

From: saveprincesparade [mailto:]
Sent: 29 May 2018 17:01
To: NATIONALCASEWORK <NATIONALCASEWORK@dft.gov.uk>
Subject: NATTRAN/SE/S247/3254

Dear Sirs

I set out below the objection from the Save Princes Parade Group to the stopping up of the road at Princes Parade.

For your information I am attaching a copy of our objection to the planning application and also some photos.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email.

Kind regards

Lesley Whybrow

Save Princes Parade Objections to the Stopping Up and Diversion of Princes Parade.

This objection is being submitted on behalf of the 439 members of Save Princes Parade.

The Council's application to stop up and divert Princes Parade should be refused as:

- The application, in the absence of a fully detailed scheme for the whole length of the diverted road, is premature
- It is unnecessary to divert the road. The proposed development could be served from Princes Parade on its present alignment.
- The stopping up of the road and its diversion results in an alignment that is less safe and considerably less convenient to road users.

Background

Princes Parade runs in a straight line from Seabrook to Hythe parallel to the beach. It acts as a through route for those travelling between Seabrook and Hythe. Additionally there are 4 pedestrian routes that cross Princes Parade from the north and give access to the beach to the people who live in the residential areas to the North of the Royal Military Canal.

However, because of the Coast line and the beach it is a destination in its own right. Throughout the year including winter it is popular with walkers, fishermen, runners and cyclists as people are able to park next to the beach. In summer particularly if the weather is good it is very popular and heavily parked by people enjoying the beach.

Additionally it is a Sustrans cycle route.

The Council through its recent introduction for the summer period of parking charges, on Princes Parade has spoilt the enjoyment of many people and driven some of them away,

instead they park on surrounding roads. It remains an important pedestrian, through route.

The attached photos show how the road was well used prior to the introduction of the parking meters on 1 May 2018. This video was filmed at 2.40pm on 7.5.18 and shows that despite the parking meters the road is still occasionally heavily used

<https://www.facebook.com/debra.k.jones.7/videos/1806319989427235/?t=8>

The Planning Application

The planning application is Hybrid application which is a full application for the leisure centre and its parking and servicing only. The outline application relates to the remainder of the site, which is the majority of it, and is for primarily residential development with a small amount of commercial development. In relation to the part of the site that is in outline, i.e. the residential area and commercial area the application is for the principle of development only. The detail of the road alignment and siting of the buildings that is shown on the plans is only illustrative and not for determination now. It is only the leisure centre part of the site where the detail including the road alignment is for determination now.

Proposed Realignment

The Council's proposed route for the realigned road is shown on the plan attached to the Notice. It is proposed to reroute the road to the North so that it runs parallel to the Canal with a sharp bend adjacent to the leisure centre. This is the only part of the site where there is any certainty over the position of the road.

In the part of the site where the application is in outline the proposed road runs parallel to the Canal then cuts back to the south and re-joins Princes Parade. The illustrative plans show that there will be car parking provided on the realigned road adjacent to the Canal, and a car park on the western end of the development site.

For the length of the site (about 1 kilometre) the planning application shows the realignment of Princes Parade so that it runs adjacent to the Royal Military Canal which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and an important local ecological habitat. The area that is currently occupied by the road would be replaced with a hard surfaced promenade. The realigned road as proposed in the application will create serious harm to the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, and destroy the important habitat alongside the Canal.

The Area to be Stopped Up

The Plan and forms that accompany the notice shows that the part of Princes Parade that is to be stopped up is immediately outside the leisure centre and the remainder of Princes Parade for the length of the site is to be diverted as a outlined above.

Objections to the Planning Application

The planning application that generates the Council's desire to Stop up and divert Princes Parade is already the subject of strong local objection - 607 objections at the time of writing, and objection from Historic England, as well as request to the Communities Secretary to Call In the application for his determination, because of its seriously damaging effects. The stopping up and diversion of Princes Parade should be considered by the Secretary of State for Transport at the same time as the planning

application and not separately. Attached is a copy of Save Princes Parade Objections to the planning application for your consideration.

As background the application is contrary to the advice in the NPPF, the Council's Development Plan Policies, and creates serious harm to important views, the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the environment. The realignment of the road as proposed contributes significantly to the harm that is created by the development.

Highway Objections to the Stopping Up and Diversion of Princes Parade.

Due to the way the Council has submitted the planning application as a hybrid, there is only certainty over the position of a small length of the realigned road at the eastern end of the site. The position of the remaining length of the realigned road which is the majority of it, is in reality unknown and is not for determination now.

Whilst the Council may develop the leisure centre themselves, it is their intention to sell the remainder of the site to a private developer who will then submit the detail of the road alignment, the buildings etc. There is no certainty that the developer will want a realigned road in the position the Council have illustrated. Indeed there is no certainty that the developer would want to re align the road at all, it would actually be cheaper for them to serve their development from Princes Parade on its present alignment

Faced by this lack of certainty, over a future developers intentions, and where the road would be positioned if it was moved at all. If the Council were to stop up the road as proposed, it could result in a short length of realigned road to service the leisure centre, and the remainder of Princes Parade becoming a very long dead end which could only be approached from the Hythe direction.

Such an arrangement would be very inconvenient to existing road users, future residents of the proposed development and anybody approaching the leisure centre from the Hythe direction.

In the absence of knowing the detailed alignment of the full length of the new road, this application to stop up and divert the existing road is premature and could result in considerable inconvenience to existing and future road users. This application should be refused for that reason alone.

The detailed plans and the illustrations show an alignment of the road with a sharp bend adjacent to the leisure centre, parking along its length adjacent to the Canal, and a new car park at the western end of the site.

The sharp bend adjacent to the leisure centre lies in the part of the site covered by the detailed application. The road safety audit shows that this bend is a hazard with the possibility of vehicles leaving the road and plunging down the bank and into the Canal.

Whilst the scheme does provide parking for the users of the coast and the beach for recreational and leisure purposes it is not located in close proximity to the beach as is the existing parking .Instead people including the disabled will have to carry their fishing equipment, canoes and beach paraphernalia through a housing development to reach the beach. Such an arrangement is inconvenient compared to the existing situation.

If the stopping up and realignment of the road as proposed is approved, it would result in a highway that is less safe than the existing alignment, and considerably more inconvenient to road users

There is no overriding need to stop up, and divert Princes Parade to serve this development.

In their application the council state “By relocating the road to the rear of the site, we can generate a vehicle free link from the leisure centre and housing development to the beach and existing promenade.”

Princes Parade could be left on its present alignment and the leisure centre and the housing served from it. If it was considered appropriate to improve the pedestrian environment then consideration should be given to reducing the speed on Princes Parade and inserting pedestrian lights. It would be less damaging to the environment than the current proposal.

If Princes Parade were left on its present alignment the proposed buildings could be sited as positioned in the application, and it would enable the proposed park to be enlarged, a wider undeveloped buffer strip to be created alongside the Canal, thereby reducing the impact of the development on the Ancient Monument, and reduce the level of destruction of the habitat alongside the Canal and an alignment which is safer and more convenient to road users than the one proposed.

While no details have been provided, the road width dimensions for the replacement road as indicated on the leisure centre plan are about 0.8 metres narrower than the actual existing road.