

A421 M1 Junction 13 to Bedford Improvements Newsletter Issue 3 – October 2009

Introduction

Welcome to the third issue of the A421 Improvements Scheme Newsletter. The scheme, when complete, will provide a new 8 mile length of dual carriageway from the M1 at Junction 13 to the A6. By travelling through the area you will be aware of the significant progress made to date.

For the safety of all road users, there is a reduced speed limit of 40mph on the A421. Average speed cameras are being used to enforce these reduced speed limits. Also be aware that changes to the roadworks layout are frequently made. These are designed to keep both road users and our workers safe, so please be careful.

A6 Cowbridge

Works at Cowbridge are progressing well with the Progress Park junction almost complete and at an advanced stage at Elstow and Cowbridge itself. Works in such a confined space in a live traffic situation are very difficult and we are very aware of the frustrations this causes drivers. However, we are making every effort to complete the works as quickly as possible including night and weekend working and appreciate your continued patience.

Please also be aware there will be variations to the temporary traffic island arrangement currently on Cowbridge between now and the end of the scheme. It is our intention to avoid using temporary traffic lights at this junction due to the disruption they cause. However it is possible that they may have to be introduced for a very short period in order to safely complete the works.

The three junctions should be completed and fully operational by mid November 2009.

Update

We have been fortunate with the weather since our last update in July and have been able to make good progress. Notable developments include:

- Earthworks are progressing well in all areas of the site
- Road construction is taking place from Lower Shelton to Manor Road and Marston to Wood End.
- The foundations for Salford Road bridge are now complete and the beams will be placed in October.
- Beams have been placed on both bridges at Fields Road and the M1 (Brogborough).
- Work has begun on the new Salford Road Roundabout, we will be moving traffic onto the new roundabout and de-commissioning the existing signals early in the new year. There will be possible night time lane closures at the A421/Junction 13 during this time.
- Piling to support the embankment to the East of North Common Farm underpass is now complete.
- Work to extend Lower Shelton underpass is almost complete, with works underway to complete the finishes, lighting and the footpath approach
- Piling work has been completed at Marston Bridge (Beancroft Road) and Marsh Leys Railway and is in progress at Marsh Leys Junction.

- Lower Shelton Link road is due to open in early November
- Roadworks are being carried out on the existing A421 at Marston Moretaine and the re-aligned section at Brogborough.

Traffic Management

- M1 Junction 13 overnight slip road closures – ongoing
- M1 Junction 13 to 14 overnight lane closures
- M1 Junctions 10 to 13 southbound temporary 50mph speed limit – due to adjacent Managed Motorway Scheme
- A421 temporary 40 mph speed restriction and single lane running from M1 Junction 13 to approximately 1 mile east of the junction with the A6
- A421 Marston Moretaine temporary layby closure
- A421 no right turns to or from the A421 westbound carriageway at the site of the former Interchange Retail Park roundabout
- A6 narrow lanes and temporary 30mph speed restriction between Elstow Junction and A421/A6 for upgrade to signalised junctions and road widening until November 2009
- A6 Cowbridge – temporary roundabout layout for construction of splitter islands and signals.

Future Traffic Management

- A421 overnight closure at Fields Road on 23 October to place edge bridge beams
- A421 closure between Marsh Leys roundabout and the A6 from early evening on 24th to late evening on 25th October to place bridge beams over the Bedford to Bletchley railway line
- A421 Marsh Leys Junction - carriageway and lane closures from January 2010

- A421/M1 Junction 13 – Possible overnight lane closures from early 2010 for construction of Salford Road roundabout

The Environment - Recycling

We have received a great deal of interest about the fill material we have used near to M1 Junction 13.

PFA - Pulverised Fuel Ash - is the result of burning of pulverised bituminous, hard coals in power station furnaces. PFA has been used as a lightweight fill material to construct the embankment for the new M1 Junction 13 Brogborough Interchange.

To be able to use PFA the Project had to register with the Environment Agency, an exempt activity under Paragraph 19 of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2007

Prior to importing the PFA the Broughton Brook watercourse was realigned to its new permanent route to minimise the potential for any pollution to occur with regular visual inspections and water clarity monitoring taking place.

On completion of the new embankment approximately 375,000 tonnes of PFA have been imported to site over a 5 month period from Ratcliffe and Didcot power stations - peaking at 30,000 tonnes per week.

