

North Devon Link Road (NDLR) (Portmore to Borner's Bridge)

17th June 2021

Dear Resident and Businesses

Abnormal / Wide Loads Procedure NDLR A361

We last wrote to villagers of Landkey and Swimbridge adjacent to the main road concerning the 11 night-time diversions in May to allow for work on the NDLR. This went exceptionally well, and the diversion route operated efficiently thanks to the many residents who complied with our request over parking. Thank you all.

This letter is to a wider audience, incorporating all residents and businesses in the wider rural area along the diversion route. Going forward, we are required to manage Abnormal Loads that occasionally must negotiate the A361. These are predominantly large static type caravans due to the tourist nature of this area. Vehicles over 3.5m wide need to be escorted through the works area from Portmore to North Aller Roundabouts. Throughout this section we have removed temporary traffic lights in favour of narrow lanes of 3.5m for east and westbound traffic, creating a permanent and safe work zone and allowing traffic to flow.

We have been informed by Devon & Cornwall Police that there is a national Police policy prohibiting the movement of Abnormal Loads during hours of darkness for safety reasons. So, we are limited to move such loads during daylight hours. We shall avoid peak traffic hours. A procedure will be in place where our Traffic Safety Control Officer (TSCO) will deploy temporary diversion signs so that the oncoming traffic ONLY that would face the Abnormal Load whilst escorted, will be diverted along the diversion route only for the short duration of the load completing its journey through the works area.

We have no warning of the arrival of Abnormal Loads, and we are expanding communication with Hauliers and The Police Abnormal Loads Officer to build dialogue with frequent users of this route.

We will have no time to alert residents of the diversion. An increase in traffic in one direction would be experienced for up to 30 minutes until the NDLR is again fully opened. West Buckland junction would also be manned and closed temporarily during this time with signage. We shall be deploying advanced warning signage at this junction, so when this occurs it will be no surprise to local drivers.

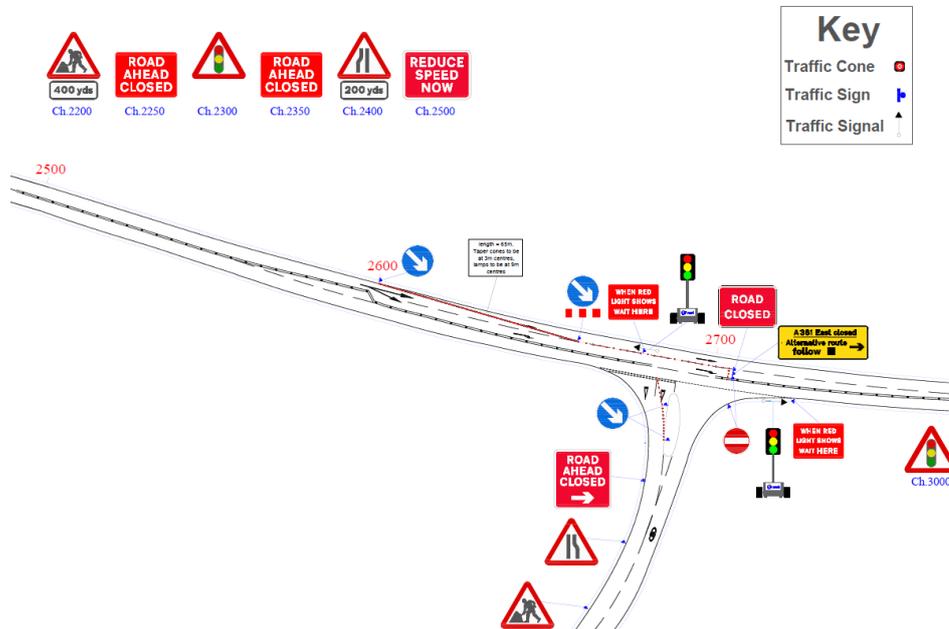
**Part time closures
may occur for
wide load operations**

**Approximate closure
time of 20 minutes**

Landkey Junction on the A361 will be affected temporarily also as two-way Temporary Traffic Lights will appear should the load be travelling westbound from North Aller Roundabout. Diagram 1 shows the Traffic Management set up for this.

In summary, and as an example, if an Abnormal Load is travelling westbound it shall be stopped in the lay bay west of North Aller Roundabout. At a time outside of peak hours the eastbound traffic will be diverted from Landkey Junction through the diversion route with temporary lights and there would be NO Right Turn out from Landkey junction, West Buckland Junction closed, and the load will commence westbound followed by westbound traffic at its tail, using the full width of the two carriageways on the A361.

Diagram 1 Landkey Temporary Lights in the event of a Westbound Abnormal Load



Current HGV's carrying such loads are capable of 40mph which is the reduced speed limit for this stretch of the works.

The Diversion route would be reversed if the Abnormal Load is travelling eastbound from the Barnstaple direction, in this case westbound traffic would be diverted at North Aller Roundabout, West Buckland Junction Closed and the load would commence eastbound followed by eastbound traffic at its tail.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you so when this occurs, and you see an increase in traffic in a certain direction you can understand why and be assured that it will be temporary. All this should not happen too frequently but there are likely to be more movements in spring and summer when there are longer daylight hours.

We and DCC Highways have considered all alternatives, such as holding traffic on the A361 for the duration of the escorting of the abnormal load, but the tail back would be excessively long, and it would be likely vehicles would take the diversion route as an alternative in any case and / or prohibit movement of locals stuck in the tail back.

Applying for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting parking on the main road through Landkey and Swimbridge was another consideration, but for the unpredictable frequency and limited duration of such loads was felt too excessive a measure and difficult to Police.

Other 'A' roads in the area are not as suitable to take Abnormal loads due to narrowness or low overhead cables, which removes another alternative.

We apologise for inconvenience caused and ask you work with us so we can make this procedure work throughout the period it takes to complete this section of work along the A361. In time we shall be working on the Landkey Junction and West Buckland Junctions, and we shall keep you updated in advance of these works.

You can get in touch via our web site community.alungriffiths.co.uk or by contacting our Public Liaison Officer Jim Aitken on 0330 041 4637* or NDLR@alungriffiths.co.uk

For all Traffic related matters call Traffic Safety Control Officer (TSOC) Tel: 07889 225393*

*Calls to this number are charged at national call rates and included in inclusive minute plans from landlines and mobiles.



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