

Friends of the Derwent Valley Line

18 Holloway Road

Duffield

Derbyshire DE56 4FE

M: 07973 950 923

E: Rupert@railpr.com

W: fdvl.org.uk

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Dear Colleague

The Derwent Valley (Derby-Matlock) Rail Users' Strategy (RUS)

On behalf of the Friends of the Derwent Valley Line, I am pleased to provide you with a copy of our Rail User Strategy (RUS) for the route between Derby and Matlock, known as "The Derwent Valley Line". The RUS has been researched and compiled by the Friends' Steering Committee and produced along similar lines to the wider RUS's currently being produced by Network Rail.

The Friends were formed in the Autumn of 2004 by a number of regular commuters on the line who were concerned that current service levels were inadequate and that the full potential of the line was not being realised. Following a number of discussions with the (at that time) two train operators over the route (Central Trains and Midland Main Line) and the withdrawal of Midland Main Line services due to alleged weight problems with their new Meridian trains, the Friends felt that the potential for improving business on the line was being ignored by both the infrastructure owner and the train operators. As the line has been identified for designation as a "Community Line" under the Government's Community Rail Strategy, the Friends felt it appropriate to produce their own RUS for the line to be presented to Central Trains as part of the Community Rail Day on May 14th 2005.

As part of the preparation for the document, a number of surveys and passenger counts were carried out on most trains operating on the weekday service. As well as numbers using the services, origin and destination stations for journeys were noted and a travel pattern for regular users identified, particularly for those travelling beyond Derby. Opinions were also sought of regular commuters as to preferred times of travel to and from Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham and London. Tourist bodies such as Peak Rail, Wyvern Rail and the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site were also consulted on their aspirations for the line. All the local councils served by the line were consulted on future residential and commercial developments which would provide potential business growth for the line.

The RUS describes the line – the route, places served, population and employment/tourism locations in the area. An assessment of the geography of the route, particularly the limitations placed on alternative or competing forms of transport, is also included. To demonstrate the under-performing nature of the line, a comparison is made with the Exeter – Exmouth line, which serves similar communities, has a similar pattern of commuting, leisure and tourism use, has a similar rate of population growth, but performs four times better than the Derwent Valley line in terms of passenger numbers and revenue. The main difference between the two routes is that the Exmouth line has a frequent, regular service in spite of a high level of bus competition, whereas the Derwent Valley line does not. Statistics are provided from up to date industry sources.

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The Friends of the Derwent Valley Line is a voluntary group representing passengers and local communities along the Derby – Matlock Railway Line. Our aim is to work with Train Operating Companies, Government, the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership, and all other stakeholders who seek to increase ridership, improve services and enhance facilities on the Derwent Valley Line.

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Having concluded that the line is seriously under-performing, a number of issues of 'why' are considered in detail:

- Service reliability
- Inadequate timetable
- Infrastructure problems
- Engineering possessions\
- Bus substitution
- Revenue collection
- Access to stations

It then goes on to outline solutions to the above and in particular offering more appropriate timetables to induce growth and the infrastructure changes required to achieve to optimum timetable.

The suggested solutions are costed and it is clearly demonstrated that their implementation would give a potential revenue that exceeded the cost of implementation and operation i.e. the line would make a significant contribution to the National Network both as a feeder service and a revenue generator in its own right. The development of the line will also bring major social benefits to a major tourist and residential area that is currently suffering from serious road congestion and traffic pollution.


The first draft of the RUS was presented to Central Trains on May 13th at Derby Station and has been well received. The final version of the first edition was published in August 2005. The Derwent Valley Line RUS will be a dynamic document that will develop as initiatives between the Friends and the industry are carried out.

We believe that this line has enormous untapped potential both now and for the future and simply needs the careful application of the strategies such as those that we have put forward in this RUS to make the line fit, attractive, and self-financing for the future benefit of the growing numbers of travellers to and from this important and growing centre of innovation and excellence.

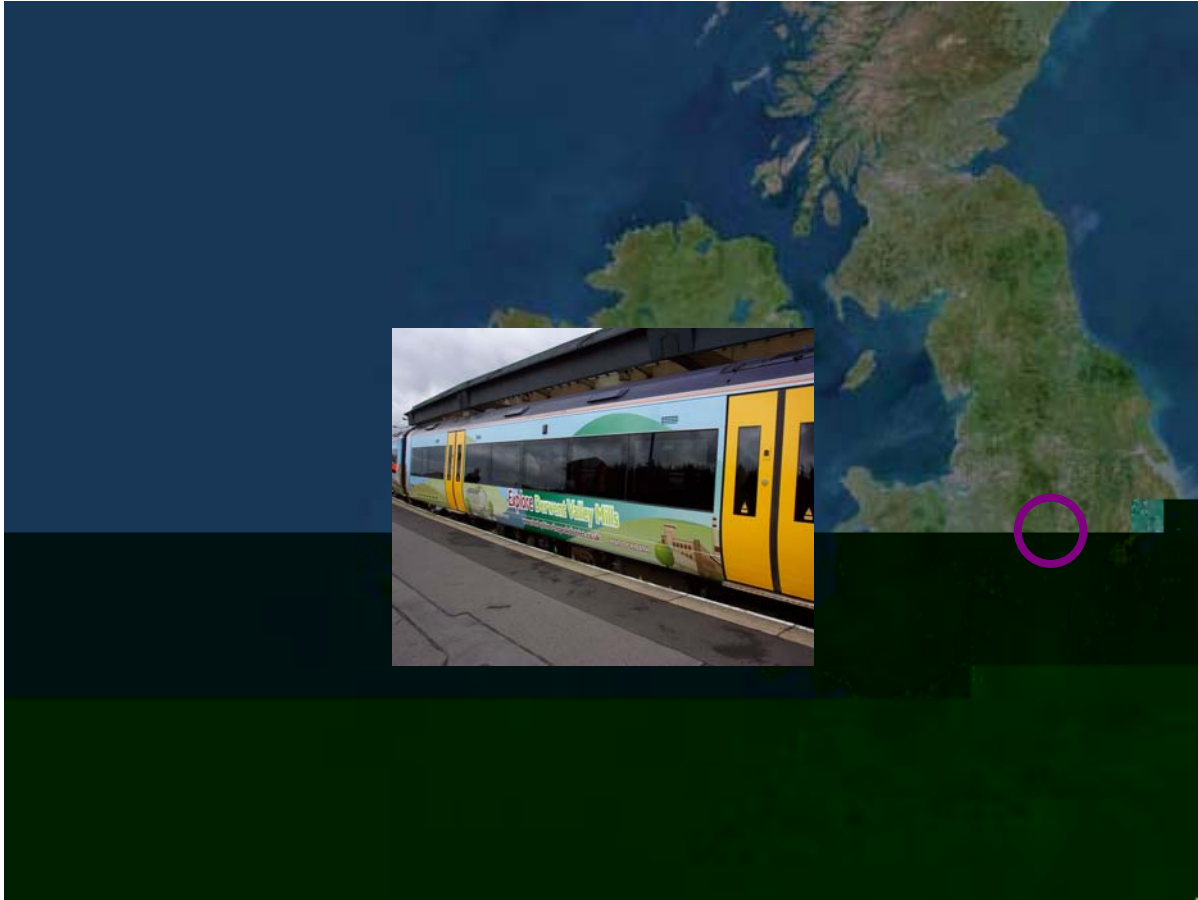
We ask you to spend some time reading the RUS and hope that you will support its proposals in every way that you can. Should you like to discuss this with us or raise any questions or points of detail, please don't hesitate to contact me or any members of the Committee of the Friends of the Derwent Valley.

Thank you for taking your time to read this letter and hopefully, the attached RUS.

Yours faithfully



Rupert Brennan Brown
Chairman
Friends of the Derwent Valley Line



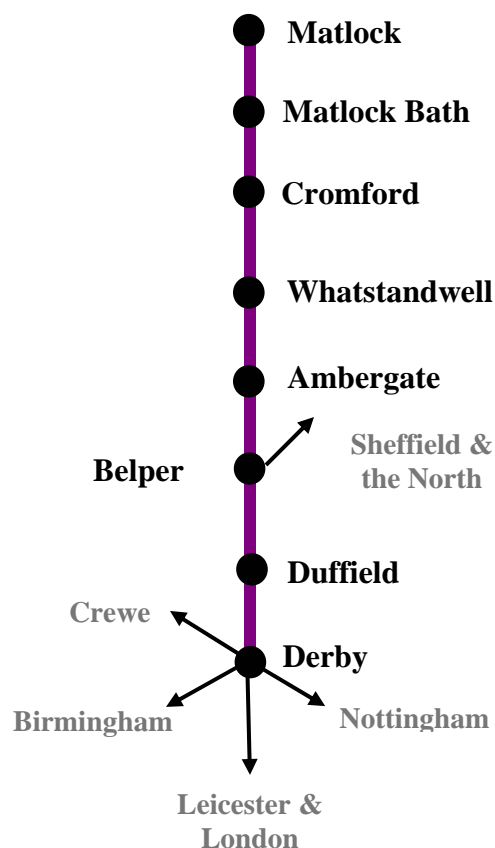
Derwent Valley

Rail Users' Strategy

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Derwent Valley Line

Derwent Valley Rail Users' Strategy

A strategy for the Derwent Valley Line



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1. Executive Summary



Battered but not bowed!

The Derwent Valley Line is often regarded as a rustic backwater, deserving only poorly planned timetables, minimal publicity and remote management. Yet the Line serves a prosperous and growing residential district, with the added attraction of traversing an area rich in tourist and heritage attractions. Its potential is clear, as is demonstrated by similar lines elsewhere.

The Derwent Valley RUS suggests a number of ways in which the Line could be improved with the objective of increasing the number of passenger carried, growing revenue and reducing overall costs - all of these objectives are in line with those of the Community Rail Development Strategy.

Markets (Section 3)

- The Line serves a large market, for both outwards commuters and inwards visitors.
- This market is growing, with Derby's increasing role as a hi-tech employment centre, and the Derwent Valley's designation as a World Heritage Site.
- Much residential growth is taking place near to the stations, all of which is well located for new and existing business.
- In particular the major new residential development in the former Cawdor Quarry, Matlock should generate significant additional traffic.

Competition (Section 4)

- The Line has a strong competitive advantage, due to both car and bus being generally slower and less reliable than the train due to chronic road congestion in Derby and along A6.
- Rail's advantage is even more pronounced for passengers making onwards connections, due to the shortage of parking at, and lack of direct bus services to, Derby station.

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Benchmarking (Section 5)

- The Derwent Valley Line is greatly underperforming and earns barely one quarter the income of similar routes (eg the Exmouth branch).
- Significant traffic growth is possible and has been achieved elsewhere.
- The poor performance of the Derwent Valley Line may be explained by it having a significantly poorer train service than other comparable lines.

Why is the Line underperforming (Section 6)

- The timetable is unfit for purpose, and is steadily getting worse.
- This is compounded by frequent bouts of unreliability and bus substitution.

Operating and engineering issues (Section 7)

- Headways are limited by line capacity but train frequency could be significantly improved.
- Work already undertaken by the Friends of the Derwent Valley line reveals that MML Meridian trains could offer direct services to London at little additional cost.

Some stations do not meet current design standards, but nevertheless do not cause great problems to passengers.

Bus substitution (Section 8)

- Experience during engineering works and a recent industrial dispute shows that buses cannot substitute for trains along the Derwent Valley.
- When faced with replacement buses Derwent Valley passengers use their own cars.

A strategy for the future (Section 9)

- **Timetables:** Fit for purpose timetables with trains running at the times that people want to travel (particularly the growing numbers of commuters on the line).
- **Connections:** Improved

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2. Introduction



Beautiful countryside but still a commuter railway

2.1. Purpose of this paper

The Derwent Valley Line (the “Line”) runs from Matlock to Derby, traversing the length of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. The railway has considerable potential, both as a commuter service and a tourist route. However, both passengers and other stakeholders perceive that the line is seriously under-performing. It is often referred to as “the commuter railway without a commuter train”, whilst regular service interruptions at weekends constrain the development of tourist traffic. A poorly-planned train service has resulted in low levels of ridership that are a fraction of what could be achieved and this is compounded by poor revenue protection and (until recently) a lack of publicity by train operating companies (TOCs) - both Midland Main Line Ltd (Midland Mainline - MML) and Central Trains Ltd (Central Trains - CT). The railway is currently the lowest priority of a vast and distant franchise operator, thus failing to deliver for passengers, taxpayers and the wider community.

