



PHE Harlow – Frequently Asked Questions

June 2020

Public Health England (PHE)

- **What is PHE?**

PHE was created in 2013 and is the expert national public health agency that protects and improves health and tackles inequalities. PHE's remit is:

- Protecting the public's health from infectious diseases and other hazards to health
- Improving the public's health
- Supporting the development and delivery of efficient, effective and affordable health and care services
- Ensuring the public health system can tackle public health challenges today and in the future.

- **Where is PHE based?**

PHE has 9 teams in 4 regions around England to support implementation where people live and work. Its main operational sites are PHE Colindale, PHE Porton and PHE Chilton. However, the whole of Colindale and the majority of Porton will be relocating, along with the London-based national functions and headquarters, to the new campus, PHE Harlow.

PHE Harlow

- **What is PHE Harlow?**

PHE Harlow will be a new world-leading science campus in Harlow, Essex spread across a 40-acre site. It represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring together key public health functions for England on one site and to create a centre of excellence unique in Europe.

The site will co-locate PHE's national level public health protection, science, research and health improvement functions, along with headquarters and corporate services functions currently spread across Porton, Colindale and central London (c2,300 staff). The development includes re-provision and enhancement of laboratory facilities currently housed in buildings at Porton (some which are over 60 years old) and at PHE Colindale.

- **Where is PHE Harlow?**

PHE Harlow sits on the former GSK site outside Harlow town centre on the Pinnacles Industrial Estate.



- **Why is PHE moving to Harlow?**

Public Health England's national public health science facilities at Porton are in pressing need of replacement, and facilities at Colindale will need to be replaced in the years ahead. The UK needs to maintain and develop the planned scientific and laboratory capabilities. Providing these facilities at a single site in Harlow and co-locating with other PHE HQ functions currently located in central London, brings additional benefits. A single campus at Harlow is the best value for money option.

The main strategic benefit of basing a single campus in Harlow is the high concentration of related bioscience industry and academic institutions in the London-Cambridge corridor. This is likely to support greater access to high calibre employees for the organisation for the long-term, as well as supporting additional commercial and research opportunities.

- **When will construction start on-site?**

Demolition started last year and enabling ground works and strip out of the existing buildings began at the start of 2020. The main construction is due to commence in early 2021.

- **When will PHE Harlow be complete?**

We expect all the buildings on site to be built and commissioned by 2028, with PHE Harlow reaching full operation some two years later. However, the first opportunity to be based on site comes in 2023 with the large majority of functions beginning to move during 2026.

- **Why have the dates changed for when your staff will move to Harlow?**

The detailed work we carried out last year, as part of our final business case for PHE Harlow, gave us more realistic timelines for the construction phase and for the moves of PHE business.

Although the first moves are a few years away, we have already built very strong links with stakeholders through our community engagement. This has had a particular focus on building our workforce of the future and our outreach through partnerships with local schools, colleges and universities.

This work will be stepped up as soon as the COVID-19 guidelines around social distancing allow.



Jobs

- **How many roles will be available at PHE Harlow?**
It is estimated that up to 2,750 roles will be based at PHE Harlow. This will be a mixture of roles directly employed by PHE (approximately 2,450) and those in partner and supplier organisations.

- **Of the 2,750 roles, how many will be opened for local people?**
The exact number of vacancies available for local people is currently unknown. This is due to the time involved before operations begin on site.

- **What type of jobs will be available at PHE Harlow?**
There will be a variety of roles available, and not just Public Health science jobs. Other roles on offer will include finance, HR, marketing, analytics/IT, data science, digital delivery and management jobs to name a few.

- **Will jobs be available for local people during construction?**
Yes. The Construction Local Employment Scheme sets out an array of aspirational targets and initiatives during construction of the site, including:
 - a) 90 employment opportunities shared between three major contractors (graduates, apprenticeships)
 - b) 750 training days (undergraduates, taster days, day release employees, work experience, traineeships, pre-employment courses that take place at the hub)
 - c) 450 individuals upskilled including existing employees (e-learning, CPD days, supply chain briefings)
 - d) 1000 students reached via local engagements and use of on-site training 3 community projects

More broadly, the development is estimated to support up to 10,000 jobs in the construction supply chain. A new facility to train and find jobs for hundreds of people in the construction industry has also been opened at the Harlow site – the Construction Skills Centre.

The Construction Skills Centre is a partnership between PHE, Harlow College, Jobcentre Plus, the Construction Industry Training Board and the three main contractors working on the 40-acre PHE Harlow site - VolkerFitzpatrick, Kier and Wates. The aim is for the centre to train up to 1,000 people, to become work and site ready, within the first year of operation at construction projects across the area. The partners are also aiming to place more than 35% into employment. It is hoped that the centre will remain at the PHE site during the construction phase and continue at other locations in the town beyond that.



Education and training

- **Will PHE form links with local education providers for training opportunities?**
Yes, PHE is already in contact with many local providers including universities, colleges and schools. PHE has signed memorandums with Anglia Ruskin, Hertfordshire and Essex universities as well as Harlow College. These are commitments to explore opportunities for mutual benefit in areas like jobs, training and apprenticeships.
- **Will PHE Harlow create any jobs/training for young people?**
An “Operational Local Training & Education Scheme” will be implemented as part of delivering PHE Harlow. This covers the potential training and education opportunities for persons living within the district of Harlow and which scheme has the specific aim of giving those people the opportunity to develop the type of skills that are required within the Development once operational.

