

Our ref:
Your ref:

Councillor Robert Scott
Chair to Hockliffe Parish Council
Hockliffe Parish Council
Hockliffe
Bedfordshire

Kate Partridge,
Project Manager,
South East
2 Colmore Square
5th Floor
Birmingham
B4 6BN
www.nationalhighways.co.uk

21 December 2023

Dear Councillor Scott

M1 Junctions 10 to 13 Safety Enhancements Project

Thank you for forwarding me your email about the closures on the M1 on the evening of Tuesday 5th December.

At the parish council meeting on 11 December, we acknowledged receipt of the feedback sent to Martin Fellows about the effectiveness of the diversion route signage on the A5 approaching Kelly's kitchen roundabout and Thorn roundabout. I understand your frustration and the effects on the residents of Hockliffe due to the increase in traffic as a result of the motorway closure.

We confirmed that the project team reviewed the diversion signage in place with their traffic management team. As a result, there were additional signs added on the A5, on the approach to Kelly's Kitchen roundabout as follows:

- Don't follow your satnav.
- Repeater (additional) diverted traffic roundabout signs.
- 'Get in lane' signage approximately 510 yards away from the roundabout.
- Repeater 'Get in lane' signage approximately 100 yards from the roundabout.
- At the traffic signals – Right hand diversion sign
- On the roundabout – Right hand diversion sign
- Messaging on the portable VMS has been changed to read "M1 diverted traffic use the A4146".

We also added the following signage on the approach to the Flying Fox roundabout:

- Diversion signs sending traffic back to Kelly's Kitchen roundabout.
- At the turn off for Hockliffe – Unsuitable for HGV's and Local Access only signs will be positioned in the road with cones narrowing the access.

We will also continue to reinforce existing messages to haulage companies about complying with the diversion route as well as the message already posted online and on our website.

Unfortunately, we are unable to impose a temporary weight restriction on the A5 as this is not the route being worked on. Weight restriction orders are intended to protect old or weak bridges and structures or bar heavy vehicles from areas unsuitable for their size or if they pose a danger, for example, narrow village roads, adjoining schools.

We've raised your concerns regarding the speeding Heavy Good vehicles with Bedfordshire Police enforcement team. They've reported that three HGVs were recorded speeding on the night in question although there were a number of cars speeding as well.

We also mentioned that we may not be able to implement the same mitigation measures for the northbound closures. This is because the layout along the A5-M1 link and A505 approach is different to the Flying Fox approach. Our Customer and Communications Manager Vanessa Adu wrote to you on 12 December to confirm, we wouldn't be able to install the narrowing at the Hockliffe exit.

Following your feedback on the morning of 13 December, the team installed a lane 1 closure on the A505 north and outer ring of the roundabout to have one lane at the Hockliffe exit. We also installed a lane 2 closure from the centre hatching prior to the A505 entry to further control the flow of traffic. Unfortunately, traffic continued to use the route despite these measures.

As we mentioned in our correspondence to you on Thursday 14 December, we were not able to make any further amendments to the road layout during that week. We are continuing to review mitigation measures for the closures scheduled next year including adding further electronic signage as soon as practically possible, to encourage drivers to use the approved diversion route.

I can also confirm that we will use the overhead signage prior to the closures to pre-warn drivers of the upcoming closures. The team that looks after the overhead signage have confirmed that when they review the applications, they will look at what the best signs to use are for the closure. They will confirm this with the team once they know the overhead signage is working.

The gantries on our motorways and roads are used to notify the public of any closures on the network. This means that other closures may replace any closure information that we have. For example, emergency closures will take priority over current full carriageway closures and future weekend full carriageway closures.

We'll write to you again in the New Year to update you on when we're due to start the scheme and potential dates for visiting the project offices at junction 11a.

Thank you once again for your feedback. If I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate in contacting our Customer Manager at M1J10-J13CCC@balfourbeatty.com. Alternatively, if you've any enquiries not related to the M1 junction 10 to 13 scheme please direct these to our National Highways customer contact centre at Info@nationalhighways.co.uk or call 0300 123 5000.

Yours sincerely

Kate Partridge
Project Manager