

Lower Thames Crossing

5.3 Statement of Commonality

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5.3 Statement of Commonality

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 National Highways (the Applicant) 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 This Statement of Commonality is provided to assist the Examining Authority (ExA) in understanding areas of commonality across the Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) which have been prepared between a range of stakeholders and the Applicant.
- 1.1.3 The document comprises the Applicant’s understanding of the stakeholders’ positions, as set out in the SoCGs submitted by the Applicant to the ExA at application.
- 1.1.4 This document is a “live” document and will be updated through the post-submission and examination process in order to reflect changes made within the SoCGs through ongoing discussions with stakeholders.
- 1.1.5 This Statement of Commonality is part of a suite of documents which accompanies the application to grant development consent. A full description of all the Application Documents is provided in the Introduction to the Application (Application Document 1.3) which also accompanies the application. A navigation document on the Statements of Common Ground is provided at Application Document 5.4.
- 1.1.6 For more detailed information of the respective stakeholders’ positions, in relation to the topics covered in this Statement of Commonality, please refer to the SoCGs.

1.2 The need for the Project

- 1.2.1 For over 58 years the Dartford Crossing has provided the only significant road crossing of the River Thames to the east of London. It is a critical part of the country’s road network, connecting communities and businesses and providing a vital link for the nearby major ports. However, traffic flows on the Dartford Crossing are consistently in excess of the design capacity of the road which results in frequent congestion and poor journey time reliability, making it one of the least reliable sections of the strategic road network. The current operational challenges have significant negative impacts on users and non-users in terms of economic productivity and trade, social and user experience, and environmental impacts. For more information on the need case, refer to the Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1).

1.3 The Project

- 1.3.1 The Project would provide a connection between the A2 and M2 in Kent and the M25 south of junction 29, crossing under the River Thames through a tunnel. The Project route is presented in Plate 1.1.
- 1.3.2 The A122 would be approximately 23km long, 4.25km of which would be in tunnel. On the south side of the River Thames, the Project route would link the

tunnel to the A2 and M2. On the north side, it would link to the A13, M25 junction 29 and the M25 south of junction 29. The tunnel portals would be located to the east of the village of Chalk on the south of the River Thames and to the west of East Tilbury on the north side.

1.3.3 Junctions are proposed at the following locations:

- a. New junction with the A2 to the south-east of Gravesend
- b. Modified junction with the A13/A1089 in Thurrock
- c. New junction with the M25 between junctions 29 and 30

1.3.4 To align with National Policy Statement for National Networks (Department for Transport, 2014) policy and to help the Project meet the Scheme Objectives, it is proposed that road user charges would be levied in line with the Dartford Crossing. Vehicles would be charged for using the new tunnel.

1.3.5 The Project route would be three lanes in both directions, except for:

- a. link roads
- b. stretches of the carriageway through junctions
- c. the southbound carriageway from the M25 to the junction with the A13/A1089, which would be two lanes