PHE will actively look to create opportunities for young people. We work with local schools and community youth groups to help foster enthusiasm about science and medicine and to inspire students, preparing them for the exciting jobs of tomorrow. We will attend recruitment fairs providing young people with information and education on careers in science. We hope that once appointed the contractor will be able to provide an apprenticeship scheme for young local people to learn a trade in the construction industry.

PHE has a target of at least 2.3% of its directly employed staff to be apprentices. This could equate to 55-60 new apprentices every year at Harlow.

Consultation

- **What consultation has PHE undertaken to date?**
PHE has been part of the community in Harlow for four years. PHE first started engaging with the community in 2016 when plans were first developed for the site. PHE initially identified 260 stakeholders to engage with as part of the planning process. Since then that number has grown to over 500 who have been engaged through public consultation events, one-to-one meetings and presentations, press releases and community events.

The consultation that took place in 2016 formed a crucial part of the plans for Harlow. The first exhibitions allowed PHE to introduce the early plans for the site, and the second exhibition showed how the designs had responded to local feedback.

- **How can I give my feedback?**
The consultation period is open from 5 – 19 June. During the time you can complete the feedback form on our virtual exhibition or email us at pheharlow@phe.gov.uk



- **How will my feedback be used at this exhibition?**

We're continuing our engagement with Harlow prior to submitting a final detailed planning application in July. We want to hear your views on the final designs which we'll take into consideration before submitting the application.

- **How will you keep us updated on the plans?**

PHE is committed to being a good neighbour and creating a world-leading science campus for PHE and Harlow to be proud of. PHE Harlow is a 60-year business plan, showing a commitment to Harlow's future. We will continue to update you through newsletters and updates on our website. We'll also continue to build on the connections we've made with key stakeholders through forums and briefings.

Traffic and Transport

- **Has traffic been considered as part of the plans?**

Yes. As part of the outline planning application, a comprehensive Transport Assessment and Transport Chapter to an Environmental Statement were prepared that predicted the impact of PHE traffic. Importantly it identified that PHE Harlow would have a lower transport impact than its site predecessor GSK.

A Travel and Visitor Management Plan was also prepared that set out how PHE proposes to encourage the use of alternative modes to travelling alone by car. Accordingly, potential transport impact has been carefully considered to ensure the development can minimise the impact on local roads.

- **How do PHE propose minimising the transport impact?**

The Transport Assessment and Transport Chapter to an Environmental Statement clarified that the transport impact would be lower than the previous GSK site and that PHE Harlow could be accommodated by the surrounding transport network.

A Travel and Visitor Management Plan was also prepared that set out how PHE would encourage the use of alternative modes to travelling alone by car. The site is already well connected to existing bus, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure and we expect to improve further with local shuttle bus connections, together with additional cycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the site vicinity.

Flexible working and car share schemes are already a feature of PHE ways of working, enabling some staff to work from home, stagger start and finish times and travel at less intensive times of day.



- **How many car parking spaces are being provided?**

The campus will provide a minimum of 1,186 number of parking spaces which is deemed as sufficient to meet the needs of the development.

PHE also has outline permission for the provision of a multi-storey car park to increase parking capacity, if required.

- **There are lots of developments being built in Harlow. How will the local roads cope?**

PHE's outline planning application took account of other developments with planning permission that were still to be implemented as well as potential future development allocations. PHE is in communication with other developers in the area to discuss how we can work together with Harlow Council and Essex County Council to deliver a more integrated transport plan which provides benefits right across the town and not just close to our development. We're keen to support the Council's plans to minimise the impact of congestion on roads, encourage exercise and make journeys easier and safer.

- **How will construction traffic be managed?**

As part of the planning application a Construction Environment Management Plan and Travel Plan will be submitted to ensure construction traffic impact is minimised. We have also formed a Community Liaison Group which will be able to quickly deal with any issues if they arise.

Sustainability

- **Is PHE committed to sustainability?**

Sustainability is at the heart of PHE's business case for the planned move to Harlow – which provides opportunities to reduce impacts on the environment; promote better social outcomes and reduce operating costs.

The work undertaken by PHE includes dealing with the health impacts of global warming, so reducing the carbon emissions associated with PHE Harlow is a key part of our plans.

PHE has also committed to the greening government initiative and achieving Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Excellent for its new buildings.

BREEAM set standards for the environmental performance of buildings through design, specification, construction and operation phases.



- **Will PHE contribute to sustainability through transport?**

Yes, PHE wants to be an exemplar organization in this area. The transport plans for the site encourage a reduction in the number of single car uses by people working on the site through measures such as car shares, shuttle buses, staggered start times, provision of cycle paths and flexible working.

- **Will the buildings factor in sustainability in their design?**

Yes, the site has been designed by leading architects to ensure sustainability is at the heart of the plans. Sustainable design has been embedded into the designs including:

- Using green roofs / walls to promote thermal mass, purification of the air, increase biodiversity and act as a rainwater buffer reducing load on the sewage system
- Low energy lighting and control mechanisms are being used internally and externally across the site
- Solar shading incorporated on elevations to reduce solar gain within the buildings
- Allotments for PHE staff to use for sustainable food production

In addition, the designs include the promotion of physical activity through provision of pedestrian and cycle paths for walking, running and cycling, encouraging staff and visitor to opt for these methods rather than using a car. The designs also include the provision of outdoor gym equipment.