

Richard Farhall

Rye Town Council; Town Clerk

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Our ref: EC7530

Date: 13 August 2020

Dear Mr Farhall

I am writing to ask for your views on the use of Environment Agency (EA) land at Strand Quay in the centre of Rye.

At the EA we have a desire to see this land utilised to the benefit of the local community. As representatives of that community we would very much value your views on a particular ongoing issue regarding the use of the Quay by visiting motorcyclists looking for somewhere safe to park their (in many cases expensive) vehicles.

Hitherto we have allowed freedom of access to Strand Quay and free occupation by pedestrians and, by virtue of the nature of the barriers in place, to motorcycles as well.

Unfortunately we have received a number of complaints over recent years (albeit from a limited number of residents) regarding antisocial behaviour by what we understand to be a small minority of the motorcyclists. The complaints have increased in number this year.

The complainants have asked that we either maintain an active presence at the site to ensure that use is appropriate or that we restrict access so that all vehicles including motorcycles would require our permission to gain access.

We have neither the powers nor the resources to undertake the former of the two requests which leaves us considering restriction of access.

We are sympathetic to the view that antisocial behaviour by some motorcyclists has an impact on the quality of life of residents in the area. The behaviour of the motorcyclists is, however, not something over which we can exercise any form of regulation and is a police matter, whilst on the public highway.

Other factors that have been brought to our attention are that these visitors bring a significant income to the town and that parking in the town centre facilitates this.

Additionally, there is the concern that if displaced from the Quay the motorcyclists may choose to park in even less appropriate locations. This in turn leading to greater

risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, residents and other visitors to the town.

As representatives of the local community we would appreciate a view, one way or the other as to whether you are in favour of us restricting access to Strand Quay to motorcycles as well as other vehicles.

If we undertake works to restrict the access then we will look to maintain, if at all possible, access for wheelchairs and pushchairs as we recognise the value of this location to residents and visitors to the town alike. However, it may well be the case that the freedom which is currently enjoyed in regard to open access may be somewhat curtailed.

We are checking the legal position but as far as we are aware currently there is no right of way and no right of use or access in regard to this piece of land.

Our involvement in this issue will be limited to whether or not we restrict access to the Strand Quay site but we recognise the issue as part of a larger one related to management of traffic and order in the town.

I would be grateful if you could express a view on the above and any other factors that should be considered before 28 August 2020 to allow us to come to a resolution as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely  
Alan



**Alan Cansdale**  
**Area Environment Manager**  
**Kent, South London and East Sussex**