

INQUIRY UNDER THE WATER RESOURCES ACT 1991

INTO FOUR ABSTRACTION LICENCES HELD BY SOUTHERN WATER
AUTHORISING ABSTRACTION FROM THE RIVERS ITCHEN AND TEST, AND
ONE ABSTRACTION LICENCE HELD BY ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AFFECTING
THE CANDOVER STREAM

SOUTHERN WATER SERVICES' POSITION STATEMENT

1. Southern Water appealed against the Environment Agency's proposals to vary the terms of abstraction licences for the Rivers Test and Itchen and the Candover boreholes because the changes would put the company in the impossible position of having to break the law - either by breaching an abstraction licence in order to continue to supply customers in drought or force majeure events, or by breaching its duty to supply water to the public, a duty which is laid down by Parliament.
2. The planning inquiry process triggered by Southern Water's appeals has proved useful in enabling both sides to deepen their understanding of their respective positions. In particular, the exchange of evidence enabled both parties to focus on devising a pragmatic solution to the complex and potentially conflicting environmental and supply needs in the Southampton West area for an interim period whilst Southern Water develops its permanent supply scheme for the area.
3. The solution being devised acknowledges the wide range of interest shown by Interested Parties, enables Southern Water to fulfil its duty to supply its customers in

drought and force majeure events, and enables the Agency to closely supervise the manner in which the environment will be protected.

4. Southern Water recognises the importance of the Agency's regulatory oversight of the environment and looks forward to developing further, during the course of this week and beyond, the co-operative working relationship between the parties which is enabling a resolution to this complex case.

13 March 2018

JUSTINE THORNTON QC

CATHERINE DOBSON

ADAM BOUKRAA



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