



FAQs

A285 - Duncton Road Closure

09 November 2021 v9

Scheme: Duncton Closure
Type: Carriageway / structural failure
Road: A285 Southside of Seaford College main entrance
Parish: Duncton
WSCC Member: Tom Richardson
Cabinet Member: Joy Dennis

Summary

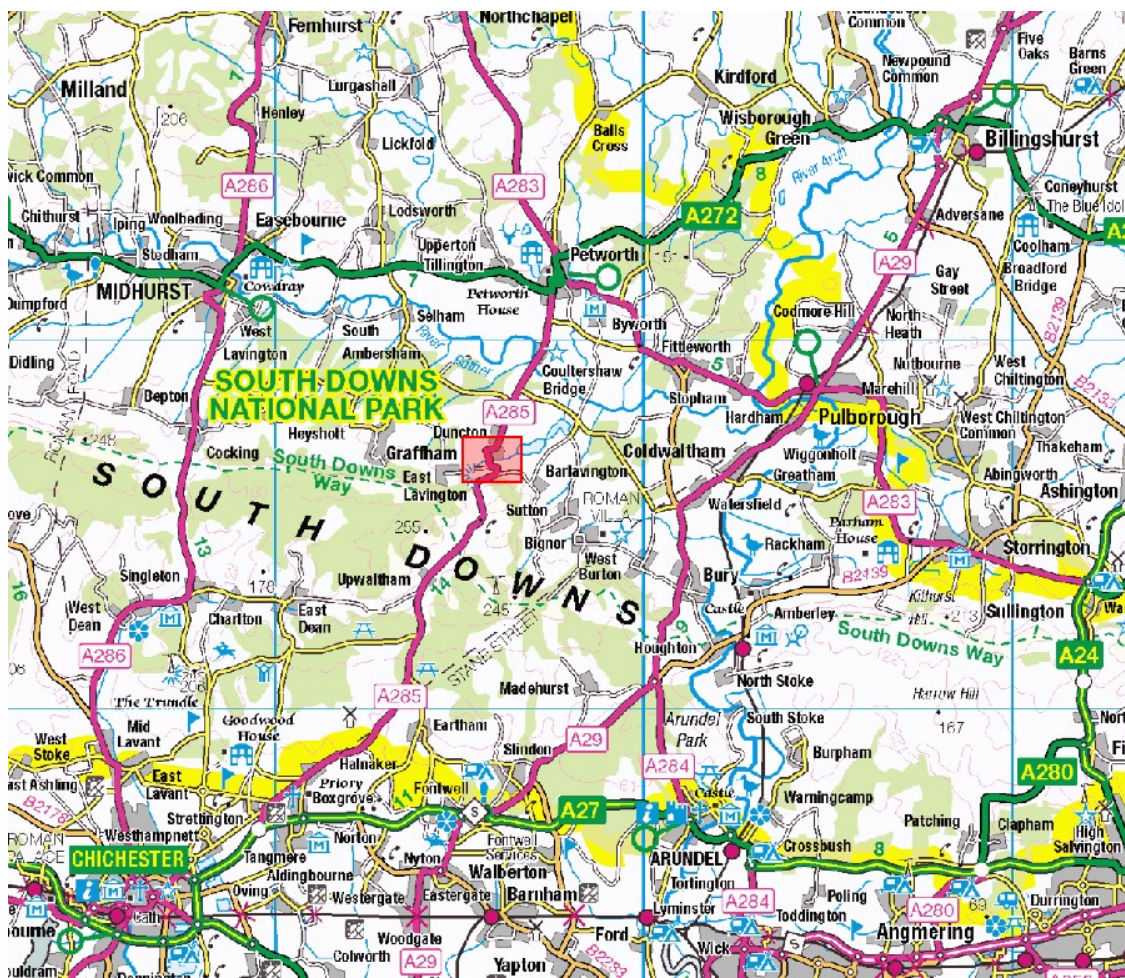
Date: October 2021

Extent:

A short section of the A285 at Duncton, just south of the Seaford College entrance, has been closed following a slippage of earth over a culvert that spans beneath the carriageway.

The movement, possibly caused by exceptional rainfall, led to the carriageway subsiding and this section of road has been closed for safety reasons.

The road will remain closed whilst investigations and repairs are completed.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What has happened to the road, why is it closed?

