

Roundwaters Retaining Wall Scheme

Question & Answer Sheet (Release 1 - 24th August 2023)



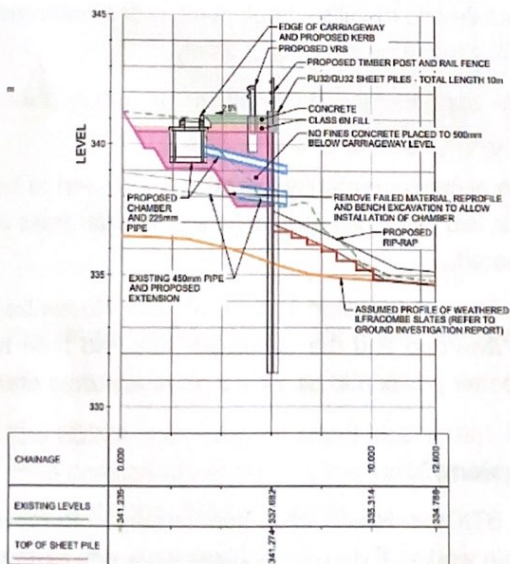
Overview

During the winter of 2020/21, the embankment supporting the B3224, between Exford and Wheddon Cross at Roundwaters failed; as shown in the opposite photograph.

It is believed that this failure occurred following one or more storm/rainfall events, which caused a large tree to fall and take with it a significant portion of the embankment adjacent to the carriageway.

The exact date of the failure is unknown but, once discovered, a single lane closure was put in place to prevent vehicles from running close to the unstable edge of the carriageway and its associated drop.

This traffic management remains in place at the current time.



REFER TO TYPICAL SHEET PILE EMBEDMENT SECTION AT LOW POINT ON DRAWING 70097762-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-002 FOR FULL DETAILS OF PROPOSED WORKS

As a result of this failure, a consultant (WSP) was engaged to undertake a feasibility study and, from the options they proposed, a steel sheet piled (SSP) retaining wall with associated drainage and highways improvements that includes a vehicle restrain system (VRS) and carriageway resurfacing, was selected as detailed in the adjacent typical section.

Somerset County Council (SCC) (before becoming part of the Somerset Council (SC) unitary authority) and their consultant have been liaising

with the adjacent landowner. The SCC's Structures' Section also attended an LCN meeting to provide some outline information to the LCN regarding the scheme's progress earlier in the year.

Roundwaters Retaining Wall Scheme



Question & Answer Sheet (Release 1 - 24th August 2023)

When will the works take place?

This is a difficult question to answer. It was originally envisaged that the works would commence on or around 17th October 2023. However, activities have taken longer to sort out than originally expected, therefore this date is no longer achievable.

Why is it difficult to answer?

SC are looking to go out to tender late August to early September 2023.

The contractor will have four to six weeks to review and price the tender documents. During this time, they have the opportunity to raise tender queries and to ask for an extension to the tender period, which SC would grant if there was i) the opportunity of cost savings, ii) it resulted from technical questions or iii) other legitimate reasons. Once the tenders are returned, SC will require a minimum of two weeks to evaluate the submissions and potentially another two weeks to go through the formal process of award.

Although we have the process for the road closure in place, since this date will be changed, it will take between two and six weeks to update the required systems.

In addition to this the contractor will need time to mobilise, book plant, order materials, prepare their programme and to generally resource the project safely.

Furthermore, SC would wish to have the opportunity to undertake some further public engagement or consultation.

Of course, some of these activities can occur concurrently but others will need to be consecutive and, unfortunately, the best laid plans can always go a drift regardless of how methodically they have been prepared.

At present we would not expect the site works to start before mid-late November, however once the contract has been awarded and the contractor has had time to programme the works we will be in a better position to provide a more accurate start date.

What are you doing to speed things along?

To facilitate the earliest possible start, BT/Open Reach have been engaged to move existing telecom poles ahead of the main works. Extensive ecology work has already started and includes surveys, and vegetation removal works will occur between mid-September and early October.

The road space has been prebooked so that when a start date is confirmed a reduced advertising period can be adopted to secure that road space.

What Traffic Management will be used for the works?

The traffic management envisaged will be a full road closure and the contractor, once appointed, will create a diversion route.

Roundwaters Retaining Wall Scheme



Somerset
Council

Question & Answer Sheet (Release 1 - 24th August 2023)

How long will the works last?

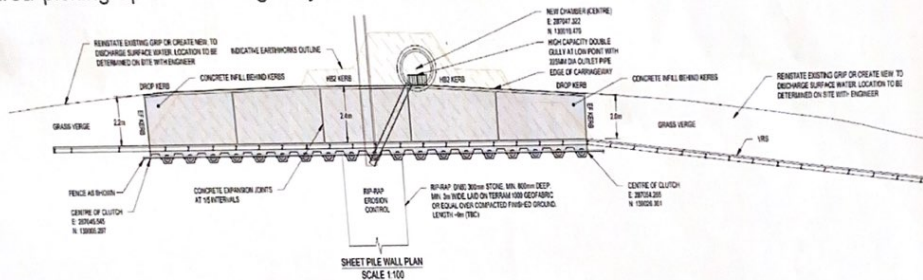
It depends on the contractor's approach, the weather conditions at this time of year and other issues beyond our control. At this time, SC estimate that the works could last between four and eight weeks.

What will the works involve?

The works include circa 23m length of SSP retaining wall. In addition to this there are approach and departure protection barriers (VRS) to prevent vehicles from falling over the vertical retaining wall face. There is also resurfacing and re-lining of the carriageway to be undertaken and enhancement of the drainage.

The contractor will also be mindful of overhead cables, which although moved before works start, will still need to be carefully worked around; as will the private water supply and culverts beneath the carriageway, which fall within the extent of the SSP retaining wall.

The work's extent is thus not limited to the specific collapse area but covers a wider area picking up on other highway maintenance issues as shown in the plan below.



Are these works going to be really disruptive?

We would be lying if we said "No".

The B3224 is a really important local route. However, these works are essential and once completed will remove the traffic management from this location and reopen the road to its pre-collapse capacity.

What about Christmas?

At this point SC are unsure how these works will fall around the important Christmas period but SC will ensure that the contractor's programme takes due consideration of, and limits any effects that may arise with, any clash.

Where can I find out more about progress?

It is intended to put this briefing note on the SC website where further updates may be posted. Press releases are also planned over the coming months.

Roundwaters Retaining Wall Scheme



Question & Answer Sheet (Release 1 - 24th August 2023)

Once the contract is awarded and the contractor has had time to review the scheme's challenges in detail, SC plan to invite the community to an event whereby contractor, consultant and Council staff will be available to answer questions together.

Alternatively, you can email bridges@somerset.gov.uk and mark your questions for the attention of Mr Paul Nation.