

Final piece of track welded into place for Metro extension as project nears completion

April 16, 2021



A major milestone has been reached on the Birmingham Westside Metro extension as the last piece of track was welded into place on Hagley Road.

The significant achievement, which signals the end of track laying on the project, means passenger services to a new terminus at 54 Hagley Road continues to be on track to commence later this year.

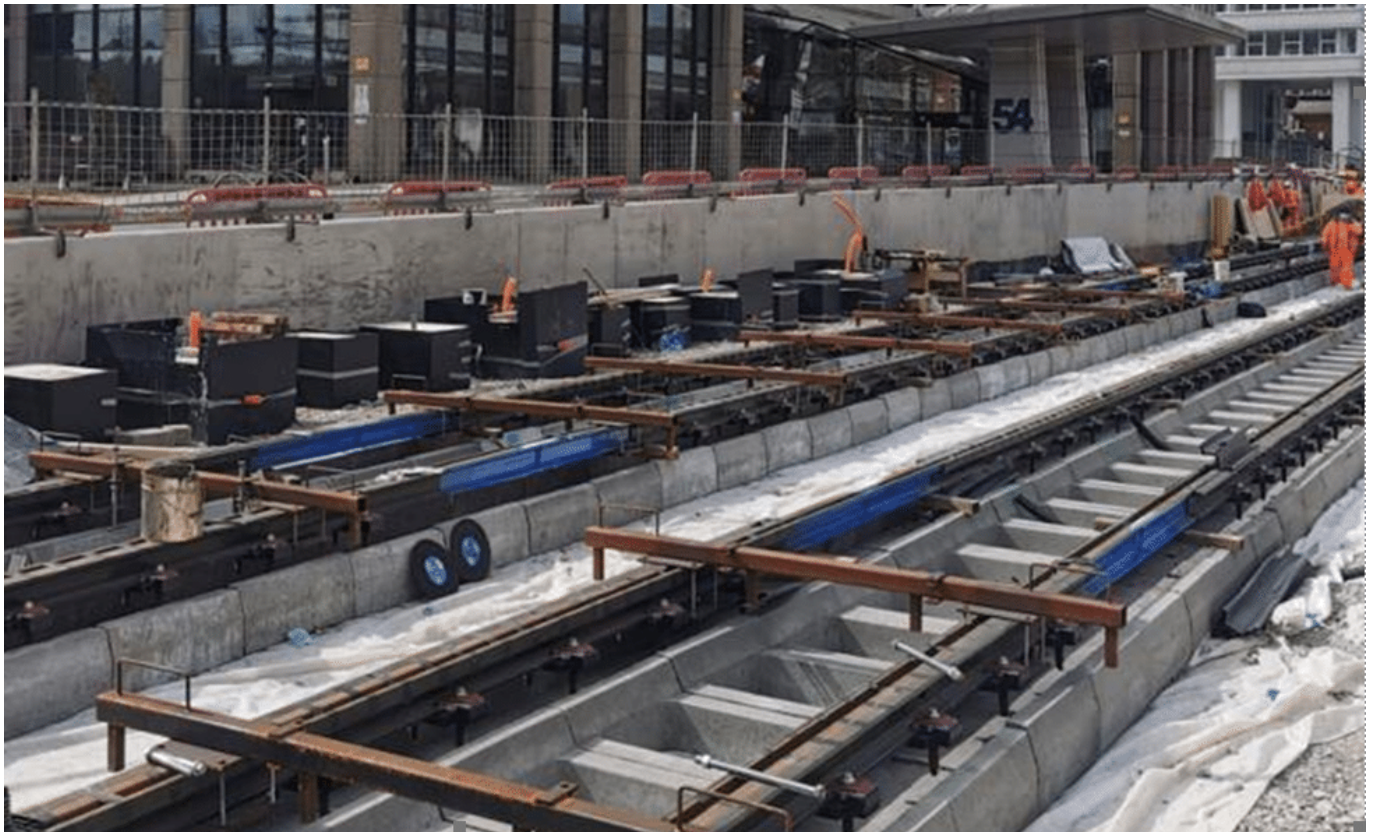
The team at Midland Metro Alliance, which is constructing the route on behalf of Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), have been commended for continuing to make great strides on the scheme, even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to reach the final stages of construction.



Michael Anderson, Projects Director for West Midlands Metro, said: "It is incredibly exciting that the team have continued to press ahead whilst at the same time implementing new and unforeseen safety measures to reach this milestone. What the team at the Midland Metro Alliance have achieved in the last 12 months despite all the challenges they've faced is brilliant, and I know businesses on Broad Street will be thankful that we've been able to move forward with the works during lockdown to minimise the impact as they begin to reopen.

"This is a significant stage in the project as it means that we are ever closer to unlocking the many benefits the extension will bring to every part of our region, whilst other extensions to the East of Birmingham and from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill in the Black Country continue at pace as part of a wider transport plan for the West Midlands."

