

Benefits for customers in Southall with step-free access and bigger ticket hall ahead of the Elizabeth line opening

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Southall station has been given a new lease of life by Network Rail with a new ticket hall and lifts opening for customers on Thursday (26 August) as part of upgrades for the transformational Elizabeth line.

People using Southall station will benefit from a brighter, more spacious station entrance with a new ticket hall constructed from glass and steel, including a wider gateline for tickets and contactless payments. There are also three new lifts and a new footbridge, which provide step-free access to all four platforms at the station.

Southall station is staffed at all times while trains are running with ramps available for those that need them to board trains. All TfL Rail stations operate a turn-up-and-go service for customers needing assistance.

New customer information screens and ticket machines have also been installed at the station delivering an improved customer experience, and work will also take place to refurbish the station's toilets and make

the waiting room accessible for customers. The station building now has a new forecourt and wider doors to reduce congestion at the entrance.

Southall station originally opened in 1839 and is currently served by TfL Rail and Great Western Railway services. Network Rail has extended the platforms to accommodate the Elizabeth line trains, which are more than 200 metres long. The station also has refreshed signage maintaining the bilingual information that was installed due to the large Punjabi community in the area – one of the few stations in England with bilingual signage.

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris, said: “I’m pleased to see transformational upgrades completed at Southall Station, which improve accessibility and deliver better, more modern facilities for passengers. This will benefit the local community immediately and readies the station for when the Elizabeth line opens next year.”

Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor for Transport, said: “I’m delighted that Southall is the latest station to benefit from a range of Elizabeth line upgrades including a more spacious entrance and step-free access. These improvements will make a big difference to passengers ahead of the opening of the line next year.”

Howard Smith, TfL’s Chief Operating Officer for the Elizabeth line, said: “The Elizabeth line is going to be transformational, and by opening the new ticket hall and lifts at Southall station there is now a modern entrance ready for customers to use for many years to come. It’s great to see the upgraded bilingual station signage alongside the wider refurbishments and I really hope the people of Southall are pleased with these new improvements which make the station much more accessible and inviting.”

Elizabeth line Director at Network Rail, Tim Ball, said: “As passengers return to the railway it is great news that yet another station has been significantly upgraded. Our completion of the stunning new ticket hall and addition of step-free access at Southall follows hot on the heels of our similar transformations of Acton Main Line, West Ealing, Ealing Broadway and West Drayton which opened to passengers earlier this year. Southall is now ready for the Elizabeth line and its new facilities will improve passenger journeys for generations to come.”

Katie Pennick, Campaigns Lead, Transport for All, said: “We are delighted to see step free access instated at Southall station for the very first time, enabling more disabled people to make journeys with confidence and ease. Inaccessible infrastructure locks so many people out of the network, so we are thrilled to see the Elizabeth line continue to transform stations and contribute to a more accessible transport system.”

Karamjit Singh, Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall (SGSS) representative, said: “We as a community are looking forward to using the new upgraded and modern station. It will benefit many who already live around the area and others in having accessibility to platforms, especially for our elderly. The heart of Southall is its people and we are pleased to see our Punjabi language as a signature focal point.”

The Southall Opportunity Area has been adopted in the area’s Local Plan to deliver an indicative 9,000 homes and 3,000 jobs with delivery accelerated by the Elizabeth line.

The area around the Elizabeth line station, Southall Gateway, will stitch the existing neighbourhoods and

streets with the new residential-led developments at East Southall and West Southall as well as the regenerated Havelock Estate.

Connected Living London (CLL), a partnership between the developer, Grainger plc and Transport for London (TfL), has received approval from Ealing Council to deliver 460 homes on former railway sidings and storage land (which has been used as part of the Crossrail project), including 40 per cent affordable housing.

The development will incorporate renewable forms of energy with the homes built in a range of sizes specifically designed for renters, including a range of additional spaces for people to work, relax and socialise. The surrounding area will be made to feel safer with more space for walking, new street lighting and greenery, designed to transform this brownfield site into an active community with easy access to Southall Park.

Acton Main Line, West Ealing, Ealing Broadway and West Drayton stations recently reopened to the public after similar station improvements were completed. Network Rail is now finalising improvements at Hayes & Harlington station with a large ticket hall and new lifts due to open there later this year, providing step-free access for local people and those changing trains to and from Heathrow. Once complete, all Elizabeth line stations from London Paddington to Heathrow and Reading will have lifts providing step-free access.

Whitechapel station has recently reopened its ticket hall with step-free access provided by new lifts to the London Underground and London Overground, benefitting customers ahead of the Elizabeth line opening. Wimbledon Park Tube station has also had a lift installed to enable customers to make step-free journeys. Work continues at Osterley, Sudbury Hill and Harrow-on-the-Hill to deliver step-free access by the end of the year.

London will ultimately fund the majority of the cost of the new railway, and when the Elizabeth line opens in the first half of 2022, it will operate as three separate railways. Customers from Southall will initially have to change at Paddington for services into the central section of the route.

Photo credit: Transport for London