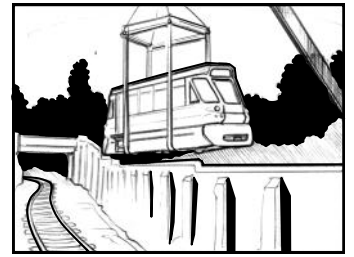




# PARRY NEWS



[www.parryassociates.com](http://www.parryassociates.com)

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Issue No 54

An Occasional Newsletter from JPM Parry & Associates Ltd (JPA),  
Parry People Movers Ltd (PPML), and Pre Metro Operations Ltd (PMOL)

July 2009



Railcar No. 139 001 (left) arrives at Stourbridge Junction for the first time on 17th May 2009 to join No. 139 002

## NEW SCHOOL OPENING IN ZAMBIA

BUTEMPA SCHOOL in Zambia's Central Province was formally opened in June 2009 in a ceremony attended by the provincial education officer and Mrs Sue Lucas, the chairman of UK charity Build IT International which is involved in a programme of school construction in the country.

The school was designed with input from the local community. Parry roof tiles give the classrooms a cool and airy environment for pupils, while Build IT's use of local material production has produced new jobs and livelihoods in the area. *Hexagonal school completed, page 3*



Butemba school in Zambia brightens the life of local children

## THE FLEET'S IN!

### Class 139 enters service at Stourbridge

THE TWO PPM 60 railcars - 'Class 139' in British railway terminology - have entered passenger service on the Stourbridge Town branch: a breakthrough for lightweight rail.

Ordered as part of the London Midland franchise and financed by Porterbrook Leasing Company, the two vehicles making up the 'fleet' came together at Stourbridge for the first time on 17th May after the delivery of No. 139 001 to join its sister on the branch line.

A phasing-in period starting at the end of March saw passengers being carried by Parry People Movers technology once again between Stourbridge's Town and Junction stations, after the successful experimental operation using the 'PPM 50' prototype railcar in 2005-06. It was that period of Sundays-only running that convinced Govia, owners of London Midland, to include lightweight rail in their successful franchise bid.

By late June both Class 139 vehicles had entered passenger service, and thousands of passenger journeys had been made in them. On 22nd June the first day of intensive service saw over 200 public service trips along the branch line made by 139 001. Making one journey in each direction every ten minutes, the railcar easily met its operational specification and gave Stourbridge Town its best ever train service - made possible by the sprightly performance and short turnaround times achievable with this type of rolling stock. The introduction of the PPM 60s also marks the successful transformation of Pre Metro Operations into a fully-fledged subcontract train operator, running the Stourbridge Town service on behalf of London Midland.

*Class 139 delivered and into service, page 4  
Public views of the new operation, page 5*

### Also In This Issue...

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- New design unit widens Parry Associates' commercial offering, p7
- Track joints and a smooth ride, p8



by John Parry

# NOT QUITE SO BARMY AFTER ALL?

I WILL remember for some time having woken up to the BBC News Headlines on 15th June 2009. In amongst all the

gloom over the disputed election in Iran, and over one poor Scots lady dying of swine 'flu, I thought my ears were deceiving me over the third, much more positive, item. This said that Britain's Train Operating Companies have begun making a strong business case for reconnecting 40 towns to the national rail network by reopening branch lines.

## Aspiration

When we put this as a notion to the Strategic Rail Authority in 2003, it was dismissed as so 'aspirational' as to be close to barmy. And, somewhat late in the day, the thoroughly unjoined-up thinking of the Men from the Ministry laid the plans for the proposed new Eco-Towns with scant regard for the need to connect them to railway arteries. This omission is now challenged at the same time in the train companies' new agenda.

Why only 40 towns? By great good fortune the 'barmy' determination of people who refused to let old branch line railway track be melted down like scrap iron has made them the proud possessors of almost a thousand miles of railways, many of which are suitable to be turned into useful public transport corridors - connecting towns such as Bewdley, Wallingford and Chinnor to busy junctions on the rail network. Adjustments may need to be made to accommodate both heritage and new stock - but nothing like the task of rebuilding the whole line. Thank heaven

for that bit of past barminess. As a result of the past commitment of railway preservationists, we count another possible 30 towns. That makes 70 towns which could be provided with a railway connection comparatively cheaply!

