

Frequently Asked Questions & Points (FaQPs)

A592 Kirkstone Pass (Patterdale to Troutbeck)

1. Why are the works being done?

In November 2016, the Secretary of State for Transport announced a £3 billion roads investment package which included provision for the innovative Safer Roads Fund. This fund was designed to target upgrading 50 of England's most dangerous local A class roads. The fund is specifically targeted at delivering road upgrades and improvements with the aim of reducing the number and severity of fatal and serious injury collisions.

The A592 route in Cumbria between Penrith and Windermere was selected as one of the 50 highest risk routes. Analysis concluded that an estimated 26 fatal and serious collision injuries could be avoided or saved over a 20-year assessment period if investment were to be made in the road. As a result of the Safer Roads Fund being made available to adopt a much more proactive approach being taken, Cumbria County Council were awarded £7.4 million for the A592 route. This investment is substantial and presents a real opportunity for the county council to utilise ring fenced funding in a very specific way. The funding will enable sections of the A592 route, including Kirkstone Pass, to be targeted and for significant upgrades of the road with associated safety improvements to be delivered.

Failure to spend the funding on the A592 would be viewed by the county council as a lost opportunity and a dereliction of its duty as the Highway Authority.

2. Why are full road closures necessary?

The nature of the planned works on the section of the A592 route between Brotherswater at the north end and Hird Wood at the south end is significant and the scope includes for areas of full width reconstruction of the carriageway pavement and resurfacing large sections of the road. Major upgrades to drainage crossings of the road are planned as well as new crash barriers and repairs to retaining structures and boundary walls. Notwithstanding health and safety requirements to keep the contractor's workforce and all road users safe, these kinds of work can only be undertaken once the road is fully closed to traffic. For this reason, full road closures will be necessary at various times and at various stages during the full period when planned works are to be undertaken.

3. Why are separate full road closures necessary?

The Council has appointed an experienced and locally based contractor (Metcalf Plant Hire Limited) to deliver all the planned works on Kirkstone Pass. The works have also been planned and programmed in such a way as to be able to do them in the most efficient way possible, whilst also keeping the road open to traffic as much as possible and at key times. The planned works on this mountainous pass, the highest in the Lake District with a strategic route over it, will be challenging and more so during the winter months with snow, lower temperatures and shorter working days.

The need for full road closures to take place at various times reflects the scale, nature and complexity of the works to be undertaken. In addition, the Council has also placed constraints on the contractor so that full road closures cannot be introduced during school holidays and bank holiday periods. These periods during the year are generally better for doing works particularly during the summer months but they are also the busiest times of the year for tourism and travel. The Council's planned approach is therefore a compromise to ensure the works can be delivered, albeit in a longer timescale. The approach also reflects the importance attached to the A592 Kirkstone Pass route and the need to keep it open to all users as much as possible.

Separate road closures will be needed at various stages during the period when works will be undertaken. The first full road closure will take place starting in early March 2023 for a 4-week

period. Thereafter, full road closures are planned to take place in June, October and then finally in March 2024. There will also be separate overnight road closures planned for July, November, December 2023 and January 2024.

The need for separate road closures is necessary to enable the different work activities to be done in the most efficient way possible whilst also working within the constraints imposed for when works may be undertaken. The approach also makes best use of longer working days during the warmer months when temperatures are higher and better productivity can be achieved. If the works were planned and undertaken in one full road closure, it would be for a much longer period of time than the individual road closures being planned.

4. How long will it take to do all the works?

The full programme of work for Kirkstone Pass between Brotherswater at the north end and Hird Wood at the south end is programmed to commence on 13 February 2023 and is due to be completed by the end of March 2024. This overall timescale will be subject to weather conditions particularly during the winter months when adverse weather could easily affect the progress made and prevent works being undertaken.

During the works period, there will be several key stages when different temporary traffic management arrangements will be introduced on the A592 route for varying periods of time. **These will range from temporary traffic signals during the daytime only with the road kept open**, overnight road closures between 9.00pm and 7.00am when the road will be closed overnight only and then separate full road closures when the road will be fully closed and not available to the general public. Each of the key stages will be for different periods of time and these may need to change if it means there are safety related issues that prevent the road from being re-opened at certain times. Equally, if good progress can be made, it should be possible for the contractor to reduce the periods of time when temporary traffic restrictions will be in place.

