

Angela Foster

SOPP/100

From: M THOMPSON
Sent: 29 May 2018 19:22
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction Order)"

Dear Secretary of State,

I wish to offer my wholehearted SUPPORT of this scheme. I am in no way connected with the Rother Valley Railway, I just wish them well with their endeavours.

Writing from the point of view of a regular user of the A21, and as a road safety professional (DVSA Approved Driving Instructor) I believe that the claims of the objectors, regarding road safety and additional congestion, to be wholly spurious.

The crossing barriers will be used in off-peak hours only, and even at peak train service. the crossing will only be in use approx. 12 times in one day for about 1 minute at a time, meaning about 1 minute in every half hour. Obviously, any queue forming would quickly disperse at those intervals.

Secondly, from the point of view of "The most dangerous road in the UK", traffic at this point will be either braking for the roundabout ahead (Northbound) and be travelling at 40mph or less, and southbound traffic will just be exiting the roundabout, travelling at no more than 20mph. Either way, drivers will be in Hazard Negotiation mode due to the roundabout, and be very aware of their surroundings and speed. The Level crossing would just be a further mitigation measure against excessive speed, which, along with judgement/concentration deficit, is the prime cause of accidents on this type of road.

The second claim I wish to address is the claim that the railway could "destroy the livelihood" of local farmers:

Of the 2 affected landowners, one does not use the ex-railway land for any form of production- the embankment lies fallow and overgrown, and has done ever since the railway closed.

The second (Parsonage Farm) would, from aerial views, stand to lose approx. 2 acres of probably quite difficult to farm land (It is bordered by the meandering River Rother to its south). The reinstatement of the railway on its original route would effectively turn this particular field into a virtual rectangle. However, to put this in perspective, this particular family's landowning in the district is extensive, and this 2 acre loss would equate to less than 1% of their total holding. Their business should not become unviable in any way.

Despite my profession, I am a fervent believer in a joined-up public transport network, even if in this case it is for the promotion of tourism. This is a golden opportunity to boost both tourism, bringing thousands of visitors into the area (minus their cars) and public transport in an area which does not offer much else in the regional employment market, plus the opportunity to put the Rother Valley back onto the national railway map.

I Urge you to support these meticulously planned and researched proposals

Yours Sincerely,

Mark Thompson

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