

## **Rother Valley Railway - Transport and Works Act Order**

### **Statement in Support of the Order by R M Arblaster**

Please take the following statement of support into account in making your report.

“Over the past years, a determined group of people have devoted much time and wealth to establish the nucleus of this operation in Robertsbridge, their station being named Robertsbridge Junction to emphasise the direct connection to the mainline railway.

The heritage railway business countrywide contributes very handsomely to the nation's GDP as evidenced by the renewed prosperity of such centres as Portmadoc, Matlock, Tenterden and many others. As a relatively poor county, the increased business generated in East Sussex by the reinstatement of the Rother Valley Railway would be more than welcome.

Of course, in 21st century Britain, there will be nimbyist complaints raised but, valid though some of these may be, they should not be allowed to detract from the overall benefits of this scheme, which has so much to commend it.”

The above extract is taken from my letter of 14th August 2014 to Rother District Council and the import of my words remains unchanged, but I would like to add the following comments.

#### **1. Railway crossing of A21**

The proximity of the proposed crossing to the Salehurst roundabout at the foot of Silver Hill, within a 40 mph speed limit zone, helps to minimise interference to traffic flow. Indeed, the occasional hiatus provided by crossing closure will assist traffic exiting from Robertsbridge south and Poppinghole & Redland Lanes on to the major road, and is surely welcome. It is likely that the operation of this crossing will have less effect on traffic flow than the more frequent and year-round relatively slow movement of diesel powered agricultural machinery between Redlands Lane and the Salehurst roundabout and vice-versa.

#### **2. Parking facilities Robertsbridge**

As a project benefiting the tourism and leisure industry, it is inevitable that traffic peaks will be at weekends when the existing spacious Robertsbridge main line station car park is virtually empty. It should be simple for the railway operators, by arrangement with the car park lessees, to sell rail/car park inclusive tickets to encourage the use of this underutilised facility without causing any additional problems.

Additionally, thanks to the co-operation of Network Rail, a main line connection has been installed to enable the possible movement of special trains on to the RVR, whilst every effort will surely be made to encourage visitors to arrive/depart by rail from the adjacent main line station.

In conclusion, the re-instatement of this rail way link between Bodiam, site of one of the National Trust's most visited sites, and the main line at Robertsbridge will bring substantial economic benefits to this area, and the promoters are to be commended for the professionalism shown in their progress thus far.

R M Arblaster