## Hybridisation

The most outrageous (truly barmy) suggestion of all, which began to be implemented in the mid 1990s, was that - providing the correct circumstances were created for segregated operations - a new form of rolling stock could be based around an on-board kinetic energy recovery system. 'What?' you might ask, 'Surely this is not anything to do with the "KERS" technology that is currently being developed by the Formula 1 motor racing teams in order to increase the cars' range and conserve their brakes?' Yes, exactly the same principle as the PPM traction technology described by some experts in the rail industry as being of 'nightmarish complexity' - because of the inclusion of a flywheel to store energy to re-use for acceleration. Barmy it may have been called, but the concept which emerged is now featured on Page 1 of this newsletter with the two railcars now carrying passengers on the Stourbridge Town branch line. The only way for such a difficult project to have come about was as a result of a remarkable loyal army of supporters and collaborators. Occupations past and present are very wide ranging: bank managers, teachers, patent attorneys, bus drivers, doctors, consultants, clergymen, sales reps, engineers, policemen, county councillors, senior academics, finance directors, community workers, small business people, civil servants, judges and magistrates, and charity workers are some examples.

Even some railwaymen have become supporters, having reached a conviction that the potential for a new form of more affordable, short line suburban railway based on hybridised traction with recovered kinetic energy as the second source is so relevant to today's concerns that it should be helped to succeed. The adjective 'barmy' has even been affectionately ascribed by one of the people in the ranks to himself and his colleagues, on the basis that the road to success would be so long and hard that normal investment considerations would not be sufficient to sustain support. He may well have been right from a start point in 1992. Delayed official recognition of the relevance of our approach made it particularly dependent on the farsightedness of our supporters seeing the project from a long term perspective. However the longer term is now happening, and despite John Maynard-Keynes's witty observation, we are not all dead. Far from it: we are alive and kicking and preparing to realise the dream.

## Realisation

The reason why all this talk of railway reopening is so significant in our People Mover story is that - as a result of the investment in hybrid traction, braking energy recovery and lightweighting of chassis and coachwork - a concept has emerged which greatly lowers the threshold of costs of operating short line railways. Every feasibility study which runs up against doubts over commercial viability doing the job conventionally with heavy rail technology can now consider a more affordable option. All I can say is 'Join the Barmy Army, we may not be quite as daft as some people think!'

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# ZAMBIA SCHOOL COMPLETED WITH HEXAGONAL ROOFS

## Parry roof tiles cover new two-classroom building in Butempa

BUILD IT INTERNATIONAL formally handed over a new school to the local community on 11th June 2009. This will trigger the Ministry of Education to send the community a trained teacher: good news for the 300 children of Butempa and surrounding villages in rural Zambia.

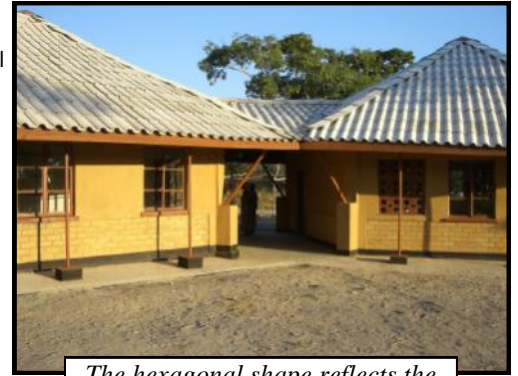
Designed by the community with a local architect, the school took nine months to complete at a cost of £25,000. It replaces temporary mud-brick and grass structures and provides a cool and light space for children to learn in. The unusual six sided rooms are built from stabilised soil blocks and Parry tiles all made on site by the local people trained by Build IT International.



*The rear of the buildings at Butempa in the sunlight*

Mr Ngoma, the local Provincial Education officer, attended the ceremony and was highly impressed. He even suggested that the building was too good for a rural community and should be in town!

Andrew Jowett, Build IT International's UK-based director, commented: 'We are delighted, not just with the school, but with the opportunities that the project has created for local people. At least three of the builders we trained are now busy on other projects and have the ambition to establish their own small businesses in a very poor part of the world.'



*The hexagonal shape reflects the traditional round house design*

Build IT International is currently working on three more schools in Zambia that should be completed by early 2010.

# INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR JAMIIBORA PROJECT

PARRY BUILDING materials technologies are being extensively used in one of the most remarkable initiatives to help the poor of a third world country.

JamiiBora, founded in 1999 in Kenya, was born out of the decision by fifty beggars from Mathare Valley shanty town to ask the experienced development aid worker Mrs Ingrid Munro to help them 'Make Real Their Dream' to raise themselves out of poverty. The meeting of minds between the shanty town representatives and Ingrid and her associates concluded that this could not happen using aid hand-outs but must instead be done through small business development.

The means used was 'Micro Credit' which could be released and secured by mutual guarantee of loans to members of the community. Small business loans have resulted in a galaxy of enterprises including fish wholesaling, hairdressing, mobile kitchens serving food to local schools, transporting goods by hand carts, and making paper bags for market stall holders.

