

Lower Thames Crossing

5.2 Statement of Engagement

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Lower Thames Crossing

5.2 Statement of Engagement

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1 Executive summary

- 1.1.1 The Applicant (National Highways) has submitted an application under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 for an order to grant development consent for the A122 Lower Thames Crossing ('the Project').
- 1.1.2 The Applicant has undertaken extensive engagement with stakeholders throughout the pre-application stage of the Project. Ongoing engagement has helped stakeholders shape the Project and has facilitated continuous improvement to its design. This engagement has also been of significant benefit to the Applicant, as it has provided a deeper understanding of local issues and enabled information to be gathered to support decision making.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant's continuous engagement programme has run in parallel with, and has been complementary to, its formal public consultations. There is a distinction to be drawn between engagement and consultation, which is that:
- a. engagement captures the ongoing discussions between the Applicant and stakeholders, outside formal public consultations, across a range of matters, which is the focus of this document. The output of engagement is a project that has been consulted on iteratively and developed to the point that (at submission) it reflects a balance of project needs and stakeholder requests, as set out in further detail within the Statements of Common Ground;
 - b. consultation captures the periods of formal public consultations, which have been held since 2018 and have provided the opportunity for anyone to feed back on the proposals set out in those consultations.
- 1.1.4 This document sets out the detailed engagement process that the Applicant set up and implemented in order to make most effective use of the pre-application period, and to develop the best possible application for development consent. In doing this, it has set a strong foundation for ongoing engagement throughout the pre-examination and examination periods, and beyond (when strong lines of communication will be essential to implement the Project).
- 1.1.5 In line with the underlying principles of the Planning Act 2008, the Applicant has sought to share information in advance of the submission of the DCO application to assist with the closing out of matters, but inevitably there are a number of matters which are not currently agreed and these are documented within the relevant Statements of Common Ground. The DCO examination process provides a forum for parties to set out their respective positions and for the Examining Authority to ask questions of the parties in relation to those matters.

- 1.1.6 As explained throughout this Statement of Engagement, the pre-application process is not the only way in which stakeholders can further influence the Project on those matters going forward. Opportunities for further engagement are provided for within the framework of the DCO application and are referenced in each cohort section throughout this document.

Identification of stakeholders

- 1.1.7 The Applicant has worked to ensure that all relevant individuals and organisations were engaged with in a manner that is proportionate to their interests, roles and responsibilities, and statutory status. Technical engagement has targeted the following groups:
- a. Statutory consultees under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008
 - b. Those that are likely to be most impacted by the Project, to the extent they are not statutory consultees
- 1.1.8 A complete list of statutory consultees that the Applicant has consulted in accordance with section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 is set out in Appendix H of the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).
- 1.1.9 Stakeholder cohorts have been set up in order to develop tailored engagement strategies that respond to their interests, responsibilities and functions (e.g. statutory/regulatory status, spatial area, commercial interests). These cohorts are summarised in the following sections.

Local authorities and transport bodies

- 1.1.10 Following the withdrawal of the previous DCO application in November 2020, the Applicant took the opportunity to review its approach to engagement with the local authorities, taking into account feedback from the Planning Inspectorate and local authorities through their Adequacy of Consultation representations. The key themes of the feedback relevant to engagement were as follows:
- a. There was a significant and growing list of unresolved issues at the time of the first submission (captured in the ‘issues logs’).
 - b. It was unclear how and whether some issues had been adequately resolved.
 - c. There was a lack of clarity, signposting or specificity as to where such answers could be accounted for within the DCO documentation.
 - d. There was considered to have been insufficient progress in technical matters that were a priority to the local authorities.
 - e. There was considered to have been some uncertainty as to how mitigation and other measures were to be secured.

- 1.1.11 The Applicant listened to this feedback, revised its approach to managing the issues logs and implemented a system that more robustly closed the engagement feedback loop with the local authorities.
- 1.1.12 The engagement activities introduced sought to address the feedback received at the point of withdrawal in 2020. This process for identifying and closing issues was shared with the local authorities and has been matched with an internal process to ensure that each issue has been reviewed, considered and responded to appropriately by the relevant technical specialists.
- 1.1.13 Drafts of the Statements of Common Ground and issues logs were shared with the local authorities on multiple occasions prior to the submission of this DCO application (with the first version of the issues log being shared in November 2019 for most of the local authorities). These provided the local authorities with opportunities to reframe the way an issue was presented in the Statement of Common Ground and assign a status against each of the matters. Some local authorities responded in meetings, others in writing, though in some cases there was limited feedback on the Applicant's responses to the relevant issues.
- 1.1.14 Drafts of all of the Statements of Common Ground were shared for the last time in September 2022 to enable local authorities to undertake a final review prior to submission.
- 1.1.15 Engagement in the months following the submission of the DCO application will centre on the matters that remain under discussion within the Statements of Common Ground. In most cases, the Applicant and the local authorities have agreed to these being 'under discussion' as they rely on the local authorities having full access to the application materials, which can only happen after submission. As such, the Applicant is anticipating that these matters will continue to mature in advance of the examination period. The Applicant will continue to work collaboratively with the local authorities to ensure that discussions on those matters continue.

Statutory environmental bodies

- 1.1.16 As the Applicant set out to produce its Environmental Statement (ES) (Application Documents 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (Application Document 6.5), technical meetings were held with statutory environmental bodies to agree the scope of the assessments, methodology, baseline and surveys, and the approach to mitigation and compensation. With some of these bodies (such as the Environment Agency and Natural England), the frequency of these meetings was, on average, every fortnight since 2018.
- 1.1.17 To ensure that the design presented for development consent can efficiently move through the secondary consenting process, the Applicant has sought to engage with the relevant bodies responsible for consents, licences and permits. Where appropriate, changes have been incorporated into the methodology for construction and the design itself to ensure that obtaining the necessary

secondary consents following the granting of the DCO would be feasible. This engagement has been crucial to securing agreement on the approach to secondary consenting set out in the Consents and Agreements Position Statement (Application Document 3.3).

- 1.1.18 As an example, extensive engagement throughout the pre-application phase has meant that Natural England considered that a Letter of No Impediment (LONI) in respect of protected species licence for badgers could be provided with the DCO application (subject to updates to reflect the Order Limits at submission). It is anticipated that a LONI would be issued for bats, dormice, water voles and great crested newts once the final draft application is available to Natural England, for which its support for this approach is recorded in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.1.6).
- 1.1.19 The Applicant has worked collaboratively with the statutory environmental bodies to develop Statements of Common Ground. The large proportion of matters agreed between the parties is a reflection of the detailed technical discussions that have taken place and will continue to take place as the Project progresses.

Community groups and parish councils

- 1.1.20 Engagement with this cohort tended to focus on the localised impacts of the Project. As these stakeholders often have limited experience working with Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) promoters, engagement was shaped in a way that reflected their specific needs. Public campaigns were also employed as measures to reach out to the community on matters of wider interest such as routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders (WCH).
- 1.1.21 Engagement with those bodies has influenced the controls proposed within a number of documents that form part of the application, such as the Design Principles (Application Document 7.5) and the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14).
- 1.1.22 A number of the parish councils, as well as the Thames Chase Trust, have entered into Statements of Common Ground with the Applicant. The issues log process has aided the development of these documents with further correspondence to frame the matters within the draft Statements of Common Ground and to assign a status to each of the issues.
- 1.1.23 The Applicant is keen to continue engagement and information sharing, and maintain relationships with stakeholders once the Project is under construction, and will produce Engagement and Communications Plans (with its Contractors) that will inform stakeholders of construction activities and detail how any communication-specific commitments within the DCO will be discharged.
- 1.1.24 The Engagement and Communications Plans will provide a detailed programme of community engagement, setting out how relevant planning authorities, communities, stakeholders and affected parties will be engaged with throughout the construction period.

Statutory undertakers and asset owners

- 1.1.25 The Applicant has engaged with statutory undertakers and asset owners throughout the development of the design, principally in relation to the impacts of the Project on their assets and any diversions, protections, stopping up of, or new connections to their networks that would be required to facilitate the construction and operation of the Project. The Applicant has also engaged with statutory undertakers such as the emergency services, Royal Mail and the Health and Safety Executive, whose operations could be impacted by the construction and operation of the Project.
- 1.1.26 The design of utilities has been ongoing through the pre-application period and design development has reflected these discussions as they matured. The designs presented at the various consultations clearly demonstrate the extensive collaboration between the parties to ensure that diversions to assets can occur without prejudicing one another and that the controls proposed within the application reflect the requirements of the statutory undertakers and asset owners, such as easements and no-work zones.

Business and industry

- 1.1.27 The Applicant has met with a wide variety of businesses and industry groups to discuss the benefits and opportunities of the Project and to understand concerns that those groups may have.
- 1.1.28 A number of businesses and industry groups with whom the Applicant has actively engaged have provided letters which set out their support for the Project. These letters can be found in Appendix A to the Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1).

Land and property

- 1.1.29 The Applicant has met regularly with landowners impacted by the Project to discuss the implications of the Project on their land and opportunities to enhance the design to reduce adverse impacts.
- 1.1.30 The Applicant has sought to enter into negotiations to acquire third-parties' interests voluntarily where expressions of interest have been received. In cases where there are no active negotiations, the Applicant has written to those with relevant interests outlining its willingness to secure voluntary agreements where practicable.
- 1.1.31 At the time of writing, it has not been possible to secure all of the land and rights required for the Project by agreement. Compulsory acquisition guidance acknowledges that where proposals would entail the compulsory acquisition of many separate plots of land (such as for long, linear projects) it may not always be practicable to acquire by agreement each plot of land. Where this is the case, it is reasonable to include provision authorising compulsory acquisition covering all the land required at the outset. The current position on these negotiations is set out in Annex B of the Statement of Reasons (Application Document 4.1).

Neighbouring projects

- 1.1.32 The Applicant has proactively identified proposed developments within proximity to the Project since the Preferred Route Announcement in 2017 so that bespoke engagement plans could be developed and outcomes fed back into the design process for the Project. Engagement with the promoters of nearby projects has positively shaped the Project and supported coordination on design, consenting and delivery issues, maximising the growth potential of the Lower Thames area and beyond.
- 1.1.33 Public consultations have provided the promoters of neighbouring projects with the opportunity to provide feedback on the Project. The Applicant has had regard to comments received and, where necessary, has undertaken further engagement with promoters to focus on specific matters of interest, which has in some cases facilitated a resolution of potential areas of conflict, such as the design changes implemented at Tilbury Fields to accommodate the proposed Thames Freeport.
- 1.1.34 Proactive engagement with the promoters of neighbouring projects has allowed the Applicant to identify, appraise and, where relevant, develop changes to the Project's design where appropriate.

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of the Statement of Engagement

- 2.1.1 The Applicant (National Highways) has submitted an application under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 for an order to grant development consent for the A122 Lower Thames Crossing ('the Project').
- 2.1.2 The Applicant has undertaken extensive engagement with stakeholders throughout the pre-application stage of the Project. Ongoing engagement has helped stakeholders shape the Project and has facilitated continuous improvement to its design. This engagement has also been of significant benefit to the Applicant, as it has provided a deeper understanding of local issues and enabled information to be gathered to support decision making.
- 2.1.3 This document sets out the detailed engagement process that the Applicant set up and implemented in order to make most effective use of the pre-application period, and to develop the best possible application for development consent. In doing this, it has set a strong foundation for ongoing engagement throughout the pre-examination and examination periods, and beyond (when strong lines of communication are essential to implement the Project).
- 2.1.4 The Applicant's continuous engagement programme has run in parallel with, and has been complementary to, its formal public consultations. There is a distinction to be drawn between engagement and consultation, which is that:
- a. engagement captures the ongoing discussions between the Applicant and stakeholders, outside formal public consultations, across a range of matters, which is the focus of this document. The output of engagement is a project that has been consulted on iteratively and developed to the point that (at submission) it reflects a balance of project needs and stakeholder requests, as set out in further detail within the Statements of Common Ground;
 - b. consultation captures the periods of formal public consultations, which have been held since 2018 and have provided the opportunity for anyone to feed back on the proposals set out in those consultations.
- 2.1.5 Engagement is distinct from consultation. The latter is an opportunity to present the Project's iterative changes, effects and mitigation to the public, in order for the public to formally comment. The former is not limited to consultation periods, is specifically targeted at stakeholders by location or topic area, and enables detailed, technical conversations that then inform consultation and application materials. Consultation provides the opportunity to present the Project's development which has been informed by engagement.

2.1.6 This Statement of Engagement and the Consultation Report (which sets out how the Applicant has had regard to matters raised through the formal consultation channels) are part of a suite of documents which make up the application for development consent. A full description of all the DCO Application Documents is provided in the Introduction to the Application (Application Document 1.3).

2.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 2.2.1 The Statements of Common Ground are living documents produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties and where agreement has not (yet) been reached. Statements of Common Ground are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific matters that may need to be addressed during the examination.
- 2.2.2 The Applicant has sought to jointly prepare a number of Statements of Common Ground with stakeholders, where those stakeholders have indicated that they would like to enter into a Statement of Common Ground. These Statements of Common Ground are detailed in the cohort sections of this document.
- 2.2.3 This Statement of Engagement does not set out to replicate or detail all the matters of discussion between the various parties; the Statements of Common Ground are the primary source for understanding the issues and how the Applicant has responded to concerns. Instead, the Statement of Engagement describes the approach to engagement undertaken in order to reach common ground with parties.
- 2.2.4 The tables within each cohort section of this document provide the status of each of the Statements of Common Ground which is summarised by one of the following:
- a. **Agreed** – the final version of the Statement of Common Ground has been signed by both parties and there are no matters outstanding.
 - b. **Draft agreed** – a draft Statement of Common Ground with matters outstanding which has been signed by the stakeholder to confirm it is an accurate description of the matters raised and the current status of each matter but there remain matters outstanding which are yet to be agreed, and engagement continues on these. In most cases, the matters outstanding have clear, defined actions to resolve.
 - c. **Draft** – a draft Statement of Common Ground with matters outstanding and is unsigned. The draft Statement of Common Ground has been drafted by the Applicant but the stakeholder has not yet been able to complete their review in line with their governance process. The Applicant considers that these Statements of Common Ground present an accurate description of the matters raised and the status of each matter, based on the engagement that has taken place to date

- 2.2.5 The Statements of Common Ground can be found in Application Document 5.4 and will be updated as discussions continue throughout the pre-examination and examination phases.

2.3 Structure of this document

2.3.1 This document comprises 10 further sections as described below:

- a. Section 3 describes the objectives of stakeholder engagement, the overall approach to delivering engagement and how this was shaped by the Planning Act 2008 and relevant guidance.
- b. Section 4 sets out how the Applicant has identified the stakeholders which it has subsequently engaged with.
- c. Sections 5 to 11 explain the general methodology and approach to stakeholder engagement for each cohort, including:
 - i. Pre-application engagement undertaken, such as the process for sharing information and how stakeholders have influenced the development of the Project
 - ii. Development of the Statements of Common Ground and the current status of these documents
 - iii. The proposed approach to stakeholder engagement after the submission of the DCO application and how stakeholders can continue to be involved in shaping the Project.
- d. Section 12 provides a summary of pre-application engagement and the Applicant's intentions for stakeholder engagement as the Project progresses.

2.3.2 The following two appendices form part of this document:

- a. Appendix A – Working Groups, which sets out the various working groups that have been set up to seek stakeholder feedback on proposals during the pre-application period, as well as the working groups proposed to be set up following the submission of the DCO application.
- b. Appendix B – Local Authority Engagement, which sets out further details of engagement with the main host local authorities.

