



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Bradford Forster Square

December 2017 Consultation Event

Final Report

Supported by

**West
Yorkshire**
Combined
Authority

LEP LEEDS CITY REGION
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

**NORTHERN
POWERHOUSE** Local
Government

Introduction

This report gives full details of the consultation event which took place at Bradford Forster Square Station on the 12th and 13th December 2017. It covers how the event was carried out as well as the results from the survey associated with the event.

The event was a chance to inform the public about the plans for a major redevelopment of Bradford Forster Square Station, which are being developed by Bradford Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, together with Network Rail and Northern (the train operator).

This project has received funding through the West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund, and the Leeds City Region Growth Deal - a £1 billion package of Government investment through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to accelerate growth and create jobs across Leeds City Region.

The Purpose of the consultation

- To raise the awareness of stakeholders about the plans for Forster Square Station
- To get feedback about the plans generally and certain specific elements in order to inform detailed design

Materials Used

Posters were put up round the station advertising the consultation event in the week leading up to the 12th December.

Small cards (credit card size) were been printed for handing out to people passing through the station who simply want to know where to get further information (website) and fill in the survey online.

Leaflets giving information which included a paper based version of the survey were also available.

Banners – pop ups to advertise the event were placed round the station during the event.

Large printed versions of the plans and images were available at an information table in the waiting room area.

The Event

The event took place at Bradford Forster Square Station on Tuesday 12th December and Wednesday 13th December, from 0700-1800 on each day.

Between these hours at least 2 project representatives were present with 3 or 4 present at busy times. Most users of the station were, understandably, just interested in getting from their train to wherever they were going or getting to their train. Most of the time project representatives were outside, handing out cards to users or explaining what the consultation was about. If users showed more interest, they were able to have a longer conversation at the table in the waiting area. Most users simply took a card, rather than requesting a leaflet and most of the responses to the survey were online (see below). The online survey was 'live' from 12th to 20th December and a box was available at the station ticket office for paper responses over this period.

The leaflet used during the consultation is shown at Appendix A. A website (www.bradford.gov.uk/forstersquare) was developed to provide an online presence for the consultation (see Appendix B), this included a prominent link to the online survey which was identical to the one shown in the leaflet. As part of the event a special email address (forstersquare@bradford.gov.uk) for any further queries was also created. This has received a number of emails already and is being monitored by project staff. Both the website and the email address remain active and can be used for further consultation events in the future.

The response from users during the event itself was positive, a large number of the small cards were handed out and some very positive comments made with a few station users and other stakeholders spending some time discussing the scheme with project representatives.

The staff at the station were very helpful and Northern (who manage the station) were also very helpful in facilitating the event. As well as WYCA and Bradford Council employees, staff from Arups and Costain who have an involvement in the project also helped out.

Survey Results

A total of 461 responses were received, though not all of these were complete. Of these only 83 were on paper forms. Three of the questions were multiple choice questions (question 1, 2 and 3) and there were two questions which allowed the input of free text (questions 4 and 5).

Question 1: What do you think about the proposals for Forster Square?

A five point scale was available with extremes marked “Strongly Disapprove” and “Strongly Approve”

A total of 437 responses were received to this question and percentages are out of 437.

	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Approve	238	54%
	138	32%
	35	8%
	11	3%
Strongly Disapprove	15	3%

This suggests there was overwhelming support for the scheme with 86% of respondents expressing a positive opinion

Question 2: Please rate how important each of the following facilities would be to you

A five point scale was available for each of the listed facilities with 1 being “not at all important” and 5 being “very important”. There was a slight variation in the number of responses by facility, as shown in the table below.

Facility	Average score	Number of responses
Cash machine	3.83	452
Heated waiting room	4.21	459
Toilets	4.50	459
Cafe	3.58	453
Two lifts as opposed to one	3.51	456
Shop/Newsagents	3.68	452
Indoor cycle parking (simple 'U' tube)	2.88	447
Indoor secure cycle parking (locked enclosure)	2.98	451

All the proposed facilities except for the cycle parking were felt to be important (scored an average of over 3) and toilets were felt to be particularly important

Question 3: Both the lift shafts and the roofs of the pods could be topped with either pointed or rounded arches, which would you prefer?

