

# West Midlands business review of 2021 – part three: new cultural museums, Perry Barr masterplan and M&S on the move

Our review of 2021 has reached the summer months and the news that a brace of cultural attractions [are set to open as part of a £260 million](#) mixed-use development in Birmingham.

New plans were revealed in July for a **Museum of Youth Culture and Birmingham Music Archive** after deals were struck with developers of a major scheme in Digbeth.

The Museum of Youth Culture will front onto a new public park and celebrate social movements, subcultures, sounds and styles that span the generations and genres from post-war to modern-day Britain.

The museum will also host a permanent exhibition of the Birmingham Music Archive, celebrating the history and culture of the city through permanent and temporary exhibitions and events.

The wider development in Upper Trinity Street also contains plans for a new boxing academy, almost 1,000 residential units, a hotel and commercial space.

## Birmingham BusinessLive Awards 2022



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The annual ceremony will celebrate the city's finest businesses, individuals and organisations and crown our overall Company of the Year – [enter now here.](#)

The deadline for submissions is **Monday January 17** and the ceremony will be held at the ICC in Birmingham on **Friday March 18.**

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A grand masterplan set to transform the **Perry Barr district** of Birmingham [over the next two decades was unveiled.](#)

Among the headline projects was a new museum of athletics, in a nod to the district's Alexander Stadium, housing, commercial and leisure space.

Appropriately called the Perry Barr 2040 Masterplan, its proposals also include repurposing the bus garage at Perry Barr Village site to provide community space, development of sites at Birchfield Gateway and new landscaping at Perry Hall Park.

This work would extend the already huge swathes of investment flooding into the area ahead of next year's Commonwealth Games, including a housing estate on the former Birmingham City University campus and facelifts for both the railway and bus stations.

In another sign that the office is not dead post-covid, **Arup** announced in August that it was [moving 1,000 staff from its West Midlands hub in Solihull](#) to Birmingham city centre.

The built environment consultancy has struck a deal with the £700 million Paradise project for three floors of the new One Centenary Way building which is currently under construction.

The company, which employs 6,000 people across 17 UK offices, is the first occupier to sign up for space in the 13-storey block which is due for completion in early 2023.

Birmingham's Bullring shopping centre was handed a boost when high street stalwart **Marks & Spencer** announced it was moving.

The retailer is currently based in nearby High Street but has struck a deal to take some of the [huge anchor unit vacated by Debenhams after it closed down earlier this year.](#)

The move is expected to complete in late 2022 or early 2023 with all 150 staff relocating to the new shop which will sell clothes and homewares and have a food hall, across the lower two of the unit's four floors.



West Midlands Metro has been extended along Broad Street to Hagley Road but could it go even further?

(Image: Graham Young / BirminghamLive)

Transport chiefs outlined plans for an audacious [£1.7 billion funding bid to boost the region's services in September.](#)

The headline act of the masterplan was to build a new tram line down the A456 Hagley Road west of Birmingham city centre, taking the system beyond Five Ways to where an extension is currently being built.

It is one of **four new tram routes** West Midlands transport chiefs want to build along with a fourth platform at Snow Hill station, developing a business case for the Sutton Park railway line, which is currently freight only, a new station at Tettenhall and redevelopment of Solihull station.

There were no signs that the covid pandemic was slowing down the pace of development at the flagship £700 million **Paradise scheme.**

A trio of [new plans were unveiled in September](#) which will complete phase two of the work in Chamberlain Square.

Developers are seeking permission to build a new 180,000 sq ft office building called Three Chamberlain Square neighbouring Town Hall and a 17-storey hotel next door, both fronting onto Paradise Street.

The third application is for a series of new public squares and pedestrian routes through the site which will also see the return of the James Watt and Joseph Priestley statues.

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"Urgent action" was needed to [speed up the installation of electric vehicle charging points](#) across the Midlands region, according to transport chiefs in September.

A new report by **Midlands Connect** suggested that, based on current data and trends, 11 charging points a day would have to be installed to meet demand from those EV drivers who could not charge their vehicles at home.

At the moment, fewer than one in every 100 vehicles is an EV, it said, but in order to meet the growing number of vehicles, 39,410 new public charging points must be installed across the Midlands by the end of the decade.

Installing 11 new points every day until the end of 2030 and the speed of installations needed to meet these targets is more than six times the current rate.