



5th November 2013

Press Release from Greenwich Borough Liberal Democrats

GREENWICH LIB DEMS OPPOSE RIVER CROSSINGS PROPOSALS

After several months of local party consultation, culminating in an executive committee summit over the weekend, Greenwich Borough Liberal Democrats have issued a detailed policy response to the TfL proposals for new river crossings in Greenwich Borough. Local Greenwich Lib Dems have come out in strong opposition to any new road or ferry crossings in Greenwich Borough itself, whilst agreeing that crossings further east may be necessary if evidence is found to support a case for them. They support new ferries at Woolwich, rush hour tolling at Blackwall, increased use of traffic management measures and a raft of public transport initiatives as alternative solutions.

The Lib Dems point out that evidence against the Silvertown tunnel, next to Blackwall, is currently much more compelling than anything produced to support it. The borough already suffers illegal levels of air pollution, which will only get worse with new road build, and research points to markedly more traffic, not less, should extra capacity be built in this location. There has been precious little attention given to greener and cheaper solutions to current problems.

The Lib Dems also oppose any sort of crossing at Gallions Reach in Thamesmead. The road infrastructure for even a ferry would be significant and disruptive for local residents already suffering from noise pollution from City Airport. Much worse would be the strong possibility of a ferry crossing being the precursor for a fixed link with associated approach roads cutting across large swathes of Shooters Hill and Plumstead to join up with the A2.

Chris Smith, Chair of Greenwich Liberal Democrats said:

"The current proposals have precious little to back them up whilst research from our local area and across the world points to the huge problems that could result. Key amongst those is the negative affect on the health of Greenwich residents who already suffer with unacceptably high levels of air pollution."

He went on to say that:

" The probability is that these new roads will fill up overnight, as they did when the M25 and the second Blackwall tunnel were built, thereby solving nothing. We in Greenwich already have enough in the way of high volume, large roads and we don't want more of our green spaces and family homes bulldozed for yet more. The Labour Council have failed to make the case for a crossing on the basis of hard evidence, so have had to resort to spin and the PR "Bridge The Gap" campaign. It's up to Labour to prove that these new crossings would be good for Greenwich and its residents".

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