



Dear Sir/Madam,

PLANNING APPLICATION; 13/01601/OUT CASTLE QUAY PHASE II

I write as the Chairman of The Oxfordshire Branch of the Inland Waterways Association, and as a boater myself, to express my concern, and that of my committee, to the proposed development in Banbury for the following reasons.

The Oxford Canal is a designated conservation area and as such any development which impacts on it must be given careful consideration

The Oxford Canal is very popular with boaters, providing access to the Thames to the South and the national canal system to the north.. The boat movements will increase in the coming years as other canals like the Cotswold and Wilts and Berks Canals, which are currently under restoration are in use. Oxford City Council have already recognized this and together with the Oxford City Canal Partnership are developing plans to bring more people to the Canal in Oxford (Jericho Conservation Area Project) and to restore the basin in the City Centre(West End Development Plan).

Banbury is at present a very popular mooring area Providing safe mooring in pleasant surroundings, access to the well known Historic Market Town, nearby shops and of course places to eat. It is indeed the only mooring on the Oxford canal which provides such a range of amenities It is widely used by the many holiday boats, many hired from local companies as well as privately owned boats. .

Many visiting boaters use the nearby facilities provided by General Foods Club. They welcome boaters, provide reasonably priced food and drink and invite them to join with the various events which take place there.

Through the Inland Waterways Association we have researched similar schemes to that proposed and based on the experiences from towns and cities (for example Coventry and Lincoln) where developments, such as those now being suggested have taken place, they have had a detrimental effect on the use of local waterways Facilities like bars/cafes/cinemas bring late night visitors to the water-side. People exiting from them, very often late at night, are often noisy and interfere with the moored boats. Word gets around very quickly and boats **will** stop mooring there. This will have considerable impact of the town shops and of course the "hiring "boatyards

Many people visit the canal as it provides an open space where one can relax and enjoy all the amenities, which being near waterways bring. Erecting multi storey buildings close to both sides of the canal and compounding this with a roof over as is being suggested will have a detrimental effect on the sense of freedom and calm and will exacerbate any late night noise problems.

One only has to consider the number of visitors coming to the well known Banbury Canal Day to see how the waterways attract visitors. Enclosing the canal with surrounding high buildings, putting these buildings on the currently available space will impact on this event also. As the proposals will leave insufficient space for the number of stalls, continental markets etc for the event to continue to thrive.

To summarise therefore we feel that the proposed application should not be approved in its current form. Its implementation will lead to a worsening of the canal environment contrary to the conservation area requirements and would almost certainly lead to a gradual diminishing of the trade Banbury receives from the Canal to the detriment of all concerned.

Ron Heritage
Chairman, Oxfordshire Branch Inland Waterways Association