In 2009 JamiiBora has grown to an organisation with 235,000 members, serviced by 90 branches throughout Kenya and 160 smaller outlets. As well as loans, the organisation provides health insurance recognised by 52 hospitals. Insurance is provided at affordable rates, as low as US\$14 per year for a family of six.

The most visible impact of the JamiiBora operation in Kenya has been the creation of a brand new town at Kaputiei for 10,000 residents. This is where

Parry Associates became involved as suppliers of the vibrating machines and moulds to produce the 2.4 million blocks and 1.9 million roofing tiles needed for the houses and schools.

### International Interest

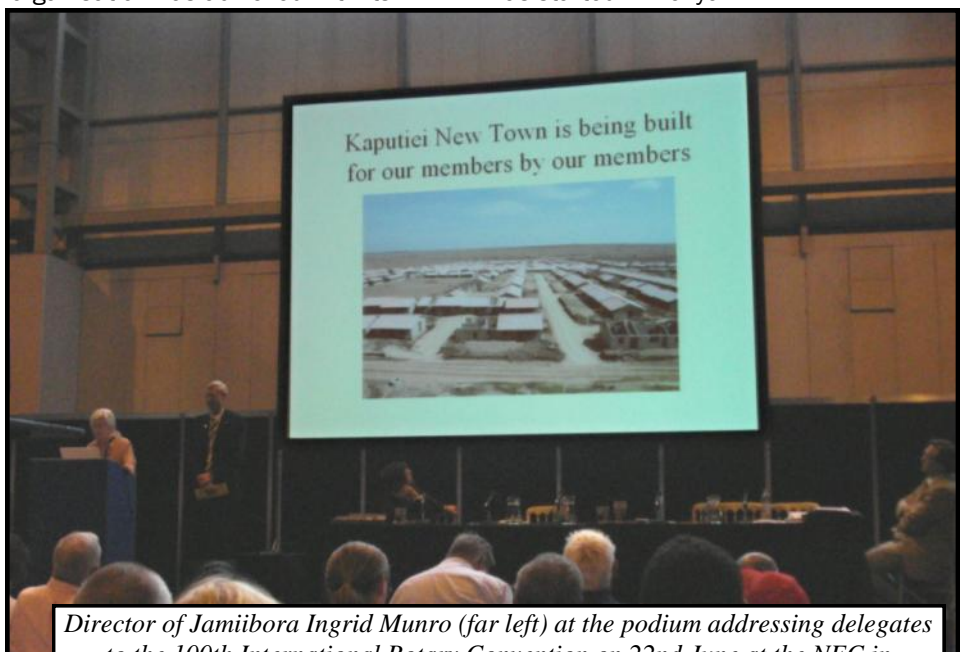
During a presentation to the 100th International Rotary Convention at the NEC on 22nd June 2009, Ingrid Munro paid tribute to the essential role played by Parry equipment and technical support in the construction of Kaputiei New Town.

There are now further developments taking place which illustrate the recognition which the JamiiBora organisation has achieved with its

various activities, from micro finance to new settlement construction. The authorities in Kenya have encouraged the establishment of JamiiBora Makau: a development organisation with a wider remit.

This will look into requests for new programmes of activity in different regions of Kenya. At the same time, a request from the nearby state of Burundi will probably lead to a new, similar organisation being established in that country as well.

Meanwhile Ingrid is having to resist calls to conferences throughout the world to explain the amazing success story which has started in Kenya.



*Director of JamiiBora Ingrid Munro (far left) at the podium addressing delegates to the 100th International Rotary Convention on 22nd June at the NEC in Birmingham, with a recent photograph of Kaputiei New Town on the screen*

# TWO CLASS 139 RAILCARS NOW IN SERVICE

Thousands of passengers being carried by lightweight rail on Stourbridge Town branch

## Commissioning task aided by London Midland's 'phasing-in' strategy

BY THE END OF June 2009 the much-delayed introduction of two Parry People Movers-built Class 139 railcars was beginning to settle down into a regular service operation. The management of the train operating company for the West Midlands franchise, London Midland, had been extremely anxious about the impact that commissioning a technology of rail vehicle radically different from what they were familiar with might have on passenger experience and on the all-important Public Performance Measure. This other 'PPM' is the measure by which that company's achievements are formally assessed.

