



# Platform 3



# STATIONS

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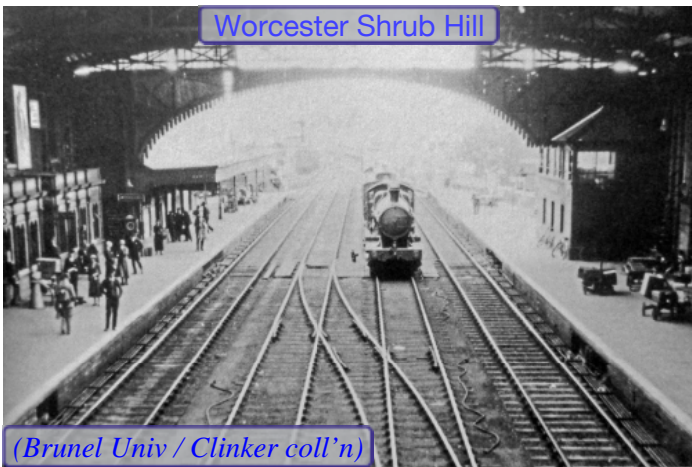
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## INTRODUCTION by Roger Davis

I'm sure that the majority of Stourbridge line users could probably name every station between Worcester Foregate Street and Birmingham Moor Street, especially as they can be seen scrolling across the screens and heard on automated messages on the Class 172 units that normally operate our service.

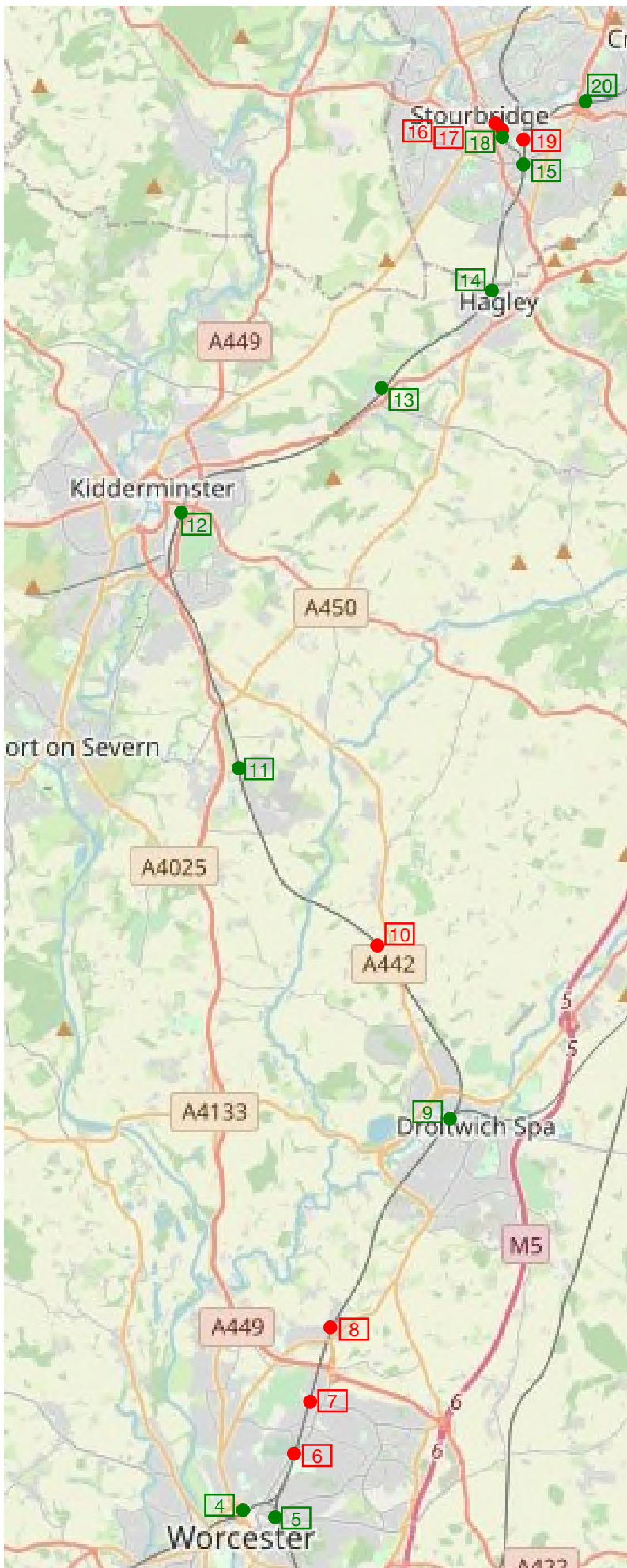
However, there are also a number of old stations that have either closed or have been relocated. Some of these stations may be remembered by SLUG members of a certain age. However, there are also stations that people will not remember. For instance, the first stations to close on the line did so as early as 1885 after only 18 years. In addition, there were two halts in the Worcester area that had an even shorter life span with one closing only 3 years after opening.



