



I Jenkins
Inspector
Ref: SUPP-80

Sir Peter Hendy CBE
Chair, Network Rail
Waterloo General Offices
Waterloo Station
London SE1 8SW

Dear Mr Jenkins,

I am writing to you ahead of the Rother Valley Railway TWA Order Public Inquiry, due to commence on 6 July 2021.

I previously wrote to the then Secretary of State for Transport in May 2018 to express Network Rail's strong support for the reinstatement of the Rother Valley Railway (RVR) via the proposed TWA Order. In January 2020 the Government launched the Restoring Your Railway policy programme which I feel further strengthens the case for the RVR reinstatement via the proposed TWA Order under inquiry in July.

While RVR predates the announcement of this policy programme, its objectives and the benefits it would deliver are in strong alignment with the programme. The Department for Transport's website for the programme makes clear it is aimed at encouraging '*projects to restore lost rail connections to communities*'.

Supporting information on the same website also states the importance proposals providing strong socio-economic benefits, with employment and tourism cited among the main factors to consider. The three themes mentioned in the paragraph above were all included in my original letter to the then Secretary of State in May 2018, and which I have summarised again below to highlight the alignment between the RVR objectives and those of the Restoring Your Railway programme:

- Connectivity benefits for residents in communities along the line who would have direct rail access to the national network restored for the first time in over 60 years, in turn improving access to employment opportunities in other towns in Kent and Sussex as well as to London
- Boosting tourism by providing direct rail access by mainline rail from Robertsbridge to tourist attractions along the line such as Bodium Castle and Tenterden Town
- Wider economic benefits to the Rother District and surrounding areas, independently assessed by Steer Davies Gleave in 2018 as being worth up to £4.1million per annum.

In light of the development of the Restoring Your Railway programme and the strong emphasis that Government Ministers have made about the importance of reconnecting communities as part of the 'build back better' agenda, I would ask that this is taken into account as part of the inquiry process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to be "Peter Hendy", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE
Chair