

Green light for Dudley bus and Metro interchange

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The £24 million development of a new Dudley Interchange station has achieved another major milestone after securing full planning permission.

Partners in the scheme, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and Dudley Council, will now move onto the next stages including securing remaining parcels of land and finalising the detailed designs to appointing a construction contractor, before building work can begin.

The project will see the existing 1986 built bus station, the oldest in the West Midlands, demolished to make way for a modern bus and Metro tram interchange allowing passengers to seamlessly move between services.

The first phase of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension is currently under construction and set to open in 2024 when it will offer frequent services from Dudley town centre to Wolverhampton and Birmingham. The second phase will see the route go to Brierley Hill, including a stop at the Merry Hill Shopping Centre.

Also under development is a new cross-city bus route, offering more reliable and faster journey times, between Birmingham and the new Dudley Interchange as part of the region's plans to improve bus services.

This investment in public transport is being led by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), in partnership with Dudley Council.

Dudley's planning committee approved the plans which will deliver a new two-storey Interchange with comfortable waiting areas, shop units, live travel information screens and solar panels on the roof – to reduce the building's carbon footprint.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and chair of the WMCA, said: "This is another significant milestone in the development of the new Dudley Interchange and I would like to thank the planning committee for supporting this important scheme.

"It is clear from their decision that they recognise a modern, efficient and comfortable bus and tram interchange will not only be warmly welcomed by the people of Dudley but will also create a fantastic gateway for visitors to the town centre.

"Work is underway on the new Metro line and a new cross-city bus route is being established to speed up journey times to Sandwell, Birmingham and Wolverhampton. This is great news for Dudley and will vastly improve connectivity for local residents for many years to come. I cannot wait to see this scheme come to fruition and change lives for the better."

The WMCA is also supporting wider multi-million pound investments in the town centre including the Portersfield development, the now completed Institute of Technology and the Very Light Rail Innovation Centre.

Cllr Simon Phipps, Dudley Council cabinet member for regeneration an enterprise, said: "This transport interchange is a key part of more than £1billion worth of regeneration activity in Dudley and the planning committee's decision will be welcomed by many.

"When complete, this scheme will revolutionise how people visit and commute to and from this borough and provides an excellent boost for public transport. I am delighted to see this important programme of work gathering pace."

The £24 million funding for the scheme is primarily funded from the region's Transforming Cities Fund allocation from the Department for Transport.

Photo credit: Transport for West Midlands