



Archaeological discoveries on site

A120 Bypass (Little Hadham) and Flood Alleviation Scheme

Project Newsletter
November - December 2020

Welcome

Welcome to our monthly A120 Bypass (Little Hadham) and Flood Alleviation Scheme newsletter and an archaeology special! Our project newsletters are produced to keep the community updated on all aspects of the project from the start of construction to completion.

Project benefits

Once complete the new 3.9km bypass, to the north of Little Hadham, will alleviate congestion caused by the Little Hadham traffic lights and provide more reliable journey times.

Hertfordshire County Council worked in partnership with the Environment Agency to develop the scheme to include flood alleviation measures. New road embankments across the River Ash and Albury Tributary will act as flood storage dams to reduce flood risk to the village and other nearby communities.

The scheme will improve air quality in Little Hadham and also ultimately benefit the county's economy, with more reliable transport links to Stansted Airport alongside other long-term advantages for Hertfordshire.

The A120 Bypass and Flood Alleviation Scheme is registered with the
Considerate Constructors Scheme.

A record rainfall in Little Hadham

October was an exceptionally wet month for north-east Hertfordshire. Storm Alex brought huge amounts of rainfall. A remarkable 275% of the long term average rainfall fell in the area around Little Hadham, making October the wettest month in total since local records began in 1920.

This amount of rainfall has affected the type of construction work that can be carried out, in particular placing clay materials to form the flood storage dams. Unfortunately, these are not sufficiently advanced to have had an influence on river flows through Little Hadham this winter.

Our river flooding **Alerts and Warnings** are still issued based on the existing pre-scheme characteristics of the area and need to be heeded if they are issued. If you're not already, you can register to receive these warnings at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>



River Ash flowing into the new culvert during a storm

Spotlight on Archaeology

Over the summer and autumn months of 2019, archaeological excavations funded as part of the scheme, revealed a fascinating insight into a 2,000 year old lost settlement. We're delighted to be able to share some of these findings with you now following a great deal of work by the team including Cotswold Archaeology.

Early explorations hinted that pre-historic and Roman remains of some significance may be buried along the line of the new road. Subsequent excavations undertaken by Cotswold colleagues did not disappoint.



Archaeologists directing heavy machinery to carefully remove topsoil and reveal the buried remains beneath

Exciting discoveries revealed

The site team were quick to discover the foundations of Iron Age (300 BC) houses and the remains of the former field boundaries that would have sub-divided the farming landscape during this time. In the aerial photograph below, the dark areas represent the in-filled remains of 2,000 year old boundary ditches that sub-divided the landscape.



Field boundaries that subdivided the farming landscape



You can watch a short video all about the findings on site by visiting our **YouTube** channel: <http://bit.ly/A120videos>

Remarkable Romans

Much of the archaeologists' efforts were focussed on the Roman period remains, dating from the 1st to 4th centuries AD.

The foundations of a corn dryer were a particularly interesting discovery. The structure, specifically the preserved plant remains found within it, help us to understand the way the landscape was farmed and what was eaten (and drunk) nearly 2,000 years ago!

A small cemetery was also unearthed including the remains of four burials and 16 cremations, some of which survived within their urns.



The team excavating the foundations of a Roman period corn dryer discovered near the Albury Tributary

Some of the more eye-catching finds include 72 Roman bronze coins (shown below) nearly all of which date to a very short period between AD 330 and AD 348, the time when the House of Constantine ruled the Roman Empire.

Over 10,000 shards of pottery were also discovered alongside many other interesting artefacts too.



Roman bronze coins

Construction Progress

Tilekiln Roundabout

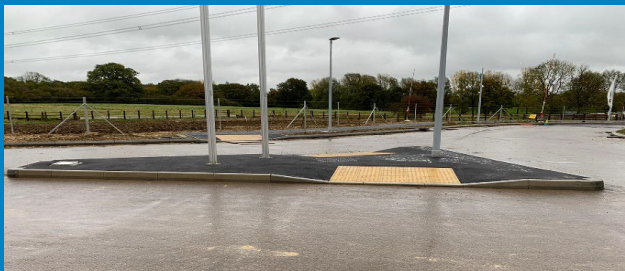
Work has continued on the offline sections of the Tilekiln Roundabout. Lighting and signage has been installed as far as possible and the verges have been brought up to finished level with topsoil.



