



Visualisation Funifor cablecar cabin

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PROJECT SCHILTHORN CABLEWAY 20XX - FURTHER MILESTONE REACHED

At the end of April, Schilthorn Cableway Ltd. submitted to the Federal Office of Transport (FOT) the dossiers for the SCHILTHORN CABLEWAY 20XX planning approval application. This far-reaching project replaces the existing cableway facilities and stations. Construction is expected to commence in spring 2022. A project website has been set up at www.schilthornbahn20xx.ch to provide comprehensive information and project updates.

The SCHILTHORN CABLEWAY 20XX project has reached another important milestone: last week, the documentation for the planning approval application was submitted to the Federal Office of Transport. This step was contingent on obtaining the support of the affected landowners. All 58 involved parties have approved the project and signed the easement agreements. Schilthorn Cableway hopes to obtain planning permission by spring 2021. After extensive preparatory works and the completion of the supply ropeways in summer 2021, the construction of Section 2 (Mürren-Birg) is set to start in spring 2022 and be completed by the 2023/24 winter season. Section 3 (Birg-Schilthorn) is scheduled to go into single-track operation by mid-March 2024 and be completed by November 2024. Finally, the construction of Section 1 (Stechelberg-Mürren) is planned for 2025. The project in its entirety is scheduled for completion by the 2025/26 winter season.

Funifor – a Swiss first for cableway builder Garaventa

Sections 2 and 3 are being planned and built as entirely independent cableways to ensure year-round access to the Schilthorn. Instead of a conventional aerial cableway, the company has opted for the Funifor system by Garaventa – a first for Switzerland. This exceptionally wind-stable aerial ropeway system comes out top in terms of safety, technology and economical use. Its distinguishing features are a noticeably wider rope gauge and very short hangers. This ensures a considerable improvement in wind stability and optimal compatibility with the challenging high-Alpine environment. Lower-rise station buildings and fewer and shorter pylons will have a favourable effect on the overall appearance.

Direct link to Mürren with the world's steepest cableway

A new direct connection between Stechelberg and Mürren is the key to achieving faster and more convenient access to the Schilthorn. The existing access from Stechelberg via Gimmelwald and Mürren dates back to the 1960s, representing an at the time significant pioneering feat both in terms of tourism development and cableway technology. The current situation is marked by almost 100% capacity utilisation and the need for multiple changes between cable cars. Facility operation is complex and must meet the needs of diverse target groups, while also ensuring – in addition to passenger traffic – the transport of goods and cargo.

Key factors are increased capacity and improved comfort for locals and guests. Roomier cabins with 25% more space per passenger, but also the state of the art and current regulations, require larger track widths and thus larger axis corridors and stations. The existing cableway will continue to provide access to Gimmelwald village. This section can be maintained for future operations through ongoing maintenance and targeted renewal investment – increased capacity or major mechanical changes are not needed here. The direct connection between Stechelberg and Mürren will be realised as a conventional aerial cableway with 85-passenger-capacity cabins. The cabins overcome a maximum gradient of 160%, which means that guests can look forward to a spectacular ride on the steepest aerial cableway in the world.

New structures at all stations

The new cableway installations will require newbuilds at the Mürren, Birg and Schilthorn stations. A new station building will also complete the valley terminus at Stechelberg. Luggage and goods transport to Mürren will become fully automated. A bistro will also be integrated.

Mürren: New and spacious, Mürren station will become far more than just a changing point. Amenities will include a sports retailer, ski depot, bar & shop and an expansive sun terrace. At basement level, the station will have a modern, covered baggage and goods loading and unloading area. The overall height of the building will be lower, thus minimising the visual obstruction for residents and guests in the mountain village.

Birg: The new cableway station at Birg will feature more usable surface area. The increased footprint will allow for the addition of a self-service restaurant, two new retail premises and access to a new, sun-exposed roof terrace. The existing, distinctive concrete building will be converted into an exquisite à la carte restaurant.

Schilthorn: The summit station with the iconic 360-degree Piz Gloria Restaurant at its heart will be adapted to the two single-track Funifor cableways. Alongside visible cableway technology, guests can also enjoy a light-flooded summit building at 2970 metres above sea level. The access ramp to the ski slopes will now be located below the cabin entrance to the terminus.

Uniform architecture and visible cableway technology

The compelling design concept was developed in a certified procedure in several workshops, with the participation of the Federal Office of Culture (FOC), the cantonal monument preservation authorities and the Bernese organisation for cultural heritage protection. The unheated three-finger dock concept will be adopted at all stations, resulting in a uniform concept throughout. This means that the structures are subordinate to the cableway technology, which will remain visible. The architectural structures meet all requirements on technology, context and sustainability. The architectural firm Brügger Architekten Thun is responsible for the station architecture. Numerous other important partners were involved in the planning and realisation of the project.

Project website online

The project website www.schilthornbahn20xx.ch is now online. This platform gives continuous access to comprehensive information and the latest news on the project. Images, videos and visualisations of the stations are also published here.

Information about the company

Schilthorn Cableway Ltd is based in Interlaken and connects the Lauterbrunnen valley from Stechelberg with the car-free mountain villages of Gimmelwald and Mürren, continuing via Birg station to the Schilthorn summit at 2970 m.a.s.l. In front of Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, the Schilthorn region offers numerous activities for guests from all over the globe. The Schilthorn acquired international prominence through the filming of the James Bond movie "On Her Majesty's Secret Service" in 1968.

Contacts



Christoph Egger

Press Contact

Direktor

media@schilthorn.ch

+41 79 631 10 81