Script of free format responses to the River Thames Scheme Statutory Consultation, March 2024

I am responding on behalf of residents of Egham, as Chair of Egham Residents Association.

Please note: as the infrastructure of the RT scheme falls completely outside of Egham, the Egham Residents' Association is not commenting on the non-flooding aspects of the scheme.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the scheme would help to reduce flooding in this area?
Egham Residents' Association disagrees that the RT Scheme will reduce flooding experienced by Egham.

Egham suffered flooding in 2003, 2014 and in January this year, 2024.

From our reading of the PEIR and the non-technical Modelling Report, it appears that the RTS model of a 1-in-20 year flood does NOT capture the flooding experienced at these times in The Avenue, Albany Place, Strode Street and Vicarage Road (at the Vicarage Crescent junction) in Egham. Therefore these locations fall outside the area for which the scheme's benefits have been judged (ie there is no benefit claimed). We see in the comparison of observed and modelled river levels for Bell Weir that the model under-represents the river level there (consistently, and by ~10 cm at peak flood). Possibly this explains the model's failure to capture the full extent of the flooding affecting Egham as experienced in 2003, 2014 and 2024. If the model under-represents the 1-in-20 year floods at Egham, we cannot trust the model outcomes at the scale that Egham is affected. Nor can we trust the claimed benefits across Runnymede fields (because if the 1-in-20 year flood is under-represented by 10 cm in the 'calibrated' model, the claimed benefit is of the same order of magnitude as the model error).

Q54. Is there anything further the River Thames Scheme should consider?
On reading the documents, it was not clear to us whether the modelling of the floods extents, with and without the scheme in place, had incorporated specific groundwater conditions as part of the 'starting conditions' or not. Nor, if the groundwater conditions at the time of the river flooding had been specified, what they had been specified as. (We are interested, because there is local knowledge that across Runnymede fields at Egham, groundwater flooding sometimes precedes the river breaking its bank, and hence accentuates the extent of the river flood). If this process is not represented in the 1-in-20 year flood models, it's another reason why the models may under-represent the extent of flooding experienced by Egham in 2003, 2014 and 2024.

W.G.Burgess, Chair: Egham Residents' Association