

Dear Simon Thwaites,

Thank you for the letter to Scott Crudginton, Chief Executive, dated 14 May 2024 concerning the closure of B651 – Sandridge Village.

The roadworks highlighted are a collaborative effort for multiple utilities including Affinity Water, UK Power Network, BT & Virgin Media to lower their existing highway assets in line with the current carriageway along Sandridge Road. Unfortunately, the existing footpath along this location runs considerably higher than the existing carriageway and will be brought down in line with the existing carriageway to facilitate the installation of a new vehicle crossover entrance for the development opposite Reynolds Crescent.

To enable the vehicle crossover works and install new connections for the developed properties several utility companies need to lower their assets and meet required depths so that they do not become damaged or pose safety risks to the public. Unfortunately, due to the machinery required and the location of works in the carriageway does not allow a suitably safe width to be maintained for vehicles and therefore a road closure is required.

We fully appreciate that closing this section of road for such an extended period of time will be disruptive however the collaborative effort for all utilities to work together and work consecutively reduces the overall duration of works. Agreement of works and duration was based on the collaborative efforts of all utilities following several site meetings and discussions.

Following concerns raised by local councillors, further meetings and discussions with the appointed contractors and utilities took place and a revised programme of works has been agreed which should alleviate some of the concerns raised regarding Sandridge Road. Please see below the newly proposed programme of delivery:

Phase 1 - 22nd July – 5th August: A set of temporary 3-Way lights will be erected at the junction with Reynolds Crescent to facilitate the excavation of the footpath, verge, and bank. These works will expose the existing utility services. During this window and working with the developers' contractor, UK Power Network, Openreach and Virgin Media will carry out the lowering works of their assets in line with the new footpath level.

Phase 2 - 6th August – 26th August: Full Road Closure and diversion route will be installed on the 6th August. The first 2 weeks will consist of Affinity Water excavating the carriageway to enable the diversion of the existing water supply which runs from St Albans to Wheathampstead and beyond. The connection of the new main will take place on the 20th August. However, this is subject to receiving satisfactory results from the pressure testing and chlorination of the pipework. Providing there is no issues with the results of the tests the road can be reopened from the 26th August. Once the installation and connection are completed the existing main in the footway can be safely disconnected and removed by the contractor.

Phase 3 - 26th August – 27th September: The 3-Way lights will be put back out to facilitate the development works, which will entail the creation of the new access and re-grading of the footpath on each side.

Unfortunately, as noted in the phases above there is still a requirement to close this section of highway to safely facilitate Affinity Water's works due to the depth and location of excavations needed however this is reduced to three weeks, residential access to Reynolds Crescent will be always maintained.

The diversion route that will be signed during the closure will be as follows, B653 Lower Luton Road > B652 Station Road > A1081 St Albans Road > Beech Road > B651 Sandridge Road & vice versa.

The footway along Sandridge Road will be closed for the duration of the works and pedestrians will also be on diversion as they will be unable to walk through the site and there is not a direct opposite footway on Sandridge Road available to them. Pedestrians will be directed to cross the road into St. Heliers Road and follow the footpath along the house fronts to Reynolds Crescent where they will be able to cross back over to the other side of Sandridge Road and the works zone.

Works are to be delivered during the school summer holidays when vehicle volumes are reduced. We have a duty to facilitate works on the public highway and put the safety of all road users first, it is therefore necessary to deliver the works as detailed above. We are working closely with the developer and all utilities to ensure works are delivered in the shortest duration possible and have therefore agreed extended working hours of 7am – 7pm Monday to Saturday and 9am – 4pm Sundays to expedite the works.

We hope the above provides some clarity on the situation and apologies for the inconvenience they works will cause.

Yours sincerely



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