

First phase finished on Gosforth Metro depot

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Work has finished on the first phase of a £70m project to rebuild the Gosforth Metro depot.

So far, the project has seen the partial demolition of the existing 100-year-old depot, as well as the installation of new train stabling track and overhead lines.

The completion of this phase has paved the way for more demolition work at the site, as well as the creation of a modern facility to house the upcoming 46-strong Metro train fleet. Stadler, who is supplying the trains for Nexus, will start work on the new depot buildings and demolish more of the old facilities in the coming months. They have appointed Volker Fitzpatrick to build the depot.

The new depot will include inspection roads and pits, cranes, jacks, test facilities, automatic trainchecking equipment and a wheel-lathe. Other features include a wash-plant to clean train exteriors and other areas dedicated to daily and periodic deep-cleaning.

It will house operations including preventative and corrective maintenance, overhauls and train presentation. There will be storage for spare parts and material supplies and office space for training and support functions.

The project has been designed so Nexus can still use Gosforth depot as work continues. It is also using a smaller, temporary train depot while it transitions to the new facilities.

Rob Baxter, managing director of Stadler Rail Service UK, commented: "This is a hugely ambitious project, taking place in an area of the country with a strong railway heritage. Although work to build a new depot only started last year, I am delighted that great progress is being made, with the site really taking shape.

"Partners involved in this project are working together closely and effectively to manage this complex construction challenge. With the new sidings now ready, it's already beginning to look like a home for the brand new trains arriving from next year."

Chief operating officer at Nexus, Martin Kearney, said: "Great progress is being made with our new £70m Metro depot at Gosforth, which is going to house the new Metro train fleet.

"I'm pleased to say that the first phase of this transformative project is complete, on time and on budget, paving the way for further demolition work of the 100-year old depot building on site, and the start of the construction of the new depot facility.

"We can look forward to seeing the first new Metro train arrive at this state of the art facility at the end of next year. It is a historic project, which secures a very bright future for the Tyne and Wear Metro, as well as benefiting the local supply chain.

"Stadler has already begun manufacturing the new trains over in Switzerland and by 2023 we will have the first new train in full service, following a period of training and testing. The new trains are going to transform the quality of services we can offer our customers."

Photo credit: Stadler