This is the first of two editions of *Platform 3* where we will look at the history of every station, open or closed, along the line from south to north.

In this edition, we will travel from Worcester Foregate Street to Lye, taking a small detour to visit Stourbridge Town. Along this section of the line, there are ten stations which are still open, four which have closed, and two which have been relocated (one of these on two occasions).





## KEY

- 20 Lye
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- 14 Hagley
- 13 Blakedown
- 12 Kidderminster
- 11 Hartlebury
- 10 Cutnall Green Halt



- 9 Droitwich Spa
- 8 Fernhill Heath
- 7 Blackpole Halt
- 6 Astwood Halt
- 5 Worcester Shrub Hill
- 4 Worcester Foregate Street



(Peter Shoesmith)



**Station Name : Worcester Foregate Street (1860-present).**

Worcester Foregate Street station was opened on 17 May 1860 when the line across the River Severn from Shrub Hill to Henwick opened to link with the line from Henwick to Malvern Wells. The original bridge over Foregate Street was a very plain structure but was replaced in 1909 by the ornate bridge that still exists today. On 21 November 1973 the track layout through the station was rationalised when Rainbow Hill Junction, to the east of the station, was removed. It has left two single lines running through the station, with trains to/from Shrub Hill forced to use platform 1 and trains to/from Droitwich Spa forced to use platform 2. This has created operational issues in the Worcester area for about half a century, and Worcestershire County Council is prioritising the resignalling of the Worcester area and the reinstatement of Rainbow Hill Junction in its Rail Investment Strategy. SLUG fully supports this upgrade and hopes that the transfer of the Worcester area into Network Rail's Central Region will see this come to fruition sooner rather than later.



**Station Name : Worcester Shrub Hill (1850-present).**

The station opened on 5 October 1850 when a branch line from Abbotswood Junction on the main Bristol to Birmingham line opened. This allowed trains to run from Worcester to both cities although a reversal at Abbotswood was necessary to travel to Birmingham New Street. The line was extended to Droitwich and Stoke Works on 18 February 1852, allowing access to New Street without reversing, and was further extended to Stourbridge and Evesham on 1 May 1852. The original temporary station building was replaced in 1865 by the current building designed by Edward Wilson. The station originally had an all-over roof linking platforms 1 and 2 but this was removed in 1938. One of the most distinctive buildings on the station is the The Ladies Waiting Room on platform 2b which has a cast-iron facade which was manufactured by the Vulcan Iron Works in Worcester in about 1860. The exterior is decorated with classical pilasters and clad with ceramic tiles by Maw and Company of Broseley. It was fully restored and reopened in 2015.

# ASTWOOD HALT

# CLOSED

Opened on 18 June 1936  
Closed on 25 September 1939



(Ray Jones Coll'n)



(Andrew Smith)



Station Name : Astwood Halt (1936-1939).

Astwood Halt was a short lived halt situated just north of Brickfields Road and on an embankment alongside Blackpole Road. It was exactly ¼ mile north of the northern portal of Worcester Tunnel. It was a small wooden halt to be served by a new “railcar” service. The halt was opened by the Great Western Railway on 18 June 1936 but the service only lasted 3¼ years with the last timetabled service running on 25 September 1939. Although the halt was officially closed in 1940, it was still showing in the October 1942 Great Western Railway Timetable (right) as unadvertised workers' trains to the Royal Ordnance Factory Blackpole continued to call here until 1946. No traces of the station remain today.

