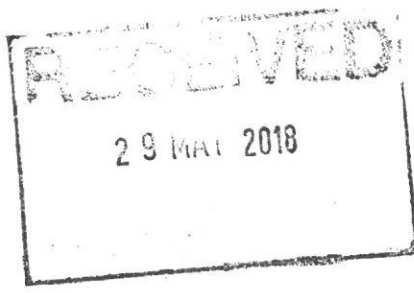


06J/184



Date 24th May 2018

Secretary of State for Transport
c/o Transports & Works Act Orders unit
Department for Transport, Zone 1/18
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road,
London,
SW1P 4DR

Mr Mark Johnson

Dear Sir/Madam

Rother Valley Railway – proposed A21 extension

As a resident of Robertsbridge I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms regarding the proposed extension of the RVR.

The A21 is a key artery between London and Hastings. The Department of Transport has invested heavily in reducing congestion along its route. To create a new crossing at Robertsbridge would run completely counter to that strategy, creating significant traffic build up throughout the day. Any prudent observer would see that the road is heavily used - and if the tailbacks on other RVR crossings are to be a guide - the situation on the A21 will be worsened by the presence of much more heavy road freight. The RVR argument that there is already a pedestrian crossing on the A21 is ignorant of the fact that it is barely if ever used. My own road, Poppinghole Lane, joins the A21 approximately half a mile from the proposed site. At weekends it can take several minutes to exit the lane onto the A21 such is the speed and volume of traffic. A crossing would make that even worse as traffic backs up on the northern approach and/or traffic heading south accelerates along a long stretch of road to John's Cross which is already an accident hotspot and the scene of a number of fatalities.

I cannot imagine that any of the RVR supporters (and I have yet to meet one locally) would be inconvenienced by these proposals - either because the A21 is not their route to school, or the supermarket or because they do not see its impact on the local community. This is not NIMBYism. The idea of a steam train is wonderfully nostalgic and who would not be delighted by the sights and sounds it brings. But we have one already, a few miles away at Bodiam. The stretch of land bordering the proposed extension is open meadow. The notion of a compulsory purchase order to build a train track through it to satisfy the interest of hobbyists is absurd. The RVR is not an essential piece of infrastructure and the idea that it brings jobs and prosperity to the area is equally misguided. The village has little to engage other than a cafe. We have no church, no castle, no stately home. Visitors are more likely to wait on the train for its return to Tenterden or Bodiam (or alight there if Robertsbridge were the starting point).

I simply do not understand how the District Council has approved the scheme without consideration of local people. We were not consulted, we don't need another railway and we certainly don't need it to cross the A21.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,
Mark Johnson