A simple choice between “Pointed”, “Rounded” and “Not Bothered” was available. In the online survey images explaining the choices were shown.

A total of 453 responses were received to this question and percentages are out of 453.

	Number of responses	Percentage
Pointed	90	20%
Rounded	243	54%
Not Bothered	120	26%

There was a clear preference for rounded arches

Question 4

This included a small amount of explanatory text:

“We’re looking for ideas about how to use the area behind platform 3 and in front of the arches.

Do you have any ideas?

We’d be particularly interested if you know of any organisations that might like to be involved in developing this space.”

In total 182 meaningful responses to this question were received. The responses were categorised according to the type of suggestion being made (a number of responses made more than one suggestion), with a few common themes emerging from the analysis.

The most popular suggestion (70 responses) was for green space or landscaped area of some kind, this is hardly surprising as this was suggested in supporting material describing the scheme. Details of the type of green space varied from a wildlife area/nature reserve to a more managed garden or allotments, possibly including fruit trees.

The second most popular suggestion (45 responses) was some kind of commercial use. Here suggestions were very varied, some wanted a more conventional retailer to use the space such as Costa, Starbucks, Greggs or Subway or simply a conventional shop. Others thought it might be an opportunity to do something a bit more inventive, such as pop up stalls selling street food, or some other kind of street or farmers’ market. Others suggested a licensed premises or pub. Some saw it as a possible space for small local businesses/entrepreneurs or boutique shopping.

A number of people suggested some kind of community or heritage use (38 responses). Suggestions along these lines included some form of exhibition space (perhaps with a local theme or about railway history), space for open air sculpture or some other form of public art display, information about local cultural events, a Tourist Information Centre or a location for a community bike project or some other charity use.

There were a number of other suggestions, these included:

- More space for the facilities already proposed for the station (café, toilets etc.) (19 responses)
- Space for bus or taxi access or safeguarded for possible future railway use (eg a Platform 4) (8 responses)
- Some kind of facility for the homeless (3 responses)
- A shelter or area for smokers (2 responses)

There were also a number of less specific comments which ranged from cleaning and clearing up the litter to generally brightening the area up (perhaps by the use of a lighting scheme). Conversely, one respondent suggested simply blocking the arches off to avoid them being used by vagrants.

A number of issues were raised by respondents, these included concerns about tidiness and cleanliness (9 responses), issues about the homeless and how to manage them (5 responses) and a widespread concern that provision for maintenance needed to be considered alongside any future use.

A number of organisations were suggested as being potentially interested in helping develop the space, these included the horticultural college, Bradford Environmental Education Service, Veg on the Edge (Shipley), the RHS, the Bradford School of Art as well as commercial partners.

Question 5: Do you have any further comments about the proposals for Forster Square Station?

In total, 278 meaningful responses to this question were received with a wide range of different comments being made (many responses included a number of comments). While many of these did not say whether they welcomed the changes or not, there were 63 responses which were broadly positive, 10 which were negative and 12 which were mixed. In most cases, further justification for the point of view was given and these comments are included in the analysis below. In order to analyse the comments they were collected together in broad themes, some of these themes related to features of the station while some were more general concerns or comments.

Features of the Station

Many of these were clearly derived from concerns about the current provision and many respondents took the opportunity to reinforce issues that they had been able to respond about earlier in the survey (e.g. in question 2). One of these issues was toilets, with the importance of improved provision being mentioned by 21 respondents and another was the waiting room with ten respondents mentioning the importance of this and especially that it should be heated. The most frequently mentioned issue not raised in the publicity material was the ticket barriers, with 19 respondents making comments about them currently being in the wrong position, not working properly or otherwise causing delays. Stairs and lift provision was mentioned by 12 respondents with most welcoming the improved lift access, but a couple of respondents were concerned about the loss of the stairs. Ten respondents made comments about the general architectural quality of the proposals; opinions varied though most welcomed the light, airy structure and the scale. Lighting was mentioned by nine respondents who felt improvements would be welcome. Eight respondents mentioned car parking and the importance of retaining or enhancing the existing provision. The ticket office and ticket machines were mentioned by seven respondents, three of whom wanted more ticket machines and the other four felt retaining a staffed ticket office was important. There were a large number of other suggestions, these included (number of mentions in brackets):

- Cycle parking and other cycle facilities (7)
- Wifi provision (4)
- Train information (4)
- Disabled access (3)
- Protection from the weather (3)

There were variety of other suggestions, ranging from a quiet reflection room to making a feature of the rocky outcrop beyond platform 3 and some kind of facility for the homeless (or otherwise addressing concerns about begging and vagrancy). Concerns were also expressed about the green roof and general maintenance issues. There were also a wide variety of suggestions for improving the retail facilities, either by bringing in larger chains or encouraging small independents.

