

[Press release: Major junction upgrade passes the halfway stage](#)

Highways England is widening some of the approaches and slip roads at the junction and adding an extra lane to sections of the roundabout, increasing it from 2 to 3 lanes as part of an £8.3 million scheme.

Once the scheme is complete it will increase capacity, reduce congestion and improve safety for the thousands of drivers who use it every day.

Since the scheme started back in February Highways England has completed work on the inside of the roundabout which will form part of the additional lane and a new combined footpath and cycleway. Work has also been undertaken getting ready to install 2 new 'superspan' gantries which will cross both carriageways on the M1.

Work will now start on the outside of the roundabout with the narrow lanes being moved on to the new section of surface from Saturday 22 July. This will also allow the new pedestrian crossings to be completed.

Highways England project manager Derek Dobinson said:

Work is progressing well at the junction which acts as a major route into Leeds city centre and is the main access for a number of major businesses. Over the next few months we will continue work on the widening of the northbound entry slip road, add an extra lane on to the southbound entry slip road so traffic can merge easily from the roundabout and start work on the A63 approach.

Most of the work will continue to be carried out during the day. However, there will be some overnight closures to put in the new gantries, which display advice for drivers and for resurfacing of the junction. These will be advertised closer to the time.

There will be overnight closures on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 July to remove the equipment which was installed on the current gantries which only span one side between 8pm and 6am.

While the scheme is ongoing there is a reduced speed limit of 50mph on the M1 and a 30mph limit on the slip roads and roundabout.

Further information about the project which is due to be completed in winter can be found on the [scheme website](#).

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.

[Press release: Major milestone for A21 upgrade as new flyover opens](#)

The work is part of a project to upgrade the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury to a new dual carriageway, speeding up journeys and boosting the economy.

Drivers using the A21 through the Longfield junction will no longer need to stop at the old Longfield roundabout as the new flyover partially opens, with one lane open in each direction. It is the latest in a series of milestones achieved by the Highways England-led project team in recent months, and follows the reopening of Tonbridge Road in April and moving traffic on to new structures near Fairthorne village in June.

The new flyover at the Longfield Road junction will remove the need for drivers continuing on the A21 to stop at the old Longfield roundabout

Highways England Project Manager Anne-Marie Palmer said:

Over the last few months we've made real progress with the construction of the new flyovers at Fairthorne and Longfield Road. Opening the new flyover at the Longfield Road junction will reduce congestion by removing the need for drivers continuing on the A21 to stop at the old Longfield roundabout. Later this summer we will be opening both lanes of the dual carriageway, which is when the benefits of this major improvement will really be noticed.

Earlier this year, Tonbridge Road reopened to traffic between the Longfield junction and Pembury hospital. The bridge at the new Fairthorne junction partially opened in June allowing construction of the new access road for residents along Pembury Walks and Half Moon Lane.

George Pargeter, Balfour Beatty Project Director for the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Project, added:

We are very pleased with the progress on the A21 given the complex nature of this project. The partial opening of the Longfield Flyover is set to transform journeys for local residents by providing a more streamlined route for drivers continuing on the

A21 and is a testament to the skills and expertise of the project team.

The Longfield flyover will fully open to traffic – providing two lanes to traffic in both directions – later this summer when the new dual carriageway opens.

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[News story: Jem Eskenazi joins UK Export Finance as Chief Technology Officer](#)

At UKEF, Jem will act as a champion for digital technologies within UKEF, responsible for innovation and adoption of new technologies as the department further develops its digital support for exports.

Jem brings significant experience of digital innovation in the international finance industry, having previously worked for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development as its Information Technology Managing Director.

Prior to this Jem has also held several Chief Information Officer posts, as well as undertaking various Non-Executive Director roles. He has experience in a number of geographic regions and industries, including financial services, mobile telecommunications, medical systems, industrial gases and pharmaceuticals.

Throughout his career, he has focused on the strategic evolution of IT functions, projects and roles, with a particular focus on improving integration with other departments.

