

A404 Handy Cross Improvement

M40 Junction 4

Introduction

Welcome to Issue 4 of the M40 Junction 4 / A 404 Handy Cross Improvement scheme newsletter. This is the second newsletter since construction began in October 2005. There will be a series of newsletters produced during construction to explain what has happened so far and to give details of the work still to be done. Since our last newsletter in March 2006 work has generally progressed well and we are still on target to complete the improvement scheme at the end of the year.

The New Wycombe Road Bridge



WORK TO DATE

The new Wycombe Road Bridge

The new bridge on the C100 Wycombe Road (also known as Marlow Road leading to Marlow Bottom) is now open to traffic. We are now removing the temporary sheet steel wall that supported the diversion of Wycombe Road whilst the bridge was built.

Motorway Slip Roads

Construction of the earth bank for the new slip road between the A404 Marlow Bypass and the M40 west towards Oxford has progressed well. Now the Wycombe Road bridge has been completed the earth beneath the bridge can be removed to allow the new slip road to be completed under the bridge.

On the east side of the junction the new sheet steel and concrete walls have been completed for the widening of the slip roads. New road surfacing has been laid on the widened on-slip road (towards London) and the off-slip road (from London) will be completed in the next few weeks.

On the west side of the junction the widening of the off-slip road (from the Oxford direction) has been completed. The new traffic island at the top of the slip road will separate traffic turning left towards High Wycombe from traffic turning right and travelling towards Marlow.

Cross link through the roundabout

Drainage pipes have been installed for the new road across the roundabout and surfacing of the new road has been completed. A pond has been built in the middle of the roundabout to collect rain water from the new road and the widened slip roads. The water level in the pond is controlled by an overflow weir which allows water to collect in the lowest part of the pond and to soak away naturally into the ground.

Earth Bank for the A404 - M40 (W) Slip Road



Work on the roundabout

In August and September we replaced the old worn out road surface on the roundabout and also laid the new surface material on the widened slip roads. To start with we carried out work at weekends and during the night to minimise delays and disruption. However, as a result of severe traffic congestion and delays on Saturday 12th August, caused by unexpected high volumes of traffic and failure of the traffic signals on the roundabout, we changed to carrying out most of the work on the roundabout at night.

Other work

During the Summer, five new traffic sign gantries were put up on the junction. Signs on the gantries and new white lines on the roundabout will help drivers to choose the right lane for where they want to go.

We have also been working on the pedestrian and cycle route across the junction. All the pedestrian and cycle crossing points on the roundabout will be controlled by traffic signals, making crossing the junction much safer for pedestrians and cyclists.



THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

The next few months will see the completion of the work. We are still on target to complete the work at the end of the year.

Work will be going on throughout the junction but the most visible change will be the construction of the new slip road between the A404 Marlow Bypass and the M40 west bound (towards Oxford).

The majority of the work will be carried out away from the carriageway; however, there will be times when we need to close traffic lanes to carry out certain operations. There will inevitably be some effect on traffic around the junction, but by careful traffic management and programmed night and weekend working we hope to keep disruption to a minimum.

Temporary traffic signs and cones will be in place on the roundabout during the work, both for the safety of our workforce and to help make your journey around the junction as smooth as possible. To assist with this aim, we ask that drivers keep to the 40mph speed limit.

While we try to minimise delays and disruptions, please allow extra time for your journey or use an alternative route if possible.

How can I find more information?

You can either contact the Highways Agency Information Line (HAIL) (number below) or visit our website which provides up to date information during the works.

For real time traffic information:

08700 660 115

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

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

(Calls from BT landlines to 0845 numbers will cost no more than 3p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more)

Safe driving at roadworks

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



During 2005, five workers were killed and 12 seriously injured in the course of their work on Highways Agency roads. This was the worst year since 1999.

For the safety of all road users and roadworkers, drivers approaching roadworks are advised to:

- 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