



**Royal Oak Culvert Replacement
South Wales Trunk Road Agent (SWTRA) Drop-in Session 9th October 2024**

Meeting Notes

Communication

The community asked if SWTRA could hold a public engagement event, as some members feel there is a communication gap, with some people aware of the works and others not. They also requested the involvement of Pembrokeshire Council and other key parties. The community believes there may be misinformation, and that everyone would benefit from hearing directly about the project, followed by a Q&A session

- SWTRA confirmed that they would deliver a public presentation, and hold a subsequent Q&A session, with the venue TBC. SWTRA suggested the use of information boards that could be placed in strategic/high footfall locations i.e. the Town Surgery / the Memorial Hall. SWTRA also suggested that the community nominate a few key contacts that may be able to assist with disseminating information around the community.
- SWTRA confirmed that these works are being carried out on behalf of Welsh Government, not Pembrokeshire Council.
- **Additional feedback:** SWTRA have contacted the Newport Memorial Hall on 16th Oct requesting dates for w/c 28th October. Exact date and time TBC once availability becomes known. Members of SWTRA's Senior Management Team will be in attendance.

The community suggested that any information relating to this scheme should also be shared with Dinas Cross, including access to the public presentation.

- SWTRA confirmed that information would be disseminated to Dinas Cross and they would form part of any planned presentations.

Additional feedback: The roadworks information has since been shared with Dinas Cross Community Council.

The community requested larger drawings that clearly display the traffic management layout and diversion routes that will be used for the scheme.

- SWTRA confirmed that larger more legible drawings showing traffic management and diversion routes would be issued.

The community raised a concern that farmers may not be aware of the planned works and subsequently drive their vehicles into the Town and get stuck, and therefore requested that SWTRA make contact with the local farms.

- SWTRA confirmed that contact would be made with local farms.

Additional feedback. SWTRA have identified and issued letters out to all local farms on 16th October 24'.

Bus and Public Services

Concerns were raised relating to bus services (incl. school bus services) and how they will be affected by the works (to include the T5 service and Crymych bus services).

- SWTRA informed the community that they are working with Pembrokeshire Council Transport Services, Transport for Wales and Richards Bros, to create a plan to keep services running, though possibly reduced, during the works. This will involve temporary timetable changes.
- They also confirmed they are collaborating with Pembrokeshire Council and Richards Bros to ensure school bus services continue, although some operational changes may be needed. More details will be provided once the plan is finalised.

Concerns were raised relating to public services i.e. waste collections, and how they will be affected by the works

- SWTRA informed the community that they are working with Pembrokeshire and SWTRA's maintenance divisions to develop a plan to ensure the continued operation of public services such as refuse collections, and winter roads maintenance.

Local Businesses

Local businesses raised concerns relating to possible lost business as a result of the works, via reduced footfall, reduced traffic through town, and a reduction in local parking. A query was raised by multiple members of the community relating to businesses being compensated due to any lost business caused by the works.

- SWTRA confirmed that typically there is no compensation provided due to the impact from Trunk Road Works, and that works of this nature are essential to ensure the safe operation of the Trunk Road Network. SWTRA noted that in this instance the impact on the Town was appreciated and although the stance on compensation was unlikely to be different, they would raise the query with Welsh Government.
- SWTRA also explained that following initial engagement with key stakeholders and local councillors, SWTRA had planned the work to be undertaken during January/February to minimise impact, as it's the least busy time with low tourist numbers and some businesses closed during that period.
- **Additional feedback:** Unfortunately there is no compensation paid to businesses due to disruption from works on the Trunk Road Network, and there is no legislation to support compensation for loss of trade for an authority undertaking works to fulfil their statutory duty. The only businesses that may be due compensation are those that are directly impacted by the works, for example due to land use during construction works. Those businesses will be contacted directly and compensated accordingly via independently led legal agreements.

Local businesses raised concerns relating to possible difficulties with deliveries, and that for some delivery companies the diversion route might be too long.

- SWTRA advised that advance notification of works is provided to enable business owners to make alternative arrangements, however that they are reviewing possible options that may assist local businesses; for example the possibility of providing a 'drop-off' point for deliveries

on each side of the town, with a small van shuttling the deliveries from the drop-off point to the businesses. It should be noted however that it is unclear if this is feasible or not currently.

Emergency Services

The community raised concerns relating to Emergency Services and access through Newport during the works. A specific concern was raised relating to urgent medical treatment. The community raised concerns about emergency services access during the works, particularly for urgent medical treatment.

- SWTRA informed the community that all emergency services had been informed of the planned works and of the diversion routes that would be in place during the planned works.
- SWTRA confirmed that emergency services would be contacted again to ensure that alternative arrangements had been made in preparation for the works to ensure all areas could be serviced comprehensively.
- **Additional feedback.** SWTRA have contacted Emergency services again to ensure sufficient alternative arrangement are in place during the works.

The community queried if there was scope for alternative arrangements to be made to ensure response times weren't jeopardised, such as helicopters. A query was also raised relating to defibrillators, and if SWTRA could ensure that defibrillators were accessible on both sides of the Trunk Road closure.

- SWTRA confirmed that the query relating to helicopter emergency services would be raised with the Emergency services, and that the location of defibrillators would be reviewed with emergency services, with a view to adding an additional unit if required.
- **Additional feedback.** Emergency services contacted and queries issued in relation to potential helicopter response during the construction programme, and location of defibrillators.

Traffic and Pedestrian Management

The Community queried how long the road closure would be in place, and if there was any opportunity to reduce the construction programme and the subsequent road closures.

