

In The News | 27th March 2023 | Latest Rail News

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Delays in linking up HS2 and Euston could end up wasting taxpayers' money, with a platform design already ballooning billions of pounds over budget, Britain's spending watchdog has warned.

The article in the Telegraph says the government has sought to arrest spiralling costs by delaying various parts of the beleaguered high-speed route including, most recently, the construction of the Birmingham to Crewe leg, which will be pushed back by two years.

The National Audit Office (NAO) has warned that, while the postponement may put the Euston work on a “more stable footing”, the deferral of spending to manage inflationary pressures “will lead to additional costs and potentially to higher spend overall for the project that will need to be managed closely”.

A DfT spokesman said: “We remain committed to delivering HS2 from Euston to Manchester in a way that delivers the best value for money to the taxpayer.”

Extending the contract of under-fire rail operator Avanti West Coast was the right decision, but the company still has “a long way to go”, an MP has said.

The article on the BBC website says the firm was given a six-month extension by the government last week despite calls for it to be stripped of the franchise after a raft of problems.

John Stevenson, MP for Carlisle and chairman of the West Coast Main Line All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), said the firm was making progress.

The contract will run until 15 October.

It is 60 years to the day when Devon and Cornwall was dealt a devastating blow. March 27, 1963, was when the first Beeching report, titled *The Reshaping of British Railways*, was published.

Dr Richard Beeching, in two reports, *The Reshaping of British Railways* (1963) and *The Development of the Major Railway Trunk Routes* (1965), identified that 2,363 stations and 5,000 miles (8,000 km) of railway line for closure could be closed – totalling 55 per cent of stations and 30 per cent of route miles across Great Britain.

Wensleydale Railway has announced the introduction of the ‘Wensleydale Fryer’, its new lunchtime fish-and-chips dining train to Leyburn.

An article on Rail Advent says passengers can experience a scenic journey through the Yorkshire Dales whilst enjoying locally-supplied fish and chips, mushy peas, bread and butter plus unlimited tea or coffee served at your table.

The service will begin on Saturday 22 April, with the heritage diesel-hauled train travelling from Leeming Bar to Leyburn.

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