This paper analyses the Line’s potential, benchmarks it against another line with similar characteristics, examines what has gone wrong (and what has gone right) and suggests a strategy to benefit both passengers and the taxpayer.

This paper has been prepared by the Friends of the Derwent Valley Line (the “Friends”) during March-May 2005. It was officially presented, albeit in draft form, to Central Trains by the Friends in a small ceremony held on Derby Railway Station on 13 May 2005, as part of the Community Rail Day (14 May 2005) celebrations organised by the Friends on the Line.

The Friends gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Arup Associates (Leeds) with the final printing and production of this document.

2.2. The Friends of the Derwent Valley Line

The Friends is a voluntary group (currently 80-90 strong) that was formed in the Autumn of 2004 to represent the Line’s users and the communities en-route, and to work with the railway industry, the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership, Derbyshire County Council and other local stakeholders to secure the Line’s successful future.

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2.3 Community Railways

The recent Railways' White Paper endorses the SRA's "Community Railways" policy. This seeks to make local railways more useful to the communities they serve; to increase revenue; to reduce costs; and to involve local stakeholders more fully. We support this approach, and believe that the proposals in this paper are wholly consistent with it.

2.4 The railway industry

The current operator of the Line is Central Trains Ltd., a subsidiary of the National Express Group. Central Trains have held the franchise for the Line since privatisation in 1997, although Midland Mainline has also operated some services on a commercial basis.

Whilst this paper is critical of some aspects of Central Trains' and Midland Mainline's tenure, we would wish to place on record our appreciation of the efforts of many individual managers and staff, and also to acknowledge that many of the Line's problems stretch back to British Rail days.

3. Markets



New homes – the railway has the key

3.1. Traffic flows

The main traffic flows handled by the Line are (figures are % of morning peak traffic):

- Daily commuting – primarily to Derby (ca. 50%), Nottingham (ca. 10%), and Birmingham (ca. 15%), also inwards to Matlock.
- 2 - 5 days a week commuting to London (ca. 15%)
- Shopping and leisure, to Derby, Nottingham and Birmingham
- Inwards tourism and day trippers
- Access to the rest of the National Rail network

3.2. Resident population

Whilst the Line is often regarded as a country branch, this is not appropriate. Instead, it serves a string of urban areas along the River Derwent, all of which serve as dormitories for the City of Derby. The Line should more properly be regarded as a commuter route, albeit in an area of great natural beauty and historical interest.

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3.4. Matlock redevelopment

This is a huge opportunity for the Line. Redevelopment will shortly commence at the former Matlock goods yard, and the adjacent Cawdor Quarry. The site will be occupied by:

- A relocated bus station, next to the railway station
- A taxi rank, next to the station
- 432 new houses immediately adjacent to the station
- A new Sainsbury's supermarket
- A new business park
- A new A6 relief road
- Improved car parking
- A proposed extension of the Peak Rail line to give direct interchange between National Rail and heritage trains.

Further housing developments are under construction along the Bakewell Road, a short walk from the station, including a development on the former gas company site (80 dwellings). Due to space constraints, other recent and planned developments around Matlock have limited car-parking facilities.

Matlock station will thus be central to all the new transport, residential, retail and commercial development in the town. The project is discussed in more detail in Appendix A.

3.5. Tourism and heritage

The Line serves a considerable number of tourist attractions.

Matlock is the southern gateway to the Peak Park, which with 22m visitors p.a. is the second most popular such destination in the world (after Mount Fuji). The Derwent Valley itself is a scenic and historic area of national beauty for almost its entire length, and the Line could be a scenic ride in its own right if properly marketed and sensitively cleared to provide even more views of the surrounding countryside.

Other major tourist destinations include:

- **Matlock:** Peak Rail steam railway, Limestone Way, onward connections for Haddon Hall, Chatsworth House, Peak Village Retail Park, the White Peak
- **Matlock Bath:** Promenade, illuminations and fireworks; Gulliver's Kingdom theme park; Peak District Mining Museum; Heights of Abraham (cable car base station adjacent to railway station)
- **Cromford:** Cromford Mill heritage centre; Masson Mill retail mall; Cromford Canal; Willersley Castle (Ecumenical holiday centre), High Peak Trail, Lea Wood Pump House, Steeple Grange Railway
- **Whatstandwell:** National Tramway Museum (Crich), Cromford Canal
- **Ambergate:** Cromford Canal
- **Belper:** Historic East Mill.
- **Derby:** Derby County football stadium (for passengers from the Derwent Valley), Derbyshire County Cricket Club and Royal Crown Derby amongst others

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Matlock Bath, Cromford, Whatstandwell and Ambergate stations are all well located for rambling and pub walks. Matlock and Ambergate stations have Youth Hostels nearby.

Between Derby and Cromford the Line traverses the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (the “Site”), with many locations of historical and industrial interest. The Site’s designation specifically called for a greater emphasis on public transport to access these. The Friends are assisting consultants undertaking a study for the World Heritage Site on public transport access to the Site, in particular, rail provision.

3.6. Charter Train Market

Prior to 1996, the Line enjoyed a relatively buoyant charter train market to Matlock thanks largely to the stately homes of Chatsworth and Haddon and the outstanding scenery the route itself offers. Matlock has also provided a departure point for Christmas shopping, football and steam charter trains to London and other destinations.

3.7. Onwards travel

Derby has frequent direct rail services to Birmingham (ca. 40 minutes), Nottingham (23 minutes), Leicester (25 minutes) and London (ca. 107 minutes), also Sheffield, Stoke and Crewe. There are regular traffic flows from the Line to all of these cities, for both commuting and shopping; passengers to London are mostly “3-day a week” commuters, working partly in the capital and partly at home. This is an expanding sector in the Derwent Valley, due to the quality of life available in the area, and good Broadband data transfer infrastructure.

Connections between Matlock and Birmingham/Nottingham trains are relatively good, due to the frequent services to these cities. Connections to/from London have however become steadily worse in recent years, leading to a visible loss of traffic. The June 2005 timetable is particularly bad, with passengers on the main London business train facing waits of up to 37 minutes southbound and 27 minutes northbound. In addition, frequent timetable changes have deterred longer-distance commuters from making a commitment to rail.

3.8. Station locations

Matlock, Matlock Bath, Ambergate, Belper and Duffield stations are all centrally located, although Belper suffers from being hidden behind a supermarket and Ambergate from a circuitous approach road. Cromford and Whatstandwell are on the edge of their respective villages – although within easy walking distance – but are well located for the road network. Cromford, in particular, has a lot of “kiss and ride” traffic, from Wirksworth town as well as surrounding villages. All of the stations apart from Duffield have adequate car parking capacity for current needs.

Derby station is ca. 10 minutes walk from the main shopping streets and adjacent to the Pride Park business park area. However, the area between the station and the city centre (e.g. the Castlefields shopping centre) is being redeveloped and this is moving the city’s “centre of gravity” nearer to the station. As noted above, the station’s convenience for many employment areas, in particular Pride Park is reinforced by chronic road congestion.

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3.9. Rail Staff Travel

Derby is a major centre of rail industry employment, and it is often alleged that “most” passengers on the Line are rail staff travelling on free passes.

The survey carried out by the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership in September 2004 (published December 2004) established that 18% of peak-period passengers had rail staff travel facilities. However:

- a)** This proportion is declining rapidly, as most rail industry employers in Derby are not eligible to give travel facilities to new employees, or to staff changing jobs.
- b)** Whilst staff travel is free to the employee, it is a charge to the employer through the Rail Settlement Plan and associated arrangements. The train operators thus gain income from “free” travel, albeit that this is not credited specifically to individual routes. Available income data for the Line will thus understate its “real” earnings.

3.10. Markets – summary

The Line serves a relatively large and growing market, for both outwards commuters and inwards visitors. Most residential growth is taking place near to the stations, all of which are well located for the traffics on offer and, furthermore, the Cawdor Quarry redevelopment at Matlock could make a quantum change to the Line's prospects.

4. Competition



Going nowhere fast!

4.1. Road congestion

The A6 road parallels the Line. This is single carriageway throughout, with a 50mph maximum speed limit and long stretches restricted to 40 or 30mph. Because of this the train is normally faster than the car. Even when the road is clear, Matlock-Derby will take over 40 minutes by car.

Traffic congestion is a major problem. During weekday rush hours all roads into Derby from the north regularly jam solid (on the A6/Duffield Road, Kedleston Road and the A5111/Frank Whittle Way in the morning; on the Inner Ring Road and at The Cockpit roundabout in the evening). On summer weekends (and even in winter if it is sunny) the A6 jams solid between Whatstandwell and Matlock Bath, with tailbacks of up to 2 miles. This section of road is also affected by frequent accidents, primarily involving motorbikes. As a consequence both car and bus journeys are considerably extended.

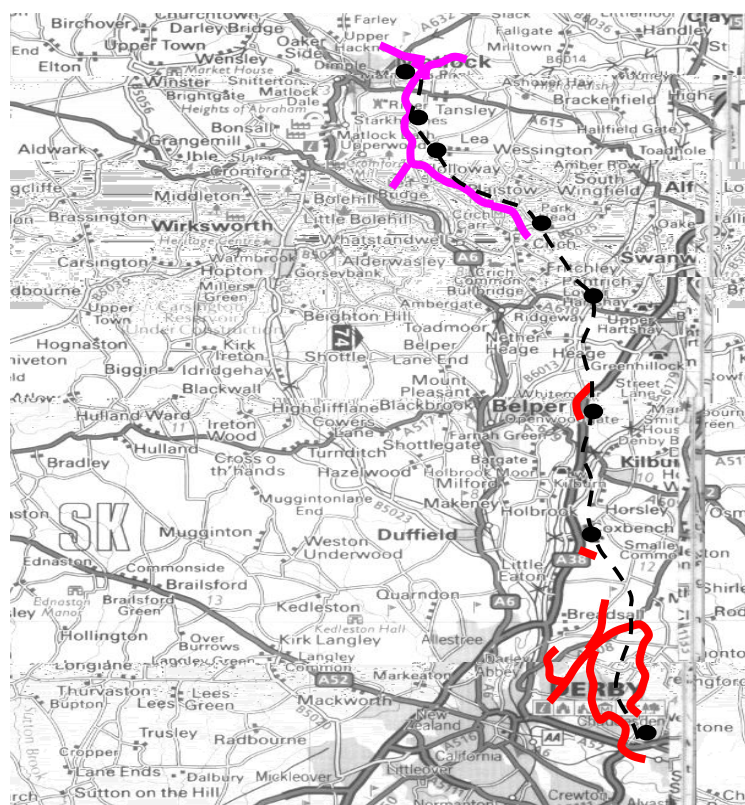
4.2. Parking

Parking for tourists in Matlock and Matlock Bath is relatively limited and expensive (£4.20/day). Day-trippers seeking non-existent parking places add to the congestion along the A6 through Matlock Bath.

Parking for commuters and shoppers in central Derby is expensive (£8+ per day); parking alone can cost more than the train fare, quite apart from petrol, etc. Whilst the total capacity appears to be adequate, motorists often have to wait and/or search several car parks for a space. As Derby City Council planning policies permit only limited car parking space at new developments, pressure on public car parks is inevitably increasing.

Parking at intercity railhead stations is expensive (£7.50/day at Derby, £5.00/day at Chesterfield), and the station car parks are regularly full by 0830. This should give a strong incentive to use the feeder rail services. However, the poor rail service in the Derwent Valley militates against this.

