

TITANIC

COATING CONTRACT



100 years after the Titanic went down, Belfast is paying its respects to the most famous ship in history with major construction and refurbishment projects.

Belfast's Queen Elizabeth II Bridge was opened by the Queen in 1967. Its popularity with drivers over 45 years, however, has only been exceeded by its popularity amongst pigeons. Up to 7 inches of guano had accumulated on its girders, whilst its proximity to the North Channel (the Straits of Moyle) had enabled salt corrosion to penetrate the previous chlorinated rubber coatings.

London-based infrastructure maintenance company Rhinoceros, won the contract for recoating the Bridge. According to the company it has built a reputation for efficient and trouble-free projects on Highways structures, building on its extensive experience in the application of anti-graffiti coatings to street highway structures.

COATING SELECTION

Selection of a suitable coating system was one of the first decisions to be made as that would also determine the preparation requirements. Taking advice from PPG / Sigma coatings the company proposed a Highways specification to be applied over sweep blasted existing sound chlorinated rubber. Exposed areas were to be blast cleaned to Sa2.5 followed by a two pack epoxy system (HA items 115, 116 and 168) using the Sigmacover and Sigmadur range from PPG/Sigma.

Where chlorinated rubber has been in place for some years overpainting is a possibility since enough of the solvent will have evaporated, even though this process never really completes. However, in areas where the structure is