

Doncaster puts name in the hat to be new Great British Railways HQ

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Doncaster is bidding to be the national home for the new Great British Railways (GBR) after a competition was announced by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps.

Doncaster, the birthplace of the Mallard and Flying Scotsman locomotives, has been pitched by the council as the ideal location for the headquarters (HQ) as the competition looks to recognise towns and cities with a rich railway history that are strongly linked to the network, ensuring the first HQ will take pride of place at the heart of a new era for Britain's railways.

Confirming that Doncaster will bid to become home to the new HQ, Doncaster elected Mayor, Ros Jones said: "I believe that Doncaster is best placed to bring rail back to the people it serves. With an extensive rail history of over 150 years of engineering excellence in the rail sector, Doncaster is a national hub for rail industry manufacturing and infrastructure. We have world class rail and engineering education and training facilities here and a skilled workforce, bringing together the hearts, hands and minds of the Great British Railway.

"Our geographic location and transport links are perfectly situated at the heart of the British rail network servicing a massive area of the country. Doncaster also has one of the best transport and logistics hubs in England, an international airport that has huge expansion capacity and potential and is located near to i-port hubs. Our northern location makes Doncaster a prime spot to become a linchpin for Government plans

on levelling up, improving opportunities for people here in innovative, high wage, high productivity industries. We have high ambitions here in Doncaster and a track record for getting on and getting things done which is just what this industry needs.”

Mayor of Sheffield City Region, Dan Jarvis MP said: “Trains have played an integral part in Doncaster’s past for more than a hundred years, and I hope they will be central to its future. Doncaster’s position at the heart of the rail network would make it the ideal site for the new Great British Railways headquarters. The government has pledged to ‘Level Up’ our communities, and building the new home for the railways in Doncaster would bring much needed jobs and investment to South Yorkshire.”

On Doncaster Council’s announcement to bid, Nick Fletcher MP said: “Doncaster is a proud railway town with a vibrant, growing economy. We built the Mallard here and the Flying Scotsman too, as well as many other trains. One of Doncaster’s predecessor MPs, Sir Edmund Beckett, is credited with developing the railways and bringing them to Doncaster. I fully support Doncaster Council applying to be the home of Great British Railways. Bringing the railways back home to Doncaster would fit into our history. Doncaster’s local economy is buzzing with talent and we are ready to take advantage of this exciting opportunity. I think Doncaster has a strong case which I will champion in Westminster. Let’s get on with the job and make it happen.”

Dame Rosie Winterton MP said: “It is fantastic news that Doncaster Council are to bid to become the home of the new Great British Railways HQ. Doncaster has such a rich rail history, it was only recently I spoke at a dedication to Joseph (Joe) Duddington, the unbeaten world record holder as the driver of the fastest steam locomotive, the Mallard. Joe was born in Doncaster, lived in Doncaster and laid to rest in Hyde Park Cemetery. Joe’s story really shows how Doncaster is steeped in rail history, from the many people who have and continue to work on our railways to our brilliant manufacturing and infrastructure. It is also right to note out exceptional transport links, as Mayor Jones has done, we are ideally located for such a HQ and I will be lending my full support to this bid at every point – we should go full steam ahead.”

Ed Miliband MP said: “Doncaster is a railway town and would be the rightful HQ of British Railways. “The Council and everyone involved in this bid has my full support. All aboard! As the local MP for Doncaster North, next stop is reopening Askern railway station, which would be great for the community and help protect the environment by offering people a great public transport alternative.”

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