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ROAD CONGESTION

- M-F peak hours
- Weekends

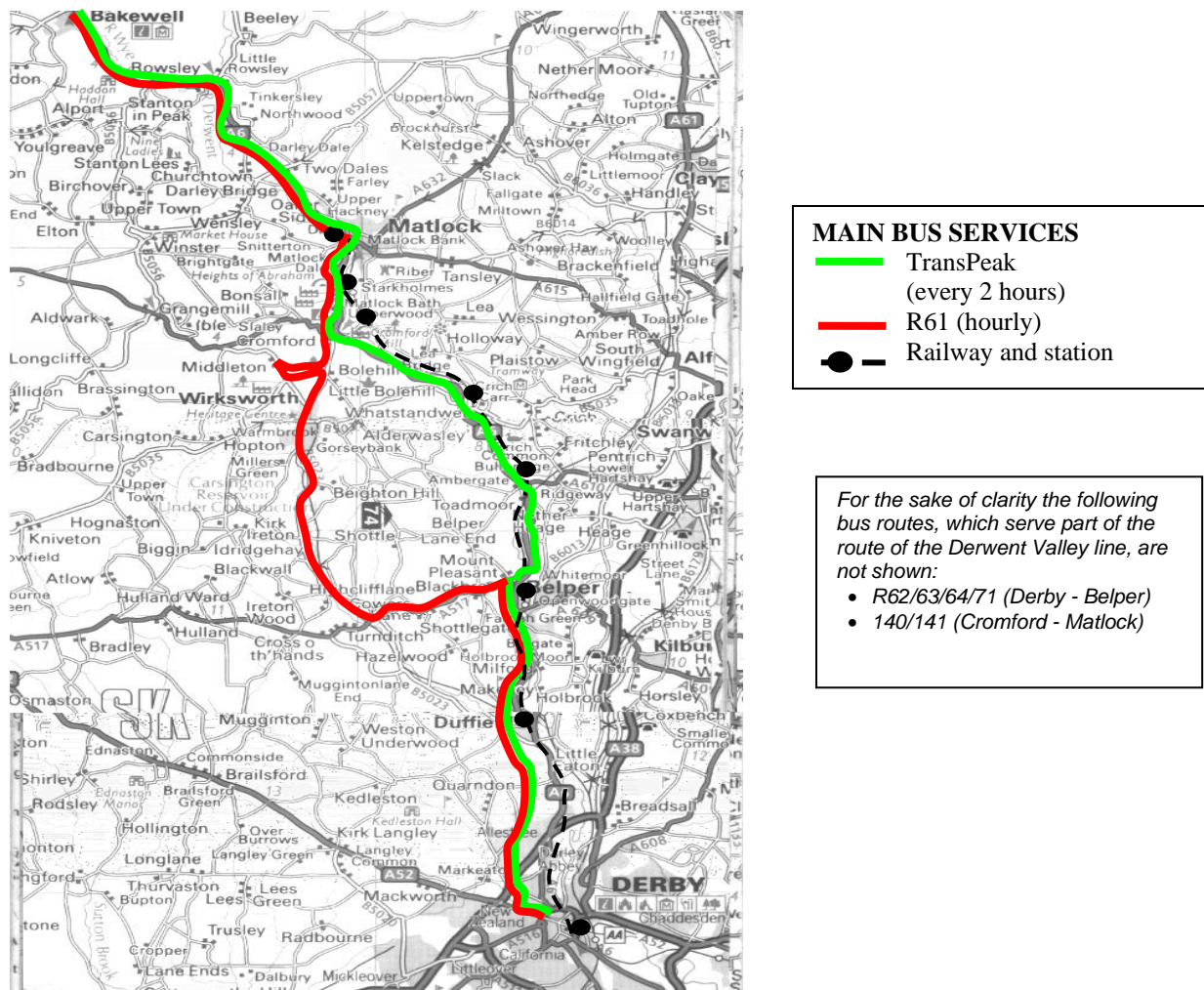
4.3. Bus services

The main bus services paralleling the line (wholly or in part):

Route section	Route number	Frequency	Bus journey time	Rail journey time
Matlock-Matlock Bath - Cromford - Whatstandwell - Ambergate - Belper - Duffield -Derby	TP (TransPeak)	every 2 hours	46 minutes <i>(Derby bus station – to rail station is ca. 15 minutes)</i>	31 minutes
Matlock-Matlock Bath-Cromford-via Wirksworth-Belper- Duffield -Derby	R61	hourly	78-83 minutes <i>(to Derby bus station)</i>	31 minutes
Belper-Duffield- Derby (combined services)	TP, R61, R62, R63, R64, R71	every 15 minutes	26 minutes <i>(to Derby bus station)</i>	11 minutes
Matlock-London	440	once daily	295 minutes	160 minutes <i>(with connection, at equivalent time of day)</i>

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The bus services are operated by Trent Barton, who are generally well regarded within the bus industry and by passengers. The coach service is operated by National Express, and appears to carry few passengers from Derwent Valley towns:



The R61 is generally reliable, but slow. The TransPeak service is much faster, but unreliable. Traffic congestion at both ends of the route - in Derby and Stockport/Manchester - and along the A6 results in late running and cancellations. Derby bus station is 15 minutes walk from the railway station and this, combined with unreliability and extended journey times, makes the buses unsuitable for journeys involving onwards rail connections. In addition, the Pride Park employment area is not served directly by buses from the Derwent Valley corridor - passengers must change at Derby bus station, with consequent delay and an additional fare.

Bus fares are generally higher than train fares for similar journeys. However, there is full ticket inter-availability between train and bus, and Trent Barton publicity and timetables make good mention of the railway.

Facilities at bus stops are generally minimal – many do not even have a shelter – and there is no real-time information on delays.

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4.4. Competition – summary

The Line has a strong competitive advantage, due to both car and bus being generally slower and less reliable than the train and the high cost and scarce availability of parking at the main destinations. Rail's advantage is even more pronounced for passengers making onwards connections, due to the shortage of parking at, and lack of direct bus services to, Derby (and Chesterfield) railway stations.

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5. Benchmarking

5.1. Data sources and definitions

Population data is from the 2001 census (urban areas dataset).

“Tributary pop’n.” = that served exclusively by the line;

“Main centre pop’n.” = that at the junction and/or main urban centre served.

Rail traffic data is from the railway industry performance database (“LENNON”)

5.2. Exmouth comparator

It is instructive to compare the Derwent Valley Line with a similar line elsewhere, in terms of passenger traffic levels, market potential and train service. The best comparator is the Exmouth branch:

	Exmouth Line	Derwent Valley Line
Tributary pop’n. ‘000	37	55
Pop’n. growth 1991-2001	+6.8%	+3.0%
Main centre pop’n. ‘000	107 (Exeter)	237 (Derby)
Pop’n. growth 1991 - 2001	+11.1%	-0.5%
Markets served	Commuting, tourism	Commuting, tourism
Tourist interests	Seaside, sailing	Hills, heritage
Length in miles	11	18

The Derwent Valley Line serves a larger population than the Exmouth branch. Whilst this is growing at a smaller rate, it still exceeds the national average. Derby station is less convenient to the main shopping area than is Exeter Central, but conversely is adjacent to a major business park, and the hospital (the city’s largest employer). Whilst Exeter arguably has a stronger regional role than Derby it is worth recollecting that there are five other major employment and retail centres within easy reach of Derby (Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham, Sheffield and Stoke on Trent) whereas no other cities are within easy reach of Exeter. The Derwent Valley Line also has less bus competition than does the Exmouth branch, which is paralleled by a bus every 12-15 minutes. Traffic congestion is bad in both cities.

Passenger traffic levels on the Derwent Valley Line should therefore be at least similar to those on the Exmouth branch. However:

Traffic, p.a. (2003/4)	Exmouth branch	Derwent Valley
Originating revenue, £000	2,092	496
Destined revenue, £000	1,379	424
Total revenue, £000	3,471	920
Originating issues, ‘000	324	74
Destined issues, ‘000	213	62
Total issues, ‘000	537	136

Despite having the larger market potential, revenue on the Derwent Valley Line is only **27%** of that achieved on the Exmouth branch. Even if rail staff travel on the Derwent Valley Line is factored in, the equivalent revenue is still only 31% of that on the Exmouth branch. **The Derwent Valley Line would thus appear to be seriously underperforming.**

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The main reasons for this **underperformance** would appear to be a historical greater awareness of rail services around Exeter (dating back to Southern Railway policies) and, crucially, the far better service level on the Exmouth branch:

	Exmouth branch	Derwent Valley
No. of trains/day, M-F	29	13
No. of trains/day, Sat.	27	12
No. of trains/day, Sun.	13	7

Timetable data for December '04

The poor train frequency on the Derwent valley Line is exacerbated by the actual timing of the trains, which for the most part are neither suited to working hours in Derby, nor offer good connections to/from London. This is not an issue on the Exmouth branch, due to its half-hourly frequency.

5.3. Traffic growth on comparable lines

Since privatisation, Train Operating Companies in the Regional Sector have recorded a high rate of traffic growth:

Sector	Growth Q1/1998-9 - Q3/2004-5	
	Passenger km.	Passenger journeys
Regional	+24%	+24%
London & South East	+31%	+22%
Inter-city	+9%	+37%
National Rail total	+22%	+24%

Source: SRA/National Rail Trends

In the past year alone, traffic on regional lines has grown by 7.8% - the highest of any sector. Amongst the best performers has been the "Bittern Line" (Norwich-Sheringham). This has potentially less favourable characteristics than the Derwent Valley line:

	Sheringham	Derwent Valley
Tributary population '000	31	55
Main centre pop'n. '000	174	229
Length (miles)	31	18

However, traffic on the Sheringham branch has grown by **162%** in the past 7 years. This has been due to better marketing, strong stakeholder and community involvement, and (especially) by timetable improvements, aided by a strong local management focus. Initially, train times were fine-tuned to best serve market demand. Latterly, extra trains have been added to cater for traffic flows identified (or created) by the marketing efforts.

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5.4. Service frequency on comparable lines

Line	Tributary pop'n. '000	Main centre pop'n. '000	Area function C=commuter T = tourist-	Length, miles	Approx. headway M-F
Matlock	55	229	C, T	18	120 mins
North Berwick	n/a	n/a	C	24	60 mins
Saltburn	51	176	C	12	30 mins
Whitby	14	143	T	35	4 trains/day
Sleaford-Skegness	59	N/a	T	41	60 mins
Sheringham	31	174	C,T	31	60 mins
Felixstowe	29	139	C	16	60 mins
Sheerness	16	42	C	8	30 mins
Seaford	34	16	C	9	30 mins
Lymington	14	3	C,T	5	30 mins
Exmouth	37	107	C,T	11	30 mins
Barnstaple	38	107	C,T	39	120 mins
Gunnislake	5	244	C,T	15	120 mins
Looe	5	9	T	8	90 mins
Newquay	20	9	T	21	4 trains/day
Falmouth	29	21	C,T	12	60 mins
St.Ives	10	n/a	T	4	30-60 mins
Pembroke Dock	41	15	T	27	7 trains/day
Blaenau Ffestiniog	9	9	T	31	8 trains/day
Stratford-Leamington	22	85	C,T	15	120 mins
Stratford-Shirley/B'ham	25	971	T	22	60 mins
Morecambe	50	46	T	4	45 mins (av)
Windermere	36	n/a	T	10	60 mins

It is notable that the Matlock branch has a far less frequent train service than most other lines, despite serving a much larger population.

5.5. Benchmarking – summary

Experience elsewhere on the national network indicates that:

- The Derwent Valley Line is greatly underperforming in traffic terms
- Significant traffic growth is possible and has been achieved elsewhere
- The poor performance of the Derwent Valley Line may be explained by it having a significantly poorer train service than other comparable lines.

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6. An under-performing railway



The trains have improved – but the timetable has deteriorated!

6.1. Train service changes and reliability

The usefulness of the train service has been eroded by badly conceived timetable changes in recent years, compounded by periods of extreme unreliability.

