

[Press release: New A5-M1 link road in Bedfordshire hailed by business and civic leaders](#)

The A5-M1 link road has created a new northern bypass for Dunstable, taking long distance traffic away from the town centre, and opened up opportunities for thousands of new homes and jobs. It connects the existing A5 to the M1 at a newly created junction – junction 11A.

Today, Highways England invited local public figures, partners and supporters to join the project team for the A5-M1 Link scheme to celebrate the new road, which opened early and on budget in May.

Iftikhar Mir, Highways England's major projects director overseeing the A5-M1 Link project, said:

Since it opened on 11 May, the A5-M1 Link scheme has been providing a vital new east-west connection between the A5 and the M1.

Early anecdotal evidence is very encouraging. The new link road, built to modern standards, is already providing road users with better journeys, and congestion through Dunstable's high street has also begun to ease.

We would like to thank local people and road users for their patience and support over nearly two and a half years while we have worked to deliver this new road on time and on budget.

The new A5-M1 Link road opened to traffic on 11 May 2017

Town Mayor of Dunstable, Councillor Gloria Martin said:

The Town Council and residents of Dunstable are pleased that after many years of suffering heavy traffic and poor air quality, we now have a northern relief road. "Since its opening the reduction in through traffic, particularly heavy lorries, has been noticeable.

We look forward to the de-trunking of the A5, the enforcing of a heavy lorry ban, improved air quality in the High Street and continued regeneration of our town.

Tina Barnard, Hertfordshire LEP board member and chair of Strategic Infrastructure Board, said:

This short but absolutely vital link between the M1 and the A5 is

critical to help economic development and jobs growth both in Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. Not only will it reduce journey times for long-distance traffic by giving HGV drivers easier access to the M1, it will also help to relieve congestion for residents and businesses by taking pressure off local roads.

This is a prime example of where local authorities and LEPs have worked hand in hand with Highways England to identify the critical interventions needed to grow our local economy.

Houghton Regis Town Mayor, Councillor Joanna Hillyard said:

Houghton Regis has watched the progress of the A5-M1 Link with interest and many members of the town were fascinated to watch the bridge demolitions.

The difference it has made to the town since its opening has been quite remarkable. As more and more people start learning to navigate the new roads and junctions, it is hoped that the roads through the town will see even less cars and lorries, which will improve the air quality and noise. Houghton Regis has welcomed this project and has enjoyed working with Highways England and its joint venture contractor Costain-Carillion.

Stephen Catchpole, SEMLEP's Chief Executive said:

The completion of the A5-M1 link, together with the new Woodside Link road, is a major contributor to unlocking economic potential of the area. This vital road infrastructure enables new developments that will assist growth by freeing up prime employment and housing land.

Discussing the benefits of the newly opened A5-M1 link road at today's opening ceremony

The £162 million, 2.8 mile dual carriageway and new motorway junction opened shortly after 4am on 11 May 2017. The new road is also set to make journeys between the A5 and the M1 safer, faster and more reliable.

It will also make a difference to local residents by unlocking 40 hectares of land for new business development and jobs and providing the infrastructure for 7,000 homes to the north of Houghton Regis.

The new M1 junction 11A, which is another key part of the scheme, is now linking the new road and Central Bedfordshire Council's Woodside link road to the M1, providing better access to the backbone of the national road network and opening the way for new and established businesses in Central Bedfordshire to faster connections with their customers in the UK and beyond.

The new road is the first major East of England project to be delivered in the Government's £15 billion investment in the strategic road network up to 2021. Now renamed A5, the A5-M1 Link road replaces a section of the A5 through Dunstable which has been handed over to Central Bedfordshire Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

The project included the building of a completely new dualled road, three new junctions including a new motorway junction, and six new bridges. Two old bridges over the M1 also had to be demolished to make way for the new junction 11A.

For more information about the A5-M1 Link, [visit 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.

