

Alnmouth to Alnwick on the train

A rail line linking Alnmouth to Alnwick was opened 150 years ago will make a come back as permission has been granted to reinstate the line.

The branch was one of the last legs in the north-east of England to be lost as part of the Beeching Axe in 1968.

The line will run from Alnmouth to the Lionheart Enterprise Park with a short cycle and walking path being laid to complete the journey into Alnwick.

Permission was granted on Thursday 1 July 2010.

The Aln Valley Railway Trust and Society will recreate the link to give people a more convenient means of getting to Alnwick from all over the country.

Alnmouth continues to be fed by East Coast Main Line Company, but bringing back the link to Alnwick could build upon the hundreds of thousands of tourists that already visit Alnwick's castle, gardens and other attractions.

Equally, the line will provide a commuter link for the residents of Alnwick.

Steam-hauled service

Re-opening the original line all the way into the centre of Alnwick has proved difficult, partly because of cost and partly because a supermarket has been built on the old track route.

Instead, the line from Alnmouth will end just short of Alnwick at the Lionheart Enterprise Park, with a walking and cycle path being offered to complete the rest of the journey.

The line used to run over 30 passenger trains a day up until 1960 and was one of the last lines to operate a steam-hauled service.

As the railway was originally a double track, and will be rebuilt as a single track only, there will be room to create the path which will be safely fenced off from the railway.

The project will also involve trains running over the seven-arch 1850 Cawledge viaduct.

Meanwhile, a bus route is available from Alnmouth to Alnwick - Arriva 518.

Work is hoped to start as soon as the end of the year.

Barter Books

Alnwick's original station was originally opened on 5 August, 1850 and was based to the west of the present site.

After calls for an improvement in facilities, the new station, which was designed by architect William Bell, was built at a cost of £10,444-10s-7d and was opened on 5 September 1887.

When the line was axed in 1968 the original Alnwick station was transformed into a second-hand bookstore, Barter Books, which now brings in many tourists itself.

The shop keeps much of the station's heritage alive through murals, original rooms and a small train set.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/local/tyne/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_8777000/8777285.stm

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