

I write as an Oxfordshire County Councillor for the nearby Division of Shrivenham, and recent OCC Cabinet Member for the Environment at OCC to oppose the proposals presented in the Gate 1 consultation by SESRO, and repeat my statement in the debate at OCC on 15th November that there has been no decision that a reservoir is the solution to Thames Water's need for water.

I endorse the detailed comments presented by Cllr [REDACTED] and add the important fact that it has not been decided that Thames Water 'needs' a reservoir. Reduction of leakage from TW water pipes is a long-established part solution, and alternatives sources of water have not been properly/fully explored.

Thames Water has moved beyond claiming it 'needs' water to meet demand of growing population on Oxfordshire, to a plan to sell water to other water companies. It has not been established that Oxfordshire should bear the environmental and social costs of supplying water to Affinity Water (now the only named potential customer). If Thames Water 'need' is established there is the alternative of water transfer from the Severn, which has not been fully examined (though opposed by the Environment Agency, it has not been fully challenged) or Affinity Water's need might be met by moving water down the canal system from Birmingham.

This Gate 1 process appears to focus on the issues arising from the reservoir as though the solution has been decided. It has not. In post I called for a second Public Enquiry (autumn 2019) to examine the TW 'need' and these alternatives, and this gated process appears to by-pass that challenge. There can be no decision to proceed with this reservoir without first deciding in a public setting that it is the best/only solution to an established Thames Water "need".

[REDACTED]