Bhaskar Dasgupta, Chief Operating Officer at UKEF, said:

We're delighted to welcome Jem to UKEF as Chief Technology Officer,

with his extensive experience of delivering user-centred digital services. His pioneering approach to information technology teams and systems will ensure we in UKEF can continue to make exports happen by driving innovative technological solutions across the business.

Jem Eskenazi, Chief Technology Officer at UKEF, added:

UKEF provides competitive, innovative and flexible support for exports for firms of any size, in any sector. It therefore needs internal and external digital infrastructure that meets requirements as diverse and dynamic as the customers we support. I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead the organisation's next phases in IT efficiency and innovation.

News story: Minister for the Middle East statement on settlement plans in East Jerusalem

Following the recent decision of the Israeli authorities (4 and 6 July) to advance plans for 1,600 new settlement units in the illegal settlements in Pisgat Ze'ev, Ramat Shlomo and Ramot in East Jerusalem, Foreign Office minister Alistair Burt said:

I strongly condemn these plans, which are the latest example of an accelerating policy of illegal settlement expansion. I call on the Israeli authorities to reconsider plans to construct further settlement units in East Jerusalem in the coming days, including construction in Sheikh Jarrah involving the demolition of Palestinian homes and displacement of Palestinian residents.

While settlements are not the only obstacle to peace, these actions take us further away from a two-state solution and the shared vision of a safe and secure Israel living side-by-side with a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian state.

As a strong friend of Israel, we urge the Israeli government to avoid steps that reduce the prospects for peace and security and make it harder to achieve a different relationship between Israel and the Arab world.

[Press release: Public Health England buys the GSK site at Harlow](#)

PHE announced today (7 July 2017) that it has bought the vacant GSK site at Harlow where it plans to build a £400 million world-leading home for public health science.

PHE will create a centre of excellence for research, health improvement and protection and bring together world-renowned scientists working to protect and improve the health of the nation.

PHE plans to create a campus where it will re-locate staff and facilities from Porton in Wiltshire and Colindale in north London as well as its headquarters functions from central London.

Richard Gleave, PHE Deputy Chief Executive said:

Our move to Harlow will create a world-class science campus for public health, of international significance and real benefits for the local community. The decision to buy the site now has been taken after careful consideration of the advantages and represents best value to the British taxpayer. This includes reduced running costs and the ability to carry out a number of further specialist additional surveys which will save us considerable time and money and provide invaluable information for the more detailed design work planned for later in the year.

We are also responding to the local community's desire to see PHE move to Harlow as soon as possible. We hope today's announcement will be a massive boost to the town and surrounding area.

The site and assets were purchased for £25 million which independent analysis has shown represents extremely good value for PHE's particular needs and the taxpayer. This follows a significant period of close collaboration between PHE and GSK.

Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of Harlow Council, said:

As the town celebrates its 70th birthday, and we look ahead to the next 70 years, this development will play a major part in Harlow's bright future. New jobs and opportunities for local people and local businesses will be created and Harlow will be on the world map, leading the way as the place for protecting and improving lives. Securing Public Health England's relocation to Harlow is all part of the jigsaw being put in place for Harlow's future with new

jobs, new investment and improving local people's skills.

Today's announcement comes just a few weeks before PHE expects to submit a planning application to refurbish a number of the current buildings and construct new ones on the Pinnacles Estate site. The plans include new and converted laboratories and a visitor centre.

It is anticipated that the first staff will move to Harlow in 2021 with the site fully operational by 2024. At that time up to 2,750 people could be based at the Science Hub with scope for further expansion to 3,250.

Visit www.gov.uk/phe/harlow for up to date information about the Science Hub.

Contact PHE for further information:

1. [Public Health England](http://www.gov.uk/phe) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](https://twitter.com/PHE_uk) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.
2. PHE submitted an Outline Business Case to Government in July 2014. An interim decision was taken in September 2015 to move the majority of PHE functions from Porton to Harlow. In November, the government supported a further proposal to move PHE science facilities at Colindale to Harlow to create a single integrated campus.
3. PHE is now working to submit an outline planning application over summer 2017.
4. It is hoped the science campus will be fully operational by 2024 with the first construction work expected to start in 2019.