2.4 Other relevant documents

- 2.4.1 This Statement of Engagement does not set out to repeat information that can be found elsewhere in the application; further information on related topics can be found in the following documents:
- a. Consents and Agreements Position Statement (Application Document 3.3) which outlines the Applicant's strategy for securing consents and associated agreements required to implement the Project.
 - b. Statement of Reasons (Application Document 4.1) which sets out the compelling case in the public interest which would justify the Applicant's exercise of powers of compulsory acquisition in order to acquire land and rights permanently and to use land temporarily to enable it to construct, operate and maintain the Project.
 - c. The Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1) which sets out the feedback received from public consultations and how the Applicant has had regard to matters raised through the formal consultation channels. It also sets out the focus and purpose of each phase of pre-application consultation and summarises the methods that were used to undertake them.
 - d. The Statement of Commonality (Application Document 5.3) which identifies the issues which have been commonly raised by stakeholders, with the primary purpose to guide the Examining Authority on matters that are either not agreed or remain under discussion at the point of application.
 - e. Statements of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4) which provide a record of matters which are agreed, not agreed and under discussion between the Applicant and the stakeholders at each point in time.
 - f. The Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1) which sets out the need case for the Project. It demonstrates that there is a clear and compelling need to address the long-standing traffic problems at the Dartford Crossing, as well as an opportunity to boost local and regional economic growth. It sets out the Scheme Objectives and how the Project meets them. Appendix A of the Need for the Project includes the letters of support provided by a number of businesses that the Applicant has engaged with.
 - g. The Interrelationship with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Major Development Schemes document (Application Document 7.17) which describes how the Applicant has worked with third-party project promoters and stakeholders to control project interfaces, where feasible, and to avoid prejudicing the successful delivery of other projects.

- h. The Benefits and Outcomes document (Application Document 7.20) which provides signposting to where the Project's benefits are described within the DCO application and outlines the wider benefits that sit outside of the DCO application and control documents. The document outlines proposals that have been secured or are under agreement, that will provide substantial benefits to the local community, the general public, the environment and the national economy.
- i. The Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21) which provides a list of construction, design and operational commitments given to stakeholders that are secured by the draft Development Consent Order (draft DCO) (Application Document 3.1) and are not included in other documents or agreements such as side agreements (agreed with specific stakeholders outside of the draft DCO), or are not otherwise provided for through the control documents set out in the draft DCO, such as the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments and the outline management plans. The intention of the document is to reduce the need for separate legal agreements by providing a mechanism to give legally secured commitments to stakeholders, thereby avoiding potentially time-consuming and costly negotiations, allowing resources to be allocated to examination matters instead.

3 Overview of stakeholder engagement

3.1 Objectives of stakeholder engagement

- 3.1.1 Meaningful engagement has been a critical part of the development of the Project. The Applicant recognises that there is a myriad of stakeholders interested in the Project and has sought to communicate and build relationships as much as possible, whether the stakeholders are supportive of the Project or not.
- 3.1.2 The Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the Pre-Application Process (paragraph 29) (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015) sets out that early engagement outside the consultation process allows for stakeholders and members of the public to provide input and can help avoid unnecessary delays and cost in making changes at later stages in the process. This early engagement has been essential to the Project and allowed for input during the early development of the preliminary design for the Project's statutory consultation and subsequent non-statutory consultations.
- 3.1.3 In response to the observations of the Planning Inspectorate in its Section 51 Advice Note and the concerns raised by some local authorities, the Applicant decided to withdraw its application for development consent in November 2020 and to strengthen its engagement with stakeholders. A summary of feedback on the Applicant's approach to engagement, as at November 2020, is set out in Section 5, together with an explanation of how the Applicant has adjusted its approach in response.
- 3.1.4 The Applicant also recognises that stakeholder engagement is an ongoing and iterative process that does not stop at the end of the pre-application phase or once development consent has been granted. There will be further opportunities for stakeholders to influence the Project as it progresses through its lifecycle. These opportunities are detailed in each cohort section of this document as well as Appendix A, which sets out the various working groups that are proposed to be set up as part of the next stages in the development of the Project.

3.2 Approach to pre-application stakeholder engagement

- 3.2.1 In line with the underlying principles of the Planning Act 2008, the Applicant has sought to share information in advance of the submission of the DCO application to assist with the closing out of matters, but inevitably there are a number of matters which are not currently agreed and these are documented within the relevant Statements of Common Ground. The DCO examination process provides a forum for parties to set out their respective positions and for the Examining Authority to ask questions of the parties in relation to those matters.

- 3.2.2 Understandably, some stakeholders have caveated that any agreement documented in the Statements of Common Ground is conditional upon a review of the submitted Application Documents. Therefore, in a number of cases, issues are indicated to be resolved by those stakeholders upon a review of the Application Documents.
- 3.2.3 The Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the Pre-Application Process (paragraph 115) (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015), accepts that *'applicants and consultees will not always agree about whether or how particular impacts should be mitigated'*. The Applicant has sought to provide an explanation of its position on all issues and to work towards finding common ground with stakeholders without engaging in unduly protracted discussions in relation to matters where there are fundamental differences between the parties, as this limits time to resolve other matters where an agreed position could feasibly be reached. The Applicant considers that the approach to sharing information and resolving matters prior to submission of the DCO application has been reasonable and proportionate.
- 3.2.4 During the pre-application phase, discussions have tended to relate to:
- a. Points of clarification
 - b. Areas of challenge or change relating to assessments and mitigation
 - c. Sharing of information and knowledge
 - d. Requests for additional mitigation, compensation and benefits
- 3.2.5 The Applicant recognises that stakeholder engagement involves negotiation, and it is appreciated that major infrastructure projects present opportunities for resolving existing challenges in the local area and leaving a positive legacy. However, as a publicly funded project, there are many factors that need to be considered and balanced when making such decisions, including the following:
- a. Whether the requested proposal sufficiently mitigates an actual impact identified in the Environmental Statement (ES) and whether it is proportionate to the impact identified. There have been a number of requests for changes that do not respond or correlate to identified effects in the ES or are proposed to mitigate pre-existing issues that are not connected to the Project. The Applicant has engaged with stakeholders on the approach to assessment and mitigation and where these requests do not meet these tests, the Applicant has been clear in its engagement with the stakeholder.
 - b. Whether there is policy that supports the proposal and if the matter is a material planning consideration, or if the request is contrary to government policy and guidance or, in the case of section 106 agreements, whether the obligation sufficiently meets the legal and planning tests.

- c. The views of other stakeholders, including those with statutory duties that could be impacted, as the Applicant has sought to ensure that decisions made do not prejudice another stakeholder from fulfilling its statutory obligations or generating onerous secondary consent obligations.
- d. Whether the Applicant has the ability to implement such requests, or whether the responsibility for resolving a matter actually sits with another body.
- e. If more appropriate avenues exist such as the Applicant's designated funds programme which works in partnership with stakeholders to promote legacy projects, more details of which can be found in the Benefits and Outcomes document (Application Document 7.20).

3.2.6 Where the Applicant has taken the view that a suggestion or request is not in alignment with one or more of the factors above, justification has been provided in the respective Statements of Common Ground and in the Application Documents (where relevant). Further details of how the Applicant has appropriately considered individual requests from stakeholders is outlined in the cohort sections of this document.

3.2.7 As explained throughout this Statement of Engagement, the pre-application process is not the only way in which stakeholders can further influence the Project on these matters going forward. Opportunities for further engagement have been provided for within the framework of the DCO application and are set out in each cohort section throughout this document.

4 Identification of stakeholders

- 4.1.1 This section sets out how stakeholders relevant to the Project were identified for engagement. The Applicant has worked to ensure that all relevant individuals and organisations were engaged with in a manner that is proportionate to their interests, roles and responsibilities.
- 4.1.2 Technical engagement has targeted the following groups:
- a. Statutory consultees under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008
 - b. Those that are likely to be most impacted by the Project, to the extent they are not statutory consultees.
- 4.1.3 A complete list of statutory consultees that the Applicant has consulted in accordance with section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 is set out in Appendix H of the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).
- 4.1.4 Stakeholder cohorts have been set up in order to develop tailored engagement strategies that respond to the interests, responsibilities and nature (e.g. statutory/regulatory status, spatial area, commercial interests). These cohorts are summarised below:
- a. Local authorities and transport bodies
 - b. Statutory environmental bodies
 - c. Communities and parish councils
 - d. Statutory undertakers and asset owners
 - e. Business and industry
 - f. Land and property
 - g. Neighbouring projects
- 4.1.5 The following sections outline how stakeholders were identified within each cohort.

4.2 Local authorities and transport bodies

- 4.2.1 The Applicant has engaged with the host and neighbouring authorities, as defined by section 43 of the Planning Act 2008. In some instances, engagement has also taken place with local authorities who are not formally statutory consultees within the meaning of that section.
- 4.2.2 Local authorities are identified as a statutory consultee where a NSIP is either in or adjacent to their area, as set out in sections 42 and 43 of the Planning Act 2008. These local authorities have a key role to play within the pre-application process, including providing local insight and perspective on the Project as it develops. The host authorities engaged with are identified as 'B' and 'C' authorities in section 43 of the Planning Act 2008.

- 4.2.3 Transport bodies are defined as local government bodies responsible for aspects of the transport system – in this case the only transport body is Transport for London. For the purposes of this document, references to the local authorities includes Transport for London.
- 4.2.4 Plate 4.1 and Plate 4.2 identify the local authorities in line with section 43 of the Planning Act 2008. They are also set out in Table 4.1 alongside other local authorities engaged with, that do not meet the criteria in section 4.2.

Plate 4.1 Section 43 A & B local authorities

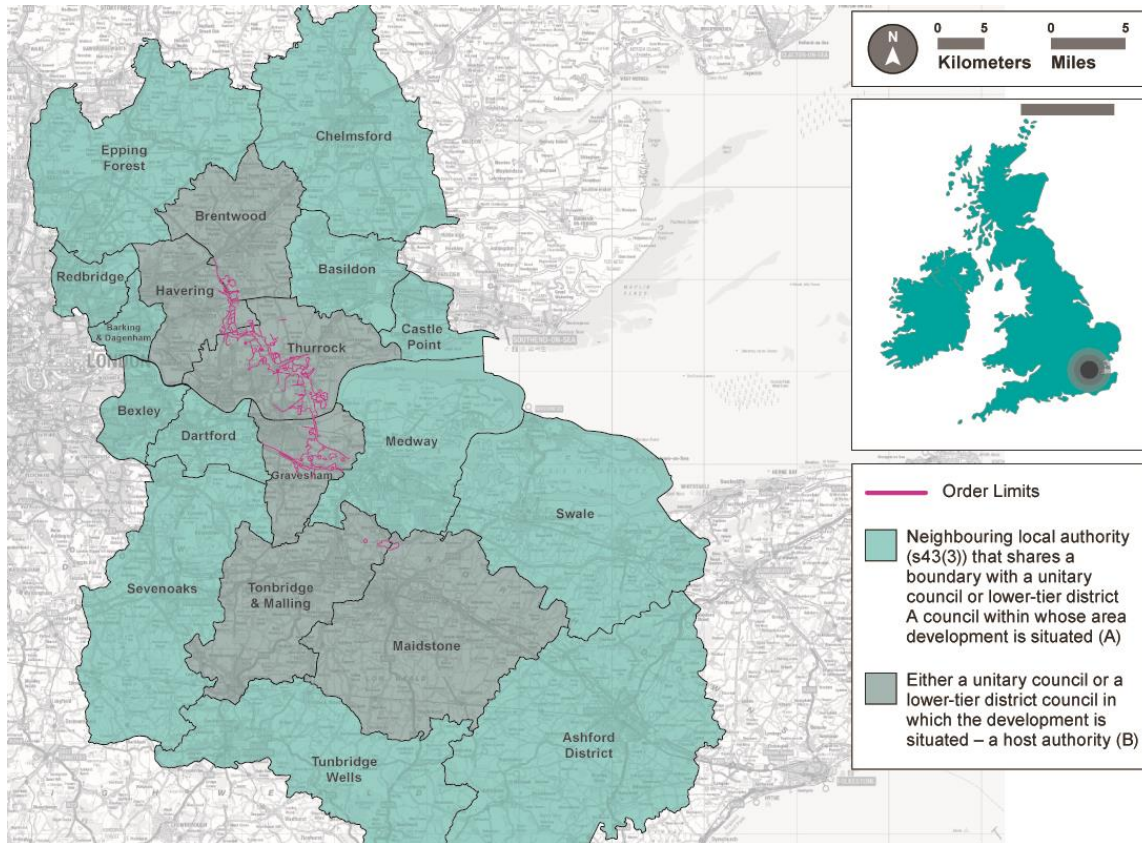


Plate 4.2 Section 43 C & D local authorities

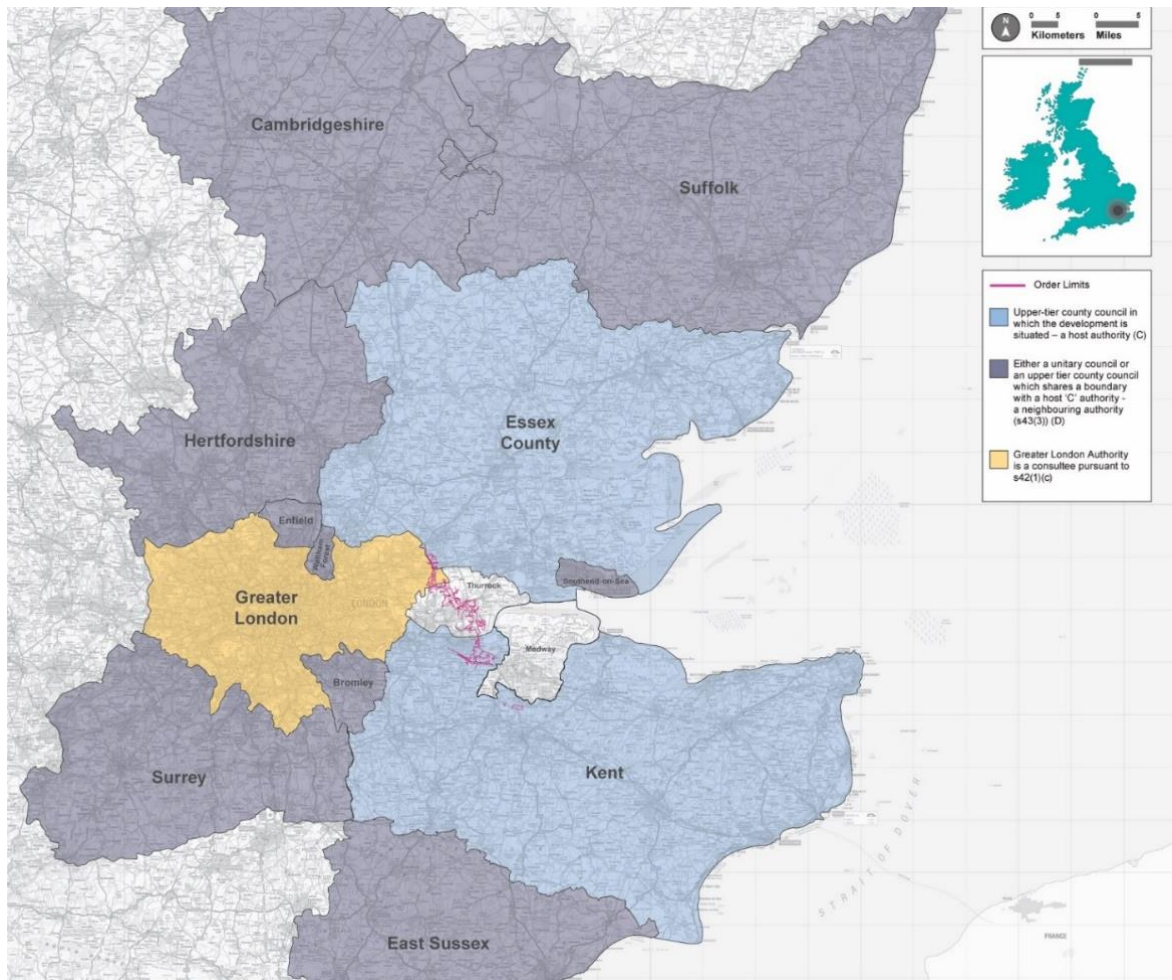


Table 4.1 List of local authorities consulted with by the Applicant

Host local authorities	Neighbouring local authorities	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brentwood Borough Council • Essex County Council • Gravesham Borough Council • Greater London Authority (includes Transport for London) pursuant to section 42(1)(c). • Kent County Council • London Borough of Havering • Maidstone Borough Council • Thurrock Council • Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford District Council • Basildon Council • Cambridgeshire County Council • Castle Point Borough Council • Chelmsford District Council • Dartford Borough Council • East Sussex County Council • Epping Forest District Council • Hertfordshire County Council • London Borough of Barking and Dagenham • London Borough of Bexley • London Borough of Bromley • London Borough of Enfield • London Borough of Redbridge • London Borough of Waltham Forest • Medway Council (includes North Kent Marshes Internal Drainage Board) • Sevenoaks District Council • Southend-on-Sea City Council • Suffolk County Council • Surrey County Council • Swale Borough Council • Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Braintree District Council • Canterbury City Council • Colchester Borough Council • Dover District Council • East Sussex County Council • Folkestone and Hythe District Council • Harlow Council • Maldon District Council • Rochford District Council • Tendring District Council • Uttlesford District Council

4.2.5 As the Project has evolved and the Order Limits have changed, the number of host authorities increased to include Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council, and the approach to engagement was revisited to ensure that new host authorities were able to access the necessary information from the Applicant relevant to the potential impacts (outside of the forum of the public consultations). Local authorities further from the Project were also provided with opportunities to engage on technical matters when interest was expressed (e.g. Dover District Council).

