

Mr Neil Parish MP
Chair of the EFRA Select Committee
House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

Thames Blue Green Economy
c/o Netherbury, Meadow Close
Bridge, Kent CT4 5AT

July 17th 2015

Dear Mr Parish

Re: Request for an Inquiry into the need for the Thames Tideway Tunnel and alternative options to it as a result of the compelling new evidence that has emerged since the adoption of the National Planning Policy for Waste Water in March 2012.

I am writing to you on behalf of Thames Blue Green Economy (TBGE). TBGE is a broad alliance supported by many individuals including academics, civil engineers, economists, environmentalists, gardeners, health practitioners, journalists, lawyers, politicians and scientists, who are working together, to achieve the most cost effective and sustainable solutions for London's water-related environmental problems.

We have tried to hold the Government to account over their misguided decision to back the Thames Tideway Tunnel (TTT) at apparently any cost, without success. The 25km, £4.2 billion concrete TTT conceived in 2005 is the largest construction project in Europe. It will take over 7 years to construct causing untold disruption, havoc and adverse impacts upon Londoners and the environment.

Since 2005, the facts have changed. Even Professor Chris Binnie who was chair of the Thames Tideway Strategic Study Group responsible for putting the TTT forward then does not think it is now an appropriate nor cost effective solution. The problem, to a significant degree, has already being addressed by the upgraded sewage treatment works and the soon to be operational Lee Tunnel.

Therefore, it is imperative that there is an inquiry into the TTT by the EFRA Select Committee so that the up to date financial and technical evidence can be scrutinised. The matter is urgent because the preferred bidder for construction of the tunnel has just been announced by the Government.

I attach the following papers compiled by TBGE experts and correspondence between Lord Berkeley and Rory Stewart MP which illustrate why the TTT is not needed. Why it has arguably NIL benefits but many DIS-benefits and why it has huge unknown costs and risks.

The now robust alternative option known as integrated water resource management (IWRM) would cost far less and reap tremendous benefits. Professor Colin Green, Water Economics Middlesex University, has calculated that London's Infrastructure Plan would save £30 billion by implementing IWRM rather than the tunnel, reservoirs and, desalination plants. IWRM has not been considered by the Government and needs to be. It is now European and USA policy. It is also recognised as global best practice and best suited to achieving resilience in the face of climate change and other associated risks.

We ask that the EFRA Select Committee hold an inquiry into the need and alternative options to the Thames Tideway Tunnel as a matter of national urgency.

Yours sincerely

Emily Shirley
TBGE

Cc. Darren Johnson GLA Chair Environment Committee
Boris Johnson, Mayor of London