

From: Richard Hedger [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 May 2018 21:51
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY (BODIAM TO ROBERTSBRIDGE) ORDER

I would like to strongly object to the reinstatement of this railway line for the reasons listed below.

1. This scheme would need 3 level crossings, one of which would need to cross the A21 trunk road. The A21 is already regarded as one of the most dangerous roads in the country. Any further delays on this stretch of this road can only make it more dangerous as people try to make up journey times for example. Motorists using this road already have to endure unnecessary delays caused by every day hazards I.e. bin collections which regularly cause lengthy tailbacks.

Vehicles trying to avoid hold ups on the A21 already try to use Robertsbridge village to bypass the problem. Any vehicle trying to avoid the crossing on the A21 will encounter a second crossing in the village bringing the village to a complete standstill. This poses an additional risk to pedestrians especially where there is no pavement.

2. Laying the track on the fields crossed by the proposed line will necessitate substantial embankments. These will compromise the flood defences that have been created to remove the risk of severe flooding such as Robertsbridge has endured in the past. A series of tests for flooding are required if housing is to be built, surely similar tests must be applied here, especially as it may move the flooding problem on to those previously unaffected.

3. Robertsbridge is in the High Weald AONB and as such should receive protection from unnecessary developments which would seriously alter the local landscape. Much of the land has been left untouched since the line closed and is locally renowned for being rich in wildlife.

4. RVR will be using coal fired steam and diesel locomotives on this line. Following the recent Government announcement that all new cars sold in the UK will have electric by 2040, is this new use of polluting fuels for purely leisure purposes consistent with future thinking on this subject. This, with the increase of traffic and stationary vehicles at the crossings, will substantially increase the levels of pollution around the village and will affect the health and wellbeing of the residents.

5. The required use of crossing points by farmers wishing to traverse the line in order to reach their divided land will put additional responsibilities upon them. I reference a collision between a tractor and locomotive on the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch line in November 2016, where the farmer and contractor were criticised for not having taken sufficient guidance in how to cross the line safely. This guidance is impractical for every day use and increases the length of time any work may take, at a cost to their business.

6. The line is only to be used for purely leisure purposes and will not offer anything substantial to the businesses in the village. Their business model proposes the employment of 2 people. Any other employment for RVR will be voluntary, and any other employment opportunities for the village will be minimal.

7. The A21 is considered to be the main artery for traffic into Hastings. Hastings has been officially recorded as a deprived area and in need of regeneration. Anything which further interrupts the use of this road to supply this town cannot be beneficial.

I hope that these objections will be given equal consideration to those received from other sources.

Richard Hedger



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