

Record of a meeting concerning the Leashaw Landslip: 2.30-3.05 Tuesday October 31st 2023

1 Those in attendance:

Julian Gould: Director of Highways, DCC
Cllr C Cupit: Cabinet Member: Highways, Assets and Transport
Cllr David Taylor: District and County Councillor
Cllrs P Ward (Chair), A Bradshaw, A McDonald and S Farnsworth: DLH Parish Council

In addition, a local resident strongly affected by the proximity of the works and prior flooding, attended and was offered the opportunity to ask questions of the DCC representatives at the close of the formal meeting .

2 Purpose of the Meeting

The meeting was called by DLH PC in order to gain some certainty on three issues:

- the status of the one-way traffic proposal;
- the likely date of production of an engineering solution for full two-way traffic;
- the likely date of implementation of Leashaw fully reopen in both directions.

3 The One-way Traffic Proposal

This temporary solution was first mooted by Cllr Taylor in July of 2023 at the Extraordinary Parish Meeting held in the Chapel. At this point, following the successful installation of two anchor points, Severn Trent felt that their asset was secure and that they no longer wished to part-fund, with DCC, a complete repair of the landslip.

This then left DCC with all liability for the creation of a solution, its implementation and its funding. As a temporary measure therefore, recognising the difficulties the current closure is posing to the surrounding communities, DCC began to investigate and design a scheme for the one width carriageway re-opening of the road.

As a stop-gap measure therefore, DCC devised a scheme for one-way working and submitted it to ST in early September as ST needed to ensure that it would not compromise the security of the aqueduct. Approval from ST was received on September 28th. ST continue to monitor the road, as do DCC. DCC's plans to install the barriers for one-way working were not carried out during October as Storm Babet (18-21 October) both diverted human resource from the project and, as it has emerged through monitoring, has opened the road surface causing some slight movement and weakening it further.

DCC's have continued to progress plans to install the barriers for reopening a single lane of the road. Works/plans needed before this can be implemented include the design and installation of a vehicle-restraint system, road safety audit and confirmation around how and which vehicles and pedestrians will be able to use the access (weight limits and the best form of traffic management to secure safe give way).

As a result, given these developments and the already minimum proposed single carriageway re-opening, DCC are now assessing the road/any movement further before progressing. This will visibly take the form of temporarily reinstating some of the old wall, and the sealing of the cracks that have appeared on the road surface over the next few weeks (weather dependent) to then be monitored for further movement/issues.

Whilst this monitoring is carried out, work is ongoing on the design of the planned single-carriageway re-opening. The road safety audit will confirm whether the one-way traffic arrangement will be

a priority system (with priority being given in the Holloway-to-Crich direction) or temporary traffic lights.

The single-carriageway opening will be subject to a three tonne weight limit so no buses or heavy vehicles will be allowed. Gritting of the route during any winter weather is still being analysed.

The upshot of these developments is that DCC is still not able to proceed to put in place a one-way traffic solution until:

- there are further assessments of any ongoing damage through the current period of bad weather;
- there has been a further safety review of the road.

The best estimate that DCC could advance therefore was that one-way working might be installed by Christmas 2023 but that that could not be guaranteed if further movement in the road was detected.

4 The likely date of production of a solution for full two-way working

At the current time, ST have not handed over the complete designs and calculations arising from their detailed ground boring and surveying. It is not yet clear that they would be willing to do this even at some future point. If this is not resolved, DCC will have to recommission the work which will take time and resource.

The best estimate that DCC could advance was that a complete solution for fully open two-way traffic might not be available until late spring/early summer 2024.

5 The likely date of implementation of a scheme for fully open two-way traffic.

DCC were unable to be at all precise. The barriers standing in the way of clarity were as follows:

- **design of the final solution:** here was too much to achieve by way of research, design, approval, tendering and contracting to be at all confident that Leashaw could find a place in the 2024/5 capital programme year;
- **available financing/programming:** the 2024/5 capital year was already programmed and financially committed. As there is no costed design it is not possible to be clear as to the likely cost of full re-instatement. It is likely to be a significant scheme in terms of cost. Given DCC's latest overall financial position - which is parlous difficult - DCC were unable to confirm whether there would be sufficient capital available in 2025/6. The Cabinet member hoped that the Chancellor may say something favourable regarding local government roads financing and capital financing in general, in the Autumn Statement which takes place on November 22nd. She advised political lobbying with the local MP;
- **further road deterioration:** the road is old and fragile, is built on a sandbed and has already been compromised by the various trenches that have been dug into it to repair or divert utilities. This instability impacted upon the kind of design solution and method of working that could be adopted, for example, there was little space or solid ground for very heavy machinery to pile-drive or to manoeuvre or turn. If deterioration accelerated, the engineering solution was likely to become more complex, more expensive and to move further forward in time.

In terms of wider financing, given there are at least 200 landslips in the County, including on some major roads, it was noted by DCC that they continue to make the case to Government for specific additional funding in this regard. The PC, local members and the MP may be able to support in making the case for additional funding to accelerate a longer-term repair to the current landslip on Leashaw Road.

6 Summary

- there *may* be a one-way traffic scheme in place by Christmas 2023;
- there *may* be a practical engineering design that would support two-way traffic in place by late spring/early summer 2024;
- there *may* be works underway to finally stabilise the road and re-surface it ready for full two-way traffic by late 2025/early 2026.

All attendees were thanked for their attendance by the Chair and the meeting ended at 3.05.

