

## **East Leeds Link Road – Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***Q. Why has it taken so long to start work on East Leeds Link Road?***

The East Leeds Link Road was fully approved by the Department for Transport in December 2000 with a part contribution towards the total cost of the scheme. The remaining funding was required from Leeds City Council and the adjoining landowners who wished to develop their sites. The scheme has been delayed due to protracted negotiations between the City Council, Highways Agency and the main land owners over issues around the scale of development which the City Council could accept on the sites and the traffic impacts on both the local network and adjoining M1.

The delay resulted in an increase in cost and a further bid was submitted to government for additional funds to allow the scheme to progress. Final approval to the additional funding was given in December 2005 on the basis that the government support was now capped. Work was then required to prepare documentation to allow for a tendering round for construction of the scheme. The scheme finally started at the end of October 2006; had the negotiations not been as protracted, an earlier start could have been made. The construction cannot be delayed as the budget from the government is capped and every month of delay will add to the overall scheme cost.

### ***Q. Why is work being undertaken in the South Accommodation Road area at the same time?***

The works at South Accommodation Road are part of the Leeds Inner Ring Road Stage 7 scheme, which includes a new viaduct in the South Accommodation Road area. Construction of the scheme commenced in May 2006, however the scheme has been subject to delay due to the approval processes required by the Department for Transport (DfT). Construction could not be further delayed as the budget from the government is capped; every month of delay would add to the overall scheme cost.

The scheme was approved by government in December 2000 but the City Council was asked by the DfT to prepare a business case for funding through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) process. In 2003 the DfT decided that PFI funding was not appropriate. The City Council was then asked to prepare a further justification for conventional grant funding. This was prepared and approval to funding was finally given in December 2003 on the basis of a capped budget. If funding had been approved through conventional grant in 2000, the scheme could now be complete. The City Council has worked with our private sector partner MouchelParkman and the contractor McAlpine through early contractor involvement to prepare the detailed design for the scheme in the shortest timescale possible which resulted in construction starting in May 2006 with completion expected by Autumn 2008.

### ***Q. Why has Pontefract Lane been closed between M1 Junction 45 and the water treatment works in Cross Green?***

This section of Pontefract Lane has been closed since the end of October 2006 to allow for the construction of the East Leeds Link Road. This is necessary because of the level differences between the new East Leeds Link road and the existing Pontefract Lane, and as such it will not be possible to construct the scheme within current land ownership and budget constraints without this closure. The consequence of this is a displacement of traffic from the Pontefract Lane route onto other routes in east Leeds.

***Q. Is anything being done to minimise the disruption to travellers during the construction period of the East Leeds Link Road?***

The City Council has set up a web site giving information about the East Leeds Link and options to assist with travel. The site can be found at [www.leeds.gov.uk/ellr](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/ellr). There are links to public transport information and other initiatives such as car sharing. If people can be encouraged to use sustainable modes of travel it will help to reduce congestion levels. Almost 1,700 additional seats were introduced on peak-time train services into and out of Leeds in December 2006, benefiting passengers on the MetroTrain network and beyond. Further details can be found on the Metro website at [www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com).

Officers from the City Council and Metro are also working with businesses in Leeds to assist them with travel planning. Businesses in the Aire Valley Leeds area, which includes Cross Green, are eligible for travel grant funding. For further information on what is available please contact Alice Sheldon on 0113 2517429 ([alice.sheldon@wypte.gov.uk](mailto:alice.sheldon@wypte.gov.uk)).