



## **Briefing note for Phase 2 of Tamar Bridge resurfacing scheme**

This briefing contains the following information:

- Progress on the project so far
- Phase 2 programme
- Traffic management arrangements
- Bus services
- Keeping people informed

**Please [click here](#) to view a short film about the project**

### **Progress on the project**

The good progress made by VokerLaser during the recent period of fine weather means that the contractor remains on schedule to complete the work on both cantilevers by 29 July.

Work on resurfacing the south cantilever was completed last week and, if the fine, dry weather continues for the remainder of this week, work on the north cantilever could be completed ahead of this date. We will be able to confirm the final completion date for Phase 1 of the works later this week.

Once work has been completed on both cantilevers and the expansion joints, the focus of the scheme will move to resurfacing the three lanes on the main deck.

This final phase also includes resurfacing the toll plaza area and the bridge approaches, and completing the remaining four bridge expansion/movement joints.

The successful completion of the first phase means that the entire project remains on schedule for completion by the end of October 2021.

### **Phase 2 programme**

The resurfacing on the main deck will be carried out on one half of the deck at a time, beginning on the north side and then moving to the south side. One lane will remain available for traffic on the main deck throughout the works.

The process for the works on the main deck is exactly the same as has been carried out on the cantilevers.

This includes:

- removing the majority of the thickness of the existing surfacing material using a road planer.

- removing the remaining thin layer of surfacing either by hand using mechanical hand tools or using a large flat blade on a suitable digger/dozer machine
- blasting the steel deck with grit/shot using an enclosed mobile blasting machine to remove any remains of existing surfacing and deck waterproofing material, providing a clean deck so engineers can thoroughly inspect the steel deck and welds for cracks or damage
- carrying out repairs to damage on the deck as required
- applying paint 'primer' to the bare steel deck to protect the steel from corrosion
- applying a two-layer waterproofing system on to the primer - this provides vital corrosion protection to the steel deck
- applying a 'tack-coat' on to the waterproofing - the 'tack-coat' helps the surfacing material bond to the waterproofing material creating a composite surfacing system
- laying the surfacing material in two thin layers using a special surfacing machine that runs on rails - the rails are set up to ensure that the contractor achieves the correct material thickness while also providing a smooth running surface
- applying road markings and installing a replacement illuminated road stud system.

### **Traffic management arrangements**

Tamar Crossings staff have been working closely with VolkerLaser, Highways England and the highways teams from Cornwall and Plymouth Councils to finalise the traffic management arrangements for this final phase of the scheme to minimise traffic build up and delays as much as possible.

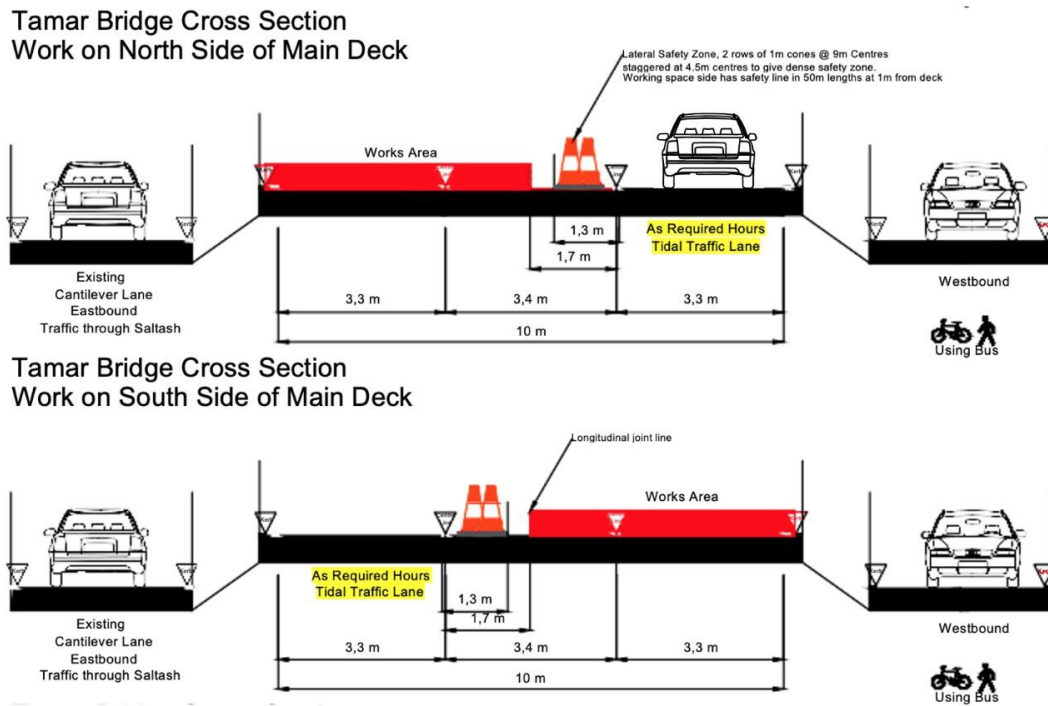
This has included reviewing the effectiveness of the current traffic management arrangements, and continuing to liaise with local stakeholders to ensure that the proposed arrangements meet their needs.