After the first trial introduction during late-March to mid-May with only one railcar (No. 139 002) available, it became clear that the need to pull this new vehicle out of service every couple of days for adjustments and fault rectification was incompatible with London Midland's over-riding operational responsibilities. The type of commissioning issues which arose included minor leaks in the pneumatic system causing the brakes to slightly engage, which slowed the railcar down on the up gradient out of Stourbridge Town, and the need to 'fine-tune' the



*A busy scene at Stourbridge Junction*

hydro-static equipment in order to give drivers more subtle control over acceleration, which at the beginning was too jerky for comfort. Another aspect causing initial commissioning difficulties for Pre Metro Operation crews concerned the fuelling arrangements based on propane gas in bottles. An uneven supply and the complexity of pipework and indicators between the four cylinders occasionally indicated that one or other were empty when actually full. As a result of the need for some short periods out of service, and with only one railcar as yet available, London Midland's managing director Stephen Banaghan concluded that the best way forward was not 100 percent conversion from heavy to light but to 'phase in' the

new technology by covering spells out of service with a Class 153 heavy railcar. This turned out to be a very practicable arrangement. The crews of the two different types of railcar, coordinated by London Midland Control with 'safe separation' issues handled by Network Rail signallers, produced a surprisingly smooth service. By the end of June the need for phasing-in was beginning to ease and the Class 153 gradually withdrawn.

### Railcar 139 001 flies in!

Early in the morning of Sunday 17th May, the Class 139 fleet at Stourbridge was completed with 139 001 joining its sister. At the same time, the prototype PPM 50 vehicle (known as 'Car 12') that had operated the historic Sunday experimental service in 2005-06, could be taken away from Stourbridge for the last time.

As with the delivery of 139 002 in January, 139 001 was lifted by crane directly from the back of the delivery lorry on to the tracks at Stourbridge Town, from where it ran under its own power up to the depot compound at Stourbridge Junction. Once this move had been completed, it was time for the process to be reversed and 'Car 12' was

## EARLY ONE SUNDAY MORNING IN STOURBRIDGE: 17th MAY 2009



*The PPM 50 (left) leaves Stourbridge Junction for the last time, passing 139 002 in the spur*



*No. 139 001 arrives at Stourbridge Town by lorry...*



*... and is lifted into the air in front of the PPM 50*



*No. 139 001 sets off up the branch for the first time...*

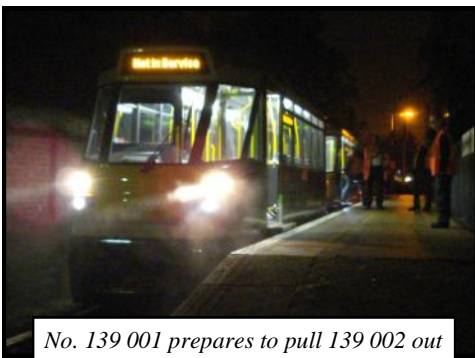


*... and joins 139 002 just north of Stourbridge Junction...*



*... while at the Town station, the PPM 50 is lifted for its return to Cradley Heath*





No. 139 001 prepares to pull 139 002 out of Stourbridge Town and up the gradient in the early hours of 11th June 2009

lifted off the branch and on to the lorry for transfer back to Cradley Heath. This operation required detailed planning. As well as arranging for the lorry and crane, and the planning of the two lifts, the 'choreography' of the three railcars had to be agreed with the railway authorities, and both No. 139 001 and 'Car 12' had to be given the appropriate certification to permit their first and last moves respectively over Network Rail track. The planning even had to involve Stourbridge Age Concern, as it was their forecourt from which the crane and road transport had to operate - and it was essential to be away before the centre opened that morning.

#### Night-time running

With full passenger services running between 6am and midnight Monday to Saturday, and 10am to 8pm on Sunday, test running, mileage accumulation and

driver familiarisation on the branch line could only take place overnight. Operations were undertaken on eleven nights, with both vehicles being run in this way.

The logistics were challenging with simultaneous daytime and night-time operations stretching resources. The overnight running enabled crews to become familiar with both the vehicles and the route prior to passenger service.

#### Acceptance

On 2nd June, No. 139 001 was put through its paces in the presence of representatives from leasing company Porterbrook and train operator London Midland. The trials included demonstration of the 'rescue' of one vehicle by another (followed up during the night of 10th June when 139 002 dragged its 'dead' partner up the gradient from Town to Junction without problems) and proof that a ten-minute interval service could be operated in both directions along the branch line. With its capabilities shown to meet requirements - and with a short list of further rectification work to be undertaken - No. 139 001 was formally accepted by Porterbrook that day.