4.3 Statutory environmental bodies

- 4.3.1 Statutory environmental bodies in the context of the application are considered to be those which have a statutory purpose or regulatory function related to the environment (for example, the power to issue permits, consents and licences). These environmental bodies are statutory consultees pursuant to section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.
- 4.3.2 In identifying the relevant environmental bodies to engage with, the Applicant has considered the environmental impacts that may arise, statutory functions that may be impacted through the disapplication or modification of provisions within the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1), future consents or licences that may be required, as well as guidance set out within Advice Note 11 Working with Public Bodies (Planning Inspectorate, 2017), which sets out expectations for working with such organisations.
- 4.3.3 As the Project requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be undertaken to inform the application for development consent, there are additional consultation requirements set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The way the Applicant has complied with these regulations is set out in Chapter 10 of the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).
- 4.3.4 In consideration of the above, the statutory environmental bodies that the Applicant has engaged with comprise:
- a. Environment Agency
 - b. Forestry Commission
 - c. Historic England
 - d. Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit
 - e. Marine Management Organisation
 - f. Natural England
 - g. Port of London Authority
- 4.3.5 Engagement has also taken place with non-statutory environmental interest groups such as BugLife, Woodland Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and Shorne Woods Country Park, to garner feedback on matters pertaining to their particular interests.

4.4 Community groups and parish councils

- 4.4.1 The identification of community groups and parish councils began prior to the Preferred Route Announcement (2017) through identifying groups likely to be impacted by the Project, outreach activities and community events. This was supplemented by reviewing responses to the formal consultations to identify additional groups.

- 4.4.2 The Applicant developed a strategy for engaging effectively with hard-to-reach groups, which include older people, those with disabilities, those who may not be able to read, and those for whose first language is not English. This informed how the Applicant approached its formal consultations, as well as technical engagement. Further details are outlined in the Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (Application Document 7.10).
- 4.4.3 The following is a non-exhaustive list of groups within the local community that the Applicant has engaged with:
- a. Operators of community assets such as Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre, Wild Thyme Outdoors, Whitecroft Care Home, Sugarloaf Riding School for the Disabled.
 - b. Community interest groups such as Thames Crossing Action Group.
 - c. Forestry England, a subsidiary of the Forestry Commission, responsible for the management of community woodland areas within the Order Limits.
 - d. Local schools, including those located outside the Order Limits which may experience changes in forecast traffic movements during the construction of the Project.
 - e. Thames Chase Trust which manages the Thames Chase Community Forest.
 - f. Traveller and gypsy communities in relation to the Gammonfields Way travellers' site located to the west of Baker Street in Thurrock, as well as a number of private travellers' sites in Gravesham, Thurrock and Havering.
- 4.4.4 More detail on the community groups consulted can be found in the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).
- 4.4.5 Parish councils are prescribed consultees under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008. There are five parish councils within the Order Limits of which Shorne Parish Council, Cobham Parish Council and Higham Parish Council have entered into technical engagement outside the formal consultation process. Aylesford Parish Council and Boxley Parish Council have been identified as section 42 consultees following the inclusion of nitrogen deposition compensation sites in 2022.

4.5 Statutory undertakers and asset owners

- 4.5.1 The Applicant has engaged with statutory undertakers and asset owners outside the formal consultation process where their assets are directly impacted or where the Project may alter the way in which a statutory undertaker or asset owner operates during the construction and/or operation of the Project. The full list of statutory undertakers consulted under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 is set out in Appendix H of the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1). A full list of asset owners impacted by the Project can be found in the Book of Reference (Application Document 4.2).

- 4.5.2 To facilitate the construction of the Project, utilities and other assets are required to be diverted, protected or removed. These impacted statutory undertakers and asset owners include the following:
- a. Airwave Solutions Limited
 - b. Anglian Water (AWG Group)
 - c. Barking Power Limited
 - d. Cadent Gas Limited
 - e. Cellnex UK
 - f. Essex and Suffolk Water
 - g. euNetworks Fiber UK
 - h. EXA Infrastructure (previously known as GTT)
 - i. HS1 Limited
 - j. Lumen Technologies UK
 - k. National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)
 - l. National Grid Gas (NGG)
 - m. Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
 - n. NextGen Access Limited
 - o. Openreach Limited (including providers such as British Telecommunications)
 - p. Southern Gas Network (SGN)
 - q. Southern Water Limited
 - r. Thames Water Limited
 - s. Thurrock Power Limited
 - t. UK Power Networks
 - u. Verizon UK Limited (also known as Edgecast Networks)
 - v. Virgin Media Limited
 - w. Vodafone Limited
 - x. Zayo Group UK Limited
- 4.5.3 Additionally, there are a number of other organisations whose operations may be impacted by the construction and/or operation of the Project. These include:
- a. Emergency Services
 - b. Health and Safety Executive
 - c. Royal Mail
- 4.5.4 This list excludes statutory undertakers already referenced in other cohorts (e.g. the Environment Agency).

4.6 Business and industry

- 4.6.1 There is no prescriptive guidance on engagement with businesses or industry groups unless they have section 42(1)(d) land interests under the Planning Act 2008. Due to the transformational nature of the Project and its widespread impacts, the Applicant has engaged with many businesses and industry groups to capture views and concerns about the Project, as well as to communicate the benefits of the Project to local businesses during construction and once it is operational.
- 4.6.2 This includes local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in addition to large scale businesses. Engagement with collectives such as the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership helped identify local businesses that could benefit from engagement with the Applicant in relation to the Project.
- 4.6.3 Examples of businesses and industry groups engaged with include Thames Estuary Growth Board, Port of Dover, Logistics UK, the Essex and Kent Chambers of Commerce, and DP World London Gateway.

4.7 Land and property

- 4.7.1 The Applicant has carried out diligent inquiry to identify all persons with an interest in land within the Order Limits and persons with a potential claim for compensation as a result of the Project.
- 4.7.2 There are 4,204 plots of land required for the Project as illustrated on the Land Plans (Application Document 2.2). Of these:
- a. 723 plots are owned by or on behalf of the Applicant
 - b. 1,218 plots are owned by landowners (excluding local authorities) with whom the Applicant is in regular contact either directly or via their agent
 - c. 1,817 plots are owned by local authorities with whom the Applicant engages on a regular basis
- 4.7.3 In total these, 3,758 plots represent 90% of the land (by area) within the Order Limits.
- 4.7.4 The Applicant is in active discussions with a number of landowners with larger/multiple land holdings to agree Statements of Common Ground (these are not currently submitted as part of the DCO application). These would cover approximately 50% of the land (by area) within the Order Limits. The Applicant is actively seeking to progress negotiations to acquire the interests required over land by voluntary agreement. For further information on the current status of these negotiations please refer to the Schedule of Negotiations in Annex B of the Statement of Reasons (Application Document 4.1).

4.8 Neighbouring projects

- 4.8.1 The Applicant engages with the promoters of development proposals as part of its function as statutory authority responsible for the strategic road network (SRN). The Applicant is notified by local authorities where proposed developments:
- a. are likely to result in an adverse impact on the safety of, or queuing, on the SRN
 - b. are likely to prejudice the improvement or construction of the SRN
 - c. consist of or include the construction, formation or layout of access to or from the SRN.
- 4.8.2 The Applicant has followed the notification of development procedure, as prescribed under National Highways TR111 Guidance (National Highways, 2016), to ensure planning applications that are likely to prejudice the construction and operation of the Project are referred to it for comment before determination by the local planning authority. This has enabled the Applicant to identify a number of neighbouring projects, engage with the promoters of those project and comment on any planning applications being progressed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 4.8.3 This process, in combination with the identification of NSIPs and major development schemes in proximity to the Project, as detailed in the Interrelationship with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Major Development Schemes (Application 7.17), has supported engagement with promoters of the following neighbouring projects as part of the pre-application process:
- a. Brentwood Enterprise Park
 - b. DP World London Gateway
 - c. East Anglia GREEN
 - d. Hole Farm Community Woodland
 - e. M25 junction 28
 - f. Port of Tilbury Thames Freeport tax site
 - g. The London Resort
 - h. Tilbury2
 - i. Tilbury Link Road
 - j. Thurrock Flexible Generation Plant
- 4.8.4 A description of these projects, their relationship to the Project and how interfaces with the Project have been managed, where relevant, is outlined in the Interrelationship with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Major Development Schemes (Application Document 7.17).

- 4.8.5 In some cases, where the promoter is also a statutory consultee (e.g. NGET), further details of how the Applicant has engaged with them can be found in another cohort section of this document (e.g. under the statutory undertakers and asset owners cohort) and in the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).
- 4.8.6 The Applicant will continue to monitor other developments coming forward in proximity to the Project and engage with third-party project promoters following the submission of the DCO application. More information about ongoing engagement with the promoters of neighbouring projects is provided in Section 11 of this document.

5 Local authorities and transport bodies

5.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 5.1.1 The Applicant established relationships with the host local authorities from the handover of the Project by the Department for Transport in 2014. The local authorities were invited to participate in meetings that would assist the development of the Project including the Stakeholder Advisory Panel (see Appendix A for further details). Individual meetings were also set up to discuss specific route options as the detailed long-list was developed prior to the Preferred Route Announcement by the Secretary of State in 2017.
- 5.1.2 Following the conclusion of the route options stage, technical engagement with the local authorities increased and became more regular in preparation of the preliminary design and the Project's statutory consultation. This included meetings to discuss the Applicant's proposed approach to undertaking the EIA (including surveys and methodologies).
- 5.1.3 The Applicant recognises that the Project is a large and complex project raising significant planning, environmental and socio-economic challenges and opportunities. Planning Performance Agreements were entered into with local authorities most impacted by the Project to enable local authorities to assess the issues arising and to ensure that resourcing was made available within each organisation to provide timely input to the process.
- 5.1.4 Up to the point of resubmission, this has provided local authorities with an opportunity to seek reimbursement for certain activities to help inform and develop their understanding of the impacts in their local authority area. One of the objectives underpinning these agreements includes working collaboratively to ensure timely delivery of agreed work packages. These have been updated and extended where required.
- 5.1.5 Information was shared with local authorities in parallel with the formal consultations. This included traffic modelling and draft copies of a number of Application Documents as they were being developed to assist the local authorities to understand the impacts of the Project in their respective boroughs. A more detailed list demonstrating the extent of technical information shared with local authorities is set out in Appendix C of each of the Statements of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4).
- 5.1.6 Regular political meetings were also set up with the local authorities to keep the relevant councillors updated with progress and of matters of concern. Many local authorities require responses to consultations and Statements of Common Ground to be governed by councillors, so it was important to ensure that officers and members were regularly updated in a transparent manner.

- 5.1.7 In order to document and respond to the comments received as part of the public consultations and technical engagement activities, ‘issues logs’ were produced for the each of the local authorities that had indicated they would like to enter into a Statement of Common Ground with the Applicant.
- 5.1.8 The intent of these issues logs was to:
- a. maintain a record of feedback provided as part of the consultations and technical engagement activities as well as the Applicant’s position in relation to those matters
 - b. identify key issues to focus engagement (earlier iterations of the issues logs used a red/amber/green rating to prioritise core areas of concern raised by a local authority)
 - c. form the basis of the Statements of Common Ground with technical specialists providing responses to the matters raised.
- 5.1.9 These issues logs have a different format to those used for the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1) which set out how responses to the public consultations were taken into consideration. Both processes have been carried out in close collaboration, involving the same members of the Project team.
- 5.1.10 Since the previous DCO application was withdrawn in November 2020, the Applicant took the opportunity to review its approach to engagement with the local authorities, taking into account feedback from the Planning Inspectorate and local authorities through their Adequacy of Consultation representations. The key themes of the feedback relevant to engagement were as follows:
- a. There was a significant and growing list of unresolved issues at the time of the first submission.
 - b. It was unclear how and whether some issues had been adequately responded to or resolved.
 - c. There was a lack of clarity, signposting or specificity as to where such answers could be accounted for within the DCO documentation.
 - d. There was considered to have been insufficient progress in technical matters that were a priority to the local authorities.
 - e. There was considered to have been some uncertainty as to how mitigation and other measures were to be secured.

- 5.1.11 The Applicant listened to this feedback, revised its approach to managing the issues logs and implemented a system that robustly closed the engagement feedback loop with the local authorities. This involved the following:
- a. A detailed ‘stocktake’ review of every issue on the issues logs, irrespective of age or status. This entailed a review of over 6,000 individual issues.
 - b. The categorisation of each issue from the issues log, into groups so that they could be addressed in the most appropriate way by both the Applicant and the stakeholder:
 - i. Group 1 – issues that required no further action or discussion through engagement, because they have either been superseded, are statements requiring no action, are matters that have been agreed, or are duplicated matters.
 - ii. Group 2 – issues that required a small to moderate amount of work to address, such as matters that required an updated position from the Applicant, or issues that warranted further information or clarification.
 - iii. Group 3 – issues that were material, such as complex requests or changes to the Project, which required considerable technical engagement to respond to or resolve.
 - c. A briefing with local authorities in September 2021 on the suggested approach to dealing with these groups of issues. This was followed by a process of agreeing a collaborative approach with each stakeholder, to managing the different groups of issues, and agreeing which group each issue belongs to.
 - d. Meetings with each local authority with the aim to close out as many issues as possible in order to focus on the more complex matters under discussion. These occurred in the second half of 2021 and first part of 2022. Their extent and more details can be found in the list of meetings set out in Appendix C of each Statement of Common Ground.
 - e. Detailed issues-based meetings focused on the material matters still under discussion. These have predominantly happened in 2022 after the refined issues logs had been shared with the local authorities.
 - f. Thematic or topic-specific meetings bringing together groups of stakeholders to discuss matters in a forum such as the Community Impacts and Public Health Advisory Group (CIPHAG) (See Appendix A for further details).
 - g. The drafting and structuring of material issues within Statements of Common Ground.
 - h. Establishment of the principle of an ongoing engagement programme leading up to submission and beyond.

