

Rousham causeway bridge works explained

To all residents of Lower Heyford and Caulcott from your Parish Council

The PC would like to explain why the bridge is going to be closed for up to 4 weeks and what the problem is as well as trying to explain what is being done.

We have received the following information from OCC and their contractors, Skanska.

Please note: we understand that this programme is approximate at present

The Problem

OCC roadway core samples taken recently have determined that, over the years, numerous layers of surface dressing have been laid to try and lengthen the life of the surfacing below.

Various works, in the past, such as the installation of the south footway and the concrete channel on the north side have only served to block the drain outlets, and so surface water has to clear the 170m long structure mainly by flowing to the west side of the bridge and then north into Heyford Road, or south into the Rousham Road. To compound the problem, water is also flowing down the hill from the B4030, the gullies along that route not being connected to a drainage system.

This has caused much of the structure to become saturated over the years and as a result a lot of the stonework needs replacing or re-pointing but it is necessary to stop the problem recurring first.

The Solution

The works, which are being carried out by contractors, Skanska, on behalf of OCC, have been split into two stages:

Stage 1 will commence on the 16th November 2020. The stonework of the bridge has suffered a lot of damage as a result of surface water penetration from the carriageway above and so for the first two weeks the proposed drainage channel on the north side of the bridge will be laid, the existing drain outlets found and unblocked, then made good to match the older outlet details along the north retaining wall.

Stage 2 will commence as soon as OCC are certain that Stage 1 has been successful. A lot of stonework needs replacing or re-pointing but that cannot commence until the stone has dried through, which is also an indication that surface water is no longer entering the structure.

Stage 2 will probably start in May 2022 and will be mainly below the bridge, and so a long closure will not be necessary.

Detail of the Stage 1 Works - The Bridge will be closed during the day from the 16th November and last about 4 weeks. For the first two weeks the proposed drainage channel on the north side of the bridge will be laid, the existing drain outlets found and unblocked, then made good to match the older outlet details along the north retaining wall.

It will then be necessary to plane off the existing road surface between 120mm to 200mm so as to change the profile of the road to one that has a constant 1 in 40 crossfall that will drain towards the north side drainage channel. Next a new surface layer 120mm thick will be laid, new loops cut for the traffic signals (7 in all) and white lining and cats' eyes laid. This work will be done in the evening or through the night from 20:00 to 05:00 hrs, so as to comply with noise restrictions but also to allow school buses/emergency services to pass through the works during the day.

Please note that no vehicles, except emergency vehicles and school buses, will be able to pass through the works when they are progress and diversionary routes will be signposted. Gatemmen will be in place to enforce access control.