



MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT  
St. Christopher House, Southwark Street, LONDON S.E.1  
Telegrams: *Transminry, London, Telex*  
Telephone: *WATERloo 7999, ext.*

14th June, 1961.

Our reference:

Your reference:

Dear Sir,

Maidenhead Motorway

The six-mile Maidenhead Motorway, including the new bridge over the Thames at Bray, will be completed and opened to traffic towards the end of this month.

A press facility visit has been arranged for the morning of Thursday, June 22, a few days before the opening, and it is hoped that you or your representative will be able to be present. A copy of the programme is attached.

... In order that arrangements may be made for transport and lunch, would you please let me know as early as convenient if you are able to accept this invitation and whether you wish us to reserve a place for you in the coach.

Journalists using their own transport should proceed along the A.4 to the junction with the motorway at Huntercombe Manor about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Slough. Cars can be parked on the motorway just inside the barriers and drivers should join the coach for the tour.

Yours faithfully,

*R. G. S. Hoare*  
R. G. S. Hoare.

Chief Information Officer.

The News Editor.



June 21.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

St. Christopher House, Southwark Street, LONDON S.E.1

Telegrams: Transminry, London, Telex

Telephone: WATERloo 7999, ext. 2684

15th June, 1961.

Our reference:  
Your reference:

Dear Miss Field,

Maidenhead Motorway

... I am enclosing a note from Mr. Hoare inviting you to a press facility visit on the above motorway on June 22.

We are, however, arranging a television facility visit on June 21 which would start at about 11 a.m. at "The Huntercombe" and follow the route for the next day. This would give cameramen rather more time than that which will be available for the tight schedule on June 22.

Could you let me know if you wish to cover on June 21, or 22? A handout will be available in advance. I should add we would ask you to hold any material filmed on June 21 for release after mid-day on the 22nd.

Yours sincerely,

*Phyllis Faulkner*

Phyllis E. Faulkner  
Publicity Officer

Miss Grace Field,  
Pathe News,  
142, Wardour Street,  
London. W. 1.

(2 dep)

Try for little humm  
OK show bottleneck at  
N. head of motorway taking  
over.

MAIDENHEAD MOTORWAY

Programme for Press Visit to Motorway on  
Thursday, June 22, 1961.

- A.M.
- 9.30  
(Sharp) Press party leaves by coach from offices of Messrs,  
John Laing & Son, Ltd., 4 Lower Regent Street.
- 10.45 Arrive at "The Huntercombe" at the junction of  
motorway with A.4 west of Slough. Coffee and short  
briefing session.
- 11.15 Inspect flyover junction near Huntercombe Manor and  
view route of Slough By-pass which will form  
continuation of motorway.
- 11.40 Board coach and drive along motorway to New Thames  
Bridge, Bray. Leave coach to observe bridge from  
tow-path or other convenient viewpoint.
- P.M.
- 12.15 Arrive Windsor Road junction and make detour via slip  
road to study structure of the junction.
- 12.25 Halt at Kimber's Lane footbridge and alight to look  
at footbridge.
- 12.35 Pause at Shoppenhanger Bridge.
- 12.40 Arrive at Maidenhead Thicket, present end of motorway,  
and turn back.
- 1.0 Arrive Monkey Island Hotel. Buffet luncheon at  
invitation of contractors, Messrs. Higgs & Hill, Messrs.  
Horseley Bridge & Thomas Piggott, Ltd., and Messrs. John  
Laing & Son Ltd.
- 2.15  
(approx.) Coach leaves for London.

Ministry of Transport,  
St. Christopher House,  
Southwark Street,  
London. S.E. 1.

June, 1961.

Ministry of  
**TRANSPORT**

*Not for release before 2.30pm*



*on  
June 22*

**WATERLOO 7999 (ASK FOR PRESS OFFICE)**

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22nd June, 1961.

**MAIDENHEAD MOTORWAY COMPLETED**

**First Link in London-South Wales Motorway**

Early on Monday, June 26, traffic will begin to flow along the six-mile Maidenhead Motorway with its new and graceful 350ft. bridge across the Thames.

For motorists the completion of this £2,750,000 Ministry of Transport scheme means the end of the mile-long queues which have been a common feature of this ancient riverside town on summer week-ends for many years.

For Maidenhead itself it means that much of the traffic on the London-Bristol Trunk Road which has choked the narrow shopping streets will be diverted south of the town.

This, however, is merely the initial purpose. Eventually the By-pass will be a link in the London-South Wales Motorway via the Severn Bridge. Already work has begun on the next stage, the 5½-mile Slough By-pass, and by 1964 it is planned to complete 24 miles of motorway from Chiswick Flyover to Maidenhead Thicket. At the other end, preliminary work on the Severn Bridge is in progress.

Maidenhead Motorway is connected with the A.4 by a short length of motorway known as the Huntercombe Spur. This spur road leaves A.4 about 2½ miles west of Slough and runs due south to the flyover junction with Slough By-pass.

