

From: Emma Ogilvie [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 May 2018 12:59
To: TRANSPORTANDWORKSACT
Subject: Rother Valley Railway (Bodiam to Robertsbridge Junction) Order

Dear Secretary of State for Transport

I am writing to lodge my objection to the above order. I have lived in the village of Robertsbridge for 11 years. I think it is a disgrace that the construction of a railway line from Robertsbridge to Bodiam is even being considered where there is so much evidence of the negative impact the line will have.

My objections are:

Level Crossing

The plan to build a level crossing over the A21 - the main artery in the area.

The disruption to the flow of traffic on the A21 will be horrendous. The delays and queues will have a paralysing affect on the bypass which is unacceptable. The traffic flow on the A21 is worst at the weekends and particularly the Bank Holiday weekends when there is a constant stream of traffic. I am assuming the railway will be working at it's peak during these times which is madness. The A21 is a major arterial route for both tourists and business and it is of paramount importance that this road is kept clear.

Parking

The RVR are claiming that there will be 50,000 visitors to Robertsbridge generated by the Robertsbridge connection- these will not all arrive by National Rail. There is no additional parking proposed and so the impact on residential parking and congestion in the village of Robertsbridge will be enormous.

Flooding

The proposed railway extension will come with additional flooding risks to many businesses and domestic properties - this is being blatantly ignored by the RVR. These properties include: the museum and the pavilion on the Clappers, commercial unit on Station Road, Robertsbridge Abbey, Udiam Cottages, Forge Farm and Park Farm. This is unacceptable and there can be no justification for the increased threat of flooding to these properties.

Environmental Impact

There appears to have been no land based study on the affect of the proposal on the delicate environmental balance found on a flood plain. Almost half of the train services that would be operating will be with diesel trains - resulting in unnecessary heavy pollution of wildlife. This will certainly have an impact on protected species such as larks, newts, badgers, nightingales, doves and rare species of moths and mosses. There can be no justification for the increased threat of pollution to the local flora and fauna.

Compulsory Purchase Order

How can it be acceptable that local farmers are being forced to sell their land and have their farms broken up by this Order? These farms have been owned by these families for generations - there is no justification to allow such land grab.

Forecast Financial Benefit to the Parish

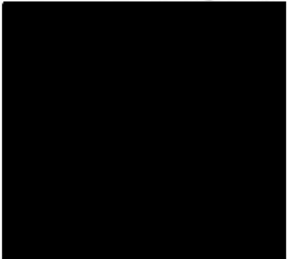
It is unlikely that there will be substantial financial gains to be made by businesses in the village. The majority of tourist money is likely to be spent in Tenterden or Bodiam.

It is clear that the trustees of RVR have no care or concern for the community of Robertsbridge and are determined to use consultants and lawyers to coerce the proposal through regardless of the impact on the village, the environment and the forced sale of land. This project is a vanity project for a few train enthusiasts who have no real interest in generating income into the area. Certainly, there has been no great increase in wealth in Bodiam since the railway opened.

The negative impact this project will have on the roads, flood levels for many businesses and households, environment and farmers totally outweighs any supposed positive impact the introduction of a railway across three roads, a flood plain and a village could have.

Kind Regards

Mrs Emma Ogilvie



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