- 5.1.12 The categorisation of issues set out in (b) above was driven by the following principles:
- a. Engagement should be focused on discussing and resolving matters that are material (i.e. Group 3) because it is those matters that are likely to be the focus of discussions at the examination.
 - b. The Examining Authority is likely to find it useful to be able to distinguish between matters agreed, not agreed and still under discussion.
 - c. That matters need to be addressed and resolved through a robust, transparent process which stakeholders understand and agree with.
- 5.1.13 In summary, the engagement activities set out above have sought to address the feedback received at the point of withdrawal of the previous DCO application in November 2020. This process for identifying and closing issues has been shared with the local authorities and has been matched with an internal process to ensure that each issue has been reviewed, considered and responded to appropriately by the relevant technical specialists. Engagement is an ongoing process and there will continue to be additional issues that are raised that require a response.
- 5.1.14 Over 6,100 issues were raised by the local authorities and were broadly split as:
- a. Group 3 – c.1,500 issues
 - b. Group 2 – c.2,800 issues
 - c. Group 1 – c.1,800 issues
- 5.1.15 The Applicant shared responses with local authorities to the Group 2 and 3 issues throughout 2022 and gave those authorities an opportunity to reclassify issues to ensure they reflected the stakeholders' priorities. Where new issues were raised (such as in response to the Local Refinement Consultation), these were also triaged and added to the issues logs to be considered and responded to by the Project team.
- 5.1.16 For those local authorities which had large numbers of issues, responses were shared on a fortnightly or monthly basis. In the case of the local authorities with fewer issues, the responses were shared less frequently and on average these were shared every two months.

Sharing of information

- 5.1.17 To aid the understanding of the Project and its potential effects, the Applicant has shared extensive amounts of information with local authorities. The following list of documents and information (shared prior to the withdrawal of the previous DCO application) is not exhaustive but demonstrates the scale and breadth of information shared during the earlier stages of the pre-application period:
- a. Several drafts of the Code of Construction Practice and Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments were shared, in December 2019, June 2020 and August 2020.
 - b. Draft chapters for twelve topics of the ES were made available in July 2020 along with a draft of the Environmental Masterplan.
 - c. A draft of the Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (HEqIA) in August 2020.
 - d. Cordons from the Lower Thames Area Model (LTAM - the Project's transport model) to further facilitate local authorities' understanding of the changes that are anticipated on the local road network. In some cases, additional modelling was provided to enable local authorities to understand more detail at specific junctions. Where required, updated cordon models of the operational and construction traffic modelling were supplied to the relevant stakeholders.
 - e. Sensitivity tests were also offered for emerging local plans where the necessary inputs can be provided by the local authority. These sensitivity tests were offered to assist local authorities with the development of their local plans rather than to identify potential changes or optimisations to the Project or local junctions.
- 5.1.18 Upon the withdrawal of the previous DCO application in November 2020, a number of the local authorities raised in their Adequacy of Consultation representations that they felt that there was insufficient information available to enable them to develop informed conclusions on the likely effects of the Project. In response, the Applicant has subsequently shared the following draft Application Documents and briefings on application content with the local authorities:
- a. The previous DCO application – all the Application Documents were shared with key stakeholders via SharePoint including the full ES and Transport Assessment, submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2020.
 - b. An updated version of Chapter 8 of the Transport Assessment was shared in February 2022 to respond to concerns around the assessment of the forecast impacts of the Project's construction on the road network within the application.

- c. Draft versions of new control documents proposed (e.g. outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction). These were made available to relevant parties for comment in February 2021 prior to workshops being held in March 2021 to discuss the feedback received.
- d. Updated control documents were shared as part of the Community Impacts Consultation in July 2021 to enable stakeholders and the public to understand how mitigation and compensation measures would be secured within the application itself. Stakeholders were invited to provide comments on the documents which were then discussed at a series of workshops and updated copies of some of the control documents were reissued to demonstrate how changes had been incorporated (e.g. outline Materials Handling Plan).
- e. An Environment Update technical note was shared in May 2022 with the local authorities to provide an update of the main changes to the ES since the withdrawal of the previous application.
- f. Briefings were also set up prior to the resubmission of the DCO application (September and October 2022) to update the local authorities on changes to the environmental assessments and mitigation proposed.

5.1.19 Where possible, additional information has been shared at the request of a stakeholder to better understand more localised impacts of the Project. Examples specific to the local authorities have been set out below to demonstrate the breadth of information shared, with more extensive lists within Appendix C of each of the Statements of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4):

- a. Detailed modelling exercises have been undertaken to assist with the understanding of traffic impacts at local junctions, including local plan growth. These have been offered to support the local authorities in developing their local plans. The majority of these runs have been for Thurrock Council and fall outside of the guidance on the approach to including development into the core scenario within the Project's transport model. The outputs provided to date are outlined in Appendix C of the Statement of Common Ground. Meetings were subsequently held on a fortnightly basis (in 2022) with Thurrock Council to discuss outputs and are ongoing as modelling continues.
- b. Responses in the form of technical notes, position papers and emails to the 'Mitigation Benefits Report' (Hatch, 2020) (also referred to as the Hatch Report), a report prepared for Thurrock Council outlining measures and benefits it is seeking to be implemented by the Applicant.
- c. A series of briefings have been undertaken prior to the DCO submission to present the findings of the EIA, focusing on impacts and mitigation, in advance of the full ES which will be made available to the authorities upon submission of the application.

- d. A technical note providing details on the site selection methodology for the nitrogen deposition compensation sites. This included details of the site selection criteria, identification of search areas, site feasibility assessment, analysis of ecological suitability, and the refinement process that led to the sites proposed as part of Local Refinement Consultation.
- e. A technical note for Medway Council to outline how growth assumptions are provided for within the core scenario of the LTAM and how these could translate to additional housing yield within Medway at various points in the future.

5.1.20 It is recognised that some of the local authorities have made requests for the outputs of the updated ES and control documents prior to the submission of the DCO application. This has not been possible due to the Application Documents still being drafted and reviewed in the weeks leading up to submission. Instead, briefings were offered to the local authorities to provide an update on changes to the environmental assessments prior to submission. This has meant that the local authorities have been apprised of changes without incomplete assessments being released which could cause confusion.

5.1.21 More detailed examples of technical engagement with the main host authorities are set out in Appendix B to this document.

Influencing the development of the Project

5.1.22 Concerns were raised in some of the Adequacy of Consultation representations in November 2020 that the Applicant had not addressed issues raised by the local authorities and it was unclear how these comments influenced the development of the Project. The Applicant has considered the points raised by local authorities through the consultation and technical engagement responses.

5.1.23 During the development of the Project, many design changes have been made. Consultation has played a key role in this, as has the direct engagement with stakeholders to shape those changes. Key changes are set out in Section G of the Project Design Report (Application Document 7.4), with further changes identified in the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1). Given the wide range of interests that a local authority has, there have been many opportunities for the local authorities to shape the Project and suggest changes. Non-exhaustive examples of changes made in response to local authorities' suggestions include:

- a. Design – various inputs to the preliminary design of the Project, including:
 - i. Relocation of the proposed car parking facility to be closer to Shorne Woods Country Park, in order to provide access and parking for users. Discussions are ongoing with Kent County Council to understand the detailed design requirements for the facility including the provision for horseboxes and kiosk/toilet facilities.

- ii. Reduction of the limits of deviation for the SGN's gas pipeline diversion (Work No. G1A) to respond to concerns raised by Kent County Council and Gravesham Borough Council on the potential impacts on ancient woodland. Further east, the pipeline has been diverted along Park Pale and down Brewers Road to retain woodland.
 - iii. The design of the proposed Tilbury Fields and Chalk Park features.
 - iv. Alterations to the design proposals at the A13/A1089/A122 Lower Thames Crossing junction and the Orsett Cock junction to improve connectivity with the A1089.
 - v. Provision of the Tilbury operational access near the North Portal.
 - vi. Inclusion of an additional WCH bridge over the A127 to the west of M25 junction 29 due to concerns raised by London Borough of Havering and Transport for London regarding connectivity.
- b. Control documents – which secure the identified mitigation and compensation:
- i. Various updates to the control documents (for example, the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction, the outline Materials Handling Plan, and Design Principles). These changes arose from feedback and workshops on the draft documents shared throughout the pre-application period and through the process of responding to the individual comments in the issues logs. Examples include the commitment to use of the River Thames for transporting construction materials, traffic monitoring during construction and providing a worker accommodation helpdesk.
 - ii. Use of section 106 agreements as a securing mechanism forming part of the DCO application. This facilitates the commitment to the Skills, Education and Employment targets, and secures the community funds and the ring-fencing of the funds by affected wards – both of which have been longstanding requests of the local authorities.
 - iii. Updated provisions within the Schedule 2 Requirements following concerns from the local authorities regarding how feedback provided as part of a local authority's consultee role would be considered and reflected in the applications made to the Secretary of State to approve the control documents. The Applicant has included a transparent process within Schedule 2 of the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1) to clarify how comments received as part of the consultation process with local authorities would be reflected within the applications made to the Secretary of State.

- c. Modelling and environmental assessments:
 - i. Review of the Uncertainty Log for the LTAM for input into committed and impending developments in each borough.
 - ii. CIPHAG workshops enabled local authorities to participate in the development of the assessments and mitigation for impacts arising in relation to public health.
 - iii. The consideration of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the ES, which led to the reduction of impacted land classified as a SINC at North Ockendon.
- d. Planning Performance Agreements:
 - i. The Applicant has agreed to enter into Planning Performance Agreements during examination to cover work which extends beyond the host authorities' statutory duties.

5.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 5.2.1 Statements of Common Ground were entered into with host local authorities as well as a number of local authorities further from the Project where interest was expressed
- 5.2.2 A fundamental part of the process to develop Statements of Common Ground was the collation, review, prioritisation and detailed technical response to 'key issues' that local authorities have raised during the pre-application period (e.g. the Group 3 issues) and to share these with them to help clarify the Applicant's position and facilitate engagement to resolve outstanding issues. These were shared through a spreadsheet as a live tracker. Then, in the months ahead of the submission, the trackers were converted into a table and the issues distilled into what are now the Statements of Common Ground.
- 5.2.3 The extent of issues within the Statements of Common Ground with the local authorities are wide ranging, and the overlap between the stakeholders can be visualised in the Statement of Commonality (Application Document 5.3).
- 5.2.4 The status of the Statements of Common Ground at the time of submission with local authorities and transport bodies, is set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Status of the Statements of Common Ground with the local authorities and transport bodies

Local authority/transport body	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
Basildon Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.1
Brentwood Borough Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.2

Local authority/transport body	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
Dartford Borough Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.3
Essex County Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.5
Gravesham Borough Council	Draft	Application Document 5.4.4.6
Kent County Council	Draft	Application Document 5.4.4.7
London Borough of Havering	Draft	Application Document 5.4.4.8
Medway Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.10
Transport for London	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.11
Thurrock Council	Draft	Application Document 5.4.4.12
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.4.13

- 5.2.5 Drafts of the Statements of Common Ground and issues logs were shared with the local authorities on multiple occasions prior to the submission of the DCO application (with the first version of the issues log being shared in November 2019 for most of the local authorities). These provided the local authorities with opportunities to reframe the way an issue was presented in the Statement of Common Ground and assign a status against each of the matters. Some local authorities responded in meetings, others in writing.
- 5.2.6 Where possible, workshops were held to run through the various matters in collaboration with each local authority.
- 5.2.7 Drafts of all of the Statements of Common Ground were shared for the last time in September 2022 to enable local authorities to undertake a final review prior to their submission.
- 5.2.8 Where a Statement of Common Ground is not signed, the Applicant has characterised these Statements of Common Ground as being the Applicant's reflection of matters agreed, not agreed or under discussion based on technical engagement during the pre-application period. This reflects pre-application advice from the Planning Inspectorate that it is helpful for applicants to clarify the status of matters at the point of submission, provided they are appropriately characterised in a transparent manner with the stakeholder.
- 5.2.9 There are a number of matters under discussion because the local authorities do not yet have access to the Application Documents. These documents will be shared with local authorities following submission.

5.3 Ongoing engagement

- 5.3.1 Engagement in the months following the submission of the DCO application will centre on the matters that remain under discussion within the Statements of Common Ground. In a number of cases, the Applicant and the local authorities have agreed to these being ‘under discussion’ as they rely on the local authorities having full access to the application materials, which can only happen after submission. As such, the Applicant is anticipating that these matters will continue to mature in advance of the examination period. The Applicant will continue to work collaboratively with the local authorities to ensure that discussions on those matters continue.
- 5.3.2 As the Statements of Common Ground are submitted, they are not final, but subject to change through the examination of the application and ongoing engagement.
- 5.3.3 Furthermore, the Applicant will be in discussion with local authorities with respect to a number of agreements, including the following:
- a. Planning Performance Agreements – where there are a substantial number of matters within the Statements of Common Ground, the Applicant is seeking to agree new Planning Performance Agreements with the local authorities to enable issues resolution to continue after the submission of the DCO application.
 - b. Section 106 agreements – the Applicant has submitted draft Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3) for section 106 agreements with the host local authorities. Discussions will continue on the substantive terms and the drafting of the agreements themselves.
 - c. Highways Agreements – discussions are ongoing with local highway authorities on the drafting of highway agreements covering matters such as the handover of assets upon their completion. These discussions will also include Detailed Local Operating Agreements or Local Operating Agreements in relation to maintenance and operational matters while the Project is being constructed.
- 5.3.4 Engagement with the local authorities would not end with the granting of development consent. Local authorities will continue to have an important role to play following any decision by the Secretary of State in relation to the DCO application. This includes the following:
- a. Roles set out within the Schedule 2 Requirements – the host local authorities will be consultees on a number of the control documents to be produced and submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State ahead of the commencement of construction works. Local highway authorities will also have a role in agreeing local junctions for monitoring as part of the development of traffic monitoring schemes. A number of control documents

also require additional engagement with the local authorities such as the Design Principles (Application Document 7.5) and Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, ES Appendix 2.2).

- b. Working groups – as set out in Appendix A, the Applicant has set up a number of working groups and forums to date, some of which will continue into the construction phase of the Project, and further working groups and forums would be set up with the aim of working collaboratively with stakeholders.
- c. Additional permits – the Applicant will require additional approvals such as those relating to temporary traffic management measures. Discussions have been ongoing and will continue in relation to these and related matters.

6 Statutory environmental bodies

6.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 6.1.1 Early engagement with the statutory environmental bodies largely focused on the Scoping Opinion produced by the Planning Inspectorate and Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) published as part of the Project's statutory consultation. The PEIR generated useful feedback from the environmental bodies which the Applicant considered as part of developing the ES and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 6.1.2 As the Applicant set out to produce its ES and HRA, further technical meetings were held with the statutory environmental bodies to agree the scope of the assessments, methodology, baseline and surveys, and the approach to mitigation and monitoring. With some stakeholders (such as the Environment Agency and Natural England), the frequency of these meetings was, on average, every fortnight since 2018.
- 6.1.3 To ensure that the design presented for development consent can efficiently move through the secondary consenting process, the Applicant has sought to engage with the relevant bodies responsible for consents, licences and permits and, where appropriate, has incorporated changes into the methodology for construction and the design itself to ensure that obtaining the necessary secondary consents following the granting of the DCO would be feasible. This engagement has been crucial to securing agreement on the approach to secondary consenting set out in the Consents and Agreements Position Statement (Application Document 3.3).
- 6.1.4 As an example, extensive engagement throughout the pre-application phase has meant that Natural England considered that a Letter of No Impediment (LONI) in respect of protected species licence for badgers could be provided with the DCO application (subject to updates to reflect the Order Limits at submission). It is anticipated that a LONI would be issued for bats, dormice, water voles and great crested newts once the final draft application is available to Natural England, for which its support for this approach is recorded in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.1.6).
- 6.1.5 More detail on the matters that have been agreed between the Applicant and the statutory environmental bodies can be found in the relevant Statements of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4).
- 6.1.6 To enable the statutory environmental bodies to assess the issues and to ensure that resourcing is made available within each organisation to provide timely input to the process, Service Level Agreements were entered into with a number of the statutory environmental bodies.

- 6.1.7 Up to the point of resubmission, this has provided those bodies with an opportunity to seek reimbursement for certain activities to help inform their understanding of the impacts and provide consenting advice. One of the objectives underpinning these agreements includes working collaboratively to ensure timely delivery of agreed work packages. These have been updated and extended where appropriate.

