



Innovation and training for a sustainable rail industry

Background

The Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle (DRIIVe) will be a new, modern innovation and training centre focused on the rail industry. The centre will provide space for research, training, and commercial activity to help make rail transport more efficient and more sustainable. Chesterfield Borough Council, Barrow Hill Ltd, and University of Derby have delivered this project.



The challenge

There is growing demand in the UK for specialist facilities that connect directly to the main rail network, allowing for **hands-on research, testing, and training**.

DRIIVe will meet this need by **providing modern research and training spaces** where industry and universities can work together to:

- Develop **cleaner, more energy-efficient rail technologies**
- Support the shift to **decarbonised, digital rail systems**
- Provide **training and skills development** for people entering or progressing in the rail and manufacturing sectors

What's innovative about this project?

DRIIVe will include flexible space, including:

- A **digital lab** for innovation and design
- Classrooms and workshops for **technical training**
- Direct mainline rail access — allowing trains to come on site for inspection, testing, and modification

The centre will bring together engineers, researchers, and businesses to **solve industry challenges and develop new technologies**.

Why this matters for the East Midlands

DRIIVe will be a **key driver of innovation, skills, and green growth** in the East Midlands. It supports regional goals in advanced manufacturing, clean energy and decarbonisation, digital innovation, and inclusive skills development. The project will help build a **stronger local economy, create new job opportunities, and support a low-carbon future for the UK rail industry**.

“DRIIVe is a really exciting project for our borough that will **encourage growth in the rail sector** and ensures that **local people can gain the skills they need** to benefit from this growth.” - Councillor Tricia Gilby, Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council

“With our rail innovation centre, we are **positioned as leaders in supporting sustainable rail technologies**, enhancing our reputation and operational capabilities within the East Midlands region.” - Professor Mark Robinson, Chairman of Barrow Hill Engine Shed Society

Find out more about the project

[Visit the Chesterfield Borough Council website](#)



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