



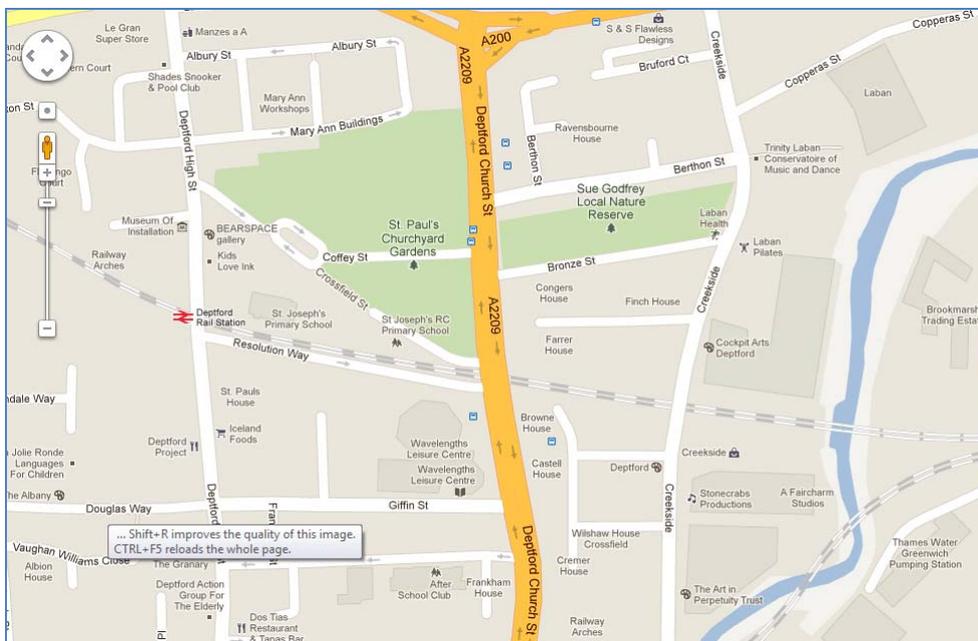
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01/12/2013

Dear Sir\Madam,

I wish to express my concern and (complete) disbelief at the proposal by Thames Water to build a sewer outlet in the heart of Deptford's conservation area. It is astonishing that that anyone could take seriously the suggestion that this scheme should go ahead within Deptford's much treasured historic centre – directly between our Grade 1 listed church and the well-established RC primary school, St Joseph's. The project would seriously disrupt the area for many years, with probable long term damage, to schools, businesses and organisations in the wider area of Deptford. As significant, if not more so, would be the loss of a beautiful green site, an historic site, with a tragic permanent impact on the quality of life of the local residents and wildlife of the area. I have included a list of reasons why this is not a suitable spot for the project – below, but would like to express my main concerns in the following paragraphs.



As you can see, in the above map taken from Google Maps, Thames Water has chosen the last remaining green space in Deptford – the only bit of green space that has not been plundered for development by the private builders and developers – (the piece of green above Coffey Street being the Church and its grounds, and then across Church Street, the Sue Godfrey Local Nature Reserve).

The whole area has – especially in the past few years - been turned into a nightmare jungle of concrete – grey ugly buildings that have blocked out the sky and been built on ‘brown’ field sites that were not considered worth saving for the local wildlife or as the natural ‘lungs’ for the area.



Figure 1 – This stunning view along with the wall and the trees would be destroyed. Figure 2 – A more typical Deptford view (Resolution Way)

The space that has been chosen for the Thames Water site is one of the only pieces of green land remaining – and certainly the largest unspoilt. It is a concrete free oasis for the local people and equally it forms part of an important ‘bridge’ for the fast depleting wild birds, insects and animals. An example would be a song thrush, which was seen nesting in this piece of land last year. It is an important place for other birds and animals to feed – they have few other places to go. (I have noticed in the 7 years that I have been living here that the numbers and variety of birds have diminished alarmingly, probably by at least 50%, with some species disappearing altogether). Similarly, butterflies and bees have become rare in the area – but can still be seen in the summer.



Figure 3 – Mistle Thrushes and other birds nest in the trees on the site every spring

It is especially scandalous that it should be chosen as it is seen as a ‘soft’ target by Thames Water. It is rumoured that some of the land in the area, which would have been ideal for the project – was sold off by Thames Water to developers, to boost profits, shortly before this scheme was announced. It is my belief that they sold off their land, knowing that they could forcibly obtain another piece of land at a cheaper price through central government involvement.

Because this land has been preserved through the centuries from development, it is one of the few remaining places left to target for such a project. Thames Water were speaking of the green as if it was ‘waste land’. However, it is not an accident that it has been left alone – that it appears ‘forgotten’ by the developers. It is not a scrap piece of land waiting to be concreted over. It is a necessary ‘breathing’ space for both the local residents and the wildlife. It is this protection from the developers that now makes it one of the only places left for any type of construction: surviving all this time, only to be the target for a possible forcible removal from the people by the government.



Figure 4 – Building snowmen on our green – Feb 2012



Figure 5 – The site – toward St Josephs School – Feb 2012

The local council is also completely against the use of this land by Thames Water. Those who have power in this process, who will decide the fate of this beautiful piece of land, appear to know little of the area and will not have to suffer the consequences of their decisions.

I would additionally like to make a complaint about the consultation process - set out by Thames Water themselves and not followed. They only informed the local Deptford population of their decision to make the site their preferred location midway through their consultation with other areas – such as Borthwick Wharf (the residents of which managed to persuade Thames Water that the Deptford site would be more suitable). The local residents of Deptford have had a far shorter time to protest and organise themselves than the residents in other areas - and during a time when traditionally people are less likely to feel able to commit the time\energy – over Christmas and the New Year and during the dark, cold months of January. The initial protest meetings were postponed due to the riots in August, which left very little time to raise awareness in the area – just a couple of months.

