

Teddington Direct River Abstraction Newsletter

May 2026





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Foreword from
Leonie Dubois
Head of Land, Engagement,
and Consents for Strategic
Resource Options at
Thames Water

The way we use and manage water is changing. In 2025, the UK experienced the hottest and driest spring on record – receiving less than half the rainfall we’d normally expect.

For the South East, already officially designated as “seriously water stressed” by the Environment Agency, this was a stark reminder of the pressures we face. Climate change, a growing population, and the need to protect the environment mean that if we don’t do anything, we could face a shortfall of one billion litres of water every single day by 2050.

A shortage of this scale could touch every part of daily life. It could mean water restrictions, school and business closures, impacts on wildlife and river habitats, reduced crop yields, higher food prices and – at the most severe end – economic losses of up to £500 million a day in London alone.

The Teddington Direct River Abstraction (TDRA) project is one of the key proposals that would help London keep running smoothly during times of drought. Last year, more than 14,000 people and organisations shared their views on our proposals during our statutory public consultation. Thank you to everyone who provided feedback.

Since then, we’ve been carefully reviewing it all, alongside continuing discussions with key stakeholders and analysing further information from technical assessments and surveys. This important process has allowed us to make several design changes to the project and we’re pleased to be able to confirm the removal of the intermediate shaft at Ham Playing Fields from the design.

We have identified specific areas – land near Burnell Avenue and Beaufort Road – where further changes to our proposals may be needed. Before we progress, we want to hear your views on those changes. We are therefore holding a supplementary public consultation from **21 May to 18 June 2026**.

We’d previously planned to submit our application for development consent - seeking the powers to build the project - later this year, but now we plan to submit it in early 2027, which will give us the time we need to consider further feedback from local communities and stakeholders, and continue to develop our proposals.

You can find out more about all of these changes in this newsletter and I would encourage you to share your views on the updated proposals during our consultation. Thank you for taking the time to help us shape the future of London’s water supply.

Best wishes,
Leonie

Project design update

Since our statutory public consultation on our project proposals in 2025, we've been considering all the feedback received and updating our design. This process will continue, until we submit our application for development consent. As infrastructure projects develop, it's typical for the design to evolve and change as further information from surveys, technical assessments, consultation responses, and stakeholder engagement is considered. At our statutory consultation in 2025, we presented several options for elements of the project, and we've now made some key decisions.

1 Removal of the intermediate shaft at Ham Playing Fields

During our statutory consultation in 2025, we proposed building an intermediate shaft at Ham Playing Fields which would provide access to the new recycled water conveyance tunnel. This tunnel would transfer the recycled water from a new tertiary treatment plant located at Mogden Sewage Treatment Works to the new outfall on the River Thames. The purpose of the intermediate shaft was to support health and safety, maintenance, and for tunnel inspection purposes once the project was operational. Building the intermediate shaft would require a construction site at Ham Playing Fields, and a smaller work site near Ham Street car park, which would be accessed through the car park.

Listening to feedback and updating our plans

We've been carefully listening to feedback from stakeholders, and following a technical review with tunnelling experts, we've taken the decision to remove the intermediate shaft at Ham Playing Fields from the design. We're also removing the associated access hatches from the project, as well as the temporary Ham Playing Fields construction site. As part of our updated design, the removal of the intermediate shaft at Ham Playing Fields means that surface construction works at this location are no longer required. This change significantly reduces disruption in this area by removing:

- Near-surface construction activity at the site
- Operational impacts on the surrounding area
- Potential effects on nearby streets, including Ham Street and Riverside Drive



In addition, removing the intermediate shaft eliminates the need for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) to travel to and from the Ham Playing Fields site. This removes the environmental and community impacts associated with HGV movements at this location, including reducing construction traffic on local roads and removing impacts regarding noise or air quality from the Ham Playing Fields site. Additionally, there will now be no impacts from the Ham Playing Fields site on users of the playing fields for formal or informal sports or activities or impacts on nearby businesses and amenities such as Ham House and Garden.



Does this affect the recycled water conveyance tunnel below the ground?

The recycled water conveyance tunnel, between Mogden Sewage Treatment Works and the River Thames at Teddington, would still pass underneath this area of land, within the tunnel corridor presented at statutory consultation in 2025. However, there will now be no above-ground construction or infrastructure on the Ham Playing Fields site. Removal of the Ham Playing Fields site and its associated permanent infrastructure would not affect the indicative alignment of the recycled water conveyance tunnel, nor any parts of the project at other construction sites, including construction works and permanent infrastructure at Mogden Sewage Treatment Works, Burnell Avenue and Tudor Drive.

2 Design decisions on outfall position and Thames Lee Tunnel connection

At our statutory consultation in 2025, we presented two options for the Thames Lee Tunnel connection, as well as two options for the outfall design.

Thames Lee Tunnel connection

The Thames Lee Tunnel is an existing tunnel that carries water from south to east across Greater London. It starts in the borough of Richmond upon Thames and runs to our Lee Valley reservoirs. For this project, we're proposing to connect to it so we can transfer the water we take from the River Thames to the Lee Valley reservoirs, where the water would be treated to provide drinking water for London.

At statutory consultation in 2025, we presented two options for the connection to the Thames Lee Tunnel: one at Burnell Avenue (Option 1, which was our preferred option) and one at Tudor Drive (Option 2).

Feedback from the statutory consultation showed no clear preference for either option, but since then we've carried out further detailed design work, and we can confirm that we're taking forward Option 1.

Option 1 requires a much shorter connection to the Thames Lee Tunnel and avoids the need to potentially excavate an additional shaft at our Tudor Drive site. We would still need our Tudor Drive site to carry out works on the Thames Lee Tunnel, but there would be less construction activity there compared with if we had selected Option 2.



