

	<p>REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS</p> <p>THIS RESPONSE IS BEING SENT TO:</p> <p>1. The Assistant Coroner for Mid Kent and Medway, Mr James Dillon, of Cantium House, 2nd Floor, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XD in response to a ‘Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths’ following an inquest hearing into the death of Josie Archer-Smith that concluded on 06 July 2021.</p>
1	<p>NATIONAL HIGHWAYS</p> <p>I am [REDACTED] Interim Regional Director, South East, responding on behalf of [REDACTED] Chief Executive of National Highways Limited of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, SURREY GU1 4LZ.</p> <p>Unfortunately, National Highways was not made aware of the inquest, so we did not have an opportunity as the highway authority to assist you by answering questions at the time. The Regulation 28 Report is dated 07 December 2022, a significant time after the conclusion of the inquest on 06 July 2021 and was received by National Highways on 14 December 2022. However, we welcome the opportunity to address your concerns and we hope our response assists. In complying with our duty, National Highways has responded within 56 days of the report, namely by 08 February 2023.</p>
2	<p>CORONER’S MATTERS OF CONCERN</p> <p>The MATTERS OF CONCERN were identified are as follows:–</p> <p>The M20, a multi lane motorway, at the location where the collision took place has had a number of collisions occur which appear to have been caused by water/aquaplaning.</p> <p>Investigating police from the Serious Collision Investigation unit commented that they are aware that this location is a problem in heavy weather and have attended collisions at this location in the past.</p> <p>The crash location is at the bottom of an incline on the M20 motorway which normally would not cause an issue, however the road also has a camber which causes water to run across the carriageway rather than draining into either the central reservation or the drain on the hard shoulder.</p> <p>The police officer believes that it is when this heavy water is running across the carriageway that there is an issue which does require further investigation as to any remedial works that can be completed to prevent any further fatal/serious injury collisions.</p>
3	<p>DETAILS OF ACTION TAKEN</p> <p><u>Location</u></p> <p>The M20 motorway at the collision location is a 3-lane dual carriageway with a nearside hard shoulder (‘the mainline’). The collision occurred on the London bound carriageway. To the nearside there is a distributor road with 2 lanes and a hard shoulder (‘the distributor’) that provides access to the M20 Junction 5 exit. The mainline and distributor road are separated by a concrete vehicle restraint system.</p> <p>The location of the collision was on the mainline on the overbridge of the Network Rail line between Aylesford and Maidstone West. The topography is complex. The scene is approached by the mainline and distributor road via a bridge over the River Medway and at that point the road is on an uphill slope with a crossfall from offside to nearside (right to left). The crossfall reduces as the point of collision is approached, then the crossfall changes from nearside to offside (left to right). At the same time the road breasts the</p>

incline before continuing on a gentle downhill slope towards the Junction 5 on-slip.

Action taken

In the days immediately following the collision, and then over a period of approximately 18 months (as road space booking allowed for the lane closures) National Highways staff and our contractors carried out the following actions:

- Temporary “Road liable to flooding” signs installed just after Junction 6 on the London bound mainline (to remain in place until the proposed permanent works described below are complete).
- South East Regional Operations Centre (SEROC) set variable message signs to display “Skid risk slow-down” or “Surface water slow-down” on the overhead signals between Junction 6 to 5 when they have confirmation of water on the carriageway at the collision location.
- To maximise drainage efficiency, 170 metres of combined kerb drainage jettted, 200 metres x 2 Acco drains jettted and a full CCTV drainage survey carried out on the London bound mainline.
- Remedial works carried out following a full CCTV drainage survey:
 - Traffic management put in place to carry out the works:
 - 6 Shifts - Full closure of London bound distributor and lane 1 of the London bound mainline; and
 - 3 Shifts - Lane 3 closure on the London bound mainline and a lane 3 closure on the coast bound mainline due to working in the centre reserve.
 - Remedial works:
 - 200 metres of combined kerb drainage jettted and cleaned;
 - 150 metres of centre reserve drainage channel cleaned;
 - 400 metres of Acco type drain (200 metres x 2) between distributor and mainline gratings removed and cleansed and new clips installed for the gratings;
 - 7 x drainage pipe patch repairs;
 - Cleansed 21 x gullies;
 - Cleansed 11 x catchpits;
 - Installed 1 x drainage pipe from end of Acco channel between distributor and mainline; and
 - Installed 9 metres of extruded asphalt kerb to direct surface water to the nearest gully on the hard shoulder.
- Also carried out within these road closures, our contractors carried out routine cyclical works as below:
 - Grass cutting;
 - Sweeping of whole of the distributor road; and
 - Cleansing of remaining gullies within the site area which are not part of the remedial works listed above.

4	<p>DETAILS OF FURTHER ACTION PROPOSED</p> <p>The M20 Medway and Allington Deck Refurbishment scheme is due to be delivered between June and July 2023 at an estimated cost of £3 million.</p> <p>In order to reduce the likelihood of future similar events, the scope of the scheme includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete refurbishment of the London bound carriageway (mainline and distributor road) including replacement of the waterproofing, surfacing, joints, white lines and road studs from 15 metres before the River Medway to 15 metres past Allington Railway. • Thin Surface Course surfacing to be replaced with Hot Rolled Asphalt Wearing Course. The Hot Rolled Asphalt is textured to provide more grip and also to allow water to drain away more quickly. • Vehicle Restraint System and drainage to the distributor road to be replaced. 				
5	<p>TIMETABLE FOR ACTION</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>DATE</th> <th>ACTION</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>June-July 2023</td> <td>M20 Medway and Allington Deck Refurbishment scheme.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	DATE	ACTION	June-July 2023	M20 Medway and Allington Deck Refurbishment scheme.
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6	<p>SAFETY OF ROAD USERS</p> <p>The safety of everyone on our road network matters; it is an imperative for our business in what we set out to achieve and a core value of our organisation in how we go about it. The action taken and those proposed are designed in this light to help to prevent future deaths at this location.</p>				
7	<p>01 February 2023 Signed:</p> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <div style="text-align: right; margin: 10px auto;"> Interim Regional Director on behalf of </div>				