The main changes since Privatisation have been (all dates and times below are approximate):

- May 1999 AM peak services retimed to run approx. 20 minutes earlier from Matlock. No southbound arrival in Derby between 0747 and 0946 (up to a few years ago this was 0813) making rail unattractive for commuting to Derby. This has resulted in an observed decline of ca. 25% decline in commuter traffic as a result. (At the time Central Trains promised that this was a short-term expedient whilst they were awaiting delivery of additional rolling stock, but no remedial action was ever taken.)
No northbound arrival in Matlock between 0712 and 0905, making rail unsuitable for commuters to Derbyshire County Council offices in Matlock.
- Sept 2002 Morning and evening services retimed so as to break connections in/out of the main fast London trains (0756 ex Derby, 1715 ex London). Rail was now unattractive for business trips to London and the growing “3-day a week commuting to London” traffic was put at risk (ca. 15 London passengers/day lost).
Hourly Matlock-Birmingham off-peak service introduced, primarily to offset Virgin Trains competition between Derby and Birmingham. Very unreliable, due to 9-minute turnarounds at Birmingham with trains either running very late, cancelled, or turned back short at Ambergate. Much off-peak traffic on the Line has been lost as a result.
- Jan-Aug 2003 Weekend blockades, no Saturday or Sunday trains for ca. 20 weeks. Replacement buses are slow and pick-up points at intermediate stations unclear. Much weekend traffic was lost, plus no revenue taken (see below).
- Sept-Nov 2003 Rolling stock for the 0722 ex Matlock was resourced from Birmingham via Leamington Spa, Nuneaton and Leicester. Trains were regularly very late or cancelled. The problem was corrected after 2 months, but more erosion of commuter traffic occurred in the meantime.

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- 2003-onwards Recurring problems with the token machine (signalling equipment – allowing only one train onto the single track line) at Ambergate leading to trains occasionally cancelled north of Ambergate.
- Aug-Sep 2004 Weekend blockades with trains replaced by buses – effects were as before. (Network Rail's increasing tendency to schedule engineering possessions over weekends and at bank holidays greatly constrained potential tourist traffic).
- Sep -Dec 2004 Planned withdrawal of Midland Mainline's trains due to new trains being presumed to be too heavy for the Matlock line. This threat (in particular loss of 0640 Mon-Fri Matlock–Derby) caused passengers to seek alternative transport/employment. Whilst Central Trains stepped into the breach at the last minute, some passengers had already been lost for good.
- Dec 2004 2100 Mon - Fri Derby - Matlock withdrawn. 0743 Sat. Matlock-Derby retimed to run 20 minutes earlier, with consequent loss of shop-worker traffic. Through London services ceased, prior to loss of MML's Turbostars in the following January.
- 1 Jan - 27 Mar '05 All Mon - Fri daytime trains were replaced by buses due to industrial action with no revenue protection on the buses for most of this period. Buses noted as carrying less than 10% of the traffic of the equivalent trains.
- Mar '05 onwards A renewed threat to the 0639 and/or 0601 ex Matlock again caused passengers to review travel plans.
- June 2005 0601 Matlock-Derby withdrawn and the 2020 Derby-Matlock retimed, further reducing the Line's usefulness for London travellers. Off-peak service reduced to 2 hourly, with the loss of one return service between the peaks. New timetable on Midland Main Line significantly extends connectional times at Derby. Most MML calls at Belper withdrawn, including the well-used 1847 arrival. Belper has suffered a 25% reduction in overall train service in the space of 6 months!

The Saturday morning commuter train to Derby is however marginally improved.

Throughout this period the service has been juggled between Midland Mainline and Central Trains (both National Express subsidiaries). Central Trains' services were transferred to MML to gain the latter a franchise extension and then abandoned completely when MML pulled out! Despite this steady deterioration, passenger numbers have started to rise whenever the service has been relatively stable, for instance in 2004 passenger numbers increased by 20% but this growth was subsequently squandered by timetable changes and bus replacement. Nonetheless, this is indicative of considerable latent demand.

6.2. The June 2005 timetable – Fit for purpose?

The current timetable (12th June 2005 – 3rd December 2005) is poorly suited to market needs. There are no trains at the times of peak demand, whilst other trains run with no apparent purpose.

Particular problems are:

- There is no southbound service arriving at Derby between 0753 and 0944. The Line is therefore of little relevance to the biggest potential market – commuters to Derby. Passenger surveys by The Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership have demonstrated the demand for a Derby arrival between 0810 and 0820.
- Whilst there is a through commuter service to Nottingham, arriving there at 0822, there is no equivalent return service in the evening. A connection into the 1735 from Derby requires departing Nottingham at ca. 1638 (1700 if the 10 minute connection margin is ignored) – too early for most jobs, whilst the next Matlock train is not until 1902 by which time people would expect to be home.

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- The 0716 arrival in Matlock is too early and the 0858 arrival too late, for convenient commuting to Matlock e.g. County Hall. The 1658/1813 departures in the evening are likewise unsuitable.
- Whilst connections to Leicester and London are good during the day, they are very poor in the morning and early evening – the busiest times for such journeys. The early train from Matlock is withdrawn altogether, thus making impossible any arrival in the capital before 0931, and the 0638 and 0721 from Matlock require respectively 26 and 42 minute waits for London trains. In the Down direction, the 1655 “Master Cutler” from London requires a 27-minute wait at Derby for the 1902 to Matlock. Worst of all, the former 2020 from Derby is retimed to 2102, thus requiring a 48 minute wait, whilst just missing the 2056 and 2110 arrivals from London, which are the first evening trains from London on which discounted fares apply.
- The 0542 Derby-Matlock serves no purpose apart from empty stock movement, yet sits at Matlock for 26 minutes before its return journey.
- The between-the-peaks frequency is reduced to every two hours – and annoyingly, the trains run at similar times to the 2-hourly Trans-Peak bus.
- On Saturdays there is no Matlock departure between 2020 and 2230, making the train irrelevant for travellers returning from the illuminations/fireworks at Matlock Bath, even though these draw huge crowds. The Derwent Valley Rail Transport Partnership (“DVRTP”) arranged additional services for the autumn 2004 fireworks, which were frequently filled to capacity.
- Midland Mainline are withdrawing their 1847 (Down) stop at Belper. The latter is particularly important for passengers from Nottingham, Leicester and London, with up to 30 passengers alighting. The combined service cuts by Central Trains and Midland Mainline have resulted in a 25% reduction in train calls at Belper since the June’04 timetable; there can be few towns of similar size that have been so poorly treated.

6.3. Unreliability

As well as the major disruptions noted in 6.1.above, day-to-day cancellations and late running are relatively frequent. In particular, trains are occasionally turned back at Ambergate, leaving passengers for stations through to Matlock stranded.

The main reasons appear to be:

- Morning trains late off Nottingham depot.
- Failure of the Electric Key Token machine at Ambergate
- Crews not arriving at Derby in time from other lines
- Late starts from Matlock due to delays whilst making manual train running database (“TRUST”) reports.

6.4. Connectional policy

A significant number of the Line’s passengers are travelling to destinations beyond Derby, and thus dependent on connecting services.

When main line services run late, Matlock services are often allowed to depart before the connecting train arrives at Derby (and on occasions even as the main line train is entering the station). Passengers are then left stranded, with perhaps a 2-hour wait until the next train. However, there appears to be no clear policy to guide control offices, signallers or station staff as to whether connections should be held, or alternative transport provided; decisions instead appear to vary according to individual whim. As a consequence passengers have little confidence that connections with mainline trains will be held resulting in fewer

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passengers than might be expected using the line as a starting point for longer journeys on the National Rail network. Many passengers prefer to use Derby and Chesterfield as railheads instead.

6.5. Unnecessary costs

Despite there being a maintenance depot at Derby, both the rolling stock and the crews used for the Line are based at Nottingham. This is due to the Derby depot being operated by Midland Mainline, rather than Central Trains. The result is considerable empty stock / unnecessary mileage, and substantial time spent by relief crews travelling “on the cushions” to/from Nottingham.

As well as adding unnecessary extra cost, this arrangement constrains the timetable and imports unreliability – morning trains on the Line are often cancelled or turned back at Ambergate, as the coaches have not arrived from Nottingham on time. Similarly, cancellations occur due to staff not having arrived from elsewhere.

6.6. Revenue Collection

Revenue collection and protection on the Line are poor. Particular problems observed include:

- **Southbound** The peak commuter trains also carry passengers making long distance connections at Derby. These often require complex or unusual tickets, and/or are paid with credit cards. Transaction times are extended, thereby delaying the conductor from issuing tickets to other passengers. Many long-distance passengers instead purchase tickets at Derby, which is then credited with the revenue rather than Derwent Valley Line stations.
- **Northbound** There is a recurring problem of on-train staff assuming that all passengers already have tickets, and therefore failing to check or issue tickets.
- **Advantix machines** Since partial introduction in 2003 there have been continuing problems with issue speed, machine reliability and machine availability. Staff are frequently unable to deal with all passengers, or at times to issue any tickets at all. Delays increased during 2005 due to introduction of Chip & Pin scanners and the final withdrawal of SPORTIS machines, whilst the Advantix machines are now increasingly losing screen sensitivity.
- **Football** Trains run full and standing when Derby County are playing at home. Conductors often do not try to issue tickets, either because of fears of intimidation, or because the crush of passengers prevents them getting through the trains. The latter problem is also observed on sunny weekends.
- **Replacement bus** No revenue collection is done on replacement road services, whether scheduled during engineering works or in emergency due to train/signalling failure. No tickets were issued on replacement buses for most of the 3 months industrial action in early 2005. This may be due to safety concerns about train conductors collecting fares on moving buses or simply, cost effectiveness considerations.
- **Uneven fares** Fares anomalies such as cheaper fares to Derby from Matlock Bath than Cromford have skewed sales figures as local passengers discover them.

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- **Fare collection** The proposed withdrawal by Central Trains of the Revenue Protection staff from the 0721 Matlock-Derby service will further reduce ticket issues, due to the conductor concentrating on door control duties and, south of Belper, the number of standing passengers preventing movement through the train.

Because of these factors, usage and revenue statistics for the Line are likely to under-represent the true picture. This is exemplified by SRA figures for station footfall, based on ticket sales, in which neither the absolute figures nor the rankings between stations on the Line accord with observation. For the prolonged service disruptions in 2003 and Jan-March 2005, any ticket-based statistics will be meaningless. Furthermore, on-board surveys in the past have been taken during academic holidays thus misrepresenting commuter ridership.

6.7. **Marketing and publicity**

For most of the past 20 years specific publicity for the Line has been non-existent. Many local people do not even know that they have a train service – and many of those who do assume that journey times are longer and fares higher than is actually the case. Publicity has been noticeably lacking after periods of disruption. Whilst notices may have gone up at stations and on trains, there has been nothing done to advise occasional passengers who may have given up in disgust.

Some marketing efforts have also been counter-productive – e.g. Midland Mainline mail drops to houses in the Derwent Valley gave full details of services from Derby and Chesterfield, whilst making no mention of the Matlock-London services then being operated by MML. However, in the past 18 months publicity has markedly improved due to the efforts of the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership.

6.8. **Stations**

Stations along the Line are now generally in a relatively good condition with the exception of Duffield. However, they do suffer from the (perceptions of) poor security common to unstaffed halts elsewhere.

Prospective passengers are also deterred by:

- **Cromford:** The route to the station along Mill Lane and Lea Road is poorly lit, has dangerously narrow pavements (particularly on the river bridge), and encroaching vegetation. It also requires pedestrians to cross from one side of the road to the other on a blind corner.
- **Whatstandwell:** Whilst the station lies alongside the A6, the pedestrian route from the village involves a narrow, poorly lit footpath, with frequent changes of level to cross the canal and the railway.
- **Ambergate:** The access from the southern part of the village is very indirect.
- **Belper:** Whilst located on the main shopping street, the station is hidden behind a supermarket. Signing for pedestrians is non-existent, and a casual observer would not know that the station exists.

Whilst all stations have - in theory - adequate car park capacity, the works necessary for the ring road, etc. at Matlock (see 3.4 above) will greatly reduce the availability of parking in the town whilst the work is under way. Non-rail users will be tempted to park in the station forecourt, thus reducing car parking for off-peak rail passengers. Car park security is perceived as a problem at several stations where break-ins have occurred.