WOLVERHAMPTON		0.00	0.25	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00
Priestfield	dep.	3.45								4.50
Bilston	"	3.52								4.57
Dunley Bank and Bradley	"	3.54								4.58
Prince's End and Cowley	"	3.57								5.02
Tipton	"	3.59								5.04
Dudley	arr.	4.03								5.08
Blowers Green	dep.	4.12								5.14
Romald Oak	"	4.17								5.20
Brierley Hill	"	4.19								5.22
Brettell Lane	"	4.25								5.28
Stourbridge Junction	arr.	4.29								5.31
Hagley	dep.	4.40	5.20							5.41
Churchill & Blackdown	"	4.43	5.21							5.51
Kidderminster	"	4.49								5.56
Hartlebury	"	4.58	5.43							6.12
Cuttall Green	"	5.08								6.15
Dreditch Spa	"	5.19								6.26
Fernhill Heath	"	5.29								6.29
Astwood Halt	Foregate St. arr.	5.30								6.30
	Shrub H. dep.	5.30								6.30
Stourbridge Junction	dep.	5.30								6.30
Stanton	"	5.30								6.30
Wyre Halt	"	5.30								6.30
Fladbury	"	5.30								6.30
Ernesham	"	5.30								6.30
Littleton & Badley	"	5.30								6.30
Hooeybourne	"	5.30								6.30
Mickleston Halt	"	5.30								6.30
Camples	"	5.30								6.30
Hookey	"	5.30								6.30
Marston-in-Marsh	"	5.30	6.55							6.55
Adlestrop	"	5.30	7.10							7.10
Kingsham	"	5.30	7.16							7.16
Shipton (for Striford)	"	5.30	7.20							7.20
Ascott-under-Wychwood	"	5.30	7.29							7.29
Charlbury	"	5.30	7.39							7.39
Winstock Halt	"	5.30	7.43							7.43
Cumbe Halt	"	5.30	7.43							7.43
Hansborough (for Blenheim)	"	5.30	7.43							7.43
Yarnton	"	5.30	7.57							7.57
OXFORD	arr.	7.55								8.00

Saturdays excepted. #R

## BLACKPOLE HALT

# CLOSED

Opened 1917, Closed 1920  
Reopened 1940, Closed 1946



**Station Name : Blackpole Halt (1917-1920, 1940-1946).**

During the First World War, a Government owned munitions factory was built on both sides of the line. This was called Cartridge Factory No.3 and it was run by Kings Norton Metal Co Ltd. To serve the factory, Blackpole Halt was built alongside and was served by unadvertised train services. The halt was closed in 1920. In December 1919 a large fire at Cadbury's Bournville factory caused considerable damage. To provide additional factory space, the firm bought the recently vacated Blackpole site in 1921. In 1940, after the start of World War II, the Government requisitioned the site to create a Royal Ordnance Factory (R.O.F. Blackpole) to produce cartridge cases. To serve the factory, Blackpole Halt was reopened for unadvertised services in 1940. These services ran every 8 hours for the benefit of the wartime shift workers. After the war, in 1946, the site returned to Cadbury Brothers Ltd and became their centre for cake production. The station closed in 1946 and was demolished. No traces of the station remain today.

## FERNHILL HEATH

# CLOSED

Opened on 18 February 1852

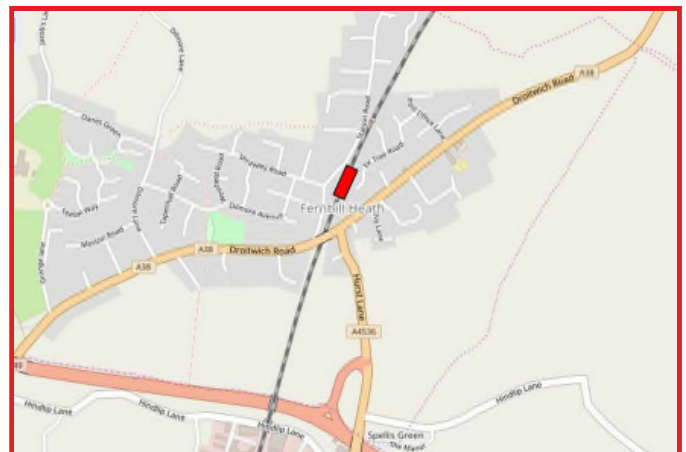
Closed on 3 April 1965



(Stations UK)



(R G Nelson / T Walsh Collection)



**Station Name : Fearnhill Heath (1852-1883), Fernhill Heath (1883-1965).**

Fernhill Heath station was situated just to the north of the A38 Worcester to Droitwich Spa trunk road as it passes through the village. A footbridge over the railway line marks the location of the station, which has been totally removed. The footbridge was installed in the early 1970s after the station had closed to provide pedestrian access over the railway line. When the station was open, access between the two platforms was provided by a walk over crossing. There have been campaigns over the years to reopen the station as it serves a large community to the north of Worcester. Worcestershire County Council have investigated the building of a new station in their plans to improve rail travel in the county and to relieve traffic congestion in Worcester City Centre. The plan is for a new park and ride station close to the A38 and A449 trunk roads. Therefore, it would appear that, if a new station is built, it would not be on the site of the original, but further south to provide better road access while still serving the village of Fernhill Heath.

