

New interchange for Stourbridge by Rob Hebron

After months of deliberation by Centro, modifications to the original design and a public consultation, work has commenced on the new Stourbridge Interchange. The word "interchange" is significant because the life expired bus station is to be replaced with a facility which integrates Stourbridge Town railway station with the adjacent bus loading area. The artist's impression is available to see on the website of Network West Midlands (the new branding of Centro).

The rows of parallel shelters are to be replaced with a central building with electronic sliding doors. This design eliminates the dangerous pedestrian crossings within the old bus station and provides a more secure environment.

The subway to and from the town is to be enlarged and extended further into the bus waiting area. This subway has been much maligned due to the associated anti-social behaviour which it has encouraged. Thankfully, it is to be given a makeover to make it brighter and cleaner.

The railway station itself will be more visible when the wall in Vauxhall Road is demolished. This will make the ticket Office and People Mover rail car more apparent for the travelling public. The path from the railway station to the High Street at the side of St John's Church is to be upgraded and a canopy leading from the stations platforms will safeguard the public from inclement weather.

The only reservations which the Group has, is the time the work is expected to take (completion date- early 2012) and the inconvenient location of temporary bus stops. Two bus shelters in Parkfield Road accommodate Merry Hill Centre and Cradley Heath bus services but the majority of services leave from Birmingham Street. Kingswinford and Wolverhampton buses are probably the furthest from the railway station. With the onset of Winter, SLUG hopes that passengers are not deterred by the inconvenience, because the new interchange is overdue but necessary.



Goodbye to all this – low prominence railway station, cramped waiting shelters, dangerous pedestrian crossings and buses hitting railings!