6.9. **Infrastructure**

Some of the train service reductions and unreliable operation stem from infrastructure constraints. These are detailed in Section 7 below.

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6.10. Management structure

The Line suffers from remote management. Central Trains managers are based in either Birmingham or Nuneaton. There is no Central Trains presence of any kind at Derby, even though this is a hub for several Central Trains routes. As a result managers may not have the relevant knowledge for either long-term planning or day-to-day operations. This is a key factor in the Line's poor timetable design and continuing unreliability.

Poor liaison between Central Trains and Midland Mainline is also a problem, despite both being owned by the National Express Group. This is manifest in the poor connections between local and main line services at Derby, no suitable services for discounted fares on the main line, different policies for bank holiday services and no consistent policy for managing late running and cancellations. Midland Mainline supervisors at Derby have a particularly difficult job when explaining to passengers decisions by Central Trains Control, over which they have no influence

6.11. Recent improvements

Despite the problems noted above, significant improvements have been made of late:

- Repairs to shelters and canopies at Cromford, Ambergate and Belper stations.
- Resurfacing and lighting of the approach road at Cromford station.
- Passenger information monitors at Matlock and Belper stations.
- Better notification of proposed engineering works by Central Trains.
- Improved publicity, including timetable leaflets delivered house-to-house and signage to/from stations.
- Special trains for Matlock Bath fireworks.

These improvements stem from work by the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership and Derbyshire County Council, and a much greater willingness by Central Trains management to engage with local stakeholders. This is much appreciated.

6.12. Why is the Line underperforming – summary

The overriding problem continues to be a timetable that is unfit for purpose, and is steadily getting worse. This is compounded by frequent bouts of unreliability, bus substitution, and poor revenue collection that negate much of the good work done on publicity and station improvements.

Most of the other factors are relatively easy to overcome and can, if necessary, be dealt with by external stakeholders.

7. Operating and engineering issues



**Back to the future?
Exchanging the token at Ambergate.**

7.1. Line capacity

The single line between Ambergate and Matlock limits effective train headways to 40 minutes (35 minutes absolute minimum, unless a train is “locked out” at Matlock - a capability that should be retained following the Cawdor redevelopment & Peak Rail’s proposed move into the main Matlock station).

The main line between Derby and Ambergate is operating at less than 70% of theoretical capacity, and was not identified as a problem area in the Midland Mainline Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS).

The RUS provides for an hourly off-peak service on the Line, if required.

7.2. Infrastructure

Due to perceived weight issues with the new Midland Mainline “Meridian” trains, through services from Matlock to London were withdrawn in December 2004. The prime reason was the capability of three bridges, AJM1/10 (Bridge 10 - River Derwent Viaduct), AJM1/19 (Bridge 19 - Leawood Bridge) & AJM1/29A (Bridge29A - Boathouse Bridge).

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The last assessment of the bridges on the Line was carried out in 1996. These revealed repairs would eventually be required at the above three locations:

- Bridge 10: longitudinal trough decking in poor condition, RA0, with 10mph speed restriction for RA2
- Bridge 19: main truss girders and decking in poor condition, RA2, 50mph restriction
- Bridge 29A: cross girders overstressed and bridge floor in poor condition, RA3, 50mph restriction

(RA = Route Availability; the higher the number, the greater the train weight/axle load allowed; Class 170 “Turbostar” and 222 “Meridian” trains are both RA2). *It should also be noted that very large margins of safety are rightly included in all bridge assessments.*

The Line is RA8 apart from the three restrictions listed above.

By working with Network Rail and MML it would appear that through services with “Meridians” could be safely introduced, subject to local speed restrictions. Given the excellent acceleration of these trains, such restrictions should not adversely affect journey times.

7.3. Permanent way

The track layout dates back to the ‘singling’ of the branch in 1969 following closure of the through route from Matlock to Chinley/Buxton. The track itself is maintained to current Network Rail Standards and varies between relatively modern continuous welded rail in apparently good condition and jointed rail on wooden sleepers in poor, but serviceable, condition. The track on the mainline section has recently been upgraded as part of the Cross Country Route Modernisation with increased line speeds.

7.4. Line speeds

Maximum line speed between Derby and Ambergate Junction is 110mph; it is therefore preferable that Matlock trains should be worked with 90/100mph rolling stock so as to maximise line capacity. This is currently the case, with Classes 158/170 forming the majority of services. Maximum line speed between Ambergate Junction and Matlock is 50mph, again originating from the line’s ‘singling’ in 1969. A specific lower speed restriction exists at the user-worked level crossing leading to Whatstandwell sewage works. Given the relatively short distance between stations, raising line speed is not likely to make a worthwhile difference to journey times, indeed train journey times are already more favourable than those by road.

7.5. Platform lengths

Platforms are limited to 3 x 23m cars (Whatstandwell); 4 x 23m (Ambergate and Cromford); 5 x 23m (Duffield, Belper and Matlock); and 8 x 23m (Matlock Bath). In the past, 8-car HSTs (“High Speed Trains”) have been handled at Matlock, Matlock Bath and Belper and should retain ‘Grandfather rights’ to such operation. There are thus no constraints for present operation nor for MML “Meridian” units in future, as these units are already fitted with Selective Door Opening that enables compliant operation at Whatstandwell.

7.6. Platform heights and level access

The platform at Cromford is very low, and those at some other stations may not meet current standards. Inconvenience to passengers is however minimal as train crews alert passengers of the hazard over the PA and look out at Cromford to see whether assistance is needed. Raising the platform at Cromford would be difficult as the station buildings are grade 2 listed. Lowering the track would also be difficult due to the under bridge at one end of the platform and the tunnel invert at the other.

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Most stations on the Line have level access from the street to all platforms. Duffield however has an island platform between the main lines, accessed only by a footbridge and steps. A ramp would be possible on the “street” side but would not be so desirable on the platform side, whilst the cost of providing lifts would greatly exceed the station’s revenue. Belper platforms are reached via a steep ramp and Ambergate, Cromford and Matlock Bath stations all have inclined approach roads to various degrees.

All trains operated on the line carry train crew assisted wheelchair ramps, although Cromford and Duffield provide significant challenges. The Turbostar and Meridian fleets are both fully RVAR compliant.

7.7. Operating and engineering issues – summary

Headways are limited by line capacity on both the main line and the branch, but even with these constraints the train frequency could be significantly improved. Whilst the design/perceived condition of some bridges on the Line has caused the withdrawal of Midland Mainline trains, there appears to be no reasons why such services could not run, subject to local speed limits.

Some stations due to their age do not meet current design standards, but nevertheless do not cause great problems to passengers. Remedial work would not be economically viable and should not be used as an excuse to load costs onto the Line, nor to close the stations concerned.

8. The role of the bus



39 minutes late! - gridlock on the A6 delays buses as well as cars

8.1. Recent experience

Bus substitution has effectively already been tried on the Line during the prolonged industrial dispute in early 2005. Passengers clearly voted with their cars and the replacement buses carried barely 10% of the traffic of the equivalent trains. This was despite the buses being effectively “free”, due to there being no revenue collection on the buses for most of the period.

8.2. Observed problems with bus operation

Reasons for the unsuitability of buses as an alternative to trains include:

- Extended journey times: Matlock-Derby trains take 31 minutes; the rail-replacement buses were scheduled to take 60 minutes. (As noted in 4.3 above, the “Transpeak” bus is officially scheduled to take 46 minutes from Matlock to Derby Bus Station, but would take longer if extended to the railway station)
- Unreliability: Buses are frequently delayed due to traffic congestion along the A6 and in Derby; the “Transpeak” service is particularly affected. Passengers wishing to make onwards connections, unless journey times are greatly extended to compensate for traffic conditions, cannot therefore rely upon buses.
- Station facilities: All the stations along the Line have public address, help points, shelters, and short- and long-stay car parking. However, local road layouts prevent buses accessing most of the stations and they are thus confined to the main road. Many of the bus stops along the A6 lack shelters. Providing PA, help points and (particularly) car parking at bus stops would be difficult and often impossible.

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- **Confusion:** It has been suggested that buses might be used in place of trains at less busy times of day. As the railway stations are difficult to access by bus this would result in different stopping places at different times of the day, according to whether the service was by rail or road. At Cromford, the A6 bus stop and rail station are ½ mile apart, whilst at most of the other stations the bus calling point would be some way away from – and out of sight of – the railway. This would be confusing for passengers and difficult for anyone leaving their car at a station making an outward journey by train and then returning by bus to a different place!
- **Costs:** It is erroneous to compare the cost of a train with a single, driver-only, bus. The slower speed of buses results in longer trip cycle times and thus existing train frequencies could only be matched by using 2 buses in place of a single train set. Also, if buses attracted the same level of business as the trains, 2-3 buses would be needed to carry the passenger numbers on each peak train. Finally, the number of passengers and the variety of destinations would make driver ticket issue unfeasible, thereby requiring a conductor on each bus, or, off-bus sales. The savings to be made by bus operation would thus be much less than is commonly imagined - unless it is accepted that most passengers would transfer to car, leaving the bus with only residual traffic.

8.3. Bus substitution – summary

Experience shows that buses cannot successfully substitute for trains along the Derwent Valley and that most rail passengers would desert public transport if this took place.

In light of recent experience the Friends of the Derwent Valley Line will strenuously oppose any attempt to replace trains with buses.

9. A railway for tomorrow



The future – Meridians to Matlock?

9.1. Rationale

The previous chapters have shown:

- The Line is well placed to serve a relatively large and growing market, with potential traffic flows in both directions.
- Road congestion and parking costs give rail a competitive advantage.
- Despite the above, traffic on the Line is low compared to similar routes elsewhere.
- Low traffic is primarily due to successive timetables being increasingly unfit for purpose, compounded by periods of prolonged disruption.
- Whilst the Line has some limitations in terms of infrastructure, e.g. platform heights and level access, these need not prevent operation of a better service.
- Bus substitution has been proved to be totally unsuitable.

In short, the Derwent Valley Line offers an inadequate service for its users and thus low ridership and poor value for both local communities and the taxpayer. However, significant improvements to the Line are both desirable and possible. An improved timetable and an initial modest increase in resources, followed by a period of stable operation to rebuild public confidence and allow traffic to grow, could result in a reduced need for subsidy in future.

9.2. Timetable

The most important requirement is for a better timetable, with trains that run when people wish to travel!

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9.2.1. Market hierarchy

Existing and potential traffic flows indicate that there is a hierarchy of demand. Train services should thus be timed to meet the following needs, in order of priority:

1. Commuting to/from work in Derby
2. Connections to/from London at Derby (esp. am and pm peaks)
3. Commuting to/from work in Nottingham
4. Commuting to/from work in Birmingham
5. Tourist/leisure flows into the Valley

The relatively low ranking given to Nottingham and Birmingham reflects the frequent connections available at Derby, rather than overall demand. However, consideration must be given to arrival/departure times in these cities; passengers travelling to Nottingham, Birmingham and London will depart earlier, and arrive back later, than those travelling local-to-line. Connections in the morning and early evening are thus more important than during the middle of the day; there is little point in, say, having a good service or connection *to* a given city, but no easy return journey *from* it. Other markets (e.g. inwards tourism, outwards shopping) are also significant, but less time sensitive – an exception is the Matlock Bath fireworks each autumn.

We recognise that any timetable is a trade-off and the Line's capacity constraints make it a challenge to serve all market needs. Even so, considerable improvements can be made.

