

## A2/A282 DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT and THE M25 JUNCTION 1B-3 WIDENING

Newsletter Issue 3

August 2005

### Introduction

Welcome to our third newsletter keeping you informed about progress on the A2/A282 Dartford Improvement Scheme.

The latest news is that following the Public Inquiry in February 2004, the Scheme has been approved to proceed to the detailed design and construction phase.

Additionally, we have taken the decision that there is merit in developing proposals to widen the M25 between Junction 1B and Junction 3, first announced by the Highways Agency in April 2004, in conjunction with the detailed design and construction for the A2/A282 Dartford Improvement Scheme.

This newsletter provides details of the two schemes and the reasons for packaging them together into a single contract, the programme for delivery and information on surveys and investigations that are ongoing.

### A2/A282 Dartford Improvement

Following the Public Inquiry, the Secretaries of State, having fully considered the recommendations of the Inspector's Report, announced in their decision letter of 27th August 2004 that the scheme would proceed.

The contract for the construction of these proposals was awarded to Costain in early July. We are now working closely with them to proceed to a start of work on site early in 2006.

### M25 Junction 1B to 3 widening

The Highways Agency announced in April 2004 that it would develop proposals for widening between J1B and 3 of the M25. The scheme is still at a fairly early stage and it is not expected that construction work would start until late 2006.

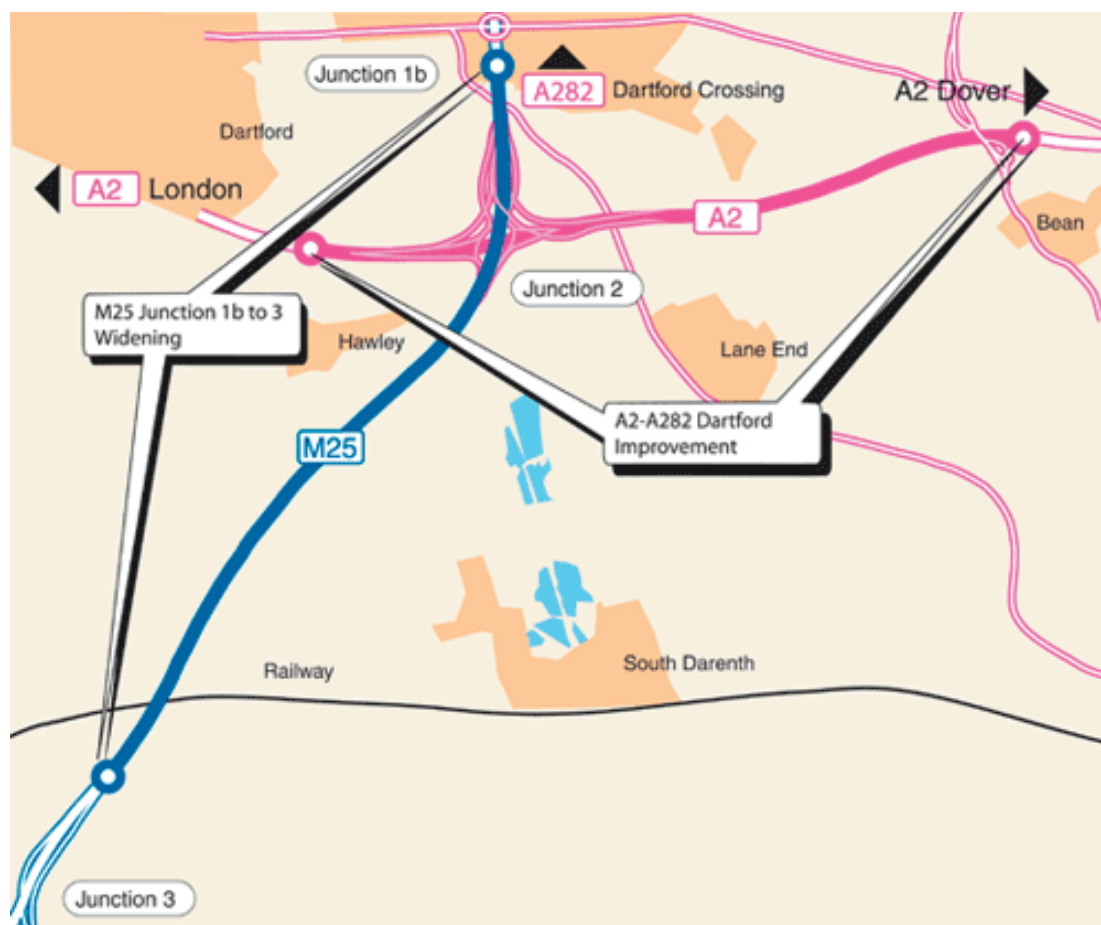
The proposals include widening from 3 to 4 lanes in each direction between Junctions 2 and 3 and the provision of 3 lanes in both directions through Junction 2 to Junction 1B (currently 3 lanes northbound but only 2 lanes southbound). All widening would be contained within the existing motorway boundaries.

### What will happen next?

Now that the contract has been awarded the contractor is expected to carry out additional surveys, to develop designs for the A2/A282 Dartford Improvement scheme and to begin to make arrangements to start work. When the Highways Agency is satisfied with the designs, and that the statutory procedures are complete, the contractor will be authorised to enter site and commence construction. The contractor will appoint a liaison officer to keep the public and authorities informed of critical phases of construction that will inevitably cause disruption, and to act as a point of contact to deal with queries or complaints. Contact details for the liaison officer will be in our next newsletter and published on the Highways Agency website as soon as they are known.

