

11 February 2009

CHANGES TO ROADS IN WETHERBY AS PART OF A1 UPGRADE SCHEME

The Highways Agency is advising road-users in the Wetherby area of a number of changes to the motorway and local road layout as construction of the new A1 northbound motorway carriageway is due to get underway next week.

The work, which may be subject to change due to weather, will allow the Highways Agency to continue its upgrade of the A1 between Bramham and Wetherby to motorway standard.

From Monday 16 February, it is proposed that:

- The northbound entry slip road on to the A1 at Walton Road will be closed permanently.
- Walton Road into Wetherby will be closed temporarily at the roundabout junction with the local access road for approximately six weeks. This will allow contractors to change the height of the roundabout in order to link it to the new Walton Road bridge.
- While Walton Road is closed, some HGVs delivering goods into Wetherby will be diverted along Sandbeck Lane, Sandbeck Way and Hallfield Lane. Temporary double yellow lines will be laid along parts of Hallfield Lane to assist the safe passage of HGVs and emergency vehicles.

From Thursday 19 February, it is proposed that:

- Traffic travelling north and southbound on the A1 will be temporarily put in contraflow on the newly-constructed southbound carriageway, creating two lanes of traffic in each direction.
- Work will begin to construct the final section of Wetherby's Local Access Road between Walton Road and York Road. Completion of this section will provide a single-carriageway route for local users between the A64 in the south and Kirk Deighton in the north, located alongside the new A1 motorway.
- The remaining western side span of the old Walton Road bridge is due to be demolished in late February.

Highways Agency project manager Alec Briggs said: "By diverting traffic away from Walton Road and the existing slip road access to the A1 northbound carriageway, we will be able to focus our efforts on safely constructing the northbound carriageway of the new A1 motorway and on completing the final section of Local Access Road.

"It will also enable us to complete the Walton Road roundabout and link it to the new bridge, and to complete the demolition of the old Walton Road bridge.

"While access to Walton Road is closed, it will be necessary to put down double yellow lines along short lengths of Hallfield Lane, which forms part of the HGV and emergency vehicle diversion route, in order to ensure the safety of all road users. This decision was taken after consultation with Leeds City Council, the emergency services and businesses, and we are working closely with our partners to ensure that any affected residents are kept informed.

“We are making every effort to minimise disruption to the public and would like to apologise in advance for any inconvenience this work may cause.

“The project to upgrade the A1 to motorway standard is progressing well, and we are on course to complete works by the summer. We would like to thank the people of Wetherby for their continued patience during the construction period.”

Notes to Editors

1. The Highways Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Transport. We manage, maintain and improve England's motorways and trunk roads on behalf of the Secretary of State.
2. The £68million A1(M) Bramham to Wetherby upgrade scheme has been underway since May 2007. An Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) contract was awarded to Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd in September 2003. They have appointed Atkins Consultants as their designer. The scheme is due to be completed in summer 2009.
3. Real-time traffic information for England's motorways and major A roads is available:
 - From the web at www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo
 - By phone from the Highways Agency 24-hour voice activated phone service on 08700 660 115. (Calls from BT landlines to 0870 numbers will cost no more than 8p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more).

Before using a mobile, find a safe place to park. Never stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency. Make sure it's safe and legal before you call.

4. For more general information about the Highways Agency and its work, visit the Highways Agency website www.highways.gov.uk, or telephone the Highways Agency Information Line on 08457 50 40 30 at any time. (Calls to 0845 numbers cost no more than 3p/min from BT residential landlines. Call charges from other landlines and mobile networks may vary)

Safe driving at roadworks

The Highways Agency is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads. For the safety of roadworkers and all road users, 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.

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Media enquiries out of hours should be made to the Highways Agency National Press Office on 0207 081 7443.

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