

Derbyshire County Council

Cabinet Meeting

21 September 2004

Report of the Director of Environmental Services

Feasibility Study of Re-opening the Matlock-Buxton/Chinley Section of the Derby to Manchester Railway: Response to the Consultants' Report (Environment and Highways)

Introductory Summary This report is concerned with the findings of the feasibility study into the possible re-opening of the Matlock to Buxton section of the Derby to Manchester Railway. It summarises the consultants' main findings, outlines the representations received since publication of their report and recommends a response.

The consultants found that while there were no insurmountable engineering difficulties to re-opening the railway, the project was unlikely to be economically viable, at least in the short term, and that the environmental benefits did not outweigh the adverse environmental effects. On the basis of these findings they recommend that no further work should be undertaken in the immediate future, but that the line of the route should be safeguarded for possible construction in the longer term when they expected the financial case to improve.

This report recommends that the broad thrust of the consultants' findings should be accepted. It suggests that the continuity of the route should be safeguarded as a transport corridor, but that north of Rowsley there should be no presumption that the reinstatement of the railway is necessarily a 'preferred use'. In the light of these recommendations, the report suggests that discussions should take place with the relevant authorities to consider opportunities to improve accessibility and promote sustainable tourism in the corridor.

(1) **Purpose of Report** To draw to the Cabinet's attention the findings of the feasibility study, to outline representations received and to agree a response.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In October 2002 Scott Wilson Railways were appointed to carry out a feasibility study into the viability of re-

opening the Matlock to Buxton section of the former Derby to Manchester railway. The study was in two parts: the first required the consultants to examine the overall viability of the project and make recommendations on a preferred option, while the second was intended to develop the scheme in more detail. There was a period of review between the two phases to enable the County Council and its funding partners to consider the consultants' findings and to decide how to proceed.

The report on the first stage of the study was published on 15 June 2004. A copy will be available at the meeting or in advance of the meeting from the Director of Environmental Services. This report briefly summarises the consultants' findings, outlines the representations received since publication of the report and suggests a response to the study findings. Informal discussions with the other funding partners suggest that their response will be compatible with that suggested in this report.

Study findings

The consultants' findings are set out in detail in the Derby to Manchester Railway: Matlock to Buxton/Chinley Link Study Main Report published in 2004. They may be summarised as follows:

Passenger demand – a re-opened railway could be expected to attract up to a million additional rail journeys per year in the year of opening, the actual number depending on the choice of route and the frequency of service. Passenger demand, and hence revenue, was expected to grow over the life of the project. Much of this, however, would be at the expense of existing rail services, particularly in the early years.

Freight demand – the consultants concluded that the line was unlikely to be attractive as a strategic freight route. The only freight traffic using the line was likely to be limestone and cement traffic from quarries in the Buxton area. This could increase in the longer term if quarry operators were able to serve new markets in the South East.

Infrastructure – there were considered to be no insurmountable difficulties in constructing a line along the route of the former railway. Capital costs were estimated to be in the range £84.1m to £123.6m depending on the level of service, the choice of route, and whether provision is made for freight traffic.

Economic evaluation – the consultants concluded that the railway would not provide a good rate of return on the capital investment and that rail services would require an ongoing subsidy, albeit that the financial performance would be expected to improve in later years.

Environmental impact – the report identified a number of environmental impacts including noise (which would increase as use of the line intensified), the need to relocate the Monsal Trail, and the potential impact on SSSIs and the candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Whilst some transfer of traffic from road to rail was identified in the longer term, the consultants concluded that the environmental benefits did not outweigh the adverse effects.

Public consultation – there was considerable public support for the idea of re-opening the railway, although there was significant opposition from those most directly affected including residents living close to the line and users of the Monsal Trail.

In the light of these findings, the consultants recommended that the study partners should:

- on the basis of longer term forecasts, safeguard the corridor for future public transport use
- if the route is to be safeguarded, consider how blight can be removed or reduced including the possible use of a 'not before' date
- limit further development of the project, until such time as a funding mechanism can be identified
- consider opportunities for private finance to reduce the requirement for public sector funding
- if the route is to be safeguarded consider how the condition of the route, and in particular the structures, can be maintained.

Representations on consultants report

At the time of writing some 38 representations on the consultants' report have been received and these are summarised in a separate schedule, a copy of which will be available at the Cabinet Meeting or in advance from the Director of Environmental Services.

