

**IAN 197/17**

**Chamber Access Covers:  
Programme of  
Assessment/Upgrading Works for  
Accesses Located in a Running  
Lane**

## **IAN 197/17 Chamber Access Covers: Programme of Assessment/Upgrading Works for Accesses Located in a Running Lane**

There have been a number of failures of access covers where the hard shoulder has been converted to, or utilised as, a running lane. Similar failures have occurred where the hard shoulder is utilised as a running lane in roadworks.

Action required

IAN 161/15 (extract below) introduced important changes to access cover locations in relation to the Smart Motorway Programme and it established an option hierarchy. The requirements of IAN 161/15 shall be applied:

- a) retrospectively to all existing chamber accesses in live running lanes in operational Smart Motorway - All Lane Running or part time (dynamic Hard Shoulder Running) schemes and any other motorways that are managed by Highways England where the hard shoulder has been used as a running lane, eg – on extended slip roads, and where the requirements of IAN 161/15 have not been addressed. Affected sites shall be identified and appropriate upgrading works implemented.
- b) to temporary road works where the hard shoulder is to be utilised as a running lane. Chapter 8 Guidance for Roadworks Para D6.2.8 also applies.

### Assessment of Locations and Programme of Upgrading Works

A records check (including HADDMS and AVIS), access knowledge of frontline staff and supervisors to identify all affected sites should be undertaken. The likelihood that there may be buried chambers should be considered and physical and / or survey techniques applied as appropriate to confirm the presence and extent of such chambers.

A programme of assessment and upgrading works to manage the risk shall be undertaken as quickly as is practicable as follows:

- 1) High susceptibility sites shall be identified within **2 working weeks from the date of issue of this document**, and these shall be addressed as an immediate priority for upgrading to meet IAN 161/15 requirements.
- 2) all other affected sites shall be upgraded by **31 May 2017**.

If these dates cannot be achieved for a specific site, then a request for extension must be made, together with justification and a proposed revised date for completion. Any such extension will only be accepted if it is clear that all reasonable efforts are being made to achieve compliance at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Reporting Requirements

Reporting is required in two stages to confirm the identification of affected sites followed by confirmation of completion of upgrading work. Reporting shall be made using the Programme Log.

A Programme Log at Annex C shall be submitted to Highways England Operations Directorate on both the deadline dates above and copied to the drainage inbox [drainage@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:drainage@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**Relevant extract from IAN 161/15:**

*2.11 Drainage and water quality*

*2.11.4 Chamber access covers in the carriageway shall be eliminated wherever practicable. Where it is not practicable to re-align an existing drainage network or provide side access chambers to locate their access covers in the verge, the following hierarchy of requirements shall be followed (where 1 is the preferred solution and 3 is the least desirable solution):*

*1. Plate over access cover points of existing chambers that are not essential for safe and efficient drainage maintenance operations. The existing chamber shall also be 'piped through' (pipework installed to complete the pipe run through the redundant chamber) and backfilled or removed and backfilled as appropriate. The plating should be flush with the bottom of the sub-base layer wherever possible. Those chambers that are of a catch-pit type shall be benched out.*

*2. Re-locate access covers from the running lanes to the hardstrip, and rotate the cover and frame so that the gap between the trafficked side of the cover's frame and running lane is maximised.*

*3. Where access covers cannot be practicably plated over or re-located from the running lanes, the cover and frame shall be rotated to maximise the distance of the cover's frame from the wheel tracks and the bedding of the cover and frames shall be constructed in accordance with the guidance provided in HA 104/09. It is a departure from standard to have an access cover located in a running lane.*

*2.11.5 All access covers in the carriageway (including hard strip) shall conform with advice in HA 104/09 paragraph 3.3 on higher category covers and frames, and provide the necessary skid resistance requirements. Chamber covers and frames shall be secured to ensure that they are not dislodged by a vehicle. All proposals for chambers in a carriageway, including plating over, shall be endorsed by the PSCRG and the decision process recorded in the DSR. Access covers should be avoided in highway conflict points of merges and diverges.*

*2.11.6 Plating shall be recorded in the drainage database (HADDMs), including details of the depth of the plating.*

*2.11.7 Where any re-alignment is undertaken or chambers in the verge introduced – the connecting piping shall be the same diameter to that of the main drain and there shall be an invert to invert connection that will enable a CCTV crawler camera to be driven into the buried [plated] chamber and look left and right.*

*2.11.8 Where a SM scheme includes major junction improvement works then guidance shall be sought from the Overseeing Organisation*

## Supplementary Guidance to IAN 161

The guidance below describes a decision support tree for treatment of existing carriageways that complies with IAN 161/15. This should always be used in conjunction with IAN 161/15.

