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Thames Tideway Tunnel

Thank you for your letter of 16th June, offering a meeting to discuss the issues raised in my previous letters and your response. I would very much like to take up your offer, and will contact your office to see if we can arrange it before Parliament rises for the Summer Recess.

In the meantime, I attach Prof Binnie's comments, which I fully endorse. I believe that there is a strong case to be made that the improvements already achieved, or likely to be within a year, to the tidal Thames will satisfy the requirements of the ECJ and the Commission. Many of these arguments are contained in the various papers published by Prof Binnie, and summarise on the attached paper.

You will note his conclusions – that a combination of options (or partial measures) to suit different parts of the catchment area of the TTT 'should be much less expensive than the tunnel, and the benefits would occur sooner than the eight years needed to build the tunnel.'

There is also the potential saving to the Government of the contingent liability on the construction costs of the TTT, and the saving to Thames Water's 12 m domestic customers of £80 pa for an indefinite period.

So I do believe that, if the Government were serious about these savings as well as eliminating the severe disruption that the construction will cause to many parts of London, a strong case could be made to the ECJ and EC to set aside the judgement, and even reduce the potential fine by completing these partial measures earlier than the completion date of the TTT.

I look forward to discussing these issues with you soon.

Tony Berkeley