[Store First Limited – information for creditors, customers, investors and other interested parties.](#)

Court outcome

On 30 April 2019 the court made an order to wind-up four companies in the public interest by consent between those four companies and the Secretary of State. The companies wound-up in court:

- Store First Limited, company registration number 07463355
- Store First Blackburn Limited, company registration number 07951785
- Store First St Helens Limited, company registration number 09664578
- SFM Services Limited, company registration number 07160642

The trial started on 15 April 2019 at the Manchester District Registry of the High Court and was presided over by HHJ Hodge QC. The Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

The petition to wind up Store First Midlands Ltd was dismissed, also by consent between the parties following Store First Midlands Ltd transferring a storage centre it owned in Nottingham to Store First St Helens Limited. Store

First Midlands has undertaken to the Court to no longer sell or market store pods as an investment or otherwise.

Liquidation

The Official Receiver was appointed as liquidator and has responsibility for dealing with the assets and liabilities of the four companies.

On 11 December 2019, the Official Receiver completed the sale of the freehold, associated assets and goodwill of the 15 Storage centres located in Blackburn, Burnley, Rochdale, Barnsley, Liverpool, Ellesmere Port, Wakefield, Glasgow, Preston, Derby, Leeds, St Helens, Manchester, Northampton and Nottingham to Store First Freeholds Limited.

On the same date the Official Receiver also completed the sale of the assets of SFM Services Limited to Pay Store Limited.

The Purchasers have confirmed that they intend to continue renting the self-storage units to end users and that Pay Store will continue to manage the storage sites on a day to day basis using the name Store First.

Queries regarding the day-to-day business at the 15 sites should be directed to Pay Store: customerservices@pay-store.co.uk.

Information for investors

Investors who have enquiries regarding the operation of the sites and their pods should contact Pay Store: customerservices@pay-store.co.uk.

If you completed a purchase of a storage pod prior to the Companies entering liquidation the sale of the sites will not affect the ownership of your pod.

The Official Receiver and the Purchasers have agreed that the Purchasers will:

- For a period of six months following the sale, attempt to complete purchases of storage pods which were not legally completed prior to the liquidation.
- Accept any requests from investors to surrender their pods. Pay Store will cover the costs of the surrender, but the investor will not receive any payment.
- Exchange pods which are unusable for a pod of the same size and dimension, subject to availability.
- Assist investors with applying for Business Rates relief.
- Will not market or sell pods to third parties for investment purposes.

Investors with enquiries regarding any of the agreements listed above should contact Pay Store: customerservices@pay-store.co.uk.

The Official Receiver is responsible for investigating the cause of the liquidation of the four companies, including any business dealings and affairs, and reporting on the conduct of the directors. If you have any

information that may assist in these duties please send to PIU.North_StoreFirst@insolvency.gov.uk.

The Official Receiver is and remains the sole appointed liquidator of the companies by virtue of the court order dated 30 April 2019 and pursuant to s136(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986.

Third Parties not connected to the Official Receiver continue to contact individual investors requesting upfront payments. These entities are not connected to the Official Receiver in his capacity as the Liquidator of the companies and they do not have the authority to act on the Official Receiver's behalf.

The Official Receiver accepts no responsibility for these third parties and for any individuals who enter into agreements with such third parties and any loss suffered as a consequence.

All enquiries relating to the Companies' affairs should continue to be directed to:

The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 2nd Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester, M1 3BN. Email: PIU.North_StoreFirst@insolvency.gov.uk.

[News story: The AAIB has sent a team to Wiltshire](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The AAIB has sent a team to investigate a light aircraft accident in Wiltshire.

[Press release: Satellite Event- Pakistan: Family Planning Summit at London 2017](#)

The London Family Planning Summit was co-hosted today by Priti Patel, the Secretary of State for International Development, Melinda Gates, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Natalia Kanem, UN Population Fund. The Summit focused on practical measures to reduce costs and increase availability for the millions of women who want contraception, but can't afford or get hold of

it.

At today's Family Planning Summit, Ms Patel set out an increased support package – boosting and extending the UK contribution until 2022 – to provide voluntary, modern family planning to women in the developing countries across Africa and Asia.

In her key note speech at the London Summit, Ms Patel highlighted the UK's global leadership in responding to the urgent need for voluntary family planning:

She said

It's truly astonishing that in today's world there are still 214 million women around the world who do not want to get pregnant, but who are not currently using modern methods of family planning. This new UK aid support will provide 20 million women with voluntary contraception, change the lives of 6 million women by allowing them to avoid unintended pregnancies and prevent the trauma of 75,000 still births.

