

From: Judith Halliwell [mailto:████████████████████]
Sent: 09 May 2018 18:20
To: NATIONALCASEWORK <NATIONALCASEWORK@dft.gov.uk>
Subject: NATTRAN/SE/S247/3254

Dear Sirs

I wish to register my very strong objection to the above proposal to stop up a length of Princes Parade and divert a length of the same road in Hythe, Kent.

This development is unacceptable on several grounds.

a) The proposed diversion of the road would take it extremely close to a unique scheduled national monument, the Royal Military Canal. This would cause irreparable damage to the existing natural habitat which is the home to numerous wildlife species. The Canal (which is over 200 years old) is a major feature of the town and is enjoyed in its current state by both inhabitants and visitors. Putting a road right next to it would ruin it forever. (Please just do a Google Images search on "Royal Military Canal" and "Princes Parade".)

b) The local council, Folkestone & Hythe, are attempting to grant themselves planning permission to build housing and also a (currently uncosted) leisure centre on the land between the canal and the existing road. This development is being contested by local inhabitants, mainly for the reason stated above (although also because there are no accompanying proposals for increased healthcare provision, etc etc ...). Even if permission is granted for this building work, however, there is no need to stop up and/or divert the existing road that runs along the sea front, as the proposed buildings could easily be served by the existing road. Indeed, it could be said that any housing development would be better served by a road intervening between it and the sea, as this would provide additional protection from high tides and storms (which are of course forecast to increase in the future as a result of climate change).

c) Stopping up and/or diverting the current road would result in a significant increase in traffic along the nearby Seabrook Road (at the moment, traffic can use either Seabrook Road or Princes Parade to travel through this part of the town). This road is already busy, particularly during the school run, and any increase in traffic would quite simply be dangerous.

d) The current road is used by visitors to Hythe to park next to the beach. In the summer, the number of people parking along the road and enjoying the beach and also the other facilities of the town is significant. The council has recently taken the extremely unpopular step of introducing parking charges on the road - presumably as a preparatory measure for the proposed stopping up and diversion. This has already had a noticeably deleterious effect on the number of people using this part of the seafront, visiting the local cafes, etc, even in the short time it has been in operation. If the road is stopped up and diverted this effect will be even greater, and the economy of the town will suffer commensurately.

I strongly urge the Secretary of State to reject the proposal to stop up and divert the road. I also urge him to consider the stopping up order in conjunction with the planning application referred to in my point b) above, as the two are inextricably linked. Neither must be allowed to happen, as both will result in serious damage to an extremely important historical monument and will also deeply affect the character of a unique seaside town.

Yours faithfully

Judith Halliwell

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