

# The Lightweight Approach to Community Rail



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# **“Lightweighting” Rail**

**Reality: Lightweight Suburban Rail at Stourbridge**

**Policy: Meeting Transport Aims**

**Expansion: Attractive Local Transport**

**Benefits: for People and the Environment**

**Conclusions: the Future for Local Transport**

# Sundays at Stourbridge



Pre Metro Operations services began in December 2005

Officially launched in February 2006

# Performance at Stourbridge

37 operational days

2,892 timetabled journeys operated

Service reliability: 98.2%

Late running (five minutes or more): 0.7%

24 days of 100% reliability and punctuality

Over 7,000 passenger journeys

# Service at Stourbridge



New rail passengers

Improved accessibility of rail services

# Lightweighting - the way forward

“[Stourbridge Town branch] operating costs are high and it is possible that alternative options for providing a rail-based service would represent better value for money ... Light rail solutions such as [the PPM experimental service] could represent a way forward for the route.”

*Department for Transport, West Midlands Franchise Consultation Document*

“We will be reviewing the way standards drive costs on community rail lines and whether there are any opportunities to reduce the subsequent costs. A number of options are being considered including use of lighter vehicles.”

“Lighter trains can deliver improved acceleration and braking, reducing journey times between stations and using less energy.”

*Network Rail, Initial Strategic Business Plan for Control Period 4*

“All alternatives must be considered [including] adding ... intermediate stops, increasing service frequency [and] reducing the cost of the service by using shorter or lighter trains, or by changing the standard to which the track is maintained.”

“A wide ranging review of options ... must identify all other reasonable rail-based options as an alternative to closure.”

*Department for Transport, Consultation on the implementation of the Railways Act 2005 provisions on closures and minor modifications*

# Lightweighting Local Transport

- Rethinking the rail mode
- Transport for people
- Increasing patronage



# Applications

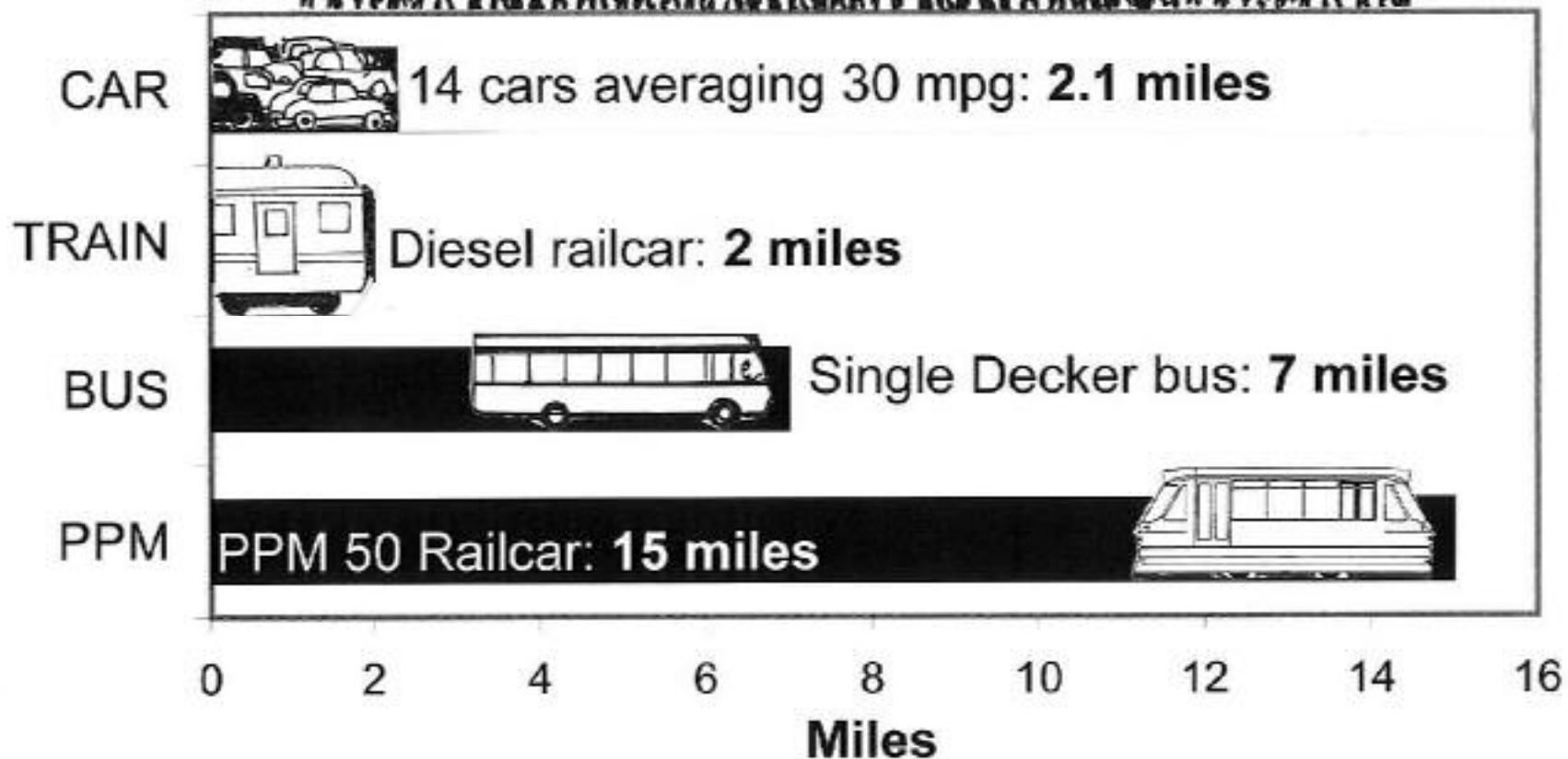
- Segregated branch lines
- ‘Filler’ services
- More services, more stops
- The tram experience



# Benefits

- Attractive public transport
- Appropriate solutions to the real challenges
- Environmental improvements - local and global
- Community benefits from better transport

How far can 50 people travel on one gallon of fuel?



# Conclusions

## Lightweighting:

- Clean, green and attractive
- ‘Pacer’ replacement is an opportunity
- Benefits for communities and the environment



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