



University Station

SLC Property is working for West Midlands Combined Authority as part of the West Midlands Rail Programme to deliver significant upgrades to the existing University station in Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Background

Located between the University of Birmingham and the Queen Elizabeth, the station commands one of the highest footfalls within the West Midlands outside of the city centres. The existing station, opened in 1979, was not designed for the levels of usage it now sees. The existing railway land is constrained by the Worcester & Birmingham Canal on one side and University of Birmingham land on the other. An additional complication is that below the University of Birmingham land are the remains of Methley Roman Fort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the land is also encumbered by covenants in favour of Calthorpe Estates which preclude use of the land as a railway station. The University of Birmingham is contributing the land required for this scheme; a new canal footbridge, owned by the University of Birmingham, will also be constructed over the Canal & River Trust's land giving direct access to the University campus, together with a new accessway for pedestrians between the station and the canal.

Key accomplishments to date

- Developing a robust and ambitious strategy to ensure that all consents, leases and agreements are in place at the right time.
- Together with WMCA's legal teams, negotiating two Deeds of Grant from Canal & River Trust, together with a lease for part of the bridge from Network Rail to the University of Birmingham.

Services provided by SLC Property:

- SLC Property is working on a Material Change Proposal, to be issued by WMCA, and is providing other support relating to Station Access. This has proved to be even more complex than usual due to the land and property elements and the need for multiple applications for Clearance and LC17.
- Land referencing for the various plots of land required for the scheme.
- Negotiation of a lease to Network Rail of part of the University of Birmingham's land on which the main new station building will be located, together with associated wayleaves and easements.
- Acquisition of land from Birmingham City Council by the University of Birmingham, which will be incorporated into the University's lease to Network Rail.
- Our strategic advice is provided in the form of a Land & Consents Strategy, which is the standard and requisite document for development on or around operational railway land.
- Negotiation of easements required for maintenance of the new main station building from the adjacent landowners (including the freehold owner, their tenant and the undertenant).



- Successful negotiations with Western Power relating to diversion of an existing HV cable and lease of the new substation.
- Producing Land Registry compliant plans for the full suite of legal agreements.
- Negotiating a Development Agreement with the University of Birmingham.
- Negotiation of a Deed of Variation, Consent and Waiver with Calthorpe Estates and production of accompanying plans. This was agreed at no cost other than payment of legal fees which was a huge achievement and cost saving for the client.

Challenges

- SLC Property, together with WMCA's legal team, has built strong relationships with all parties involved in the scheme to facilitate complex land discussions.
- Delivering key items within shorter lead times to meet a challenging programme.
- The presence of archaeological remains, together with other buried services of which we were not aware, has meant last minute changes which we have accommodated and delivered successfully.
- Addressing the Calthorpe Estates' covenants and getting agreement for the project whilst protecting their other covenants on adjacent land, especially achieving the Deed of Variation, Consent and Waiver without payment of a premium.
- Ensuring that power and water can be supplied to the new station buildings without compromising the archaeological remains or the existing buried services.

- Negotiation of easements required for maintenance of the new main station building from the adjacent landowners (including the freehold owner, their tenant and the undertenant).
- Negotiation of a lease for part of the new main station building which will be used by University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust as a medical facility.
- Negotiation of Party Wall Awards.
- Supporting the planning team.
- Working with Historic England to get Scheduled Monument Consent for the scheme and with archaeologists to ensure protection of the site.
- Commercial negotiations with Calthorpe Estates regarding their covenants on the University of Birmingham's land.
- Negotiation of a wayleave and lease with Western Power for the new station DNO.

Get in touch:

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