

A12 (Junction 19 to Junction 25) widening

Survey and Ground Investigation FAQs

We are doing important surveys and ground investigations in the area. These will give us a clearer picture of the condition of the existing A12 road, as well as the types of soil and rocks and the groundwater levels where we're proposing to build the new road and the wider area where we're considering route options. The work will help us to plan junctions and structures safely and economically, ahead of the next stage in the project.

Most of the work will take place overnight on the existing road, although some of the surveys will also take place on private property, such as farmland and industrial sites during the day. To ensure our workforce is safe during these surveys, we will need to close the A12 road overnight. We have chosen night road closures rather than daytime to minimise the impact on motorists.

Covid-19

Highways England's priority at the moment is to play its part in keeping the country safe and support the movement of essential supplies, services and people who cannot work from home. We are following the government's policy which is that construction activity should continue where it can be done safely. All our sites have strict safeguarding measures, in line with Public Health England guidance, to prevent the spread of COVID19. None of our sites are open to the public.

Roadworks affect all journeys, which is why it is important they are completed as quickly and safely as possible. We are keeping all aspects of our work under constant review during this period to ensure the safety of the public, our staff and colleagues in the supply chain, following government guidance at all times.

Traffic volume overall has reduced by 50% compared to this time last year. With a lower volume of traffic on our roads, we are continuing work to improve them before traffic flows eventually return to normal. We have planned this carefully so that we do not increase travel disruption for those who cannot work from home and need to use our roads to deliver vital goods and services. Unfortunately, despite less traffic, incidents still happen on the road. We always encourage those who have to make essential journeys to plan ahead and drive safely.

Question	Answer
<p>What is happening and when?</p>	<p>We'll be carrying out different types of surveys along the proposed road route from junctions 19 to 23, and in the wider area around junctions 23 to 25 (where we haven't yet decided which route the road could take). These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road surveys – to understand better both the existing road's construction and where the proposed sections of new road are likely to link into it. • Drainage surveys – to understand the existing drainage layout and flow • Topographical surveys – to find out more about the ground levels • Environmental surveys – to get more data for our environmental assessments • Archaeology geophysical surveys – to get more data for archaeological assessments • Ground investigation – to understand better the local soil, rock, and groundwater levels. <p>We started our surveys in late November 2019, and these will carry on during 2020. So far, we have completed the following initial surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1, Eastbound junctions 19 to 23: completed 24 January 2020 • Phase 2, Westbound junctions 22 to 19: completed 6 March 2020 • Phase 3, Eastbound junctions 23 to 25: completed 27 March 2020 • Phase 4, Westbound junctions 25 to 22: completed 1 May 2020. <p>However, we still have some more investigations to make.</p> <p>There will be overnight road closures from 8pm to 6am on the A12 to allow the following work to be carried out (dates subject to change):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side Roads: Work started on 4 May 2020 and runs for approximately 3 weeks. • Eastbound junctions 19 to 25: from Monday 18 May to Friday 12 June 2020 • Westbound junctions 19 to 25: from Monday 8 June to Friday 26 June 2020 • Side roads and junctions: Planned from Monday 29 June to Friday 10 July 2020 • Structural survey of Olivers' Bridge on the B1018, Maldon Road (date tbc). <p>Live traffic information can be found at www.trafficengland.com or on Twitter: @highwaysEAST.</p> <p>Drivers should plan ahead and allow more time for their journeys.</p>

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<p>Where will the work take place?</p>	<p>Most of our survey work will be carried out overnight from 9pm – 6am, between Monday and Friday. There will be a break in the work during the Christmas period, from 20 December to 5 January.</p> <p>Most of the surveys will need full overnight carriageway closures on the A12 in phases between Junction 19 and 25. We will only close the A12 in one direction at a time. We will also need lane closures and temporary traffic lights at junction 18 and on the local roads so that we can safely access some locations. We are not planning to do survey work on weekends.</p> <p>If survey work is due to take place next to residential properties, we will write to those residents in advance to let them know what is happening and when. We have advised landowners where we need access to their land.</p> <p>We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this survey work, and we thank you for your patience.</p>
<p>Will the work be noisy?</p>	<p>Many of the surveys will not be noisy, such as the geophysical surveys. Unfortunately, some of the equipment we need to use to do other surveys will be noisy for those within approximately 50 metres, so on some nights you might hear the work we are doing. We will try to limit the noise as much as we can.</p> <p>The percussion bore hole rig used for ground investigation surveys involves a long, steel pipe that is hammered into hard ground to keep it open to take samples of the deep soil. The sound from this survey is only heard within a few hundred metres and the work will be for short time at each site.</p> <p>We will try to limit the noise as much as we can by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing the noisiest work as early in the night as possible • using the least noisy equipment • using white noise reversing alarms on vehicles. White noise bleeps do not have to be as loud to be heard over background noise, and people can better tell where the reversing signal is coming from, so they are also safer • using a temporary acoustic barrier which will help absorb the noise.
<p>What will you see at the survey sites?</p>	<p>The ground investigation and survey work look similar to the everyday work that you see on your roads and pavements; for example, you may see safety barriers around a small section of pavement or road in towns or cities, with a diversion around it for traffic or pedestrians.</p>

