

Shenaz Choudhary

OBJ / 730

From: Helen Mackie
Sent: 31 May 2018 10:22
To: Shenaz Choudhary
Subject: FW: Objection to Transport and Works Order RVR

-----Original Message-----

From: TransportSecretary
Sent: 30 May 2018 12:51
To: POCorrespondence <POCorrespondence@dft.gov.uk>
Cc: Mark Liston <Mark.Liston@dft.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Objection to Transport and Works Order RVR

Madeleine Crean | Diary Manager and Assistant Private Secretary, Secretary of State for Transport, Department for Transport

5/13 | 020 7944 4397 | 079665 12520

-----Original Message-----

From: GRAYLING, Chris [mailto:chris.grayling.mp@parliament.uk]
Sent: 30 May 2018 11:46
To: TransportSecretary <TransportSecretary@dft.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Objection to Transport and Works Order RVR

-----Original Message-----

From: Erin Innes [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: 29 May 2018 17:16
To: GRAYLING, Chris <chris.grayling.mp@parliament.uk>
Subject: Objection to Transport and Works Order RVR

[REDACTED]
4th May 2018

Dear Secretary of State for Transport,

I am writing to express my objection to the TWA for the Rother Valley Railway extension between Robertsbridge and Bodiam, East Sussex.

I object for the following reasons:

1. Traffic Safety

a.I am concerned about the effect introducing 3 level crossings to roads in the Robertsbridge and Bodiam area will have on the flow of traffic. In particular, the A21 is a very busy, and at times dangerous, road and has received recent investment to improve traffic flow. Introducing a level crossing will likely worsen congestion and increase the risk of accidents.

b.Traffic through the village of Robertsbridge is already problematic, thus drivers potentially taking detours through the village to avoid the A21 crossing will make this worse.

c.Level crossings are being removed on National Rail networks due to safety concerns, introducing 3 new crossings is in direct conflict with this.

2.Parking

a.There has been no plan put in place to accommodate parking for potential visitors to the Railway. The village of Robertsbridge currently already has a problem with low availability of parking and this will be made worse with RVR Development. Parking was an initial condition of Planning Permission and RVR are yet to address this issue.

3.Flooding

a.The Rother Valley is a flood risk and the community has suffered greatly due to floods in the last 10-20 years. Flood defences have been installed by the Environment Agency and are currently untested. Adding an embankment to an already fragile flood-risk area is a grave concern.

4.Pollution

a.As a country, there has been a lot of great work done to reduce pollution and the re-introduction of steam and diesel trains directly contradicts current Department for Energy and Environment Policy of pollution reduction.

5.Local economic benefit

a.This project will not benefit the residents of Robertsbridge and improve their lives. RVR claim that there will be up to 70 jobs created. However, they also model themselves on the neighbouring KESR are staffed entirely by volunteers. Employing 70 volunteers does not increase employment rates. RVR have admitted that Robertsbridge will not likely benefit from this project in terms of bringing in customers to local businesses. The location of the start of the RVR railway is some distance from the amenities in the village.

6.Questionable clarity on the specific "Heritage" nature of the project a.RVR claim to be reinstating a railway but their application is for construction of a new railway. There is a subtle difference but one which must be scrutinised regarding the legality of the CPO.

7.Conservation of current AONB & Heritage Interests a.The area is an AONB and the local ecosystem will be under threat in both the construction and running of the railway. There are heritage interests also in preserving the village of Robertsbridge as it is a conservation area, and the preservation of the heritage of hops farming (the industry of one of the landowners subject to the threat of CPO).

8.Out of date/unreliable supporting documentation from RVR a.Unfortunately RVR have not updated their impact assessment reports since 2014. In the last 4 years, the duration of level crossing time has changes, as has the traffic flow on the A21. This should be revisited.

I reiterate that I object to the TOWA for the RVR Extension between Robertsbridge and Bodiam and would welcome a full, open public enquiry into all matters arising.

Yours sincerely

Dr Erin Innes
BSc (Hons) MBChB FRCA

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