9.2.2. Making the existing timetable fit for purpose

To make the June 2005 timetable fit for purpose would require a wholesale rewrite. Limited improvements should however be possible:

- Reinstate the 0600 Matlock-Derby, to give a connection into the 0638 Derby-St.Pancras (and thus in time for 0900 meetings in London).
- Retime the 1902 Derby-Matlock to run earlier, reducing the waiting time for passengers arriving on the 1655 from London and giving commuters from Nottingham and Birmingham an earlier arrival home. 1850 ex Derby appears possible.
- Retime the 2102 Derby-Matlock to run either earlier (reducing the wait for passengers arriving on the 2014 arrival from London) OR slightly later to give a connection off the 2056/2110 arrivals from London and inter-alia a discounted fare from London. If retiming is not possible, special arrangements should be made to hold the 2102 in the event of the 2056 arrival from London running late; de-facto the following 2112 from London will also be running late, so holding the Matlock train will not create extra delay for the latter.
- Reinstate a Belper stop in the 1810 or 1836 Midland Mainline departures from Derby. (These are currently worked by HSTs but as noted in 7.5 above, HSTs have been scheduled to stop at Belper in the past).

In each case these changes would give a significantly more useful service (and in particular more high-yield long distance revenue). Except for the reinstated 0600, train mileage costs would be the same as now. The 0600 would require an extra round trip (but no additional rolling stock); the costs of this would be greatly exceeded by the contributory revenue from the 8-10 London passengers who previously used this train each day.

Alternatively, the timetable should be completely rewritten.

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Even within the constraints of a single-train shuttle, it is possible to better match the service to market demand – the pre-1999 timetable used no more resources than that for June 2005, but was much better suited to passenger needs.

9.2.3. Enhanced peak frequency

Additional trains are required at the times of peak demand:

- 0800-0815 from Matlock giving an 0830-0845 arrival in Derby. Central Trains could operate this with no additional rolling stock if the 0709 from Matlock is turned back at Derby rather than going through to Nottingham. This would also give a better arrival time at Matlock for those commuting to work in Matlock. Alternatively, such a service might be formed by a Midland Mainline train, forming an extension of the 0835 Meridian service to London (see 9.2.5 below).
- Ca. 1810-1820 from Derby, to give a connection for Nottingham and Birmingham commuters finishing work at ca. 1700.

The likely level of demand for both these trains would give a significant margin over direct operating costs.

9.2.4. Hourly service to Nottingham

The Midland Mainline RUS provides for a regular-interval hourly service on the Line. Benchmarking against other similar lines indicates that this would be desirable and would be justified by both the en-route population and the number of attractions served.

The unhappy experience with the through service to Birmingham in 2003 indicates that any trains to/from Birmingham (New Street) would require additional layover time, consuming capacity at an already busy location. Conversely, a through service to Nottingham risks less delay importation and would link the Derwent Valley to the East Midlands' regional capital. This could be achieved by terminating Crewe-Nottingham-Skegness trains at Derby (thus minimising the endemic unreliability of the Crewe trains) and extending the Matlock trains to Nottingham and beyond. The necessary flexibility for timing such a service will be provided by the forthcoming opening of the Allington chord at Grantham.

Such a "linked" hourly service may require no additional rolling stock resources and only 5-6 extra trips to/from Matlock would be needed. Costs would thus be relatively low, and would likely be met by the increased revenue so generated – *especially if appropriate publicity was given.*

9.2.5. Through trains to London

As noted in 7.2 above, it appears that Midland Mainline "Meridian" DMUs can operate on the Line subject to a 10mph speed limit across the River Derwent Viaduct (Bridge 10). Restoration of the through service to London should thus be feasible. The Line's contributory revenue greatly exceeds local-to-line revenue. Surveys have shown that there is already regular traffic from the Line to Leicester and London and as this traffic was much greater before the connections were destroyed in 2002, it is reasonable to suppose that such a train could be viable.

By running the through services as extensions of the 0835 from Derby to London and the 1957 arrival at Derby from London, significant gaps in the present timetable would be filled (see 9.2.4 above). The former in particular would also generate considerable local traffic as well as long-distance patronage. These trains currently (June 2005) run to/from Burton-on-Trent. However, between Derby and Burton they closely follow Central Trains/Virgin services and are thus lightly loaded - typical passenger numbers are in single figures. (Burton to London travellers generally prefer to use the faster route via Tamworth and the forthcoming Trent Valley-London hourly direct service will make this more attractive). Running the trains to/from Matlock instead

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would require no extra crews or rolling stock, and would generate more revenue for both Midland Mainline, and the railway in general.

Good and continuing publicity for any through London trains will be even more important than for local services, due to the occasional/discretionary nature of much of the prospective traffic.

9.2.6. Potential “ideal” timetable

Ideally, a new timetable should be built around the priorities set out in 9.2.1 above:

- Arrivals in Derby at ca. 0820-40, and departures at ca. 1720-40 for Derby commuters working 0900-1700.
- Arrivals in Derby at ca. 0700-20 & 0740-50 and departures from Derby at ca.1615-30 & 1800-20 for Nottingham and Birmingham commuters to Derby commuters working 0800-1600.
- Good connections into/out of the Midland Express/Master Cutler (0746 ex Derby, 1655 ex St.Pancras), plus an earlier business train to London and a later business train from London.
- Hourly through service during the day to Nottingham - given the wide range of connections at Derby, exact timings would be unimportant.
- Turnaround times at Matlock to be 10+ minutes to allow Down services to be held for late running connections without affecting subsequent Up trains.
- A spread of services into the evening to give some flexibility to long-distance passengers and a “safety net” in the event of missed connections.

Alternatively, the June 2005 timetable could have been amended:

Matlock dep.	Belper dep.	Derby arr.	On to	London train dep*	London train arrives*	From	Derby dep.	Belper dep.	Matlock arr.
0556	0616	0628	0646 dep.	0638		Depot	05+30	-	05+55
0638	0658	0710	Nott'm	0735/46		Depot	06+08	⁴	06+33
0721	0741	0753	Nott'm			0632 arr	0646	0657	0716
0806	0824	0834	London	0835		Depot	0737	0747	0805
Shef'ld	0903	0913	London	0935	0812	London	0816	0825	Shef'ld
0912	0932	0944	Nott'm	1005	0812	Nott'm	0826	0838	0857
1012	1032	1044	Nott'm	1105	0909	Nott'm	0928	0940	0959
1112	1132	1144	Nott'm	1205	1005	Nott'm	1028	1040	1059
1212	1232	1244	Nott'm	1305	1105	Nott'm	1128	1140	1159
1312	1332	1344	Nott'm	1405	1205	Nott'm	1228	1240	1259
1412	1432	1444	Nott'm	1505	1305	Nott'm	1328	1340	1359
1512	1532	1544	Nott'm	1605	1405	Nott'm	1426	1440	1459
1612	1632	1644	Nott'm	1704	1505	Nott'm	1528	1540	1559
1712 ¹	1722	1744	1820 dep	1802	1605	Nott'm	1628 ⁵	1640	1659
Shef'ld	1751 ²	1801	London	1802	1709	Nott'm	1728 ⁶	1740	1759
1811	1831	1843	1850 dep.	1902	1810	1744 arr.	1820 ⁷	1832	1852
1857	1916	1928	Nott'm		1835	1843 arr.	1855 ⁸	1907	1928
1939	2000	2011	2102 dep	2035	1957	London	2000	2010	2029
20+35 ³	-	-	Depot		2056#	2011 arr	2102	2114	2133
2139	2159	2210	2228 dep		2208	2210 arr	2228	22240	2259
2305	2325	2336	Nott'm						

(Based on known June 2005 MML timetable, and assumed Virgin timetable)

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Notes:

* = Connection of more than 10, but less than 25, minutes

Shaded = additional train

BOLD = MML Meridian train, diverted from Burton on Trent

00+00 = Empty Coaching Stock

1 = present 1658 retimed to fit interval and give better departure for Matlock workers

2 = special arrangements may be needed for HSTs in short platform at Belper

3 = could run as service train if crew diagrams allowed

4 = present 0542 service train, not now needed to meet PSR

5 = present 1620 retimed to fit interval, and connect out of 1614 ex Birmingham

6 = present 1735 retimed to fit interval and give better margin to following Virgin train

7 = does the job of the present 1827 MML stop at Belper

8 = present 1902 retimed to give better connection with London, Cardiff and Nottingham trains; could run earlier if 1820 train not introduced

Thus, the diversion of an existing MML service plus the addition of six return Central Trains workings would give a timetable that meets almost all market needs. Whilst extra train mileage costs would result, the Line's market potential and the traffic levels achieved by other lines (5.2, 5.3 above) indicate that the Line's overall financial position would nevertheless improve.

The Saturday and Sunday timetables need a similar review.

9.3. Connectional policy

It is accepted that southbound main line services should not be held at Derby for late running local trains. However, due to the relative infrequency of services to Matlock, an explicit connectional policy should be drawn up for northbound trains. This should be made clear to control offices, signallers and station staff, and included in timetable information and other publicity. It should state the minimum connectional time at Derby, the extent to which trains will be held in the event of connecting trains running late and what alternative arrangements should be put in place for "stranded" passengers.

The present 10-minute connectional margin at Derby should be reviewed, as it is excessive compared to that at similar stations elsewhere (e.g. Stafford is 5 minutes).

9.4. Revenue protection

Revenue protection arrangements need to be reviewed on all services radiating from Derby and the case for installing automatic ticket gates evaluated. For the Derwent Valley Line in particular, the following should be considered:

- Installation of ticket vending machines at Belper and Matlock
- Sale of "carnet" ticket books – perhaps valid for 10 single journeys on a zonal basis (e.g. all stations Matlock-Whatstandwell to Derby; all stations Ambergate-Duffield to Derby; all stations Matlock-Duffield to Nottingham), discounted to give hh nduc

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9.5. Revenue generation

The greatest benefit would come from running trains at the times people want to travel – see above. Other initiatives should include:

- **Publicity:** An ongoing campaign is required, aimed at people who do not currently/regularly use the Line. The household drops of timetable leaflets pioneered by the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership should continue and be accompanied by display boards at off-line sites, such as town/village centres. Concerted efforts should be made to gain editorial coverage in local media, together with advertising of significant developments – e.g. timetable changes or special events. Given the amount of new housing planned near stations, information leaflets/welcome packs should be prepared for prospective house buyers and distributed through the developers and estate agents. Good publicity will be essential if through London trains are restored or promotional fares introduced.
- **Market demand:** Current data for travel in the Derwent Valley by all modes should be studied (or new surveys carried out), in order to assess actual market needs. Whilst on-train surveys are valuable, de-facto they only cover existing passengers who will be self-selected for the existing train times.
- **Tourism:** A professional (i.e. tourist industry) study should be undertaken as to how the Line's relevance to the tourism and heritage industries can be enhanced. This must recognise that attracting tourist passengers (travelling to the Line from distant points) requires a different approach from attracting local passengers. Meanwhile, tourism and heritage interests along the Derwent Valley should be encouraged to include the Line in their publicity and information material, rather than automatically assuming that their clients will come by car. Non-tourist/heritage businesses should be encouraged to do likewise.
- **London fares:** Time limits on promotional/discount fares from Derwent Valley stations to London should be revised to fit the connections available at Derby – London – see 5.2. above.
- **Catering:** A tea trolley on the main commuter trains from Matlock each morning may be viable, possibly as a concession linked to a catering outlet in the redundant building at Matlock (see 9.6. below).

9.6. Stations and access

The following are needed:

- **Matlock:** The former Up waiting room currently used by Peak Rail as its main offices north of (and separate from) the Peak Rail shop is likely to be re-opened for retail/catering use following the Cawdor development / bus interchange and proposed move by Peak Rail onto Platform 2.
- **Cromford:** An improved pedestrian route along Mill Lane/Lee Road, including improved lighting, vegetation management and safety enhancements at Cromford River Bridge.
- **Whatstandwell:** Lighting on the pathway over the canal, repairs to the station footbridge and the provision of lighting in the station shelter.
- **Ambergate:** A new pedestrian route from the south end of the station down to the A6/Heage Road. Improved car park access.
- **Belper:** Signing on King Street at the station entrance.
- **Duffield:** Improved waiting accommodation.
- **Help points:** At all stations (already planned by Derbyshire County Council)

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- **Level access:** The costs of providing access at Cromford (low platform – see 7.6. above) and Duffield (island platform – see 7.6 above) are recognised. These costs should not be used as an excuse for closing these stations, nor for spending money, which could be better used for other improvements on the Line. Instead, long-term derogations should be sought.
- **Security:** British Transport Police and Derbyshire Constabulary should be encouraged to visit stations along the Line, particularly at less busy times.

