

Lower Thames Crossing

7.20 Benefits and Outcomes Document

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List of contents

	Page number
1 Executive summary	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Benefits secured through the DCO application	1
1.3 Delivering wider benefits	2
1.4 Biodiversity	4
1.5 Work to date	4
1.6 Future projects	4
2 Introduction	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Purpose of this document	5
2.3 The need for the Project	6
2.4 The Project	6
2.5 Structure of this document	7
3 Benefits secured through the DCO application	9
3.1 Transport benefits	9
3.2 Other benefits	10
3.3 Mitigation and secured community outcomes	11
4 Delivering wider benefits	14
4.1 Introduction	14
4.2 Designated funds	14
4.3 Net zero	19
4.4 Sustainable travel	19
5 Work to date	21
5.1 Introduction	21
5.2 Detailed Proposals	23
5.3 Havering and Brentwood	23
5.4 Thurrock	24
5.5 Gravesham	25
6 Future projects	27
6.1 Introduction	27

6.2 Proposed measures.....27

7 Conclusions.....30

References31

Glossary32

List of plates

	Page number
Plate 2.1 Lower Thames Crossing route.....	8

List of tables

	Page number
Table 5.1 Projects with funding in Havering and Brentwood.....	23
Table 5.2 Projects with funding in Thurrock.....	24
Table 5.3 Projects with funding in Gravesham.....	25

1 Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document provides further information on National Highways' activities that are being delivered outside the framework of the Development Consent Order (DCO) for the A122 Lower Thames Crossing (the Project) and how these could deliver local benefits. It responds to issues raised during the pre-application stage of the Project where consultees requested further information on these matters.
- 1.1.2 It briefly summarises the Project's benefits that are both inherent to the scheme and secured through the DCO, and signposts to documents where these are set out more fully. It then describes National Highways' approach to delivering wider benefits that sit outside the DCO, but which nevertheless relate to the Project and National Highways' 'business as usual' approach to managing the strategic road network (SRN) and its impacts on local communities, and delivering benefits.

1.2 Benefits secured through the DCO application

- 1.2.1 The benefits and outcomes that are delivered and secured by the Project and through the DCO are set out in a range of other Application Documents.
- 1.2.2 Appendix D of the Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report (ComMA) (Application Document 7.7) includes the Economic Appraisal Report (EAR) and the Wider Economic Impacts Report. Together these set out the benefits of the Project which have been calculated using the Department for Transport's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG).
- 1.2.3 In total, benefits of £1,662 million are gained by those starting or ending their journeys in the Lower Thames area (Thurrock, Brentwood, Havering, Dartford, Gravesham and Medway) and benefits of £1,085 million are gained by those starting or ending their journeys in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region.
- 1.2.4 The Project will deliver a range of other planning policy, environmental and sustainability objectives. These are set out in a number of documents, including the Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1) Planning Statement (Application Document 7.2) and Sustainability Statement (Application Document 7.11).
- 1.2.5 Mitigation will be secured through DCO requirements as well as a number of documents, including the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (Application Document 6.3, Environmental Statement Appendix 2.2) which includes the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC), and the Section 106 Agreements – Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3).
- 1.2.6 The Section 106 Agreements – Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3) set out obligations that would deliver benefits to the local community. These include:

- a. Skills, Education and Employment – a strategy to create a skills legacy, bring people closer to jobs, inspire future careers and support business growth.
- b. A Community Fund of £1.89 million to support:
 - i. mental health and wellbeing
 - ii. local skills and employment
 - iii. connecting communities
 - i. environment.