DROITWICH SPA

OPEN

Opened on 18 February 1852



Station Name : Droitwich (1852-1899), Droitwich Spa (1899-present).

Droitwich Spa station is situated just under ½ mile west of the Town Centre close to Ombersley Way. The station was named Droitwich when it opened on 18 February 1852 as part of the Oxford-Worcester-Wolverhampton Line. It was built by the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway, which was later taken over by the Great Western Railway. A short branch line to Stoke Works Junction on the Midland Railway's main line between Birmingham New Street and Gloucester was opened on the same day and this line is now used by West Midlands Railway services between Hereford and Birmingham New Street. The station was rebuilt using money provided by the "Salt King", John Corbett, in 1899 and was renamed Droitwich Spa. Unfortunately, John Corbett was unable to attend the opening ceremony, which was conducted in his absence by Sir A F Godson on 3 July 1899. The magnificent station buildings fell foul to Government cuts in the 1960s and were demolished in 1964. Fortunately, a modern station building was later built.



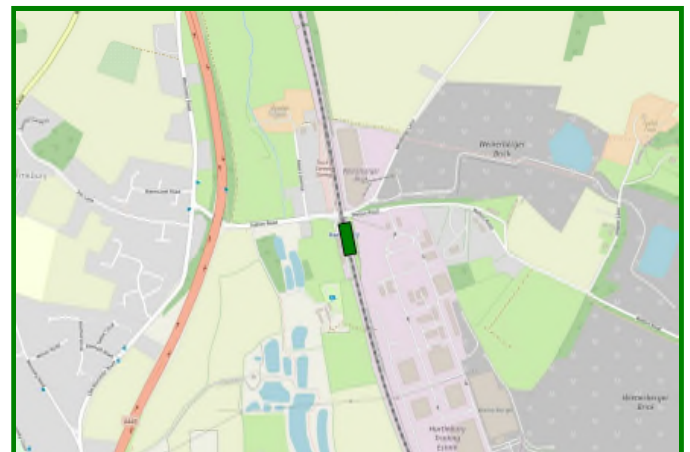
## HARTLEBURY

# OPEN

Opened on 1 May 1852



*(Peter Shoesmith)*

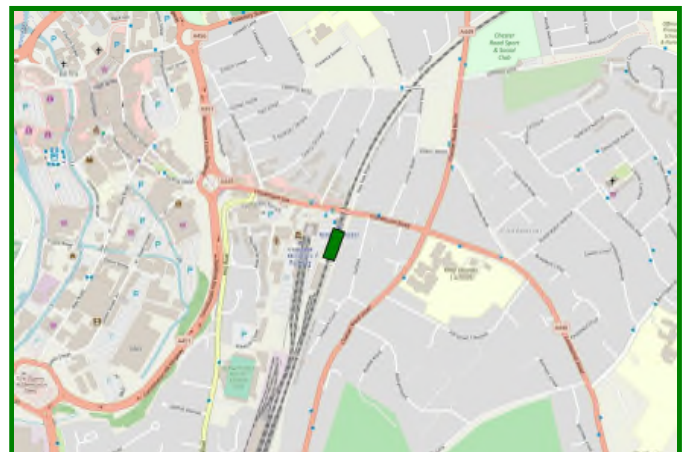


**Station Name : Hartlebury (1852-present).**

Hartlebury station is situated about 500 yards east of Hartlebury village and about a mile east of Hartlebury Castle, the seat of the Bishops of Worcester until 2007, and now the home of the Worcestershire County Museum. The station opened on 1 May 1852 when the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway extended its line as far as Stourbridge. The station became a junction on 1 February 1862 when the Severn Valley and Wyre Forest lines to Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley, Bridgnorth, Ironbridge, Shrewsbury, Tenbury Wells and Woofferton Junction on the Welsh Marches line opened. Bewdley to Woofferton Junction closed to passengers on 1 August 1962, Bridgnorth to Shrewsbury on 9 September 1963, and the line via Stourport-on-Severn to Bewdley on 3 January 1970. Services stopping at the station dwindled in the following decades until only a rush hour service remained but a concerted campaign by SLUG saw an hourly off-peak service restored on 9 December 2013 and a Sunday service introduced on 12 December 2021.



