

[News story: Midland Metro extension gets £59.8 million green light from government](#)

A key metro extension linking Birmingham city centre with Edgbaston and the city's growing Westside area has been given the go-ahead thanks to a multi-million pound funding pledge from the Department for Transport.

Five new stops will be served by up to 10 trams an hour at peak when the 2 kilometre extension of the Midland Metro, from Grand Central, outside Birmingham New Street station, to Edgbaston opens in March 2021.

The £59.8 million boost from the Department for Transport completes the total £149 million funding for the project, with another £84 million having already been raised locally through the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Birmingham City Council, Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership and others.

On a visit to see the route of the new extension yesterday (Thursday 31 August 2017), Transport Minister Paul Maynard also met with Cllr Bob Sleigh OBE, Deputy West Midlands Mayor and Laura Shoaf, Managing Director of Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM), part of the WMCA.

Mr Maynard said:

Midland Metro is already a success story, with passenger journeys up nearly a third this year compared to last year. This new extension will be a further boost to Birmingham businesses, and make travelling to work easier for commuters.

But just as importantly, it will help ease the pressure on the roads as it will provide an alternative for getting in and out of the city centre. This is a vital project and one which we are delighted to be able to support.

Cllr Sleigh said:

We are delighted that government funding is now in place to help get the Midland Metro extension to Edgbaston built. The metro is a real success story for this region and that will continue as new routes are rolled out over the next few years across Birmingham and the Black Country.

It is not just these areas that will benefit though as the Metro is key to the WMCA's vision for strategic growth and regeneration across the West Midlands, bringing huge benefits to everyone who

lives and works here.

The extension will see new stops at the Town Hall, Centenary Square, Brindley Place, and at 2 further stations either side of the Five Ways roundabout in Edgbaston. The new route will also offer a direct metro link to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, the International Convention Centre and Symphony Hall.

Preliminary groundworks started in the summer but now final funding for the scheme has been secured from central government, major project works could be set to get underway within weeks.

To limit the impact on Birmingham's historic city centre and iconic buildings, parts of the route will be built without overhead lines. When this happens, hi-tech batteries fitted to the trams will mean they can run on their own power.