

Paddington Elizabeth line station enters final commissioning phase

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Crossrail has announced that the Paddington Elizabeth line station has become the third of the newly built central stations where construction works are sufficiently finished for final commissioning activities to start.

The station has reached its T-12 landmark, this means the station is now considered to be 12 weeks away from being ready for handover to Transport for London (TfL), who will operate the Elizabeth line.

Work at the station will now primarily focus on the extensive testing and commissioning of systems ahead of the Elizabeth line opening. The railway is still on track to open in the first half of 2022.

Reaching this important milestone enables Crossrail to commence the process of handing the station over to TfL and follows the recent progress of Farringdon and Tottenham Court Road stations.

Paddington Elizabeth line station has been built by Costain Skanska Joint Venture (CSJV) and will have step-free access for passengers from street to train. When the railway opens customers travelling from services from the west of England, Reading or Heathrow will still initially have to change trains at

Paddington National Rail station onto Elizabeth line services from the new station into central London.

Mark Wild, Crossrail Chief Executive, said: "This is an incredibly important moment for the team at Paddington station and for the Crossrail project as a whole and is another important step for us on the journey to opening the Elizabeth line.

"Paddington is an historic and much-loved part of our rail network and the new Elizabeth line station is a spectacular new addition, which further enhances its role as one of London's major gateway stations providing connections to London's transport network and rail services to west London and Heathrow, the Thames Valley, Wales and the west of England."

James Moloney, Senior Project Director for CSJV, said: "The Costain Skanska JV has worked hard, including under COVID-19 restrictions, to achieve this important milestone.

"Delivery of this complex project is a huge tribute to the thousands of people who have created it. There is much still to be achieved and we will continue to work collaboratively to deliver this station which will benefit people for generations to come."

Sharon Thompson, Station Handover Lead for TfL, said: "Crossrail and Costain Skanska are making progress in finishing the works and we look forward to reaching handover, as part of our preparations for opening the Elizabeth line as soon as possible. Paddington is a really striking station and will provide a vital interchange with the Bakerloo, Circle, District and Hammersmith & City lines as well as National Rail services."

Built below ground adjacent to the 19th Century Grade I listed building, the new Elizabeth line station, with its 120-metre-long entrance canopy on Eastbourne Terrace, is on an epic scale.

The new station extends four levels below Eastbourne Terrace and Departures Road with entrances from above via a newly pedestrianised public area that connects to the existing national rail station and it also has a direct connection to the Bakerloo line via a pedestrian tunnel.

The Elizabeth line project is the most recent transformation of Paddington and builds on the legacy of the permanent station building completed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel in 1853, the arrival of London Underground in 1863 and the opening of the original section between Paddington and Farringdon by the Metropolitan Railway.

Already a busy terminus for local, regional and international passengers, the new station further increases capacity at this major interchange and secures Paddington's role as one of London most important transport hubs and a key gateway to the city for the Thames Valley, Wales and the west of England.

Paddington is also the terminus for the Heathrow Express and TfL Rail services to and from Heathrow Airport and Reading and has two Tube stations providing connections to the Bakerloo, Circle, District, and Hammersmith & City lines.

Crossrail will move into the next major stage of the project, with the start of Trial Running and intensive

testing later this year.

Photo credit: Crossrail Ltd