## What will happen next? - continued

At the same time, the contractor will commence development of the M25 Junction 1B to 3 Widening scheme. Surveys and environmental assessments will be completed in order to prepare the Scheme Assessment Report and the Environmental Statement, which will be available for comment. A number of public exhibitions will be held to show the scheme proposals which you will be able to discuss with representatives from the Highways Agency and from the contractor's design and construction team.



### Why combine the M25 Widening with the A2/A282 scheme?

The decision to package the M25 widening and the A2/A282 Dartford Scheme into a single contract was taken in order to:

- capitalise on the opportunity to upgrade these vital routes, tackling congestion and improving safety and journey time reliability for road users and at the same time supporting economic growth
- avoid abortive work at the interface of the two schemes that may otherwise be required if the two schemes were procured separately
- limit disruption to road users
- complete construction of the two schemes within the minimum possible overall period of time
- minimise the overall cost of the two schemes.

# A2/A282 DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT AND THE M25 JUNCTION 1B-3 WIDENING

## M25 Junction 1B to 3 widening

The proposals for the M25 include:

- Widening the M25 to 4 lanes between the south facing slip roads of Junction 2 and the north facing (M20) slip roads of Junction 3.
- The southbound M25 would be widened to 3 lanes from Junction 1B to south of Junction 2.

The proposals still need to be fully developed but will include:

- No land take outside the highway boundary.
- Low noise road surfacing and/or noise fencing to shield properties and to reduce traffic noise.
- Drainage pollution measures to trap spillage from the highway and prevent contamination of water courses.

## A2/A282 Dartford Improvement

The proposals for the A2/A282 Dartford Improvement include:

- New free flow link roads between the A282 north and A2 east.
- New free flow link between A2 eastbound and A282 northbound.
- New dedicated free flow lane for A2 westbound to M25 southbound movement.
- A fourth lane added in each direction on A2 from Junction 2 of the M25 to Bean Junction.
- Link roads carried on two new viaducts alongside Littledale viaduct and a flyover over the A2 and M25.

Features of the proposals require detailed development but will include:

- Earth mounds and noise fencing to shield properties.
- Low noise road surfacing to reduce traffic noise.
- Drainage pollution measures to trap spillage from the highway and prevent contamination of water courses.
- Drainage storage ponds to prevent run off from adding to flood risk in the River Darent catchment area.

## Current Scheme Development including Surveys and Environmental Work

Local residents, businesses and farmers will be aware that various surveys associated with road planning are currently being undertaken. You may have been approached with requests for land entry. These include a Ground Investigation and various Ecological and Environmental Surveys.

The Ground Investigation will provide design data for both the A2/A282 and the M25 Widening. Site work, already undertaken, has involved boring holes or excavating pits where new bridges and road works are proposed. Ground samples have been taken for testing in a laboratory. The results will enable the Contractor to complete the detailed design of the road works and bridge foundations.

The various Ecological and Environmental Surveys are being carried out by specialist consultants to establish the existing status of the ecology and environment alongside the M25. The Contractor will then determine the effect of road widening on the wildlife and environment and the results of the assessment will be published in an Environmental Statement. We will, at all times, do our best to limit the impact of the improvement works on the local environment.

## Project Programme

The contract was awarded in early July 2005 to develop and construct both the A2/A282 Dartford Improvement and the M25 J1B to J3 Widening scheme. The anticipated programme is shown in the table below, but some advance work may take place towards the end of 2005.

|                    |                                                                                                   |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>July 2005</b>   | Contract awarded to Costain                                                                       |
| <b>Early 2006</b>  | Start construction for A2/A282 Dartford Improvement                                               |
| <b>Spring 2006</b> | Publish Scheme Assessment Report & Environmental Statement for M25 J1B-3. Hold Exhibitions        |
| <b>2006/2007</b>   | Start Construction for M25 J1B-3 (Subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory procedures) |
| <b>2008/2009</b>   | All works complete                                                                                |

## How can I find out more information?

As the scheme develops, we will keep you informed by further newsletters, issued in conjunction with the contractor, on a regular basis, probably every 3 months. The Highways Agency Information Line (HAIL) and Website will also be updated during the works.

## Contact details

Room 2C, Highways Agency, Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1SZ

John Martin: 01306 878129 Janice Burgess: 01306 878163

email: [A2A282DartfordImprovement@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:A2A282DartfordImprovement@highways.gsi.gov.uk) or [M25J1B-3Widening@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:M25J1B-3Widening@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

For real time traffic information:

**08700 660 115**

[www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo](http://www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo)

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

(Calls from BT landlines to 0870 numbers will cost no more than 8p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more)

For general Highways Agency information:

**08457 50 40 30**

email: [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

8am – 8pm weekdays, 9am – 5pm weekends

(Calls from BT landlines to 0845 numbers will cost no more than 4p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more)

## Driving through roadworks

If you do have to drive through roadworks, please take extra care.



- Keep to the speed limit - it is there for your safety
- Concentrate on the road ahead, not on the roadworks
- Keep a safe distance - there could be queues in front
- Get into the correct lane in good time - don't keep switching
- Be alert for works traffic leaving or entering roadworks
- Observe all signs - they are there to help you

**Remember that tiredness can kill. Take regular breaks from driving.**