Given the conclusions of the report, it is perhaps to be expected that the majority of representations have come from those in favour of reinstating the railway. Many of the representations made similar points, and a number seem to have been influenced by a critical article that appeared in *Entrain*, a specialist railway magazine.

Some of the main points made in the representations include:

- a general welcome for the study and the support given to it by the funding partners
- concern that the focus of the report was too narrow, in particular a view that the wider 'network benefits' had not been adequately captured

- a belief that rail freight had a more significant role than that identified in the report
- comments about the importance of the Monsal Trail and the need for a satisfactory alternative to be provided should the scheme go ahead
- concern about the location of a new Buxton Station and in particular a fear that a new station could be too far from the town centre
- a view that the passenger forecasts were unduly pessimistic and failed to take account of initiatives and service options that could increase demand
- concern that the capital costs of the project had been over-estimated
- the potential to adopt a phased approach to re-opening (eg extension to Bakewell first, with the rest of the route at a later date)
- concern that the report under-estimated the impact on important nature conservation sites
- a view that too much weight had been given to environmental issues
- general support for Peak Rail and the potential for enhancing its role in providing local services
- the need to give more consideration to the potential for developing the line as a Community Railway

In addition to the comments summarised in the schedule and outlined above, a detailed submission was received from Peak Rail that outlined proposals for pursuing an ambitious programme of initiatives focussed on the Matlock area. These include the extension of their existing services into Matlock Station; extension northwards to Rowsley village; the integration of Derby - Matlock and Matlock - Rowsley services; and extension of heritage train services southwards to Cromford or Ambergate.

Officer comments and suggested response to the study findings

Scott Wilson Railways have produced a wide-ranging and objective report on the feasibility of re-opening the railway. There are some reservations about specific points of detail in the report and representations have also been received to the effect that the report is too narrow in its focus and, in particular, that the study has failed to capture the wider 'network benefits' of re-opening the railway. This point has been put to the consultants and they have confirmed that the appraisal that was undertaken complied with accepted methodology and that even the enhanced level of revenue that has been suggested would not alter their fundamental conclusions about the overall viability of the project.

There are also risks to the delivery of the project that remain unresolved. These include the difficulty of identifying a site for a station at Buxton that complies with modern safety standards; concerns about the potential impact on sites of nature conservation importance leading to the possibility of objections from statutory consultees; the need to establish and agree an

alternative route for the Monsal Trail; and last, but by no means least, the difficulty of securing capital and ongoing revenue support for the project.

In the light of these findings it is recommended that the broad thrust of the consultants' report should be accepted and that, in line with their recommendations, no significant amount of further work on the project should be undertaken at present.

In the longer term, the report envisages that the prospects for re-opening the line will improve. The financial forecasts indicate that the railway would break even (ie the revenue would exceed operating costs) some 20-25 years from now and that thereafter the financial position will continue to improve. This improving financial performance, together with the absence of any readily identifiable alternative, has led the consultants to recommend that the corridor should be safeguarded to facilitate the re-opening of the railway at some future date.

While it seems reasonable to assume that the financial performance of the railway could improve over time, the report provides no evidence that the performance of this line will be any better than others of a similar nature.

Given that other projects may already have a stronger economic case, it is difficult to see how this project could be accorded a higher priority in, say 15-20 years time, than it is now. While increased pressure on the road network may result in more calls for 'something to be done', it seems equally likely that the perceived amenity and environmental value of the disused railway will increase over time, thereby strengthening opposition to the scheme. Viewed in this context, the consultants' views about the longer-term prospects for re-opening the line may seem rather optimistic.

The likelihood of the project being implemented at some future date is one of the factors to be taken into account in considering the degree of protection that should be afforded to the corridor to facilitate construction of the railway at some future date. In practice the current ownership and use of the route (operational railway, multi-user trail, private estate and heritage railway) means that it is unlikely that there will be wholesale changes in land-use that would rule out future re-opening of the railway.

While it is always tempting to keep options open, this needs to be balanced against the uncertainty it creates for policy makers and for those living or working along the line of the route. In the circumstances it is suggested that planning policies should continue to protect the continuity of the route between Rowsley and Blackwell Mill as a transport corridor. This would provide for the protection and development of the former railway as a recreational route for walking, cycling, horse riding or other uses. While this would not preclude the restoration of rail services at some future date, there would be no presumption

that reinstatement of the railway was necessarily a 'preferred use'. South of Rowsley most of the route is already being used as a heritage railway and it is suggested that the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan should continue to protect this section of the route for the possible re-opening of the railway.