(Peter Shoemith)



Station Name : Kidderminster (1852-present).

Kidderminster station is situated on Comberton Hill, about ½ mile east of the Town Centre. It opened on 1 May 1852 with a temporary wooden station building. This was replaced in 1859 with a larger wooden station building but this was destroyed by fire on 17 February 1863. It was replaced the same year by the famous half-timbered building, originally destined for Stratford-upon-Avon, and this remained until 1968 when it was deemed to be beyond repair. The inadequate building that replaced it survived until 2019 when the current glass sided building was constructed and opened in 2020. The station became a junction in 1882 for the Severn Valley and Wyre Forest lines to Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley, Bridgnorth, Ironbridge, Shrewsbury, Tenbury Wells and Woofferton Junction (between Leominster and Ludlow). This entire network had been closed by 3 January 1970 but the complete Kidderminster to Bridgnorth line was reopened by the Severn Valley Railway on 30 July 1984 when the adjacent Kidderminster Town station opened.



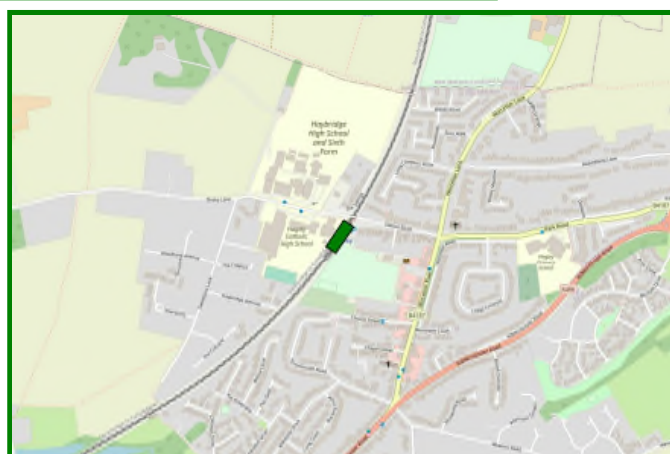
Station Name : Churchill (1852-1908), Churchill & Blakedown (1908-1968), Blakedown (1968-present).

When the line between Droitwich and Stourbridge opened on 1 May 1852, the only intermediate stations were Hartlebury and Kidderminster. This station, named “Churchill” after the village about ½ mile north, opened the following year on 1 April 1853. It was later named “Churchill & Blakedown” after the village even closer to the station to the south west, with newspaper archives suggesting that this occurred in 1908. The current name was adopted on 6 May 1968. The 1888 signal box was decommissioned in 2012, and was donated to the local parish council who have moved it to a non-operational site as a venue and coffee house.





(Stations UK)

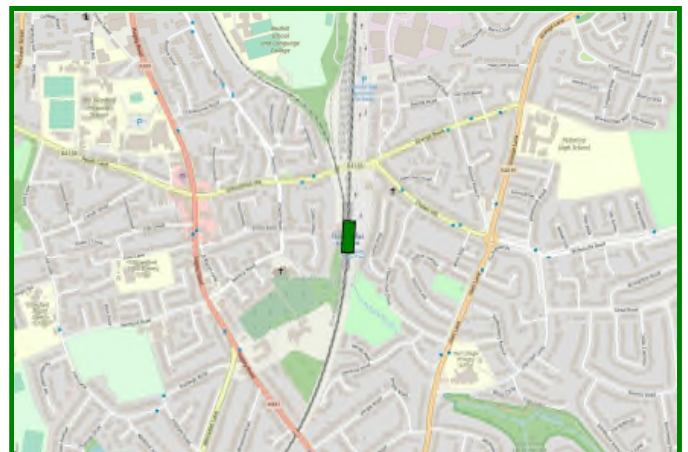


Station Name : Hagley (1862-present).