### **Decision Support Tree for treatment of existing chambers in the carriageway.**

1. For new drainage network designs, chamber access covers and frames are not permitted to be located in a running lane.
2. If an existing chamber is being modified by a scheme then the decision tree as Figure 1 following applies. Note in no circumstances will access covers be permitted within the wheel track zone.
3. This decision tree also applies to the rest of the network where a chamber is identified as existing in a running lane.

### **Notes to Figure 1 – Decision Tree for chamber access covers retained within pavement**

- a. This process applies to all access covers (whole or part) located in the carriageway pavement including its hardshoulder and hard strip(s).
- b. The “carriageway pavement” includes the full-depth carriageway pavement construction and any hardshoulder or hard strip. Also the entire area of entry and exit nosings shall be considered as being fully included. Where a hard strip of full-depth construction is provided it shall be considered up to and inclusive of 1.0m from the traffic side of the carriageway edge white line. Additionally, in central reserves the full area of emergency crossover points are to be included even where a reduced pavement structure is provided; but excluded are other hardened central reserve areas that do not have the full depth pavement construction of the adjacent carriageway.
- c. A ‘simple chamber’ for the purposes of this advice note is one that meets all the following criteria;
  - No side connections i.e. one incoming pipe and one outgoing pipe only.
  - On removal of the chamber in question the resulting gap between adjacent remaining chambers on the same drainage run must be no greater than 200m.
  - Difference in incoming and outgoing pipe diameter must be no greater than 150mm.
  - The change in pipe direction is no greater than 22.5°.
- d. Where referenced, the Overseeing Organisation is considered to be inclusive of both Professional & Technical Solutions (PTS) and Operations Directorate. Where a Departure from Standard (DfS) is indicated within this process; PTS will require the DfS to be completed prior to the Designer certifying their design under the HD50 ‘*The Certification of Drainage Design*’ process.
- e. The bedding of frames must adhere strictly to the details given in Sections 6, 8 and 9 of HA 104. This means that amendments will be required to the current MCDHW Vol 1 SHW, by way of a DfS to incorporate the HA 104 requirements; using scheme

Appendices 0/1 and 0/2. This includes amendment to SHW clause 509.16 to clarify that these bedding requirements apply to all new or rebuilt chambers (as notes a and b), not just those covers adjusted and replaced that is covered by clause 509.18.

- f. All access covers in the carriageway pavement including hard strip shall provide the necessary skid resistance requirements, in accordance with SHW clause 507.9 and the advice in HA 104 clause 3.4.
- g. All drainage details are to be included in the drainage HADDMS database, including chamber treatments of plating over, piping through, side chambers etc.
- h. PTS will discuss alternative solutions to achieve a consensus prior to the submission of a DfS. These alternatives may include:
  - i. a plated & buried chamber retained under the pavement around bridge piers where existing changes of direction provide pipe angles >22.5 degrees, and
  - ii. a retained buried benched chamber within the central reserve, but with rodding eye for jetting purposes.
- i. It will be acceptable for similar DfS to be amalgamated as a bulk DfS.
- j. Where reference is made to a location wholly between the wheel track zones within a running lane, additionally the area between the wheel track zone and the carriageway edge line and its hard strip is an equivalent area. For the purposes of this CHE memo, PTS will consider the wheel track zone as defined in IAN 161/15 clause 2.5.7 with 900mm wide zones (and not 600mm wide zones). Furthermore, special attention must be exercised if considering retaining an access cover within the entry and exit areas of junctions (both main line and slip road) as the combined, and individually wider, wheel track zones are not as simple as that described within SHW clause 903.21 or IAN161 clause 2.5.7.
- k. Further applicable advice can be found in IAN 161 'Smart Motorways' clauses 2.11.5 and 2.11.7.
- l. With reference to IAN 161 'Smart Motorways' clause 2.11.4, where access covers cannot be relocated, all access covers in the carriageway (including the hard strip) shall conform with advice in HA 104 paragraph 3.3 which states:  
*"The installation of higher category covers and frames such as E600 should be considered in applications where the chamber is located in the wheel path of a motorway, trunk road or other road carrying over 1,500 commercial vehicles per day in each direction. Such proposals should be discussed with the Overseeing Organisation. It should be noted that EN 124 is a minimum performance specification and if there is any doubt, a higher category cover and frame should be selected".*

This consideration of higher category covers and frames is also outlined in HA104/09.

It should however be borne in mind that increasing the duty of the "cover and frame" to a higher class such as E600 alone may not necessarily resolve the issue of failure and other 'site specific' factors may also need to be taken into consideration when making the choice. See also IAN 161 clause 2.11.5 and SHW clause 507.9.

Figure 1 – Decision Tree for chamber access covers retained within the pavement

February 2017 Version 2.0  
 for CHE Memo

