

NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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WORKS STARTED ON THE RIDGES EMBANKMENT AND ROAD REPAIRS

Restoration works have begun in preparation to reopen The Ridges in Finchampstead, and it is anticipated it will be complete by 4 November.

Councillor Paul Fishwick, newly appointed executive member for active travel, transport and highways, said: "I am pleased that works to repair The Ridges are scheduled to begin, after a long and frustrating period for residents.

"Schemes such as this are complex, and specialists have been working behind the scenes for many months to find the best way to stabilise the embankment and repair the road to allow it to be opened again to traffic."

As with all work of this nature, timescales can change. This could happen if there is a spell of bad weather that means it is not safe for contractors to work, or that they need certain conditions for the materials to work effectively, or if something unexpected is uncovered, such as further damage.

Background

In Spring 2021, sections of The Ridges started to collapse. It was soon established that it wouldn't have been safe to just patch up the road. A long-term solution was needed to prevent it from happening again.

What followed has been a complex project involving a range of technical disciplines to identify the right solution, considering long term stability, disruption during construction, land availability, value for money and environmental impacts (including tree retention and carbon impacts).

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Specialist engineers were required to look at the issue, what was causing it and to come up with some different solutions, and soil nails were chosen as the preferred option.

A tender went out shortly after, and VSL Systems Ltd have now been appointed to undertake the work.

VSL Systems Ltd are an international company bringing a wealth of experience, in particular works on other soil nail projects such as the HS2 project.

Restorative works

During the closure of The Ridges, Dell Road, Cricket Hill and the Lower Sandhurst Road have been used as local diversion routes and are now showing signs of wear and tear. Once the works on The Ridges are completed, the council will inspect these roads to identify what remedial works are required, with a view to undertaking these works in spring 2023.

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Further information:

1. More from Councillor Paul Fishwick at paul.fishwick@wokingham.gov.uk
2. More from Councillor Clive Jones at clive.jones@wokingham.gov.uk