The station is situated on the western edge of the village. The actual date of opening is unclear with one source quoting June 1857, although most sources state that it first appeared in timetables dated 1862. It was a rough and ready structure with platforms built of old sleepers. The station was rebuilt by the GWR in 1884 with canopied brick buildings constructed on either side of the line at this time, and the platforms linked by a footbridge. The Stourbridge side building housed waiting rooms and toilets while, on the Kidderminster and Station Drive side, there was the stationmaster's office, the ticket office, and two more waiting rooms and toilets. While the footbridge and main station building still exist, the building on the Stourbridge platform has been demolished and replaced by the now common bus shelter. The footbridge and station building gained national recognition when Hornby modelled them for the OO gauge railway. The footbridge, which is grade 2 listed, was restored in 2011 and repainted in the original GWR colours.



(Peter Shoemith)



### Station Name : Stourbridge Junction (1901-present).

The current station opened on 1 October 1901 to replace the station described on page 19. The station consisted of two island platforms giving 4 platform faces, and was only accessible from Station Drive. In 1903, it had 112 staff, and this increased to 162 by 1938. Extensive marshalling yards flanked the eastern side of the station and stretched nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile northwards, with sidings both sides of the line north of the station. From 1968, the marshalling yards east of the main line were closed and platform 4 taken out of use, while those west of the line remained and have since been developed by Chiltern Railways as a train depot. In 1973, WMPTA approved the building of the first stage of the car park, which provided a second entrance into the station from the east. In 1997, the original station building was demolished and replaced by the current structure. Two further extensions to the car park, north of Brook Road with an entrance in Rufford Road, has increased the capacity to nearly 1,000 spaces.

## STOURBRIDGE

# CLOSED

Opened on 1 May 1879  
Closed on 17 February 1979



(Peter Shoemith)



(Peter Shoemith)



**Station Name : Stourbridge (1879-1915), Stourbridge Town (1919-1979).**

Stourbridge station opened alongside Foster Street on 1 May 1879, when the branch from the original Stourbridge Junction station was built. The branch was double track with crossovers north and south of the station to enable engines to change ends. The line serving the station platform terminated just north of the station while the other one continued down a steep 1 in 27 gradient to Stourbridge Wharf. The line was realigned in 1901 to serve the new Stourbridge Junction station and was closed from 1 April 1915 to 28 February 1919 as a wartime economy measure. It became two parallel single lines in August 1935, one being the passenger line and the other the goods line to Stourbridge Wharf, necessitating the use of push-pull trains and diesel railcars. The line was proposed for closure during the 1960s and 1970s and the fine station building suffered from lack of maintenance, with its canopies removed. The goods line was closed in 1965 and later ripped up. The station closed on Saturday 17 February 1979 and the building was demolished.

## STOURBRIDGE TOWN

# CLOSED

Opened on 19 February 1979  
Closed on 10 January 1994



(Andrew Smith)



(Nigel Hunt)

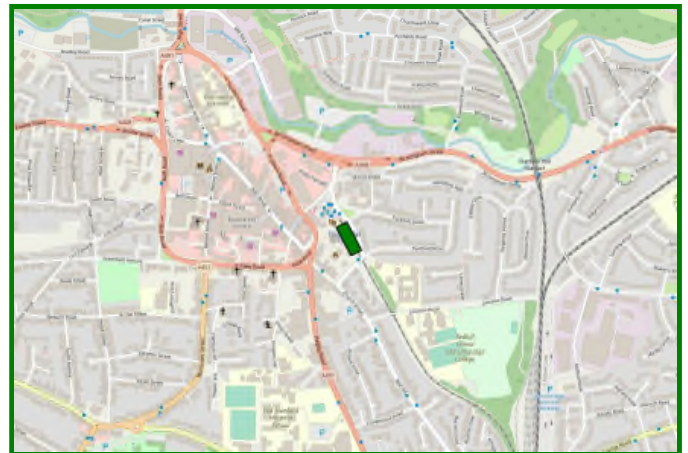


**Station Name : Stourbridge Town (1979-1994).**

Work started in 1978 to build a short platform with shelter and portakabin immediately to the south of the original Stourbridge Town station, thus shortening the line by about 70 yards. The new platform opened on Monday 19 February 1979. The original station building was then demolished and the site transformed into the first incarnation of Stourbridge Bus Station. Throughout its short life, the station witnessed two of the three occasions when a train overshot the buffers. The first had occurred on 2 April 1977 at the original station when the single car unit crashed through the buffers and a wall and finishing up hanging over Foster Street. Similar incidents on 21 January 1989 and 1 March 1990 occurred at this station with the train demolishing the wall between the railway station and the bus station. On the last occasion, the buffers weren't destroyed - they hadn't been replaced after the 1989 incident! In early 1994, Centro started work on rebuilding the bus station and taking up a bit more of the branch line. As a result, this station closed on 10 January 1994.