Outfall

To release the recycled water from the conveyance tunnel into the River Thames at Teddington we're proposing to build a new outfall roughly 180 metres upstream of Teddington Weir and 180 metres downstream of our proposed intake.

At our statutory consultation in 2025, we presented two options for the outfall design: a bankside outfall, and an in-river near-bank outfall.

Feedback from the statutory consultation showed no clear preference for either option. Since consultation, we've had ongoing engagement with the Environment Agency and carried out further design development, which has led to us choosing the in-river near-bank outfall as our selected design to take forward.

Having the outfall within the river helps to protect the marginal habitat on the bank for migrating fish. We're working closely with the Environment Agency on the continued design of the outfall.



3 Tertiary treatment plant

Since our statutory consultation in 2025, we've undertaken further work on the proposed location of the tertiary treatment plant, as well as concluding our pilot plant trial. The tertiary treatment plant is where we would treat wastewater to a high standard, following primary and secondary treatment, before being transferred to the River Thames.

We've now taken the decision to move the tertiary treatment plant away from its original proposed location above the storm tanks in Mogden Sewage Treatment Works.

Further technical work is on-going regarding an alternative location within the Mogden Sewage Treatment Works site boundary. We'll be able to provide a further update on this over the course of the coming months.

Supplementary Consultation

Updated plans near Burnell Avenue

During our statutory public consultation in 2025, we proposed using land to the south of Burnell Avenue to build an intake structure on the riverbank, which would be used to draw water from the river.

This intake structure would be connected to an existing tunnel, which would be used to convey the water to our reservoirs in the Lee Valley in North London. We proposed an outfall structure, which would be used to top up the river with highly treated water from Mogden Sewage Treatment Works. We also proposed a control building (formerly referred to as a 'kiosk'), which would also be located on land to the south of Burnell Avenue, housing control and power facilities.

We're now proposing to:

- Make changes to the size and appearance of the intake structure, as well as adding underground pumps to help draw water from the river and new maintenance hatches
- Increase the size of the control building and add a footpath around three sides of the building
- Make changes to the design of the outfall structure, including additional maintenance hatches and revised earthworks
- Extend the draft Order limits for the project, to provide space on Beaufort Road for the upgrade of a power cable within an existing substation
- Increase the total number and peak levels of HGVs servicing the Burnell Avenue worksite during construction, while reducing the number of HGV movements at the Tudor Drive worksite and removing all HGV movements from the Ham Playing Fields worksite
- Extend the length of time that construction would take place at the Burnell Avenue site
- Now also use Ewell Road (in addition to other roads previously identified) to route construction traffic including HGVs to service the Burnell Avenue and Tudor Drive sites



Have your say

How to find out more and have your say

Before we go further with these proposals, we want to hear your views on the changes.

We're therefore holding a supplementary public consultation from **21 May to 18 June 2026**. You can **find out more** about our proposals by:

- Viewing the consultation booklet at our website: thames-sro.co.uk/tdra/haveyoursay2026
- Attending our in-person event
- Joining our online webinar
- Picking up a printed copy of our booklet and feedback form at Ham Library

You can **have your say** on our latest proposals for the updated plans near Burnell Avenue by:

- Filling in our online feedback form which you can find at thames-sro.co.uk/tdra/haveyoursay2026
- Emailing us at TDRA@ipsos.com
- Writing to us, free of charge, at FREEPOST TDRA CONSULTATION
- Filling in a printed feedback form and posting it to us free of charge

Our consultation is open until **11.59pm on 18 June 2026**. Our online feedback form has a character limit of 4,096 characters for each question, which equates to roughly 750 words per answer. If your responses are likely to be lengthy, you might prefer to email or write to us.

Printed consultation booklets, feedback forms and Freepost envelopes are available to collect from our public information event; and from Ham Library, Ham Street, Ham, TW10 7HR.



Join our events to find out more

We're holding an **in-person** public information event where you can find out more about the changes we're proposing at land near Burnell Avenue. This will take place on **Tuesday 2 June 2026**, from **2pm to 8pm** at **St Andrew's Church Hall**, Church Road, Ham, TW10 5HG.

We're also hosting an **online** information event on **Monday 8 June 2026**, from **midday to 1pm**, which will include a presentation from the project team summarising the proposals, the consultation process, and how you can provide your feedback. Attendees will also have an opportunity to ask questions of the project team. You can register for the online event via our website: thames-sro.co.uk/events

What's coming up

Over the next few months, we'll keep working on updating and refining our proposals for the project, including:

- continuing to engage with stakeholders to discuss the feedback they've shared with us to date, resolve issues and help shape key elements of our design work
- undertaking further technical assessments
- continuing to consider responses to our statutory public consultation held in 2025
- considering all the responses to the supplementary consultation on potential changes to our proposals near to Burnell Avenue being held in May/June 2026.

As the TDRA project is of national significance, we'll need to adhere to the Development Consent Order (DCO) planning process under the Planning Act 2008.

Due to on-going design changes and the points listed above, we're now planning to submit our application in early 2027. We'll share further updates before we submit our application, including how you can get involved in the DCO process, further opportunities to speak to the project team and ways to find out more.



Contact us

If you have any questions or topics you'd like us to cover in future newsletters, please contact us on:

- Tel: 0800 316 6899
- Email: info.TDRA@thameswater.co.uk

For more details on our proposals, visit our website: thames-sro.co.uk/tdra/haveyoursay2026

You can also sign up to receive our newsletters by email. To stay informed and receive project updates directly to your inbox, please visit our website: thames-sro.co.uk/subscribe or scan the QR code below.



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