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The long-awaited review on “root and branch” reforms to the rail network has been hit by further delays as Downing Street does not want to undermine the Government’s “stay at home” COVID message.

That is according to an article in the i paper that says the paper understands that the report by Keith Williams into the future of rail franchising and ticketing is complete, but has been delayed again.

An industry insider told the paper that the government are holding back everything, including the Williams Review, because they don’t want to encourage anyone to travel.

Network Rail is about to begin a major four-year package of work to modernise 1980s track and signalling on the lines into London Victoria station.

The upgrades will improve reliability on the network, helping even more passenger and freight trains arrive at their destinations on time.

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Plans to give Aldridge its own railway station have moved forward after the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) agreed a £400,000 investment to buy the land needed to build it.

Bosses at Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), which is part of the WMCA, want trains to serve Aldridge as part of a wider upgrade of rail services in the Black Country which is already set to get new stations at Darlaston and Willenhall.

Aldridge had its own station for decades but was one of hundreds closed under the controversial Beeching cuts of the 1960s.

Finally, and a new £9 million competition to find cutting-edge ideas set to transform the future of the railways has been launched today, as Rail Minister Chris-Heaton-Harris and Innovate UK launched the 2021 First of a Kind competition.

Focused on developing pioneering technology and exceptional ideas which can improve journeys for passengers and decarbonise the rail network, FOAK is now entering its fifth round.

The latest has a particular focus on supporting innovations which make the network cleaner, greener and more passenger friendly.

[Click here for more details.](#)

Photo credit: Network Rail