

Consultation begins on design to transform Solihull Station

July 19, 2021



Solihull Council prepares to share bold new illustrative designs for Solihull Station, a key transport interchange linking the borough to the rest of the region and the capital. Following approval at its latest Environment and Infrastructure decision session, an eight-week public consultation period has started this week.

The wholesale redevelopment of Solihull train station is required to ensure it is able to keep up with forecast growth in passenger numbers. Prior to the pandemic, around 2m passengers were passing through the station every year and this was forecast to increase to 3m by 2036. Although the pandemic has temporarily impacted passenger numbers over the last 18 months, this is expected to recover with overall station use still set to increase drastically.

Set around an enlarged new internal public concourse, the redesigned station will include upgraded facilities that passengers expect to find at a station of Solihull's size and importance. Planting within the station concourse will create a calming internal garden, acting as a welcome contrast to the hustle and bustle of the busy station.

Sustainability has been at the heart of the design from an early stage, with numerous features such as onsite energy generation, electric vehicle charging, biodiverse planting and energy efficient systems. With enhanced public realm including a new public square at the front of the station entrance where pedestrians are prioritised, and a one-way loop to the north of the station where public and private vehicles are concentrated, the design encompasses far more than just the station building itself.

After listening to previous feedback, improving access to platforms has been a real focus of the design, with a newly widened underpass and enlarged lifts to platform level forming part of the proposals. For more information, make sure to visit the consultation website when it launches.

Station users and local stakeholders will be invited to have their say in a number of ways on the exciting new illustrative designs. A brand new interactive website dedicated to the project will go live once the consultation launches, providing information about the new station design and featuring a variety of concept images including 360 views. Users will be able to browse the designs and leave their comments directly on the website for the project team to view.

The views and information captured during this process will be instrumental for the project team going forwards when refining the design.

In addition, three virtual webinars will be held which will include a presentation of the station design followed by a Q&A session. Two of these sessions will focus on resident engagement whilst the third will be tailored towards local businesses. The consultation aims to respond and build upon previous engagement activity carried out in the summer of 2019, which gathered views on the existing station and passengers' experience of it.

Subject to scheme development and funding, construction of the new station could start between 2024 and 2026.

Cllr Ian Courts, Leader of Solihull Council and Cabinet Member for the Economy said: "Developing a world-class point of arrival into the town centre is an integral part of our ambitious [Town Centre Masterplan](#), which aims to deliver more than 4,000 total jobs and welcome 1,900 new residents. The designs are striking and make a powerful first impression, showcasing Solihull as the thriving and vibrant destination it is. The station is at the very heart of the borough and meaningful consultation is absolutely key to make sure we are designing a station that Silhillians can be proud of.

"It's not lost on us that working habits have changed during the past 18 months because of the COVID pandemic. However, we are confident with the extraordinary vaccine rollout being coordinated by the NHS, we will eventually begin to transition back to a 'new normal'. Businesses up and down the high street have been hit hard and need to make up for lost footfall during the height of the pandemic. It's now more important than ever to continue to invest in our town centre and to make it accessible by as many sustainable modes of transport as possible. The ambitions for Solihull Station and our wider vision set out in the Town Centre Masterplan send a clear message that Solihull will bounce back stronger than ever from these difficult times."

Councillor Ken Hawkins, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure said: "I'm delighted that

we're able to reveal and share the emerging design for the innovative redesign of Solihull Station. Our designers have done a brilliant job of thinking about the station holistically. The proposals integrate a variety of onward sustainable travel options and will provide a seamless experience of switching between transport modes. Encouraging active transport is a key part of our [Cycling and Walking Strategy](#) and our designs for the station reflect this priority, including a new cycle hub with over 140 spaces and clearer, larger pedestrian crossings.

"Sustainable design is also a consistent theme throughout the whole redevelopment, with the station being designed to meet BREEAM excellent standards. This closely aligns with our goal of reducing borough wide carbon emissions to net zero by 2041. I'd highly encourage everyone who uses the existing station, no matter how frequently, to get involved in the consultation and provide their invaluable feedback to the project team."

Photo credit: Solihull Council