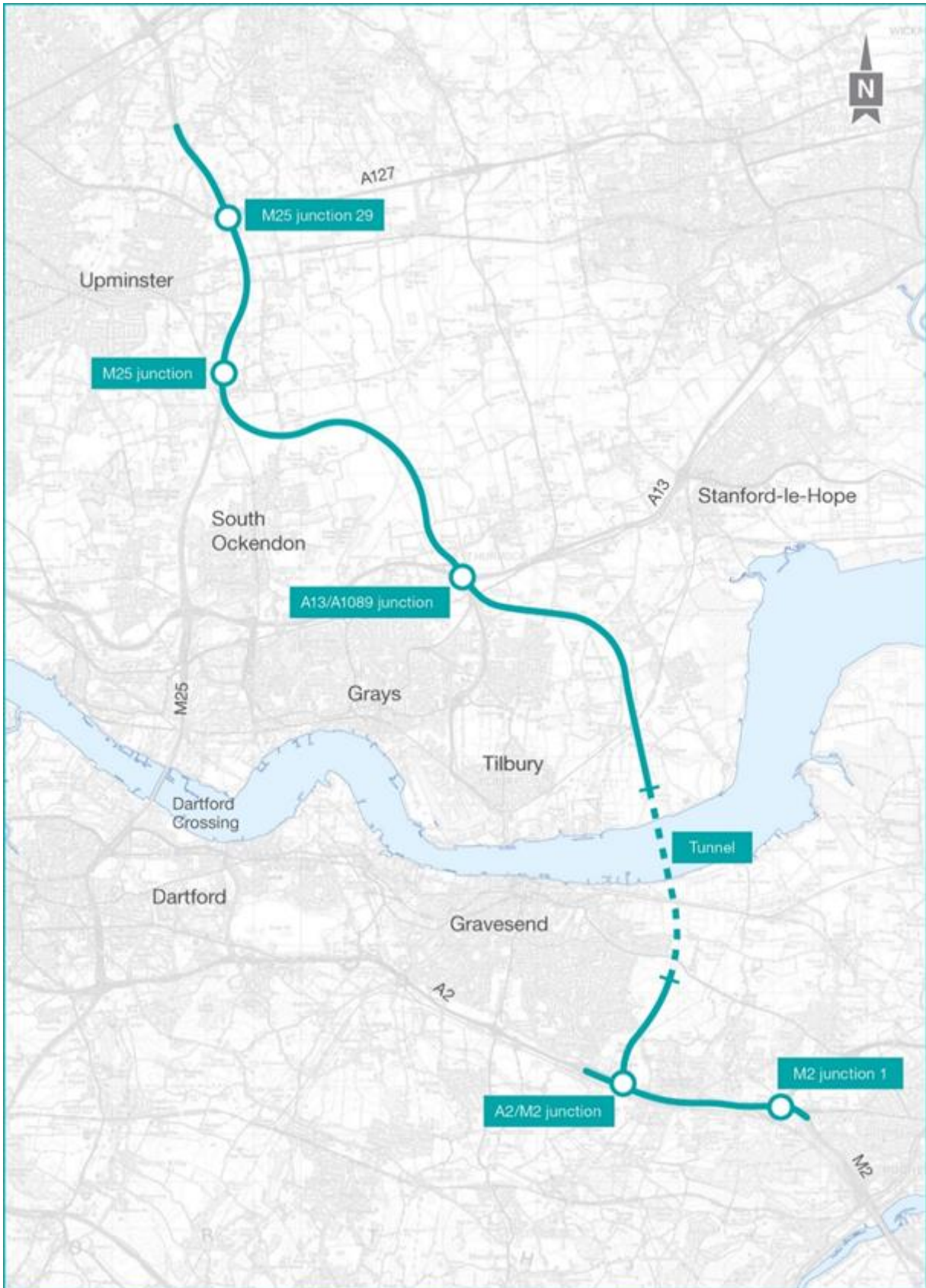
1.3.6 In common with most A-roads, the A122 would operate with no hard shoulder but would feature a 1m hard strip on either side of the carriageway. It would also feature technology including stopped vehicle and incident detection, lane control, variable speed limits and electronic signage and signalling. The A122 design outside the tunnel would include emergency areas. The tunnel would include a range of enhanced systems and response measures instead of emergency areas.

1.3.7 The A122 would be classified as an 'all-purpose trunk road' with green signs. For safety reasons, walkers, cyclists, horse riders and slow-moving vehicles would be prohibited from using it.

1.3.8 The Project would include adjustment to a number of local roads. There would also be changes to a number of Public Rights of Way, used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Construction of the Project would also require the installation and diversion of a number of utilities, including gas pipelines, overhead electricity powerlines and underground electricity cables, as well as water supplies and telecommunications assets and associated infrastructure.

1.3.9 The Project has been developed to avoid or minimise significant effects on the environment. The measures adopted include landscaping, noise mitigation, green bridges, floodplain compensation, new areas of ecological habitat and two new parks.

Plate 1.1 Lower Thames Crossing route



1.4 Structure of this document

- 1.4.1 This document comprises four chapters as described below:
- a. Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the drafting of SoCGs along with a summary of their structure;
 - b. Chapter 3 provides an up-to-date list of the SoCGs and their status;
 - c. Chapter 4 provides a summary table which indicates the commonality on topics across the SoCGs.

