



29th May 2018

The Hon. Mr Christopher Grayling
Secretary of State for Transport
C/o Transport & Works Act Order Unit,
General Counsel's Office
Department of Transport Zone 1/18
Great Muster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction Order)

I am writing in support of my family members who live and farm at The Moat Farm, Salehurst which is directly affected by the proposed Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) and the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) that is included in the Act, for reinstatement of railway track between Bodiam and Robertsbridge.

My strong objections to the threat of this CPO are based on the following:

- There is no convincing case for Compulsory Purchase powers being utilised to acquire land for non-essential infrastructure to accommodate steam/diesel railway enthusiasts ambitions.
- There is no tangible economic benefit to the surrounding areas with Rother Valley Railway (RVR) already having admitted that Robertsbridge would not benefit from this project as a tourism attraction other than in way of unwanted congestion and pollution from increased vehicle access. (This has already been substantiated by several similar projects -The Alresford to Alton reinstated line in Hampshire for example).
- There is proposal for three new level crossings, the major one being across the important and busy main A21 road link between the M25 and Hastings/Rother District with huge disruption to motorists and commercial vehicles. This proposal is also contrary to the Government and Network Rail's policy to remove level crossings wherever possible in view of their well documented danger level.
- Reports show that there is increased likelihood of flooding to properties and farmland around Robertsbridge and Salehurst as a result of the proposed new build rail embankment required to take the rail extension being built on a very active flood plain.

- Little attention is being paid to meadow and woodland destruction and that of wildlife habitats at The Moat Farm that have been untouched for years as also the proposed complete removal of woodland along the line of the new railway track.
- This is a NEW railway and NOT a reinstatement as is being claimed by RVR. The track bed does not exist, being taken up by the British Rail Board in 1967 following RVR's last attempted bid to try and CPO it at that time! In addition, RVR have plans to run an as yet undisclosed concrete access maintenance track alongside the new railway line and to CPO a further sizeable piece of farm land in addition.
- Inevitably there will be noise, smoke and diesel fume pollution from the trains with emissions from vehicles held up at the proposed level crossings, particularly across the A21 at Robertsbridge, all contrary to Government pollution principles.

In conclusion it is essential that a request for a PUBLIC ENQUIRY is implemented, as the documentation prepared so far by RVR is inadequate with far too many unexplained issues such as:-

- Flooding aversion following new railway embankment construction
- New railway embankment size with dimensions and visual impact shown on surrounds
- Survey and ecological reports
- Increased vehicle parking as a result of visitor traffic generated by the Robertsbridge connection
- Issues that are not being addressed with Public or Community interests paramount

A Public Enquiry will finally make aware and protect the livelihoods of thousands of residents and businesses in and around Robertsbridge and the Rother Valley who are probably still not currently properly informed as to the extremely detrimental outcome of the TWAO and CPO rulings if implemented.

Thank you for your anticipated understanding and support in what has become such a distressing and worrying business for so many affected people in Robertsbridge and the surrounding areas.

We very badly need your helping hand, please.

Yours sincerely

C J de Q Ferrier