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	Many of our survey locations will not be visible from the road, but you may see our vehicles and equipment working in local fields.								
What will the sites look like afterwards?	Our contractors are required to leave every site as they found it. Landowners will be compensated for any damage arising from work, although the timing of our survey investigations and access routes will be chosen to minimise any disturbance. Sites will always be left safe and secure. We may need to clear some areas of vegetation to access the survey sites, although this will be kept to a minimum.								
What information will the surveys give?	These surveys are really important. They will give our engineers information about the existing ground conditions which will help us to design the proposed new road safely and in a way that gives good value for money. They also help our environmental experts decide how best to limit any potential impact.								
Why can't existing information be used instead?	Initially our project has relied on existing records and other geological information held by the British Geological Survey and other organisations. This information is extremely useful, but unfortunately it isn't detailed enough for us to plan the exact route for the proposed road, especially in rural areas. It is important that we have detailed and up-to-date information to help our design.								
How long will the survey and ground investigations take?	<p>We need to survey approximately 25 kilometres (15 miles) of the road. The work will be split into several phases along different parts of the proposed route for junctions 19 to 23. For the junctions where we're still considering the route, we'll be investigating the wider area to assess any environmental concerns.</p> <p>Site surveys can take a matter of hours, or days, depending on the location. Additional surveys may need to take place if something unexpected is found.</p> <p>Overall, each phase of survey is likely to take a few months to complete, including work on site, laboratory testing and reporting the results.</p>								
Who will be doing the surveys?	<p>We will be using specialist contractors to carry out the work. Our contractors include:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Costain</td> <td>Jacobs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Headland Archaeology</td> <td>Geotechnical Engineering</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flowline</td> <td>PTS International</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ground Control</td> <td>Chevron</td> </tr> </table>	Costain	Jacobs	Headland Archaeology	Geotechnical Engineering	Flowline	PTS International	Ground Control	Chevron
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	<p>However, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact us direct at:</p> <p>Email: A12chelmsfordA120wide@highwaysengland.co.uk Phone: 0300 123 5000 Post: A12 Widening, Highways England, Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW.</p>
<p>Will the survey work be safe?</p>	<p>Safety is always our highest priority. We will ensure that any site risks linked to the survey work are identified, assessed and managed. We will assess the contractors' health and safety performance and will ensure that survey sites are safe and secure at all times.</p> <p>See page 1 for information on how and why we are working safely during covid-19.</p>
<p>Will the surveys affect public rights of way?</p>	<p>None of the works in our planned survey locations will affect access to existing public rights of way. Where investigations or surveys are happening near a public right of way, we will protect the safety of the public and the site workers.</p>
<p>Is the work going to disrupt my journey?</p>	<p>To ensure the safety of the public and our workforce, we will need to close a lane or shut the road. These closures will take place overnight from 9pm-6am to minimise disruption to motorists. If the road is fully closed, signed diversion routes will be provided.</p> <p>We may also need temporary traffic lights on local side roads. These will also operate overnight to minimise disruption.</p>
<p>I live on the A12. Will access to my property be affected?</p>	<p>If your property is within a closed section of road, we will ensure you are safely escorted through work area by one of our staff. We will also ensure you have the contact details for our night time supervisor who can help you.</p>
<p>What will the sites look like afterwards?</p>	<p>Our contractors are required to leave every site as they found it. Landowners will be compensated for any damage arising from survey work, although the timing of our survey investigations and access routes will minimise any disturbance. Sites will always be left safe and secure. We may need to clear some areas of vegetation to get access to the survey sites, although this will be kept to a minimum.</p>

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<p>How will you prevent damage to the environment?</p>	<p>Many of the surveys we will be doing will help ensure that we have detailed information on the local environment that we can use in our planning.</p> <p>We will limit any effect of the surveys on the local environment by carrying out prior checks to ensure there are no ground nesting birds or other ecological concerns. The position of each survey location can be moved slightly if there are concerns.</p> <p>We will only refuel the site vehicles in suitable designated locations.</p> <p>The survey areas are small and unobtrusive, and the amount of waste is minimal. We backfill boreholes and the trial pits are refilled with the soil we take out.</p>
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