2 Statements of Common Ground

- 2.1.1 The Applicant has sought SoCGs with stakeholders in order to capture the respective stakeholders' positions on material matters relating to the application. The SoCGs will be updated in response to the ExA's Rule 6 letter in due course. The SoCGs include material matters raised through the course of a consultation and engagement programme in the lead up to the submission of the DCO application.
- 2.1.2 A full list of the SoCGs and their status is provided in Chapter 3.
- 2.1.3 To ensure consistency across the SoCGs, a uniform approach has been taken to drafting the SoCGs. Each is generally structured as follows:
- a. An introduction, setting out the purpose of the document, the parties to which the SoCG is prepared in respect of, the key terminology, and confirmation of the status of the SoCG;
 - b. A table setting out the characterisation of the positions of the Applicant and of the stakeholder on each Matter, and the status of agreement of the Matter. Across the SoCGs this table is structured by a common list of topics; and
 - c. A summary of engagement undertaken and information shared in order to draft the position and reach an agreed status of Matters within the SoCG;
 - d. Where available, appendices providing additional information relating to the documents considered within the SoCG, and information on the engagement undertaken.
- 2.1.4 A uniform approach has been taken across the suite of SoCGs to documenting the position on each matter. The position on each Matter can be one of the following:
- a. Matter agreed
 - b. Matter not agreed
 - c. Matter under discussion
- 2.1.5 All SoCGs follow this format.

3 List and Status

- 3.1.1 This Chapter of the document provides a list of the SoCGs and a summary of the current status of each.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant has prepared SoCGs with a number of statutory consultees, including statutory undertakers, and others who are expected to become interested parties, in the lead up to the DCO application submission. Table 3.1 provides a list of these stakeholders.
- 3.1.3 Table 3.1 also provides the status of the SoCG which is summarised by one of the following:
- a. **Agreed SoCG** – the final version of the SoCG has been signed by both parties, and there are no matters outstanding;
 - b. **Draft Agreed** - a draft SoCG 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; or
 - c. **Draft** – a draft SoCG with matters outstanding and is unsigned. The draft SoCG 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 SoCGs present an accurate description of the matters raised and the status of each matter, based on the engagement that has taken place to date.
- 3.1.4 Table 3.1 will be updated for each version of the Statement of Commonality to provide an update on the progress made in finalising each SoCG.

Table 3.1 List of SoCGs

Cohort	Document Reference	Stakeholder	Status
Statutory Environmental Bodies	5.4.1.1	Environment Agency	Draft Agreed
	5.4.1.2	Forestry Commission	Draft Agreed
	5.4.1.3	Historic England	Draft
	5.4.1.4	Kent Downs AONB Unit	Draft Agreed
	5.4.1.5	Marine Management Organisation	Draft Agreed
	5.4.1.6	Natural England	Draft Agreed
	5.4.1.7	Port of London Authority	Draft

Cohort	Document Reference	Stakeholder	Status
Business and Industry	5.4.2.1	DP World London Gateway	Draft Agreed
	5.4.2.2	Port of Tilbury London Limited	Draft
	5.4.2.3	Thurrock Power Limited	Draft
Statutory Undertakers, Utility Owners, and Regulators	5.4.3.2	Barking Power Limited	Draft
	5.4.3.3	Cadent Gas	Draft
	5.4.3.6	Essex and Suffolk Water	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.8	EXA Infrastructure	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.9	Health and Safety Executive	Draft
	5.4.3.10	HS1 Limited	Draft
	5.4.3.14	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	Draft
	5.4.3.15	NextGen Access	Draft
	5.4.3.16	Openreach Limited	Draft
	5.4.3.17	Royal Mail Group	Agreed
	5.4.3.18	Southern Gas Networks plc	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.21	UK Power Networks	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.22	Verizon UK Limited	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.23	Virgin Media Limited	Draft Agreed
	5.4.3.24	Vodafone Limited	Draft
5.4.3.25	Zayo Group UK Limited	Draft Agreed	
Local authorities and transport bodies	5.4.4.1	Basildon Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.2	Brentwood Borough Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.3	Dartford Borough Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.5	Essex County Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.6	Gravesham Borough Council	Draft
	5.4.4.7	Kent County Council	Draft
	5.4.4.8	London Borough of Havering	Draft

Cohort	Document Reference	Stakeholder	Status
	5.4.4.10	Medway Borough Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.11	Transport for London	Draft Agreed
	5.4.4.12	Thurrock Borough Council	Draft
	5.4.4.13	Tonbridge & Malling BC	Draft Agreed
Community and Parish Councils	5.4.5.1	Cobham Parish Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.5.2	Forestry England	Draft Agreed
	5.4.5.3	Higham Parish Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.5.4	Shorne Parish Council	Draft Agreed
	5.4.5.5	Thames Chase Trust	Draft Agreed

Table 3.1 note: the following document ref numbers have not been used in the application and thus not referenced in this table – 5.4.3.1, 5.4.3.4, 5.4.3.5, 5.4.3.7, 5.4.3.11, 5.4.3.12, 5.4.3.13, 5.4.3.19, 5.4.3.20, 5.4.4.9 and 5.4.4.9.