Sharing of information

- 6.1.8 Information has been presented to the statutory environmental bodies outside the public consultations to assist with the understanding of the Project and to enable matters to be resolved. The statutory environmental bodies were provided with copies of the previous DCO application and subsequently the updated control documents. Examples of additional information shared by the Applicant include:
- a. Plans including the River Restriction Plans to detail the proposed protection zones referred to in Article 48 of the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1).
 - b. The draft DCO for comment including its schedules where relevant (e.g. the protective provisions and Deemed Marine Licence).
 - c. Draft copies of the HRA (including Scoping and Appropriate Assessment). Briefing notes were also prepared on a number of related topics to provide Natural England and the Environment Agency with assessment details and matters for them to comment on such as on the proposed water supply for the HRA functionally linked mitigation land adjacent to Coalhouse Point.
 - d. Drafts of the proposed protected species licence application to facilitate the provision of LONIs by Natural England, some of which have been submitted with the DCO application.
 - e. Draft proposals for environmental mitigation and compensation, such as ancient woodland compensatory planting at Claylane Wood, and drafts of control documents such as the outline Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (Application Document 6.7) and outline Site Waste Management Plan (Application Document 6.3, Appendix 2.2, Annex A) which set out proposed mitigation and compensation measures.
 - f. A technical note providing details on the site selection methodology for the nitrogen deposition compensation sites. This included details of the site selection criteria, identification of search areas, site feasibility assessment, analysis of ecological suitability, and the refinement process that led to the sites proposed as part of the Local Refinement Consultation.
 - g. Various technical notes outlining design considerations, assessment work and proposed mitigation. Examples include the trenchless study for the A2 enabling works, desk-based assessment methodology, the ground protection tunnel, and options for the Southern Portal discharge.

Influencing the development of the Project

- 6.1.9 Technical engagement with the statutory environmental bodies has resulted in a number of changes throughout the development of the Project. Examples of how the statutory environmental bodies have influenced decisions or changes include the following:
- a. Change to the scope of the air quality assessment to include modelling for ammonia, which has triggered the provision of compensatory habitat as part of the DCO application, in discussion with Natural England.
 - b. Changes to the scope of the control documents, such as changing the proposed landscaping scheme in Requirement 5 of the Schedule 2 Requirements to become a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP), with an outline of this plan submitted as part of the DCO application.
 - c. The design of the Project such as the proposals for new public open space (e.g. Chalk Park and Tilbury Fields) and further changes such as:
 - i. The removal of the Park Pale acoustic barrier from the design following engagement with Natural England and the Kent Downs AONB Unit
 - ii. The provision of an additional two hectares of woodland planting to offset the impact of a gas pipeline diversion on Claylane Wood at the request of the Forestry Commission
 - iii. The removal of the ‘Homes for Heroes’ near Thong Lane from the Order Limits as a result of engagement with Historic England
 - d. Various changes to the methodology and baseline assessments as part of the ES, such as the inclusion of Essex Field Club data within the ecology baseline assessment; and further ecological and water sampling of drains and ditches was undertaken in and around the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar.
- 6.1.10 Detailed matters of discussion that have been agreed (such as changes to commitments in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (part of ES Appendix 2.2, Application Document 6.3)) are recorded in the respective Statements of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4).

6.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 6.2.1 The Applicant has worked collaboratively with the statutory environmental bodies to develop Statements of Common Ground. The large proportion of matters agreed between the parties is a reflection of the detailed technical discussions that have taken place and will continue to take place as the Project progresses.

- 6.2.2 Draft copies of the Statements of Common Ground were shared iteratively with the stakeholders to provide them with an opportunity to comment on how a matter has been framed within the document as well as to confirm the status and next steps for resolution.
- 6.2.3 The status of the Statements of Common Ground at the time of submission with the statutory environmental bodies is set out in Table 6.1

Table 6.1 Status of Statements of Common Ground with the statutory environmental bodies

Stakeholder	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
Environment Agency	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.1.1
Forestry Commission	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.1.2
Historic England	Draft	Application Document 5.4.1.3
Kent Downs AONB Unit	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.1.4
Marine Management Organisation	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.1.5
Natural England	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.1.6
Port of London Authority	Draft	Application Document 5.4.1.7

- 6.2.4 Engagement in the months following the submission of the DCO application will centre on the matters that remain under discussion within the Statements of Common Ground. In some cases, the Applicant and the statutory environmental bodies have agreed to these being ‘under discussion’ as they rely on the statutory environmental bodies having full access to the application materials, which can only happen after submission. As such, the Applicant is anticipating that these matters will continue to mature in advance of the examination period. The Applicant will continue to work collaboratively with the statutory environmental bodies to ensure that discussions continue to progress.

6.3 Ongoing engagement

- 6.3.1 Technical engagement with the statutory environmental bodies would continue throughout the examination and into the delivery of the Project. The Applicant has already commenced discussions on the likely consents, permits and licences that would be required to enable the construction and operation of the Project outside of the approvals which are sought as part of the DCO application.
- 6.3.2 A number of agreements, consents, permits and approvals are being pursued with environmental bodies and discussions will continue to progress in relation to these (and any prospective agreements) post submission.

These are detailed in the Consents and Agreements Position Statement (Application Document 3.3) and include the following:

- a. Natural England – to ensure the draft protected species licence applications are complete, such that Natural England is able to issue letters of no impediment for the following species: bats, dormice, great crested newts and water voles.
- b. Essex Wildlife Trust – discussions continue with Essex Wildlife Trust over a formal agreement regarding water vole translocation sites and barn owl boxes outside the Order Limits, in consultation with Natural England.
- c. Service Level Agreements – the Applicant is seeking to agree new Service Level Agreements with the statutory environmental bodies to progress the resolution of issues following the submission of the DCO application.

6.3.3 Furthermore, there are various opportunities and avenues identified to ensure that statutory environmental bodies have a role to influence the development of the Project beyond these next stages:

- a. Schedule 2 Requirements – a number of the statutory environmental bodies will be consultees in respect of the control documents to be produced and submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State ahead of the commencement of construction works, insofar as those documents relate to matters relevant to their functions. A number of control documents also require additional engagement with the statutory environmental bodies such as the outline LEMP (Application Document 6.7) and Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.7, Appendix 2.2).
- b. Protective Provisions – a number of protective provisions are included in the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1) for the protection of statutory environmental bodies, including the Environment Agency and Port of London Authority.
- c. Deemed Marine Licence – this is included in the draft DCO and provides that the carrying out of activities relating to the marine environment will be subject to conditions and approvals by the Marine Management Organisation.
- d. Working groups – as set out in Appendix A to this Statement of Engagement, the Applicant has set up a number of working groups and forums to date, some of which will continue into the construction phase of the Project, and further working groups and forums would be set up with the aim of working collaboratively with stakeholders. One of these is the LEMP Advisory Group which would be set up following the submission of the DCO application and will include representatives from various environmental bodies and local authorities to further inform the development of landscape

and ecological information relating to the Project and the development of the LEMP required to be produced and submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State under Requirement 5 of the Schedule 2 Requirements. Further details of this proposed group are set out in Appendix A.

- e. Applications for secondary consents will be sought from these bodies and the Applicant will remain in dialogue with the statutory environmental bodies in this regard.

7 Community groups and parish councils

7.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 7.1.1 Engagement with this cohort tended to focus on the localised impacts of the Project. As these stakeholders often have limited experience working with NSIP promoters, engagement was shaped in a way that reflected their specific needs. Public campaigns were also employed as measures to reach out to the community on matters of wider interest such as WCH routes.
- 7.1.2 The forecast impact on the road network as a result of the Project's construction was a common theme across the groups and the Applicant met with concerned stakeholders to discuss their respective concerns and, where appropriate, added further controls to the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction, such as the explicit consideration of schools when choosing and implementing traffic management measures and access routes for construction compounds.
- 7.1.3 The below sections 7.1.4 to 7.1.18 set out specific engagement undertaken with the parish councils and community groups.

Parish councils

- 7.1.4 The approach to engagement with the parish councils followed on from the issues log approach employed for the local authorities. Due to there being fewer issues raised by the parish councils, there was no need to triage the issues and categorise them in the same manner as the local authority issues, however a similar approach was undertaken to the way in which responses were provided to the stakeholders.
- 7.1.5 Issues logs with responses from the technical specialists were shared with the parish councils on a regular basis and were used to inform the drafting of the Statements of Common Ground.
- 7.1.6 Where requested, the Applicant sought to provide information to enable the parish councils to better understand the impacts arising from the Project, such as sharing the DCO application documents following withdrawal of the previous application in November 2020. Traffic count data held by the Applicant and Kent County Council was also shared with some of the parish councils.

Community groups

- 7.1.7 The Applicant has engaged with community groups outside of the consultation processes to ensure their concerns have been considered and responded to. Acknowledging the diverse remits of the different groups involved, bespoke approaches were employed in relation to the manner in which engagement was undertaken. Examples of this are provided below in relation to travellers' sites and schools – this does not summarise the full extent of engagement with community groups but provides an illustration of the ways in which engagement plans have been developed to respond to the individual needs of a group.

- 7.1.8 ES Chapter 13: Population and Human Health (Application Document 6.1) sets out further details of engagement with local community groups in the context of assessing the potential effects of the Project on the community.

Engagement with traveller and gypsy communities

- 7.1.9 In the case of traveller and gypsy communities along the route, engagement has predominantly occurred through site visits to meet the various traveller communities to raise awareness of the Project and the likely effects that may be experienced.
- 7.1.10 In the case of the Gammonfields Way travellers' site, which would be permanently impacted by the works proposed at the A13 junction, the Applicant has engaged with the residents and Thurrock Council (as the landowner) to agree an alternative location for relocation of the site to the west of the existing site. This activity included the creation of a Facebook page to engage with the community on layout options as face-to-face meetings were not possible in the height of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.
- 7.1.11 The design of the new site layout has been agreed with the Gammonfields Way Travellers and Thurrock Council, as well as the inclusion of a condition within the Schedule 2 Requirements that provides for Thurrock Council to approve the detailed design of the replacement site. A draft of the illustrative layout is included in Appendix C to the Design Principles (Application Document 7.5).

Engagement with schools

- 7.1.12 The Applicant is dedicated to ensuring that any impact on schools is minimised as much as possible and to providing support to local schools and educational facilities in preparation for construction of the Project.
- 7.1.13 Meetings have been held with the schools closest to the Project to discuss their needs, concerns, and potential mitigation measures to address adverse impacts. Skills, education and employment opportunities have also been shared through attendance at careers fairs, organising and attending webinars, and specific school newsletters.
- 7.1.14 A note was shared with the Gateway Learning Community schools which provided a summary of the construction works and associated forecast impacts on traffic near the schools during the construction of the Project. This provided an opportunity for the Applicant to clearly set out the proposed measures to mitigate impacts during the construction phase and it invited the schools to engage further with the Applicant on the implementation of these measures.
- 7.1.15 In response to concerns raised regarding the lack of funding towards educational road safety programmes for school children, the Applicant has included a commitment within the Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21) to provide an educational road safety programme for school-aged children.

Influencing the development of the Project

- 7.1.16 A number of changes to the Project have been proposed to respond to concerns raised by the community groups and the parish councils through technical engagement. Examples of these changes include the following:
- a. Refinements to the design of the utility diversions in order to reduce the footprint of land required, and in doing so reduce the potential impacts on the Shorne and Ashenbank Woods SSSI, Jeskyns Community Woodland and Claylane Wood.
 - b. Changes to the South Portal design to extend it 350m further south to reduce impacts on the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar wetland.
 - c. Inclusion of a new commitment within the outline Materials Handling Plan (part of ES Appendix 2.2, Application Document 6.3) to the use of the river for material transportation, which includes a target for use of port facilities for the transportation of bulk aggregates.
 - d. Widening of the Thong Lane green bridge over the A2/M2.
 - e. Inclusion of a dedicated slip road from the Gravesend East junction to the Lower Thames Crossing.
 - f. Inclusion of a commitment within the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14) for crematoriums to be a consideration as part of the development of the Traffic Management Plans, with access and egress to be maintained through the construction period with the exception of night-time and weekend closures where required for specific planned works.
 - g. Inclusion of a heavy good vehicle (HGV) ban along Lower Higham Road within the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14), with the A226 Gravesend Road compound to be accessed from the A226 Gravesend Road.
 - h. Designation of the WCH route at Jeskyns Community Woodland to limit the interaction between users. The permissive pathway would instead be upgraded for use by pedestrians and cyclists, with horse riders using existing trails.
 - i. Amending the construction access routes shown in the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14) to avoid Broadfields, the Thames Chase Car Park, and Pike Lane as far as possible.
 - j. Inclusion of a new design principle that requires the design of new woodland planting south of the Thames Chase Community Forest, including the location of the memorial tree planting and replacement trees, to be developed in collaboration with Thames Chase Trust and Forestry England (see Part D of the Design Principles (Application Document 7.5)).

- 7.1.17 Additionally, the Applicant has proposed that the Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21) be set up to provide a mechanism for further engagement with the local community beyond submission of the DCO application, including schools, which will be easy to navigate and clear.
- 7.1.18 It also provides an avenue for further engagement with the local community in relation to localised matters. This register will be a living document in the examination phase and will be one of the key securing mechanisms for future commitments made to the local community.

7.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 7.2.1 A number of the parish councils, as well as Thames Chase Trust, have entered into Statements of Common Ground with the Applicant.
- 7.2.2 The issues log process set out earlier has aided the development of these Statements of Common Ground with further correspondence to frame the matters within the documents and to assign a status to each of the issues.
- 7.2.3 The status of the Statements of Common Ground at the time of submission with the community groups and parish councils is set out in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Status of the Statements of Common Ground with the community groups and parish councils

Stakeholder	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
Cobham Parish Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.5.1
Forestry England	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.5.2
Higham Parish Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.5.3
Shorne Parish Council	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.5.4
Thames Chase Trust	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.5.5

7.3 Ongoing engagement

- 7.3.1 In addition to the ongoing development of the Statements of Common Ground throughout the examination phase of the Project, there will be a number of further opportunities for this cohort to be involved in the ongoing development of the Project. This includes:
- a. Working groups such as the Community Liaison Groups and Traffic Management Forum, which will be key forums to ensure that the community is kept informed of the Project and is therefore prepared for forthcoming changes and construction activities. As set out in the Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, ES Appendix 2.2), the Applicant will

work closely with stakeholders on the membership of the groups, which will include representatives from the local community.

- b. Further engagement during the detailed design of the Gammonfields Way travellers' site to ensure appropriate provision of replacement facilities.
- c. Engagement through the control documents such as the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14) and the Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21).

7.3.2 The Applicant and its Contractors will also produce Engagement and Communications Plans that set out measures to ensure stakeholders are informed of construction activities and relationships are maintained with stakeholders. These will also detail how any communication-specific commitments within the DCO will be discharged.

7.3.3 The Engagement and Communications Plans will provide a detailed programme of community engagement, setting out how relevant planning authorities, communities, stakeholders and affected parties will be engaged with throughout the construction period. It will specify the stakeholders, communities and affected parties (such as schools, places of worship, businesses and environmental organisations) and for each group, will identify the proposed methods and likely timing of engagement for each key stage of work. Such methods may cover, but are not limited to, community drop-in sessions, one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders as relevant, newsletters, and leaflet drops explaining forthcoming works.

8 Statutory undertakers and asset owners

8.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 8.1.1 The Applicant has engaged with statutory undertakers and asset owners throughout the development of the preliminary design, primarily in relation to the impacts of the Project on those bodies' assets and any diversions, protections, stopping up of, or new connections to their networks that would be required to facilitate the construction and operation of the Project. The Applicant has also engaged with organisations such as the emergency services, Royal Mail and the Health and Safety Executive, whose operations could be impacted by the construction and operation of the Project.
- 8.1.2 The design of diversions and other works to utilities assets has been ongoing throughout the pre-application period and design development has reflected these discussions as they have matured. This is evidenced by the designs presented at the public consultations, which clearly demonstrate the extensive collaboration between the Applicant and these bodies, to ensure that the diversions can occur safely, whilst minimising environmental impacts and complying with relevant regulatory requirements.
- 8.1.3 The Applicant has also sought to agree protective provisions with a number of statutory undertakers (these are included in Schedule 14 of the draft DCO), and has sought to resolve, or provide a method of resolution for issues raised.
- 8.1.4 The Applicant has worked collaboratively on the design of the utilities to reduce the impacts of diversions as far as practicable. In some cases this has involved joint meetings with stakeholders, for example, Cadent Gas Limited have met with other parties such as St Mowden (developer of Brentwood Enterprise Park) to assist with technical engagement and provide further information on design requirements.
- 8.1.5 A working group was also set up with the emergency services to encourage cross-organisation discussion on common matters.