1.3 Delivering wider benefits

- 1.3.1 To help ensure its roads work harmoniously with the communities that live alongside them, National Highways operates several dedicated funds – known as designated funds – to provide environmental, social and economic benefits to the people and businesses who live and work near to the SRN.
- 1.3.2 Between 2020-25 these total £936 million and are allocated to four funding streams covering safety and congestion; environment and wellbeing; users and communities; and innovation and modernisation. Around £30 million is allocated to the area around the Lower Thames Crossing.
- 1.3.3 National Highways works with many different partners to make sure its designated funds are reaching schemes that add real value for society. It welcomes applications for funding from both National Highways teams/projects and external organisations. These can include public, third and private sector organisations. All applications are subject to the same principles for funding.
- 1.3.4 The four funding streams are:
- Safety and congestion**
- 1.3.5 This fund contributes to improved safety, helping National Highways to achieve a ‘zero harm’ network – where no one travelling and working is killed or injured on its roads, by 2040. It is investing this fund in initiatives which tackle locations of high congestion on the roads and keep traffic flowing.
- Environment and wellbeing**
- 1.3.6 This fund is helping National Highways operate its business in an environmentally responsible way, while making sure sustainability shapes its work from start to finish. It has nine themes which support its vision of a greener, more sustainable road network: Biodiversity, Noise, Air Quality, Flooding, Water Quality, Carbon, Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Environmental Legacy.
- Users and communities**
- 1.3.7 As technology and travel evolves, this fund is helping us look beyond road journeys to do more for our customers and neighbours. It has six themes aimed at meeting their needs:

- a. Integration – with other local and national roads and modes of travel
- b. Walkers, cyclists and horse riders – new infrastructure to encourage sustainable, non-motorised forms of transport
- c. Roadside facilities
- d. Communities – support for those most affected by changes to the SRN
- e. Freight – improvements for the UK’s vital freight and road haulage sector
- f. Information – helping road users feel safe, make informed decisions and stay in control of their journeys

Innovation and modernisation

1.3.8 Through this fund, National Highways is exploring new ways to improve safety and journeys, connect the country and drive the economy. It has five themes which are revolutionising travel and work on its roads:

- a. Design, construction and maintenance.
- b. Connected and autonomous vehicles.
- c. Customer mobility – Providing seamless and sustainable journeys for customers through reliable, information-rich highways.
- d. Energy and environment.
- e. Operations – Unlocking capacity and making roads safer and better.

Net zero

1.3.9 National Highways is undertaking a number of studies, reports and actions to design and implement a path to net zero. These include a focus on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and freight; electric vehicle charging services and energy storage; and improving public transport on the SRN. These will contribute to making the Project net zero.

Sustainable travel

1.3.10 More locally, National Highways has established the Lower Thames Crossing Sustainable Transport Working Group (STWG) with a range of local partners. It is investigating sustainable travel and cross-river connectivity enhancements that could be delivered in future to complement the Project.

1.3.11 The STWG has proposed nine Stakeholder Priority Measures include ferry service improvements, feasibility studies for cycling and e-bike initiatives, and a Walking, Cycling and Public Realm Action Plan for Tilbury.

1.3.12 The information on each measure has been presented in a way that sets out the background information, scope of the proposals and the main objectives that could be achieved, supporting stakeholders to develop business cases for future investment from Designated Funds or third party funding streams.

1.4 Biodiversity

- 1.4.1 National Highways has established an Environment Working Group that is developing and delivering a programme of activity that increases biodiversity and habitat connectivity, enhances the landscape and improves public access to green space. The group has recently secured over £2.5m and is now focusing on identifying additional opportunities whilst also investigating the potential to secure Super National Nature Reserve designation for sites south of the River Thames.

1.5 Work to date

- 1.5.1 Projects around the Lower Thames Crossing are eligible for up to £30 million from designated funds and National Highways is working with partners to identify suitable projects, focused on five areas:
- a. Environment
 - b. Heritage
 - c. Employment and Skills
 - d. Sustainable transport
 - e. Community
- 1.5.2 The Project has established an overarching Benefits Steering Group and four Working Groups to oversee and drive forward some of the wider benefits work. These involve stakeholders from local government, and organisations focused on heritage, the environment, housing and economic development.
- 1.5.3 Agreed funding for projects in Havering and Brentwood currently totals over £1 million; over £3 million in Thurrock, and a further £1 million in Gravesham.