- SWTRA explained that the project has two phases. The first phase involves Openreach relocating their equipment under the road, which will require four consecutive Sunday road closures starting on October 20, 2024.
- The second part is the main culvert replacement, managed by SWTRA. Initially estimated to take in the region of eight weeks, the contractor is now finalising a construction schedule, expected by the end of October. Once this is confirmed, the duration of the road closures will be communicated to the community. To potentially shorten the timeline, SWTRA is discussing options with the contractor, including double shifts and working 6-7 days a week. They also confirmed that no noisy work will occur after 11 pm each night.

The community queried what traffic management would be required for the works.

SWTRA confirmed that prior to the culvert replacement works, Openreach have to carry out some enabling works whereby they are required move some of their apparatus that currently runs underneath the A487 carriageway. That will be undertaken over 4no. Sundays (between 0900 and 1900hrs) commencing on 20th October, with traffic management on those days as follows:

- A487 full closure between Parrog Rd and Market St;
- Temporary suspension of parking on Market St;
- Revocation of one-way system on Upper Bridge St / Upper West St., to allow two-way traffic running with the use of two-way manually controlled lights. This will be a local diversion route around the town, for cars and small vans up to 3.5T only;
- Locally placed operatives to ensure traffic joining onto Upper Bridge St / Upper W St can do so safely, to include the management of traffic along Castle St, Church St, and Mill Lane;
- The Trunk Road diversion route will be: Westbound traffic to travel on A487 to Cardigan, southbound on the A478 to the Penblewin Roundabout, westbound on the A470 to Haverford West, northbound on the A40 to Fishguard, eastbound on the A487 to Newport. Eastbound Traffic will be vice versa;
- SWTRA advised it was highly likely that the same arrangement of traffic management would be used for the main culvert replacement works.

The community voiced concerns relating to the pedestrian diversion route when the A487 is closed for the main culvert replacement works. They believe this route may be too long for elderly, those with reduced mobility, and less-able bodied members of the public.

- SWTRA confirmed that the pedestrian diversion route had been produced with safety in mind with the assistance of the Town Council, as SWTRA tried to keep pedestrians on footpaths where available. SWTRA noted that unfortunately no alternative routes with footpaths were available due to the lack of footpaths through the majority of the town.
- **Additional feedback.** SWTRA are currently reviewing the possibility of providing a shuttle service between the two sides of the closure, for the elderly, those with reduced mobility, and less-able bodied members of the public.

The community voiced concerns over the lack of footpath on the Market St, and were concerned that with the parking revocation that is planned during the works, pedestrians would be put at higher risk of collision with vehicles.

- SWTRA fed back that they would review this with the traffic management contractor to ascertain if a solution can be developed.
- **Additional feedback:** SWTRA have reviewed this route and there is an existing footpath that leads from the alternative parking location on Long St, across the A487 to a small footpath on the western side of Market St. The footpath on Market St extends up as far as the Spar whereby there is a drop kerb for those wishing to cross the road to access the Spar.

The community raised a concern relating to the safety of pedestrians on East St, and stated that pedestrians had previously been hit by cars at that location.

- SWTRA commented that was outside the remit of these works, however, would feedback to the SWTRA Highways Team. SWTRA commented that unfortunately it was the nature of the

construction of the town that there were a lack of sufficient footpaths as buildings had been constructed directly adjacent the roads with no thought to footpaths at that time.

General Queries

A number of queries were raised by the community relating to Openreach's stats diversion works.

Additional feedback: SWTRA raised these queries with Openreach and the feedback from Openreach has been added as answers below:

- **When Openreach undertake the jointing works, it is assumed that existing services will need to be stopped temporarily when for example jointing is happening? Please can this be confirmed, and if so, what type of disruption is expected i.e. durations / slower internet speeds etc.?**

Jointing works will all be undertaken at night in order to minimise disruption. With regards to copper (normal telephone / broadband) they are generally only out of service for a few minutes, an hour at most. Fibre cables take a little longer (up to 8 hours). Local fibre services for residential / business customers can be taken down for this length of time under the terms of their contracts for maintenance – Openreach are only obliged to maintain service for those who pay additionally for it which is done as part of the course. However as noted works will be undertaken at night to minimise disruption.

Openreach notify the service providers of the planned works (this has already been done), and service providers then pass on the relevant information, depending on the contracts they have with their end users.

- **If service in the Town is going to be disrupted during the works, is there any opportunity to provide mobile towers that maintain internet signal whilst the cabling works are happening?**

There will be no temporary service whilst these works are undertaken. As noted, for copper services each line is typically only out of service for a few minutes. Fibre services can take up to 8hrs, however works are undertaken at night to minimise disruption. Disruption will only occur to each connection once, therefore when the jointing is undertaking on one night, the following nights work will not affect that same service again.

- **When you install the new equipment/cabling, what equipment is going back in – high speed internet cables etc.?**

The New Roads and Street Works Act only allows for installing like for like with this type of work

- **When Openreach are undertaking these works, is there any opportunity to upgrade the equipment so that the Town can receive better/faster internet services?**

Unfortunately, this is not feasible; it is far more complex to upgrade a network than installing new cabling in the road. It would require amongst other things, new equipment for end users, additional street furniture and other infrastructure changes. This could become a project in itself, ultimately leading to significantly more disruption over a longer period.

How was it discovered that the culvert required repairing?

SWTRA fed back that they undertake inspections in accordance with statutory obligations, whereby a visual inspection is undertaken every 2 years, and a more in-depth detailed inspection every six years. These inspections captured defects on the existing culvert.

Will there be any disruption to existing services; gas, water and electric?

SWTRA confirmed they are working with service providers to ensure that there is no disruption to existing services during the planned works.

There is an issue with rats in some areas of Newport, will it be possible to put rat poison into the new culvert?

SWTRA confirmed that this would not be possible due to ecological constraints and potential contamination of the watercourse.

