



Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Emma Hardy MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
T: +44 (0) 3459 335577
E: correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk
W: gov.uk/defra

Ian McNuff
Founder Member
Save Our Lands and River
ian_mcnuff@hotmail.com

Our ref: PO2025/25005/SS

11 December 2025

Dear Ian,

Thank you for your further letter of 18 November about the Teddington Direct River Abstraction (TDRA) scheme.

I hope it is helpful if I address the themes raised in your correspondence as follows:

Water resources planning

You are correct that the TDRA was considered as part of much wider water resources planning modelling carried out by Water Resources South East, which modelled all options in the southeast to determine a preferred best value for plan for the region. This modelling underpinned all South East's water company Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) with the need for TDRA established in [Thames Water's WRMP](#) published August 2024.

I note your concerns about best value and the cost of the scheme when the scheme will only be used intermittently. TDRA is a drought scheme and its inclusion in the best value WRMP reflects the likely operational regime of the option. While other schemes have been identified that also support water supply in London such as the Abingdon reservoir proposal that you mention, these schemes are both required to meet future demand sustainably. Other actions such as reducing leakage and water efficiency measures are also included in the WRMP and must be delivered by Thames Water alongside developing new supply options.

As schemes are developed, costs will change as designs are refined and we expect any changes in cost to be reflected in WRMP annual reviews, which are subject to scrutiny by regulators and we have recently published our joint regulator [letter](#) (redacted) to Thames Water for the most recent annual review.

Water quality and treatment standards

As set out in my previous letter, although the need for TDRA has been established in Thames Water's WRMP, for the scheme to progress, it needs to gain a Development Consent Order (DCO) and relevant environmental permits.

You have expressed concern about the standard of water treatment used to treat the discharge associated with TDRA and impacts on water quality of the River Thames at Teddington. Any discharge associated with TDRA will require a water quality discharge permit, for which the Environment Agency (EA) is the regulator. The permit will set out the conditions that the discharge must meet to protect the water quality of the River Thames and Thames Water must ensure that any treatment works are fit for purpose and can meet those requirements in order for the scheme to operate. The EA will regularly inspect permitted discharges to ensure that permit standards are met and will take enforcement action where necessary.

Public consultation

I appreciate your concerns about the level of consultation on the scheme by Thames Water and how local communities' views will be taken on board. Consultation is a statutory requirement of the DCO process and Thames Water will have to demonstrate how they have consulted communities and how feedback has influenced scheme design when they formally submit their DCO application next year. As per my previous letter, I recommend you maintain contact with Thames Water in order to ensure your concerns are understood.

With regard to your invitation to meet. As previously mentioned, I am not responsible for developing the TDRA project and it would be more appropriate for you to share views with Thames Water. The views will help inform Thames Water's proposed application for development consent.

Thank you for taking the time to set out your views and I understand the importance of these to you and the local community. If you require any further information please do get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,



EMMA HARDY MP