

## **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**

### **Why has the completion date changed to summer 2024?**

We started enabling work in April of 2023 by installing a contraflow on the viaduct. This allowed us to remove road surface layers to conduct in depth inspections and investigations. Since removing the road surface, several issues were uncovered, and those issues meant we have had to revise our programme of work.

Once we were aware of the extent of the repairs and had solutions to address them, we adjusted our completion date to April 2024. We have taken the decision to revise this date again to the summer of 2024, considering remedial work required on Wentedge Bridge, so we can stand down this part of the project.

We are deferring the work on Wentedge Bridge while we work behind the scenes on a new design for the central pier and the engineering solutions required to prop the structure. This means once northbound work on Wentbridge Viaduct is complete, we can re-open this part of the A1.

We aim to return during 2026 to complete Wentedge Bridge. As this is a busy part of the A1, we may need to return before then to carry out other routine repair work as part of our day-to-day management of the network.

### **Why has there been little or no activity on the viaduct?**

Once the repairs were identified it took some time to design, check and approve the engineering solutions. When those repairs got underway, they required up close and invasive working methods, often with hand tools. This is because we need to protect the post-tensioned cables within the bridge from any damage. We did not need large plant machinery for this phase, so at times it can appear less busy. We also had several repairs which were accessed from underneath the structure.

### **Why are your workers in vehicles, shouldn't they be fixing the bridges?**

For safety and security reasons, our traffic management (the contraflow and access onto the work area) is staffed 24/7. It is the role of our traffic management contractor to monitor access into the work area, adjacent compound, and site office. Traffic management contractors do not carry out work on the roads, they are there to support safe working and ensure no unauthorised vehicles enter the work area.

### **Can you work 24/7 to complete the maintenance sooner?**

We continue to work on site using a mix of daytime and evening shifts and where resources are available, at the weekends. There may be times when there is less activity on the bridge as concrete is curing and we carry out work behind the scenes and underneath, below the deck. No activity does not mean we are not working on this project – at any one time we have a large team of engineers and contractors working to refurbish the bridge and progress the project.

### **Are both the viaduct and bridge safe? Would it be quicker to build a new one?**

Yes, they are safe and there is plenty of life left in the viaduct. Building a new viaduct is not necessary, this would be more disruptive and would not represent value for money at this time as our extensive testing shows the integrity of the viaduct is overall, in good condition. Wentedge Bridge is safe to use, and recent inspections will help inform work in the future.

### **Why is so much traffic diverted through local villages? What can you do to stop this?**

We are not diverting or signposting any traffic through local roads while the A1(M) is open, under contraflow. Drivers are making these decisions independently or are choosing to follow their Satnavs. Unless there is a restriction in place, it is perfectly legal for drivers to make those choices although we understand that this impacts on local residents.

We have placed extensive signage across all local villages, including 'no access for HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicle)' and 'local access only' signage on unsuitable roads, balancing this with signage requests from local businesses, who are still open and trading. We are doing all we can to keep drivers updated about any delays and are advising road users to expect some delays on the A1(M) or are signposting to the M18 and M62, using signage from Scotch Corner to the M25.

### **Drivers are speeding through villages – what can you do to stop this?**

We have met with residents including parish councils to see how we can support safe driving behaviour. As a result, we have safety camera vehicles operating in the area and the Police are actively enforcing speed limits, weight, and height restrictions on local routes.

### **How do I report maintenance issues on the local roads?**

The local road network is under the management of Wakefield Council or North Yorkshire Council. We continue to meet and liaise with the local authorities on a regular basis; they are fully aware of our work and the challenges for drivers and residents. We are not diverting traffic onto these local routes, except during full overnight closures and these have been minimal. If you spot any emergency repair issues, these should be reported to the council on their website or 24/7 customer service phone number.