From this point the main motorway runs westwards for about two miles to cross the Thames just below Bray. It then curves around the southern outskirts of Maidenhead to rejoin the A.4

near the wooded uplands of Maidenhead Thicket, a famous beauty spot, once part of Windsor Forest.

Dual 24ft. carriageways are provided throughout, separated by a 13ft. grass verge and flanked by hard shoulders where vehicles can stop in emergencies. The hard shoulders vary from nine to 10ft. in width but are omitted on the Thames bridge. The carriageways are of flexible construction surfaced with asphalt.

#### Buckinghamshire Section

About two miles of the motorway lies in Bucks. The greater part of this section is built on embankment over low-lying ground and a high quality granular filling was used, obtained from two pits opened for the purpose near Taplow Railway Station.

There are three major bridges on this section, carrying the Huntercombe Spur, the Huntercombe Lane diversion and the Marsh Lane diversion over the motorway. All these bridges are of four simply-supported spans varying between 32ft. and 52ft. The pre-stressed deck beams are supported on rubber bearing blocks to allow for movement due to variations in temperature. Piers and abutment capping beams are cast with Cornish granite aggregate and white cement treated to expose the aggregate. The face of the cantilever coping has been treated in a similar manner.

There is a footbridge over Huntercombe Spur with a triple ramp structure on each side about 50ft. long and approach ramps from 70ft. to 90ft. long. As in the road overbridges Cornish granite aggregate and white cement were used in the piers and cantilevers.

The contractors for the works were Messrs. Higgs & Hill Ltd. and the contract was carried out under the supervision of the Bucks County Council (County Surveyor: Mr. E. H. Frankland) as agent authority for the Ministry of Transport. The bridge designs were produced by the Bridges Section staff of the County Council in collaboration with Messrs. Maxwell Ayrton & Courtenay Theobald, Consulting Architects.

### New Thames Bridge

The new Thames bridge - the first permanent bridge to be built across the river since the war - has a graceful main span of 270ft. and two side spans, each of 38ft. The foundations and abutments were substantially completed in 1940, after which work was suspended. When the scheme was revived a few years ago, the bridge was redesigned as a fully welded structure with a composite concrete deck. Work at site recommenced in January 1960.

About 700 tons of steelwork have gone into the construction of the bridge. The superstructure consists of eight high tensile steel girders interconnected by welded mild steel cross frames. In assembling the parts extensive use has been made of modern prefabrication methods. Each of the eight high tensile steel girders was fabricated at Tipton, Staffordshire, in 11 sections. The main sections were cantilevered out from each side of the river and the closing sections dropped into position and welded.

A novel feature of this motorway bridge is that in addition to the dual carriageways it carries two 6ft. wide cycle tracks and two footpaths each 5ft. 6ins. wide. The cycle tracks are separated from the carriageway by 6ft. wide verges with unclimbable fencing and guard rails. Substantial steel parapets are provided on each side. The overall width of the bridge deck is 100ft.

The consulting engineers were Messrs. Freeman, Fox & Partners, and the bridge was built by Messrs. Horseley Bridge & Thomas Piggott, Ltd.

### Berkshire Section

From Maidenhead Bridge to the end of the motorway at Maidenhead Thicket the distance is about four miles. In addition the scheme has involved a short diversion of the Maidenhead-

Henley Trunk Road at the western end and the re-aligning and regrading of over five miles of side-roads. There is good visibility throughout - the minimum longitudinal visibility is 750ft. - and the maximum gradient is about 1 in 43.

Two flyover junctions have been built on the Berkshire section, one at the junction with the Windsor Road and the other near Cox Green at Shoppenhangers Road for traffic to and from Maidenhead. All other roads are carried over or under the motorway.

The needs of pedestrians and cyclists are met by a footbridge at Kimbers Lane and a subway at Cox Green. Ramps are provided to the footbridge, instead of stairs, to assist cyclists or people with prams.

All the road bridges are of concrete construction and, with the exception of the footbridge, are faced with precast exposed aggregate facing panels using Mountsorrel granite aggregate. Movements due to temperature are allowed for by a combination of flexible columns and rubber bearings at the abutments.

The road bridges were designed by Messrs. Scott and Wilson, Kirkpatrick & Partners, who also supervised their construction, with Messrs. Ansell & Bailey as consulting architects.

Where the motorway rejoins A.4 at Maidenhead Thicket a roundabout with a 240ft. diameter island has been constructed.

The motorway is carried over the main Western Region railway by a three-span girder bridge, the centre span being 73ft. 10ins. All steelwork had been erected before the war and to provide the necessary headroom of 16ft. for future electrification it was necessary to raise the bridge 16ins. This was done one Sunday morning in July 1959. Hydraulic jacks were provided at all girder bearings and the whole structure was raised in stages of approximately 2ins.

This bridge and various other structures started before the war were completed to designs prepared by the Berkshire County Council, (County Surveyor: Mr. K. P. Brow), who as Agent Authority for the Ministry of Transport also designed the roadworks.

The main contractors for the Berkshire section were Messrs. John Laing Construction Limited.

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