

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

20TH JANUARY 2022

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture, Cllr Jim Beall

THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY (S&DR) BICENTENARY

SUMMARY

The Stockton & Darlington Railway extended along a 26mile corridor from the coalfields of County Durham down to the dockside in Stockton. The rails, bridges, tunnels and buildings were not the innovation that changed the world, nor was the use of steam power, but the combination of locomotive steam with a line open to the public for the movement of themselves or their goods, was unique. Opened on September 27th 1825, the Stockton & Darlington Railway connected places, people, communities and ideas. Its impact was transformational and far reaching, creating a new paradigm for travel and transport.

Stockton Borough Council, Darlington Borough Council, Tees Valley Combined Authority and Durham County Council have been working with Historic England, Network Rail, the Friends of SDR and others, to develop a connected set of visitor sites, experiences and interpretation that will become a permanent visitor attraction. This ribbon of landscape and buildings, linking Locomotion Museum in Shildon, Darlington's Rail Heritage Quarter, Preston Hall Museum & Grounds and Stockton's Riverside, will be launched in 2025 with a vibrant, inspiring and ambitious programme of activity that celebrates the 200th anniversary of the birth of the modern passenger railway.

This paper outlines the range of activity it is hoped can be achieved and seeks support in principle for the investment required to ensure Stockton Borough is recognized, visited and celebrated for its contribution to rail heritage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To approve the outline of proposed celebrations of the S&DR Bicentenary and support the identification of resources through the MTFP process.

DETAIL

1. The 100th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway was celebrated by huge crowds, events took place in London, York and Darlington and Stockton's Mayor hosted a visit by the Duke of York (later crowned King George VI). The 150th, in 1975, generated equally massive crowds as a cavalcade of locomotives, illustrating 150 years of rail, was

brought together at Shildon. There is global interest in the 200th anniversary and the media and tourism potential is significant.

2. The core group of partners have been collaborating for 5 years to develop plans for the S&DR Bicentenary. Under the auspice of the Tees Valley Combined Authority, a powerful Rail Heritage Partnership Board has been established, combining the key local authorities, national rail partners, heritage agencies, academic institutions, visitor attractions and community organisations. Stockton Borough Council's Director for the Environment, Culture, Events & Leisure is Chair of the Partnership Board and has been playing a pivotal role in developing the relationships and the plans necessary to ensure the Bicentenary befits the scale and importance of the anniversary and delivers a coherent and impactful visitor experience.
3. The Partnership has commissioned major pieces of work to provide the foundation for the development of the permanent visitor attraction and the promotion of the Bicentenary. These include a full access audit for the length of the line, historic significance and condition surveys of buildings and structures, marketing and interpretation frameworks, feasibility studies into live steam and early locomotive exhibitions, and an authoritative independent Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) to calculate the potential value of the S&DR to the Tees Valley and County Durham. The EIA remains is DRAFT at the time of writing this Cabinet report.
4. The draft EIA demonstrates a potential across the Durham and Tees Valley area of 2310 net additional temporary jobs in 2025 and 410 net additional permanent jobs after the Bicentenary, a Gross Value added of £120m and a wider impact value of £227m.
5. The S&DR story is nationally and internationally significant and Government and national agencies are keen to promote activity across the country and overseas.
6. The 200th anniversary in 2025 will attract visitors from across the world and establish the profile and identity of the S&DR visitor attraction in all its parts, celebrating our heritage, changing perceptions about the area, and driving long term visitor economy growth. The EIA highlights a potential 13% increase in overnight visits and a 27% increase in international visitors, compared to pre-covid benchmarks.
7. The Bicentenary will foster connections between communities in the Tees Valley and County Durham, encouraging pride and optimism, and highlighting the vital role of innovation and entrepreneurialism to our economy now and in the future.
8. The work of the Partnership and other stakeholders will seek to inspire communities and businesses, mobilizing them to seize the opportunity of the 200th anniversary of a world changing event. It is important that the Bicentenary celebrations are inclusive, accessible and open - allowing any group or individual to generate activity and engaging a diverse audience in the widest possible celebration of the S&DR.
9. With only a few years to go, much work has been done to lay foundations for the 2025 activity, but there is a need to increase our capacity to deliver and move from concepts to confirmed programmes. Feasibility studies have been produced for the major strands of work, these include estimates for costs and potential impacts. Some sources of partner funding are confirmed but many are still subject to further application and assessment processes.
10. For example, on behalf of the partnership, Darlington Borough Council led an application for National Heritage Lottery Funding (NHLF) for capital investment and community participation work from Stockton to Shildon. This will add considerable capacity to the work of the Friends of Stockton Darlington Railway and provide staff to work with communities in