The lifting of the remaining COVID restrictions and the beginning of the peak summer holiday season at the end of July means there will be an increase in traffic using the bridge which will need to be carefully managed.

Phase 2 of the resurfacing works will see one lane on the main deck remaining available for traffic throughout the works, with traffic also using both the north and south cantilevers. This will provide three lanes at peak times which will be managed as follows:

- the north cantilever will be used for eastbound traffic from Cornwall and for local traffic, with lane 7 on the toll plaza acting as a tag only lane as normal - this should help to reduce traffic congestion in Saltash
- the south cantilever will be used for westbound traffic and so will remain closed to pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooters for the remainder of the scheme
- the single lane on the main deck will be used to help manage and balance traffic flows, with the direction changed to respond to build-up of traffic or incidents such as accidents or breakdowns on the bridge or adjoining roads.

The free bus services will remain in place to transport pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooters safely across the bridge.



The works on the main deck mean that the overhead lane control signs cannot be used by the bridge’s operational staff to change lane priorities and manage traffic flows. Instead the control room staff will be working with traffic management teams sited at either end of the bridge to implement traffic plan changes.

Directed by the bridge operations teams, the traffic management teams will use a mixture of physical signs and traffic cones to change the priority of the lane on the main deck as required.

While this reduced flexibility means it will inevitably take a little longer to change the direction of traffic in response to an incident, the control room staff will be monitoring traffic flows around the clock to ensure that action is taken to reduce congestion and delays as quickly as possible.

The bridge’s specialist vehicle recovery teams will remain on site 24 /7 to deal with vehicle breakdowns on the bridge as quickly as possible for the duration of the project. The control room staff will also continue to liaise with Highways England and the police to ensure that any incidents or accidents causing congestion on the A38 or roads adjoining the bridge are managed effectively.

The traffic management arrangements and lane restrictions on the main deck mean that drivers of ‘abnormal loads’ may be restricted from using the bridge. Full details of abnormal load restrictions are continuing to be shared with

hauliers via the 'ESDAL2' system and our website which provides details of a suggested diversion route for wide vehicles.

Abnormal Load Advanced warning signs remain in place at key locations on the A38 and the local traffic network, as well as on the main motorway junctions.

We recognise the impact of these essential works on both people using the bridge and those living and working in the surrounding communities, and are very grateful for their patience. We will continue to work with our contractor to ensure that the scheme is completed as quickly and safely as possible.

### **Bus services**

The use of the south cantilever for westbound traffic during this phase of the project means that we are continuing to provide the free shuttle bus services to enable pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooters to cross the bridge quickly and safely for the duration of the resurfacing project.

During the first phase of the project we have worked with the resurfacing team and our partners Plymouth City Bus and Roselyn of Cornwall to constantly review service schedules and routes to ensure that we were achieving the right balance between customer convenience, carbon efficiency and Covid safety.

As a result of this work, the 'on-demand' mini bus service now operates between 06.30 in the morning to 6.30 in the evening and we have reduced night time bus timetables to avoid empty vehicles running at night.

However it is vital that the shuttle bus services are available when people want and need to use them to cross the bridge.

We will be continuing to review demand as Covid restrictions are lifted to ensure that both the mini-bus and bus services cater for individual customer needs to help them avoid using their cars.

### **Keeping people informed**

Regular updates on the project will continue to be posted on the Tamar Crossings website and social media channels, and provided to partners and stakeholders, including motoring organisations and the local media.

This includes details of any traffic congestion or delays which are also being displayed on electronic messaging signs along the A38 at Manadon Junction and Trerulefoot Roundabout.

We are very aware of the importance of the Tamar Bridge as a vital transport link between Cornwall and Devon. This is a major once in 20-25 year scheme which is essential for the safety of bridge users and in ensuring the ongoing service life of the structure.

Our staff are committed to working with contractors and partners to deliver this final phase of the resurfacing project as safely as possible with as little disruption to bridge users as possible.