8.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 8.2.1 Statements of Common Ground have been drafted for some of the impacted statutory undertakers and asset owners.
- 8.2.2 Copies of the Statements of Common Ground submitted as part of the DCO application were initially shared in August 2022 and for the last time in September 2022 to enable local authorities to undertake a final review prior to submission. In the case of Royal Mail, matters were agreed in mid-2022 and the Statement of Common Ground was fully governed and signed by them.
- 8.2.3 Where a Statement of Common Ground is not signed, the Applicant has characterised these Statements of Common Ground as being the Applicant's reflection of matters agreed, not agreed or under discussion based on technical

engagement during the pre-application period. This reflects pre-application advice from the Planning Inspectorate that it is helpful for applicants to clarify the status of matters at the point of submission, provided they are appropriately characterised in a transparent manner with the stakeholder.

8.2.4 The status of the Statements of Common Ground at the time of submission with the statutory undertakers and asset owner is set out in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Status of the Statements of Common Ground with the statutory undertakers and asset owners

Stakeholder	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
Barking Power Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.2
Cadent Gas Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.3
Essex and Suffolk Water	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.6
EXA Infrastructure	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.8
Health and Safety Executive	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.9
HS1 Limited	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.10
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.14
NextGen Access	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.15
Openreach Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.16
Royal Mail	Agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.17
Southern Gas Networks	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.18
UK Power Networks	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.21
Verizon UK Limited	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.22
Virgin Media Limited	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.23
Vodafone Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.3.24
Zayo Group UK Limited	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.3.25

8.3 Ongoing engagement

8.3.1 The Applicant will continue to work with the statutory undertakers to seek to resolve matters set out within the Statements of Common Ground following submission of the DCO application. The Applicant will also continue to liaise with the statutory undertakers and asset owners to explore the appropriateness of entering into any side agreements relating to the assets affected.

8.3.2 Following any decision to approve the Project, the Applicant will continue to be in dialogue with the statutory undertakers and asset owners throughout the detailed design and undertaking of the works.

- 8.3.3 There are a number of mechanisms which will facilitate this future engagement, including the following:
- a. The protective provisions set out in the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1), which require further consultation and, in some instances, approvals from the relevant statutory undertakers. This will ensure that the Applicant and its Contractors work closely throughout the development of the detailed design and undertaking of the works.
 - b. There will be ongoing dialogue with directly impacted statutory undertakers and asset owners throughout the procurement of the Project to ensure that potential Contractors are aware of design requirements, mitigation measures and other controls relevant to the works.
 - c. The outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14) provides a list of consultees including Royal Mail and the emergency services who would be consulted on programmed diversions, closures and alternative access arrangements that could affect travel on those routes.

9 Business and industry

9.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 9.1.1 The Applicant has met with a wide variety of businesses and industry groups to discuss the benefits and opportunities of the Project and to understand concerns that those groups may have.
- 9.1.2 There are a number of cross-cutting themes raised by the business and industry stakeholders, which include the following:
- a. The benefits of the Project for businesses including journey time savings and improved resilience at the Dartford Crossing.
 - b. Skills, education and employment opportunities that would arise as a result of the Project, including opportunities for new jobs to be created in local areas.
 - c. Programmes that enable SMEs to upskill and take advantage of the wide range of supply chain opportunities that come with the construction of a NSIP of this scale.
 - d. Traffic modelling outputs and the potential impacts at key junctions and routes used by stakeholders during construction and operation of the Project.
- 9.1.3 In some cases, detailed modelling results have been provided (e.g. to DP World London Gateway and Port of Tilbury London Limited) to enable better understanding of the forecast changes in traffic resulting from the Project.
- 9.1.4 Feedback received on these topics has influenced the development of the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction, the Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan, and the Skills, Education and Employment (SEE) Strategy.
- 9.1.5 Due to the close proximity of the Port of Tilbury and the interface between the Project and two of the Port of Tilbury London Limited's projects (Tilbury2 and the Thames Freeport proposal), the Applicant has worked closely with the Port of Tilbury London Limited to redesign part of the Project's proposals for land near the River Thames to avoid conflicts between the two designs. This resulted in design changes to the Tilbury Fields proposal, which were consulted upon during the Community Impacts Consultation.

9.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 9.2.1 Statements of Common Ground have been progressed with a small number of businesses. In general, the scope of these Statements of Common Ground is limited to specific matters (e.g. some are limited to traffic modelling matters) and others extend across the interests of other cohorts (such as the Port of Tilbury London Limited which also has land and neighbouring project interests).
- 9.2.2 At the point of submission, the status of the Statements of Common Ground with businesses and industry groups is shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Status of the Statements of Common Ground with businesses and industry groups

Stakeholder	Status of Statement of Common Ground at submission	Location
DP World London Gateway	Draft agreed	Application Document 5.4.2.1
Port of Tilbury London Limited	Draft	Application Document 5.4.2.2
Thurrock Power Ltd	Draft	Application Document 5.4.2.3

Letters of support

- 9.2.3 A number of the businesses and industry groups with whom the Applicant has actively engaged have provided letters which summarise their reasons for supporting the Project. The following organisations have provided letters of support which can be found in Appendix A to the Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1):
- a. Asda
 - b. Bluewater
 - c. Confederation of British Industry
 - d. Essex Chambers of Commerce
 - e. Essex Developers Group
 - f. Federation of Small Businesses
 - g. Federation of Small Businesses Kent
 - h. John Lewis
 - i. Kent Chambers of Commerce
 - j. London Southend Airport
 - k. London Stansted Airport

- l. London Thamesport
- m. Maritime Transport
- n. Morrisons
- o. Opportunity South Essex
- p. Port of Dover
- q. Port of Sheerness (Peel Ports)
- r. Ripe Now
- s. Road Haulage Association
- t. Ruskins
- u. Sharp Group
- v. South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- w. TCP Group

9.3 Ongoing engagement

9.3.1 In addition to progressing the resolution of issues within the Statement of Common Ground, the Applicant will continue to liaise with business and industry groups as the Project moves forward. Examples include:

- a. The Applicant will continue discussions with the Port of Tilbury London Limited regarding how its future ecological mitigation can be accommodated near the Project as well as the preparation of an overarching agreement that will cover land and access arrangements, as well as design approval.
- b. The Applicant and its Contractors will also produce Engagement and Communications Plans that will set out measures to ensure stakeholders are informed of construction activities, and relationships are maintained with stakeholders. This document will also detail how any communication-specific commitments within the DCO will be discharged. The Engagement and Communications Plans will provide a detailed programme of community engagement, setting out how relevant planning authorities, communities, stakeholders and affected parties will be engaged with throughout the construction period. They will specify stakeholders, communities and affected parties (such as schools, places of worship, businesses and environmental organisations) and for each group, will identify the proposed methods and likely timing of engagement for each key stage of work. Such methods may cover, but are not limited to, community drop-in sessions, one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders as relevant, newsletters, and leaflet drops explaining forthcoming works.

10 Land and property

10.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 10.1.1 The Applicant has undertaken extensive engagement with land and property owners since the announcement of the preferred route in 2017. A record of this engagement, and a summary on the current position with any ongoing negotiations, is set out in Annex B of the Statement of Reasons (Application Document 4.1).
- 10.1.2 The Applicant has sought to enter into negotiations to acquire third-party interests in land voluntarily where expressions of interest have been received. In cases where there are no active negotiations, the Applicant has written to those with relevant interests outlining its willingness to secure voluntary agreements.
- 10.1.3 At the time of writing, it has not been possible to secure all of the land and rights required for the Project by agreement. Compulsory acquisition guidance acknowledges that where proposals would entail the compulsory acquisition of many separate plots of land (such as for long, linear projects) it may not always be practicable to acquire by agreement each plot of land. Where this is the case, it is reasonable to include provision authorising compulsory acquisition covering all the land required at the outset.
- 10.1.4 The Applicant has met with most of the landowners and occupiers within the Order Limits. Regular meetings have been held with many of the more adversely affected parties to discuss the implications of the Project on their land and potential opportunities to reduce adverse impacts. This has resulted in changes to the land acquisition proposals and elements of the design such as the following:
- a. Realignment of the road design and re-positioning of construction compounds to reduce impacts, for example, in the vicinity of the Whitecroft Care Home.
 - b. Changes to other design elements such as access tracks, utility diversions, drainage ponds and the layout of areas of environmental mitigation.
 - c. The proposed provision of replacement open space, which has been refined in several locations across the Project including, for example, the proposed Folkes Lane Woodland replacement open space, to avoid impacting a local business.
 - d. Realignments of proposed Public Rights of Way and new WCH routes.
 - e. Design changes to mitigate impacts on the proposed Brentwood Enterprise Park site (for further information see the Brentwood Enterprise Park section of Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Major Development Schemes (Application Document 7.17)).

- 10.1.5 In some cases, commitments have been secured via the Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21) in response to concerns raised by landowners. Examples of these commitments include the following:
- a. Ensuring farm access to retained land near Green Lane, Orsett is provided during construction.
 - b. Provision of a farm access track west of Brentwood Road prior to severing any existing access.
 - c. Where access to a significant area of a landowner's farmland is severed by construction works, the Contractors must ensure that the landowner is provided with controlled access to their retained land.

10.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 10.2.1 A number of Statements of Common Ground have been submitted as part of the DCO application for organisations which have land or other interests affected by the Project (such as local authorities and statutory undertakers).
- 10.2.2 Draft Statements of Common Ground with other landowners (i.e., those not covered by a separate cohort) have not been prepared as part of the DCO application. However, some are being progressed with landowners where appropriate, and would be submitted to the Examining Authority if agreed between the parties. The current position regarding negotiations with landowners is set out in Annex B of the Statement of Reasons (Application Document 4.1).

10.3 Ongoing engagement

- 10.3.1 The Applicant will continue to engage and seek to progress voluntary agreements with landowners and/or develop Statements of Common Ground, if appropriate, to resolve outstanding land acquisition issues or concerns and to assist the Examining Authority. There will also be opportunities for landowners to participate in the examination process.
- 10.3.2 Landowners will also be able to engage with the Applicant regarding the delivery of the Project during construction through commitments made in the DCO Application such as in the Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (Application Document 7.21).

11 Neighbouring projects

11.1 Overview of pre-application engagement

- 11.1.1 The Applicant has proactively identified proposed developments near the Project since the Preferred Route Announcement in 2017 so that bespoke engagement plans could be developed and outcomes fed back into the design process for the Project. Engagement with the promoters of nearby projects has positively shaped the Project and supported coordination on design, consenting and delivery issues, maximising the growth potential of the Lower Thames area and beyond.
- 11.1.2 Public consultations have provided the promoters of neighbouring projects with an opportunity to submit representations on the Project. The Applicant has had regard to comments received and where necessary has undertaken further engagement with those promoters to focus on specific matters of interest or concern, aiding the efficient development of proposals.
- 11.1.3 Engagement with the projects cited earlier in Section 4.8 has allowed the Applicant to identify, appraise and, where relevant, develop changes to the Project's design where appropriate. Examples of changes made during the pre-application phase of the Project in response to discussions with other project promoters include the following:
- a. Relocation of Tilbury Fields (a new public park and area of environmental mitigation) to the eastern side of the proposed alignment, from where it was previously proposed to the west of the alignment, to avoid a conflict with the proposed Thames Freeport.
 - b. Changes to the design of the Project to accommodate Thurrock Power Limited's Flexible Generation project to the west of the North Portal. This includes a new Schedule 2 Requirement that reflects the design interface between the two projects.
 - c. Changes to construction access arrangements at Brentwood Enterprise Park to facilitate development proposals.
 - d. Overlapping traffic management requirements during construction have been appropriately accounted for within the application (see Section 5.2 of the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)).
- 11.1.4 Further details of the relationship with these projects, and engagement undertaken by the Applicant with the promoters of them, are set out in Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Major Development Schemes (Application Document 7.17).

11.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 11.2.1 The engagement described in this section has fed into the preparation of Statements of Common Ground between the Applicant and the promoters of a number of neighbouring projects to confirm areas of agreement, disagreement and ongoing discussion.
- 11.2.2 These are set out in the previous cohort sections which are listed below.
- a. DP World London Gateway – Business and industry
 - b. Forestry England – Community groups and parish councils
 - c. Port of Tilbury London Limited – Business and industry
 - d. Thurrock Power Limited – Business and industry

11.3 Ongoing engagement

- 11.3.1 The Applicant will continue to engage with the promoters of neighbouring projects, including any new projects that may come forward, following the submission of the DCO application.
- 11.3.2 This will include engagement in relation to the following matters:
- a. Development of Traffic Management Plans to ensure that proposed traffic management measures are coordinated with nearby projects such as the M25 junction 28 project.
 - b. Development of agreements to reduce any potential conflicts such as at the proposed Brentwood Enterprise Park site.

12 Summary

- 12.1.1 Engagement with stakeholders is an ongoing and iterative process that takes place throughout the lifecycle of the Project. The Applicant has set up a robust framework to ensure that the feedback from stakeholders is considered in detail and that stakeholders continue to be involved in the Project as it progresses, with an ability to further influence and shape its delivery.
- 12.1.2 Reflecting on comments from the Planning Inspectorate and the local authorities, the Applicant continues to consider its approach to engagement, to ensure that it reflects the needs of stakeholders and allows them to understand the impacts of the Project in their area. Following the withdrawal of the DCO application in 2020, the approach to engagement with stakeholders, including the recording and management of issues, was significantly revised. Since then, the Applicant has provided bespoke responses to over 6,000 comments raised by the local authorities.
- 12.1.3 Statements of Common Ground have been prepared to demonstrate the progress made with stakeholders and the matters where dialogue is ongoing. To submit Statements of Common Ground alongside the application which are as mature as possible, the Applicant has iteratively shared draft copies of the documents and responses to issues throughout 2022 to enable the stakeholders to form a view in relation to the Applicant's response.
- 12.1.4 As outlined in the previous sections, the Applicant has proposed a variety of mechanisms to ensure that the stakeholders have the opportunity to further influence the development of the Project, which include consultation requirements within the draft DCO itself (Application Document 3.1) and the suite of control documents submitted as part of the DCO application.

Appendices

Appendix A Working Groups

A.1.1 This section sets out the various working groups that have been set up to seek stakeholder feedback on proposals during the pre-application period as well as the working groups which are proposed to be set up following the submission of the DCO application.

A.2 Pre-application period

A.2.1 There are a number of groups that have been developed by the Applicant to foster cross-organisation engagement and influence the development of the Project and preparation of the Application Documents. These groups include:

- a. Benefits Steering Group and sub-working groups
- b. Community Impacts and Public Health Advisory Group
- c. Community Fund
- d. Emergency Services and Safety Partnership Steering Group
- e. SEE Working Group

A.2.2 Further details on each of these groups is set out below.

Benefits Steering Group

A.2.3 Projects around the Lower Thames Crossing are eligible for up to £30m of money from designated funds and the Applicant is working with partners to identify suitable projects.