This approach to safeguarding would seem to be preferable to the consultants' suggestion of establishing a 'not before' date which could conflict with Government guidance that development plans should only include those schemes where there is a strong commitment from the delivery agency.

The consultants also recommended that consideration should be given to investigating private finance opportunities and to maintaining the condition of the route to minimise future costs of railway reinstatement. Given the findings of the study and the doubts about the likelihood of the project proceeding, it is suggested that no specific action be taken on these points.

The concept of re-opening the railway forms part of the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy (SPITS) and a decision not to proceed with the project has potential implications for the delivery of the strategy. While the consultants concluded that there was no obvious alternative to reopening the railway, there may be merit in the local authorities and public transport operators exploring the scope for enhancing bus services in the corridor or pursuing other initiatives to further the SPITS objectives.

Finally, it is suggested that the relevant authorities should have discussions with Peak Rail to consider the extent to which their proposals could make a contribution to promoting sustainable tourism and providing integrated transport services in the light of the Government's emerging policy for Community Railways.

(3) Financial Considerations The feasibility study was funded by a consortium of private and public sector organisations. In the event of a decision not to proceed with further investigations, the surplus funds will be returned to the funding partners on a pro-rata basis.

(4) Equal Opportunities Considerations The study took account of the need to address the needs of people with impaired mobility. Re-opening the railway also has the potential to provide new travel opportunities for people without access to a car.

(5) Environmental and Health Considerations Environmental considerations were a key component of the feasibility study. As reported in the main body of the report the consultants concluded that the environmental benefits of the scheme did not outweigh the adverse impacts.

(6) **Property Considerations** The disused railway is owned by Derbyshire Dales District Council, Haddon Estates and the Peak District National Park Authority. No County Council property is known to be affected by the scheme.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, legal and human rights, and personnel considerations.

(7) **Background Papers** Derby to Manchester Railway: Matlock to Buxton/Chinley Link Study Main Report, Scott Wilson Railways, June 2004

(8) **Key Decision** Yes

(9) **Officer Recommendation** That Cabinet is recommended to:

- 9.1 Accept the broad thrust of the conclusions set out in the consultants' report.
- 9.2 Agree that no significant amount of further work should be undertaken at present.
- 9.3 Seek to continue safeguarding of the former route north of Rowsley as a transport and recreational route, but without any presumption that reinstatement of the railway is a preferred use.
- 9.4 Seek to continue safeguarding a route south of Rowsley for the possible re-opening of a railway.
- 9.5 Consider, in conjunction with other local authorities and public transport operators, the scope for transport initiatives in the Matlock – Buxton corridor compatible with the objectives of the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy (SPITS).
- 9.6 Support further discussions with Peak Rail, public transport operators and relevant local authorities with a view to improving accessibility and promoting sustainable tourism in the wider Matlock area.

David Harvey
Director of Environmental Services

Schedule of Responses – Derby to Manchester Railway Feasibility Study

Name/Organisation	Comments Made
Mr Martin Hulbert, e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses surprise that the Chinley route attracts more journeys than the Buxton route. Feels that the Buxton route would be better. • Suggests an alternative location for the new Buxton station on the gradient behind the Railway Hotel, which would also be nearer to town and be more visible.
Mr Roy Booth, Buxton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels strongly that the study has been a waste of tax payers money. • Does not think that road traffic will be reduced by more than a fraction as a result of re-opening the line and that few people will use it. • Cannot see any benefit to freight operators as rail cannot deliver door-to-door. • Considers the re-opening would be an environmental disaster for the surrounding areas.
Mr Tony Eyre, e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleased that the continuation of the scheme is not recommended due to the increase in noise and visual intrusion on his property in Ambergate. • Pleased that the report is negative towards freight traffic.
Kay Pagany, Buxton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the re-opening of the line for passengers and freight
C Underhill, Ambergate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointed that the scheme is not going ahead. Feels that the scheme would have beneficial effects far beyond Derbyshire.
J M Dagger, North Lincolnshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointed that the scheme has 'stalled'
John Brook, e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that the motive or requirement of pure profit should not be the deciding factor. • Feels that possible flows of long distance passengers and freight should not be ignored. • Wonders whether other sources of funding exist, other than from the Strategic Rail Authority. Also considers that the benefit to the locality should be taken into account in any calculations. • If a positive decision is taken, feels strongly that the scheme specification must not be artificially constrained by cost.
A L Kent, Buxton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the initiative of the County Council for producing the report.

