

Briefing Note 2

Summary of Events

During the winter of 2020/21, the embankment supporting the B3224, between Exford and Wheddon Cross at Roundwaters, failed. This seems to have occurred following storm/rainfall events and the resulting fall of a large tree causing embankment loss adjacent to the carriageway. The date of the failure is unknown but, on discovery, a single lane closure was put in place to prevent vehicles from running close to the unstable carriageway edge and associated drop. This traffic management remains in place at the current time.

As a result of this failure, WSP (the Council's consultant) undertook a feasibility study resulting in a steel sheet piled (SSP) retaining wall with associated drainage and highways improvements that includes a vehicle restraint system (VRS) being designed. This solution was presented to the LCN earlier in 2023 and has also been circulated to the affected landowner.

Briefing Note 2 records the continuing progress and development of the scheme and its delivery.

Progress Since Previous Briefing Note

- Four contractors were asked for expressions of interest in tendering for the scheme.
- Two contractors returned favourable responses and asked to be included in the process.
- One contractor returned priced tender documents.
- The tender evaluation process has been undertaken and the tender was compliant and acceptable.
- A pre award meeting was held with the contractor returning the priced tender documents. The outcome of this meeting required the contractor to revisit and re-submit their programme based on community requests and concerns. (Christmas/New Year access through the site.)
- The Openreach cable diversion has commenced with new poles being installed. Openreach will need to revisit site to undertake vegetation removal, not identified by them previously, as a clear cable hanging route between the new poles is not present. We are awaiting a date for that activity and the importance of this task has been stressed. The outstanding work required from Openreach includes vegetation trimming, cable diversion, using the new poles, and old pole removal.
- The pre "main works" vegetation removal was successfully completed by 24th October 2023 ahead of our consent deadline. This was completed during the same road space booking as the Openreach works but Openreach did not identify their additional vegetation trimming requirements until after our works had been completed and our team was off site.
- The contract was let to Walters on 26th October 2023.

Future Activities

- TBA – Openreach diversion.
- 9th November 2023 – LCN meeting whereby Briefing Note 2 and Q&A Release 3 will be circulated and the Panel will decide on how the wider community will be updated considering either evening, Teams or drop-in event.
- TBA – Community drop-in, evening or Teams meeting to be attended by Contractor, Designer and/or SC depending on meeting style, venue size and logistics.
- 8th January 2024 Main works start date.
- 10th May 2024 completion date – anticipated duration is 87 days.

Further Information

Email bridges@somerset.gov.uk and mark for the attention of Paul Nation.