### **What are the queuing times like on the A1(M)? How long will I be delayed?**

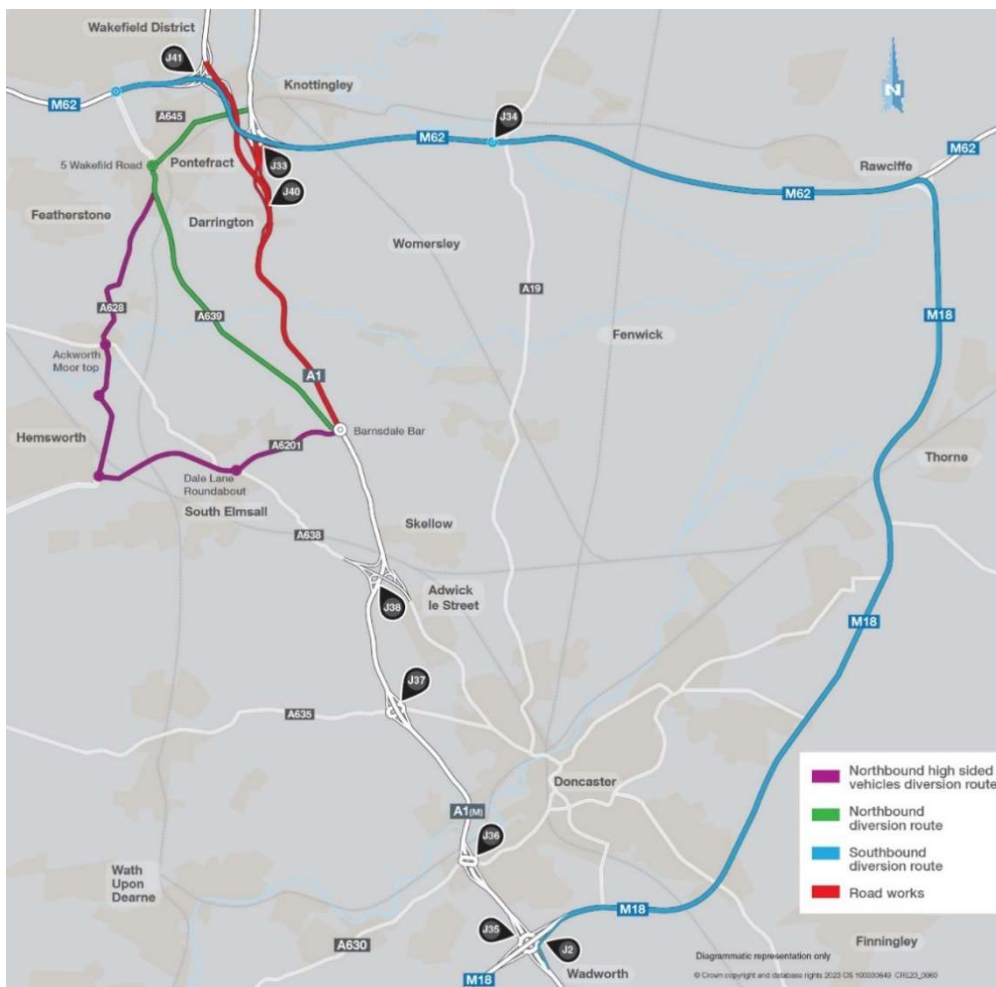
Our electronic monitoring shows that on average, queuing times are around 30 minutes at peak times before getting through the contraflow – staying on the A1(M) or using the M18/M62 as an alternative, are the best routes to follow for all traffic.

Some drivers are using Darrington Lane to come off the A1 and then rejoin, to try and get ahead of queuing traffic. This is causing congestion in Darrington. There is a lot of unnecessary traffic going around the roundabout. Could traffic lights be fitted on the southbound slip road as a deterrent? On the A1, drivers are also using the 'hard shoulder' area to get around vehicles. Can you barrier the verge to stop those using it illegally?

We are aware of these issues and have looked at several options. Trying to rejoin the A1 using the roundabout off Darrington Lane has no positive outcome – no time is saved by taking this route during peak times. While this behaviour may add to the congestion, choosing to take this route is perfectly legal and there are no powers to enforce any restrictions. We will continue to sign the correct route through the contraflow and share information with drivers to help plan journeys.

There is no hard shoulder in this area as there is not enough room, instead the road surface has a restricted area as shown by the raised white lining near the verge. Using this area to jump traffic is an offence – we cannot barrier or cone this area as emergency vehicles still need access, as they would a hard shoulder. However, as a result of driver behaviour, we have installed a safety camera in this location. The Police are aware of the issue and are enforcing the restriction.

### Where are you diverting traffic when the A1 is closed?



Drivers are advised to stay on the motorway network where possible using the M62 and M18 for both northbound and southbound journeys.

- Northbound diversion - traffic on A1 up to Wadworth (junction 35) - leave junction 35 onto M18 and M62 to Ferrybridge Interchange.
- Northbound high-sided vehicles, north of Wadworth (junction 35) - leave A1 at Barnsdale Bar onto A6201 and onto A628 re-joining A1 from the A645 via Ferrybridge Interchange. The Environmental Weight Restriction for HGVs on A628 Ackworth has been revoked during overnight closures of the A1. This is due to height restrictions on alternate route.
- Northbound diversion, traffic north of Wadworth (junction 35) - leave A1 at Barnsdale Bar onto A639, re-joining A1 from the A645 via Ferrybridge Interchange. There are height restrictions on this route.
- Southbound traffic use the M62 and M18

### **What have you done to keep people informed about this work?**

We began advance communications in January 2023 through the local media, councillors, and parish councils, four months ahead of our start date. We also sent updates to local MPs (Member of Parliament) and continue to do so.

We held a public information event in February in Darrington and are looking to repeat this on Saturday 10 February 2024.

We have sent written updates to over 2000 residents, at several stages of the project and communicate with distribution and logistics companies by email or newsletters, so they can plan.

The project team also continue to respond to residents' questions on an individual basis in person, by email and over the phone.

We are sharing regular updates in the press, on our website and social media channels to keep drivers, businesses and residents informed.

### **Where can I find real time updates about any delays and closures?**

Real time information about closures is available from National Highways by visiting [www.trafficengland.com](http://www.trafficengland.com) and the X (formally Twitter) account @HighwaysYorks.

We'll also be updating our Facebook page, National Highways Yorkshire - although this is not managed 24/7.

For urgent real-time assistance, our 24/7 contact centre team can also provide up-to-the minute information on 0300 123 5000.

Other enquires can be sent to our regional customer service team by email at [info@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:info@nationalhighways.co.uk)