

# Mayor welcomes compulsory purchase result for Darlington station transformation

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Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen has welcomed the result of compulsory purchase proceedings which pave the way for Darlington railway station's transformation.

The plans, backed by £25million of funding from the Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority, will see a new platform, entrance, station building and upgrades to its transport links.

To make the plans to deliver a 21st century railway station for the town a reality, a compulsory purchase order was progressed by Darlington Borough Council for parcels of land to the east and west of the station, with a public inquiry held virtually in January ahead of the result. The Planning Inspectorate has now ruled that all the land in question can be brought into public ownership.

This follows the news that, late last year, planning permission was granted for both the new eastern and western entrances of the station.

The major redevelopment will create three new platforms on the east side of the existing station to accommodate current and future services, a new station building and a footbridge linking the new

platforms and building with the existing station.

An upgrade to the Victoria Road entrance and car park, pick up and drop off points on the western side of the station is planned, alongside new road layouts, wider pavements and improvements to walking and cycling access to make the station easier to reach.

Mayor Houchen said: "This is a welcome result that will help kick-start the sorely needed £105million redevelopment to improve and futureproof Darlington station, providing faster, smoother and more reliable services to help people get around locally and nationally.

"2022 is our year of construction, and we're going further faster to bring forward our transformational projects that will transform the lives of local people right across Teesside, Darlington and Hartlepool. To truly capitalise on these – and the ever-growing Darlington Economic Campus – we need world-class transport links to get people to work, get businesses moving again and get more investment on our doorstep.

"While we are obviously conscious of the local residents and businesses that will be impacted, talks are ongoing with them all and we're confident these will lead to an outcome which benefits everyone.

"Now there's nothing stopping us getting spades in the ground for this project, which the people of the town, the wider region and its companies, have been crying out for and deserve."

Councillor Heather Scott, Leader of Darlington Borough Council, said: "What we have here is a once in a generation chance to redevelop our historic railway station to ensure it remains fit for purpose for many, many years. The decision to go ahead with compulsory purchase order proceedings, to enable this work to be carried out, is not one that was taken lightly, and appropriate steps are being taken to bring about a satisfactory conclusion for all concerned. I look forward to seeing the station development project continue to make great progress."

*Photo credit: Tees Valley Combined Authority*