General Concerns

Many of the comments made in response to question 5 concerned general issues which it were felt to be important in the redesign of the station.

The issue of train services serving the station, wider improvements to the rail network and other public transport links (by bus) were mentioned by 48 respondents. On the rail side these included a connection between Forster Square and Interchange, an increase in the number of services and the range of destinations served and rolling stock improvements. Similar improvements to bus services were suggested with links to Interchange as well as other bus services being welcomed (at the moment no bus services call at Forster Square).

Improvements to the local environment including better local links to the station were mentioned by 36 respondents. Suggestions included cleaning and tidying as well as addressing antisocial behaviour. Specific comments about new pedestrian links as well as improving existing provision were made as well as suggestions about the route from the Midland Hotel via St Blaise Square.

Security and staffing issues were often hinted at and explicitly mentioned by 26 respondents. The main concerns were antisocial behaviour around the station, the importance of staff presence at the station and general safety,

especially at night. A number of respondents said they sometimes find the station environment intimidating and some said they avoided using the station at night because of this.

Unsurprisingly, a number of respondents questioned the money being spent on the scheme, especially in the current fiscal climate. There were a number of suggestions to redirect the money at other transport schemes or services or other council priorities. Four respondents were concerned about the disruption caused by construction.

Other

At the end of the survey there was the opportunity to supply contact details for those users who wanted to be kept informed about the project. Many respondents took the opportunity to supply their details and these will be retained for further communication activities.



We want to make a dramatic improvement to the station and we want to know what you think.

Bradford Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) together with Network Rail and Northern are planning a major redevelopment of Bradford Forster Square Station.

We want your views on the design and the facilities that the station needs to become a great gateway to Bradford City Centre.





We're planning to replace the existing station as well as the lift and staircase tower.

We want to:

- Create a much larger building with a modern airy design, a glass front and a 'green' roof
- Install two new lifts to provide access to Cheapside/Manor Row
- Incorporate the arches behind the station and the lifts into the building
- Put 'pods' into the arches to provide extra station facilities
- Provide a café, toilets and ticket facilities in a smaller building within the building
- Improve the layout and access arrangements on the Valley Road side
- Clear up the overgrown area behind the station and provide a green space or 'pocket park'
- Note that we won't be making any major changes to the railway tracks or the layout of the platforms.

Survey

What do you think of the proposals for Forster Square. (Please tick ✓)

Strongly Disapprove

Strongly Approve

Please rate how important each of the following facilities would be to you.

1 = not at all important, 5 = very important (Please tick ✓)

	1	2	3	4	5
Cash Machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heated Waiting Room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toilets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cafe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Two lifts as opposed to one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shop Newsagents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indoor Cycle Parking (Simple "U" tube)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indoor Secure Cycle Parking (Locked enclosure)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Both the lift shafts and the roofs of the pods could be topped with either pointed or rounded arches. See the images in this leaflet, which would you prefer?

Please select your preference.

