

A303 COUNTRESS ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENTS

Background

- (a) The A303, and its junction with the A345 (Countess Roundabout) near Amesbury, form part of the national strategic road network. The Highways Agency (HA) is the responsible authority for the management, maintenance and upkeep of the strategic road network. Within the vicinity of Amesbury, Balfour Beatty Mott Macdonald (BBMM) is the Highway Agency's agents.
- (b) Wiltshire Council is responsible for the local road network, which in the Amesbury area includes the A345.
- (c) BBMM have made Wiltshire Council aware of the HA's proposed improvement works to the A303 Countess Roundabout.
- (d) Wiltshire Council Highway Officers have engaged with BBMM with a view to minimising the impact that the construction of the HA's scheme may have on the local road network.
- (e) This note, which is for information only, provides a general overview of the scheme and of the emerging construction arrangements.

What will the scheme include?

- (f) The principal elements of the works will include:-
- Traffic signal installation on all four approaches to Countess Roundabout;
 - Widening and resurfacing the A303 approaches to, and around, the roundabout;
 - Permanent 40 mph speed limit applied on A303 approaches;
 - Safety barrier, road signs and road markings replaced;
 - Extension of subway under A303 westbound approach, to accommodate carriageway widening works;
 - Renewal of lighting columns, lanterns and installation of associated cables;
 - Replacement and refurbishment of certain sections of the existing drainage system;

- Resurfacing of the A303 approach to Countess Roundabout in the Boscombe Down area.

Why are the works needed?

- (g) The Countess Roundabout junction suffers from congestion - particularly at weekends and during holiday periods. This congestion often restricts the flow of traffic along the A303, but also impacts upon the operation of the A345.
- (h) The HA's scheme focuses on measures to improving the safety and capacity of the junction, to ease traffic movements along the A303, and the flow of traffic trying to cross Countess Roundabout using the A345.
- (i) The scheme will benefit local residents through enhanced connectivity across the A303 and between Amesbury and the Durrington / Bulford areas.

When are the works scheduled to take place?

- (j) Discussions with BBMM indicate a start date of 17th January 2011 with a total construction period of approximately three months.

What will be the local traffic implications?

- (k) Wiltshire Council Highway Officers have been working closely with BBMM and the Police with a view to minimising the impact that the construction works will have on local traffic conditions.
- (l) Certain road closures and diversions are unavoidable.
- (m) Originally, information provided by BBMM indicated a construction programme duration of approximately 21 weeks. The proposal envisaged A303 traffic, which generally consists of long distance strategic movements, being diverted onto the local road network over a series of weekends. Potential diversion routes for the A303 traffic included The Packway / Larkhill Road / Bulford, and the A36 / A30 and A343 via Salisbury.
- (n) Wiltshire Council requested that BBMM consider an alternative approach which involved A303 traffic being retained within the A303 through the use of a 'contra flow' system. This approach would remove the need for strategic long distance traffic to use the local road network.
- (o) In response to this request, a revised strategy is being developed which uses a 'contra flow' arrangement and which reduces the construction period to approximately 12 weeks. Both of these issues should reduce the impact of the construction works on the local area and traffic flows.
- (p) The emerging revised strategy now includes for the outline construction sequence included at Appendix A.

What are the key benefits to the Amesbury Community Area?

- (q) The traffic signalisation of Countess Roundabout will enhance the ability of A345 traffic to cross the A303. Rather than being held indefinitely at a give way line, traffic leaving the Amesbury and Durrington areas will have right of way over the A303 traffic when the traffic signals 'show green'.
- (r) Increased capacity of the A303 approaches will make it easier for local traffic to leave the A303.

Appendix A

A303 Countess Roundabout - outline construction sequence

Weeks 1-5

- Works to eastbound approach to Countess Roundabout under 'lane closures';
- Occasional restricted movements at Countess Roundabout with A345 traffic being diverted using the local road network;
- A303 traffic retained along A303.

Week 6

- Works to eastbound approach to Countess Roundabout under 'contra flow' arrangement (24/7 working);
- A345 traffic diverted using local road network. Diversion routes include Stockport Road / Solstice Park, Larkhill Road / Bulford, The Packway / Airman's Corner, Stonehenge Road, West Amesbury, and London Road, Amesbury

Weeks 7-11

- Works to westbound approach to Countess Roundabout under 'lane closures';
- Occasional restricted movements at Countess Roundabout with A345 traffic being diverted using the local road network;
- A303 traffic retained along A303.

Week 12

- Works to westbound approach to Countess Roundabout under 'contra flow' arrangement (24/7 working);
- A345 traffic diverted using local road network. Diversion routes include Stockport Road / Solstice Park, Larkhill Road / Bulford, The Packway / Airman's Corner, Stonehenge Road, West Amesbury, and London Road, Amesbury

Note: - Overall construction period may be subject to amendment due to such items as weather delays, design changes and the Easter holiday period.