Drone footage of Tilekiln Roundabout

Hadham Park Roundabout

The footway at Hadham Park Roundabout is finished and is now ready and open for pedestrian use. The site team have also begun the works on the Plantains access road.



Footway and island surfaced at Hadham Park Roundabout



Aerial view of Hadham Park Roundabout (November 2020)

Mill Mound Bridge

The site team have been working extremely hard to progress with the works to construct Mill Mound Bridge.

The pad foundations for the piers have been constructed and the works on the foundations for the abutments are well underway.



Concrete pour on Mill Mound Bridge

Utilities

BT have completed the diversion works at Albury Road reclaiming their old cable.

Unfortunately and unrelated to the project, an Affinity Water pipe burst to the south of the bypass on Albury Road at the beginning of December. Affinity Water have since installed temporary two way traffic lights on Albury Road to repair the leak.

Construction Corner 101

What are foundations?



Foundations provide support to structures or buildings by transferring their load to layers of soil that have capacity to support them.

What are pad foundations?

Pad foundations are a type of foundation formed by a rectangular, square, or circular concrete pad that support localised single point loads such as columns.

What is an abutment?

Abutments are the end support of a bridge. They support the deck and, in most cases, they also support the approach road embankments.

Flood Alleviation Progress

The bridge beams have been lifted and installed into place at the River Ash Spillway, each beam is 30m long and weighs 72 tonnes! The bridge deck construction will proceed over the coming weeks.



One of five beams being lifted into place at the River Ash



Almost there...



The bridge over the River Ash Spillway starting to appear

Splendid scenes at the scheme's spillways

The site team have been making excellent progress at the flood storage dams spillways.

A spillway allows excess flood water over a dam embankment in a safe controlled manner. The spillway channel is designed so that water slows down and loses energy in its passage through the spillway. They will only be used if the capacity of a reservoir is reached, under very rare and exceptionally high flood conditions.

Albury Tributary Spillway

The spillway formation has been excavated and prepared ready for the construction of the spillway channel base. The reinforcing steel fixing and concreting works for the base of the spillway are ongoing.

River Ash Spillway

The base of spillway has been successfully completed and works to construct the walls are ongoing. A total of 2966 tons of concrete was placed in this base!



Aerial imagery: progress at River Ash Spillway

#Didyounknow

During the first two weeks of November, the team removed sections of vegetation, along the banks of both River Ash & Albury Tributary letting in additional day light, to provide increased habitat for various native and semi-aquatic species. The total length of vegetation cleared equates approximately to the length of four professional football pitches!



Site plan

Upcoming project roadworks

Social distancing has changed the way we plan and carry out work, which may cause cancellations or changes to roadworks and closures.

A120 Hadham Road

Weekday temporary traffic lights will be in operation 8am-6pm as required until spring 2021

M11

Highways England have confirmed one closure of the M11:

- Friday 18 Dec (9pm) - Saturday 19 Dec (5am).
- Some aspects of their works will require diversion through Hertfordshire, including the A120 between junction 8 of the M11 and the A10.
- Throughout 2021 and beyond we are expecting further requests from Highways England to divert M11 closures through Hertfordshire, along the A120 corridor.

What's Coming Up?

- Minor works will be carried out at both roundabouts.
- Both flood alleviation dams will have duct work and drainage installation.
- **The site will shut down on the 18 December with works continuing from the 4 January 2021.**

You can find out more about the project by visiting our dedicated website:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/a120bypass



You can follow us on **Twitter**:
@Herts_Highways



Or on **Facebook**:
www.facebook.com/HertsHighways



Subscribe for email updates:

www.Hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme



You can watch our progress on site with our latest drone and time-lapse footage. Visit our **YouTube** channel:
<http://bit.ly/A120videos>

You can also keep up-to-date with all roadworks using the One.Network service.

Type **One.Network** into your internet search engine and then type '**Ware (Little Hadham)**' into the search box to find out more. You can pick different date ranges from the drop-down menu to see upcoming works.

You can also call the GRAHAM site team at Standon Road on **01279 314182** for immediate enquiries and concerns.

Please note our monthly face-to-face drop-in sessions have been cancelled in line with government restrictions until further notice. However, we are joining **Little Hadham Parish Council's** monthly online meeting to provide updates.