

# Newcastle Central Station: Next phase of transformation due to begin in September

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The next phase of Newcastle Central Station's multimillion pound transformation project is expected to begin in September following the appointment of North East construction company, Tolent, to lead the works.

Funded by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Growth Fund, the second phase of the Central Gateway project will see the creation of two new pedestrian/cycle entrances at Neville Street and Central Parkway, the creation of a new concourse within the station, and the pedestrianisation of Orchard Street.

Proposals for a new 'smart' taxi rank at the front of the station are under review to improve access and reduce congestion in the area.

£4m from the Local Growth Fund has been awarded to Newcastle City Council to deliver the works at Newcastle Central Station, which is managed by LNER.

Andrew Moffat CBE, Chair of North East LEP investment board, said: "The Local Growth Fund is designed to

improve the quality of life for people living and working in the North East LEP region by investing in major capital projects that help create jobs and boost the local economy.

“The Central Gateway project is vital in ensuring Newcastle Central Station can accommodate growing passenger numbers, and the introduction of new lines and services in the future.

“Newcastle Central Station is one of the busiest transport hubs in the North East and the latest round of works will ensure people and goods can continue to travel fast and efficiently across our region, and the country.”

Michelle Percy, Director of Place at Newcastle City Council, said: “It’s great news that after all the consultation and permissions work is finally due to start at the Central Station.

“Creating new spaces, new entrances and a taxi pick-up point will open up the station which should act as a catalyst for further development at Stephenson Quarter, Forth Yards and Quayside West.

“It’s a fine example of how the city council, the North East LEP, LNER and Network Rail are working together to improve passenger experience at this attractive and busy gateway into our region.”

Claire Ansley, Director of Customer Experience at LNER, said: “Newcastle Central Station plays an important part in the city and wider region so we at LNER are very excited that the next phase of the transformation will soon begin. The enhancements being made will help further improve the station’s accessibility to the surrounding areas and provide an even more impressive welcome to customers travelling to the city.”

Paul Rutter, Route Director for Network Rail’s East Coast Route, said: “This is a crucial scheme which will really open up Newcastle Central station and transform how passengers move through the area.

“It’s great that we can now move on to the next phase of the project and we look forward to passengers reaping the benefits once complete.”

David Thompson, regional director for Tolent, said: “We’re delighted to have won this contract that is going to bring significant benefits to all those living and working in Newcastle city centre. Having completed previous works within similar live environments such as the refurbishment of Central Station and the iconic Haymarket Hub, our experienced teams are ready to start on site and we look forward to working with all partners to deliver another fantastic project for the city.”

This first phase of the Central Gateway project saw refurbishment inside and outside the station, a new glass portico with ticket machines and cafes, enhanced public space and pavement cafes in the area surrounding the station, improved cycling facilities and better public transport links.

Phase two of the project will improve connections to areas to the south of the station, including Stephenson Quarter, Forth Yards and development areas on the quayside, helping to promote investment and growth.

The Local Growth Fund has invested more than £270m in major capital projects across all seven North East LEP local authority areas since 2015. Projects include the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) in Sunderland and South Tyneside, The Biosphere life sciences building on Newcastle Helix, the South Shields bus and Metro Transport Interchange in South Tyneside, and The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre in Northumberland National Park.

This latest investment in Newcastle Central Station follows the £2.5m awarded from the Local Growth Fund towards the refurbishment of Newcastle Central Metro station in 2017.

The Local Growth Fund supports the delivery of the North East Strategic Economic Plan, which aims to grow a more productive, inclusive and sustainable North East economy and create 100,000 more and better jobs for the region.

All £270.1m from the Local Growth Fund has now been allocated in the North East LEP region, with all in-progress projects due to reach completion by 2024.

Projects supported through the Local Growth Fund help drive innovation, improve support for businesses, support economic inclusion, and either help develop skills infrastructure or enhance strategic transport sites and public transport infrastructure.

To find out more about the Local Growth Fund, visit <https://www.northeastlep.co.uk/funding>.

*Photo credit: Network Rail*