9.7. Infrastructure

The line should be maintained for at least RA2, and a line speed of 50mph. The repair and ongoing maintenance costs/speed restrictions needed for higher Route Availability should however be established, so that an informed judgement can be taken as to the value obtained (e.g. shorter running times, and/or ability to run special trains), and external funding sought as appropriate.

Remedial work should be carried out on three “weak” bridges on the Line (see 7.2 above), to allow use by RA2 trains without speed restrictions, and to enable heavier rolling stock in future. Informal estimates of the costs for work on the three bridges *combined* are:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| • Assessment and feasibility studies: | £60k-£105k |
| • Detailed design: | £75k-150k |
| • Remedial work to remove restrictions at RA2: | £370k |
| • Full refurbishment to allow RA8: | £1,750k |

To provide a half-hourly service currently being considered as probably essential to properly promote the sites and on-going legacy of the World Heritage Site would require a loop to be provided to allow for passing trains on the Ambergate to Matlock section of the Line. The Friends propose that such a loop (ca. 0.8 miles in length to allow for HSTs and charter trains) could be positioned in the vicinity of the former Cromford & High Peak Junction and Leashaw Farm (Leashaw Loop?), just north of Whatstandwell station.

As the track access charges already paid by Central Trains and Midland Mainline will have included an accruals element to maintain structures at the current RA2, there should be no financial barrier to carrying out the remedial works. However, given that the affected bridges are on the “branch” part of the Line, which has been designated as a “Community Railway”, consideration should be given to third party funding mechanisms and contractual arrangements that might reduce the costs to the rail industry, and/or give the work a higher priority than it would otherwise deserve.

The bridgework may require full possession(s) of the Line for some days. Such possession(s) could also be utilised to relay the remaining portions of jointed track with continuous welded rail, on a “fit and forget” basis. Given that Government Ministers have categorically stated that there will be no “second Beeching”, relaying would be the most cost-effective policy over time.

Derby power signal box will be renewed within the next 5-10 years. Consideration should therefore be given to:

- Replacing the troublesome No Signalman Key Token instruments with axle counters.
- Potentially, a passing loop on the Line to allow improved train frequency and more operating flexibility (with consequent benefit to the main line as well).

These infrastructure improvements would also enable restoration of charter and other special trains, thus bringing additional revenue to the Line.

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9.8. Management

Management for the Line should be located as close to the actual operation as possible. The SRA/DfT's plans for "remapping" the Central Trains franchise envisage that Midland Mainline should take over all services in the East Midlands. This would have several benefits for the Derwent Valley Line:

- A single entity would be responsible for planning and marketing both local and longer-distance services.
- An organisation based in Derby would be much more responsive to local needs than one based in Birmingham.
- Day-to-day management would likewise be the responsibility of a single operator; in particular the station supervisors' job at Derby would be much easier.
- More effective use could be made of resources, with both cost savings (see 9.11 below) and greater flexibility. Using Derby-based crews would avoid both the problems with crews' breaks that bedevil the June '05 timetable and give an on-the-spot resource during out-of-course running.

We believe that this transfer should take place as soon as possible, as the present uncertainty is unfair on management and staff and unhelpful for other stakeholders. In the meantime, we welcome Central Trains' proposals to move to a Line-Management structure.

In the meantime, there should be greater co-operation between Midland Mainline and Central Trains, especially on timetable planning.

9.9. Devolved funding

The Department for Transport ("DfT") has at times suggested that more responsibility for local rail services should devolve to Regional/Local Authorities. Whilst we welcome this in principle, we would only support it if:

- Funding was ring-fenced, including provision for long-term renewals, or, an initial dowry is provided to return the infrastructure to an agreed level.
- The Line was handed over in a fit for purpose (long term) condition from day one.
- The relevant authorities were given the right to specify the entire timetable and not just for making good any shortcomings of a centrally specified one. The temptation for the DfT to cut services in the expectation that other parties will fill the gaps is all too obvious.

9.10. Rural Transport Partnership

The Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership, or an equivalent body bringing together local stakeholders, should be continued and its funding secured on a long-term basis.

9.11. Cost savings

The Line has long been operated as a "basic railway" and opportunities for further cost savings are limited. However, the following proposals should be considered:

- The basing of rolling stock and crews at Derby (Etches Park Depot), rather than Nottingham (Eastcroft Depot). This would greatly reduce unproductive/empty coaching stock mileage and avoid the need for crews to travel "on the cushions" to/from Derby. Possible savings exceed £60,000 p.a. (also see 9.8. above).

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- The use of single car Class 153 Diesel Multiple Units (“DMUs”) off-peak (if a 75mph train with only one engine can be tolerated by other operators on the mainline). However, the problems this may create in providing adequate capacity both at peak times and off-peak during school holidays, is recognised.
- Replace maintenance-expensive structures and track on a “fit-and-forget” basis (see 9.7 above)
- Seek derogations from centrally imposed standards for level access (Cromford and Duffield) or for abolishing foot crossings (Matlock Bath), in line with the “Community Railways” policy.

9.12. Inter-modal integration

The Line already benefits from ticket inter-availability with parallel bus routes. This should continue despite the current difficulties with the arrangements.

Easy interchange between train and local/country bus services will be aided by the creation of an inter-modal hub through the provision of the new bus station adjacent to Matlock railway station. More comprehensive integration of rail and bus is hindered by bus deregulation, but the following should be considered:

- Through rail/bus ticketing to Darley Dale, Rowsley/Peak Village, Chatsworth and Bakewell
- Inclusion of onward bus services in the rail timetable
- Once an hourly rail service is established, divert the TransPeak bus route to run direct Matlock-Nottingham, with passengers for Derby transferring to the train. This would reduce bus operating costs, give new bus journey opportunities, and faster journeys for passengers without increasing bus or train mileage.
- Through bus/rail ticketing within the Derby City area.

9.13. Route extensions

The closure of the Matlock-Buxton/Manchester line was fundamentally misconceived. London-centred decision making resulted in the withdrawal of “duplicate” London-Manchester services with little thought given to their role in linking the East Midlands and the North West. We therefore support the eventual restoration of through services.

In the meantime, consideration should be given to making best use of the track that already exists. The original northern terminus of the “Manchester, Buxton, Matlock and Midland Junction Railway” was at Rowsley. Rowsley is at the north end of the urban area stretching from Matlock through Darley Dale and Two Dales, whilst the junction of the Wye and Derwent valleys makes it a natural focus for the road network. The Peak Village retail mall and the Cauldwell’s Mill heritage centre have also made Rowsley a major tourist destination in its own right. Peak Rail’s terminus at Rowsley South is only ¾ mile short of Rowsley itself, and whilst the A6 forms a significant barrier, the railway could be easily extended up to that point. Through Derby-Matlock-Rowley services are thus possible, creating a new gateway to the Wye Valley, Chatsworth and the White Peak, serving residential development at Darley Dale en-route.

This would require Peak Rail to become another infrastructure authority – similar in function, though hardly scale, to Network Rail. Peak Rail would need the appropriate regulatory licences and Safety Case, and work would be needed to merge the Peak Rail and Network Rail signalling systems. Prototypes for this type of operation already exist. Both the Wensleydale and the Dartmoor Railway are privately owned, yet have professional management and run regular freight and passenger trains through to the national network. There is thus no insurmountable obstacle to a main line TOC agreeing powers to operate over Peak Rail metals to say Darley Dale or Rowsley. This is explored in more detail in Appendix B.

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10. Revenue and costs

10.1. Contributory revenue

“Contributory revenue” = the total revenue taken for all journeys starting or finishing at Derwent Valley Line stations (e.g. including the Derby-London part of a Matlock-London ticket). It therefore represents the maximum amount that can be attributed to the Line. Some, but not all, of the beyond-Derby revenue would be lost to rail entirely if the Line closed. It is highly unlikely, for instance, that Matlock-Nottingham passengers would drive to Derby and then get a train to Nottingham, when there is a direct road link!

LENNON data for all journeys to/from Derwent Valley Line stations was £920,000 in 2003/4. It is understood that this rose by ca. 15% by the end of 2004; since then bus substitution and timetable changes will cause revenue to fall again.

10.2. Local to Line revenue

“Local-to-line revenue” = that purely for the Derwent Valley Line part of any journey, whether terminating at Derby or travelling beyond. All of this revenue would be lost if the line closed.

No statistics are available for this revenue and the following estimate is necessarily crude. Average observed ridership, June '04 timetable, weekdays, was:

<i>Train ex Matlock</i>	<i>Passengers on arrival at Derby</i>	<i>Train ex Derby</i>	<i>Passengers on departure from Derby</i>
0557	15	0646	5
0639 MML	65	0817 MML Belper only	n/k
0721	120	0832	15
0905 MML ex Belper	n/k	0950	40
0912	50	1150	40
1037	40	1331	40
1237	40	1450	40
1412	40	1620	85
1537	40	1735	120
1658	45	1839 MML Belper only	25 for Belper
1811	15	1902	35
1939	10	2021	25
2055	5	2100 MML	15
2305	n/k	2226	10

This suggests ca. 980 passengers/weekday. Loadings in summer are higher with 70+ passengers being observed on some off-peak trains. Observation also indicates that Saturday revenue is roughly the same as weekdays (less commuters, but more shoppers during the day), with occasional heavy loadings due to football, etc., and that Sunday revenue is 2/3 of weekday (based on number of trains plus observation). *It should be noted that these figures are likely to differ from official railway statistics due to poor revenue collection and repeated service disruption on the Line.*

Total ridership is thus ca. 340,000 passenger journeys p.a. Assuming an average one-way fare of £1.30 (i.e. average return fare £3.00, with some allowance for children), and allowing for 18% of passengers having rail staff passes (see 3.9 above), for 2003/4 local-to-line revenue was ca. £360,000.

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10.3. Rail staff travel

Whilst rail staff travel is 'free/discounted' for employees and their families, internal rail industry transfers pay it for. However, this money is not credited to individual routes. Revenue statistics for the Line do not therefore include any allowance for rail staff travel, even though Central Trains in-toto will benefit. The revenue figures given above should thus be increased but we are unable to estimate the relevant figure.

10.4. Overall earnings

Attributable revenue – i.e. that which would be lost to rail if the line was closed – is thus somewhere between £360,000+staff travel and £920,000 p.a. Given the number of regular travellers to off-line centres such as Nottingham, who would otherwise almost certainly travel throughout by road, it is likely that the Line's true earnings exceed the local-to-line figure by a significant amount.

10.5. Operating cost – basis

The main costs of operating the line are:

- Rolling stock leasing
- Rolling stock maintenance
- Fuel
- Variable track access charges
- Train crew

These will vary according to the train mileage run and to whether a service makes marginal use of rolling stock, or requires additional vehicles to be leased.

Station costs do not vary according to train mileage (apart from a small payment for use of Midland Mainline's station at Derby). Fixed track access costs likewise do not vary and in any case are not calculated at the level of an individual route. As this strategy is primarily concerned with improving the train service, these fixed costs do not need to be considered further.

We have assumed the following costs for a Central Trains service:

- Mileage costs (maintenance, fuel, variable track access) = £1.00 per vehicle mile
- Train crew employment costs (driver + conductor) = £35.00 per hour
- Rolling stock lease = £75,000 per vehicle p.a.

10.6. Operating costs – examples

- Round trip Derby-Matlock-Derby (35 miles, 1½ hours) for a 2-car train:
= ca. £123
- Round trip D-M-D, for a 4-car Meridian train (assumes mileage cost/vehicle 50% higher)
= ca. £212
- Empty stock working Nottingham-Derby (16 miles, 30 minutes) for a 2-car train:
= ca. £50.

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- Leasing an additional 2-car DMU, exclusive of mileage costs:
= £150,000 p.a.