A.2.4 The Applicant has established an overarching Benefits Steering Group and four working groups to oversee and drive forward some of the wider benefits work (outside the scope of the DCO application). These involve stakeholders from local government, and organisations focused on heritage, the environment, housing and economic development. Members of the Benefits Steering Group include the following:

- a. Brentwood Borough Council
- b. Department for Transport
- c. Environment Agency
- d. Essex County Council
- e. Forestry Commission
- f. Forestry England

- g. Gravesham Borough Council
- h. Historic England
- i. Homes England
- j. Kent County Council
- k. London Borough of Havering
- l. National Highways
- m. Natural England
- n. South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- o. Thames Estuary Growth Board
- p. Thurrock Council

A.2.5 To complement the work undertaken by the Benefits Steering Group, four working groups have been set up that focus on specific themes. These include the following:

- a. Sustainable Travel Working Group (STWG):
 - i. The Applicant has established the Lower Thames Crossing STWG with a range of local partners. Its purpose is to investigate sustainable travel and cross-river connectivity enhancements that could be delivered in future to complement the Project.
 - ii. Members include Essex County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, London Borough of Havering, Port of London Authority, Port of Tilbury London Limited, Thames Estuary Growth Board, and Thurrock Council.
- b. Environment Working Group:
 - i. The purpose of the Lower Thames Crossing Environment Working Group is to develop and deliver a programme of activities that increases biodiversity and habitat connectivity, enhances the landscape and improves public access to green space.
 - ii. Members include Brentwood Borough Council, Environment Agency, Essex County Council, Essex Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, Forestry England, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Downs AONB, Kent Wildlife Trust, London Borough of Havering, Natural England, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Shorne Woods Country Park, Thames Chase Community Forest, Thurrock Council, and Woodland Trust.

- c. Heritage Working Group:
 - i. The purpose of the Lower Thames Crossing Heritage Working Group is to develop and deliver a programme of activities that protects and enhances heritage through interpretation and technology as well as improving access and connectivity to archaeological finds and assets.
 - ii. Members include Brentwood Borough Council, English Heritage, Essex County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Historic England, Kent County Council, London Borough of Havering, and Thurrock Council.
- d. Connected Communities and Placemaking:
 - i. The purpose of the Lower Thames Crossing Connected Communities and Placemaking Working Group is to develop and deliver a programme of activity that enhances public spaces and places to promote people’s health, happiness and wellbeing.
 - ii. Members include Brentwood Borough Council, Essex County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, London Borough of Havering, and Thurrock Council.

A.2.6 These groups will continue to meet through the examination and during the construction of the Project.

Community Impacts and Public Health Advisory Group

A.2.7 Stakeholder consultation in relation to the preparation of the HEqIA has been facilitated through the creation the Community Impacts and Public Health Advisory Group (CIPHAG). This was established in 2018 as a body for public health officials and other local authority representatives to attend, that could provide support during the preparation of the Health and Equalities Impact Assessment (HEqIA) in terms of information sharing and provision of technical advice and guidance around best practice.

A.2.8 At these meetings, environmental information was shared with attendees. This included a presentation in December 2021 on the approach to sharing environmental information. Prior to the submission of the application, briefings were held to discuss updates since the previous DCO application, to the assessments undertaken in relation to air, noise, climate and health.

Community Fund

A.2.9 The Community Fund meetings include representatives from the host local authorities with a purpose to discuss the implementation of the proposed community funds. Feedback received from stakeholders has fed into changes that have been introduced to the value and structure of the funds. This group was also the primary forum to discuss how the community funds were framed within the proposed section 106 agreements.

Emergency Services and Safety Partnership Steering Group

- A.2.10 This was set up to discuss the Design of Road Tunnels Procedure from 2018 and developed into the Emergency Services and Safety Partnerships Groups which include representatives from emergency services and local authorities including Thurrock Council and Gravesham Borough Council, and have been meeting regularly since early 2021 to discuss interaction with the emergency services and the Project.

Stakeholder Advisory Panel

- A.2.11 The Stakeholder Advisory Panel was held between 2014 and 2018 in order to draw upon local knowledge and understand stakeholders' needs, priorities and opinions. The Applicant met with this panel, which included local authorities, at key stages to discuss the assessment work being undertaken. The purpose of the panel was to act as a consultative and advisory group developing recommendations for the Project. Follow-up meetings were held with individual local authorities to discuss specific route options as the detailed long-list was developed (including all current host authorities). Where necessary, technical engagement meetings were held to provide early insight into the approach for traffic modelling.

Skills, Education and Employment Working Group

- A.2.12 The Skills, Education and Employment (SEE) Working Group includes representatives from the host local authorities with a purpose of identifying and supporting a range of new and existing initiatives that can be supported along the route to upskill local communities.
- A.2.13 The SEE Working Group has met quarterly (on average) since its inception in 2020 and the SEE Strategy was shared on multiple occasions with this group for stakeholder feedback. This group has been made up of skills professionals within the local authorities who will be key consultees on the development and revisions to the Employment and Skills Plans that will be produced prior to and during construction.
- A.2.14 The SEE Working Group was the primary forum to discuss the Applicant's SEE Strategy and how it would be framed within the proposed section 106 agreements.

A.3 Post application

A.3.1 There will be a number of groups that continue or are set up to further cross-organisation engagement and influence decision-making as the Project progresses into delivery. These include the following:

- a. Benefits Steering Group and sub-working groups
- b. Community Fund Panels
- c. Community Liaison Groups
- d. Landscape and Ecology Management Plan Advisory Group
- e. SEE Working Group
- f. Traffic Management Forums
- g. Workforce Accommodation Working Group

A.3.2 Further details on each of these groups are set out below.

Benefits Steering Group

A.3.3 The Benefits Steering Group and its sub-working groups (outlined in Section A2.2 above) will continue to meet and discuss opportunities for benefits that complement the Project.

Community Fund Panels

A.3.4 The Applicant will make available two community funds to provide a mechanism to address the residual impacts of the Project. Panels would be set up to assess applications and make award decisions for each community fund.

A.3.5 The panels would be set up by each of the Community Foundations and would each include local authority officers, representatives from the local community, a Community Foundation trustee, and a National Highways representative.

A.3.6 The detailed criteria for the community funds, which are eligible to be reviewed annually, are to be developed in partnership with the panel and local authorities ahead of the funds becoming available. The criteria would be subject to review annually at the start of each funding cycle by the panels.

Community Liaison Groups

A.3.7 The Applicant will establish and maintain Community Liaison Groups in those communities likely to be most impacted by construction activities. The Engagement and Communications Plans (to be developed by the Contractors) will identify in which communities it will be appropriate to establish a Community Liaison Group, in advance of construction commencing. The Community Liaison Groups will meet regularly before and during the construction period.

- A.3.8 The Applicant will work closely with relevant stakeholders on the membership of the proposed Community Liaison Groups, which will include representation from the local community. Attendance and membership will be published on the Project website.
- A.3.9 The scope of the Community Liaison Groups will be to ensure that local residents are appropriately informed and therefore prepared for forthcoming changes and construction activities.
- A.3.10 Terms of Reference will be developed with the participants and agreed in advance of construction commencing. More details on the Community Liaison Groups can be found in the Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, Appendix 2.2).

Landscape and Ecology Management Plan Advisory Group

- A.3.11 The Applicant has prepared an outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) (Application Document 6.7) which explains that an advisory group will be set up to help inform decision-making throughout the duration of any LEMP to be approved by the Secretary of State.
- A.3.12 The purpose of the LEMP Advisory Group would be to:
- a. assure LEMP-related targets and commitments to stakeholders and to ensure all perspectives are considered across National Highways, local planning authorities, Contractors, landowners, Natural England and other relevant groups, to seek to achieve a beneficial outcome
 - b. provide a forum for collaboration between members to enable a fair, sustainable, productive and sensitive outcome
 - c. help inform decision making on habitat management
 - d. endorse any updates proposed to the LEMP as part of the ongoing/regular review of the documentation to ensure continued applicability of the plan, and if required, provide views of the LEMP Advisory Group to the Secretary of State where re-submission of the LEMP for approval of substantive change to any approved plan has been advised
 - e. discuss and agree, within the framework of the LEMP, any changes to the habitat management commitments set out in that LEMP
 - f. discuss and endorse any changes to the monitoring frequency, duration and/or methods outlined in the final approved management plans (as a result of monitoring findings and/or changes in best practice)

- g. ensure successful achievement of objectives/measures of success have been achieved (based on the results of the monitoring carried out and provided)
- h. review progress of habitat creation/enhancement on an annual basis, ensuring that the management plans are being delivered and progress is being made towards the objectives for each land parcel
- i. review monitoring data provided by the Applicant annually to assure quality and inform decisions going forward.

A.3.13 The proposed members of the LEMP Advisory Group would include representatives from the Contractors, local planning authorities, the Applicant, Natural England, owners of land that is subject to restrictions via the LEMP, and any other relevant groups identified.

A.3.14 The LEMP Advisory Group will remain in existence until the LEMP requirements have been executed or suitable arrangements are agreed to ensure satisfactory execution of requirements is achieved.

A.3.15 The Terms of Reference for the LEMP Advisory Group are set out in Appendix 1 of the outline LEMP (Application Document 6.7).

SEE Forum

A.3.16 The SEE Working Group (outlined in Section A.2) will become a quarterly SEE Forum and will continue to meet to identify and support a range of new and existing initiatives that can be supported along the route to upskill local communities.

A.3.17 The SEE Forum will also review the Employment and Skills Plans as well as discuss the findings from the reporting undertaken as part of the SEE Strategy.

Traffic Management Forums

A.3.18 The Applicant will establish two Traffic Management Forums (one south, and one north of the River Thames) which would be held monthly. The Traffic Management Forums would review planned traffic management arrangements and receive comments as to their appropriateness. The Traffic Management Forums would also monitor, review, and provide updates to the traffic management plans when required. Updates to the traffic management plans would be consulted upon with the relevant local highway authority.

- A.3.19 The Traffic Management Forums would review the performance of implemented traffic management with a focus on the following:
- a. Direct impacts to the travelling public (including WCH routes)
 - b. Indirect impacts on the wider network as a result of the implemented traffic management measures
 - c. Impacts on local businesses and communities
 - d. Specific traffic management operations such as weekend closures for demolition
- A.3.20 The Traffic Management Forums will consist of the Contractors, utilities companies, local planning and highway authorities, public transport operators, emergency services, the Applicant, maintenance providers, and any other affected stakeholders depending on the planned construction phases (as set out in Table 2.1 of the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)). The local community leaders of the Community Liaison Groups would also be invited to the Traffic Management Forums.

Workforce Accommodation Working Group

- A.3.21 The Workforce Accommodation Working Group (WAWG) would include representatives from National Highways, its Contractors, and local authorities. The WAWG would receive monthly workforce accommodation monitoring reports from the Accommodation Helpdesk and regular updates and information from the Project including the 'look-ahead' for potential workforce implications over a 12-month period led by the Applicant and its Contractors. The findings of the workforce accommodation monitoring report and any other relevant information gathered from other sources of monitoring secured as part the DCO application, such as the Framework Construction Travel Plan (Application Document 7.13) and the SEE Strategy, would be made available.
- A.3.22 The Contractors would also be required to propose further reasonably practicable measures which encourage local workforce participation and incentivise movement of workers to areas which have higher capacity. Measures would be presented to the WAWG and the Applicant would have due regard to comments raised at that group on the measures proposed to be undertaken.

Appendix B Local Authority Engagement

- B.1.1 This appendix sets out further details of engagement with some of the host local authorities. These include:
- a. Essex County Council
 - b. Gravesham Borough Council
 - c. Kent County Council
 - d. London Borough of Havering
 - e. Thurrock Council
- B.1.2 Planning Performance Agreements have been put in place with these local authorities to ensure that resourcing is made available within each local authority to provide timely input into technical engagement.

B.2 Essex County Council

- B.2.1 The Applicant has been engaging with Essex County Council on a regular basis in order to share Project updates, respond to requests for information, and seek to resolve and clarify matters raised relating to consultation materials throughout the pre-application stage.
- B.2.2 This has consisted of regular meetings, each focusing on a number of technical matters under discussion, and providing general updates on the progress of the Project, including the following:
- a. Monthly technical meetings to provide updates and discuss ongoing work actions and tasks. These meetings were also used to discuss technical matters and the issues categorised as ‘Group 3’ issues.
 - b. Monthly Cultural Heritage meeting to discuss archaeology and heritage mitigations.
 - c. Topic-specific meetings during the catch-up sessions or dedicated slots to progress matters relating to specific issues. Examples include traffic modelling, consultation, nitrogen deposition, wider network impacts, construction traffic impacts, emergency services liaison, carbon, flooding and drainage, and the interface with Brentwood Enterprise Park.
- B.2.3 Essex County Council is supportive of the need for the Project and has sought to work collaboratively with the Applicant to resolve technical matters. Details of these matters can be found in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.4.5).

- B.2.4 Engagement with Essex County Council has resulted in a number of changes to the Project and other commitments such as restricting HGV traffic at Beredens Lane, amendments to improvement connectivity at Orsett Cock onto the A1089, and the commitment to use the STWG to act as a forum for cross-authority partnership working to promote cross river public transport use.
- B.2.5 A full schedule of engagement activity, including meetings and information shared, is set out within the Statement of Common Ground at Appendix C.

B.3 Gravesham Borough Council

- B.3.1 The Applicant has been engaging with Gravesham Borough Council on a regular basis in order to share Project updates, respond to requests for information, and seek to resolve and clarify matters raised relating to consultation materials throughout the pre-application stage.
- B.3.2 Gravesham Borough Council has been helpful in its approach to engaging with the Applicant, despite areas of fundamental disagreement, and has sought to work collaboratively to fully understand and reach common ground on matters in its statutory interest, where practicable (noting that a pragmatic and professional approach has been taken, without prejudice to the Council's overall position regarding the Project).
- B.3.3 Gravesham Borough Council does not support the Project and its concerns can be read in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.4.6). Gravesham Borough Council has raised specific technical issues that the Project has been working through and which are captured within the Statement of Common Ground.
- B.3.4 While the parties are not in agreement on the approach to some areas of impact assessment and mitigation (as set out in the Statement of Common Ground), the Applicant considers that the approach to engagement, information sharing and support in developing an understanding of the issues has been extensive.
- B.3.5 The Applicant is grateful for Gravesham Borough Council's pragmatic approach to engagement, which has led to the Applicant better understanding its effects on sensitive local receptors in Gravesham, enabling the Project to direct resources accordingly and provide Gravesham with further information on specific areas of concern – for example regarding Gravesham Borough Council's concerns around contamination at Southern Valley Golf Club/Chalk Park, or the configuration of land uses around Cascades Leisure Centre.
- B.3.6 In some cases, feedback from Gravesham through engagement (and formal consultation response) has helped to shape the Project itself – in terms of the approach to physical design (for example the width of green bridges which has been increased) and principles of control and mitigation (for example, in terms

of approaches to early planting as a Design Principle). More recently, Gravesham Borough Council has been particularly helpful in engaging with and providing feedback to the Project's approach towards landscape effects, and potential nitrogen deposition compensation sites.

- B.3.7 The Applicant and Gravesham Borough Council meet on a monthly basis for general updates, and on an ad hoc basis for topic/technical-specific issues. Since early 2022, the Applicant has been sharing responses to the Group 3 and Group 2 issues referred to earlier in this document, in the lead up to sharing a draft of the Statement of Common Ground in August (and then again in September).
- B.3.8 A full schedule of engagement activity, including meetings and information shared, is set out within the Statement of Common Ground at Appendix C.
- B.3.9 It is acknowledged that there remain areas of disagreement, and areas that will remain under discussion until Gravesham Borough Council has the opportunity to view the DCO application in its entirety. The Applicant looks forward to further engagement on these issues following submission, and is confident that many of the outstanding issues can be resolved through thorough and detailed regular technical engagement, ahead of, and during the examination phase.

B.4 Kent County Council

- B.4.1 The Applicant has been engaging with Kent County Council on a regular basis in order to share Project updates, respond to requests for information, and seek to resolve and clarify matters raised relating to consultation materials throughout the pre-application stage.
- B.4.2 Kent County Council has been helpful in its engagement with the Applicant – the Council has reiterated its support for the Project and has sought to work collaboratively to fully understand and reach common ground on matters within its remit.
- B.4.3 Kent County Council's main concerns can be read in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.4.7). Kent County Council has raised specific technical issues that the Project has been working through.
- B.4.4 The Applicant undertakes regular (monthly) engagement on Wider Network Impacts with technical officers in Kent, which will continue throughout the pre-examination period. This has led to the inception of a study that Kent County Council has commissioned in order to investigate the potential effects of the Project on the network, and which will allow Kent County Council to apply for funding streams should there be evidence of a potential effect. Throughout the process, the Applicant has shared traffic modelling data and a draft of the Transport Assessment, and communicated how local authorities' comments have been incorporated into the Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP).

