

Text from the Highways England Response is given below.

“Dear Ms Norris

Thank you for your email which we received on 28 November 2018 about noise emanating from the road surface of the A303 at Ilminster.

We are very sorry to hear of the concerns of residents who are experiencing noise at this location. We take views and feedback from road users and communities very seriously.

Given the concerns raised by local residents we will undertake an investigation to determine if noise levels appear to have increased and whether any increase exceeds levels permitted by our design standards. We have recently instructed one of our supply chain to carry out some in-situ noise monitoring at the site to establish if noise levels have increased. As part of this investigation, we have requested that the findings are summarised in a report with any recommendations for further mitigation.

In response to the points raised in your letter these will be answered in turn as per the below:

We can confirm that this location is not currently designated as a noise sensitive area and structural condition of the highway is good. The reason why the road surface at the Ashwells end section of the A303 is different to the surface at the South Petherton end is because the South Petherton end was already bituminous construction where the structural integrity of the surface course had reached end of serviceable life. This was therefore carried out as a like for like surface course renewal.

With regard to whether or not there is any noise level difference between the road surfaces, concrete road surfacing does have a higher noise level than bituminous low noise surfacing. The type of treatment chosen is largely dependent on the condition of the concrete pavement and whole life cost. Generally as a rule of thumb when deciding on what road surfacing is done, if the concrete road surfacing is in a good structural condition then re-texturing is usually the preferred method where skid resistance levels have dropped below the required tolerance. If structural condition of the pavement is poor (nearing end of serviceable life) then the likelihood is that the concrete would be replaced with new bituminous construction. The only other scenario is where the concrete pavement is located within what is defined as a “noise important area” by Defra. In this case, the preferred treatment would always be to replace or overlay with new bituminous low noise surfacing.

In terms of the question which asks if any works are planned to reduce noise, this will ultimately depend on the results of the noise monitoring as detailed above. If levels are found to exceed the thresholds as defined within our standards then further mitigation will be considered. This will be confirmed on receipt of the noise monitoring report. We will be happy to share a copy of this report with the town council upon completion if required.

The recently announced safety scheme is mainly signs and white lining therefore there will be no effect on road surface lead to any changes in level of road noise

We hope this answers your enquiry. If you have any further queries, please contact our Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 or info@highwaysengland.co.uk

Kind regards