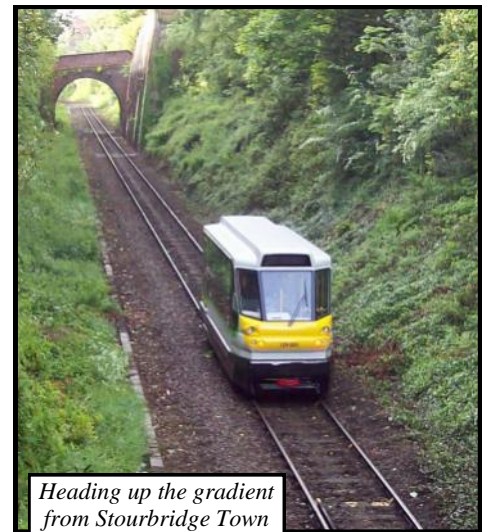
#### Depot challenge

Already over twenty thousand passenger journeys have been made on Class 139 railcars along the Stourbridge Town branch. Clearly such machines do not remain in running condition indefinitely

without attention, and for this purpose a two-vehicle maintenance depot building has been built at Stourbridge Junction, as well as a secure storage location for the vehicles' propane fuel.

The building, as it is, is adequate for Parry Associates technical staff to undertake routine maintenance activities, including the examinations performed at roughly weekly and monthly intervals.

However, for long-term maintenance (for example, the annual service), facilities including a crane and improved lighting will be required. It has not been possible to provide these amenities in advance of operation, but it is recognised by all that there is an approaching deadline by which they must be ready.



Heading up the gradient from Stourbridge Town

## PUBLIC COMMENTARY AT STOURBRIDGE: WARM, COOL & WHIMSICAL

THE START OF Pre Metro Operations' lightweight rail service on the Stourbridge Town branch appears to have stirred up mixed emotions among rail travellers in the local area!

Two examples, taken from the letters page of the *Stourbridge News*, are shown below. Mrs Rhodes (left) was clearly unimpressed, but her

### Snail rail...

AS I work in Birmingham, I use the train everyday. This week I got to Stourbridge Town to catch the shuttle, it was about 9.55am and there were several people waiting, it should have arrived at 10am but no joy.

Then at 12 minutes past, an overgrown icecream van appeared coming down the track very slowly, we all got on, half the people had to stand due to shortage of seats. Then off we went at snails pace to the junction.

If it is packed at 10.15, what's it like at peak times? I don't know who is behind this stupid mode of transport, but it is a complete waste of money.

They would have done better turning the track into a road, then at least we would walk to the junction, we would get there quicker and on time. As for the people behind the ice cream van, I hope they are now in a secure unit. They are never safe on the streets.

Mrs S Rhodes  
Amblecote

principal criticism - that the Class 139 moves at a 'snail's pace' - is erroneous: the railcars make the journeys between the two Stourbridge stations in three minutes, the same as the diesel trains they

have replaced. Perhaps the all-round views provided by the Class 139 produce an optical illusion of slow progress! Meanwhile, the number of seats has been found to be adequate for the vast majority of service trips made each day and, just as when taking short trips on the Tube, many prefer to stand anyway.

The 'Be Proud of the Parry' letter (below right) shows some of the level of support that exists for lightweight rail, as well as an appreciation of the possibilities that are presented by the concept, which can be applied to street-running trams as well as efficient operation of railway branch lines.

The best of the comments have been verbal. Stourbridge is in the Black Country which is known for the droll humour of its locals - one of whom was heard to say, 'I ay' concerned; 'I'm gooin' for a ride on the Big Dipper!'.

### Be proud of the Parry

I WAS very disappointed to read the letter from Mrs S Rhodes (May 28th 2009) regarding the Parry People Mover, currently being phased in on the Stourbridge Junction-Town line.

Far from being an "overgrown ice-cream van", this innovative, environmentally-friendly futuristic mode of public transport will not only run at more frequent intervals than its diesel predecessor, it will allow far easier flat-level entry for wheelchair access and parents with baby buggies and be far kinder to the environment.

The people behind the development of the Parry People Mover and now the

operational staff who are going to run it should be justifiably proud of their achievement to bring this innovative operation to Stourbridge. As a local resident, I am certainly proud to use it.

Why not extend it down the High Street to make our town something special? We have a new bus station coming soon and a number of new buses being brought to Stourbridge, coupled with an excellent, frequent rail service to Birmingham and peak trains direct to London. Public transport is really moving forward in our area.

Phil Tonks  
Wordsley

If the passenger comments heard during the one-year experimental service in 2005-06 are a guide, the benefits of level access between railcar and platform, all-round visibility, quietness, and cleaner, more frequent services will outweigh the issues of size and bumps in the track (see page 8).



## ATOC GETS BEHIND BRANCH LINE REOPENING CAMPAIGN

### Proposals for extension of network to link more people to rail

ON 15th JUNE, the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) published 'Connecting Communities', a report describing how to give a million more people in Great Britain access to the national rail network involving 20 schemes with a benefit-to-cost ratio exceeding 1.5. Demographic changes make train services look much more attractive than they did several decades ago, when so many lines were closed.