- Pointed Rounded Not Bothered

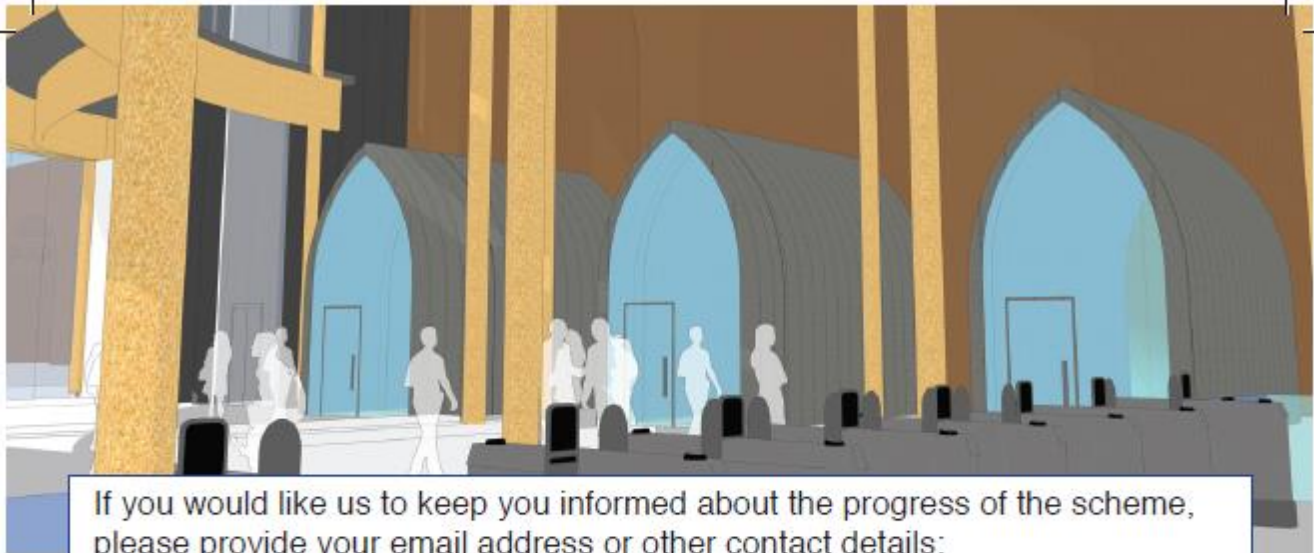
We're looking for ideas about how to use the area behind platform 3 and in front of the arches.

Do you have any ideas?

We'd be particularly interested if you know of any organisations that might like to be involved in developing this space.

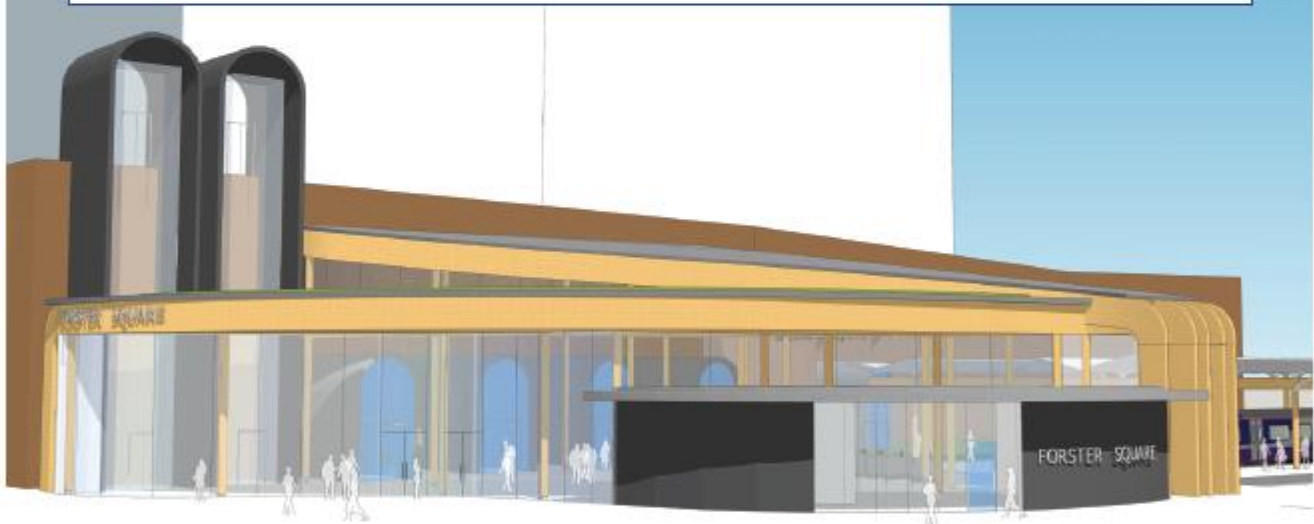
Do you have any further comments about the proposals for Forster Square Station?

