



Department for
Transport

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

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Alan Taylor, Chair of the South Devon Railway
Dick Wood, General Manager
The South Devon Railway Trust
The Station
Dart Bridge Road
Buckfastleigh
Devon TQ11 0DZ

14 July 2011

Dear Mr Taylor,

I am writing to express my support for the use of the South Devon Railway Trust footbridge (connecting NCN2 on the Totnes side and the SDR station on the Littlehempston side) for use as a cycle and walk way.

I understand that the route will close a gap in NCN2 and in the local transport network and is far more viable than the alternative longer route which seems to me to be less convenient as well as attracting serious safety concerns.

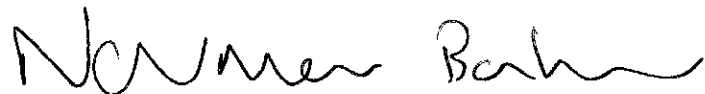
I am aware through my discussions with the local MP, Dr Sarah Wollaston, that the route has been under consideration by Devon County Council for a number of years, and that a survey of the land was carried out last year. However, I was disappointed to learn that, as one of the landowners, the South Devon Railway Trust felt unable to grant permission for the footbridge to be used for the route.

I recognise that this decision is wholly within your remit, and that you have unfortunately experienced a number of incidents of vandalism to both the SDR site and a nearby rare breeds site which you fear would be exacerbated by opening the bridge for this purpose.

However, in view of the wide public support for this route, I would like to ask you to look again at this decision and consider negotiating a way forward which would suit both the SDR Trust and the local communities. This is particularly important when considering how opening the bridge for this use will complete and improve the wider cycling infrastructure, which is 50 per cent public funded.

I am keen to be kept informed of progress on this matter, and would be grateful if you would update me of your decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

NORMAN BAKER

cc. Dr Sarah Wollaston MP