

Railways serving Durham City

The first station to be opened in Durham itself was the (then) goods station at Gilesgate. At least 5 other railways and stations had been previously attempted to contact Durham with the new passenger railway system ¹².

1. In 1829 The Clarence Railway Co wanted to extend a line to a station near the Racecourse
2. In 1834 the Durham and Sunderland Railway proposed a line through Hetton, Moorsley and Sherburn, the station was to be sited at the top of Gilesgate. Plans changed to one for a line through Broomside and Shincliffe to a station near Hallgarth Street. The line opened as far as Shincliffe in 1839 and later extended through Houghall to Croxdale pit. Further extensions towards the Browney and onto Bishop Auckland were never carried out. The line remained in use until Shincliffe station closed when Elvet station was opened in 1893. Durham Elvet Station opened to provide a service to Sunderland and Hartlepool. This station at Old Elvet ceased to regular passengers in 1931, all trains in 1954, and was demolished in 1963 to make way for the Magistrates Court ³⁹.

The station in Shincliffe was opposite to the Railway Tavern on the road to Coxhoe.

3. In 1834 the Durham Junction Railway adapted then abandoned a scheme for the line from Chilton Moor to Gilesgate.
4. In 1834 the Hartlepool Dock and Railway Co obtained powers to extend their line to a station at the top of Gilesgate by two different routes but did not use them.
5. In 1837 the Great North of England Railway suggested a line from Thrislington (near West Cornforth Colliery) to Newcastle passing near Durham, through Shincliffe, Old Durham and Frankland. The station was to be sited at about the present site of St Hilds reached by a short branch line from Pelaw Wood. Objection raised was that the Railway would be detrimental to the moral of the students.
6. In 1842, the Newcastle and Darlington Junction Railway Co sought parliament sanction for a line from Shincliffe to Rainton with branch to Durham. The latter was the first station in Durham City and opened at Gilesgate on 15th April 1844¹². Bradshaw's for 1845 shows a daily Durham to London service of seven trains each way with a change at Belmont with a journey time of 10-11 hours.
7. In 1846, Leeds and Thirsk railway Co wanted to lay line from Thrislington to Newcastle through western and southern outskirts of Durham. Three tunnels would have been required under Shincliffe Bank, under Mountjoy Farm, and from the fields near Potters Bank to a point between the Peth and the Avenue.
8. In 1857 the present Durham Railway station was first opened by the North Eastern Railway Co on a branch from Auckland Junction at Belmont to Bishop Auckland. The current viaduct at the end of North Road was built at the same time.
9. In 1868 the Team Valley line was opened.
10. In 1872, the connection from Durham to Ferryhill via Croxdale was opened with the Team Valley line became the main north to south route. This final connection enabled north – south trains to call direct into Durham City without the need for a branch line connection.

Date	First Class	Third Class	Journey time
1934 31	single 53/1 return 106/2 Tourist Class (May to October) 97/6	single 31/10 return 63/8 Tourist Class (May to October) 58/6	6 hours
1959 32	Single 63/9	Single 42/6	5 hours 30 minutes