- June 05 timetable:**

Leasing costs, 1 x 2 car	£150,000
Loaded mileage costs, 74 return trips/week:	£473,304
Empty mileage costs, inc. to/from Nottingham	£57,200.
<u>Total costs</u>	<u>£680,504 p.a.</u>

- “Ideal” timetable (see 9.2 above)**

If additional Central Trains rolling stock needed:

Leasing costs, 1 x 2 car	£150,000
Add'l return trips Mon-Sat Central Trains (36 return trips/week)	£230,256
Add'l return trips Mon-Sat MML (12 return trips/week)	£132,288
Derby-Burton mileage saved	- £106,080
Empty mileage costs saved –from Derby	- £57,200
<u>Total additional costs</u>	<u>£349,264 p.a.</u>

If no additional Central Trains rolling stock needed:

Add'l return trips Mon-Sat Central Trains (36 return trips/week)	£230,256
Add'l return trips Mon-Sat MML (12 return trips/week)	£132,288
Derby-Burton mileage saved	- £106,080
Empty mileage costs saved – from Derby	- £57,200
<u>Total additional costs</u>	<u>£199,264 p.a.</u>

10.7. Revenue and costs –summary

From the above, we can see that:

- The Line's contributory revenue is £920,000, and local-to-line revenue ca. £360,000.
- The Line's current attributable revenue is between £360,000 and £920,000.
- Contributory revenue is ca. 2.6 x local-to-line revenue; the line is thus an important feeder to the national network.
- Whilst the Line's operating costs currently exceed local-to-line revenue, they are substantially less than contributory revenue. Attributable revenue probably exceeds operating costs.
- Potential earnings are very much greater – see 10.2 & 10.3.
- Even if the Line carried only 50% of the traffic on the Exmouth line, contributory revenue would almost double to £1,710,000 p.a. – i.e. an extra £790,000 p.a. On the basis of contributory revenue exceeding local-to-line revenue by a factor of 2.6, this would equate to an additional £303,000 p.a. in local-to-line revenue.

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- Introduction of the “ideal” timetable shown in 9.2.6 above would cost an additional £200-350,000 p.a. This is much less than the potential increase in either contributory revenue or attributable revenue.
- A lesser improvement in train service - e.g. trains timed to meet peak commuter demands, and improved London connections – could still earn substantially greater revenue yet with little increase in costs.

These calculations are inevitably crude. They also take no account of socio-economic benefits – e.g. in reducing road traffic congestion if people use the train instead of their cars. However, they do indicate that the business case for improving the Line's service is well worth studying in more detail.

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11. Consultation

Many of the Line's problems can be traced to a lack of local knowledge and consultation, especially regarding market potential. When consultation has taken place it has often been too late. Recently, there have been several instances of a last-minute rush to amend timetables as a result of representations by the Friends following their detailed examination of late released information.

We are very appreciative of Central Trains' and Midland Mainlines' willingness to engage. We would however welcome an earlier start to discussions, whether formally or informally. The Friends can bring market knowledge, a realistic appreciation of operating, technical and financial constraints, and the ability to quickly undertake and analyse passenger surveys. We therefore look forward to working with Central Trains, Midland Mainline, Network Rail and the local authorities to secure the best future for the Line and the communities that it serves.

12. Conclusions

The Derwent Valley Line has great potential, both as a commuter route and as a tourist and business gateway. At present this potential is largely unrealised, but the experience of similar lines elsewhere demonstrates what can be achieved.

This document suggests a number of ways in which the Line could be improved, increasing its usefulness to the communities served and decreasing the level of subsidy per passenger. These objectives are shared by the Government's "Community Railways" policy, by local stakeholders and by the Line's operators. Together we can once again make the train the best way of travelling along this beautiful but congested valley.

**Friends of the Derwent Valley Line
August 2005**

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Appendix A - Matlock station area redevelopment

Cawdor re-development at Matlock

In 1997 Sainsbury's submitted a planning application to build a new supermarket in Cawdor quarry. This was eventually approved and work is due to commence this year after many delays.

The proposed store will create up to 250 job opportunities and have a sales area of 26,000 sq ft, almost twice as big as Matlock's largest existing supermarket. It is expected that this will boost the town as a strong local shopping centre. As part of the scheme, a road to relieve the A6 is to be built together with a new bus station immediately adjacent to Matlock railway station. This will create a unified transport interchange facility for the first time in the town. Linking the supermarket, bus and rail stations will a new footbridge. This will give access to the down platform proposed for use by Peak Rail's trains. Adjacent to the new transport interchange will be a new 200 space car park including 36 spaces dedicated to users of the train station (same number as at present), whilst the present cobbled access road to the station will be pedestrianised.

The supermarket will have a new 300-space car park, connected to the new relief road by a bridge across the railway. The supermarket access road will also provide access into the former quarry where it is planned to construct 432 new houses over a period of several years. This new housing development will be within easy walking distance of the new transport interchange, as will the town centre and existing residential areas; most of the Matlock urban area is within walking distance of the transport interchange. The bus station will serve both local town routes and regional services and a taxi rank will also be provided. Local bus services and taxi use in Matlock have both expanded in recent years.

It seems likely that the new supermarket, transport interchange and housing development will have the affect of drawing the focal point of the town to the southern side of the River Derwent. Once again the railway station will become a prominent focal point in the town after years of being a backwater. As a result there is every prospect that railway usage will increase, probably significantly, over future years.

In summary, the Cawdor Quarry development will result in:

- 1) Over 420 new dwellings immediately adjacent to the railway station.
- 2) A major employment site adjacent to the station
- 3) The development of a transport interchange incorporating the existing railway station, allowing direct connection with local buses and services to other Peak destinations and visitor attractions, and forming a focus for taxi operations.
- 4) Extension of Peak Rail services to give direct connection with Derwent Valley Line trains.
- 5) The transport interchange will also be located on the direct pedestrian route from the present town centre to the new supermarket and housing development.
- 6) Following the District Council's recent announcement, an "Innovation Centre" as part of the Cawdor Quarry development. Together with a follow-on extension into the adjacent Hall Dale Quarry (above Cawdor) this will create a large business park specifically aimed at hi-tech companies employing skilled professionals.

This is a great opportunity for Matlock and for the Line. We therefore believe that every effort should be made to provide high-quality public and passenger facilities at the transport interchange. This could be achieved by converting the disused former parcels shed and old waiting rooms into a fully covered area with comfortable transfer lounge high-grade toilet facilities, coffee and refreshment areas, all under one roof. Such a traditional/modern stylish conversion would add interest and provide historical links between the old and the new. We welcome recent suggestions that the parcels shed will be incorporated into Sainsbury's planning submission. We have also been exploring with Sainsburys direct container delivery by rail.

The goods shed in the current ad-hoc parking area is to be demolished to make way for the ring road, and we likewise welcome suggestions that the stonework from this structure should be re-used to replicate the former station buildings on Platform 2, as part of Peak Rail's proposed move into the main station.

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Appendix B - Extension Infrastructure Providers.

Peak Rail (*Material provided by Peak Rail plc*)

As mentioned in Appendix A, Peak Rail ("PR") is currently negotiating with Network Rail ("NR") and Sainsburys for various improvements to their infrastructure as part of the land settlement for the Cawdor redevelopment. This includes moving from the current isolated Matlock Riverside station, which will become part of the relief road, into the main NR Matlock Station – the currently disused Platform 2. Stone from the soon to be demolished large Goods shed will be used to build station buildings on the re-opened platform and Sainsburys will install a footbridge over the station to link the pedestrian access from the town to the new store which will allow access to the re-opened platform via the ramp to the supermarket. The former Parcels shed adjacent to the main station will be extensively refurbished and incorporated into the new Transport Interchange as the main bus station passenger facilities building. All this will form Phase 2 of PR's current plans (see below) and would allow direct interchange between rail services given a suitable PR timetable.

Of particular interest to FDVL is that Peak Rail have no objection, indeed would welcome, the additional revenue from existing assets offered by Phase 4 (see below). There are few physical obstacles, dependant on the minutia of the re-aligned Network Rail run-round loops and permanent way layout at the NR/PR interface during the Cawdor redevelopment, to prevent this being a groundbreaking move within the industry in the medium term. FDVL estimates that it would take around two years to bring to fruition from when all parties commit fully to the project. This is unlikely in the short term due to the uncertainty of the current franchise template in the region and the industry's current focus to bring costs for the existing network under control.

However the Friends support the general principle and hope that with the setting up of Community Rail Partnerships that it is a timely ideal. Darley Dale has a population of some 5000 with far greater scope for commuter traffic with the additional housing build since the original line closure and Rowsley Village an ideal weekend and holiday tourist destination, within shuttle bus distance to Haddon Hall/Bakewell and Chatsworth. Indeed support would be likely from both Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and the Peak Park.

Thus possible future phases and aspirations include:

Phase 1 – DCC Park & Ride to the Peak Park at Rowsley South.

Phase 2 - Cawdor Redevelopment – Move into Matlock Railway Station – Platform 2.

Phase 3 – PR route extension north to Rowsley Village (3 – 5 years hence).

Phase 4 - Extension of regular TOC Derwent Valley Line services to Darley Dale/Rowsley.

Phase 5 - Extension of occasional steam services to Derby (post bridge repairs).

Phase 6 - Extension of PR metals south to Cromford to serve the World Heritage Site Mills.

The latter, Phase 6 (probably 7 – 10 years off), would require associated track slews and potentially a swap of platform usage at Matlock with Network Rail, but would allow PR to serve all the key tourist attractions at the north end of the route by including the Mills and canal etc.

Following the conclusions (i.e. no current financial case) of the recent Scott Wilson Study into the re-opening of the Matlock – Buxton line, sponsored by Derbyshire County Council, it remains Peak Rail's ultimate aspiration to extend in stages to Bakewell, then Buxton and potentially eastwards to Ambergate, either by relaying the missing UP line adjacent to NR's (would involve some slews) or by acquiring control of the Network Rail infrastructure as far as Ambergate.

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WyvernRail *(Material provided by WyvernRail plc)*

WyvernRail plc (The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway) is in the process of re-opening the line between Duffield and Wirksworth.

The phases for passenger operations are:

Phase 1 - Wirksworth – Gorsey Bank (south section) opened on 24th August 2004

Phase 2 - Wirksworth – Ravenstor (northward section) to open on 3rd September 2005

Phase 3 - Gorsey Bank - Ildridgehay to open summer 2006

Phase 4 - Ildridgehay - Shottle to open summer 2007

Phase 5 - Shottle - Duffield to open summer 2008

The proposal for the operation of the whole line from 2008 is to provide a summer season steam train service for the tourist traffic, whose main destinations will be the historic market town of Wirksworth, the National Stone Centre and High Peak Trail at Ravenstor. In addition it is proposed to operate a full year round community rail service between Wirksworth and Duffield to connect into the main line and the Matlock services in particular, for commuters and shoppers.

It is not proposed to operate any through services to Derby as Network Rail removed the connection in 2004. We do not aspire to re-connection, except that, were a major freight customer to develop (the line survived for limestone traffic until 1989), such a customer would, in conjunction with Network Rail, have to undertake the re-connection. Was this to be the case, WyvernRail plc might then re-consider through services to Derby and the acceptance of incoming excursions or TOC traffic.

As part of WyvernRail's strategy, arrangements have been made, in conjunction with the Friends of the Derwent Valley Line, to adopt Duffield main line station in order to create a seamless interchange from Central Trains to the Wirksworth line trains. Although the line will not be open until 2008, Duffield is staffed by WyvernRail's volunteers on a part-time basis, for care and maintenance activities. WyvernRail may consider running an agency at this station for the sale of tickets to the national network in the longer term and is looking at whether the last remaining Midland Railway building at Duffield, a former Goods Office, might be saved from an upcoming development plan for this purpose.

Although WyvernRail would have no role to play, the company does support, in the interests of its passenger traffic, the development of a station at the Meteor Centre between Duffield and Derby to serve that retail park. Doubtless, some of the major players at that site, such as Morrisons, would also support it.

(The views in Appendix B are not necessarily the views of the Friends of the Derwent Valley Line)