

Wellington and Cullompton stations move a step closer

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Network Rail will spearhead the next stage of plans for the Wellington and Cullompton stations with the development of detailed designs and a full business case following receipt of £5 million from the Department for Transport (DfT).

Network Rail will lead on taking this project forward and continue to work closely with partners Mid Devon District Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT), Cullompton Town Council, Wellington Town Council, Devon County Council, Somerset County Council, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and Great Western Railway.

Christian Irwin, Network Rail's Industry Programme Director (South West), said: "We are pleased to be leading this next important stage of developments to support the reopening of Wellington and Cullompton stations.

"The close working relationship between the partners has been integral to us getting this far and this approach will continue to ensure that the station designs and full business case are fit for purpose and help deliver much needed stations for the communities of Wellington and Cullompton."

The funding will be used to now develop a detailed design for the stations and a full business case, to be submitted to the DfT. It is anticipated that this next stage will be completed by no later than the end of December 2023.

Subject to the approval of the business case and the receipt of the necessary funding to build the stations, construction could start as early as 2024 with the aspiration for both stations to be in operation by 2025.

Once complete, Wellington and Cullompton will provide two additional stations that will serve the Great Western Mainline from London Paddington to Penzance and sit either side of Tiverton Parkway station. Both stations closed in 1964 and both towns have grown in population since then and are the largest settlements unserved by a rail station between Exeter and Taunton.

Richard Marsh, Director of Place - Mid Devon District Council, said: "It is great to see that the considerable time and effort invested by officers and members of Mid Devon and Somerset West and Taunton Councils is paying off and this next stage of project development marks another important milestone. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners to realise the goal of the re-opening of Cullompton railway station in 2025."

Alison Blom-Cooper, Assistant Director of Strategic Place and Planning at Somerset West and Taunton Council, said: "This is a significant milestone following a number of years of hard work and collaboration, and we welcome the expertise and experience that Network Rail will bring in leading the project from this point through to delivery."

"SWT will have a continuing role in working with Network Rail and other stakeholders to ensure that wider land-use, access, master-planning and community issues can be looked at holistically."

"We look forward to seeing this long-held aspiration for the community of Wellington become a reality."

This latest funding comes from the Government's Restoring Your Railway programme and follows more than £40 million of Government investment last year to support the [reopening of the Dartmoor Line](#) which was the first of the Government's Restoring Your Railway schemes to return to service.

Rebecca Pow, MP for Taunton Deane, said: "I pledged to work to bring a rail station to Wellington when I was first elected to Parliament in 2015; and the prospect of a station is fast becoming a reality I am delighted to say. Working at Government level and with stakeholders as co-chair of the Somerset and Devon Rail group the project was one of 10 schemes fast tracked by the Department of Transport."

"The latest welcome allocation of £5m has just been received to develop the detailed business case which sets us on a pathway for a potential opening in 2025 which is tremendously exciting."

"The station will bring multiple benefits including improved connectivity, business opportunities and crucially will decarbonise our transport network. My campaign for a cycleway linking Wellington and Taunton will also help people to reduce reliance on cars and encourage active and safe travel by bike to the proposed station."

Neil Parish, MP for Tiverton and Honiton said: “As joint chair of The Devon and Somerset Metro Rail Group, I’m thrilled the metro project continues to progress at pace. I greatly welcome the £5 million of development funding provided by the Government which will refine the details and business case for rebuilding Cullompton railway station.

“The extension of the Devon Metro is crucial for unlocking potential growth across Devon: creating new opportunities for local businesses and providing an invaluable route for commuters and students.

“It will also help our efforts to protect the environment, easing congestion along the M5 corridor and supporting sustainable travel.

“Reopening the station has been a key election commitment of mine since becoming an MP, and I will continue to work with Mid Devon District Council, Network Rail, and my joint chair, Rebecca Pow MP, to ensure we remain on track for success.”

Matthew Barnes, GWR Head of Strategic Service Development, said: “We are excited to support this progress on the new stations for Cullompton and Wellington, which are large communities undergoing significant expansion and could really benefit from rail services.

“The development work builds on the introduction by GWR of more through trains between Cardiff and Penzance in December 2021, providing many services that could serve the new stations in the future.”

Photo credit: Network Rail