



5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

To the Department for Transport

**Reference: NATTRAN/SE/S247/3254**

Dear Sirs

**Re Stopping Up and Re-routing of Princes Parade, Seabrook**

We are writing to OBJECT to the proposed diversion of part of the road called Princes Parade. We are aware that planning permission has been given to the development which will include residential homes, leisure centre, swimming pool and other amenities; however, we strongly oppose the additional planning proposal to re-route part of the road so that it skirts behind the new development for the following reasons:

- The development was originally planned to be sited on the land behind the road. This suited the land owners' planners to design it for that position for the main planning application; we do not feel that they have given sufficient reasons for then changing the position of the road for the new planning application making it an unnecessary diversion.
- One of the reasons the land owner/district council has cited for the stopping up/movement of the road is to create a vehicle-free link for the leisure centre and housing development. This may benefit the inhabitants of the 150 homes but it will greatly impede access for many people who currently use the road and beach.
- There's been wild talk about traffic speeding along Princes Parade. We have lived in Sandgate for over ten years and have hardly ever encountered speeding traffic along that road. There is absolutely no comparison to the speed of vehicles using the A259 along Sandgate Esplanade. Until the zebra crossing was installed, we literally took our life in our hands when crossing the road to get to the beach or promenade. If speeding along Princes Parade is deemed to be a problem, there are various ways to get people to slow down other than actually re-routing a large section of it.
- For people who use the road to drive to and from Hythe and beyond, Princes Parade is a very necessary bypass to Seabrook Road. That section of the A259 gets a lot of traffic, by the very nature that it's the main road to and from Romney Marsh, connecting with Folkestone. It's used by lorries, tankers, vans of all sizes, the emergency services and all other road users. The alternative route of Princes Parade becomes vital when there is congestion on the A259 being mainly used by smaller vehicles and emergency vehicles when needed. The recent

problem of fuel shortages just showed how vital Princes Parade was to help with the flow of traffic when there were long tailbacks to the Seabrook Garage.

- The proposed new leisure centre will itself generate a lot of vehicle traffic. The new pool is to replace the current pool on South Road and the leisure centre would attract visitors from the other side of Hythe (where there are currently no leisure facilities) so the traffic situation will be horrendous – and these vehicles will then have to go along the re-routed part of the road, right beside the canal. Even with foundations, this could prove to be too much weight and traffic for the historic canal.
- The promenade from Seabrook garage to the Hythe Imperial is extremely popular with walkers, people with children's prams/buggies, runners, fishermen and cyclists - it is also a designated Sustrans Cycle Route. For people with mobility problems, they can enjoy the vista and fresh air by parking their vehicles on the road beside the promenade. If the road is re-routed, this will become a no-go area for these people until they reach the further end of the road when it is back to being beside the sea – thereby creating a problem of supply vs demand re parking.
- The historic Royal Military Canal has 'ancient monument' status and is an important asset for the district. To site a road alongside it would be detrimental to the beauty of the canal and significantly harm the wildlife it supports.
- There is an abundance of wildlife in the so called 'wasteland' which the land owners/district council feel can be moved according to their design – badgers 'moved' to a new area for them, right beside the golf course! Snakes picked up and moved to the other side of the canal. Perhaps signs can be put up to tell the wildlife where they are allowed to roam!
- The proposed re-routing of Princes Parade is overwhelmingly opposed by the local community. It is incredibly sad that the land owners/district council ignore all the arguments for keeping the road where it is and put their profits before local people's wishes and the unique nature of the coastal road and the amazing wildlife that the area supports.

Yours faithfully

*Amanda and Jim Mason*