A very belated Happy New Year and welcome to the first Link Road newsletter. We want this newsletter to keep you informed but would also welcome your views and comments so that we can make sure we are giving you the information you really want.

Over the months ahead we will also be building up a Frequently Asked Question section on the NCC website. If you are unsure about anything or want to know more please ask us. This will help to form the FAQ section and help to keep information informed and always correct.

This newsletter is produced by the delivery team for the project comprising Northamptonshire Highways and contractors Balfour Beatty Construction Services UK who, within the next 18 months, will build the new A45 Daventry Development Link.

We will issue these newsletters as we progress to keep residents, local business and other interested groups informed about our work and the way we will carry it out.

What we are doing now?

We have now started advance enabling works and over the last few weeks site clearance (removal of hedges and trees), setting-out the fence lines for the road and works on utilities has taken place along the route. There is a lot to do but, for now, most of the work will take place in the fields and will not affect you or the travelling public in the area.

Our priority is keeping accesses open and allowing traffic to continue as it does now wherever possible. There will however be times where we may have to temporarily close roads and divert traffic, but we will always let you know.

The A5 must be kept open at all times but, to construct in this area, we will be building a temporary route for the A5. This will take several months to complete and there will be a brief period of disruption as we transfer the traffic from the existing road to our new temporary road. Again, we will keep you informed.
The Scheme

We are sure most of you will be familiar with this already…but the A45 Daventry Development Link Road (formerly Weedon, Flore & Upper Heyford Bypass) will be a new 5.7km single carriageway. The road will start at a new roundabout on the existing A45 between the settlements of Dodford and Weedon (to the east of Globe Farm). It will then pass to the north of the villages of Weedon, Flore and Upper Heyford before re-joining the A45 at a new roundabout between Upper Heyford and the M1 motorway at junction 16.

The scheme will also include earthworks (cuttings and embankments) and the construction of eight structures including bridges for local roads, the railway, canal and river, a culvert and a farm crossing.

Consultation events were held in 2012 and as a result of these, an initial preferred route was taken to NCC’s Cabinet in January 2013. Since then, consultation has been ongoing with landowners and key national statutory bodies such as Network Rail, Canal and River Trust, Highways England and the Environment Agency. To reflect these responses the preferred route was amended twice in March and October 2014. Planning permission for the scheme was granted in June 2015.

We aim to minimise disruption for our neighbours during construction. We will do this by:

- Carrying out as much of the construction work as we can during the daytime
- Using clear diversion route signs when roads are closed
- Ensuring site vehicles only use approved routes and the impact of site operations is closely monitored
- Using techniques and machines designed to minimise vibration
- Ensuring we keep in regular contact with our neighbours throughout the project to keep them informed

For road users we will ensure their safety by:

- Operating a reduced speed limit through the road works. This makes it safer for the workforce and drivers, by giving drivers more time to react to the road conditions ahead
- Keeping road closures to a minimum and avoiding peak hours where possible

Sod cutting marks the start

Work on the A45 Daventry Development Link Road was officially started with a sod-cutting ceremony on 9th December 2015 formally launching construction work.

The road will form a new 3.5 mile long single carriageway which will improve transport links between the towns of Northampton and Daventry, and improve access between Daventry and the M1 motorway.

The Northamptonshire County Council project will also relieve communities in Flore, Weedon and Upper Heyford of through traffic as well as supporting future growth around Daventry town.

The first turf was cut by County Council Leader Cllr Jim Harker, Leader of Daventry District Council Cllr Chris Millar, and local villagers Wendy Amos and Duncan Shepherd who represented the communities set to benefit.

The project has been paid for through an innovative finance arrangement known as the Northamptonshire revolving infrastructure fund, which unites funding streams and sees local authorities, other public agencies, developers and contractors working together to put the money in place.

This approach has been possible because of the County Council funding the planning, design and implementation costs upfront.

To kick-start the scheme, Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership provided government Growth Deal money, while Daventry District Council has played a key role in unlocking money that will come from the future development the road will allow.
Work planned over the next few months -

- Site clearance, hedge and tree removal
- Protection and monitoring of sensitive ecological sites
- Survey and setting-out of fence lines
- Installation of permanent and temporary fencing
- Diversion of certain critical utilities

Archaeology

As part of the pre-commencement planning requirements, extensive archaeological investigation has taken place throughout the area where the road is to be built, and any finds carefully recorded and protected.

Last autumn the NCC archaeology team were on site and – as part of seeking to ensure that the local community derives benefit from involvement in the wider project – were assisted by members and friends of CLASP (the Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project). There have been some interesting archaeological finds as a result of the work carried out in conjunction with CLASP at Upper Heyford.

Rights of Way

For the time being all the Rights of Way inter-village footpaths and bridleways in and around the new road construction area will remain open.

At times we will have to divert these routes or restrict their use, but we will keep you up to date as we progress. The Rights of Way which interface the construction site are EU1 (Flore Hill to Dodford footpath); EU 14 / EU2 (Flore to Brockhall bridleway/footpath); EU5 (Flore High Street to Brington Road footpath); and EU7 (Flore to Harpole footpath).

For more information about the scheme you can visit the website at [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)

Please advise people that they can join this mailing list and receive regular progress updates by emailing rmiller@kierwsp.co.uk and registering their email address. They will be added to the mailing list and this information will remain confidential and will not be shared with any third parties.

If you have any questions relating to these activities please do not hesitate to contact Simon Levell at slevell@kierwsp.co.uk who will be your site-based liaison contact on day-to-day issues specifically relating to the road construction phase and its impacts.

For all general highway issues that are not specific to the Daventry Development Link Road works you should contact the Street Doctor service in Northamptonshire.

Remember, you can also report highway faults online with our Street Doctor service.

Follow us on Twitter @nnhighways for all the latest transport and highways updates and news.