

DfT Reveals Rejected Rail Restoration Bids – Joy for some, sorrow for others!

THE Department for Transport has named the schemes which have succeeded and those that have failed to qualify in the first round of its railway funding competition. It had already revealed the successful bids which have qualified for a share in a £500 million pot which will help to pay for further development. Table 1 shows the successful bidders:

- Reinstatement of rail access to Devizes via a new station at Lydeaway
- Re-open of Wellington and Cullompton stations
- Introduce passenger services on the Totton-Fawley (Waterside) line
- Re-open the Meir station between Stoke-On-Trent and North Staffordshire
- Reintroduce passenger services on the Barrow Hill line between Sheffield and Chesterfield
- Reintroduce passenger services on the Leicester to Burton (Ivanhoe) line
- Reinstatement of branch lines on the Isle of Wight
- Reinstatement of the passing loop between St Albans Abbey and Watford Junction (Abbey Line)
- Reinstatement of the Bury-Heywood-Rochdale lines
- Reintroduce passenger services between Clitheroe and Hellifield and explore freight options

These comprise passenger services between Leicester and Burton and also between Bury-Heywood-Rochdale, Clitheroe and Hellifield, and Sheffield and Chesterfield via Barrow Hill, along with reopened stations at Meir near Stoke-on-Trent, Wellington and Cullompton, and a restored passing loop on the Watford Junction-St Albans Abbey line, as well as new passenger services on the Totton-Fawley line, the reopening of branch lines on the Isle of Wight and a new station at Lydeaway, to serve Devizes. For those schemes which have been shortlisted, this is only the start. The money can now be used to develop a business case for each scheme, with the backing of local politicians and business groups.

Schemes ruled out, at least this time round, include an orbital passenger rail route between Stockport and Ashton, Keswick to Penrith, East Didsbury to Stockport, Maldon to Witham, Barnsley to Wakefield via Royston, Beverley-York, Oswestry to Gobowen, reinstatement of the Peaks and Dales Railway, Newton Abbot to Heathfield, Lewes to Uckfield, Eridge to Tunbridge Wells, Tavistock-Okehampton, Wyndham-Dereham, Stratford upon Avon to Honeybourne, and Bodmin Parkway to Wadebridge. Also left standing are suggestions for new or restored stations at Midge Hall, Ferryhill, Waverley (Yorks.), St Anne's Park (Bristol), Belford (Northumberland), Goodrington, Churston and Charfield.

Some of the rejected proposals concerned improvements on existing lines. These include Truro-Falmouth Docks, Par-Newquay, Nottingham and Leicester via Syston and Loughborough from Melton Mowbray, more secondary services on the Great Western Main Line and increased capacity west of Bristol.