Key benefits of using PFA at the A421 Project include:

- Diverting of PFA from Landfill
- Reduction in the use of Primary Aggregates
- Readily available in large quantities within reasonable transport distances
- PFA is primarily alumino-silicate glass with low trace elements present
- PFA has low permeability making it difficult for trace elements to be leached

School Visit – Daubeney Middle School

Our contractors Balfour Beatty visited Daubeney Middle school to discuss the impact of the finished road on Bedford with groups of Year 5 and Year 7 pupils. As well as talking about the scheme they discussed archaeological finds, ecology and the green responsibilities that come with a project like this. The pupils were also given a talk on the health and safety issues that are in place on the site and took part in a PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) race.

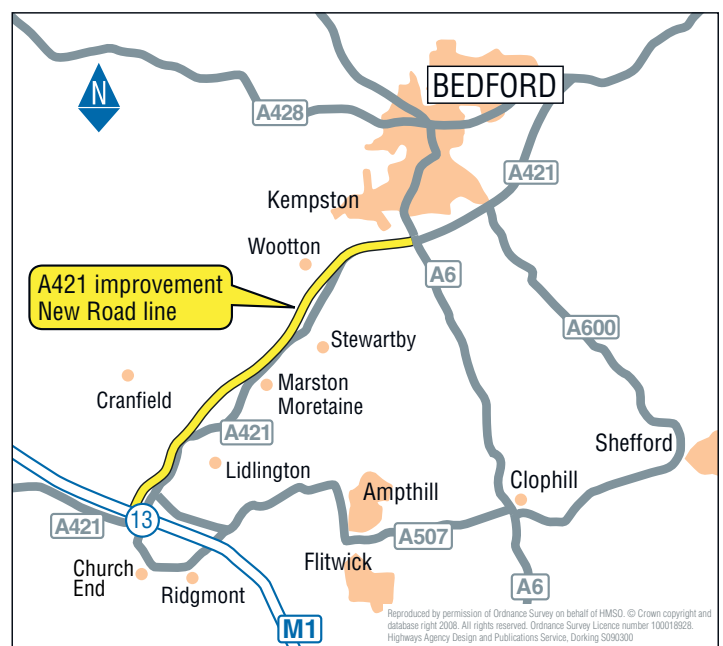
Woodworks Festival

On Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th September members of the A421 Project Team attended the Woodworks Festival at the Forest Centre Marston Vale. The event is in essence a celebration of wood, woodlands and wood products with live folk music. The whole event is about promoting the sustainable use of wood and community. It has been going for seven years.

The A421 project team were invited to take part to show the local community our green credentials in relation to the A421 construction. We were able to explain the ecology and archaeology and a great deal of interest was shown in the tyre bale, and it's innovative use. We were also able to explain the use of PFA and how we reduce, reuse and recycle materials on the scheme.

Future Work

- Construction of M1 and Salford Road Bridges
- Construction of A421 re-alignment west of M1
- Roundabout construction at the M1
- Construction of new Salford Road
- Bridge construction at Manor Farm, Vale Farm and Wood End
- Opening of Lower Shelton link Road
- Transfer of traffic to final alignment on Marston Moretaine bypass
- Roadworks to Fields Road
- Bridge construction at Marsh Leys Junction
- Roadworks to westbound carriageway Marsh Leys to A6
- Bridge construction at Marsh Leys Railway including beam installation
- Completion of A6 Cowbridge works



Considerate Constructors Scheme



Balfour Beatty have made an excellent start to the Considerate Constructors initiative, by scoring 37 out of 40 during the July assessment. We need to keep up the good work and look at how we can improve and do better for the next visit in approximately 6 months time.

If you have any comments or would like further information, you can contact, Balfour Beatty's Public Liaison Officer Jan Bath (see right panel for details) or the Highways Agency's Project Manager Roy Brunsdon on (01234) 796099.

Email: A421M1toBedford@highways.gsi.gov.uk
or visit our website
www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/4584.aspx

Contacting the Highways Agency

You can also get in touch with the Highways Agency about the A421 Improvement:

Email: A421M1toBedford@highways.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: **01234 796099**

Website: www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/4584.aspx

By post: **Highways Agency, Major Projects, Woodlands, Bedford MK41 7LW**

A421 Project Helpline

If you have any questions, please contact:

Jan Bath,
Balfour Beatty Public Liaison Officer,
A421 Improvement Scheme,
Hoo Lane (off Woburn Road),
Wootton,
Bedfordshire,
MK43 9EH

Email: Jan.bath@bbcel.co.uk

Tel: 0845 481 0867.



If you need help using this or any other Highways Agency information, please call **08457 50 40 30** and we will assist you.

For real time traffic information:

08700 660 115

www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

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 landlines to 08457 and 08700 numbers can cost up to 8p per minute but are free from some landline providers; mobiles usually cost more.
Please check costs with your service provider.

Safety 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.