

the route

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Restoration works

Work has started to restore fields in the relief road conservation area to provide an abundance of local wildflowers that were there in the early 1990s.

Hay from Tidmoor Ranges at Chickerell, which is known to have a good range of wildflowers in it, has been spread over the maize fields next to Horse Lynch Plantation, known locally as Teddy Bear Woods, as a seed source.

This will be supplemented with wildflower seeds including Corky-Fruited Water Dropwort, a nationally rare plant that thrives in meadows in Dorset and Dyer's Greenweed (pictured) which is a yellow-flowering herb that has declined all over the country in recent decades.

The fields are also providing a new home to the thousands of reptiles, such as slowworm and common lizard, that were rescued from the disused Lodmoor north landfill before work on the new park and ride site began.

In addition, Skanska have provided barn owl nest boxes, made by a local carpenter, to be put up in Horse Lynch Plantation to encourage these beautiful birds back to hunt over the fields.

Traffic delays avoided

The need for traffic lights on Ridgeway has been greatly reduced thanks to the construction of a temporary diversion road.

Originally five months of 24-hour one-way traffic, controlled with lights, had been programmed for Ridgeway while work is under way to tie in the new road level with the existing A354.

The project team wanted to avoid the disruption that this would cause and the potential for more traffic on minor roads in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty area, and have come up with a temporary alternative route for traffic on the A354.

The diversion route will avoid the need for prolonged traffic management, reducing this from 34 weeks to just ten weeks in January while the Monkton Hill section of the cycleway between Weymouth and Dorchester is constructed.

Cabinet member for transport Col Geoffrey Brierley said:

"It's great news that we have been able to find a way to reduce the amount of time traffic on the A354 will need to be controlled with lights, and that the busy Christmas shopping period shouldn't be affected. Hopefully motorists will understand the need to control a short section of the road with lights during the cycleway construction in January."

The material used for the temporary road will be processed and reused elsewhere on the scheme once the route is closed.



The relief road joins with the existing A354

Did you know?

Six hectares of chalk and limestone cuttings are being transformed into a landscape of local grassland and wildflowers.

A lot of care is being taken to select appropriate local species of grass and wildflower to ensure they fit in with the surrounding natural landscape.

What do the relief road structures do?



Ridgeway bridge

The South West Coast Path is being kept open by the Ridgeway green bridge. It allows horseriders and pedestrians to cross the relief road without putting a hoof or foot onto the road. At the moment walkers and riders must dodge traffic on the busy A354. The steel work for the bridge has finished and the concrete surfacing work has started.

Bincombe Lane underbridge

This underbridge keeps Bincombe Lane connected to Dorchester Road. The arches are complete as is the backfill over the bridge. There is a temporary reinforced soil wall at the northeast corner, this will be removed once the relief road is open, and the northeast corner of the bridge will be finished.

Chapel Lane bridge

Chapel Lane bridge keeps the access open to farm buildings, which the relief road would otherwise sever. Work on the abutments started in September. The beams will be lifted into place by the end of November.

Littlemoor Road bridge

This bridge keeps Littlemoor Road connected, because the relief road passes through Littlemoor Gap and underneath the bridge. The bridge is nearly complete, final work on the deck drainage and kerbing is underway.

Southdown Ridge bridge

Along with Ridgeway bridge and Lorton Lane bridge, this bridge is a green bridge. It will be landscaped to blend into the surrounding area and will ensure wildlife can cross the road. Southdown bridge keeps the bridleway and footpath connected. Local school children will be able to use the bridge. Work on the foundations of the bridge abutments started in October.

Lorton Lane bridge

The third of the relief roads green bridges, Lorton Lane bridge will keep access open to Lorton House and Lorton Meadows visitor centre. Work on the foundations of the bridge abutments started in October.

Two Mile Coppice underpass

This underpass will keep the bridleway that runs alongside Two Mile Coppice connected with Greenway Close. Walkers, cyclists and horseriders will use it to cross under the relief road. Excavation for the foundations started in early November.

Manor railway bridge and Manor subway

Manor railway bridge carries the road over the railway line. The beams were lifted in during night works in November and surfacing work is now underway. The new subway will give safe passage for pedestrians under the relief road at Manor Roundabout. The subway will connect to Two Mile Coppice underpass.