Continued over the page



If you would like us to keep you informed about the progress of the scheme, please provide your email address or other contact details:

Data Protection Act 1998 - The information which you provide in this form will be used solely for the purpose of informing the redevelopment of Forster Square Station. The data will not be shared with any third party for marketing or commercial purposes.



To complete this survey online go to: www.bradford.gov.uk/forstersquare

(Note deadline of 20th December) or put this survey leaflet in the box at Forster Square Station on the 12th or 13th of December.

If you have any further comments or would like to get in touch with the team about the scheme you can email us at: **forstersquare@bradford.gov.uk**



Appendix B The information shown on the website (during the survey period this included a prominent link to the online survey).



Bradford Forster Square

We're planning changes to Forster Square Station

We want to make a dramatic improvement to the station and we want to know what you think.

Bradford Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) together with Network Rail and Northern are planning a major redevelopment of Bradford Forster Square Station. We want your views on the design and the facilities that the station needs to become a great gateway to Bradford City Centre.

We're planning to replace the existing station as well as the lift and staircase tower. We want to:

- Create a much larger building with a modern airy design, a glass front and a 'green' roof.
- Install two new lifts to provide access to Cheapside/Manor Row.
- Incorporate the arches behind the station and the lifts into the building.
- Put 'pods' into the arches to provide extra station facilities.
- Provide a café, toilets and ticket facilities in a smaller building within the building.
- Improve the layout and access arrangements on the Valley Road side.
- Clear up the overgrown area behind the station and provide a green space or 'pocket park'.

Note that we won't be making any major changes to the railway tracks or the layout of the platforms.



Our current plans include:

A bigger building

The whole feel of the station will be transformed with a light airy, spacious structure enclosing the lower lift entrances, the arches at the back of the station and the ticket gates. The roof will be high enough to reach above the arches on the Cheapside/Manor Road side and supported by slender columns. Glass walls and a clerestory window in the roof will add to the spacious feel of the building. A smaller building within the building will house a café, toilets and ticket facilities. Part of the building will be topped by a 'green' or 'living' roof, this will help to reduce storm water runoff and create a natural habitat.



New lifts

Two new glass fronted lifts will replace the existing lift and stairwell tower. The new lift shafts will be much slimmer than the existing arrangement which will mean a much better view of the station when approaching from the Midland Hotel direction. Two lifts should mean a much better service between the station and Cheapside/Manor Row and the lifts will be open for longer – between the first and last train times.



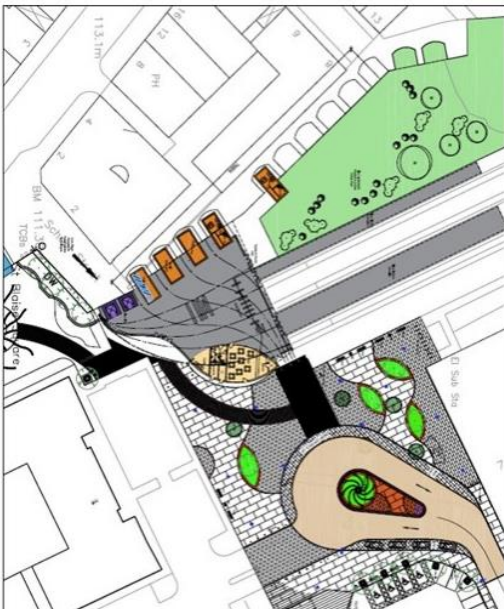
New facilities

The arches behind the station will be brought into the building and will be used to incorporate 'pods' - smaller structures which will be used for a range of different uses.



Improvements outside the station

We're going to be making big changes outside as well with improvements to the space leading down to Valley Road (next to Forster Square Retail Park). This will incorporate a turning loop for taxis and drop off and a larger pedestrian area. We'll also be making it easier to walk up from Lower Kirkgate, next to the Midland Hotel, making a more direct link to the Broadway Shopping Centre.



Green space

Behind the station, on the Manor Row side, we'll be rejuvenating the overgrown area between the station and the retaining wall with its attractive Victorian arches. This will be landscaped, perhaps creating a pocket park for Forster Square.

We want your views on the design and facilities that the station needs to become a great gateway to Bradford City Centre, and will soon publish a link to a survey for your feedback.