

News story: Good signs of progress for Dover traffic flow

The update came at Highways England's Stanford motorway depot, where the government owned company unveiled one of 29 new electronic signs that are being installed along the road in the coming weeks and will enable the speed limit on the road to be raised from 40mph to the national speed limit.

To allow the national speed limit to be re-instated ahead of the summer holiday period, temporary rotating signs will be installed while work continues to install the permanent electronic signs.

One of the new 29 electronic signs being installed on the A20 unveiled at Stanford depot

Highways England Regional Director Simon Jones said:

We know that restoring the national speed limit on the A20 is a priority for the many thousands of commuters, hauliers, holidaymakers and local people who depend on this vital road every day, and we are working hard to make it happen. Since we started construction in May we have already laid 7 miles of cabling and dug 25 trenches under the A20. Now it is time to install these new signs and get them working, and we are grateful to people for their patience. While this work continues, we are installing temporary rotating signs to allow the national speed limit to be re-instated ahead of the summer holiday period.

Since April 2015, traffic lights have been in place at the end of the A20 dual carriageway near Dover as part of a trial to help manage peak periods of traffic arriving at the port, with a 40mph speed limit in place for safety. The trial has been successful in reducing congestion in Dover town centre and has also had a positive effect on air quality in the town.

The lights have been used over 200 times to keep traffic flowing through Dover town centre.

Now, the arrangement is being made permanent, and new electronic signs are being installed along the A20 to enable the national speed limit to be restored along the road when the traffic lights are not being used.

In total, 29 new electronic signs are being installed, supported by 10 miles of ducting and over 7 miles of cabling have been installed to support the new signs. In addition, 3 weather stations are being added as well as 4 fog signs to enhance the information provided to drivers.

Barbara Buczek, Port of Dover Director of Corporate Development, said:

The A20 Dover approach is a crucial artery that gives British businesses, consumers and holidaymakers access to international markets, goods and destinations through one of Europe's busiest ports. "Being able to hold lorries on the A20 during peak traffic periods helped facilitate UK trade worth £119 billion last year, while keeping around 2.4 million tourist cars and coaches on the move. It also helped to keep central Dover free flowing.

Highways England's latest work will not only ensure the long term use of this national traffic asset, but will also enhance the travelling experience for millions of customers and local road users alike.

Moving from a temporary assessment to a permanent feature required additional environmental assessments to be carried out by Highways England before work could start. With construction now underway, Highways England expects the new signs to be up and running later this summer.