



Cllr John Reynolds, Richard Brooks customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street, cllr Adrian Andrew, and WMRE executive director Malcolm Holmes

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First look at plans for two new Black Country railway stations

Plans are today unveiled for the new passenger rail stations on the Walsall to Wolverhampton rail line.

These are the latest images of the proposed Darlaston and Willenhall Stations currently being developed by regional rail chiefs.

The original stations were closed in 1965. Passenger services resumed on the

Walsall to Wolverhampton line in 1998 but ceased a decade later.

The stations will give the people of Darlaston and Willenhall vastly-improved access to jobs and opportunities in the centres of Wolverhampton, Walsall and Birmingham.

Now transport chiefs want to hear the views of local residents through a consultation launching on Monday, March 4. As well as viewing and commenting on the plans online, residents will be able to visit any of six drop-in sessions over the next four weeks.

Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street said: "The publication of these plans is the next major step towards bringing passenger rail services back to the Wolverhampton to Walsall line.

"The opening of these stations is just one part of our plans to regenerate and revitalise this part of the Black Country.

"They will help unlock swathes of land for industrial, commercial and housing development between Wolverhampton and Walsall."

Willenhall Station will be sited next to the Bilston Street railway bridge close to the town centre, while Darlaston Station will be built on derelict land next to the Kendricks Road bridge.

Both stations' facilities include:

- Two platforms to accommodate six carriage trains
- Pedestrian footbridge, stairs and lifts for access between platforms
- Ticket machines and customer information systems
- Station designs incorporate passenger help-points to improve safety
- Pick-up/drop-off areas and secure cycle storage

Both stations will have long-stay car parks, with 300 spaces provided at Darlaston and 150 spaces at Willenhall.

The plans have been drawn up by the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) and Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) with the majority of costs covered from the region's HS2 Connectivity Fund.

They are being developed in close collaboration with train operator West Midlands Railway, the City of Wolverhampton Council, Walsall Council and Network Rail.

It is anticipated there will initially be an hourly service between Wolverhampton and Walsall stations and an hourly service between Birmingham New Street and Wolverhampton.

Cllr John Reynolds, City of Wolverhampton Council cabinet member for city economy, said: "The reopening of this rail line will be good for Wolverhampton business and offer people easier and faster services to Walsall and beyond.

"It will also encourage regeneration and the opportunity to develop new housing and industry along the rail corridor."

Cllr Adrian Andrew, deputy leader of Walsall Council, said: "This is fantastic news for the people of Darlaston and Willenhall who have been waiting to see passenger services restored.

"Alongside the new station will be a 300-space long-stay car park which can play a major part in tackling the congestion on our streets and keeping the region moving."

Following consultation, formal planning applications will be submitted during the summer and it is hoped work can start on site towards the end of next year with trains running by 2022.

Richard Brooks, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: "The reopening of these two stations will benefit many people in surrounding communities.

"We welcome to work of West Midlands Rail Executive and other partners to bring these stations to life, and encourage local residents to engage with the consultation on the new station plans.

"With our £1bn worth of investment into our network over the coming years, including new trains and increased capacity on routes across the West Midlands."

Impression of the new Darlaston

Public drop-in events

Monday 18th March 2019	11am-6pm	Saddlers	Shopping Centre, WS2 9NW
Tuesday 19th March 2019	1pm-8.30pm	CHART	Building, WV13 2NS
Wednesday 20th March 2019	11am-4pm	New	Art Gallery, WS2 8LG
Thursday 21st March 2019	2pm-5.45pm	Willenhall	Library, WV13 2EX
Monday 25th March	9am-3.30pm	Moxley	People's Centre, WS10 8TA
Tuesday 26th March 2019	1pm-7pm	Darlaston	Town Hall, WS10 8AA

For more information on the new station plans go to

<http://www.westmidlandsrail.com/news/first-look-at-plans-for-two-new-black-country-railway-stations/>

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast mainline to and from London Euston.

- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

The West Midlands Trains franchise started on 10 December 2017 and will run until 2025/26.

West Midlands Trains operates 1,300 services a day, manages 150 stations and provides over 70 million passenger journeys a year. Over the course of the franchise, West Midlands Trains will be investing £1 billion into the rail network to deliver new trains, improved routes and station upgrades. This will include 400 new train carriages across the network and space for an extra 85,000 passengers into Birmingham and London at peak times.

The franchise is a joint venture between Abellio (70.1% share) and East Japan Railway Company / Mitsui & Co., Ltd (29.9% share in a 50:50 split). Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. In the UK, Abellio operates ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, Merseyrail services in a joint venture with Serco and buses through Abellio London. For more information visit www.abellio.com

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