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**To:** Blackcountrycorestra  
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## Views on Strategy

The development of all four areas you illustrate are very important and are interlinked, but good transport is fundamental to the development of the area. The new plans published by Network Rail for the West Midlands on August the 7th are interesting and are welcome, but are concentrated mainly on Birmingham, there is little, if anything for the Black Country. The plans by the West Midlands Transport Authority are in much the same vein. Recent comments by the new Mayor also concentrate mainly the Birmingham area. The latest Rail Franchise does not include any extension of lines and is still a monopoly! The tram to Merry Hill is quoted as the answer to all the problems but this is very doubtful.

West Midland Transport has spent considerable money on New Bus stations but the busses do not reach their destinations any quicker due to the amount of traffic on the roads. It takes longer to get from Worcester to Wolverhampton now than it did in 1870.

There are some bright spots, the services from Stourbridge Junction, perhaps overcrowded at times but good. The downside is on need to be there before 7.30 am if one wishes to be able to park. Just shows what happens when the service is good, but getting to the station is another problem.

The idea of rail-heads, where people would travel to main stations has failed; road traffic has grown so much, feeder lines are essential if people are to move around quickly.

Sandwell and Dudley is likely to lose its London Trains according to proposals of Network Rail as the local passengers clutter up the trains! Trains to the N West, JS West and Wales do not stop there, so it is unlikely to become a Transport hub as proposed in the local press.

Dudley Station which was a Railway hub is now a hole in the ground, and the line to Walsall is an excellent example of the development Black Country Urban Forest. The track bed of the line from Stourbridge Junction via Wombourn to Wolverhampton, which could have fed both Wolverhampton and

Stourbridge Junction is now severed by the a very large housing estate in Tansey Green, Pensnett. As more houses are built so will the traffic congestion increase and so will the negative effect on the environment and the air that we breath.

Please do not have a great deal of faith in the projections of Network Rail. One has only to look of the under estimation of the success of the Borders Railway in Scotland. The under estimation of the passenger numbers has caused so many problems. In the country as a whole there are rail developments large and small, but little if any in our area. If we are to cut pollution, traffic numbers, enable people to move freely to get to work and improve the environment there needs to be more imaginative planning and an urgency to get things done.

The West Midland Passenger Authority needs to plan for **ALL** the West Midlands, not Just Birmingham; as does the Authority led by the New Mayor. So far there seems to little interest in the area of the Black country. Our elected representatives need to seen as leaders not followers.

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## New G.W.R. Branch Line

With the opening of the new line between Dunstall Park and Brettell Lane for passengers, parcels and goods traffic on Monday, May 11th, the public will be afforded an additional service of trains between Wolverhampton (Low Level) and Stourbridge Junction. Intermediate stations or halts have been provided at Tettenhall, Compton, Penn, Wombourn, Himley, Gornall, Pensnett, Bromley, and Brockmoor. The line, which will provide seven through services daily, in each direction, between Wolverhampton and Stourbridge Junction, will be worked by rail motor car, one class only. In addition there will be one return trip between Wolverhampton and Brettell Lane and Wolverhampton and Wombourn.

From the Kiddermister Shuttle 1923? one can but dream!