

July 2015

**W**elcome to the first in a series of newsletters in which we will provide information and updates on the construction of the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement Scheme.

### The scheme

The scheme involves the construction of a new 4.7 mile section of the A556 that will connect the M6 Junction 19 near Tabley / Knutsford with the M56 Junction 7 near Bowdon (see plan on page 2).

There will be seven new over-bridges and one new pedestrian underpass built as part of the project.

Upon completion of the new dual carriageway, works to de-trunk the existing A556 will be undertaken to reduce the carriageway width to two lanes.

Costain is carrying out the work on our behalf



*Aerial view looking South over Bowdon roundabout to the M56 and Rostherne Mere*



## Work so far

Preliminary works started in November 2014 to set up the site offices, install boundary fencing and environmental mitigation works.

The main site compound is situated on Lymm Road in Little Bollington. This comprises of the main project office and material and plant storage facilities.

A satellite compound has been set up on the A50. There is a separate entrance and exit to this site office to minimise traffic disruption.

To date, we have:

- Installed approximately 10 miles of boundary fencing to mark out the working areas.
- Began undertaking the statutory diversions
- Carried out environmental mitigation works

## What is next?

As we move towards the summer months, construction work really starts to take off.

We have started the earthworks and drainage works programmes and we will continue to do this phase of work over the summer.

We are constructing the new bridge at Bowdon and we have started constructing the underpass on Old Hall Lane.

In July we are looking to start the new Tabley and Millington over bridges.

Modification works to the existing A556 are planned to be carried out in the coming months. To carry out this work safely there will be temporary traffic management in operation. All road closures associated with this work will remain off peak.

## Traffic management

The new A556 dual carriageway is being constructed away from the existing road and will therefore have minimum impact on current A556 traffic.

Speed restrictions are in place for the duration of the scheme on the A50, A556, Old Hall lane, Millington Hall Lane and Millington Lane. The reduced speed limits are necessary to ensure the safety of our workforce and other road users.

Throughout the project there will be local lane restrictions and road closures. Please be assured that advanced notices will be in place and diversion routes clearly signposted.

The next overnight closure of the A556 is programmed to take place at the end of August/September 2015. Further information will be published in advance of this work.

For regular traffic management updates please visit the Highways England website.

## Archaeology

A series of archaeological digs have been carried out along the course of the new road. The area around Bucklow Hill has proved to be of particular interest, where the team uncovered a Bronze Age (2400 BC-700BC) burial mound. Evidence of a number of different funeral rituals were found linked to this, including the burial of human ashes in urns and bags, and also the scattering of ashes. Twelve graves were also found, although acidic soil conditions meant that the skeletons within them had totally decomposed.

The archaeologists are studying the finds and working on a publication detailing the full results. Grave goods or other artefacts were very rare, and the team hopes to use radiocarbon dating to better understand when the area's former inhabitants were being laid to rest on Bucklow Hill.

## Environment and ecology

We are committed to minimising the environmental impact of the scheme during construction and once the road is open.

The team are working closely with a local barn owl group and the project is going to supply additional owl boxes for the area.

Work is ongoing to re-locate great crested newts. This activity ensures that the species are protected from entering the working area.

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

Green netting has been placed over the hedgerows to prevent birds nesting during the trapping period.

## Community

We have attended the various local parish council meetings to provide progress updates and to answer any questions that may arise during construction.

We have also visited two local primary schools and we look forward to working closely with them throughout the project.

The site is registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme and we comply with their Code of Considerate Practice. [www.ccscheme.org.uk](http://www.ccscheme.org.uk)

If you would like to come to site to see what we are doing, please do not hesitate to book an appointment with the Community Relations team.

## Contact us

If you have any queries relating to construction activities, please do not hesitate to contact the projects Community Relations Team

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Community Liaison Manager

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If you have any queries relating to Highways England, you should contact the information line on **0300 123 5000** or alternatively email [ha\\_info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:ha_info@highwaysengland.co.uk)

For the latest information and updates, please visit our website where you can register for email alerts regarding the scheme:

[www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a556-knutford-to-bowdon-improvement/](http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a556-knutford-to-bowdon-improvement/)

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Please quote the Highways England publications code **PR30/15**.

Highways England creative job number N150149

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