Changes to the programme will be kept to a minimum although other factors such as weather conditions and the scope of works to be undertaken could easily dictate that changes will have to be made. Where changes to the programme do become necessary, the Council will look to communicate any changes using a wide range of different channels including information signage on the route.

5. Why are the works going to take so long? Over 12 months is too long.

The overall timescale needed to complete the programme of works reflects the scope and complexity of works being planned which are very significant and include for major works to be undertaken. This includes for areas of full width reconstruction of the carriageway pavement, resurfacing, new drainage crossings of the road, the introduction of new crash barriers, works to retaining wall structures, boundary wall repairs and a range of other associated works. The scope of works also reflects a low level of highway maintenance undertaken in previous years simply because of the challenging nature of working on the route and the need to keep it open as much as possible.

The overall timescale then also reflects the nature of working on a high mountainous pass which is very susceptible to adverse weather conditions as well as constraints imposed to ensure the road is kept open during key periods. If the weather allows and good progress can be made, it should be possible for temporary traffic management measures and full or overnight road closures to be reduced to ensure the road is kept open as much as possible and for longer periods.

6. Why can't the contractor work harder and longer hours so it can all be done more quickly and in a shorter timescale?

The contractor will be expected to work in such a way as to ensure good progress can be made at all times and the works are undertaken in the shortest possible timescale consistent with the operations being undertaken. The hours of working will also be dictated to some

extent by the type of works being undertaken and when weather conditions will allow. For example, concreting works or the laying of bituminous road surfaces cannot be undertaken when temperatures are very low.

During the spring and summer months, the working hours will be extended to take advantage of the better weather and longer daylight hours. Overnight working will also be undertaken during certain stages to help ensure the road is kept open as much as possible.

7. How will the works affect my journey?

Due to the nature of the works and the various stages when different temporary traffic management arrangements will be in place, full road closures will prevent any use of the road by the general public. During these periods, each one lasting for up to 4 weeks, there will be a signed diversion route in place making use of the A5091, A66 and A591 routes (including the A593 and U5542 in Ambleside town centre). Road users will be urged to plan their journeys and to allow extra time for travel. Further details of the diversion route, updated details and advice are all provided on the Council's website at the following link:

[Safer roads - A592 | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

During periods when an overnight road closure will be in place, the road will only be closed to the general public between 9.00 pm and 7.00am. During the daytime, the road will be open to traffic except there may be temporary traffic management in place in the form of temporary traffic signals. If and when this is the case, road users are urged to plan their journeys and to allow extra time for travel.

When temporary traffic management arrangements include for the use of daytime traffic signals only, the road will be kept open to traffic. Again, road users are urged to plan their journeys and to allow extra time for travel.

8. If the road is closed, how can I complete my journey?

Diversion routes will be clearly marked by signage on the highway itself, as well as in advance on the Council's website and through social media. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the highway network in this location, the diversion routes will at times be very long when full road closures are in place. Drivers are therefore asked to allow extra time and to plan their journeys accordingly.

Also, see item 7 above.

9. Why can't you do the works overnight to minimise disruption?

There will be significant periods during the works programme when night-time working will be used. This will happen particularly during the warmer months of the year and outside of the peak tourist season. The approach will help reduce and minimise the level of disruption and inconvenience to the travelling public. For reasons linked to the high altitude of the Kirkstone Pass and the limitations of only working at certain times of the year, it would be possible to make more use of overnight closures except it starts to be counterproductive, inefficient and uneconomic to do so. The Council's overarching approach is therefore viewed as the best compromise.

10. Why can't you do the works in winter, when the roads are quieter and there are fewer tourists?

Unfortunately, the climatic conditions on Kirkstone Pass, the highest mountainous pass in the Lake District with a strategic route over it, does prevent much of the planned work being done during the winter months. The location can be very challenging and the route can also be closed on a frequent basis due to snow conditions irrespective of any planned works to be undertaken. The works programme does include for winter working but it has to be recognised

there are higher risks and the progress made will be heavily dependent on favorable weather conditions allowing progress to be made.

11. Why can't the work be done under temporary traffic lights?

The nature of the works to be undertaken are such that the road width is insufficient to allow the use of temporary traffic signals. The size and width of contractor's plant and equipment nowadays is also an issue and prevents two-way traffic being maintained. Health and Safety restrictions also require safety zones of a certain width to be provided so that the safety of both the workforce and road users can be maintained. In addition, there are considerable limitations within the Lake District to widen roads even on a temporary basis to allow the road to be kept open using traffic signals. This would not be allowed either on what is a very steep route with long sections of drystone walls.