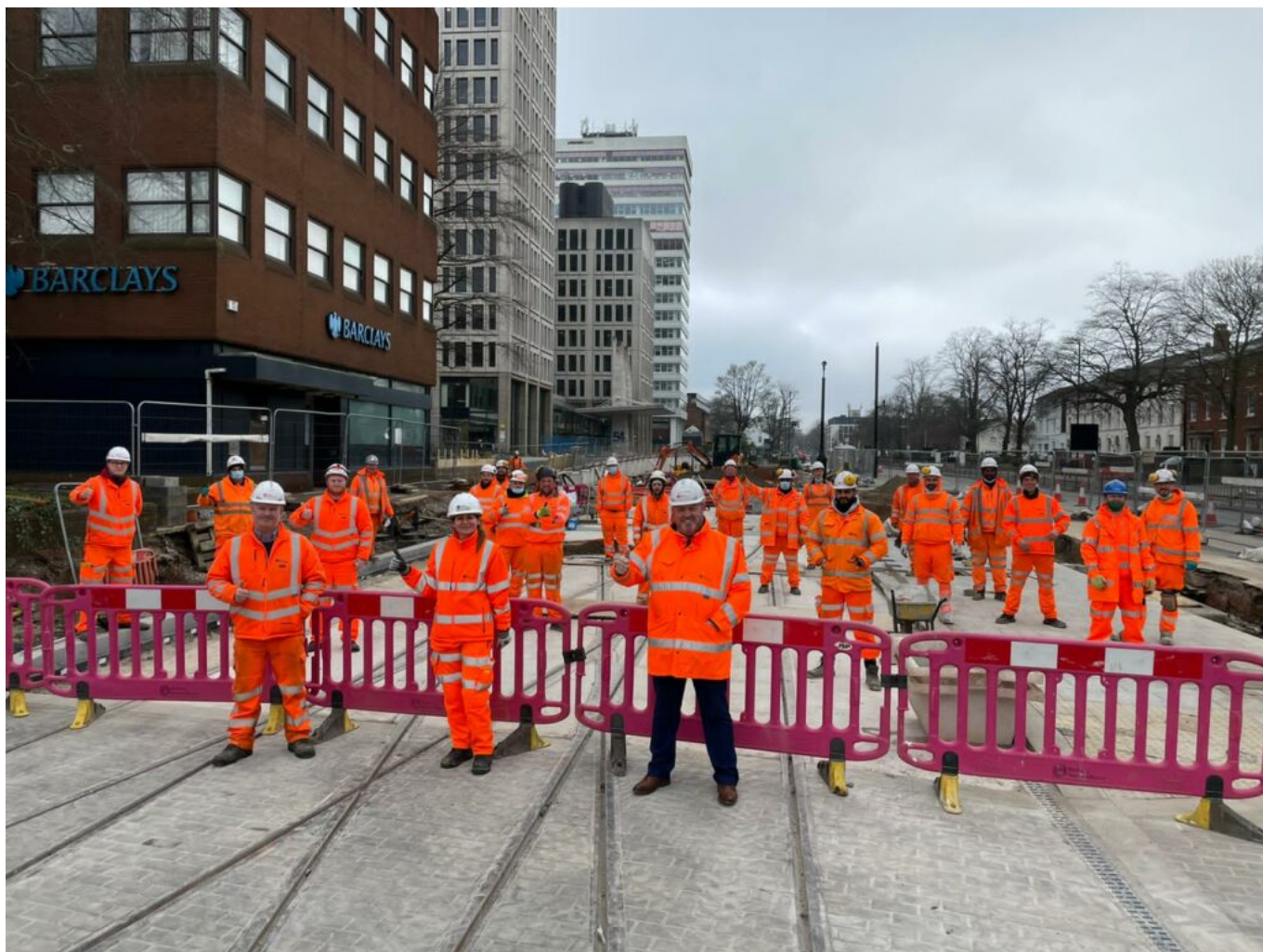
Ian MacLeod, Interim Director for Inclusive Growth at Birmingham City Council, added: "When complete, this new route will provide a sustainable option for travel across the city and will therefore play a key part in the Clean Air Zone when measures are implemented later in the spring. It is fantastic to see the project moving closer to completion and I am grateful to the team for continuing to work safely during the pandemic to keep the project on schedule."



As main construction on the project begins to wrap up the final works, including street scene improvements and the installation of overhead line equipment, will commence along with essential testing and commissioning before passenger services begin later in the year.

Peter Cushing, Director at the Midland Metro Alliance, said: "Our teams have continued to work incredibly hard and have shown great commitment to complete this stage of the project. It is fantastic to see main construction coming to an end and the area has really transformed in recent weeks with the installation of new paving along Broad Street and Hagley Road. All at the alliance share great pride in delivering such a transformative tram extension for the city and we are delighted to see the area beginning to take shape."

Much of the work on this second phase of the Birmingham Westside extension was completed during the three national lockdowns with social distancing, regular COVID-19 testing and enhanced cleaning regimes in place to keep staff members and the general public safe.



Midland Metro Alliance has been working closely with partners at TfWM, Birmingham City Council and Westside BID to accommodate the pubs, bars and restaurants that are now welcoming visitors outdoors. A number of provisions have been made to allow for the safe return of venues including accelerating schedules to ensure that much of the finishing activity is able to be completed whilst businesses remain closed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Dan Colley, Assistant Delivery Manager, explained: "So much has changed in the area since the venues were last open and it is great that many of the businesses and visitors now get to see the progress that has been made. When complete, this extension will allow people to easily access the many shops, bars, restaurants and attractions that this area has to offer and we will continue to work with the Westside BID to ensure all the businesses are kept up-to-date on our works and look forward to the return of many more businesses along Broad Street when government guidance changes."

Later in 2021, three new tram stops will connect passengers to Brindleyplace, Five Ways and Hagley Road. It will follow from the current Library terminus, which opened for passenger service ahead of schedule in December 2019, providing links to popular tourist attractions including the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the International Convention Centre and Symphony Hall.

The investment in public transport will also help support [WM2041 – A Programme for Implementing an Environmental Recovery](#), which aims to see the region become net zero carbon within the next 20 years.

For further information about the work, please visit: www.metroalliance.co.uk

Photo credit: Transport for West Midlands