

# Demolition work gets underway on the Tyne and Wear Metro's train depot

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There was an historic moment for the Tyne and Wear Metro this week as work started on the demolition of its 100 year-old depot, paving the way for a £70m new modern facility on the same site – home to the new Metro train fleet.

Crews began the task of pulling down the South East side of the Gosforth depot in Newcastle on Monday, March 8. Excavators are being used to dismantle the roof and ageing brickwork. The work remains ongoing and it will create the space that is needed for a new depot building.

It is expected to take another two and a half years for the new Metro depot to be fully transformed. The new depot, a maintenance base for Metro's new trains, will be a state of the art and environmentally friendly facility.

Nexus, the public body which own and manages Metro, will transition between the old depot and the new depot in phases by 2024.

Stadler, the Swiss train builder, is delivering the new Metro train fleet on behalf of Nexus, and has

appointed VolkerFitzpatrick to build the depot. Stadler took over maintenance of the old fleet in October last year and will look after the new trains for 35 years.

Metro Development Director, Neil Blagburn, said: "The start of the demolition work at Gosforth depot is the first major stage in the works that will transform our fleet maintenance facilities for generations to come.

"The current depot has stood there for 100 years and has been the home for Metro since the late 1970s. It's a very old building that is long past its best and while we're sad in some respects to see it go, it is essential that we take the opportunity to construct a new state of the art depot for our new trains. It will allow the train maintainer to introduce the very latest maintenance practices which will benefit our customers for years to come.

"The depot transformation is already well underway and will continue over the next two and a half years with the old buildings disappearing in phases. We are storing up to a quarter of our trains at our satellite depot in Howdon throughout this process."

Stadler is building a total of 42 new Metro trains for Nexus, which will be delivered up to 2024. They will be responsible for servicing and maintaining these trains for 35 years, underscoring their commitment to the regional economy.

The new trains, which will be 15 times more reliable and will cut energy consumption by 30%, will have modern features including charging points, air conditioning and a step-change in accessibility.

Among the new features will be an automatic sliding step at every door of the new trains, making travel easier for Metro's 50,000 wheelchair passengers as well as people with children's buggies, luggage or bicycles.

People can get all the latest updates on the project by downloading the VolkerFitzpatrick app. The app is available to download for both Android and Apple devices. To download the app, simply scan the QR code or search 'Gosforth Depot' in Google Play for Android devices, or the App Store for Apple devices.

The demolition of Gosforth Metro depot is being carried out by Thompsons of Prudhoe.

*Photo credit: Nexus*