DARLINGTON 2025
- A MODERN RAIL HUB FOR A MODERN ECONOMY
FOREWORD
Councillor Bill Dixon

The Tees Valley is where the modern passenger railway was born, when on 27 September 1825 George Stephenson’s locomotion number one left Darlington for Stockton carrying passengers.

In 2025 we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of this globally significant event, and showcase to visitors from across the world the same ambition and ingenuity that has positioned Darlington and the Tees Valley at the heart of industrial Britain ever since.

We hold the same convictions as our forebears – that fast efficient passenger and freight rail services are key to economic growth. We’ve worked with key stakeholders including Network Rail and VTEC to develop a vision for the regeneration of the east coast mainline at Darlington.

Our vision will unlock improved speeds, increased capacity and more reliable national and local rail services, remove restrictions, and offer scope for significant commercial development and investment.

These improvements will enable significant economic growth across Tees Valley as well as greatly improving rail connections across the area.

As Darlington is known far and wide as the birthplace of the passenger railway – it is now time to secure its place in the future of rail transport for future generations.

Darlington station was built in 1887 and the town continued to grow and thrive around it.

When the Victorians built stations, they saw them as statements of civic pride and a place where people and trade come together – that’s still true today.

The Darlington Station Growth Hub project will keep Darlington at the forefront of modern travel with the benefits rippling out across the wider Tees Valley, the North East, North Yorkshire and UK.

This will be in addition to what has already been delivered at Feethams leisure complex, the CPI national Biologics Centre, Business Central and Central Park Science and Enterprise Park.

We will work to ensure that:
• By 2018 The Darlington project will create knock-on improvements across Tees Valley, with fast regular services connecting Middlesbrough, Stockton, Redcar, Hartlepool and North Yorkshire.
• By 2025 Darlington Station rail improvements have unlocked the capacity constraints at Darlington South Junction, allowing economic growth throughout the Tees Valley.
• By 2025 journey time to Manchester will have been cut by 45 minutes to 70 minutes.
• In 2033 High Speed Rail has knocked 52 minutes off the journey from Darlington to Birmingham and 28 minutes from the journey to London.

For the first time in history Darlington is less than two hours from London.

“Network Rail and Transport for the North are encouraged to recognise the importance of the Darlington Station as the key rail gateway for the Tees Valley – at the heart of a commercial regeneration scheme – and to investigate the need for the station redevelopment to be included in the programmes for 2019-24 to maximise the growth potential of transformational rail packages such as HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.”

The Rt Hon the Lord Heseltine CH

In 1825 George Stephenson’s ‘Locomotion No1’ left Darlington to travel to Stockton, marking the birth of the modern passenger railway.

Councillor Bill Dixon, Leader of Darlington Borough Council and Chair of the Tees Valley Transport Committee

DARLINGTON’S RAIL STORY
As well as ambitious plans for a £150 million investment to revitalise Darlington Station – creating a welcoming and comfortable environment for 21st Century travellers – the project will see improvements across the town.

The station design honours the heritage of the building, its history and stature while modernising facilities, opening it up as the gateway to the Tees Valley.

By tackling the current infrastructure constraints of the East Coast Main Line, Darlington will be open to prospects coming out of the new northern franchise and pacer replacements, such as better opportunities for freight moving east and west from Teesport.

The Station Growth Hub underpins the transport ambition for the Tees Valley. When combined with a major upgrade to the Northallerton to Middlesbrough rail line and Middlesbrough station improvements, it will release the opportunity to provide better local rail services in the Tees Valley and better connect them into the National Rail Network.

The project also includes plans for new commercial, residential and retail developments that will make the most of the advantages created by fast, direct trains to London, Edinburgh, Leeds and Newcastle – creating a modern rail hub for a modern economy.

The wider Tees Valley economy is made up of 16,500 businesses who together contribute £12.5 billion to the national economy. Key growth sectors include advanced manufacturing, process, chemicals and energy, logistics, health and biologics, digital and creative and business and professional services. Investment in Darlington Station and the rail infrastructure will generate further opportunities and growth in these sectors.

Darlington Station has a major role to play in the economic growth of the North as a ‘touch point’ for the planned HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail network.

All elements of the project - and the three entrances at Parkgate, Victoria Road and Neasham Road – are linked together by improved public realm making the station interchange a pleasant and welcoming environment.
“HS2 can be transformational for the economy of the Tees Valley and put Darlington at the heart of a dynamic new economic corridor”

David Robinson, Chair of PD Ports

Unlocking constraints at Darlington is a priority to realise the ambitions for the national rail network.

Better local train services will support the 25,000 extra jobs and £2.8 billion boost to the economy created by the Tees valley Strategic Economic Plan 2025

Delivery by 2025 - the 200th anniversary of Darlington as the birthplace of passenger railways - will showcase the town and the wider Tees Valley to visitors from across the world. It will show the same ambition and ingenuity that has placed the North East at the heart of industrial Britain ever since.
It is an exciting time for Rail with new franchises, new rolling stock and new ambition to transform rail in the UK through HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

With rail demand forecast to grow vastly our partners recognise the need to resolve the impending constraints at Darlington Station.

All local services currently have to cross the East Coast Mainline to serve the station. This causes conflict between local services and national services - reducing the capacity on the East Coast Mainline. That means it’s not possible to increase services or to have an efficient interchange between local and regional services. This is a significant barrier to an efficient rail system in the Tees Valley.

Darlington Station is the Gateway Station to the Tees Valley and has a wider catchment from the North East and North Yorkshire making it a regionally important Station.

Action is needed if we are to overcome these issues and improvements at Darlington are a national priority if we are to take advantage of the exciting times ahead.

Our plan for a ‘Darlington Station Growth Hub: A Modern Rail Hub for a Modern Economy’ – sets out a vision that aligns all partners in a plan to resolve these infrastructure problems – and a wider ambitious plan for regeneration of local Tees Valley rail services.

“Regions are using their local knowledge to identify local strengths and work out how the improved connectivity HS2 will deliver can take those strengths to a different level.”

David Higgins, Chairman, HS2 Limited

WHAT WILL BE DELIVERED

The opportunities unlocking the potential for better transport will create are huge for Tees Valley, the North East and the UK economy.

The statistics shown here highlight just some of the reasons the project is needed.

WHAT WILL BE DELIVERED

Up to £1 BN lifetime value

1,500 new homes

3,000+ direct and indirect jobs

98,500 SQ M commercial space

£130M annual GVA boost

£1,500

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HIGH SPEED TO THE FUTURE

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BUILD IT ONCE | BUILD IT NOW | READY FOR HS2 AND NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL
HS2 SERVICES

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NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL JOURNEY TIME

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Why We Need to Act Now

A sharp increase in demand for rail services is expected by 2020 and in 20 years demand is expected to double.

Our current rail infrastructure won’t cope and improvements have to be made in time for HS2. We say do it once and do it now.

The improvements will mean better access to national routes as well as better connections within the Tees Valley - including new stops along routes.

Changing Britain: HS2 says:

“With faster journeys and opportunities for extra capacity, HS2 will better link the advanced manufacturing, bio-pharmaceuticals and energy industries of the Tees Valley with clusters and innovation hubs in the East and West Midlands.

“By connecting the Tees Valley swiftly to Birmingham and Heathrow airports, HS2 offers the potential for domestic growth as well as international expansion.”
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