



## **Reinforcement and Replacement of the Gas Network – Seven Hills Road**

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **What work is taking place?**

The principal activity is reinforcement of the local gas network. This involves laying a new, 3.6km gas main along Seven Hills Road. The second aspect of our work is replacement of existing metal gas mains with new, durable plastic pipe. We have combined these two activities, bringing forward our mains replacement to avoid the need to return to Seven Hills Road to carry out this work in future years.

#### **Why is this work necessary?**

We need to reinforce the local gas network as a result of increases in the demand for gas and the new main is needed to maintain future gas supplies to the local area. The replacement of existing mains is in line with a national programme of replacing metal mains with plastic pipe and is also designed to ensure a safe and reliable gas supply to homes and businesses.

#### **What will the affect be on the local road network?**

The work will mean the closure of Seven Hills Road from Monday 28 December for approximately 12 weeks. The work will begin at the junction of Byfleet Road and Seven Hills Road on that date and will progress along Seven Hills Road in sections to maintain access to properties. The road will remain open for pedestrians and cyclists and access to residents, businesses and schools will be available at all times.

#### **What is the diversion route?**

For through traffic, the alternative route southbound (travelling from Weybridge and Hersham to Byfleet and the A3) will be A317 Queens Road, A244 Hersham By-pass/Esher Road/Lammas Lane/Claremont Lane/Copsem Lane, A3, A245 Byfleet Road. Northbound traffic will be diverted along the same route in the opposite direction.

#### **Why has the closure now been reduced to 12 weeks rather than the original stated duration?**

Planning for this project has been taking place for many months and has happened in consultation with Surrey County Council. Following feedback from local residents and road users, we went back and looked at our planned work in the context of our wider work programme to see if there was a way to minimise overall disruption at Seven Hills Road. This further review of the project in conjunction with the local authority resulted in us being able to draft in extra resources and plan a different way of working so that the closure itself will now last for 12 weeks.

#### **Why does Seven Hills Road have to be closed?**

Due to the size of the pipe being laid and the plant and machinery required to move the pipe, equipment and materials, we would be unable to provide enough room for vehicles to pass. Safety is our number one priority and there is a legal requirement to provide a minimum safety zone between the edge of the working zone and any moving traffic.

### **Why can't temporary traffic lights be used to keep the road open?**

We examined the option of using temporary traffic lights but for the reasons outlined above this is not possible. Even without these considerations, the use of temporary lights would restrict our work (including the movement of materials around site) and would result in the project taking far longer to carry out.

### **Why can't the main be laid somewhere else?**

The new main needs to connect two existing points on the gas network and Seven Hills Road provides a natural route between these two points, which are at each end of the road. We have looked at the possibility of laying the main in the verge at the side of the road but this contains a large amount of other utilities' plant. Any attempt to lay the main on land adjacent to the road would involve going across private land and through residents' gardens and property, which would not be acceptable. In addition, due to the layout of the gas network and other obstacles such as railway lines and the A3, to lay the main along other public highways to connect the two points on the network would mean the project taking far longer and causing much more disruption.

### **Why haven't the public been consulted about these works?**

Planning of this project has involved close liaison with Surrey County Council. In addition, in order to keep residents informed we have carried out a letter drop and will be publishing information and updates on our website. A drop-in session has also been arranged for Friday 27 November and we have been in discussions with other individual affected organisations in the area. Prior to work beginning, advance warning signs will be erected as widely as possible in addition to diversion signs.

### **Will extended hours be worked?**

Yes - we will be working seven days a week and extended hours where safe and possible to do so. We will make every effort to complete the project and reopen Seven Hills Road as soon as we can within the 12 week timescale.

### **Why can't work take place 24 hours a day?**

Seven Hills Road and the surrounding area contain a number of homes and other properties, including a hotel. Our work will involve activities that cannot reasonably be expected to be carried at night due to their impact on local residents at this time.

### **Will the water or electricity companies be along next week, or sometime soon and dig up the road again?**

No - we have been liaising with Surrey County Council, whose responsibility it is to ensure coordination of utility works. We have been told that neither water nor electricity companies have any impending or future works they need to carry out in Seven Hills Road.