

The Background..

The A40 highway corridor between Highnam and Longford roundabouts forms a strategic link for traffic travelling from the Forest of Dean and from Wales via Ross on Wye. The A40/A417 roundabout is located at Over to the northwest of Gloucester and at the first crossing point on the River Severn north of the Severn Bridge some 25 miles to the south. The A40 east-west corridor at Over caters for an existing traffic flow of 43000 (March 2016) vehicles per day.

The A40/A417 Over roundabout is also the primary point of entry into the city of Gloucester for vehicles travelling from the west and from the north on the A417 from Ledbury.

Traffic analysis carried out in 2007 showed that at that time traffic on three of the four roundabout approaches exceeded capacity with a maximum AM Peak delay of 9 minutes on the A40 Eastbound approach. By 2022 it was predicated that delays on both A40 and on the A417 Southbound approaches would increase to between 4 and 23 minutes per vehicle in the AM Peak and to 8 minute per vehicle in the PM Peak for A40 Westbound traffic.

Highways England carried out an initial phase of improvements on the A40/ A417 roundabout in March 2015. That scheme was called the A40 Over Roundabout Western Approach Widening and consisted of widening the A40 eastbound approach and the northern circulatory carriageway to three lanes to provide dedicated twin right turn lanes into Gloucester, As a result of these works, Eastbound traffic delay has fallen to 1 minute per vehicle.

The second phase of improvement work will target improvements to the Westbound and Southbound approaches and to the circulatory carriageway. The works are being promoted both by Gloucestershire County Council and will be funded largely by central Government through the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership (GFirst LEP). The improvement works are intended to:-

- Reduce journey times, for all users, on the A40 between Highnam Roundabout / Longford Roundabout / Gloucester City Centre.
- Improve journey time reliability on the A40 between Highnam Roundabout / Longford Roundabout / Gloucester City Centre.
- Improve the connectivity and capacity of the strategic road network between the Forest of Dean and Gloucester / Cheltenham / Tewkesbury / the M5.

Key features:

It is estimated that the works will cost in the region of £2.3M. In detail these works will comprise of:-

- A40 Westbound: Widening of the roundabout approach to provide three lanes at the junction Give Way line and to increase the approach lane capacity by extending approach lane length.
- A417 Southbound: Widening of the roundabout approach to extend three lanes from the junction Give Way line and to increase the approach lane capacity by extending approach lane length.
- Widening of the circulatory carriageway to provide a third circulatory lane and to provide space for future installation of traffic signals.
- Construction of two 18m deep sheet piled walls, improvements to drainage infrastructure and the installation of traffic signal ducting.

Key beneficiaries:

Key beneficiaries will include motorists, bus passengers and bus operators through improvements to journey times. The scheme does not affect pedestrians or cyclists who are catered for to the west of the roundabout.

Should traffic flows increase, in the longer term, then the introduction of traffic signal control would provide a benefit to pedestrians and cyclists travelling between Gloucester and Over. The use of sheet piling will also minimise impact on the existing natural wooded habitat on the north east and south west widened embankments

Construction programme:

The Over Roundabout improvements are planned to begin following the completion of the A40 Elmbridge Roundabout scheme to the east of Gloucester. It is anticipated that the Over Roundabout works will commence in January 2018 although an autumn 2017 start may be possible.

The current programme is as follows:-

- Business Case Submission - October 2016
- Business Case Approved by GFirst LEP - December 2016
- Construction Start - Early 2018
- Construction End - Summer 2018

