Dear Colleagues,

Thames Tideway Tunnel - Chambers' Wharf site

I am writing as the elected London Assembly Member for Lambeth and Southwark, having had considerable contact with the community in the area to be affected by the tunnel drive site at Chambers’ Wharf. This site is arguably the most problematic along the whole length of the planned tunnel. I am aware that many proposed sites have attracted criticism, but I do feel that this particular site is arguably the one most closely surrounded by residential accommodation and community infrastructure and therefore the one most likely to create the most disruption for the most people.

Although this is a brownfield location, it is a site with a large community in very close proximity. Residents along the riverfront at this site - including the Dickens Estate - are deeply and understandably concerned about the noise, dust and traffic impact of living next to a major tunnel boring operation. The proposed drive and reception site for the Tideway tunnel will be a major disruption to them for a protracted period of time. An example of negative impact is the need for HGV’s a day entering and exiting the site will create ongoing noise and traffic nuisance and could have safety concerns for the pupils of nearby schools.

I am aware that there has been discussion and debate on the topic of whether the tunnel is needed at all. As long standing London Assembly member, being aware of prior discussion on the Tideway Tunnel project as a whole, I am fully in agreement with the need for this project. However, I also feel that there is scope for Thames Water to undertake more refinement of their proposals to mitigate and reduce impacts on those Londoners who will end up living close to extremely disruptive bore sites such as Chambers’ Wharf.

My request of the Infrastructure Commission is that absolutely every effort should be made to reduce the size and scale of the works at the Chambers’ Wharf site and reduce the length of time that the project will impact on the community. In particular I would ask the Commission to pay attention as to whether there is a real option to change the route – and direction of boring, making use of Thames Water’s own industrial sites. There could be a long tunnel, as Thames Water proposes but it could be driven from Abbey Mills in Stratford, Thames Water’s own property, towards Chambers’ Wharf. There is plenty of space at or near Abbey Mills for a construction site, whereas Chambers’ Wharf is in a densely residential area.

In summary, this proposal is causing a great deal of distress and upset for a large number of residents, and I feel that Thames Water should be instructed to do everything possible to avoid the Chambers’ Wharf site, or if this proves impossible, to mitigate and reduce the impact and duration of the project on the local community.

Yours sincerely

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