Dear Sadiq Khan and Heidi Alexander,

We applaud your introduction of the Ultra Low Emission Zone and your action on concerns about pollution and climate change.

However, many Greenwich residents have been unhappy with the planned Silvertown Tunnel for years, and with the new awareness of the Climate Emergency this unhappiness and indeed anger about the lack of response to our concerns is spreading quickly.

We feel that this scheme should be delayed and re-evaluated in the light of the current climate emergency.

Our arguments are these:

1. The new Tunnel has a dedicated HGV lane which fits larger vehicles, drawing them through Greenwich along major roads next to over 40 schools and nurseries where 16,000 children play inside and out. Asthma and autism and other health problems are caused by pollution and lives are shortened. Our roads are already illegally polluted and we need to prevent motor traffic not encourage it.
2. Flooding in Greenwich is a concern with climate change. Building a tunnel on a floodplain where there is only one flood defence and now a huge amount of residential properties seems misguided. One storm surge combined with high tides, large amounts of rainfall leading to a high water table is all that is needed to cause a massive flood and even a possible breach of the flood barrier defence.
3. London-wide road pricing, which will likely happen in the near future, would remove most of the congestion at Blackwall Tunnel. And the business / freight lobby argument for it will then disappear.
4. If we build the tunnel, and a future Mayor doesn't increase the toll fast enough, or removes it, then congestion and pollution in Greenwich, Lewisham and Newham actually gets much worse.
5. Even before London-wide charging, most of the congestion benefits of the scheme can be achieved by just tolling Blackwall so that traffic turns up at less crowded times - without spending £1bn and emitting 153,000 tonnes of CO2 actually building the tunnel. We should at least experiment with this before building the scheme.

In conclusion we feel that the building the new Silvertown Tunnel is a very expensive mistake at this time. We now know that motor traffic is detrimental to the health of the population born and unborn, and that to ensure public health and climate stability we need to sharply reduce car use across London - so building a tunnel that can never be fully used because it's a potential pollution bomb is a massive waste of public money. We are in a climate emergency, and so we would suggest that instead of spending £1bn of Londoners' money on a new road tunnel at Silvertown, we should invest in priorities such as a smart road pricing scheme across London, new safe bike infrastructure, and electrifying the bus fleet.

Yours sincerely,