Stockton Borough, Darlington Borough and County Durham. NHLF recently confirmed stage 1 success for the £2.87m bid.

11. The programme outlined in this report is not confirmed, much of it will be subject to the confirmation of resources from across a wide range of stakeholders. However, it is an achievable programme and it shows the potential scale and reach of the bicentenary.
12. Most of the programme touches the whole of the 26-mile corridor and costs for each aspect are being shared by the various partners, proportionate to the scale of impact and costs in each area. The aspects of the programme taking place in or directly benefiting the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, is estimated to cost between £1.3 and £1.9m. This includes an element of capital toward the creation of an 'engine shed' within which it is hoped to display the Stockton element of the early locomotives exhibition. This feature is still subject to feasibility work. A temporary structure is believed to be achievable within the lower range of the programme cost estimates, a permanent structure or a structure which incorporates some permanent elements would be dependent on additional external funding.
13. Confirmation of exact costs and levels of matching investment will emerge at different times for different elements of the programme, but an overall commitment in principle is required in order to allow further work.
14. In some cases, such as the loans of early steam locomotives for exhibition in Stockton, we need to enter contracts now that allow time for the complex legal and logistics to take place. In other cases, such as the community participation and education programmes, we need to establish resource parameters but can undertake more detailed work before contractually committing resources.
15. The S&DR Railway Heritage Partnership is seeking to deliver a core programme for 2025, built around the following;
 - **Live steam and motive power**, journeys into the region, within the region and along the line of the first journey from Shildon to Stockton
 - **Exhibitions of early steam locomotives** from around the world, brought together for the first time
 - **Education and schools' projects** to understand and celebrate the S&DR and use the innovations of the early 1800s to inspire interest in technology, engineering and invention
 - **Knowledge sharing & conferences**, attracting national and international contributors, highlighting the many different social, cultural and technological impacts that railways have had and the contributions that transport innovation could make to environmental sustainability
 - **Community events**, parades, celebrations and installations illustrating some of the ways in which communities and localities were changed by S&DR
 - **Large scale outdoor arts and street theatre** creating moments of mass celebration and spectacle that are distinctive and rooted.
16. The outline programme is attached in **Appendix A**.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. This report highlights a likely cost for the delivery of the programme proposed for the S&DR Bicentenary in the range of £1.3 - £1.9m. Work to secure financial contributions from other agencies is ongoing but it is expected that a provisional allocation c.£1.3m is required as the basis for further work. The identification of resources will be covered in subsequent Medium Term Financial Plan reports.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no direct legal implications arising from the report

RISK ASSESSMENT

19. Existing management/operational systems and procedures are sufficient to control and minimise the risks arising.

WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

20. The celebration of the S&DR Bicentenary is expected to involve residents or groups from every ward.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

'The Stockton & Darlington Railway - The Railway that got the World on Track'
Published by the Friends of Stockton & Darlington Railway, 2021.

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Appendix A

Draft Outline Programme for the Stockton & Darlington Railway Bicentenary 2025

As described in the main body of the report, the intention is to deliver a core programme of activity suitable for a broad audience, rooted in the historic events but relevant to family audiences and linked to contemporary society and future economic opportunities.

The partners acknowledge the widespread sense of ownership of the S&DR story and the core programme could provide a platform for businesses and communities to stage their own activities.

