

**Angela Foster**

SUPP/94

**From:** Richard Salmon  
**Sent:** 30 May 2018 10:00  
**To:** TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT  
**Cc:** chairman@salehurst-pc.org.uk  
**Subject:** Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

To the Secretary of State for Transport,  
c/o Transport and Works Act Orders Unit,

I write in support of the application by the Rother Valley Railway for their Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction Order, to re-instate the former railway line between these stations.

I am an active volunteer of another heritage railway, and frequent visitor to heritage railways with friends and relations. As such I see the huge joy brought to visitors, the benefits to the local economy, and the educational value for children, particularly school visits. The larger heritage railways, such as the Kent & East Sussex Railway with which the Rother Valley Railway will link, are now accepted as bringing huge benefits to the local economy in the areas surrounding each line, a fact reinforced in Bridgnorth in Shropshire where, when the Severn Valley Railway was closed for a year due to flood damage, local businesses suddenly noticed a marked drop in visitors and trade, which only recovered when the line re-opened. Pubs, Restaurants, shops and B&Bs in the locality benefit hugely not just from visitors, but also from volunteers working on the line making use of local facilities. In rural areas such as this, heritage railways also provide significant local employment and training opportunities for local residents. The additional visitors arriving over the public transport network help to improve the viability of services, by increasing passenger numbers in the off-peak.

My previous visits to the Kent & East Sussex Railway and Bodiam Castle have all been made by car. In future I will be able to reach both by train, with clear environmental benefits.

The ability of visitors to reach the line, and thus also the National Trust's Bodiam Castle, by rail from London and the South Coast will clearly far outweigh any environmental impact of traffic held for short periods a few times a day on some days of the year at the proposed reinstated level crossings.

So I firmly believe there are sound and compelling reasons for the Transport and Works Act Order to be granted.

Yours faithfully,  
Richard Salmon, Hon FBKS, MA, MIET

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