

Mr Steve Collins comments

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Members of the Thames River Users Group on the non-tidal Thames submit that the River Thames from Hampton to Teddington Lock SHOULD be designated as Metropolitan Open Land as it is distinct from the Tidal Thames downstream of the Lock. The non-tidal Thames is calmer and gentler than the Tideway with a speed limit for powered craft of 4 knots (7.4km/hour). The Council's Riverside Supplementary Planning Document recognise that the riverside plays host to a range of community and leisure groups, in addition to individuals walking, cycling, feeding swans or simply enjoying the view of passing rowers, sailing boats and cruisers.

The Kingston Reach is on the main tourist route by trip boats from London to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Hampton Court Palace. Westminster Passenger Services vessels pass regularly through the reach. Local companies Turk Launches (in existence for 500 years) and Parris run regular trips to and from the Palace.

It is recognised by the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames as the busiest on the River Thames for water-based sport, recreation and leisure activities. The River Users Group estimated in 2015, that there were over 160,000 boat trips in the central section of the riverside, with boats ranging in size from 20m long commercial vessels and racing eight rowing boats to sailing dinghies, kayakers, and stand up paddlers.

There is simply no scope or need for development of additional river related transport infrastructure.

The non-tidal River Thames meets all four criteria for Metropolitan Open Land. It:

1. contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area
2. includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London
3. contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan values (Hampton Court Palace is of **world** value)
4. forms part of a Green chain or link in a network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria.

We also suggest that there is a case for extending the MOL designation downstream. The Thames Landscape Strategy defines Hampton to Kew as the Arcadian River Thames, an area of special historical, cultural and aesthetic interest.

Finally MOL designation would allow the river to join up with an existing area of MOL at Seething Wells Filter Beds.

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