1.6 Future projects

- 1.6.1 National Highways continues to work with stakeholders through the established Working Groups to identify and promote measures that can be taken forward either as part of the DCO or through designated funds. A further £25 million is allocated to be spent on eligible projects over the next two years. The groups are focusing programmes including restoring Coalhouse Fort and wider heritage sites in the landscape and displaying heritage finds, creating a new country park in the Mardyke Valley, supporting the delivery of WCH infrastructure throughout the region, and developing proposals for sustainable transport improvements enabled by the Lower Thames Crossing.

2 Introduction

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 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).
- 2.1.2 National Highways is the government-owned, arm's length company which plans, designs, builds, operates and maintains England's motorways and major A-roads, known as the strategic road network (SRN). It manages and improves the SRN to make journeys safer, smoother and more reliable and its priorities are safety, customers and delivery.
- 2.1.3 Since 2015 National Highways has invested billions of pounds in new routes and extra capacity. It also plans and manages a programme of works to ensure its roads and the various structures along them are safe for users and operators.
- 2.1.4 Through its statutory planning role, it works with local authorities, developers, community groups and others to ensure their voices are heard. Through this work it helps create jobs, get housing schemes off the ground and keep the country moving.
- 2.1.5 National Highways has made 28 applications for Development Consent Orders (DCOs) and so is an experienced applicant. Its DCO applications form one part of its wider role in delivering economic benefits locally, regionally and nationally. Some of these benefits are delivered directly by its projects, some are secured through the planning process and others sit outside individual projects and form part of National Highways' wider responsibilities.
- 2.1.6 The same applies for the A122 Lower Thames Crossing (the Project). The Project will directly deliver a range of transport benefits through time savings and journey improvements. It will also deliver mitigation and outcomes that form part of the Project, or which are secured through legal mechanisms in the DCO (such as the proposed Section 106 agreements or other control documents such as the Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, Environmental Statement Appendix 2.2). Beyond that, National Highways will continue to deliver a range of other interventions through other funding streams outside the DCO process.

2.2 Purpose of this document

- 2.2.1 This document provides further information on National Highways activities that are being delivered outside the framework of the DCO and how these could deliver local benefits. It responds to issues raised during the pre-application stage of the Project where stakeholders and consultees requested further information on how National Highways' activities outside the DCO could deliver local benefits.
- 2.2.2 This document briefly summarises the benefits that are both inherent to the Project and secured through the DCO, and signposts documents where these are set out more fully. It then goes on to describe National Highways' approach

to delivering wider benefits outside the DCO consenting process, which relate to the Project, and National Highways' 'business as usual' approach to managing the SRN and its impacts on local communities.

- 2.2.3 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).
- 2.2.4 This Benefits and Outcomes Document 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.

2.3 The need for the Project

- 2.3.1 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).