4 Commonality

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 This Chapter of the document provides a summary of the material matters covered in each SoCG and demonstrates where there is commonality in the matters being discussed with stakeholders.
- 4.1.2 Table 4.2 shows (a) the topics covered by the SoCGs running along the top, and (b) the stakeholders running down the side. Within the matrix in the table, the colour coding represents (a) whether matters under the topic are broadly agreed, under discussion, or not agreed, or (b) whether the topic has not been a material matter in engagement. This is represented by colour coding as set out in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Commonality colour coding

Matters under the topic broadly agreed	
Matters under the topic broadly not agreed	
Matters under the topic broadly under discussion	
No matters raised at this point	

- 4.1.3 Table 4.2 has a primary purpose to assist the Examining Authority in understanding the topics which remain under discussion or not agreed, particularly such topics where the position is shared across more than one stakeholder. Therefore, the categorisation and colour coding in the matrix is intended to represent the broad position per topic (it is not absolute). In addition, footnotes have been used to indicate exceptions.
- 4.1.4 There are limitations with this approach: the summary does not identify particular matters within topics – and any commonality (or not) on those matters.
- 4.1.5 Table 4.2 will be updated for each issue of the Statement of Commonality.

Table 4.2 Statement of Commonality

	DCO and consents	Need for the project	Planning statement/policy	Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives	Consultation and engagement	Land and compulsory acquisition	Design – road, tunnels, utilities	Construction	Operation & maintenance	Charging	Traffic and economics	Wider network impacts	Sustainability	Socio-economics	EIA methodology	Air quality	Cultural heritage	Landscape and visual	Terrestrial biodiversity	Marine biodiversity	Geology & soils	Material assets and waste	Noise and vibration	Population and human health	Road drainage and the water environment	Climate	Cumulative effects	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Nitrogen deposition	Protective provisions
Environment Agency	Yellow			Green									Green						Green	Green					Red		Green			
Forestry Commission			Red	Yellow															Red										Green	
Historic England																	Yellow													
Kent Downs AONB Unit			Red	Red														Red	Red										Red	
Marine Management Organisation	Red																			Green										
Natural England	Yellow		Green	Red		Green						Green	Yellow		Yellow			Red	Red	Green	Green			Yellow	Green		Green	Red	Green	
Port of London Authority	Red	Green			1	Red		Red				Red	Yellow																	Red
DP World London Gateway											Yellow																			
Port of Tilbury London Limited	Yellow					Yellow		Yellow			Yellow	Red							Yellow											Yellow
Thurrock Power Limited							Green	Green																						Yellow
Barking Power Limited	Yellow				Yellow		Green	Yellow																						Yellow
Cadent Gas	2						Yellow																							Green

	DCO and consents	Need for the project	Planning statement/policy	Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives	Consultation and engagement	Land and compulsory acquisition	Design – road, tunnels, utilities	Construction	Operation & maintenance	Charging	Traffic and economics	Wider network impacts	Sustainability	Socio-economics	EIA methodology	Air quality	Cultural heritage	Landscape and visual	Terrestrial biodiversity	Marine biodiversity	Geology & soils	Material assets and waste	Noise and vibration	Population and human health	Road drainage and the water environment	Climate	Cumulative effects	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Nitrogen deposition	Protective provisions		
Essex and Suffolk Water	Yellow						Yellow	Yellow																							Yellow	
EXA Infrastructure	Green						Yellow	Green	Green																						Yellow	
Health and Safety Executive	Yellow																															
HS1 Limited						Yellow		Yellow	Yellow									Green	Yellow						Green						Red	
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited						Yellow	Green														Green				Green						Red	
NextGen Access	Green						Green																									
Openreach Limited	Green						Yellow																								Yellow	
Royal Mail Group	Green																															
Southern Gas Networks plc	Yellow						Yellow	Yellow																								
UK Power Networks	Yellow						Yellow																									
Verizon UK Limited	Green						Yellow	Green																							Green	
Virgin Media Limited							Yellow																								Green	
Vodafone Limited	Green							Green	Green																						Yellow	