Notwithstanding the above, there will be periods within the overall works programme when daytime traffic signals only will be used and the road will be kept open to traffic as much as possible. This needs to coincide with specific works operations such as crash barrier works that will enable the contractor to work safely and ensure the safety of the public can also be maintained.

12. Why can't the works be done at some other time?

The Council recognises that it would be possible to do the planned works at some other time or in a future year. However, the funding opportunity provided by the Department for Transport is time limited and therefore the council are keen to secure and fully utilise the funding made available for Cumbria to deliver a major investment in the local highway infrastructure. If not, some other area of the country might easily benefit from the funding which would also be viewed as a lost opportunity.

It is also relevant that any works on the Kirkstone Pass are a key challenge for the Council's local highways teams owing to its location, the geography and the susceptibility of the route to adverse winter conditions. The route has therefore not received significant levels of maintenance for far too many years now. The funding opportunity therefore presents a real opportunity for the Council to deliver a major upgrade of the route and to introduce some major improvements including for road safety. This will help safeguard the future of the road, provide an improved standard of the route, an improved condition of the road, a safer road and improved resilience to weather conditions will help avoid future unplanned road closures.

13. Why haven't we been given more notice of when these works will be done?

In recognition of the importance attached to the A592 route and the significance of these planned works, and the disruption they will create, the Council firmly believes there has been sufficient planning and notice given in advance of the works start date.

There has also been significant communication with local communities, businesses and other organisations who are likely to be affected. The Council has created a dedicated website for the public to access and updates will also be issued on social media and other news outlets from time to time as the works progress. The council is also planning further communications with local communities and businesses in January and will also be erecting information signage on the route for the different approach roads. Drop-in events have also been arranged with staff in attendance to provide more details and to answer questions. These have been scheduled for:

- Tuesday 24 January 2023 at 2:00pm until 7:00pm in Glenridding Village Hall
- Thursday 26 January 2023 at 2:00pm until 7:00pm in the Millenium Room, Marchesi Centre, Windermere

14. I didn't know about these works and it will be hugely inconvenient.

The council has undertaken a significant amount of communications related work (see item 13 above).

It is acknowledged the works will be hugely inconvenient for local communities, businesses and the travelling public generally. However, the works will be time limited, they will provide a major upgrade of the route and they will also improve road safety generally. The opportunity to deliver a significant investment in the road, albeit affecting the use of the road for over a 12- month period, will be viewed as a short-term inconvenience that will benefit all road users for many years in the future.

15. It will take me ages and cost a fortune to travel the diversion route when the road is closed.

Unfortunately, the location of the planned works and the geography of the area is such that the diversion route for traffic has to be long using other A class roads in the area. This is unavoidable.

It is acknowledged there will be additional costs incurred by road users during times when full road closures will be in place. Again, and regrettably, this is unavoidable for the periods of time when the road closures will be in place and is no different to when the road is impassable owing to adverse weather conditions.

16. I need regular access to my fields during the day to tend to livestock. How can I do this?

The contractor will work with local farmers to accommodate their access needs as much as possible, whilst also ensuring the safety of the workforce, the public and the wellbeing of the livestock are maintained. The Council will communicate with all identified land and property owners in the area who are likely to be directly affected in advance. This will help ensure any issues likely to arise are minimised. However, if there are any particular access needs, please contact us at A592@cumbria.gov.uk and we will look to make reasonable arrangements as best as we can.

17. I am a farmer and will need to take livestock to and from sales. How can I do this?

The contractor will work with local farmers to accommodate their needs as much as possible, whilst also ensuring the safety of the workforce, public and livestock are maintained. Also see item 16 above.

18. I have a business on the A592. How will my customers access my business?

Your customers will be directed around the diversion routes during times when a full road closure is in place. The Council will keep residents and businesses as up to date as possible, allowing you time to let your customers know in advance. The Council's website will be managed and updated on a regular basis to provide the very latest details of temporary traffic management arrangements. See link below.

[Safer roads - A592 | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

19. These works will put me out of business. I want compensation.

Unfortunately, the Council is not able to offer any form of compensation for businesses or any others directly affected by the planned highway works. There is no legal mechanism or any powers available to the Council to do so and it would therefore be ultra vires for the Council to make any form of payment. Legal mechanisms which are available in the Highways Act and other legislation protect the rights of all users of the highway. However, those same mechanisms also make provision for temporary road closures to facilitate the delivery of essential works.