- Realises that the conclusions have been reached in the present climate and may change over time. Therefore, would welcome a decision to safeguard the route.
- Hopes that the County Council will support Peak Rail (not necessarily financially).
- Feels there is a need to keep in mind that the alternative west-east routes have capacity constraints, and that the Matlock – Buxton link is very important and should never have been severed.

- Mr Paul Haworth, e-mail
- Concerned that there may be some fundamentally flawed assumptions underlying the pessimistic financial projections. Feels that the basing of revenue forecasts on demand within the local area has the potential to lead to a serious understatement of revenues, and that there is a serious weakness in the economics
 - Considers that additional fare revenues should have been calculated
 - Questions the presentation of operating costs. Feels that an incremental approach is required. Impossible to tell from the published section of the report whether there is a major distortion of operating costs.
 - Also concerned that the presentation of 'modal shift' has potential for distortion. Feels that the number of vehicle miles, rather than the number of road journeys transferring, is most important.
 - Notes that the study points out that the scheme would be more viable if road pricing were in place. Acknowledges that an alternative to the private car is needed first and considers that the reinstated railway would be part of a wider improvement to the transport network.
 - Suggests that a modest amount of spare capacity should be built in if the project goes ahead.
 - Feels that the economics of the project need to be revisited in detail.

- R M Goodall, Railfuture
North Midlands Branch
- Commends the initiative in commissioning the study.
 - Rejects the recommendation of inaction.
 - Finds it gratifying that the report found there were no significant engineering difficulties involved in reopening the line.
 - Encouraged that the report found considerable potential passenger traffic.
 - Strongly supports the safeguarding of the whole route from development, with a view to reopening the service.
 - Disappointed by the report's conclusion and wishes to reject it.

- Feels that some significant omissions and defects are apparent.
- Concerned that the report identifies that journeys along the corridor will more than double between 2003 and 2041 (without a railway), but does not consider how it will be accommodated.
- Considers the report to be a 'narrow commercial exercise' on the rail option which completely fails to consider the wider benefits.
- Surprised that the report finds little potential for freight traffic, given that Railtrack's Network Management Statement envisaged re-opening as a major freight artery by-passing the congested West Coast Mainline.
- Suggests that a phased opening could be considered instead of the assumption made by the report that the scheme would be implemented as a whole. A possible Phase 1 could be opening the railway as far north as Bakewell.
- Concerned that the report only considers end to end services. Intermediate and alternative services, such as an all stations from Derby to Bakewell, should be considered.
- Feels that emphasis should be given to indirect or non-user benefits
- Considers that the report omits benefits to the rest of the rail network, including its possible use as an alternative or diversionary route for passenger and freight traffic when other lines are closed for engineering work etc. This should have been considered and the financial benefit quantified.
- Comments that the costs for signalling seem very high for a simple end-to -end route. The report should reassess this.
- Suggests that the best way to safeguard the route is to commence re-opening immediately.
- Feels that the environmental benefits of reusing an existing, high-capacity artery, should greatly exceed the environmental dis-benefits of a reinstated rail service.

Dr Richard Bewley, e-mail

- Expresses strong support for the reopening of the line.
- Notes with interest that the report comments that 'no alternative means of delivering public transport within the corridor on both a regional and local scale has been identified'. Expresses concern that transport pressures on the Peak Park are increasing and there is a need to develop a sustainable policy

Ian and Yvonne Miller, • Feel that the funds used to produce report would have been much better employed in delivering a