Thames Water also believe that it is only necessary to consult with residents within the immediate vicinity of the location a few hundred meters – rather than within the boundaries of the district, the whole of which their scheme would affect. They appear to be merely paying ‘lip-service’ to the consultation process and the feeling is (among the community here) that they are going to press for this site whatever the views of the local residents, and however illogical choice it might be for such a construction. Many people have written in with queries and legitimate concerns, but received only a cursory reply – with a link to a web-site that answers none of their questions.

My protest, therefore, is not just at the fact that this site has been selected as Thames Water’s ‘preferred site’, but at the process itself; the unfair and undemocratic nature of it.

List of reasons for why this area is not a logical choice for the site (...and why Borthwick Wharf is a better site):

1. Deptford, with its historic centre, thriving market and numerous independent businesses would be very hard hit by the construction works. The local people would be hit harder than the local residents of Borthwick Wharf.

2. The Deptford Church St site is adjacent to St Joseph's primary school. The working hours of the proposed works coincide with school hours (whereas working residents at Borthwick Wharf are likely to be out during construction hours).
Dust may affect the school (and therefore all the children who spend five days a week there). The school will also be directly affected by the noises associated with excavation, drilling and lorries. Learning and quality of life for a great many children will therefore be negatively affected. The school is highly impacted by noise. They assess 10dB increase relative to assumed average baseline ambient noise levels over 12 month. This is from around 60-65dB (e.g. the volume of conversational speech) to 73dB (e.g. louder than the volume of a busy restaurant). I certainly couldn't teach or learn in a busy restaurant.
When parents choose a primary school for their children they are less likely to opt for one which borders a large construction site- this may have implications for school intake and if less students apply then funding for the school will be affected.

Thames Water have mentioned Charlotte Turner School as being affected by works should they take place at Borthwick Wharf. However, Charlotte Turner school is currently closed with no students attending. Even if it were in use it is protected from noise by the electricity substation, flats and the AHOY centre... this level of protection has been cited by Phil Stride as a reason to preclude the homes on Mary Ann Gardens from their investigations into impact of noise during construction. Charlotte Turner would not be affected by increased traffic due to works because the route proposed by TW in relation to Borthwick Wharf approaches from the Glasher Street which is no where near the school. Charlotte Turner is also much further away from the proposed site than St Joseph's is from the Deptford Church Street site.

3. The Deptford Church Street site is adjacent to St Paul's Church. St Paul's is central to community life in Deptford on two levels.

It is a place of worship. The sanctuary of the building and the churchyard and people's access to a tranquil place for worship will be adversely affected.

The building itself is of historical importance as recognised by its grade 1 listing. Works here will materially harm the setting of the building and perhaps affect the churchyard walls. After works are completed vents of up to 6 meters high will remain. These will affect the perspective over this important historical building.

4. The Deptford Church Street site is in Deptford's conservation area.

All of the mature trees currently on the green would be lost as would the historic wall (built over 300 years ago). The archaeological evidence of Thomas Archer's

eighteenth century Rectory would be lost.



Figure 6 – View of St Pauls from the proposed site

5. The Deptford Church St site is in close proximity to many homes.

There are properties missing from Thames Water's evaluation – e.g. Farrer House, the new flats overlooking the site.

The properties are more sensitive than those at Borthwick Wharf as they are single glazed properties (not sound proofed properties).

6. The site is one of the few open green spaces in this densely populated urban area. Many people walk through the space and use it to walk dogs. It offers some tranquillity in the area and may be referred to as a small lung which makes Deptford a better place to live and work. Plans for what will remain do not improve the site. Rather we will be left with a permanent structure, vents and a concreted area for access. Because the shaft will need to be accessed regularly no trees can be planted centrally.
7. Much regeneration has been going on in Deptford Lewisham which is an area characterised by economic hardship as well as innovation and thriving community. Use of Deptford Church St as a worksite would only serve to counteract these positive improvements by industrialising the centre of town and then leaving it with sewage vents and reduced green space.
8. The site is next to a number of businesses on Crossfield St. These will be adversely affected by associated traffic flow problems and potential parking restrictions on Crossfield and Coffey Streets. One is a freight business and it is unlikely to survive if access for vehicle parking is hindered. Businesses on Deptford High Street will also be affected, such as Deli X. The garden area of the café will be disturbed by noise and dust. (There is only one business in the vicinity of the Borthwick Wharf site which will be affected (the AHOY)).
9. Impact on the roads as half of Deptford Church Street will be closed for up to a year and bus stops relocated. Anyone who knows the traffic in the area will know the effects this will have on the whole of the Greenwich, Blackheath and Lewisham area, as it is an 'artery' for traffic in the area.

10. The Deptford Church Street site is not next to the river. Barges would not, therefore be an option. Roads would be the main means of delivery and removal of excavation materials. This would seriously affect traffic and pollution in the area.

The Borthwick Wharf site is next to the River and so barges could be used to bring equipment and take away spoil. Any potential odour would be more easily dissipated by the breeze on the Thames.

11. **The Borthwick Wharf site is more appropriate.**

To the front of the site there are no homes- just open water. To the left and behind there is already a noisy electricity generator and there is a single business and to the right and behind there are some flats which all have double glazing. The Borthwick site is not central to community life. It is not on a green, it is not adjacent to a school, it is not next to a place of worship important for its community role as well as its historical one.