The core programme is divided into 6 sections;

1. Live steam and motive power,
2. Exhibitions of early steam locomotives
3. Education and schools' projects
4. Knowledge sharing & conferences,
5. Community events,
6. Large scale outdoor arts and street theatre

1. Live steam and motive power

If we achieve our ambitions, during 2025, across the country, people will see steam trains on more lines and on more occasions than in any other year since 1975. Steam hauled charter trains and special trains will bring people into the region and heritage railways across the UK will celebrate the bicentenary.

It is hoped that a steam shuttle service will run between Stockton and Shildon, stopping at Darlington and crossing the Skerne Bridge. This regular service will create both a means for the visitor to see all of the S&DR attractions, and an exciting experience in itself. Heritage Railways like the Weardale Railway will provide trains that extend the visitor experience into the dramatic landscapes of the region.

A selection of scheduled trains will be turned over to historic steam, with locomotives like Tornado, Prince of Wales or Flying Scotsman replacing their modern units. This was achieved with great success in 2017 when services were pulled by Tornado on the reopened Settle & Carlisle line.

The potential to create temporary, short distance, narrow gauge steam operations on selected sites is also being investigated. These installations would provide the opportunity for historic steam locomotives to be seen in motion, and ridden on, in places where there are no accessible or usable permanent rail lines.

At the heart of the celebrations of the September 27th anniversary, the partners hope to recreate the inaugural journey, from Witton Park, via Shildon and Darlington, to Stockton, using the replica Locomotion Number 1. Mirroring the 1925 event, the loco, tender, chaldron waggons and Directors' coach would travel from Shildon to Stockton Station. The use of modern communications and drone equipment will enable this spectacle to be seen anywhere in the world in real time.

The National Railway Museum's Locomotion museum at Shildon and the Darlington Rail Heritage Quarter, incorporating the Head of Steam Museum and the A1 Trust facilities, will present engines under steam on demonstration lines and in static displays. These will enhance and animate the extensive collections of engines from every era of rail travel, uniquely brought together for 2025.

The rail story is an international one and the S&DR bicentenary will be followed by equivalent anniversaries in places like America, Germany and India, where railways changed the social,

cultural and economic landscape. There is the potential to use the worldwide interest in the years leading up to 2025 to generate audience and visitors for the UK celebrations.

The major S&DR anniversary celebrations in 1925 and 1975 enjoyed Royal patronage, it is hoped that a 'Royal Train', perhaps pulled by the Gresley class P2 'Prince of Wales', currently being built by the A1 Trust, might bring a party of Royal guests to the region at the time of the anniversary in 2025.

2. Early locos and their successors

Between April and October 2025, a unique collection of more than 30 early locomotives from the UK and beyond will be brought together for the first time, presented as a linked set of exhibits and installations across several sites. Original engines and replicas (many of which are themselves over 100 years old) will show how the locomotive evolved. Iconic engines like Puffing Billy, Catch Me Who Can and Coalbrookdale, will be brought together with engines from overseas like Marc Seguin from France and a competitor in the 1829 Rainhill Trials, Novelty. French, German and Austrian locos, many designed or built by Robert Stephenson & Co, will be shown alongside the treasures of the National Railway Museum collection and loans from other institutions.

The engines at Shildon and Darlington will be housed in permanent facilities, including the new engine shed at Locomotion and the newly refurbished Carriage Works in Darlington's Rail Heritage Quarter.

Subject to funding and ongoing feasibility, Stockton is aiming to create a temporary 'engine shed' purpose built for the bicentenary. Ideally located within the Waterfront development, where S&DR wagons unloaded onto waiting ships, the high-roofed structure would be walled-in during the exhibition, controlling the environment in which we display the historic engines. Afterwards, the structure could be opened up as a covered area for future events, gatherings and performances. If the permanent element is not achievable, and entirely temporary structure will be installed, either on the Riverside or on the high Street, for the spring and summer of 2025.

