# UK’s Derby works secures future with £430 million Elizabeth Line train contract



Work has commenced on a substantial £430 million contract to build ten new nine-car Aventra trains for London’s Elizabeth Line, securing the future of Britain’s last remaining train factory. The contract, awarded to French rail company Alstom, marks a significant moment in UK rail manufacturing history as it coincides with the 200th anniversary of the world's first passenger railway, which opened from Stockton-on-Tees to Darlington in 1825.

The new trains are being constructed at Alstom’s Derby Litchurch Lane Works, the only facility in Britain capable of designing, engineering, building, and testing trains entirely from scratch. The Derby works, established in 1876, has endured multiple ownership changes since privatisation in 1989 before being acquired by Alstom in 2021. Unlike other UK train plants, such as Hitachi’s facility in Newton Aycliffe, which primarily assembles components manufactured abroad, Derby maintains the capability to produce complete trains domestically.

The Elizabeth Line, operated by Transport for London, has seen unprecedented success since its opening in May 2022. With over 600 million passenger journeys recorded to date, it has rapidly become the busiest railway service in the UK. Daily ridership averages around 600,000 journeys, outstripping initial forecasts, and passenger demand has surged by approximately 40% between mid-2022 and late 2023. This growing demand prompted the extension of the fleet with the latest order of Aventra trains to maintain service levels and cater to future growth.

Alongside manufacturing, Alstom’s contract includes maintenance services for the Elizabeth Line trains until 2046, ensuring operational reliability and efficiency over the coming decades. The Derby plant’s unique role as the UK’s sole train-building facility for both domestic and export markets underscores its strategic importance to the British rail industry.

Andy Butters, managing director of the Derby factory, reflected on the significance of this moment, noting with poetic resonance how one of the world’s earliest locomotives, Locomotion No. 1, was recently showcased at the site, symbolising a full circle from the dawn of passenger rail travel to the manufacture of the country’s newest electric trains.

The Elizabeth Line has also played a broader socio-economic role by fostering regeneration and growth along its route. Areas such as Abbey Wood have witnessed new housing developments and employment opportunities emerging as a result of improved connectivity, demonstrating the transformative impact of modern rail infrastructure beyond mere transport.

This renewal and expansion of Britain’s rail manufacturing capabilities come after a period of uncertainty at the Derby works, which had faced job risks amid a shortage of orders. The new contract, therefore, represents not only a commercial success but also a vital preservation of manufacturing heritage and skilled employment in the UK rail sector.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c29986423x9o)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/06/14/2899107/0/en/alstom-sa-alstom-signs-a-430-million-contract-for-10-aventra-trains-with-associated-maintenance-for-the-elizabeth-line-in-london.html), [[3]](https://www.alstom.com/press-releases-news/2024/6/alstom-signs-eu430-million-contract-10-aventra-trains-associated-maintenance-elizabeth-line-london), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c29986423x9o)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2023/february/the-transformational-elizabeth-line-clocks-more-than-one-hundred-million-passenger-journeys%26lang%3Den), [[6]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2024/may/the-elizabeth-line-continues-to-transform-travel-in-london-on-its-two-year-anniversary), [[7]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2025/january/transformational-elizabeth-line-reaches-500-million-passenger-journeys)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/06/14/2899107/0/en/alstom-sa-alstom-signs-a-430-million-contract-for-10-aventra-trains-with-associated-maintenance-for-the-elizabeth-line-in-london.html), [[3]](https://www.alstom.com/press-releases-news/2024/6/alstom-signs-eu430-million-contract-10-aventra-trains-associated-maintenance-elizabeth-line-london), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c29986423x9o)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2023/february/the-transformational-elizabeth-line-clocks-more-than-one-hundred-million-passenger-journeys%26lang%3Den), [[6]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2024/may/the-elizabeth-line-continues-to-transform-travel-in-london-on-its-two-year-anniversary), [[7]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2025/january/transformational-elizabeth-line-reaches-500-million-passenger-journeys)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c29986423x9o)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/markets/article-15139517/Its-future-train-maker-Elizabeth-Line-order-rolls-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/06/14/2899107/0/en/alstom-sa-alstom-signs-a-430-million-contract-for-10-aventra-trains-with-associated-maintenance-for-the-elizabeth-line-in-london.html> - Alstom has signed a contract worth approximately €430 million to supply 10 new nine-car Aventra trains for London's Elizabeth line, along with maintenance services until 2046. The trains will be manufactured at Alstom's historic Derby Litchurch Lane Works, the only UK facility that designs, engineers, builds, and tests trains for both domestic and export markets. This contract aims to meet the growing passenger demand on the Elizabeth line, which continues to exceed expectations since its opening in 2022.
3. <https://www.alstom.com/press-releases-news/2024/6/alstom-signs-eu430-million-contract-10-aventra-trains-associated-maintenance-elizabeth-line-london> - Alstom has secured a €430 million contract to provide 10 new nine-car Aventra trains and associated maintenance services for London's Elizabeth line until 2046. The trains will be built at Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane Works, the UK's sole facility capable of designing, engineering, building, and testing trains for both domestic and export markets. This order is in response to the increasing passenger demand on the Elizabeth line, which has been higher than anticipated since its 2022 launch.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c29986423x9o> - Alstom has secured a £370 million contract to build 10 new nine-car Aventra trains for London's Elizabeth line, with associated maintenance until 2046. The manufacturing will take place at Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane factory, the only UK facility that designs, engineers, builds, and tests trains for both domestic and export markets. This contract follows a period of uncertainty at the Derby site, where over 1,300 jobs were at risk due to a shortage of orders.
5. <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2023/february/the-transformational-elizabeth-line-clocks-more-than-one-hundred-million-passenger-journeys%26lang%3Den> - Since its opening in May 2022, the Elizabeth line has surpassed 100 million passenger journeys, with approximately 600,000 journeys made each day. This makes it one of the busiest railways in the UK, exceeding initial expectations. The line has significantly improved transport connectivity across London and the South East, contributing to economic growth and regeneration in areas along its route.
6. <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2024/may/the-elizabeth-line-continues-to-transform-travel-in-london-on-its-two-year-anniversary> - Celebrating its two-year anniversary, the Elizabeth line has facilitated over 350 million journeys since its opening in May 2022. Passenger demand has grown by around 40% between June 2022 and October 2023, making it the fastest-growing railway in the UK. The line has also contributed to the development of new homes and employment opportunities along its route, particularly in areas like Abbey Wood.
7. <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2025/january/transformational-elizabeth-line-reaches-500-million-passenger-journeys> - The Elizabeth line has reached a significant milestone, with over 500 million passenger journeys made in its first two and a half years. This makes it the UK's busiest railway service. The line has also driven the creation of jobs and homes across its route, particularly in areas like Abbey Wood, contributing to regeneration and economic growth in these communities.