

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 May 2022 19:39
To: _WEB_Canals Strategy
Subject: Proposed Canals Strategy for Stroud District

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello

As someone who spends a lot of my leisure time walking along and around the old Thames and Severn canal, I have often wondered what the ultimate intention for the restoration project is and how far up it is intended to go. I have briefly reviewed the Draft Canals Strategy Documents and I must admit I do not find it very intelligible and digestible and not particularly helpful in understanding what is actually being proposed. There seems to be a lot of skirting around any actual detail of what is proposed and where.

In principle I am supportive of the works done to date up to Thrupp and I would support further extension through Brimscombe and beyond – potentially up through St Mary's as far as the old Chalford Industrial Estate/ Victoria Works. However I cannot see how it would make any sense to try and go beyond that - through Chalford and towards Sapperton and I would oppose this very strongly for a number of reasons:

1. Beyond Chalford the old canal has become one of the richest and most beautiful and unspoilt natural reserves I have ever been to anywhere, let alone in this area. It must be completely unique in the entire County, if not beyond. It would be an absolute travesty to destroy the natural ecosystems that have built up over the past 100 years or more by the scale of works that would be required to restore this upper stretch to become navigable again. These must be some of the most treasured and beautiful natural habitats anywhere and I would be amazed if it were even possible/ allowable to restore this section without harming what must be protected SSI or similar. There could be no justification for destroying these habitats and no human/ economic gain would outweigh this ecological value. The scale of works to restore this stretch would surely completely destroy the natural environment.
2. The cost would surely be astronomical to upgrade the upper sections due to the numbers of locks, the wildlife considerations, the access and the level of degradation of the canal infrastructure. The upper stretches are nature's domain now not man's!
3. It would be hugely inefficient. It always was an inefficient canal and the costs vs benefits would not stack up. How could you possibly justify the scale of destruction for a few heavy polluting canal boats to chug up and back and maybe a few quid spent at the Daneway! It just wouldn't bring enough benefit to justify the cost and destruction.

As mentioned I'm not really clear what is proposed but it looks like it involves all the way up to the Sapperton portal which I can't believe is realistic. I would support the restoration of the canal tunnel as an extension of the walkway but I appreciate this is perhaps not economically justifiable in itself.

The upper stretches of the T&S are already a wonderful natural treasure and amenity and something to celebrate as they are. There is nothing that could be done to improve this beautiful place. Restoring the canal in this section would diminish not enhance it.

Regards

