

21st September 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find below my statement to be read at the planning meeting later today.

REF: 20/00138/FUL Quay 2000 Horseshoe Bridge

I speak on behalf of a number of local residents in objecting to the further reduction in opening hours of the walkway. We object to the proposed changes on the following grounds:

Firstly, the reduction in hours essentially blocks access to the walkway during winter for many who work standard office hours. Those who use the walkway on their commute to and from work will no longer be able to do so. Access to the waterfront is of positive benefit to mental health – I often walk round there to help clear my head – and the additional restrictions will severely limit access to many particularly during the winter months.

Secondly, the path is designated as a permissive route which was supposed to be open at all times “in perpetuity”. Due to antisocial behavior, the current opening hours were agreed. Many local residents were already unhappy with this first reduction in hours, however given the problems in the area the current opening times seem a reasonable compromise. The Hampshire Chronicle today reports that Police say that the problems have largely been addressed by the current opening hours, and there is therefore no justification for reducing the hours still further. Furthermore closure of the walkway simply displaces the problem elsewhere also to the detriment of local residents.

Finally, imposing further limitations on access to the walkway sets a dangerous precedent that could easily lead to closure of the walkway altogether for the general public. Ultimately, local residents who enjoy using the walkway are suffering because of what is a public disorder and policing problem. Whilst we appreciate that Quay 2000 residents wish to feel safe in their homes – an outcome which appears to have been achieved by the current opening hours – this cannot be at the expense of access to the waterside for the many people who make use of this walkway for commuting and leisure, nor to the detriment of other nearby areas when the problem is simply displaced.

Kind regards,

Sarah Brightwell