

Open Letter: the Silvertown Tunnel project

30 April 2021

We, the undersigned, urge Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport, and Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, to take emergency action to put in place a review of the Silvertown Tunnel project. This could take the form of a cancellation of the Development Consent Order, or a decision to freeze work on the project while an inquiry is conducted.

Since the DCO was issued, the UK parliament and the Greater London Authority are among the many bodies internationally to have declared that we are in a climate emergency. As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, long-term transport projections have changed. In these circumstances, it would be foolhardy to press ahead with an infrastructure project that can only contribute to the UK's excessive greenhouse gas emissions – as well as skewing London's transport system further towards roads, and exacerbating local air pollution problems.

With the COP 26 talks coming up in Glasgow in November, the government has decided to review the licencing of a new deep coal mine in Cumbria. This was a correct decision in view of the climate emergency, which requires both that total emissions be reduced swiftly in this decade, and that infrastructure projects that could underpin higher emissions in future be avoided.

The Climate Change Committee has warned the government that it is on course to miss its own emissions targets for the fourth and fifth carbon budgets – targets that some researchers believe are anyway too generous to reflect adequately the UK's fair share of the emissions cuts required to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Transport emissions are a major part of the problem: they are rising while emissions from other sectors are falling. This can not be addressed mainly by electrification. Transport strategy in London, and the UK as a whole, needs to prioritise modal shift and public transport, not further expansion of the unsustainable road network.

Under these circumstances, the DCO issued in 2017 is not an adequate basis on which to press ahead with the Silvertown project. It risks, like the Cumbrian coal mine, undermining the UK's efforts to address climate change.

Yours faithfully,

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Kevin Anderson, Professor of Energy and Climate Change, Tyndall Centre, School of Engineering, University of Manchester

Dr Jaise Kuriakose, Lecturer in Energy and Climate Change, University of Manchester

Julia Steinberger, Professor of Social Ecology and Ecological Economics, University of Leeds

Dr Rachel Aldred, Professor in Transport, Director of the Active Travel Academy, Westminster University

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Professor Tim Jackson, Director, Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity, University of Surrey

Professor Matthew Paterson, Research Director, Sustainable Consumption Institute, University of Manchester

Dr Ian Mudway, Senior Lecturer in Respiratory Toxicology, Environmental Research Group, Imperial College London

Dr Jake Ainscough, Senior Research Associate, Lancaster University

David Andrews, Chair of Bath Trams; Chair of Claverton Energy Group

Dr Keith Baker, Researcher, Built Environment Asset Management (BEAM) Centre, Glasgow Caledonian University

Dr Lucy Baker, Senior Research Fellow, University of Sussex

Dr Andrew Baldwin, Associate Professor in Human Geography, Department of Geography, University of Durham

Terence Bendixson, President Emeritus, Living Streets

Dr Joe Blakey, Lecturer in Human Geography, University of Manchester

Dr Andrew Boswell, Independent Scientist, Activist and Consultant, Climate Emergency Planning and Policy

Professor Stefan Bouzarovski, Professor of Human Geography, University of Manchester

Dr Juliette Brown, Consultant Psychiatrist, Newham

Dr Lesley Catchpole, critical and social researcher of accounting and organisations, University of Greenwich

Gareth Dale, Senior Lecturer in politics, Brunel University

Dick Daniel, transport campaigner and committee member of Bath & Bristol Area Trams Association (BBATA)

Dr Adrian Davis, Professor of Transport and Health and Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health, Edinburgh Napier University

Dr Robert Davis, Chair of Road Danger Reduction Forum

Patrick Devine, Honorary Research Fellow (Social Science), University of Manchester

James Evans, Professor of Geography, University of Manchester

Dr Luna Glucksberg, Research Fellow, International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics

David Hall, Visiting Professor, Public Services International Research Unit, University of Greenwich

Alastair Hanton, Honorary Secretary, Foundation for Integrated Transport, and former Chair, Living Streets

Owen Hatherley, culture editor, *Tribune*; and author, *Red Metropolis: socialism and the government of London* (Repeater Books, 2020)

Fumi Hayashi, MsC, researcher in atmospheric physics, Imperial College London

Dr Jane Hindley, Lecturer, Interdisciplinary Studies Centre, School of Philosophy and Art History, University of Essex

Lisa Hopkinson, Environmental Researcher of Sustainable Transport and Trustee, Foundation for Integrated Transport

Dr Marc Hudson, researcher of social movements

Dr Neil Jennings, Partnership Development Manager, Grantham Institute, Imperial College London

Clemens Kaupa, Assistant Professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Dario Kenner, author of *Carbon Inequality: the role of the richest in climate change* (Routledge, 2019)

Peter Knapp, Air Quality PhD student, Imperial College London

Rebecca Lush, Trustee, Foundation for Integrated Transport

Professor Graeme Macdonald, University of Warwick; Researcher, Climaginaires project and Low Carbon Scotland

Dr Martin Mahony, School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia

James Marriott, artist and activist at Platform; associate researcher, University of Durham; co-author of *The Oil Road* (Verso Books, 2012) and *Crude Britannia* (Pluto Press, 2021)

Bill McGuire, Professor Emeritus of Geophysical & Climate Hazards, University College London

Duncan McLaren, Professor in Practice, Lancaster Environment Centre

Lucie Middlemiss, Associate Professor in Sustainability, Sustainability Research Institute, University of Leeds

Greg Muttitt, Senior Policy Advisor, International Institute for Sustainable Development

Dr Audrey de Nazelle, Senior Lecturer and co-Deputy Head, Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London

Peter Newell, Professor of International Relations, University of Sussex

Michael Norton, Trustee, Foundation for Integrated Transport; social entrepreneur

David Olivier, BSc, principal, Energy Advisory Associates

Dr Kerstin Oloff, Director, Centre for Culture and Ecology, University of Durham

Dr Douglas Parr, Policy Director, Greenpeace UK

Dr Abigail Perrin, Research Scientist, University of York

Kate Pickett, Professor of Epidemiology, University of York

Simon Pirani, Senior Research Fellow, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies; Honorary Professor, University of Durham

Professor Clive A Potter, Professor of Environmental Policy, Imperial College London

Rupert Read, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of East Anglia

Eric Schoenrock, MSc, postgraduate researcher of atmospheric physics, Imperial College London

Andrew Simms, Co-director of the New Weather Institute

Tom Sinclair, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Oxford

Dr Pritam Singh, Professor Emeritus (Economics), Oxford Brookes University

Peter Somerville, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of Lincoln

Kate Soper, Emerita Professor of Philosophy, London Metropolitan University

Chris Todd, Director, Transport Action Network

Dr Scott Urban, Lecturer in Economics, Hertford College, University of Oxford

Dr Ans Vercammen, Research Fellow, Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London

Dr Caroline Vincent, Biologist; member of Extinction Rebellion Scientists

Dr Judith Watson (retired), Brighton University

Chris Wells, MSc, postgraduate researcher of atmospheric physics, Imperial College London

Dr Rebecca Whittle, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University

Christian Wolmar, writer and broadcaster on transport; shortlisted to be Labour's candidate for London mayor 2016 election

Andrew Wood, Co-ordinator of Network for Clean Air

Dr James Woodcock, Reader in Transport and Health Modelling, University of Cambridge

Tristram Wyatt, Senior Research Fellow, Zoology, University of Oxford

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We invite researchers of climate, energy, transport, air pollution, urban planning and associated areas to sign this letter. Please fill out the google form at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pPZPtLYrDEZroUA5MfQszFU3urEL-JVjPxg0jNmWi-8/edit>

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