Litton, e-mail	reliable regular bus service to the isolated communities within Derbyshire Dales.
H Folkard, Great Hucklow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the open process adopted by the County Council, in contrast to that of Scott Wilson.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel that the consultants seriously understated the impact the project would have had on a SAC and SSSI, and did not take into account concerns about the future of climbing in Chee Dale. The needs of tourism and recreation were also not addressed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that a comprehensive and low cost bus service would better meet the variety of very different needs of local people and visitors alike than the railway.
Mr Alan Ackehurst, Guildford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses support for the reopening of the railway.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests support be given to the re-opening of the railway by Peak Rail.
Mr Mick Bond, Chesterfield Primary Care Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the re-opening in view of the reduced journey times for local people wanting or needing to use public transport.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels it is important that any replacement of the Monsal Trail is at least to the same standard as the existing one in view of health benefits. Also expresses a desire to increase access for people with disabilities.
Ann Plackett, English Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the recommendation that the corridor should be safeguarded for possible future use.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises that, although there would be some disbenefits from the point of view of the historic environment, the reopening of the line could assist the regeneration of Buxton and the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. It would also provide a more sustainable mode of transport for visitors to the Peak District National Park.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest Derbyshire County Council press for the 'twin tracking' of the current operational line between Matlock and Derby.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses concern that the masonry structures on the operational section of the line are deteriorating due to a lack of de-vegetation. Encourages the County Council to press for clearance to be re-instated to avoid future costly repairs.
Mr Roger Brown, Clerk to Rowsley Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unanimously accept the findings of Scott Wilson as honest and impartial.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that re-opening the railway would devastate the village in terms of loss of amenity, pollution and environmental impact.

- Expresses concern that the financial burden of funding the construction and ongoing operation of the line would place increased pressure on the Council Tax.

Mr Alan Taylor, e-mail

- Feels that the scope of the study was very narrow and only looked at re-opening the line as a mainline. The full range of options should have been considered.
- Suggests support could be given to Peak Rail to re-open the line to Buxton, and that this should be better placed to provide a 'Community Railway'.
- Expresses the need for integrated transport and feels that all forms of transport should be considered. The re-opening of the line would act as a main artery for local bus services to connect to.

Alasdair McNicol,
Merseyside

- Considers the report to be useful but short on lateral thinking.
- Feels that some statements made in section 11.9 "Heritage Rail" are sweeping generalisations. The heritage railway could offer useful connections at Matlock and Buxton.
- Expresses disappointment that the report seems to ignore the existence of the Wensleydale Railway as a heritage railway developing into a community railway. Also surprised at the lack of reference to the SRA Community Railway consultation paper.
- Suggests that if financial assistance can be found for major items such as the A6 bridge, construction costs can be contained at a much lower level than those quoted by the consultants for a conventional scheme.

Mr D J Harvey, Stamford

- Will feel very disappointed if the outcome of the report results in the line not being re-opened. Urges the County Council to facilitate the re-opening.
- Considers the report to have been commissioned on a very narrow basis. Feels it should have explored all possible methods of re-opening.
- Suggests that the re-opening the railway offers the one opportunity to reconnect the Peak Park with the major conurbations surrounding it.
- Feels that the environmental benefits of rail in the Peak Park outweigh the negatives, and questions what weighting the report gave to the environmental cost savings of rail.
- Believes that the project commands huge local and national support, and must not be allowed to fail by the wayside.

Mr T Swinson, Glossop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that the report does not take into account additional revenue accruing to existing lines from the extra passengers travelling over the re-opened railway. • Suggests that, if the full cost of re-opening cannot be found, £2.5 million could be found to re-instate the bridge over the A6 at Rowsley. Peak Rail would then be able to rebuild the line at a lower cost. • Is keen to see the railway rebuilt to Chinley so that it could act as an interchange to parts of the High Peak poorly served by public transport
Mr Paul Tomlinson, Peak Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the production of the report which confirms that the re-opening is feasible in engineering terms and has widespread popular support. • Feels that the problems identified can be overcome, particularly if the heritage/community option is implemented. Peak Rail believe this would deliver a high proportion of the benefits of providing the main line option at a fraction of the cost, without the need for any ongoing subsidy. • Requests that: the route be safeguarded. • Requests that the County Council supports Peak Rail in its proposals to extend north to Rowsley and develop a wider range of services, as detailed. • Requests that support is given to Peak Rails efforts to bring the Derby-Matlock service within its operation as a community railway.
Dr Tom Moat, English Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers the conclusion and terminology used in respect of impact on the Peak District Dales candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC) remain confused. Terms that have specific meanings in the relevant legislation are used iter-changeably. Also, the study has not addressed potential impacts on some of the candidate SAC features of interest that could be affected. The study has therefore not clarified the issues in relation to impact on the candidate SAC. • Does not agree with the report's conclusion of a "minor adverse" impact on Sites of Special Scientific Impact (SSSI). The report highlights negative impacts on plants and vegetation which are of national, not just regional, importance. • Concern expressed over SSSIs at Matlock and Cromford. • Concludes that the SSSI impacts have not been appropriately assessed or in some cases covered by the study. • Observes that no mention is made of the impact on the targets and actions in national, regional or local Biodiversity Action Plans.

