

Building the A590 High and Low Newton Bypass Newsletter 5 – November 2007

Keeping you informed

We're making good progress despite the very poor weather in June and July. The main effect of the wet weather has been on the earthworks. Work had to stop, after each period of rain, until the ground dried out to avoid the large machines damaging the site.

Delay to the construction of the earthworks has meant that some of the roads and footpaths across the bypass will not be re-opened as early as we would have liked. We appreciate the inconvenience that this causes local residents and we would like to reassure everyone that they will be opened as soon as we're certain that they are safe to use. If alternative temporary routes are identified before the permanent routes are re-opened, we'll open them and let everyone know.

Work on the road pavement itself has not been so severely delayed and the majority of the surfacing has now been laid on the scheme.

Despite the wet weather delays, we remain confident that the bypass will be open to traffic in Spring 2008. Final tidying up of the new road verges and changes to the existing A590 may continue beyond Spring but we'll complete them as quickly as possible.



This Summer's Work

Enough of the earthworks and drainage work has been completed, despite the weather, to enable the carriageway construction to begin. All of the material for the carriageway has to be brought to site. Over 80,000 tonnes of hard-core is needed for the carriageway foundation, most of this is now on site.

We have installed more than three quarters of the 14 km of pipes needed for drainage on the scheme. They're being laid at a rate of 700m per week.

The building of dry-stone walls has continued through all weathers and 6 of the 8km of walls, needed on the route, have been finished and are helping to blend the bypass with the local landscape.

Our work on the four concrete underpasses is nearly finished and traffic is already using Oak Head Underpass. Filling in with earth behind the other three underpasses is continuing, as is the addition of masonry cladding to the walls at either side of the underpasses.

Managing the Traffic

The construction of the connecting roads between the new bypass to the existing road at the northern end of the scheme will require a fairly long period of traffic management. This is to ensure the safety of our workforce while work is carried out near to moving traffic.

In November, traffic on the A590 will be diverted onto the new bypass between Oak Head Junction and the northern limit of the scheme. At Oak Head Junction, small, temporary roundabouts will be introduced to control traffic speeds at places where the road takes a new direction.

Once traffic has been diverted, the length of A590 between Oak Head and the northern limits of the scheme will be closed to through traffic but access to properties along the closed road will be maintained at all times.

For about six weeks, traffic will be routed through the former layby at the northern end of the bypass before rejoining the A590 to the south of Barrow Banks junction.

Temporary traffic lights will be used at times during these works but careful planning and the use of the former layby as part of the diversion route will ensure that two way traffic flow, without traffic lights, will operate for the majority of the time.

When the work to connect the new and old carriageways is complete, traffic will continue to run on the new bypass between Oak Head and the northern limit of the scheme until work on the rest of the bypass is complete.

Next Steps

To make sure that we open the bypass on time, we will be trying to make up the time we lost to the wet weather. So far we've avoided working on Sundays except for a few occasions. Weather permitting, we may work on some Sundays in the forthcoming weeks and we will give all affected households advanced notice of our plans.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank residents for their tolerance. We understand the inconvenience and we'll be doing everything we can to keep disruption to a minimum.

The earthworks forming the embankment approaches to the Cartmel Lane Underpass have been completed. The material has been brought from the K Shoes site near Kendal. In a mutually beneficial arrangement, the waste from the K Shoes site is being re-used and as a result we didn't need any new material to be quarried for the bypass. This is a great example of 'sustainability' and cooperative thinking to minimise both waste disposal and quarrying of stone.

Steady progress is being made digging drainage trenches through the rock, under Head House cutting, using a special trench cutting machine.

We're planting 60,000 trees and shrubs around the bypass to soften the impact of the scheme on the local environment. We hope to get the majority of them planted in the forthcoming planting season as soon as the landscaping and screening mounds are ready.

The beams for Head House Road Bridge were placed early in October. We're now adding the formwork and steel reinforcement before pouring concrete to form the bridge deck.

We're trying to complete as much of the weather dependent work as possible before the winter weather closes in. In particular we're aiming to have the vast majority of road surface laid in order to protect the vulnerable earthwork material from the effects of winter weather.



Temporary Road and Footpath Closures

There has been a serious delay in re-opening Barrows Green Road due to the exceptionally wet weather in June and July.

We appreciate that the continued closure of this and other routes across the bypass causes disruption to local residents. However, we do not wish to encourage motorists to use the existing, substandard, junction with A590 until the majority of traffic has moved from the existing A590 onto the new bypass.

We have previously publicised dates for the reopening of Barrows Green Road, but the safety of road users must be our primary consideration. So, as a result, the earliest date for reopening Barrows Green Road to general use will be early 2008. This will coincide with the reopening of Head House Road.

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Safe driving at roadworks

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



During 2006 two workers were killed and 19 seriously injured in the course of their work on Highways Agency roads.

For the safety of all road users and roadworkers, when you are approaching roadworks:

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