

NEWS RELEASE



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THAMES WATER REVEALS 10 YEAR ABINGDON RESERVOIR CONSTRUCTION BLIGHT

The Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD) has brought to light an environmental report, commissioned by Thames Water, which sets out that their proposed Abingdon reservoir would create massive upheaval and environmental damage. There would be up to 900 vehicle movements on and off the site, potentially causing huge inconvenience and delays at the A34/Marcham interchange, which is already very busy at peak times.

An official Environmental Impact Assessment document* prepared for Thames Water reveals that in the Plan:

- The overall construction period is estimated to be nine years.
- The development would require 3.5 million tonnes of rock and construction materials to be brought to the site in order to construct the massive clay embankments, involving 300 million tonnes of material in total.
- Whilst rail transport will be used, there will also be a heavy reliance on road transport.
- At its peak, 445 vehicles will enter the site each day, resulting in potentially 900 vehicle movements a day on the site.
- Most lorries delivering to the site will be routed along the A34 and A415 Marcham Road.
- Other site traffic will be using other local roads.

Nick Thompson, Chairman of GARD, said:

“The noise, pollution and disruption of the project would destroy the quality of life for many people living in Marcham, Drayton and Steventon, all of which are likely to be affected on the routes from major roads to the vast site. South Abingdon would also be affected.

“With a nine year development timetable, this is not a temporary inconvenience. It is massive disruption and blight over the course of nearly a decade.

“Despite all politicians talking about the importance of local decision making, the effects of this plan on our community have not been properly considered yet. GARD is urging local residents to join the hundreds who have already objected to the plans by logging on to www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk. Together, we can defeat Thames Water’s proposals.”

ENDS

* Thames Water Utilities Ltd, Upper Thames Reservoir, *Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report PU002-7LTC/E2*, October 2008.

For more information, please contact Peter Jones on 07917 312 749 or to arrange an interview with Nick Thompson.

Notes to editors:

1. The Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD) is a group of local residents campaigning against plans by Thames Water to build a **huge** and **unnecessary** reservoir in the countryside, south west of Abingdon. Thames Water has ignored or dismissed more sustainable and viable long term alternatives.
2. Local residents can sign up to our campaign via our website and make your voice heard. Campaign updates are available via Facebook, Twitter and the website. Go to www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk
3. A public inquiry on Thames Water's plan is due to start on 15 June this year and GARD will be challenging the plans at the inquiry. If Thames Water's plan is approved in the face of strong local opposition, work could start as early as 2016.