A. The road has subsided due to a partial failure of the embankment due to the recent inclement weather. Saturation of the ground causing softening of the embankment resulting in the increase in pore water pressure reducing the shear strength of the soil within the embankment triggering the slope failure.

Q. Could one lane be opened under traffic lights to allow vehicles to use the route again?

A. Unfortunately the whole of the road width is subject to the underlying problem. For safety reasons it is not practical to open one carriageway. As works progress there may be opportunity to open a single lane, but this would depend on a number of facts at the time.

Q. How long will the road be closed for?

A. We currently expect the works to take up to 3 months to complete, subject to any adverse weather or unexpected issues. We will of course however, do all that we can to open the road sooner if it is possible and safe to do so.

Q. When will the road be open again?

A. The road will be closed until mid-December when we anticipate we will open with restricted, traffic management (traffic lights) in place whilst we complete the works. It is then expected that the road will be fully open just before Christmas. This is subject to a number of factors including, weather conditions, resource and material availability and any unforeseen problems occurring during the construction works.

Q. Can work not be undertaken 24/7 or at least shift through the night?

A. The site is not an easy site to work within, and safety for all is our paramount concern. It would not be safe to work at night under lights given the constraint such as the volume of water, and underfoot conditions. The site is environmentally sensitive which increases the need to avoid unnecessary risk such as night working. Productivity of workforce is often reduced by between 20-30% during night working so this is also a consideration given the current national constraints of availability of the workforce.

Q. Are the contractors going to be working weekends?

A. Yes, the work programme includes weekend working where possible. This will be, at times, subject to availability of workers and materials, and the weather. There may be times when work is not possible due to particular construction activities, such as materials curing, drying or setting.

Q. I have noticed considerable surface water in the past collecting on or around the highway, will the repair work help reduce or remove this problem?

A. We continue to look to improve the highway, surface water drainage, and hope the improvements we plan will reduce the impacts that we have seen in the past. It should be noted there is considerable amount of water run-off in this locations so it will not necessarily solve all problems in the future, especially during any significant weather events.

Q. You mention improvements as well as repairs, what will be improved?

A. The embankment will be stabilised, and integrity strengthened, improved. The carriageway will be resurfaced and the drainage will be repaired and improved to ensure water clears the highway. We are also planning to install new safety barriers that will be more appropriate for the location.

Q. I have not seen any activity on site, what is happening now?

A. Work may appear intermittent but please be assured work is not standing still. As of 28 October mobilisation of the contractor and the works have begun. Not seeing work in site, does not imply there is no work happening to rectify the problem as quickly as possible as there are many elements to deal with that are necessary within this type if scenario.

Q. When will the repair work start?

A. Specialist works to identify the extent of the issue have been completed. The WSCC Contractor has now mobilised and as of Thursday 28 October the works have begun.

Q. Will the WSCC and the contractor be working at weekends?

A. Where possible extended working hours including weekends will be utilised. We have to be mindful of a number of considerations including, physical site constraints, Health and safety risks for contractors and the public, impact of noise on neighbours and environmental health legislation. Availability of resource and material is also a consideration and sometimes a constraint, but it is anticipated that weekend working will form part of the works programme.

Q. The diversion signs don't seem to help, can you improve?

A. We have reviewed the signage in light of the current situation and resident and road user feedback. We hope the signs are now appropriate and helpful to users.

Q. Wouldn't it be better to divert traffic to the east via the A29 and Pulborough to east the traffic heading through Midhurst?

A. We have reviewed the option and as a highway authority it is not appropriate to promote that route. The roads in question have a series of constraints that would prohibit us promoting the alternative route to all traffic. The constraints include weight, height and width restrictions in a number of locations.

Q. Hasn't this road been failing for years, yet nothing was done about it?

A. As with all roads, the condition is never constant. As the highways authority we manage the road condition taking in to account a number of factors to ensure the road is usable and safe. The A285, as with all A roads, is inspected on a monthly basis with the aim to identify any safety defects within the highway. The inspections are also an opportunity to identify other non-safety related issues and intelligence that may assist with long term works planning.

Although inspections can assist with assessing active intervention to prevent defects affecting the network, the majority of geotechnical assets comprise natural materials, which are inherently variable. This variability of materials can make the prediction of rate of deterioration difficult. Typically, assets deteriorate progressively over time, however there can inevitably be cases where unforeseen changes occur and assets do not deteriorate as predicted, resulting in geotechnical events and subsequent remedial works.