- B.4.5 While the parties are not in full agreement on the approach to impact assessment and mitigation (as set out in the Statement of Common Ground), the Applicant considers that the approach to engagement, information sharing and support in developing understanding of the issues related to wider network impacts has been extensive.
- B.4.6 The Applicant and Kent County Council have met several times in 2022 to discuss a way forward for the consideration of construction phase effects on road assets (regarding HGVs related to the Project's construction, as well as the potential for traffic displacement as a result of works). Engagement has been positive and work is underway to identify and agree assets at risk, consider the authority's maintenance requirements, and where there is an identified Project effect, offer support in bringing forward appropriate monitoring and/or mitigation.
- B.4.7 Several Project changes since Statutory Consultation have related to Shorne Woods Country Park, and have been the direct result of the Project responding to concerns raised by stakeholders such as Kent County Council in terms of effects on ecology, landscape, ancient woodland and access arrangements. The Statement of Common Ground sets out some of these matters, for example the iterative reduction in land-acquisition associated with utility works, the replacement of woodland contiguous with the Shorne Woods Country Park, and the provision of ecological mitigation, public open space and WCH routes, as well as the development of the proposed new car park at Thong Lane. The Applicant considers that engagement on these matters, though not always resulting in agreement, has been productive.
- B.4.8 Kent County Council is an active member of the Applicant's SEE Working Group, which has sought to provide regular updates on the Applicant's pre-application work in the area, and has included the sharing of a draft SEE Strategy, and feedback on how comments and suggestions raised by the Council have been incorporated into the SEE Strategy and its targets (which is proposed to be secured by a section 106 agreement).
- B.4.9 In addition to the above, the Applicant and Kent County Council meet on a monthly basis for general updates, and on an ad hoc basis for topic/technical-specific issues. Since early 2022, the Applicant has been sharing responses to the Group 3 and Group 2 issues referred to earlier in this document, in the lead up to sharing a draft of the Statement of Common Ground in August (and then again in September).
- B.4.10 A full schedule of engagement activity, including meetings and information shared, is set out within the Statement of Common Ground at Appendix C (Application Document 5.4.4.7).

B.5 London Borough of Havering

- B.5.1 There has been long-standing and continued engagement between the Applicant and London Borough of Havering. The Applicant has been engaging with London Borough of Havering on a regular basis in order to share Project updates, respond to requests for information, and seek to resolve and clarify matters raised relating to consultation materials throughout the pre-application stage.
- B.5.2 This has consisted of regular meetings, each focusing on a number of technical matters under discussion, as well as providing general updates on the progress of the Project, including the following:
- a. Fortnightly catch-up meetings to provide updates and discuss ongoing work actions and tasks. These meetings were also used to discuss technical matters and the issues categorised as ‘Group 3’ issues.
 - b. Topic-specific meetings during the catch-up sessions or dedicated slots to progress matters relating to specific issues. Examples include discussion on the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1), open space, heritage, section 106 agreements, traffic modelling, construction, community engagement, consultation, nitrogen deposition, planning policy, wider network impacts, carbon, construction traffic impacts.
 - c. Meetings to discuss the drafting of matters and their status within the Statement of Common Ground.
- B.5.3 London Borough of Havering is an active member of the Applicant’s SEE Working Group, which has sought to provide regular updates on the Applicant’s pre-application work in the area, and has included the sharing of a draft SEE Strategy, and feedback on how comments and suggestions raised by the Council have been incorporated into the SEE Strategy and its targets (which will be secured by a section 106 agreement).
- B.5.4 London Borough of Havering provided comments on the categorisation of issues proposed by the Applicant at subsequent meetings and these comments fed into updates to the grouping of issues. London Borough of Havering’s concerns can be found in the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.4.8).
- B.5.5 Changes have been made to the Project based on discussions with London Borough of Havering, such as the inclusion of a new WCH bridge over the A127 to the west of junction 29, consideration of SINC’s within the ES and a reduction in impacts on the SINC at North Ockendon, extension to the landowner engagement activity regarding the proposed compound relocation at North Ockendon, and expansion of the scope of the school engagement plan in Havering.

B.5.6 A full schedule of engagement activity, including meetings and information shared, is set out within the Statement of Common Ground at Appendix C (Application Document 5.4.4.8).

B.6 Thurrock Council

B.6.1 The Applicant has been engaging with Thurrock Council on a regular basis in order to share Project updates, respond to requests for information, and seek to resolve and clarify matters raised relating to consultation materials throughout the pre-application stage.

B.6.2 There has been extensive engagement between the Applicant and Thurrock Council with over 420 meetings and workshops being held with the local authority as part of the pre-application period to discuss technical and strategic matters, public consultations and the provision of legacy benefits, of which 270 have been held since October 2020. These meetings include the following:

- a. Fortnightly catch-up meetings to provide updates and discuss ongoing work actions and tasks. These meetings were also used to discuss technical matters and the issues categorised as ‘Group 3’ issues.
- b. Fortnightly ‘Hatch’ meetings to discuss ongoing progress on items raised within the Benefits Mitigation Report prepared by Hatch (2020) on behalf of Thurrock Council (commenced in early 2021).
- c. Regular wider network impacts meetings to discuss outstanding highway design matters (monthly since early 2021).
- d. Regular traffic modelling catch-ups to discuss progress on modelling being undertaken by the Applicant to support Thurrock Council (commenced in early 2021).
- e. Weekly senior strategic discussions as well as a Senior Forum since September 2021 as appropriate.
- f. Fortnightly construction traffic impacts meetings (since mid-2022).
- g. Regular climate and carbon meetings (monthly between October 2021 and June 2022).
- h. Discussions on the progression of section 106 agreements.

B.6.3 In addition to the meetings above, further meetings and workshops were arranged as and when required. Examples of these include workshops to discuss comments raised by the Council on DCO control documents, topic-specific Statement of Common Ground meetings to resolve outstanding issues in the logs, briefing sessions on the Tilbury Link Road and A13 models, the emerging design of Tilbury Fields, and to discuss the consideration of nitrogen deposition within the DCO application.

- B.6.4 The Applicant has also worked with Thurrock Council to tailor processes where required to respond to specific needs. This includes the provision of further reporting at the request of Thurrock Council on the issues log process (set out in Section 5.1) to further aid their understanding of how their comments are being addressed, by identifying the following:
- a. If the comment is a matter of clarification, which has now been provided
 - b. If/how the comment has already been addressed within the DCO Application Documents from the first submission
 - c. If/how the comment will be addressed in the updated DCO application
 - d. If the comment is already included as a matter in the draft of the Statement of Common Ground
 - e. If the comment should be added as a matter in the draft of the Statement of Common Ground for further discussion
- B.6.5 Despite areas of fundamental disagreement, the Applicant and Thurrock Council have sought to work collaboratively to fully understand and reach common ground on matters within its remit, where practicable. This has culminated in the development of a comprehensive Statement of Common Ground with Thurrock Council which has been submitted as part of the DCO application (Application Document 5.4.4.12).
- B.6.6 The Applicant has worked with Thurrock Council to try and address the more detailed technical concerns that sit under each of the broad issues identified above. Examples of this are detailed below:
- a. While the Applicant and Thurrock Council disagree on a number of matters pertaining to the Project's modelling and transport assessment, the Applicant has sought to provide Thurrock Council with additional traffic modelling outputs (such as VISSIM models). These outputs were offered to assist Thurrock Council in its understanding of the changes that are anticipated on the local road network rather than to identify potential changes or optimisations to the Project or local junctions. Fortnightly traffic modelling workshops were set up with Thurrock Council to discuss these technical traffic modelling matters, assumptions and outputs. Approximately 20 of these meetings were held in 2022 alone, prior to submission of the application. A detailed list of all the workshops and outputs provided is included in Appendix C of the Statement of Common Ground (Application Document 5.4.4.12).

- b. Thurrock Council has produced a report (commonly referred to as the 'Hatch Report') that sets out its key requests in terms of mitigation and legacy for the Project. Over 40 fortnightly meetings have been held since early 2021 to discuss the requests made within the report. In some cases, the requests have been considered further on a separate basis to the work being undertaken to inform the DCO application itself such as through the Applicant's designated funds programme where initiatives are discussed as part of the Benefits Steering Group and sub-working groups set out in Appendix A of this document
- c. The Applicant worked collaboratively with Thurrock Council and residents of the Gammonfields Way travellers' site to develop a replacement proposal for the impacted site. This has been subject to an extensive design process. This included discussions to agree a suitable replacement location and the layout of the replacement site. This has resulted in an indicative plan of the layout (that will be presented at examination) as well as agreement to Thurrock Council being the discharging authority in respect of the detailed design and layout of the replacement travellers' site under the Schedule 2 Requirements.

B.6.7 A full schedule of engagement activity, including meetings and information shared, is set out within the Statement of Common Ground at Appendix C (Application Document 5.4.4.12).

Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
A122 Lower Thames Crossing	Project	A proposed new crossing of the Thames Estuary linking the county of Kent with the county of Essex, at or east of the existing Dartford Crossing.
Application Document		In the context of the Project, a document submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the application for development consent.
Biodiversity Net Gain	BNG	Ecological enhancements introduced by the Project which leave the natural environment and the number of species present in it, in a measurably better state than before construction.
Code of Construction Practice	CoCP	Control measures and standards to be implemented by the Project, including those to avoid or reduce environmental effects.
Community Impacts Consultation	CIC	This consultation explained the impacts of the project and how we plan to reduce them, as well as the changes we have made to the project since the design refinement consultation. These have been informed by feedback received from our stakeholders and ongoing design work.
Community Impacts and Public Health Advisory Group	CIPHAG	An advisory group established by National Highways to understand local knowledge and understanding to feed into the relevant technical assessments.
Construction		Activity on and/or offsite required to implement the Project. The construction phase is considered to commence with the first activity on site (e.g. creation of site access), and ends with demobilisation.
Department for Transport	DfT	The UK Government department responsible for the English transport network and a limited number of transport matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that have not been devolved.
Design Manual for Roads and Bridges	DMRB	A comprehensive manual containing requirements, advice and other published documents relating to works on motorway and all-purpose trunk roads for which one of the Overseeing Organisations (National Highways, Transport Scotland, the Welsh Government or the Department for Regional Development (Northern Ireland)) is highway authority. For the A122 Lower Thames Crossing the Overseeing Organisation is National Highways.
Design Principle	DP	Design principles are the fundamental ideas and elements that could be applied to achieve successful design. The elements that together comprise a design.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Detailed Local Operating Agreement	DLOA	The Detailed Local Operating Agreement will set out the agreed operational and communication protocols for the LTC Project throughout the construction period and will enable handover into Operational Maintenance.
Development Consent Order	DCO	Means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
Development Consent Order application	DCO application	The Project Application Documents, collectively known as the 'DCO application'.
Environmental Impact Assessment	EIA	A process by which information about environmental effects of a proposed development is collected, assessed and used to inform decision making. For certain projects, EIA is a statutory requirement, reported an Environmental Statement.
Environmental Management Plan	EMP	A plan setting out the conclusions and actions needed to manage environmental effects as defined by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges standard LA 120. The CoCP is the equivalent of the first iteration of the EMP (EMP1). The contractor's EMP would be EMP2 and the end of construction EMP would be EMP3.
Environmental Statement	ES	A document produced to support an application for development consent that is subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which sets out the likely impacts on the environment arising from the proposed development.
Examining Authority	ExA	The Examining Authority is the Inspector, or the Panel of Inspectors appointed to conduct the Examination of the application.
Habitats Regulations Assessment	HRA	A tool developed by the European Commission to help competent authorities (as defined in the Habitats Regulations) to carry out assessment to ensure that a project, plan or policy will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 or European sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects, and to begin to identify appropriate mitigation strategies where such effects were identified.
Health and Equalities Impact Assessment	HEqIA	A systematic process used to identify the potential health and equalities impacts arising from policies, plans, programmes and projects, to identify the distribution of those effects amongst the population and to identify mitigation measures to address these effects, thereby minimising adverse effects on the local population.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Heavy Goods Vehicle	HGV	A large, heavy motor vehicle used for transporting cargo.
Landscape and Ecology Management Plan	LEMP	A document which provides details on the delivery and management of the landscape and ecology elements identified in the Environmental Masterplan for the Project, including their success criteria.
Local Authority	LA	A local authority is an organisation that is officially responsible for all the public services and facilities in a particular area.
Local Highway Authority	LHA	A local highway authority is an organisation that is responsible for the maintenance of public roads. The current role of a highway authority is defined in the Highways Act 1980 and the role is held by a large number of different groups.
Local Planning Authority	LPA	A local planning authority is the local authority or council that is empowered by law to exercise statutory town planning functions for a particular area of the UK. May also be referred to as 'local authority'.
Local Refinement Consultation	LRC	The local refinement consultation was held to share a number of updates made to the project based on feedback from a consultation in 2021, ongoing stakeholder engagement and technical surveys.
Lower Thames Area Model	LTAM	Transport model designed to forecast impacts of providing additional road-based capacity across the River Thames at locations at or east of the existing Dartford Crossing.
Main Works Contractor	MWC	A term used to identify the contractor who will be awarded a main contract for the delivery of a section of the LTC programme. They will be responsible for delivering all main works and will work with the Client to discharge our obligations under the DCO.
National Highways		A UK government-owned company with responsibility for managing the motorways and major roads in England. Formerly known as Highways England.
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project	NSIP	Major infrastructure developments in England and Wales, such as proposals for power plants, large renewable energy projects, new airports and airport extensions, major road projects etc that require a development consent under the Planning Act 2008.
Nitrogen Deposition	NDEP	The rate at which nitrogen accumulates on a surface as a result of separation from the atmosphere. The principal unit of measurement of nitrogen deposition is kilograms of nitrogen per hectare per year (kgN/ha/yr).
Operation		Describes the operational phase of a completed development and is considered to commence at the end of the construction phase, after demobilisation.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Order Limits		The outermost extent of the Project, indicated on the Plans by a red line. This is the Limit of Land to be Acquired or Used (LLAU) by the Project. This is the area in which the DCO would apply.
Planning Act 2008		The primary legislation that establishes the legal framework for applying for, examining and determining Development Consent Order applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report	PEIR	The PEIR presents preliminary environmental information compiled by the applicant for consultation bodies to use to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of a development (and of any associated development).
Preferred Route Announcement	PRA	The announcement by the SoS for Transport on the route selected from the options stage of the scheme.
Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments	REAC	A document which identifies the environmental commitments that would be implemented during the construction and operational phases of the Project if the Development Consent Order is granted, and forms part of the Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, ES Appendix 2.2).
Skills, Education and Employment Strategy	SEE Strategy	The Skills, Education and Employment Strategy introduces how National Highways aim to provide long-term benefits to communities close to the Project through new jobs and work, higher skills and education. It also begins explains how National Highways will set the standard for construction in a low carbon world. This document will be revised every two years throughout the delivery of the project to remain current and responsive to local and national needs.
Small and Medium Sized Enterprise	SME	A small or medium-sized enterprise with fewer than 250 employees. The EU also defines an SME as a business with fewer than 250 employees, a turnover of less than €50 million, or a balance sheet total of less than €43 million.
Statement of Common Ground	SoCG	A Statement of Common Ground is a written statement containing factual information about the proposal which is the subject of the appeal that the appellant reasonably considers will not be disputed by the local planning authority.
Sustainable Transport Working Group	STWG	To develop and deliver improvements to integrated sustainable transport infrastructure, including maximising use of the River Thames and improving connectivity and accessibility for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

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