

RAIL STATION DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION 2025

1 JULY 2025 | LONDON

Ahead of [Rail Station Development and Regeneration 2025](#), taking place 1st July in London, we asked **James Callingham, Programme Sponsor, West Midlands Rail Executive / West Midlands Combined Authority** to share thoughts on the challenges facing the rail sector and to consider the next steps needed for rail reform.



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WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SECURE PRIVATE INVESTMENT FOR STATION DEVELOPMENT?

Speaking from experience, it is vital to present an attractive project to potential investors. Non-railway industry funders are not going to be incentivised to invest if the scope of the project is limited and focuses more on the 'renewal' side of station development – i.e. bringing existing assets up to new standards. Stations which are built for the future and perhaps driven by a certain event (such as the Commonwealth Games in 2022 in Birmingham) are likely to attract more funding.

Having political support and an advocate for the project is also important. The Mayors of the West Midlands have achieved this in the past decade, linking in with local stakeholders who can offer funding in exchange for scope items or wider benefits.

New stations are clearly particularly attractive to investment, providing that there is sufficient passenger demand.

WHAT ARE THE NEW AND REGENERATION OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY STATION IMPROVEMENTS? HOW CAN THESE OPPORTUNITIES BE MAXIMISED?

Linking in station developments to wider regeneration schemes is one way to maximise opportunities. The redevelopment of Perry Barr railway station is a good example it was one piece of the Perry Barr regeneration programme. This is where close working with local authorities and combined authorities should be essential for all station development projects, with other regeneration activities often driven by public transport improvements.

HOW CAN STAKEHOLDERS EFFECTIVELY WORK TOGETHER TO DRIVE DEVELOPMENT FORWARD?

Railway station projects are complicated and there are many stakeholders often involved. Having strong sponsorship from the client organisation is important for managing stakeholders, linking in ideas. Documenting requirements clearly and jointly is also vital – so it is clear what the scope is from the outset.

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