond was suitable for use on a cycleway and met the requirements of the project client Transport for

London," Goosey says. In all, over 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of StreetBond was applied to the cycle route, which covers a length of 12.3km.

Painting bright colours on to asphalt surfacing is certainly not a new idea; red and green cycleways are a common sight in many urban areas. But highway authorities have sometimes struggled in the past to achieve a colour that stands the test of time and is consistent in appearance along an entire route.

With StreetBond, spraying the paint rather than rolling it on to a surface helps to evenly distribute colour, says Goosey, and the application of three thin layers rather than one thick coating ensures a uniform finish. Site operatives ensure that voids in the asphalt are filled by using brooms to brush the first coat of paint into the surface. To achieve a good

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## STREETPRINT PASSES WITH FLYING COLOURS



An even and aesthetic footway surface has been created beside the Edgware Road using StreetPrint 150 finished with an off-white colouring



**E**urovia Specialist Treatments carried out a trial of StreetPrint 150 in 2008 on behalf of Transport for London on a footpath alongside Vauxhall Bridge Road. Successful application there – combining the StreetPrint process with high performance paint colouring – led to a larger

contract beside the Edgware Road in 2009 (pictured).

Here, the existing footway was made up of large flagstones, which over time, had become uneven and a trip hazard. Reinstatements in the footway had also been covered with asphalt, giving a clumsy, patchwork appearance.

Eurovia's first task was to remove all of the slabs before installing a smooth layer of asphalt.

The surface was later reheated to allow a steel template – fashioned to resemble block paving – to be imprinted before three layers of an off-white paint were applied.



A vivid blue colour has been created on cycleway between Barking and Tower Gateway – Route Three of Transport for London's Cycle Superhighways

result, Goosey recommends that the paint is applied to freshly laid asphalt. "The blue used for the cycleway also has a unique reference code so paint applied to reinstatements made across the route can be matched precisely to the original colour," he adds.

Efforts to introduce StreetBond to cycleways began in April 2010 when Eurovia Specialist Treatments' sister company Jean Lefebvre UK secured an exclusive licence from a Canadian manufacturer to promote StreetPrint processes in this country. Award of the licence also allows Jean Lefebvre to offer technical support to all specialist contractors using StreetPrint, including Eurovia.

Other options within the StreetPrint range can create visual patterns on an asphalt surface as well as colour. Finishes include a 'block paving' or 'cobble stone' effect for pedestrianised areas and raised sections of carriageway designed to reduce traffic speed.

To create such effects, asphalt is first softened using infra red reheating. A brick or block patterned template made from flexible steel wires is then positioned and pressed into the surface to create an imprint of no more than 10mm deep. Three coats of paint are then applied in a similar fashion to the process used on the cyclepath.

Recent examples where StreetPrint solutions have been used include footpaths along Vauxhall Bridge Road and Edgware Road

in west London (see box). A StreetPrint process has also been used to create a cobbled stone effect on a residential road outside a school in Wiltshire. This was applied on a 'table top' – where the carriageway is at the same height as the footpaths – with the surface coloured red.

**"StreetPrint provides a value for money aesthetic finish at a reasonable rate compared to conventional paving systems."** Paul Goosey

StreetPrint is perfect for creating an aesthetically pleasing finish and can be used in place of block paving in a range of situations, such as outside sports stadia, Goosey says. Absolutely any colour can be specified for the finish, he adds. Painted surfaces are typically



Recent uses of the StreetPrint process include residential works in Wiltshire

touch dry within a few hours, but the application is weather dependent and StreetPrint is best suited for installation between April and October.

"Our biggest challenge is convincing clients to use the process, but it is cheaper than traditional block paving because of the speed of application," he says. "Contractors can typically lay 150m<sup>2</sup> of StreetPrint in a day, compared to 30m<sup>2</sup> of block paving. In the current economic climate, where cost is a big issue with architects and clients, StreetPrint provides a value for money aesthetic finish at a reasonable rate compared to conventional paving systems."

An advanced version of the process, known as StreetPrint XD, has been developed for use on more heavily trafficked carriageways. A trial is set to begin on a road in Kent in 2011. A template is pressed into the heated asphalt as before but rather than spraying paint onto the road, sheets of coloured thermoplastic film are placed on top and heated so that they melt and bond with the surface. Furthermore, a third version of StreetPrint known as DuraTherm allows elaborate patterns to be scorched into an asphalt surface. Colour is applied to the imprinted grooves using thermoplastic film.

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