2.4 The Project

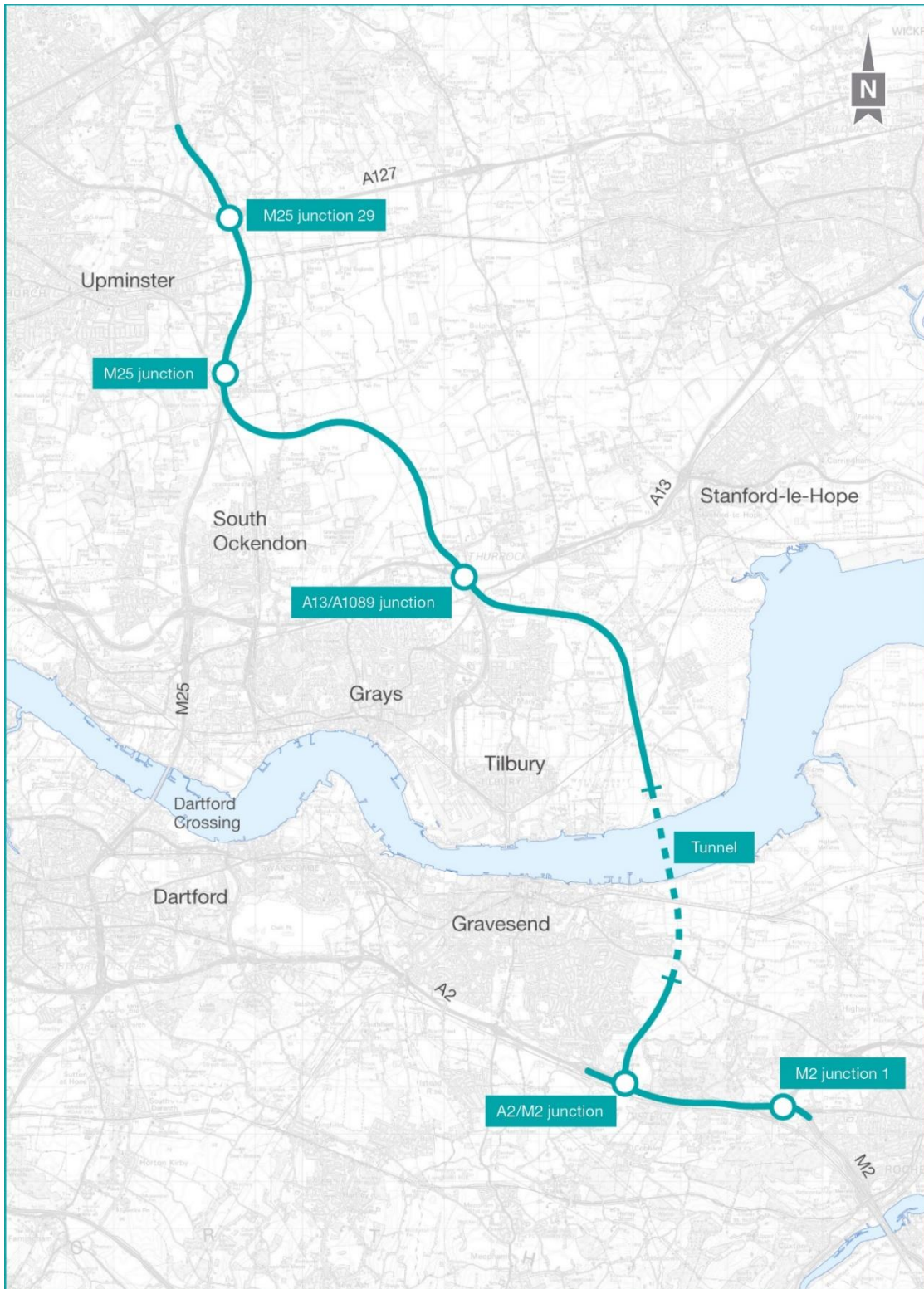
- 2.4.1 The A122 Lower Thames Crossing (the Project) would provide a connection between the A2 and M2 in Kent and the M25 south of junction 29, crossing under the River Thames through a tunnel. The Project route is presented in Plate 2.1.
- 2.4.2 The A122 road would be approximately 23km long, 4.25km 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 and junction 29 of the M25. 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.
- 2.4.3 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
- 2.4.4 To align with National Policy Statement on National Networks (NPSNN) (Department for Transport, 2014) policy and to help the Project meet the Scheme Objectives, it is proposed that road user charges will be levied. Vehicles would be charged for using the new Lower Thames Crossing tunnel.