- Does not consider that the biodiversity impacts have been appropriately covered by the study.
- Does not consider that species interests have been addressed in a way that allows a full evaluation of impacts. Considers it important that new surveys are undertaken if the project progresses.
- Found it difficult to assess the wider impacts of infrastructure associated with installing a railway and does not consider that the study has fully explored the range and implications of potential impacts.
- Considers that the impact of re-routing the Monsal Trail has not been properly addressed despite raising it with the consultants at an early stage.
- Notes that a key conclusion of the study is that the proposal "does not appear to deliver any significant environmental benefits associated with modal shift from road to rail". Feels that a development of this scale without such benefits will be more difficult to justify in terms of guidance in PPG7 on major developments in National Parks.
- Does not consider that the study has clarified the primary objective of the project.
- Suggests that the recommendations of the study should be expanded to include the need for a wider search for sustainable transport solutions.

• Expresses disappointment that the study does not make a better case for re-opening the railway.

Mr Jim Froggatt, East
Midlands Transport
Activists Roundtable

- Considers that the market for travel between Leicester and stations to the south, and Manchester and stations to the North West, has been under estimated.
- Does not feel that the report properly considers what events might improve the schemes prospects. Believes that this section should be revisited in the light of recent Government announcements on road pricing.
- Expresses disappointment about the chapter on environmental issues because it highlights many problems without finding many benefits. Considers that the beneficial effect of re-opening the line on air quality is down-played.
- Feels that it is vital that no action is taken that will preclude an early re-opening of the line.
- Congratulates Derbyshire County Council for taking the lead and considers the report to be excellent and comprehensive.

Mr David Faircloth,
Alvaston

- Feels the remit of the report was very narrow and didn't consider the network benefits for the Country.
- Suggests it would be beneficial to carry out the necessary structural clearances to allow the route to be cleared to W12 in order to allow the carrying of inter-modal traffic.
- Suggested detailed options of how the line could also be used to operate a fast London to Manchester service and North West – East Anglia services.

Mr Paul Gibbons,
Oakerthorpe

- Considers that the planned new station at Buxton is too expensive and too far from the town.
- Suggests a number of non-rail alternatives which would benefit from further study including, upgrading the A6; light rail; alternative heavy rail routes; traffic restraint; improving bus and coach services; heritage rail.
- Expresses surprise over the complications of signalling through the Peak Forest.
- Suggests establishing a park and ride station at Bibbington, just north of Buxton on the A6.
- Questions the need for a concrete saddle on the arch bridges.
- Feels that an alternative for the Monsal Trail must be found outside the railway boundary.

Mr Brian Walker, North
Yorkshire

- Cannot believe that the re-opening has been rejected and considers the prominent factor given as environmental impact to be unbelievable.
- Considers the re-opening necessary to help relieve traffic congestion and environmental problems in the Peak Park. Suggests the Settle-Carlisle railway is looked at as a model due to its similarities.
- Urges Derbyshire County Council to be positive and push forward with the project as the environmental, community and tourism benefits to the National Park would be immense.
- Feels that the time estimate given to construct the line is excessive.

Mr Wilfred Carey,
Transport 2000

- Pleased that the report found no great engineering difficulties and confirmed considerable demand for the railway. Can see nothing which should prevent a re-opening.
- Believes the predicted increase in revenues which would accrue would be far in excess of those calculated because the consultants have ignored "network benefits"
- Considers the overall journey times to be unduly pessimistic given the performance characteristics of modern trains.

- Do not accept the financial conclusions of the report. Feel that using the SRA/DfT approved assessment method gives a very pessimistic and biased view of the value of the project. It considers national costs but only revenue within the local area.
- Suggests the Council looks at continuing road traffic congestion in the area, and how in the future traffic restraint measures may affect the economics of the project.
- Question the choice of running options and suggest options of semi-fast services to Manchester via Chinley and an hourly service to Buxton from Nottingham.
- Feel that an estimate should have been provided of the cost savings to rail freight companies by using this shorter, quicker and easier graded route existing traffic diverted from the Hope Valley route.
- Support the recommendation that the line should be safeguarded and ask the Council to consider ways in which the project may be delivered by a phased approach.

