

Shenaz Choudhary

05/193

From: DFT Ministers
Sent: 01 June 2018 07:54
To: Shenaz Choudhary
Subject: FW: Objection to Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

From: GRAYLING, Chris [<mailto:chris.grayling.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 31 May 2018 13:51
To: TransportSecretary
Subject: FW: Objection to Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

From: Will Everett
Sent: 30 May 2018 22:27
To: transportandworksact@dft.gsi.gov.uk
Cc: GRAYLING, Chris <chris.grayling.mp@parliament.uk>; CLARK, Greg <greg.clark.mp@parliament.uk>
Subject: Objection to Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

Good evening,

I would like to object in the strongest terms to the Rother Valley Railways proposed link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge.

This railways would have serious implications to the area is purports to help.

Any economic benefit to the area is a complete fallacy. Having lived in the wider areas for over 30 years, having an enjoyable (but ultimately a folly) hobby railway brings no real economic benefit to the area, and any new route would bring no incremental impact above what is already achieved. The real impact would be to make it harder for long standing local farming families to make a living, and to disrupt the A21 making it harder for local businesses to operate.

The A21 crossing is madness. This road, long in need of constant improvement all the way to Hastings and as the major road in the area it is vital for the economy of the wider areas and South East. To disrupt all of the people and businesses that rely on this road for this project supporting one small business should not even be considered. A view agreed with by at least two of the MPs who's constituencies would be deeply affected - Amber Rudd MP and Greg Clark MP (In copy as I'm currently his constituent)

The natural environment in this is area is incredibly special, particularly in the area that the railway is planned to cross. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty for a reason with mature woodlands and important flood plains along with a multitude of flora and fauna. Indeed my understanding is that Sussex wildlife Trust has raised concerns already. The farmers who manage this land are longstanding local families who have through generations created the landscape as they are and care for it, to disrupt their businesses would have a knock on impact further than just the building of the railway which would be catastrophic in itself for this area of outstanding natural beauty.

Finally there is no compelling case for the use of compulsory purchase orders. The use of compulsory purchase orders should be reserved for projects of national importance that are either absolutely necessary or that bring far wider social and economic benefits that benefit whole regions or the nation as a whole. This project is hardly that.

Kind regards,

Will Everett

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05/193

The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling,
Secretary of State for Transport,
C/O Transports and Works Act Orders Unit,
Department of Transport, Zone 1/18
Great Minster House,
33 Horseferry Road,
London S.W.1. P4DR

RECEIVED ON

30 MAY 2018

PRIVATE OFFICE

30th May 2018

Dear Mr. Grayling,

The Rother Valley Railway

I understand that this private railway is seeking compulsory land rights to enable it to install the section of the railway between Bodiam and the main Hastings railway line at Roberstbridge.

To achieve this they will have to install three level crossings, two on relatively minor roads but one on the main London-Hastings A21 trunk road. The existing level crossing at Rolvenden Layne is very charming if you are not in a hurry and it is opened and shut by an elderly gentleman by hand. I understand the extension of the line would increase the number of trains using this crossing. I don't think that matters much as it is a very minor road but to install a new level crossing on an already over-burdened trunk road seems an extraordinary idea and would cause enormous problems.

Flood risk is also a serious worry as the flood plain at Robertsbridge is already vulnerable. If this is being seen as 'managed retreat' for flood water storage it does seem a bit hard not to have acquired the properties that will be flooded first.

To create a major engineering operation like this without a very full and thorough environmental impact assessment including a careful assessment of the archaeological impact is, surely, un-heard of? But I understand that this is the proposal.

I understand that compulsory powers are being sought to enable the Rother Valley Railway compulsorily to acquire the land they seek to build the railway and its ancillary works. The ability to do this was originally brought together in the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845 and, under Clause 6 of that Act and throughout all subsequent legislation on compulsory acquisition, it has always been implicit in the granting of compulsory rights that the landowner should be negotiated with in order to seek an amicable settlement. No attempt has been made to do this and, I understand, no Notice to Treat has been issued.

Yours sincerely,

William Everett FALA LLM LETAPAEWE

Land Agent

Agricultural Consultant

