

From: [REDACTED]
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To: _WEB_Canals Strategy
Subject: draft canal strategy

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Good evening,

I would first like to point out that the draft strategy requires a huge amount of time to inspect in any sort of detail whilst at the same time remaining incredibly vague.
for example

events and programmes 35 -"The character and function of the canal changes throughout the seasons from muddy towpaths to summer leaf cover, temperature of the water and the perception of safety after dark. A programme of initiatives, events and interventions help to respond to these seasonal variations and allow the canal to function all year round, in different ways"

what interventions are being alluded to? the character of our entire country changes through the season as we are a temperate country. The canal DOES function all year round. what different ways are being alluded to?

the perception of safety after dark is an important one but not one uniquely associated with canals!

the whole document is scattered with negative misgivings about the canal as it is, followed by vague allusions to improvement.

in General

Continuity

.."By providing access in a variety of ways, the canal can connect communities and create essential links between businesses, services and functions and continuous green infrastructure as a spine through Stroud District"

Communities are already connected and I don't see how regenerating the canal is going to provide further links. is the canal going to be providing direct connection through transport to businesses and if so which businesses? This is not essential! What is meant by functions? I have no idea what is meant by continuous green infrastructure. the canal is already continuous and green. the infrastructure is what? buildings? businesses?

in short the canal already does this so the only bit of ambition that it doesn't achieve is business and infrastructure.

Clustering

"

Now with the changing role of the canal, people, activities and places can unite around the canal as a thoroughfare, an attraction, a centre of activity and unique recreational space. In this way the canal can catalyse focussed activity as a new junction of trade and a centre for sociability and community.

The canal already does all of this. there are many cafes/bars opened on or near the canal. Trade could be increased and that is what the clustering really seems to be about.

Crossings

By creating a variety of local crossings and connecting activity on the banks of the canal, more strategic connections can be formed at a District level which see people not only accessing the canal corridor but accessing a variety of District-wide opportunities and in doing so being enabled to cross socio economic boundaries

is the canal really going to allow people to cross socio-economic boundaries any more than busses or cars or bikes or walking?

The focus of this is once again economic.

In short I do not agree with the concepts given as the canal already functions as a unique local setting. In particular, the canal from beyond Brimscombe is wildlife haven that is widely used due to its natural beauty. ANY restoration in that direction would be to the detriment of wildlife for the sake of economy. The promise of providing natural spaces is ridiculous if it means tearing up miles of established habitat to do so. If the main purpose is about connecting people, places and businesses, whilst making the place more accessible to all users, then simply improve the towpaths!

I completely disagree with many of the fundamental points in this draft and feel in many places that I am reading a sales pitch.