- 2.4.5 The Project road 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
- 2.4.6 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 of the tunnel would include emergency areas. The tunnel would include a range of enhanced systems and response measures instead of emergency areas.
- 2.4.7 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.
- 2.4.8 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 mains, overhead electricity powerlines and underground electricity cables, as well as water supplies and telecommunications assets and associated infrastructure.
- 2.4.9 The Project has been developed to avoid or minimise significant effects on the environment. Some of the measures adopted include landscaping, noise mitigation, green bridges, floodplain compensation, new areas of ecological habitat and two new parks.

2.5 Structure of this document

- 2.5.1 This document comprises five chapters as described below:
- a. Chapter 3: Benefits secured through the DCO application
 - b. Chapter 4: Delivering wider benefits
 - c. Chapter 5: Work to date
 - d. Chapter 6: Future projects
 - e. Chapter 7: Conclusions

Plate 2.1 Lower Thames Crossing route



3 Benefits secured through the DCO application

3.1 Transport benefits

- 3.1.1 The benefits that are delivered and secured by the Project and through the DCO are set out in a range of other Application Documents.
- 3.1.2 The transport benefits of the Project are set out in the following documents:
- a. Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report (ComMA) (Application Document 7.7) and its Appendix D:
 - i. EAR
 - ii. Distributional Impact Analysis
 - iii. Appraisal Summary Table
 - iv. Wider Economic Impacts Report
- 3.1.3 The benefits of the Project are calculated using the Department for Transport's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and are split into three levels:
- a. Level 1 impacts include transport user and provider benefits, such as journey time savings, and non-user impacts, such as accidents.
 - b. Level 2 impacts include journey time reliability benefits and wider economic impacts such as investment, employment and productivity impacts.
 - c. Level 3 impacts have not been monetised but include further investment, employment and productivity impacts.
- 3.1.4 The Level 1 impacts are used to calculate the 'Core Benefit Cost Ratio' and the Level 1 and 2 impacts can be added up to create the Project's 'Adjusted Benefit Cost Ratio.' The key impacts are summarised as follows.

Level 1 and 2 impacts

- 3.1.5 Level 1 and 2 impacts are reports in the EAR (Application Document 7.7, Appendix D to the ComMA).
- 3.1.6 The EAR sets out a 'Core Scenario', where there are just over £2 billion of travel time benefits (over 60 years at 2010 prices). These are partially offset by increased vehicle operating costs and user charges and construction and maintenance delays. These reduce the net transport economic efficiency benefits to £1.8 billion.
- 3.1.7 Just over 40% of the travel time benefits go to businesses, and these are split 39% for HGVs and 61% for cars and Light Goods Vehicles. Commuters get just over 20% of the benefits, with the remainder (37%) going to 'other' which includes things like leisure travel. The benefits which go to car drivers in particular are heavily weighted to the local areas around the Project so will disproportionately benefit local residents.

- 3.1.8 The EAR also reports other Level 1 impacts (such as noise, air quality and greenhouse gases) and these reduce the net benefits to £1.3 billion in the Core Scenario.
- 3.1.9 Level 2 impacts include journey time reliability and wider economic impacts including agglomeration. These are estimated to total £1.98 billion (over 60 years at 2010 prices).
- 3.1.10 Agglomeration accounts for £1.375 billion of benefits with the remainder (£120 million) coming from labour supply impacts and the result of changes in output of imperfectly competitive markets.
- 3.1.11 In total, benefits of £1,662 million are gained by those starting or ending their journeys in the Lower Thames area (Thurrock, Brentwood, Havering, Dartford, Gravesham and Medway) and benefits of £1,085 million are gained by those starting or ending their journeys in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region.

Level 3 impacts

- 3.1.12 The Wider Economic Impacts Report, (Application Document 7.7, Appendix D to the ComMA), sets out the Level 3 impacts. These are qualitative rather than monetised and identify the potential for positive impacts from dynamic agglomeration. This identifies how making it easier to cross the River Thames could allow greater specialisation and relocation of businesses that would boost output, competitiveness and productivity.
- 3.1.13 The EAR (Application Document 7.7, Appendix D to the ComMA) sets out Level 3 impacts qualitatively, including adverse effects on landscape, townscape, historic environment, biodiversity and the water environment; and positive impacts on journey quality and affordability. It identifies large positive 'option values' for road users and development land. It also identifies resilience benefits and slight positive impacts from improved international trade.

