

## **M25 junction 8 improvements scheme frequently asked questions**

**Q What is the objective of this scheme?**

The objective of the scheme is to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability in and around the junction. Safety benefits are also expected around the junction and on the nearby section of M25 motorway.

**Q Does this scheme provide value for money to the taxpayer?**

Highways England follows the guidance published in the HM Treasury's Green Book to appraise its projects. The costs of implementing the scheme and the resulting benefits give a benefit to cost ratio of approximately 3:1. This ratio determines that the project provides value for money to the taxpayer.

**Q Where is the funding coming from?**

The majority of this scheme has been funded by the Department for Transport's Congestion Relief Fund, which has an allocation of £220 million to improve congestion hotspots across the Strategic Road Network.

**Q Why are you spending money on this junction when there are others that are more congested?**

We're investing over £40 million to improve the operation and performance of eight junctions around the M25 network. Most of the funding is coming from the Department for Transport's Congestion Relief Fund.

These improvements will deliver safer and more reliable journeys for our customers and manage the ever-increasing volume of traffic using the M25. The proposed improvements at this location focus on what is possible given the physical constraints at this junction.

**Q Will there be disruption to local residents?**

Whilst every effort will be made to limit the disruption caused by the works, some disruption is expected. In order to complete the works, a series of 24/7 lane closures and road closures will be required to protect the travelling public and our workforce.

**Q Are you removing the pedestrian pavement as part of this scheme?**

The existing pedestrian facilities will remain.

**Q Why are there no yellow boxes being provided?**

The yellow box markings were originally put in place because the junction layout, lane widths and signal technology struggled to cope with the increase in traffic levels and the markings were a measure to relieve congestion.

The proposed improvements to the junction and its signal control system are intended to ensure that vehicles clear the signalised area of the junction efficiently, meaning the yellow box markings will not be needed.

Yellow box markings would also obscure the proposed lane markings, which could result in vehicles straying from their lane, minimising the efficiency of the junction and potentially resulting in accidents.

**Q Why are there no dedicated cycling facilities?**

Consideration was given to improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, however, the provision of dedicated cycling facilities would require widening the bridge over the M25 and the purchase of adjacent land. The cost and time required to do this are outside of the available budget and funding window for this scheme.

**Q Will emergency services vehicles be able to still get through?**

The finished scheme will provide equally as good access for emergency services as the current road layout.

Whilst the scheme is being constructed, emergency service vehicles will still be able to use the current routes for the majority of the time. Before any road closures are implemented, we will work with the emergency services to discuss routes and access through the closures where the work allows.

**Q What about the level crossing at the bottom of Reigate Hill?**

Highways England acknowledges the amount of traffic that can build up on the southbound A217, partly as a result of the level crossing. The benefits of this scheme include creating additional capacity on the southbound A217 by introducing a new lane, which will result in a safer place for motorists to stop in the event of congestion reaching the M25 Junction 8 roundabout. However, the scope of this scheme does not extend to addressing the traffic resulting from the operation of the level crossing on the A217.

**Q Are you closing (Back Lane) Gatton Bottom during the scheme?**

For 5 weeks during the programme, there will be a full closure of the Back Lane/Gatton Bottom access from the southbound A217. This is required to realign and rebuild the carriageway and remove the current adverse camber.

**Q Are you closing the bus stop as part of this scheme?**

The bus stop on the southbound A217 will be temporarily suspended during the construction phase of the scheme. It will be reinstated in a position close to its

current location, but as an 'on-road' bus stop without a lay-by. This is intended to improve safety for buses re-joining the A217 after stopping.

**Q Are you acquiring land as part of this scheme?**

Private land will not be acquired for this scheme.

**Q Will you be closing the junction overnight?**

The junction will be closed periodically to allow for works to be carried out. These closures are necessary due to the narrow width of the existing carriageways and to ensure the safety of both the travelling public and the workforce during the works. Diversion routes will be agreed with local highway authorities and will be fully signed at the roadside.

**Q. How long will it take to construct?**

From April 2021 to July 2022

**Q. Why is construction not starting until 2021?**

Detailed design for the work at this junction has been completed. In agreement with our partners at Surrey County Council, the start of improvement work at junction 8 of the M25 at Reigate will take place April 2021. This is to minimise disruption and better coordinate with our nearby work to upgrade the M23 to a smart motorway.

**Q Why is it taking over a year to complete?**

The works have been planned to allow traffic to continue to use this very busy junction. Some lane closures and the occasional full closure of the junction will be required throughout the scheme. Without these lane closures, the working areas available would be restricted or non-existent at any one time, limiting the size of equipment which can be used. This would mean that works would take longer as we'd need to work around the existing traffic signals, street lighting and drainage while we carry out the improvements.

The works involve diverting a number of existing utility services, and also carrying out some routine renewal work. We have developed approaches to suit each area of the works in order to complete these works as quickly and efficiently as possible, which is currently expected to take over a year.

We have worked closely with Surrey County Council's Highways department to plan our works. We have also considered when contractors will be undertaking routine maintenance and asset renewals for both Highways England and Surrey County Council so that road closures can be shared in order to avoid multiple closures at the same location.

Q What improvements to journey times do you expect to see?

It is expected that a total of almost 53,000 hours of journey time savings will be made in the first year after opening.

The proposals are also expected to improve the reliability of the junction, making journey times more predictable. By reducing queuing on the M25, there are expected to be fewer accidents with resulting delays.

Q What improvement to the accident rate do you expect?

We expect to see a modest reduction in 'side-swipe' and 'nose/tail' accidents at the junction due to the increased lane width and improved visibility.

Q When do you next expect to do any maintenance on the junction?

Highways England has worked with its supply chain to ensure as much of the major maintenance work planned at the junction is undertaken as part of the junction improvement scheme. We therefore do not expect to return for any major works within the next 10 years.

We have also considered when contractors undertaking routine maintenance and asset renewals, for both Highways England and Surrey County Council, can undertake their planned works within our road closures in order to avoid multiple future closures.

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