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The Comprehensive Spending Review - The Midland Metro Extension and how this affects properties in Birmingham

One of the surprise announcements on 20 October was that the Midland Metro extension plans will go ahead. The scheme, which will see the Metro line extended from Snow Hill station to New Street station, was one of the transport schemes that was spared, along with a range of other infrastructure projects.

Back in 1998, on the completion of Line 1 from Snow Hill to Wolverhampton St George's Square, there was widespread expectation that the Metro system would be expanded across the city region on a scale to match Manchester's Metro. It would link Dudley and the South Black Country to Wolverhampton and Birmingham and would extend through the City Centre out to Edgbaston. The plans fell victim to political arguments over funding and evaluation of impact, and the vagaries of regional policy. Now a more modestly scaled project will go forward.



The extended line will run from Snow Hill Station along Upper Bull Street, thereafter turning right and running along the remaining length of Corporation Street, and terminating near to the current entrance to New Street station on Stephenson Street.

Centro (the West Midland Passenger Transport Executive) will use the compulsory purchase powers granted to it in an order which came into force on 22 July 2005 to acquire the land required to install and run the line. Works have already begun and the line will be completed by 2014 to coincide with the New Street Gateway project.

The project is somewhat controversial and the debate over the economic benefits of the project finely balanced, given its modest extent and the scale of the disruption to business which the works are highly likely to cause. However, the securing of funds for the redevelopment of New Street seems to have been the decisive factor.

Anyone with an interest in land which is required by Centro will have received a Notice to Treat in June 2010 - just before expiry of the statutory 5 year period within which the Notices must be served. Centro will be obliged to compensate people and businesses not only for the value of the land which will be acquired, but for any disturbance resulting from the construction

phase as well as when the line is up and running.

As a result of the uncertainty which still hung over the project in June 2010, the level of information which accompanied the Notices to Treat about its extent and impact on affected landowners was fairly sketchy. More work will need to be done, and many more discussions will have to be conducted, before the social and economic impacts of the project, positive and negative, can be evaluated.

If you think that you may be adversely affected and would like to discuss your prospects of making a claim for compensation, then please contact:-

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