

Funding approved for new station in Essex

August 20, 2019



On Saturday 17 August, Essex County Council announced that two Chelmsford projects – the new railway station at Beaulieu and the North-East Bypass – had been approved for government funding of £218 million, following a bid prepared jointly by the City and County Councils.

The two projects to be awarded are the new Beaulieu Railway Station, located just north of Springfield, and the Chelmsford North-East Bypass, a brand-new road between the A12 and A131.

Chelmsford City Council received this news with delight and has noted a number of enquiries from local business and residents asking what the funding will mean for the local area.

Councillor Mike Mackrory, Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford, said, “This is absolutely wonderful news for our city. Securing £212 million funding for these two projects is a massive step forward in delivering the required infrastructure for Chelmsford’s new Local Plan. It’s the last piece of the jigsaw, helping us to make sure that the new homes we are required to build are properly supported by sustainable transport networks and job opportunities.

“A great deal of hard work has gone into this bid on the part of both City and County Council officers and I am thrilled that it has been successful.”

Councillor Stephen Robinson, Leader of Chelmsford City Council, added, “This has been worked towards for

over 20 years. We need this kind of infrastructure *before* housing is built, and the City Council will continue to push that.”

Dates have been set for the railway station to be built

As part of the conditions which the Government has attached to the funding, it must be spent by 2024/5. This means that the railway station – currently in the planning phases – must be completed within this timeframe.

When carrying out major works like building a new station, councils have to book ‘track time’ with railway operators two years in advance. Once these dates are booked, works must be completed within them, otherwise there will be disruption and penalties.

There will be many more jobs for local people

As part of the essential infrastructure at Beaulieu, we are already seeing the creation of new shops, schools, doctors’ surgeries and community facilities – all of which need employees.

Railway stations attract far more employers to an area. With the arrival of the new station at Beaulieu, we are much more likely to see high-grade offices, research and development facilities appearing nearby – releasing a vast pool of jobs for local residents.

Commutes will be more pleasant

Chelmsford Railway Station is currently overcrowded – in fact, it’s the busiest two-platform station in the UK outside of London. The addition of Beaulieu Station will relieve pressure on it, meaning there will be far less people crammed onto the platform at peak times.

The station will also encourage more people from the area to travel sustainably to work by foot, cycle and train – rather than driving into the city centre or to the station and adding to congestion.

The North-East Bypass will relieve congestion on local roads from people travelling between Chelmsford, Braintree, Stansted Airport, South Essex and the Lower Thames Crossing. It will also relieve traffic through White Hart Lane in Springfield.

Photo credit: Chelmsford City Council