

West Midlands transport partners working together on plans for a new Aldridge station

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Network Rail is working with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) to build and open Aldridge station – restoring passenger rail services to the town for the first time in 60 years.

Rob McIntosh, managing director for Network Rail's North West and Central region joined Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and Kate Trevorow, TfWM rail delivery director at the site of the new station this morning (Tuesday 20 February). Aldridge railway station's future site is being secured and cleared by Network Rail engineers to pave the way for the start of construction.

The £30 million project will see a single platform station built with a 40 space car park and road access from Westfield Drive.

Planned to open during 2027, Aldridge Station will initially offer a half-hourly service to Walsall town centre where passengers will be offered an easy interchange with services to Birmingham as well as the opportunity to connect to wider regional and national services.

Longer term plans could see both the line electrified offering direct services to Birmingham and beyond,

and the station upgraded as part of the wider reopening of the Sutton Park Line to passenger services.

The new Wrexham, Shropshire and Midlands Railway Company (WSMR) has recently announced plans to run services from north Wales and Shropshire to London Euston via the Sutton Park Line and opportunities for the service to stop at Aldridge are being explored.

Reopening railway stations and reconnecting communities to the rail network as an alternative to private car use contributes to the #wm2041 target for a net-zero carbon region within two decades.

The £30 million has been allocated from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding awarded to TfWM, which is part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) by the Department for Transport.

Funding for the £1.7 billion Midlands Rail Hub, the scheme to improve rail capacity and links across the East and West Midlands, has recently been confirmed by Government. By providing increased capacity for train services into Birmingham city centre it will offer the opportunity to reopen the Sutton Park Line in full.

Rob McIntosh, managing director for Network Rail's North West and Central region said: "We are delighted to work in partnership with the WMCA to build a better connected, more prosperous, fairer and greener region.

"Aldridge station is one of a number of new stations being funded by TfWM and WMRE across the West Midlands. These exciting transport hubs will not only support economic growth by improving connectivity for passengers, but also provide multiple benefits for local communities."

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and chair of the WMCA, said: "It's astonishing to think that despite being on an active railway line no passenger trains have stopped at Aldridge since 1965.

"That's why we are making this investment and working with Network Rail to get this station open for the people of Aldridge – starting with a shuttle service to Walsall from Spring 2027. This will finally start to give Aldridge the railway services it so badly needs – offering residents a convenient alternative to the car.

"But we are not resting there, we are actively seeking further opportunities to improve and increase services at Aldridge. This includes working with the Wrexham, Shropshire and Midland Railway Company on plans to give Aldridge a direct train service to London.

"We will continue to work with partners in the months and years ahead to realise this and our longer term ambition to reopen the Sutton Park Line in full, something which is now a step nearer thanks to the funding we have secured for the Midlands Rail Hub."

Cllr Mike Bird, WMCA portfolio holder for transport and leader of Walsall Council said: "This is an exciting time for rail in the region with work now underway on delivering six new stations, including at Willenhall and Darlaston, and plans for more in the pipeline.

"New stations offering convenient rail links not only open up new work and leisure opportunities for

residents and the communities they serve, but by making it easier for visitors and works can act as a catalyst for future investment in our towns.”