Q. What environmental protection measures do you have in place during this work to ensure no detrimental effects on the wildlife, pond and watercourse?

A. Before any construction works were undertaken evaluation, investigation and consultation with relevant specialists was completed. Whilst works are ongoing all necessary precautions are in place including emergency equipment such as Spill Kits and booms.

Two trees were removed during the site clearance phase, both of which were diseased.

Q. Are the landowners responsible for either side of the road happy with the works?

A. WSCC has fully engaged with both landowners and kept them fully informed regarding the proposed works and way of working. Both have been very supportive and we are grateful for their help and understanding.

Q. Why is Seaford College using Beechwood Lane to ease some of the school traffic congestion in the mornings?

Seaford College is not using Beechwood Lane for the school traffic (staff and parents) during the time of the closure. Although the lane is a public highway the impact of large numbers of vehicles potentially using the lane would significantly impact the residents of the lane. Most importantly the lane is for traffic in both directions - so safety with the potential numbers would be of a major concern.

Q. Seaford College creates a lot of traffic particularly in the morning; are you working with the school during the closure?

A. The school have a transport plan in place that has been working well and they continue to work with WSCC to update parents, staff and visitors directly with any changes. WSCC is grateful for their help and understanding during this period.

Q. Can pedestrians / cyclists use the road?

A. A path will be maintained for pedestrians and cyclists through the site whilst the repair works to the embankment are being undertaken. However, there may be occasions when this will need to be closed due to operational reasons e.g., construction plant movements and delivery of materials.

Q. My business has lost trade and this is a very important time of year. Can WSCC provide compensation at all?

A. Owners of businesses have no right in law to a steady level of passing trade. A temporary reduction in passing traffic is considered to be one of the risks of running a business and there would only be a valid claim if the loss of business was a result of negligent action by the highway authority or contractor.

Whilst there are circumstances where other claims can be made, such as for injury, damage or depreciation, there is nevertheless no automatic entitlement to claim for loss of business.

There may be a possibility that affected businesses may be able to obtain a temporary reduction in business rates, as a result of local disruption by [applying to the local Valuation Office](#).

Q. I am expecting a delivery during the works. What will happen?

A. Delivery companies will have to make alternative arrangements using the signed diversion routes.

Q. Will any diversion routes for traffic have to be put in place?

A. Diversion routes have been signposted across the area. Further information is available via [one.network](#)

Q. I have seen drivers using inappropriate side roads and or speeding along quiet lanes, what can be done about this?

A. WSCC working with residents to understand where problems are occurring as a result of the closure. There is a reliance on drivers acting responsibly and within the law. If you see unlawful acts please report to the police.

Q. The additional traffic using the smaller lanes has created considerable damage, will this be fixed?

A. WSCC has identified the key areas that are being used more due to the closure. The county council will review and look to repair subsequent damage where appropriate and where affordable.

Q. Could weather impact the proposed works?

A. Weather conditions can have an impact on the delivery of the scheme. Wherever possible mitigation to any delays will be put in place.

Q. I live nearby in what is usually a very quiet country lane. Since the closure the lane is busy and there is now considerable damage to the road and verges?

A. WSCC is constantly reviewing the situation and monitoring road condition and safety. It will fix immediate safety concerns aligned to the usual legislative frameworks and guidance. WSCC will review any damage caused to local roads and repair where possible and practical once the A285 has reopened.

Q: How to I report a fault or problem on the highway?

The most effective way to report a fault or problem on the highway is to use our reporting application - Love West Sussex.

For further information, [visit our roads and travel pages](#).

Q. What is Love West Sussex?

A. The Love West Sussex website and app allow you to inform us of any highways issues such as potholes, overgrown vegetation, damaged kerbs, footpaths and verges, which you come across in the county.

Using the Love West Sussex website or app you will be able to check on the progress of your report and any work being undertaken.

For full information go to: <http://love.westsussex.gov.uk/reports/home>

Q. How do I make contact with West Sussex Highways?

A. If you have any queries on the day regarding how the works are being carried out near you, e.g. 'Can I get access to my property' or 'Can I walk to the shops along the footpath?', then please feel free to ask to speak to the on-site Site Supervisor who is normally best placed to address your concerns.

However, if you would prefer to speak to someone about how or why the works are being carried out then please contact us via the West Sussex County Council Contact Centre on 01243 642105 or via the [WSCC website](#).