

Darlington to Dales rail link proposals submitted

September 12, 2022



Plans to create a passenger rail service running from Darlington to Weardale have been submitted to government.

Durham County Council says it has worked with The Auckland Project to submit a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) with the endorsement of Richard Holden, MP for North West Durham, to the Department for Transport (DfT), following funding to develop proposals under the Restoring Your Railway programme.

Darlington-Dales corridor

The proposals will focus on development of the Darlington-Dales corridor, improving the connectivity of towns and villages along the Weardale line. It will also review the possibility of providing a link to Crook.

This new rail link would support economic development along the Darlington-Dales corridor, helping to attract visitors and boost spend in these areas by connecting tourism sites including Hamsterley Forest, Bishop Auckland town centre, the Durham Dales, and the Weardale Railway.

The enhanced rail connectivity would also enable residents to access wider education and job opportunities, while reducing the environmental impact of the county's transport system by providing an alternative to cars.

Enhance connectivity

Councillor Richard Bell, deputy leader and Cabinet member for finance, said: "Following the success of our application to reopen Ferryhill Station, we are keen to continue our plans to improve connectivity throughout County Durham.

"By creating and building on current rail links, residents will be able to access more and better opportunities within the county and further afield, while also reducing the county's environmental impact."

If the SOBC is successful, DfT will provide further funding for us to produce an Outline Business Case and develop the proposal in more detail.

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