

M4 Junctions 3 to 12 Smart motorway

Welcome

The Highways Agency is proposing to improve the M4 motorway between Junction 3 and Junction 12 by introducing a Smart motorway scheme, which will:

- Relieve congestion and smooth the flow of traffic
- Improve journey times and journey reliability
- Maintain safety levels for all road users; and,
- Support economic development

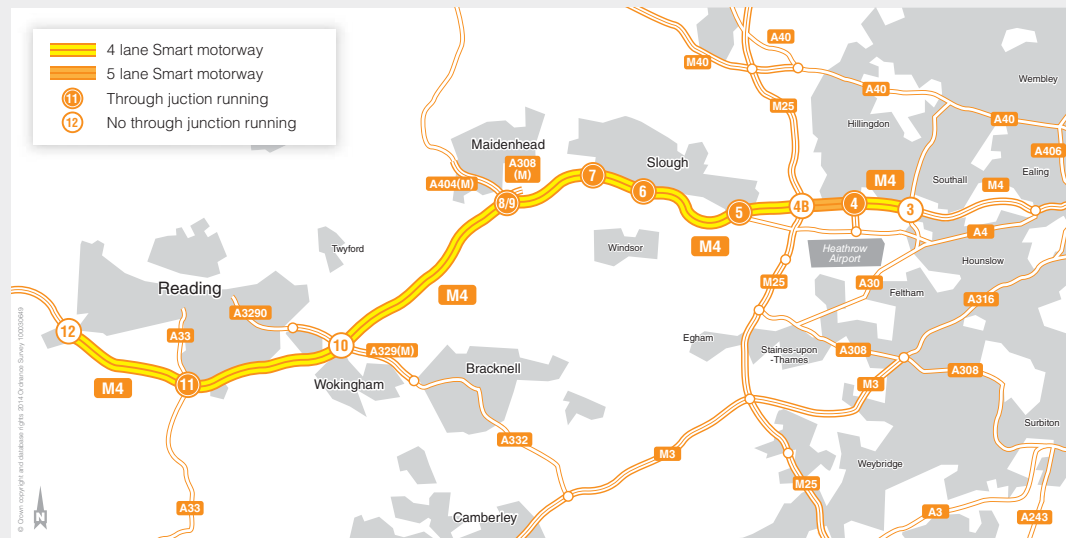


This will involve permanently converting the hard shoulder into a running lane.



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M4 Smart motorway overview

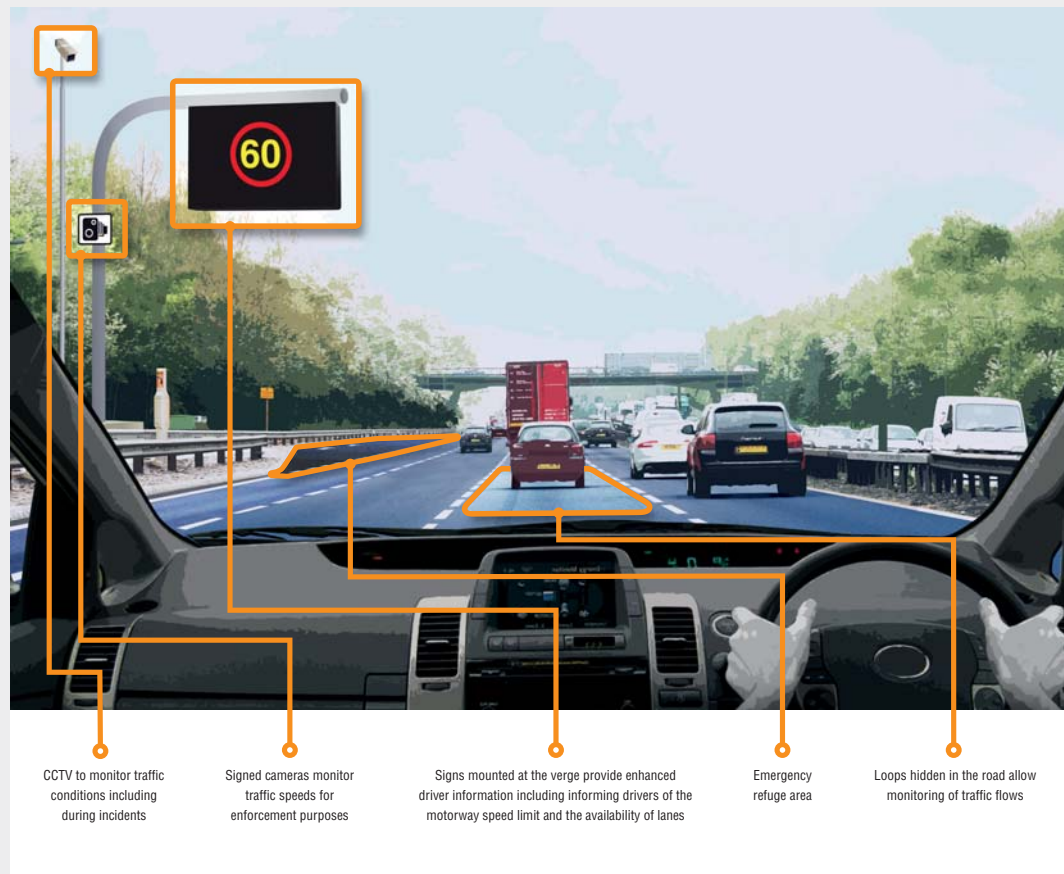


The M4 is the main strategic route between London, the West of England and Wales. It provides access directly to the M25 and Heathrow Airport.