3.2 Other benefits

- 3.2.1 The Project will deliver a range of other planning policy, environmental and sustainability benefits, set out in the following documents:
- a. Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1)
 - b. Planning Statement (Application Document 7.2)
 - c. Sustainability Statement (Application Document 7.11)
- 3.2.2 The Need for the Project document 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 how the Project contributes to the key Government policy objective of levelling up and how areas around the Project are amongst the highest Government priorities for levelling up.
- 3.2.3 The Planning Statement sets out how the Project accords with other national policies, in particular the NPSNN (Department for Transport, 2014). New national road network development can support regeneration, particularly in the

most disadvantaged areas, by bringing businesses closer to their workers, their markets and each other (NPSNN paragraph 2.6) and connecting major ports and rail terminals (NPSNN paragraph 2.13).

3.2.4 The Sustainability Statement (Application Document 7.11) recognises the importance of sustainability and sets out the key sustainability themes and outcomes for the Project. The key outcomes include the following:

- a. Improve the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by road infrastructure
- b. Improve land, water and air quality
- c. Serve to support a sustainable economy
- d. Represent good 'whole-life' value across the design life of road infrastructure
- e. Embrace innovation
- f. Reduce inequalities and ensure access to all
- g. Use responsibly sourced materials that minimise adverse impacts on people and their environment
- h. Be resource-efficient and reflect a circular approach in the reuse of materials
- i. Minimise greenhouse gas emissions
- j. Be resilient to future climate change
- k. Protect, and where possible enhance, the surrounding environmental and cultural context
- l. Be shaped by the opinions of communities and road users

3.3 Mitigation and secured community outcomes

3.3.1 Mitigation and enhancements are secured through a number of documents, including:

- a. The full set of documents with mitigation is set out in the diagram showing the control plan which is included within the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (Application Document 6.3, Environmental Statement Appendix 2.2), which includes the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)
- b. Section 106 Agreements – Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3)

3.3.2 The REAC (Application Document 6.3, Appendix 2.2) consolidates the mitigation commitments arising from the environmental impact assessment

process for convenient reference. The REAC identifies the good practice and essential mitigation commitments that underpin the environmental assessments. It contains environmental commitments that would be implemented during the construction and operational phases of the Project. The commitments listed in the REAC would be incorporated in the Environmental Management Plans produced for construction and handover stages of the Project in accordance with Requirement 4 of Schedule 2 to the DCO.

- 3.3.3 In this context, good practice means standard approaches and actions commonly used on infrastructure development projects to avoid or reduce environmental impacts, typically applicable across the whole Project. Essential mitigation means any additional Project-specific measures needed to avoid, reduce or offset potential impacts.
- 3.3.4 The draft S106 sets out obligations that will deliver benefits to the local community. These include:
- a. Skills, Education and Employment – a strategy to create a skills legacy, bring people closer to jobs, inspire future careers and support business growth
 - c. A Community Fund of £1.89 million to support mental health and wellbeing; local skills and employment; connecting communities; and the environment.

