

Dozens of murals to be installed at Cannock station under improvement scheme

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Dozens of murals depicting the beauty of Cannock Chase are being installed at the town's railway station as part of a major improvement scheme.

The project, being run by Cannock Chase District Council and supported by West Midlands Railway, is being carried out ahead of the opening of a major new shopping facility at nearby Mill Green.

The new McArthurGlen Designer Outlet is expected to open in the next few months and is predicted to drive an increase in passenger numbers once lockdown travel restrictions have ended.

More than 80 images taken by local photographers Anthony Dunn and Michelle Williams will be placed across the station's two platforms and access walkways over coming weeks. Artwork from community groups and local schools will also be displayed in bespoke poster frames.

Other works taking place at Cannock include:

- Installation of a two-tier cycle rack with CCTV coverage
- New directional 'totem' signage and maps of the town centre and shopping facilities
- Additional circular planters and a new safety handrail on the approach to platform 2

The works are being funded through a Section 106 agreement as part of McArthurGlen's planning application. Partners involved in the work include the district council, county council, West Midlands Stations Alliance and the wider rail industry.

Meanwhile, the station car park is being closed for resurfacing for one week from Monday 11 January, with passengers making essential journeys asked to use Mill Green Nature Reserve car park instead.

Councillor Tony Jackson, portfolio holder for economic development and planning at Cannock Chase District Council, said: "With many more people expected to use Cannock station in the coming years as the district grows and the designer outlet takes shape, it is important we have an improved public transport gateway. This short-term measure is part of ambitious plans to develop the overall station facilities at Cannock."

Brenda Lawrence, head of stations for West Midlands Railway, said: "These welcome improvements will greatly enhance the station environment and improve the travelling experience for our customers. Train services will operate as normal throughout the project and I would like to thank our passengers for their patience while we work with our partners to carry out these environmental improvements."

David Williams, cabinet member for highways and transport at Staffordshire County Council, said: "Cannock station is a key gateway to the town and these improvements will enhance both the station and surrounding areas. With greater passenger numbers expected into Cannock in the coming years and the opening of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet, these are timely developments.

"Improving the county's transport hubs is vital for our future growth, particularly as we come out of the pandemic period. The station works follow on from the major highways improvements we completed around the Mill Green site last year, further boosting Cannock's connectivity and vitality. This is all made possible through effective working between partners."

The works are permitted as part of the current national lockdown and work will be conducted in a COVID secure manner, following all Government guidelines.

Photo credit: West Midlands Railway