#### Heritage line potential

Some of the lines mentioned in the report were looked at by Parry Associates in the past. These include connecting Brownhills to Walsall (see *Parry News* 44), and Fleetwood to Poulton-le-Fylde (*Parry News* 50).

One suggestion is to run national rail services over a preserved railway in order to serve Brixham in Devon. This is similar in concept to the use of certain heritage lines for ordinary public transport services. Lord Bradshaw, the Liberal Democrats' transport spokesman and himself a former senior railway manager, made an

interesting observation in *The Times* on 17th June on how best to re-open railways without the 'goldplating' that can occur when the main line railway is involved. He proposed 'a separate organisation with the responsibility for re-openings using best practice from our thriving heritage railway sector, which from their experience will give us a cheap, safe railway system making best use of volunteer and part-time labour.'

This echoes proposals made over the years in *Parry News* and to the concept put forward by Lightweight Community Transport Ltd (see report right), which is promoting the use of lightweight rail for the implementation of quality public transport services where rail lines already exist but are not used for routine passenger transport.

#### Segregated but integrated

Some re-opened lines will be best served by through trains from elsewhere on the existing network. Others will be best served by a Stourbridge type branch line operation.

## LCT MOBILISES SUPPORT FOR NEW RAIL SERVICES

'COMMUNITY RoSCo' Lightweight Community Transport Ltd marked its first year by holding its inaugural AGM on 16th June 2009 in St John's United Reformed Church adjacent to the Stourbridge Town station. Those attending were able to experience lightweight rail for real by taking a ride on PPM 60 No. 139 002.

LCT was set up with the aim of becoming roughly equivalent to a rolling stock leasing company - or 'RoSCo' - but specialising in helping the implementation of new lightweight rail applications.

#### Capital raising for new rail links

The company has raised over £40,000 from investors in support of its vision of a new tier of passenger rail services, initially operating over existing, but underused, stretches of line. A number of 'heritage' railways already in existence offer exciting opportunities for shared operation, mixing steam-powered, tourist-oriented off-peak services with lightweight, low-cost passenger services in peak hours.

LCT's aim is to enable the proponents of new rail operations to finance rolling stock and depot infrastructure acquisition, as well as initial planning and training, through payback arrangements.

## PARK AND RIDE FROM SAFARI JUNCTION?

### Parry Associates designer spots opportunity for hidden parking

A TRIP ON THE Severn Valley Railway by JPA's new designer, Will Jarman (see page 7), generated the germ of an idea that could solve a conundrum which has exercised minds engaged on the potential for re-introducing public transport rail services between Bewdley and Kidderminster.

This route has great potential, as 'main line' train services from Kidderminster serve both Birmingham and Worcester (as well as Stourbridge Junction for the Town branch). Bewdley itself is a very pleasant town, but most employment is elsewhere; many people drive either to the paying car park at Kidderminster station or the more distant but free car park at Stourbridge Junction in order to take the train to work. In addition, the road between Bewdley and Kidderminster is highly congested in peak hours, and a well-planned rail link could attract further traffic from the residents of Stourport-on-Severn, which has no rail service.

However, a public transport service superimposed on the existing heritage operation would create a problem at Bewdley station, where limited parking exists. Furthermore, because the heritage trains operate on weekdays during the summer months, any parking taken by commuters in the early morning would be lost to visitors to the SVR arriving later in the day. Will had his bright idea just east of Bewdley, at the point where the Severn Valley Railway crosses the A456 trunk road. At this point, a former railway alignment branches off from the SVR route in a cutting - the last remnant of this is an isolated siding on which a selection of rolling stock is currently stored. The breakthrough realisation was that a car

park could be concealed in the cutting, with a new access road off the A456. This would produce a number of benefits. Firstly, the atmosphere of the heritage railway would be retained, as the 100-space car park would only briefly be visible from the trains, while the station would simply consist of a short and unobtrusive platform. Secondly, park-and-ride rail users could be kept to the new car park, while a terminating point at Bewdley station would still enable local residents to walk. Furthermore, the location

of the car park on the A456 would encourage park and ride traffic from Stourport and points further afield, but still keep it away from congested town centres.

A final attraction: the location is right by the West Midlands Safari Park. So there is even scope for visitors to arrive at 'Safari Junction' to be met, perhaps, by a zebra-striped Land Rover for their short trip to Africa and Asia - avoiding the occasional damage to wipers and mirrors of their own cars caused by mischievous primates.



