

Infrastructure work at York Central given the go ahead

Construction can start at York Central after City of York Council gave planning permission last night (12 November 2020) for infrastructure works backed by £77m of government funding.

The York Central development includes 2500 new homes; up to 1.2 million square feet of commercial development and improved visitor access to the National Railway Museum. The area has enterprise zone status, with around 6500 new jobs are expected to be created and a £1.2 bn boost to the local economy.

This is a major step forward in the development of one of the largest brownfield sites in England following the formation of the York Central Partnership in 2016 by Homes England, Network Rail, the City of York Council and the National Railway Museum. Homes England and Network Rail have supported the development of the site through land acquisition and master planning, and they will now oversee the infrastructure projects.

Government infrastructure investment of £77m was first announced in the March 2020 Budget and confirmed in August 2020. The infrastructure will unlock brownfield land with significant access problems and includes a new bridge over the East Coast mainline railway, as well as new cycling and pedestrian routes; drainage systems; and to allow for a new public park to be built.

The city council approved a reserved matters planning application that allows the infrastructure work to go ahead on Thursday 12 November 2020. Initial site clearance has already started and contractor are due to start on site in early 2021.

Peter Freeman, Chair of Homes England, said:

“York Central is one of the most important brownfield sites in the country and this exciting project will create homes, jobs and a better visitor experience for the city. Starting work on the infrastructure brings this development much closer and we look forward to working with all the project partners on behalf of the government to unlock this challenging site.”

Stuart Kirkwood, Group Property Director for Network Rail, said:

“We’re really pleased this development has taken such an important step forward. With our partners, we are excited to progress such a positive development for York which will deliver housing, jobs and economic growth. Unlocking under-used railway land is a core part of our strategy, helping to create great places for businesses and communities to thrive.”

Councillor Keith Aspden, leader of City of York Council, said:

“This is another vital step towards delivering the York Central scheme and

unlocking a £1.16bn boost to our economy, including a new generation of jobs and hundreds of affordable homes when York needs it most.

“I would like to thank all our partners, including Homes England, Network Rail and the wider York Central Partnership, who have secured funding from West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the York and North Yorkshire LEP. Working together, we are delivering where decades of proposals have failed.”

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Notes to editors

This is part of a wider £155m funding package pulled together by the council, which also includes £23.5m of a total of £37.2m from the West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund and Leeds City Region Growth Deal, which will also fund the ambitious plans to transform the front of the railway station.

The West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund has been part-funded through the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Deal, a £1 billion package of Government funding to drive growth and job creation across the Leeds City Region. The aim is to create around 20,000 new jobs and add £2.4 billion a year to the economy by the mid-2030s.

City of York Council has also received a Local Growth Fund contribution of £6m from York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership and agreed to borrow £35m to be repaid using retained business rates from the York Central Enterprise Zone.