

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

4 March 2021

Works at Fenland railway stations forge ahead

A multi-million pound regeneration of Fenland's railway stations is pushing forward with more major improvement works due to begin later this year.

Construction of a new 112-space car park at Manea station is set to get underway this spring, while car park improvements and work on redesigning the Platform 1 buildings at March station will begin in the summer.

The projects are among a series of regeneration schemes for Fenland stations being delivered through Fenland District Council's Railway Station Masterplans project, with a £9.5million package of funding from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), led by Mayor James Palmer, and support from Greater Anglia.

New platform waiting shelters have already been installed at Manea and Whittlesea stations through the Combined Authority funding and Section 106 contributions, along with an improved passenger footpath and lighting at Whittlesea.

Further plans are in the pipeline for Whittlesea, with the Council and the CPCA currently working alongside colleagues at Greater Anglia and Network Rail to look at options for a level crossing upgrade as part of a programme of works.

Fenland District Council appointed build contractor Danaher & Walsh for the Manea car park works last week. Due for completion by September 2021, the car park development will also include new bicycle parking and a bus turning and drop-off area to link the station to surrounding towns and villages in the near future.

Meanwhile, March station operator Greater Anglia has appointed Total Property Support Services Limited for the developments there. Detailed design works are due to begin shortly, with construction due to start in June 2021 and completion expected in November 2021.

Cllr Chris Seaton, Fenland District Council's Cabinet Member for Transport and Chairman of the Fenland Stations Regeneration Project Board, said: "These fantastic improvements will make a big difference to people's travel along the Hereward Line, creating better journeys for all, whether travelling for business or pleasure.

"The Council and the Hereward Community Rail Partnership, which helped to develop Fenland's Railway Station Masterplans, are grateful to the Combined Authority for its investment in regeneration and look forward to seeing more improvements come to fruition."

Mayor James Palmer, of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, said: "Investing in regeneration of Fenland has been top priority since my first day as mayor. Good connectivity delivers growth, widens our choices over where we live and work, and throws open all kinds of opportunity.

"We've invested heavily in Manea, Whittlesea and March railway stations because we know the difference it will make to life in these towns. And that's why we're working so hard to get

Wisbech itself reconnected to the rail network, so it can once again punch its weight as capital of the Fens.”

Simone Bailey, Asset Management Director for Greater Anglia, which is delivering the March station works, added: “We are pleased to have now appointed the contractor and look forward to commencing the work at March in the summer, following the completion of the detailed design work.

“As we plan for a green recovery after Covid, it is essential that rail travel is attractive and convenient, meeting the needs of local people to help communities stay connected to jobs, education, family, friends and leisure opportunities in a way that helps to reduce everyone’s carbon footprint.”

“We are pleased to have worked with our partners and listened to the local community on the plans for March station and I’d like to extend my thanks to all those involved in bringing this great project forward.”

Once the Manea car park is complete, its long-term management will be handed over to Manea Parish Council which has been heavily involved in its plan and design. The Parish Council and Manea villagers are also planning a time capsule project to mark the completion of the scheme. It is hoped the capsule will be buried as part of the ceremony to formally open the car park later this year.

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For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226