But this isn't a job for the UK alone and that's why at this global Summit governments from around the world have come together to make commitments on family planning to address the long term need and unsustainable population growth.

The provincial governments of Pakistan also attended the London Summit. Pakistan pledged to reach 6.7 million additional people, (3.4 million already reported and an additional 3.3 million to be added) achieving a contraceptive prevalence rate of 50 % by 2020. This commitment will be achieved through additional resources, raising the per capita expenditure on FP to \$2.50, and a programmatic refocus to address the information and service needs of men and young people and introducing safe and long acting reversible methods through task sharing.

A satellite event was also held at Islamabad, Marriot Hotel ahead of the Summit. The Health Minister Saira Afzal Tarrar; DFID Deputy Head Judith Herbertson; Country Representative UNFPA Hassan Mohtashami; and country director Population Council Dr Zeba Sathar all attended.

While speaking at the event, DFID deputy head Judith Herbertson said,

The Government is particularly emphasising the importance of the census for population planning and economic management; and we applaud the completion of the census and the associated ambition. If by 2020 Pakistan's target of 50% contraceptive use is reached, it will be a huge stride forward for individuals, families and the country.

And will set Pakistan on the road to achieving reproductive health

services for all by 2030 as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Today there are 214 million women around the world, who despite not wanting to get pregnant, aren't using modern contraception. Progress has been made globally to reach more women with family planning services, but more needs to be done. Voluntary family planning saves lives by enabling women to plan, and have fewer, pregnancies – reducing their risk of death through unsafe childbirth. This risk is very high in the world's poorest countries, especially for adolescents.

The UK's total package of support until 2022 will every year:

- help save the lives of over 6,000 women by preventing maternal deaths – that's one woman every 90 minutes;
- support 20 million women to receive voluntary contraceptives through family planning services;
- help avert 6 million unintended pregnancies; and
- help prevent the trauma of 75,000 stillbirths and nearly 44,000 new-born deaths.

The UK put family planning on the international agenda with the inaugural 2012 Family Planning Summit where a goal was established to help 120 million additional women and girls use modern, voluntary family planning by 2020. Britain is the second largest bilateral donor of family planning in the world. Since the 2012 Summit, the UK has helped nearly 8.5 million additional women to access modern methods of contraception.

Notes to editors

1. Across Pakistan, the UK is working closely with federal and provincial governments and partners on ambitious plans which will benefit millions of children and improve the standard of their education.
2. Pakistan is now one of the UK's largest recipients of development investment.
3. As well as tackling the education emergency, other priorities for the UK in Pakistan include preventing thousands of women dying in childbirth by funding skilled midwives, nurses, or doctors; providing job skills training to tens of thousands of the poorest people; and giving women in deprived households small monthly cash grants to purchase essentials, such as food and medicine.
4. UK development investment is dependent on continuing to secure value for money and results.

More Information:

DFID – the Department for International Development

- In Pakistan, contact the DFID-Pakistan media team on + 92 (0) 51 201 2000.
- Get free-to-use photos, videos and features online: www.gov.uk/dfid
- For breaking news, follow us on Twitter: [@DFID_Press](https://twitter.com/DFID_Press)

[News story: Origin and Bunn must resolve concerns over fertiliser merger](#)

The CMA has found that Origin's proposed acquisition of Bunn could reduce competition to supply fertilisers in Scotland.

The companies must now offer proposals to address these concerns by 21 July or face an in-depth investigation.

Both companies are national blenders and distributors of fertilisers for use in agriculture.

Through its initial investigation, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has found that Origin and Bunn are two of the three main suppliers of fertilisers in the central/eastern region of Scotland, supplying farmers and farmers' merchants from their sites in Montrose. The CMA is concerned that bringing the two firms together could see prices rise for customers or result in a reduction in the choice of fertilisers available.

The CMA found that there were sufficient alternative suppliers in other areas of Great Britain. The merger will be referred for an in-depth investigation by an independent group of CMA panel members unless Origin can offer undertakings by 21 July which sufficiently address the CMA's competition concerns.

All information relating to the merger is available on the [case page](#).