

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 May 2022 17:52
To: _WEB_Canals Strategy
Subject: Stroud Canals Vision and Strategy

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I am a member of the public living within the Eastern Upper Valley Canal Area ("EUVCA") at [REDACTED] Frampton Mansell, Stroud [REDACTED]

The "Driver" of "Continuity" in the EUVCA section of the canal, in so far as it's possible to deduce meaning from the extremely generalised and uninformative language of the Notes numbered 1 to 5 (inclusive) on the page of Document B headed "Eastern Upper Valley Canal Area" (the "EUCVA Page"), appears to me to be in breach of the requirements of ES11 which requires that "all developments adjacent to the canals must respect their setting, biodiversity...".

In particular Note 3 on the EUVCA Page says "Towpath improvements will provide better local multi-modal travel options and connectivity between Chalford and Sapperton". There is no explanation of what "multi-modal" means. However, I believe that such aspiration shows insufficient appreciation of the fragility of ecosystems along the towpath there. Anyone who walks regularly along the towpath will, just for one example, testify to the intermittent presence of herons in the canal and kingfishers along the adjoining River Frome. Such birds appear there only because of a sense of safety due to the present tranquillity of the environment.

"Multi-modal" must mean more modes of travel than the current pedestrian method. It must also imply greater volumes of travellers. Any materially greater volume of travellers, even on foot, will to a significant extent prejudice the ecosystems there. Any permitted mode of travel that involves fast or loud movement would be catastrophic to the ecosystems. So even bicycles are a problem, motorised transport such as mopeds or motor cycles would be catastrophic. Note 5 even says "The unique ecological ... qualities of this upper valley area are selling points for ... tourism experiences on offer". I believe this assertion demonstrates either a serious ignorance of the fragility of ecosystems or a prioritising of leisure activities over respect for biodiversity in plain breach of ES11.

It is deeply unhelpful for a document on which public consultation is invited to use language as vague, impenetrable and uninterpretable as that contained on the EUVCA Page. The language of Document B would have served the public better if, throughout, it had only used language that was specific, unambiguous and achieved absolute clarity and was thus as informative as possible so that public could know what they were being asked to comment on. It would have been immensely helpful too if all the script and plans in Document B had been of a size to be readily legible. Even on a 60 cm screen that is not so.

The EUVCA Page nevertheless seemingly shows either ignorance or insufficient care of the fragility of ecosystems that will be affected and, therefore, advocates priorities or Drivers that are inappropriate to such a rare ecological environment. I hope that the views of others too who know what they're talking about from a scientific point of view on ecological matters, such as the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, will be attended to very closely and honoured in the development not just of plans for the EUCVA but for the whole of the Stroud Canals Vision and Strategy.

Regards,
[REDACTED]