

Press release: New £192 million A556 set to open after weekend work

Cheshire's brand new A556 dual carriageway is set to open for the first time a week today (6 March) following a second round of weekend junction and carriageway closures to complete the project.

The M56 junctions 7 and 8, M6 junction 19 and the existing A556 will all be closed next weekend as work to open the new £192 million Knutsford to Bowdon dual carriageway nears completion.

Work during the first of the 3 scheduled weekend closures was completed successfully on Monday morning allowing Highways England to confirm next weekend's arrangements – another full 56 hour weekend closure running from 9pm next Friday night (3 March) and 5am on the following Monday morning (6 March).

Highways England project manager Paul Hampson said:

We made some excellent progress at the weekend and we won't need another full weekend closure until next week – as scheduled. Everything is looking promising for the road to open a week on Monday.

Next weekend's closure will allow the old road to be finally sealed off to through traffic and for the motorway junctions to be tied into the new dual carriageway.

Motorway users will be diverted to alternative junctions to leave or join the M6 or M56:

- drivers on the northbound M6 heading for Manchester and Manchester Airport will need to stay on the M6, join the westbound M56 at Lymm Interchange (M6 junction 20) and then join the eastbound M56 at junction 10 (Stretton)
- drivers on the westbound M56 heading away from Manchester and wanting to join the southbound M6 will also need to travel to junction 10 at Stretton – joining the eastbound M56 from there to travel back to Lymm Interchange and access the southbound M6

Local diversions which will be strictly monitored will also be in place with access to the A50, Chapel Lane and Mereside Road. A one way system, travelling southbound, will be in place at Bucklow Hill to allow access for residents and businesses located between the Bucklow Hill and Mere junctions along Chester Road. Vehicles must use Mereside Road and Chapel Lane to access Chester Road. Traffic marshalls will be at Mere and Bucklow Hill junctions to facilitate the local diversion.

Over the weekend, only the northbound exit slip at junction 19 of the M6 will remain partially open – allowing drivers to access the southbound, local authority section, of the A556 towards Northwich.

Drivers are advised to build in some extra time for the diversions and to check traffic conditions before setting out on journeys. Highways England provides live traffic information [via its website](#), local and national radio travel bulletins, electronic road signs and mobile apps.

Information is also available from Twitter via @highwaysNWEST as well as services in other regions. Providing they can do so safely, road users can also call the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000 to keep up to date with road conditions.

The new road and the motorway junctions will be closed for finishing works during the project's third and final full weekend of closures between 9pm on Friday 10 March and 5am on Monday 13 March.

Construction of the new A556 link road, between the M56 and the M6, started in November 2014 and is part of a £15 billion government investment in motorways and major A roads by 2021 which is being delivered by Highways England as part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.