

Press release: Business leaders hail M49 junction construction as boost to economy

A new junction Highways England is creating on the M49 will improve road access and provide a much-needed connection into the Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Area from the motorway network.

The junction, which comprises two bridges, will also promote economic growth in this area of Bristol, and reduce the numbers of HGVs and other vehicles on the local road network.

At a groundbreaking ceremony, key regional business leaders joined Highways England, the company responsible for the country's motorways and major A roads, and local authorities to welcome the £49 million scheme, which calculations are forecasted to help create 14,000 jobs in the area.

Nick Aldworth, Highways England's South West Regional Delivery Director said:

We're delighted to be breaking ground on this strategically and economically important scheme for the South West and Bristol area.

Every £1 invested in this scheme will bring more than £30 into the local economy, generating more than 14,000 jobs in the long term.

(Left to right) Colin Bird, Highways England Programme Leader, Peter Mumford, Highways England Executive Director and Jack Lopresti MP.

Highways England is working with partners, including South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, on the scheme which involves using the existing bridge at Farm Lane with a second bridge being built immediately next to it.

Located to the south of the Western Approach Distribution Park and west of the village of Easter Compton, the two bridges will be incorporated into a single roundabout spanning the motorway with new access and exit slip roads connecting fully with both northbound and southbound traffic.

The scheme has also been welcomed by joint venture partners Robert Hitchins Ltd and Harrow Estates plc, who own the neighbouring 300-acre Westgate employment site.

Simon Tothill, Property and Development Director for Robert Hitchins, said:

We have worked closely with Highways England for the last three years to enable the opening up of this area and are delighted to

see progress being made.

This project is all about the creation of jobs and economic growth. We have absolutely no doubt that it will be a huge boost to the region, deliver significant new investment into the area and unlock the large and incredibly well-located Westgate site, which already benefits from planning permission for employment uses.

SevernNet, who represent business and residents in the Severnside area, added:

SevernNet is delighted with Highways England's commitment to construct the M49 intermediate junction for Severnside – a direct link to the strategic road network will support those businesses already established and facilitate further growth within the Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area, and also relieve congestion in and around Avonmouth.

At the ceremony, Jack Lopresti, MP for Filton and Bradley Stoke, was joined by Peter Mumford, Highways England Executive Director of Major Projects, and Highways England Regional Investment Programme Director David Haimes, together with construction partners Galliford Try, South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and West of England LEP representatives.

The new M49 junction project is the first Road Investment Strategy scheme to start construction in the South West, one of six multi-million pound road schemes aimed at boosting the economy, tourism and heritage in the region.

Another key milestone in the South West within the next six months includes next steps in the planning process for the A303 Stonehenge tunnel and dualling scheme and the A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross dualling scheme in Cornwall.

The upgrades are funded by the Government's biggest-in-a-generation £15 billion investment in motorways and main A roads, and delivered by Highways England.

Construction of the new M49 junction is due to be completed by December 2019 and local communities and business will be kept informed on progress by the Highways England project team and construction partners Galliford Try.

Duncan Elliott, Managing Director of Galliford Try's Highways business, said:

We're delighted to get cracking on a much-needed scheme that will bring far-reaching benefits. We have considerable experience of motorway work from our participation in the Smart motorways programme and will bring this to bear on the Avonmouth junction scheme. We will keep any disruption to a minimum and keep road users updated about progress.

For more information visit the [M49 Avonmouth scheme web page](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.