

From: F POOKE
Sent: 31 May 2018 08:17
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Cc: F POOKE
Subject: Rother Valley Railway - (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

From:

Mr FW Pooke

Dear Sir,

I write this email **in support** of the plans for Rother Valley Railway (RVR) to build the final link to connect Bodiam to Robertsbridge in East Sussex.

I have been a resident of the village of Robertsbridge for almost 10 years. During that time I have seen RVR work hard to build the station at Robertsbridge Junction in readiness for this final piece of the jigsaw in joining Bodiam through to Robertsbridge.

There is currently a campaign being run and funded by two local farmers who fully oppose the work RVR wish to do as it crosses their land. The reasons they give are in my view rather limited and they are not looking at the bigger longer term picture.

They have set up a website (calling it the 'Great Robertsbridge Train Robbery'), been putting up banners, issuing leaflets, giving out badge stickers etc to get everyone on board to oppose the railway. They are in my view, running a very negative campaign to get residents in the village to oppose the plan so a public enquiry will be set up - there is no need for this.

There are many in the village, including myself who fully support RVR in putting this heritage railway back to as it once was and these people need to have a clear voice. I think they feel intimidated at the moment and are reluctant to speak up in support of the railway. The railway crossed these farms in the past without issue. The other parts of this railway run across farms in East Sussex and Kent through to Tenderden - people/families enjoy heritage railways.

This final link will give this area a real boost and I believe there will be economic advantages to the area as a whole. I do understand the farmers in question need to be compensated but this could easily be agreed by the relevant parties. In addition there are safety considerations to be fully thought through, parking issues to be planned for etc, but many other heritage railways exist and operate successfully and work to ensure everything is in place.

I ask that this order be agreed and put through.

Yours Faithfully.

Mr FW Pooke