Within the Waterfront development, it is hoped that the paving and surface treatment can reveal the 1820's dock edge and the outline of a sailing collier typical of the period, helping to tell the story of the importance of Stockton as a port and the boost the S&DR gave to that trade. This work is still subject to an ongoing design and feasibility process.

In York, at the National Railway Museum, a major expansion and redisplay will include some of the most iconic engines in our national collection. The exhibition will also include early diesels and diesel electrics, illustrating the evolution from 1800 steam to the modern electric trains from Hitachi, which are being built in Newton Aycliffe.

3. Schools and education

People are proud of the S&DR and the role the region played in the industrial revolution. We want a generation to feel part of the bicentenary, to understand its 19th Century context and be inspired to engage with contemporary engineering and innovation, to drive regeneration in the coming years.

We aim to touch every school along the 26-mile corridor, providing a core teaching resource as well as support for the development of special projects and events in individual schools. Where there is an appetite in the schools to do so, we hope to connect groups from a number of schools, echoing the connections between communities that were made possible by the S&DR.

Celebrations in schools will link to wider community celebrations, providing opportunities for schools to be part of village and town celebrations and parades and larger gatherings.

4. Community projects

As with the schools programme, we hope to stimulate trigger dozens of mini carnivals, parades, and celebrations throughout the spring and summer of 2025. Some communities will want to create features and installations that illustrate the ways in which their area and its residents were changed by S&DR. Such features would add to the web of information and interpretation features that are connected by the S&DR story and revealed to visitors in physical and online formats.

The Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway have passionate local groups all along the 26-mile corridor and are already working with other local people to promote access to and awareness of the S&DR line and buildings. This activity could provide a foundation for the celebrations planned for 2025, enabling local groups to develop and deliver their own distinctive elements.

The S&DR story could be a prompt for communities to reconnect, using trains, footpaths and cycleways, supporting our efforts to promote sustainable transport and linking attractions and tourism businesses from Shildon to Saltburn.

5. Knowledge sharing & conferences

In 2025, Durham and the Tees Valley will host a number of conferences, symposium and trade fair events attracting national and international participants. These will promote understanding of S&DR as the first public railway and illuminate the many different social, cultural and technological impacts that railways have had across the globe.

Building on the first 'Bright Ideas Gathering', in Durham in 2021, in partnership with Thinking Digital and Durham University, the conferences will focus on innovation and imagination, reflecting the first railway pioneers.

In the context of climate change, it is expected that one or more of the events will explore how rail technology and public transport innovation can play an increasing role in carbon reduction. The conferences will also explore the opportunities and challenges for connectivity in contemporary places.

6. Outdoor theatre and arts events

The S&DR bicentenary provides a rare opportunity to promote positive images of Durham and the Tees Valley to a worldwide audience. Footage of steam hauled trains in key locations will undoubtedly be picked up by media covering the bicentenary, but we don't just want evocations of the past. If we are to promote contemporary public facilities and visitor attractions, we need to create spectacle in sites that are important now.

Within the region, for residents and visitors, we want to create iconic and memorable moments of mass celebration. The use of outdoor theatre, visual arts and pyrotechnics has the potential to create those moments.

The partners are currently planning two linked afternoon into evening events, taking place in Darlington and Stockton. In each case a procession or parade will bring community and school groups together, linking earlier community events, building the sense of occasion and attracting audiences. The form of these events is not yet determined, but we aim to bring crowds together in large public spaces for major performances, possibly consisting of a sequence of smaller elements leading to a climactic finale.

In September 1825, at the end of the inaugural journey, the passengers were escorted by a band of musicians. The band, passengers and several hundred spectators marched to Stockton Town Hall where a banquet was held. That sense of the widespread, excited and spontaneous response to the Railway is likely to be reflected in aspects of the 2025 street theatre commissions and community arts projects.

In Shildon, at Locomotion museum, an installation is proposed, taking a cue from the Lumiere Festival, forming the basis of a large-scale event and leaving a permanent feature as a legacy of the bicentenary. A range of agencies and partners are expected to also create artistic and dramatic events throughout the year, building on the rich and diverse events and festivals ecology that already exists in the region.