

Plans to reopen Aldridge Station move a step closer

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Plans to open a new railway station at Aldridge have moved a step closer after a feasibility study confirmed the proposals were viable.

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) bosses want trains to serve Aldridge as part of the current Wolverhampton to Walsall line, which is also set to include new stations at Darlaston and Willenhall.

It is hoped that two trains an hour could run from Wolverhampton to Aldridge, via Birmingham New Street and Walsall, with an estimated 500,000 passengers using the service annually.

An initial survey was undertaken earlier this year into the viability of the project, and now the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) has reported back and confirmed that the project is viable.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street has now ordered the WMRE to draw up a business case for the station to secure the £10m funding needed to take the project to the next stage.

Aldridge is part of a raft of new station openings including those at Darlaston and Willenhall in the Black

Country, and Kings Heath, Moseley, and Stirchley on the Camp Hill line in south Birmingham.

The Mayor said: “I am absolutely delighted that the feasibility study has come back positive on our plans for Aldridge station, meaning we can now press ahead with getting it built and open as soon as possible.

“The station is one of a number across the West Midlands that were closed as part of the Beeching cuts, which I am determined to re-open.

“Alongside Aldridge we have Darlaston and Willenhall, which will be the first to open in the Black Country as part of the Walsall to Wolverhampton line re-opening to passengers, and I am also exploring the prospect of having a new station at Tettenhall as well.

“New and re-opened stations not only provide better transport links but they also help to drive significant economic growth. I will continue to explore the option of re-opening more stations across the region.”

As well as drawing up the business case, rail bosses are also looking to develop a ‘robust timetable’ for Aldridge station that will fit into the existing rail network.

Ian Ward, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) portfolio holder for transport and leader of Birmingham City Council, said: “Reopening Aldridge Station will not only put another town on the rail map of the West Midlands, but will be a further step towards getting the Sutton Park line reopened to passengers – a move which will benefit many communities including Walmley and Castle Vale.

“This is all part of TfWM’s multi-billion investment in public transport which will help us ease traffic congestion and improve the air we breathe.”

Alongside the platforms, early plans for Aldridge station include a 150-space car park.

Photo credit: Alex Daniels / Shutterstock.com – a train at Wolverhampton station