

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 May 2022 22:46
To: _WEB_Canals Strategy
Subject: Objection to the development of the canal.

Categories: Canal Strategy 2022 response

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to oppose in the strongest possible terms your proposed development of the canal from Brimscombe through to Sapperton and ultimately beyond.

I have done my best to wade through your policy document which seems to have been created with the sole purpose of making it largely unfathomable with pictures and diagrams that are splattered all over a document with almost nothing directly relating to the portion of the plan that you are trying to study. Whatever happened to plain written English?

From what I understand, it is your intention to try and reinstate a canal that was of little of no use when it was first conceived, permanently leaked, and was only financially viable when it was carrying bricks and aggregate for the railway line that replaced it.

There is talk in the document of creating opportunities for youth, regeneration, ecology, sustainability and biodiversity. As I travel past Brimscombe now, all I see is destruction and desolation. Stroud used to have the largest indoor skate park in Europe, used by team GB for training. You knocked that down. It also had a much loved and used indoor five a side and hockey facility, you knocked that down too. So much for supporting facilities for younger generations. Your proposals are to create a port for a pointless and purposeless canal, that is not needed. Sadly, you have already destroyed so much that you may as well continue with what you are doing at Brimscombe and make the best of a bad deal, but to go any further would be utter madness.

In order to achieve your plan, you will end up using hundreds of thousands of tonnes of concrete and steel with a huge ecological and carbon impact at a cost of hundreds of millions of pounds to create something that no one actually needs at a time when money and resources are tight for so many people and communities, and we are being constantly urged to reduce our impact on the climate and natural resources.

The sensible thing to do, if you really wanted to create something forward-thinking, sustainable, carbon negative and for all generations would be to fill in half of the canal that is already there and create a safe route along the valley from Brimscombe to and from Stroud that people could walk or cycle along without taking their life in their hands as they have to at the moment by travelling along the London Road. The remaining portion of the waterway would still act as a wildlife corridor with minimal impact on the life that currently lives there.

The senselessness of your proposals gets even worse from Chalford to Sapperton. A conservation area, an AONB, and also areas of SSSI, would all be impacted and for the most part destroyed by a concrete and steel trench that would utterly destroy the Golden Valley and the unique and special habitat that it is. You talk about protecting biodiversity and ecology, while at the same time wanting to rip it all up. You talk about a dark sky reserve and at the same time propose lighting along the canal as far as Sapperton.

The whole proposal is a complete vanity project that will cost hundreds of millions of pounds and destroy far more than it could ever create. There are so many worthwhile things that could be done with the equivalent amount of money that would directly benefit people living in and around the Stroud Valleys. Building a canal is about as useful and reinstating the Roman roads or work houses. We are living in the present, by all means preserve what is already with us and the heritage that we have, but stop trying to recreate the past, it's utter pointlessness and a complete waste of money.

I do not pay my council tax for this nonsense.

Shame on you.
[REDACTED]