# PARRY PEOPLE MOVERS INTO AMERICA

## Chicago 'short line' is potential demonstration site for PPM 50

INTEREST IN PPML's products continues to come from across the Atlantic (see also Parry News 51), with environmental and social factors both pointing towards a renewed interest in urban light rail. A particularly intriguing possibility is the interest expressed by Iowa Pacific, a company that owns a number of 'short line' railroads across the United States, and which has recently taken over ownership of the UK's Dartmoor and Weardale Railways, along with rail engineering firm RMS Locotec. Iowa Pacific are considering the use of one of their assets, the Chicago Terminal Railroad, for a demonstration of PPM technology in an urban environment, as this railway includes a mile-long stretch of underused street railway. Discussions are focusing on the possibility of refurbishing the prototype PPM 50 railcar - recently 'liberated' from Stourbridge (see page 4) - and



PPM 50 for Chicago?

despatching it across the Atlantic to act as a living demonstrator for lightweight rail in America. With a wider American market in mind, JPA's design unit has taken the opportunity to re-imagine the classic 'PCC' inter-urban streetcar as a flywheel-hybrid vehicle using bogies from existing PPM technology, producing some initial concept drawings of what such a vehicle might look like.



The classic PCC inspires the new PPM

Original PCC

New Design PCC DOWNTOWNER



North Cherry Avenue, Chicago: potential PPM demonstration site (Image: Microsoft Virtual Earth)

## PARRY ASSOCIATES' NEW DESIGN UNIT

WITH THE addition of Will Jarman to the Parry Associates team, the company has been able to start offering a dedicated design unit to meet internal and external requirements.



Will, who contacted the company while still at university, had seen the prototype vehicles on the Severn Valley Railway and finally approached JPA in 2008 with some ideas about the livery and shape of the future vehicles. After several months' correspondence Will joined JPA, initially helping with building work at Stourbridge before coming on board in the office. So far the design unit has reworked JPA pamphlets and leaflets, added active graphics to the website, helped with the newsletter and kept an eye out for other outside opportunities.

## SIERRA LEONE ROOFING TILES



The first roof tiles have been produced at Genesis Farms near Makeni (Photo: Hans Lemkes)

## CONSIGNMENT SHIPPED TO GHANA

### Building contractor imports equipment for housing development

FOLLOWING INITIAL contact in October 2008, Michael Mattouk of Kuottam Construction Works Ltd ordered three vibrating tables for manufacture of tiles, blocks, and slabs. The aim of the project is to build solid housing and good looking gardens, so the order included a number of decorative moulds

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

### Angola

Two enquiries have been received in recent weeks from what is becoming an active part of Africa for Parry building materials equipment. An initial enquiry for a possible five semi-sheet plants, along with wall and floor tiles, is expected to be confirmed in the near future once funding is in place. The second and more recent enquiry from a separate source is for a standard Roman II roof tile plant and is likely to be confirmed very shortly.

### Bangladesh

The owner of a construction company and property provider wishes to use Parry equipment to build low-cost housing for victims of flooding in Chittagong. A perfect use for 'High & Dry' technology!

### Congo-Brazzaville

A Congolese individual, currently based in France, is looking at exporting a small multi-product roof tile plant with elements to produce Parry equipment including the 'High & Dry' weight-saving system and having them shipped by container, first to France and then on to Africa.

### Georgia

having checked the JPA website, World Vision - an NGO with a presence in Georgia - are negotiating with Parry Associates to procure equipment to build affordable housing for the citizens of South Ossetia displaced by the recent conflicts in the area, and then set up production units across the country.

### India

In April, Parry Associates were visited by a British citizen who has spent a long time working with a school in Tamil Nadu, with a view to the purchase of a small multi-product plant to be shipped to Sholai school.

### Jamaica

Following a recent visit by two gentlemen from Jamaica, Parry Associates is set to undertake negotiations for the export of roof tile equipment and elements of the 'High & Dry' system to kick-start an affordable housing scheme.

### Malawi

Parry Associates have been contacted by a housing construction company with an office in Blantyre, who would like to manufacture storage and water tanks throughout Malawi, where the company is already involved with the school building programme organised by the Malawi education department.

Other enquiries have come in from: BOTSWANA, Democratic Republic of CONGO, GHANA, GUATEMALA, SRI LANKA, NIGERIA, SOUTH AFRICA and ZAMBIA



# WHEN LIGHTWEIGHT RAIL TAKES OVER FROM HEAVY, NOT ONLY THE VEHICLE MUST CHANGE

## Uneven track causes comment but the solution is clear

PASSENGERS ON THE PPM railcars at Stourbridge have frequently commented about the ride quality. Travelling up and down the Stourbridge Town branch on its three-minute journey, the Class 139 railcars experience several jolts in each trip.

