

Bluebell Railway consultation  
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Dear Sir / Madam,

## **Bluebell Railway Western Extension Project**

Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established independent organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. A voluntary organisation to which many rail user and campaign groups are affiliated, it is independent both politically and commercially. We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in transport and development planning.

1. Please provide us with your contact information (optional)

As above.

2. The proposed development reinstates and re-opens the railway along the former Horsted Keynes to Haywards Heath line, to join with Network Rail's track west of Hanson's aggregates depot near Ardingly. Do you support the principle of reinstating and re-opening the railway?

Yes.

3. Do you agree with the proposals as shown on the current drawings?

Other.

Unsure.

4. Would you suggest that anything is changed? Please state how (optional)

Other.

Unsure.

5. To minimise the land take at Hanson's depot, the proposal requires a new bridge under College Road, Ardingly and aligning the track to the north side of Hanson's aggregate depot, before joining the Network Rail track that will enable an onward journey to Haywards Heath. Do you agree with the alignment under College Road and past Hanson's depot?

Don't know.

Unsure.

[www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk) [www.railfuturescotland.org.uk](http://www.railfuturescotland.org.uk) [www.railfuturewales.org.uk](http://www.railfuturewales.org.uk)  
[www.railwatch.org.uk](http://www.railwatch.org.uk)

6. Would you take a journey along the restored railway line if it was re-opened?

Yes.

7. It is possible initially for trains to terminate on the east side of College Road Ardingly, at a temporary platform, to permit passengers to alight for a short time before re-joining the train. There will not be any access to College Road or elsewhere. Would you support the temporary provision of a platform here?

Yes.

8. Do you have any other comments or thoughts you would like to share on the proposals? (optional)

We are particularly mindful of the evidence of the benefits of heritage railways to their local economies. In July 2013 the Heritage Railway Association <https://www.hra.uk.com/> published a report on *The Social and Economic Value of Heritage Railways* - <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59f1c5ec51a58457c01eaed0/t/5a981e4df9619ac0c9af0d07/1519918675675/Value-of-heritage-rail.pdf> - by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail <https://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/members/apg/>. We believe that the full potential socio-economic value of the Bluebell Railway will come to be realised when eventually it is connected at each end to the mainline rail network, with an additional interchange at Haywards Heath, thereby enabling more sustainable access.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Blake BA, MRTPI (Rtd), MTPS  
Railfuture  
Vice-Chair, London & South East regional branch  
Director for Infrastructure & Networks, national Board