

New facilities at Effingham Junction

AMEC SPIE Rail's David Attoe details the work in expanding the facilities at the depot.



AMEC SPIE Rail (ASR) is proud of its role in keeping the MPV fleet availability as high as possible during the peak seasons of the year. This 24-hour operation demands reliable MPV units that are fitted with appropriate equipment for de-icing or leaf-busting. It is one of those areas that the public see infrequently, but the work performed by the machines impacts directly on their ability to get to their required destination on time, day after day.

New facility

Such a fleet demands high standards of maintenance. ASR, in conjunction with Network Rail, is developing an extensive facility to maintain the MPVs, and other vehicles at the same time, at its Effingham Junction Depot. The facility used to be home for up to seven eight-car electric multiple units, but - for some years after their transfer to other depots - it laid largely empty and derelict.

Following previous refurbishment of four short lines, ASR and Network Rail have jointly funded a second phase which included construction of a new 50 metre pit to complement the shorter pit previously built.

Not only was a new pit constructed, but there was also a new full length siding, whilst the completion of a rail apron from wall-to-wall provided a level clear surface to work on new power supply, accommodation and stores plus major refurbishment of the roof and lighting.

The facility can now accommodate, service and work on up to 11 MPVs inside the shed. Two pits enable work to be carried out under machines whilst electric jacks allow machines to be lifted for bogie changes at almost any location, giving real flexibility to maintenance operations.

Construction work

The new 50 metre pit is not only of use to ASR, but is attractive to other operators with the ability to get under many of the new machines such as rail grinding trains whilst under cover. When completed with proper lighting, air and power facilities, the depot will be a welcome facility to other companies as well as ASR.

This pit construction demanded a short

turn around from inception in August to completion by Christmas. The existing concrete floor was 300mm thick, with the chairs and rail fitted to inset blocks. All the existing track was life expired and removed. A very large floor saw cut the concrete up and allowed the pit area to be dug. After a new concrete base and reinforcing was designed and fitted, the pit has been cast in stages whilst a proper drainage interceptor system is also being built. New rail and baseplates were fitted after diamond drilling the pit's top. The fitting of services is now proceeding and will result in a maintenance pit worthy of any depot.

Even after this work the remaining depot area will not only allow some future expansion, but also enable other activities to take place totally within the building. These include the loading and unloading of lorries and the modules carried by the MPVs, as well as the storage of the modules and the consumables used in MPV activities such as fluids and sandite.

Success

Effingham Junction has proved to be a good example of the reuse and adaptation of an existing old railway building. It is also geographically well positioned, directly to Guildford/Surbiton and Leatherhead leading to the SW and SC areas and close to the M25.

ASR has also tried to be mindful of its neighbours and, where railway maintenance has to be carried on in a residential area, the building will do much to contain and reduce the noise and activity nuisance to neighbours. Undergrowth has been cleared around the building to improve its image and, although by nature MPVs are a 24-hour operation, ASR hopes the operation will have a minimal impact on the environment.

By its very nature, this has been a team effort and has brought together the capability and resources from many parts of the AMEC Group, the pit being designed and the construction managed entirely in-house. Staff and subcontractors have worked together to achieve the desired result of providing a major servicing facility by breathing life into an old depot.

