

05/1729.



Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP

Secretary of State for Transport

c/o Transports and Works Act Orders Unit

Generals Counsel's Office, Department for Transport Zone 1/18

Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road

London SW1P 4DR

29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**Reference: Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order**

*Dear Minister,*

I am writing to you to raise my objections to the above proposal for the following reasons:

Three new level crossings – I believe that Government Policy is that "other than in exceptional circumstances, no new level crossings on any railway therefore creating no new risks". I would accept that HS2 would be regarded as an "exceptional circumstance" however this is not the case here. Add to that the reputation of the A21 being the "most dangerous road in the South East" if not the country, to add another hazard and therefore another "risk" would be immoral.

Flooding – The land through which the new railway would run (it would have to be considered as a new railway as there is no existing track bed) is Flood Zone 3. To build a bund across the flood plain could only lead to disastrous consequences somewhere along the line, and despite mans' best efforts to predict the results Mother Nature always has a habit of winning.

Ecological – There has been no ecological survey carried out on the actual proposed route of the railway. I am aware that surveys have been carried out along the opposite bank of the River Rother but this is a distance of a minimum of a river and a field away and therefore would produce very different results so cannot be relied on to give a true reflection of the ecological damage the railway would cause.

Environmental – The stated plan is to run not only steam trains which obviously are not beneficial to the atmosphere but to run diesels which I believe your Government have announced "its commitment to scrapping all diesel-only trains on UK railways".

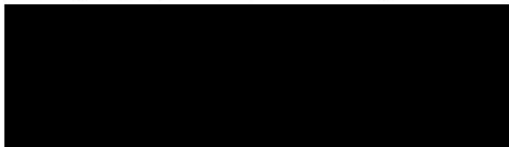
These proposed diesels are not new 'clean' diesels but old 'dirty' diesels and I would not like to leave this legacy for either my or your children.

Economic – Rother Valley Railway have admitted that Robertsbridge would not benefit from this project, this is backed up from when they held an open day some years ago when the takings fell in one village shop and extra food ordered for another had to be disposed of due to lack of custom. The only thing our village would become is a giant car park as happened on the open day.

Impact on Sport – both the village football ground and cricket pitch lie within the Flood Zone 3 and will suffer due to the rise in the water levels that Rother Valley Railway have published and have stated that the Cricket Pavilion will be affected. The Football Club have to change venue for their games and training for both seniors and juniors quite regularly at present, this will only increase. The Cricket Club, of which I am a past Chairman, host Sussex Seniors, have three league teams, a mid-week side, Sunday development side, numerous junior sides and an extremely popular junior training programme – will be affected. Despite the Pavilion being raised (Rother District Council have stated they will not allow 'one brick more' to be added) it will become more susceptible to flooding and my fear is that the insurance premium will rise to such a level or even be declined that cricket will cease in the village – thus ending not only over 125 years of history but the Village that is Home to the Cricket Bat (Gray-Nicolls) will not be playing Cricket at all.

Use of an Act of Parliament that should have been re-peeled – I believe that the last time this Act was used it involved a debate within the House, which surely has set the precedent, and if any progress has been made would also involve a Public Inquiry. My family have served this country for over four generations (one VC, one DSO, one DSC and three MC's that I know of), two World Wars and I served My Queen and Country loyally and professionally for full Colour Service, upholding the rights of – what I believed to be – a democratic, civilised and free world. Although I fully understand and agree with the use of CPO's in the national interest, I fail to see how a small group of individuals, albeit well connected and funded, have the right to use a centuries old Act to force another individual to give up their lawfully owned land. This is going back in time NOT forward. This proposal does make me reflect on the huge sacrifice given 100 years ago this year and by all of those since and whether it was all worth it.

I would therefore respectfully request that not only would you decline the proposal but ensure the Act was re-peeled and therefore leave a lasting and progressive legacy upon which future generations will be proud.

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Nicholas WF Moor.

Nicholas WF Moor