

Poole, UK
February 21, 2013

Heart of Slough selects wireless traffic detection from Siemens

New traffic intersections across seven key sites in and around Slough have been equipped with over 150 wireless magnetometer sensors by Siemens. The new Siemens WiMag equipment will help improve the management of traffic using the A4 and travelling to and from the town centre as part of the Heart of Slough improvement project.

Complementing the company's proven loop and radar detection solutions, Siemens WiMag sensors provide The Heart of Slough project with an alternative traffic detection system that uses magnetic disturbances to detect vehicles and low power wireless technology to transmit data to host controllers.

With a total of 162 WiMag sensors, the system detects traffic at seven new intersections on the A4, Wellington Street, through the centre of town, with access to and from the High Street and Slough's iconic new bus station.

According to Engineer Chris Green representing Slough Borough Council's Network Management, the new wireless traffic detection system from Siemens has enabled the council to implement the most cost effective solution for the new sites on the network.

Completed within 12 months, the major road network improvements in the Heart of Slough included removing the Brunel roundabout and creating a new four-way junction controlled by traffic signals to improve traffic flow and installing new improved road level pedestrian crossings. Led by Slough Borough Council and part funded by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the project also included upgrades to the existing road and public transport infrastructure to ease journeys, improve safety and create an attractive gateway to the Heart of Slough.

As a result, traffic congestion in the town centre has reduced to below modelled levels for the scheme and bus priority has been included without delaying other road users.

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According to Head of Product Management, Keith Manston, the WiMag system offers a cost effective detection system for stopline, vehicle actuation, SCOOT and MOVA applications. 'Using a battery-powered wireless magnetometer sensor which lies beneath the surface of the road, the WiMag system utilises disturbances in the earth's magnetic field to detect passing and stationary vehicles, and relays the information to the traffic controller without the need for expensive cabling or duct works,' he explained.

For new sites in particular, the WiMag system can offer a more cost effective and flexible solution than installing traditional loop detectors, particularly where detection is required at significant distances from the traffic controller. Being battery-powered, wirelessly linked and smaller in size than traditional loop detectors, WiMag also lends itself for installation at remote locations as well as being less prone to damage by street works.

With two options available, subject to the size of the installation, integration with Siemens' range of traffic controllers is seamless. Firstly, a dedicated equipment rack neatly accommodates all controller mounted parts of the system and provides support for up to 60 sensors via a dedicated Siemens card. Secondly, a 4-channel interface card which replicates a stand-alone loop detector card provides support for 4 magnetometers. This solution is ideal for a small installation or where the WiMag system is retrofitted to an existing site which already uses loop detectors.

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For further information and **press pictures** please see: www.siemens.co.uk/traffic

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