High Peak Borough
Council,

- Welcomes the study and the approach taken to prepare it.
- Requests that any additional work be limited to areas where progress can be achieved prior to 2025 and/or on improvements within existing rail corridors.
- Requests an early review of the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy in the light of the study conclusions.
- Requests that alternative transport measures be explored to address visitor growth and regeneration in Buxton.

Anne Tipple, Derbyshire
Chamber

- Various general comments made but generally supportive of the recommendation to safeguard the route.
- Concerns were expressed over environmental damage of freight and passenger services and the loss of the Monsal Trail.

Anne Robinson, CPRE

- Supports the recommendations of the study, with the proviso that further development should depend on identification of the scheme as the most sustainable solution for existing transport problems, not on funding mechanisms.
- Considers that if the scheme is revisited in the future it should be assessed alongside other alternatives and against clear objectives.

- Express concern that the impacts of nature conservation along the route have been underestimated.

Mr Mark Annand, Bath

- Surprised that the study produced such a bleak picture of the line's projected level of use.
- Considers that the main function of the route would be to link two population centres, Benefits to the hinterland should be extra to that main function.
- Feels that the journey times are un-ambitious and that the new line could offer increased journey reliability compared with the current route.
- Concerned that the network benefits to the national rail and road network are not well portrayed.
- Considers the study's passenger forecast model to be suspect in ignoring potential traffic from further a field.
- Feels that the environmental concerns are excessively negative.
- Wishes to see the project progress further.

Mr Steve Woods, East Sussex

- Supports the reinstatement of the line and highlights similar issues and projects taking place in Sussex.

Amber Valley Borough Council

- Acknowledges that public funding for the project is unlikely to be forthcoming in the current financial climate.
- Notes that the environmental and financial constraints could be overcome at some stage and therefore agree that safeguarding the route is appropriate.
- Suggests the County Council explore other ways of reducing road traffic growth along the A6 corridor (for pedestrians, cyclists and tourists)

Mr Steven C Corbett, Wiltshire

- Feels that the consultant's main conclusions were predictable and showed no 'new thinking'.
- Keen that environmental arguments are not allowed to suppress every proposal and that a balance should be sought.
- Considers the need to move the Monsal Trail unfortunate but not insuperable, considering walkers are not permitted through tunnels or over the viaduct on the existing trail.
- Has personally observed an increase in traffic, especially between Matlock and Buxton and believes that the re-opening of the railway would help ease this.
- Keen that the railway should be opened as a single track line if nothing else, as it would still be able

to serve communities and tourists.

- Considers that re-opening the railway would mean travelling along is not an end in itself, but part of a longer journey. Feels that, of all proposals for railway instatement, this one must have the most propensity for success.

- Expresses surprise that the signalling cost is £18 million for the one train an hour option. Suggests a cheaper, locally controlled scheme would be more appropriate.
- Considers the maximum assumed line speed of 75mph to be unduly pessimistic. Feels it may be possible to improve on the assumed journey times.
- Feels that the method used to predict the potential increase in revenue is unacceptable. Any new or improved train services also generate additional revenue outside the area. The full network benefit has not been taken into account.
- Does not consider the routing option via a new station at Buxton to be either feasible of desirable. The station would be inconvenient for the town and on too steep a gradient.
- Suggests the most suitable routing option would be an hourly semi-fast service to Manchester via Chinley (from St Pancras), and an hourly local service to Buxton (from Nottingham) terminating at a new bay platform.
- Feels that there is a good case for the re-opening to succeed and would like Derbyshire County Council to re-examine the conclusions of the report.

Mr R West, Chandlers
Ford, Hants

- Expresses surprise at the outcome of the report.
- Considers that there are several possible options for re-opening the line, including passenger and/or freight traffic.

- Feels that there will be some sort of railway between Matlock and Buxton by 2012.

Malcolm Hutton, Hotel
Owner, Great Hucklow

- Expresses a strong desire that the Peak Line is re-opened as a Community Railway. This would greatly aid visitors to the area.
- Suggests that Park and Ride at Ambergate and Rowsley would work well.
- Urges Derbyshire County Council to support the re-opening to avoid travel to the area going from bad to worse.