(Neil Potts)



**Station Name : Stourbridge Town (1994-present).**

The current station at Stourbridge Town opened on 19 April 1994 after a three month closure of the branch to enable construction to take place. Once again, the branch was shortened by a few yards and the station constructed on the opposite side of the line to the first two stations. This enabled the second version of Stourbridge Bus Station to be built. Unlike the previous station, a decent station building was constructed with covered facilities including a booking office and ticket machine, and a far better shelter than that previously offered. The station was initially served by Class 153 DMUs on Mondays to Saturdays but, after a successful trial of a Sunday service during 2006 using the prototype PPM railcar, seven day working commenced when the two production PPM railcars were introduced by London Midland during 2009. A further improvement saw the 1994 bus station closed on 24 October 2010 and the site redeveloped to produce the state of the art Stourbridge Interchange which opened on 22 April 2012.

## STOURBRIDGE JUNCTION

# CLOSED

Opened on 1 May 1852  
Closed on 30 September 1901



(Lens of Sutton)



(Lens of Sutton)



**Station Name : Stourbridge (1852-1879), Stourbridge Junction (1879-1901).**

The original Stourbridge station was situated just to the south of Junction Road, about 700 yards north of the current station, and opened on 1 May 1852. Later that year, on 20 December, the line was extended north to Dudley. It further extended to Wolverhampton on 1 December 1853. The line towards Birmingham opened on 1 April 1863 and ran as far as Cradley Heath. Further extensions in 1866 (to Old Hill) and 1867 (to Handsworth Junction) took the line all the way to Birmingham Snow Hill. The station became a junction (and was renamed Stourbridge Junction) on 1 May 1879 when the branch line to Stourbridge and Amblecote Goods Yard opened. Trains headed south from the station before forking right. The original trackbed of this line can still be discerned from the Town branch. By 1901, the station site had become restricted and more platform space was needed. The new Stourbridge Junction station was built, and the Stourbridge Town branch rerouted at its southern end to access the new station. This station was closed and quickly demolished.

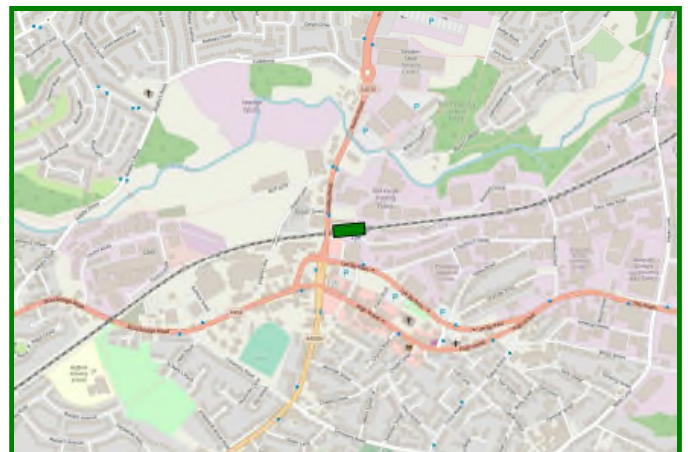
LYE

OPEN

Opened on 1 April 1863



(R G Nelson / T Walsh Coll'n)



Station Name : Lye (1863-present).

Lye station opened when the line from Stourbridge to Cradley Heath opened on 1 April 1863. The station boasted a large goods yard on the south side of the line just to the east of the station but this was swept aside in the 1960s cuts and is now an industrial estate. In addition, the station buildings on both platforms were demolished between 1964 and 1966, with the building on the Birmingham platform replaced by a bus shelter and the main station building on the Stourbridge platform replaced by the portakabin that still exists today, albeit no longer used. Local legend has it that the station has the shortest name in the United Kingdom. What it fails to mention is that it shares this distinction with nine other stations :- Ash, Ayr, Ely, Lee, Ore, Par, Rye, Wem and Wye.