Railway tracks are laid and maintained to standards which have been derived over more than a century and a half of heavy rail operation. In that time, understanding of the interaction between track and train (the 'wheel-rail interface') has improved vastly, and in general expectations of ride quality have risen as well.

The Class 153 diesel units previously used at Stourbridge have a sophisticated air suspension between bogies and body in addition to the chevron springs between axle and bogie frame - but these are a result of their specification for 75mph running on inter-regional services. The historical accident that led to the three-quarter-mile Stourbridge Town branch remaining part of Britain's national rail network also had the effect of consolidating the view that the line is just another part of the heavy rail system.

But emerging policy prescribes that this 62-chain long piece of single track should be operated in the most efficient way - separately from the rest of the network and with smaller, lighter and more environmentally-friendly railcars. And this affects the engineering of the track as well as the trains.

As it is, the Class 139 runs perfectly over most of the track; it is only the least well aligned track joints where the jolts are experienced.

### The virtuous circle

A concept that has been described in *Parry News* before is that of the 'virtuous circle', in which track maintained to a consistent high standard reduces the need for trains to be built extra strongly (and heavily) to withstand shocks from track imperfections, and lighter trains reduce the damage that causes those imperfections. Therefore the combination of light trains and smooth track give a long-lasting, low-maintenance and energy-efficient rail system.

At Stourbridge, the lightweight vehicles have been put in place, but the track retains the historic damage inflicted on it by heavier trains.

While the operators of the latter may say that 'there is nothing wrong with the track', it is quite clear that there are imperfections, and that once they are put right the Class 139 railcars (weighing 10 tonnes) will not cause these to re-appear in the way they do when hit by the 40-tonne Class 153s. In the short term, it has been easy to improve the ride quality by slowing down over the worst track joints - with little effect on journey times.



*This joint at Stourbridge Town is so well made that the railcar passes over without noise or impact. Using lightweight vehicles, it will become easier to keep the track in this condition*



*Two rail joints at Stourbridge Junction station: above, the rail ends are misaligned, causing the railcar to lurch; below, a 'dropped joint' which causes a jolt*



It should be possible to agree with Network Rail the necessity for one-off improvements to be made to eliminate the track imperfections causing jolts to the lightweight railcars as they operate at normal service speeds.

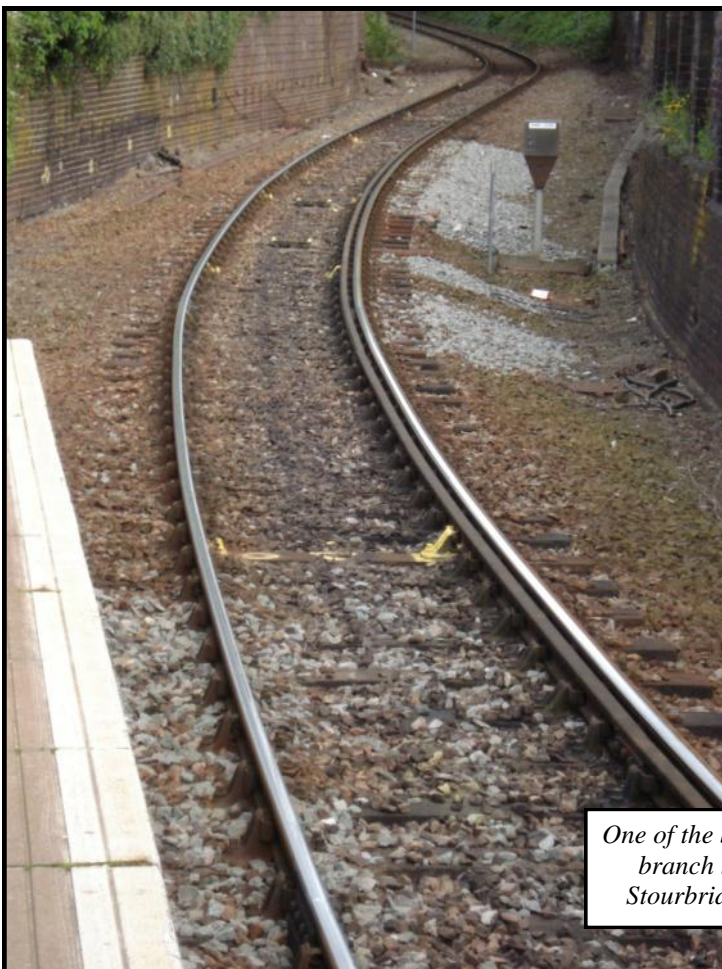


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