The M4 from Junction 3 (Hayes) to Junction 12 (Theale) is approximately 32 miles long and carries an average of 130,000 vehicles per day. It currently suffers from heavy congestion and unpredictable journey times. Without improvements to the route, traffic is expected to increase significantly over the next 20 years, resulting in further congestion.



How it works



For further details on **Smart motorways** see our website
www.highways.gov.uk/smartmotorways



What do you do if you break down



1

If you cannot leave the motorway, you should try to get to an emergency refuge area. From here, contact our staff via the emergency roadside telephone provided for help and information.



2

If you cannot leave the motorway or reach an emergency refuge area, try to get your vehicle off the carriageway or onto the verge where possible.

Put on your hazard warning lights to help other drivers and our staff to see you. If you are in the verge, exit the vehicle via the left-hand door if it is safe to do so and wait behind the barrier if possible.

Dial '999' for assistance.



3

Put on your hazard warning lights to help other drivers and our staff to see you. If you are in the left hand lane, exit the vehicle via the left-hand door if it is safe to do so and wait behind the barrier if possible.

If for any reason you cannot, or believe that it would be unsafe to exit the vehicle, or there is no other place of relative safety to wait, you should remain in the vehicle with your seat belt on.

Dial '999' for assistance.



4

When a telephone call is received from a stranded driver we will verify your location via CCTV and summon suitable emergency response staff.

We will use the signs and signals to close lanes in order to protect your stranded vehicle until help arrives. We may also close lanes to allow access for emergency vehicles.

If we don't receive a telephone call, as traffic builds we will be made aware of a problem using our detection equipment and will be able to verify your location via our CCTV cameras.



Incident management

- The all-lane running design provides a controlled environment, helping to manage traffic flow
- Instructions and information for drivers will be shown on overhead signs
- Comprehensive CCTV coverage allows our control centre to verify incident details quickly
- Emergency refuge areas are provided at regular intervals
- Incidents will be managed by lane closures with signs and signals being set to provide an access route for emergency vehicles.



Detailed scheme proposals

We will use as much of the existing motorway as possible to minimise the amount of work. However, some bridges will need to be widened or rebuilt.

There are currently several places where the existing bridges restrict the width of the carriageway as shown below. It will be necessary to replace these over-bridges and widen the underbridges.



No additional land will be required along the main motorway corridor. However, some additional land will be required to enable construction or replacement of widened bridges.



Environmental assessment

Smart motorways typically have a lesser environmental impact than traditional motorway widening schemes as there is less physical work. This minimises the potential impact on watercourses, habitats, landscape etc.

Additionally, the technology used for Smart motorways allows traffic flows to be regulated; reducing congestion and therefore reducing air quality issues.

We are currently undertaking an environmental assessment including Air Quality, Cultural Heritage, Landscape, Nature Conservation, Geology & Soils, Materials and Noise and Vibration to determine the impact the scheme may have on the environment.

The results of this environmental assessment will be published and available to view on the Highways Agency website. This will include any mitigation measures needed such as speed limit reductions and noise barriers.



What happens next?

Your feedback is essential to help us complete the project with minimum disruption to the community.

Detailed Design

Work will continue on the detailed design for the scheme over the next few months. This includes completion of the environmental assessment.

Development Consent Order

The application for a development consent order is planned to be submitted in winter 2014 and is expected to take approximately 18 months to complete.

Further Public Consultation

We will liaise closely with those who have an interest in the scheme. We will hold further public exhibitions before the development consent order is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate to advise people about the design detail.

The outcomes of the environmental assessment will be presented at these exhibitions.



Contact us

Please provide comments and queries on the scheme:



By filling in a questionnaire at the exhibition



On the web:

www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/m4-junctions-3-12



By phone: Highways Agency Information Line – **0300 123 5000***



By email: M4J3to12SmartMotorways@highways.gsi.gov.uk



By post:

**Highways Agency
M4 Junctions 3 to 12 Smart Motorway
The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RN**

We would welcome your comments by the end of April 2014

We will review and consider feedback as we progress the scheme design. We will produce a report stating the outcome of the consultation exercise and how comments received have influenced the scheme proposals. This will be available to view on the scheme website. Where it is not possible to address particular comments or issues raised we will also provide reasons for this.

Our team will provide you with a questionnaire to feedback your thoughts about the scheme. If you have any queries about the scheme, please ask a member of our team.

*Calls from landlines to 0300 and 08700 numbers can cost up to 8p per minute but are free from some landline providers, mobiles usually cost more. Please check with your service provider.



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Timeline

Where we are now	Public information exhibition about preliminary proposals
Autumn 2014	Public consultation on the proposed scheme
Winter 2014	Application for Development Consent Order submitted to the Planning Inspectorate
Spring 2016	Secretary of State's decision
Summer 2016	Construction programmed – subject to value for money and deliverability
Winter 2021	Scheme completed



Thank you
for attending
our exhibition

We hope you found it informative