20. The temporary traffic management arrangements are too complicated. I won't know whether the road will be open or closed.

It is acknowledged the planned programme of works are less than straightforward and will be undertaken with different forms of temporary traffic management arrangements in place at different times. The need for different arrangements is all designed to ensure the planned works can be completed in an efficient manner but also to help ensure the road can be kept open to traffic as much as possible.

The Council is aware the different temporary traffic management arrangements may create scope for confusion at different times. This reinforces the need for good communications in advance and information signing located on the route in advance to give warning of the arrangements in place on a particular day.

Road users will also have a responsibility themselves to check the Council's website for the latest details of traffic management in place before setting off on a particular journey and this may need to be done on a daily basis at certain times. Notwithstanding this, adverse weather conditions will also dictate certain times when the road over Kirkstone Pass is closed and this reinforces the need to check for the latest travel information before setting off.

21. My child takes the school bus. How will they get to school?

Unfortunately, school buses and all other forms of public transport will be affected by the temporary traffic management arrangements in place at different times. This will mean school transport and other forms of public transport will need to use the signed diversion routes when full road closures are in place.

At other times, when the road is open, albeit with temporary traffic management arrangements in place using traffic signals, the school bus and public transport will be able to use the A592 route as normal.

The Council will communicate with schools, education providers and public transport operators likely to be affected in advance so they can make their own temporary arrangements. The Council will also endeavor to do this as far as possible in advance to help minimise any inconvenience and to enable others to plan accordingly.

22. I drive my child to school. How can I make sure they get there safely?

See item 21 above for details of the temporary arrangements in place.

23. Will emergency vehicles still be able to get through?

During the works, we have had to reassess our earlier decision that emergency vehicles could access Kirkstone Pass, during the road closures. As a result of the narrow roads and plant machinery required to perform the tasks and also the excavation work that is taking place, we are unable to maintain access to Kirkstone pass for emergency vehicles during the road closure periods. The emergency services have had prior warning of the works and closures so can plan their response to an incident accordingly.

It is our priority to ensure the health and safety of our staff and the public, and we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

24. Will public transport (buses) be able to get through?

Regrettably, there will be no access for public transport buses during the times when full road closures will be in place. Also see item 21 above.

25. Will there be access for pedestrians and cyclists?

During the works, we have had to reassess our earlier decision that cyclists and pedestrians could access Kirkstone Pass during the works and road closures. As a result of the narrow roads and plant machinery required to perform the tasks, cyclists and pedestrians are not

permitted access to Kirkstone Pass during the road closure periods. It is our priority to ensure the health and safety of our staff and the public, and we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

26. Who will be doing the work?

Westmorland & Furness Council's Design & Build contractor for the Kirkstone Pass works is Metcalfe Plant Hire Limited. A representative of Metcalfe will be available on site at all times as the works are taking place, to advise and update on the ongoing works activities including access arrangements. Metcalfe Plant Hire will provide all temporary traffic management measures – their staff will be available on site to answer any queries, particularly regarding access arrangements.

27. How much are all these works costing?

In 2018, the council was awarded funding of £7.4 million from the Department for Transport as part of a national programme to improve the safety of key local A class roads in England including the A592 from Windermere to the A66 near Rheged. For the A592 Kirkstone Pass works the Council is working within this time limited funding envelope to deliver as much work as possible.

28. Who can I contact for further information?

In the first instance, please try and speak to the contractor or a member of the workforce on site who should be able to answer your question particularly if it relates to any specific needs. Otherwise check the A592 Safer Roads Cumbria website ([Safer roads - A592 | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)) which will be kept updated with FAQs and updates of the progress being made.

There is also the Westmorland & Furness Council Facebook page.

Alternatively, if you have any queries or you require additional information, please contact us via email (A592@cumbria.gov.uk) and a member of the project team will get back to you as soon as possible.

Road Closure Dates:

Dates	Duration	Temporary Traffic Management Arrangements (inc. planned works)
06/03/23 onwards	4 weeks	Full Road Closure No. 1 (new drainage crossings and associated works, carriageway resurfacing works, boundary wall repairs etc)
05/06/23 onwards	4 weeks	Full Road Closure No. 2 (safety barrier works etc)
02/10/23 onwards	3 weeks	Full Road Closure No. 3 (carriageway reconstructions and patching)
01/03/24 onwards	3 weeks	Full Road Closure No. 4 (carriageway surfacing and reinstatement works)