	DCO and consents	Need for the project	Planning statement/policy	Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives	Consultation and engagement	Land and compulsory acquisition	Design – road, tunnels, utilities	Construction	Operation & maintenance	Charging	Traffic and economics	Wider network impacts	Sustainability	Socio-economics	EIA methodology	Air quality	Cultural heritage	Landscape and visual	Terrestrial biodiversity	Marine biodiversity	Geology & soils	Material assets and waste	Noise and vibration	Population and human health	Road drainage and the water environment	Climate	Cumulative effects	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Nitrogen deposition	Protective provisions
Zayo Group UK Limited	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green
Basildon Council	Grey	Green	Grey	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Brentwood Borough Council	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Red	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Dartford Borough Council	Grey	Green	Grey	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Essex County Council	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Grey	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Gravesham Borough Council	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Grey	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
Kent County Council	Grey	Green	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Grey	Red	Grey	Red	Yellow	Grey	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Red	Yellow
London Borough of Havering	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Grey	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Red	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Yellow
Medway Borough Council	Grey	Green	Grey	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey
Transport for London	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Grey	Grey	Red	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Red	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Grey
Thurrock Borough Council	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Grey	Grey	Red	Yellow
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Red	Red	Grey	Grey	Red	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Grey
Cobham Parish Council	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey

	DCO and consents	Need for the project	Planning statement/policy	Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives	Consultation and engagement	Land and compulsory acquisition	Design – road, tunnels, utilities	Construction	Operation & maintenance	Charging	Traffic and economics	Wider network impacts	Sustainability	Socio-economics	EIA methodology	Air quality	Cultural heritage	Landscape and visual	Terrestrial biodiversity	Marine biodiversity	Geology & soils	Material assets and waste	Noise and vibration	Population and human health	Road drainage and the water environment	Climate	Cumulative effects	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Nitrogen deposition	Protective provisions	
Forestry England		Green		Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow										Green						Red							
Higham Parish Council				Red			Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red			Red	Red		Green	Red			Red	Red			Red				Red	
Shorne Parish Council		Red		Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red			Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow			Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow				
Thames Chase Trust		Red		Red	Green	Yellow		Green			Yellow					Green		Red						Red							

¹Matters agreed except matter 2.1.29 which is under discussion and relates to a request for a detailed programme of applications from National Highways.

²Matters agreed except for matter 2.1.1 which is under discussion and requests Land Plans, dDCO and Schedules to be provided for review.

4.2 Commentary at the Pre-Submission Stage

- 4.2.1 At this pre-submission stage there is a reasonably high rate across the topics where matters remain under discussion. In many cases, this is because stakeholders are reserving taking a more specific position, because they would like the opportunity to review the application material, which will be available once the application has been submitted. Engagement across these matters has been considerable (as demonstrated by the Statement of Engagement, Application Document 5.2), but the stakeholders would like to review the final submission documentation before discussing their position further.
- 4.2.2 Table 4.2 shows that there are a large number of topics which are not of particular interest to some stakeholders. This reflects the reality that different stakeholders have different technical and professional interests, and/or particular spatial and local interests, which inevitably focuses interest towards particular topics:
- a. The Statutory Environmental Bodies are particularly focused on environmental topics, and less focused on Design, Operation and Maintenance, and Traffic and Economics matters;
 - b. The Business and Industry cohort is focused on a small number of issues;
 - c. For the Statutory Undertakers, Utility Owners and Regulators, common ground has been sought across DCO and Consents, Design (roads, tunnels, utilities), Construction, Operations and Maintenance, and Protective Provisions – most other topics have not been of consequence to these stakeholders;
 - d. Across the Local Authorities and Transport Bodies cohort, and community and parish councils cohort, common ground has been sought across the breadth of topics.
- 4.2.3 Across the suite of 42 SoCGs, at this application stage, there are some emerging areas of commonality on particular principles of the Project, across the breadth of stakeholders:
- e. 15 have taken a position on the need for the project, of which 11 (73%) are supportive of the project's need;
 - i. Of these 15, 11 are local authorities or transport bodies, 9 of whom are supportive of the project's need;
 - f. 15 have taken a position on the adequacy of consultation, of which 11 (73%) are satisfied with the adequacy of consultation;
 - i. Of these 15, 11 are local authorities or transport bodies, eight of whom are satisfied with the adequacy of consultation;
 - g. 17 have taken a position on the route alignment, of which 8 (47%) endorse the proposed route;

- i. Of these 17, 10 are local authorities or transport bodies, six of whom endorse the proposed route; and
- h. 10 have taken a position on the proposed charging regime, of which four (40%) endorse the proposed regime;
 - i. Of these 10, eight are local authorities or transport bodies, three of whom endorse the proposed regime.

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.
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 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.
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.
Operation	-	Describes the operational phase of a completed development and is considered to commence at the end of the construction phase, after demobilisation.
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.

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