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Angela Foster

**From:** David Marsh  
**Sent:** 14 May 2018 21:00  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Subject:** Objections to Rother Valley Railway Extension - Possible New Information

Dear Sir

### **Objection to the Rother Valley Railway Extension Plans - Transports and Works Act Orders**

I would be grateful if you would consider my objections to the plans to extend the railway and the transport arrangements on the A21 and the use of the railway track. I make two specific objections below which I do not think have been fully considered previously.

1. **The Impact of a Level Crossing on the A21 and local road network will be huge. A ROAD BRIDGE for the A21 over any railway extension and the River Rother is the only possible solution.**
  - a. The roads and lanes through Robertsbridge and Salehurst will become busier, overused and even blocked by vehicles trying to shortcut queues on the A21.
  - b. There have been many accidents and periods of road works on the A21 between Silver Hill and Poppinghole Lane over the last five years and every time Church Lane, Beech House Lane, Rocks Hill, Bourne Lane, Northbridge Street, High Street, George Street and Brightling Road become congested. Shutting a level crossing on the A21 will have the same effect.
  - c. In particular, heavy lorries and coaches ignore the blue sign 'NOT SUITABLE FOR LARGE VEHICLES' by Northbridge roundabout and drive into Salehurst and follow the trail of other cars up Beech House Lane and Rocks Hill. The tight bends in Bourne Lane become blocked and damage to trees and hedges regularly occurs from large vehicles.
  - d. There must be NO DELAYS on the A21 because of any railway extension. If necessary RVR must be made to pay for the extension to be completed properly, safely and with minimum disruption to all residents and users of the A21 by funding the necessary road changes required. A ROAD BRIDGE for the A21 is ESSENTIAL if the extension is permitted.
  - e. A level crossing on a fast, straight hill, by a roundabout, near a pedestrian crossing on one of the busiest roads in the South East will not be safe. It will be madness!
  - f. Robertsbridge will have three level crossings if this proposal goes ahead. Residents and working people will be delayed on every road in and out of the village. It is too many, unfair and unreasonable
  - g. If the A21 Robertsbridge bypass was built when the original railway was in place and operating, a ROAD BRIDGE would have been built.
  - h. No impact assessment appears to have made taking these points into consideration. Has a feasibility study and costings been carried out to compare the

cost and benefits of a road bridge against the cost of a level crossing and the flood management work?

**2. The Impact of Diesel Locomotives on the environment is unacceptable! A BAN ON DIESEL ENGINES on the Rother Valley Railway should imposed as a condition of allowing any extension to the railway.**

- a. The extension to the railway will, if permitted, pass through exceptional, unspoilt and historical landscape. The two farms subjected to a request for compulsory purchase order are well farmed and provide excellent produce, particularly fruit and beef, to the local community. The railway extension, if allowed, will mean that these farms and the whole area are polluted with diesel and coal fumes.
- b. The railway extension will follow the course of the River Rother for several miles. If Rivers were listed for historical importance and beauty the Rother would be Grade 1. The wildlife in these rivers and surrounding fields are in danger of pollution from the railway.
- c. The Rail Minister, Jo Johnson, has called this year for all Britain's diesel trains to be scrapped by 2040. It follows therefore that the government are against the extension of diesel trains and tracks. This is a clear mandate to ban diesel on this line as a condition of any extension.
- d. If the extension is to be allowed it is essential that diesel engines are not permitted, along the whole of the RVR track. RVR should be made to convert diesel engines to eco-friendly, silent, hydrogen powered engines. Other railways are in the north are exploring this and trains are being converted in Cheshire. RVR have at least three years before any extension is built, if permitted. They should be made to invest in Hydrogen conversions for the whole track and Diesel must be banned.

I hope my proposals to moderate and reduce the impact of congestion, delay, danger and pollution will be taken into consideration. Please could you acknowledge that these specific points will be put forward to the Minister in considering the road and environmental impacts.

Yours faithfully

David Marsh

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