

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**  
**COUNCIL MEETING – 29 JANUARY 2014**

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Question by: Mr Robert Largan

To: The Leader of the Council

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**QUESTION**

"The proposed super sewer will put an estimated extra £80 a year on our water bills and will cause chaos and disruption for many residents living in Sands End. Can the Council outline what they are doing to fight this flawed project?"

**ANSWER**

This Council has been fighting Thames Water's proposals for the Thames Tideway Tunnel since 2008. In 2011 we were one of five local authorities that established the Thames Tunnel Commission, under the chairmanship of Lord Selborne, to look into the plans for the Tunnel, hear evidence and examine alternative options. In October 2011, the Selborne Commission released its findings: that alternative solutions focussed on sustainable drainage systems could deliver the improvements necessary to the combined sewer system to comply with the EU Directive that instigated the super sewer proposals. Since that report, world experts on water management have been queuing up to condemn Thames Water's plans for a tunnel as an out of date solution that is far too costly in comparison to the actual benefits it will deliver. This Council has been at the forefront of local government objections to the project and you can view the history of our campaigning activity on this issue on our website at [www.lbhf.gov.uk/supersewer](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/supersewer).

Thames Water's application for a Development Consent Order was put before the Planning Inspectorate in September 2013 and the Examining Authority is now two thirds of the way through a six month process and due to make recommendations to Government at the end of March. As part of this process, we have submitted detailed objections to the plans, particularly in relation to the chosen drive strategy and construction site selection. We have presented evidence throughout the process, via written submissions and via counsel at two Issue Specific Hearings that have examined whether Thames Water's insistence on a construction site at Carnwath Road is really necessary. We have commissioned expert international tunnelling engineers to look at Thames Water's plans and, as a result, we have presented the Examining Authority with alternative proposals that are far less socially and environmentally damaging to South Fulham and the surrounding area than the selection of Carnwath Road Riverside as a main construction site. The most recent Hearing was last week (22 January), where we presented the Examining Authority with expert evidence from international tunnelling engineers, CDM Smith, that there are viable and preferable alternatives to siting a main drive shaft at Carnwath Road. We are hopeful that the evidence we have presented and the submissions we have made to the Examining Authority will influence its recommendations to Government, due after March.

The Government's final decision, on whether or not to grant the Development Consent Order, is expected in September this year and I can assure you that this authority will continue to lobby and campaign against the proposals for this project right up to the wire.