Skills, Education and Employment (SEE)

- 3.3.5 The Section 106 commits National Highways to produce a SEE Strategy and update it every two years. It also commits National Highways to require its delivery partners and supply chain partners to use best endeavours to:
- a. achieve a target of at least 20% of employees to be local people who usually reside within Gravesham, Medway, Thurrock, Havering and Brentwood
 - b. achieve a target of at least 45% of employees to be from within 20 miles of the Project or associated works (including employees within the five boroughs listed in point a)
 - c. achieve the following targets:
 - i. Training for local communities: 350 people
 - ii. Sector skills qualification: 500 people
 - iii. Apprentices: 437 people
 - iv. Graduates/trainees: 291 people
 - v. Newly employed: 500 people
 - vi. Pre-employment programmes: 650 people
 - vii. Education engagement: 5,000 hours

- viii. Support to educators 2,000 hours
- ix. Work placements 470 people
- x. Small and medium-sized enterprises spend £1 in every £3
- xi. Business upskilling 1,000 businesses
- xii. Supply chain payment Within maximum of 30 days

3.3.6 Delivery Partners and supply chain partners are required to develop their own Employment and Skills Plan to deliver against these targets and monitor against them and review them annually.

3.3.7 While this forms part of the Section 106 - Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3) it will deliver legacy benefits rather than directly mitigating a skills effect.

Community fund

3.3.8 National Highways will make available two community funds of £1.26 million and £0.63 million over seven years, to be administered by the Essex Community Foundation and Kent Community Foundation respectively.

3.3.9 These are to respond to where the Environmental Impact Assessment and other assessments have identified risks of significant adverse effects across more than one environmental topic area during construction or result in residual effects after direct mitigation. They are therefore characterised as mitigation, though in some instances will deliver benefits to whole communities.

3.3.10 Grants of up to £10,000 would be awarded to eligible community-led initiatives across four key themes:

- a. Mental health and wellbeing
- b. Local skills and employment support
- c. Connecting communities
- d. Environment

3.3.11 The Community Foundations will set up independent panels to make grant awards, with local residents having four of the eight seats on each panel (the others being representatives from local authorities, the Foundations and National Highways). The panels will make grant awards against an agreed set of criteria which are included in the Section 106 – Head of Terms (Application Document 7.3).

4 Delivering wider benefits

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 As the organisation responsible for operating and maintaining England's SRN, National Highways recognises its key role in ensuring its roads work harmoniously with the communities that live alongside them and the environments that surround them.
- 4.1.2 It operates several dedicated funds – known as designated funds – to provide environmental, social and economic benefits to the people and businesses who live and work near to the SRN. Through these funds it is:
- working with partners to protect biodiversity and prevent flooding
 - creating footpaths and cycleways alongside its roads, and working with local bodies and transport providers to integrate the network with other transport options
 - supporting local plans for clean air that involve parts of its network, and helping people make the transition to zero-emission vehicles
 - researching and deploying new technologies that have the potential to revolutionise travel on its roads
- 4.1.3 The designated funding totals £936 million from 2020 to 2025 and the area around the Project already benefits from it. The money is allocated to four funding streams focused on making improvements that will make the biggest difference and deliver lasting benefits. The four designated funds cover:
- Safety and congestion
 - Environment and wellbeing
 - Users and communities
 - Innovation and modernisation
- 4.1.4 National Highways is also at the forefront of decarbonising transport and is working to ensure users of the SRN will be net zero by 2050. Its priorities are to help roll out solutions to decarbonise HGVs and support the uptake of electric cars and vans. It will also continue its work integrating the SRN with other transport modes, while working to improve the efficiency of the network.

4.2 Designated funds

- 4.2.1 National Highways works with many different partners to make sure its designated funds are reaching schemes that add real value for society. It welcomes applications for funding from both National Highways teams/projects and external organisations¹. These can include public, third and private sector organisations. All applications are subject to the same principles for funding.

¹ Projects under the safety and congestion theme can only be spent on the strategic road network and only by National Highways itself.

4.2.2 These funds sit outside the Lower Thames Crossing Project and are not considered benefits as part of the planning balance. They form part of National Highways' 'business as usual' and are not directly linked to the DCO application.

4.2.3 Funding is awarded under the four themes described below.

Safety and congestion

4.2.4 The aims are:

- a. Achieve a 'zero harm' network – where no-one is killed or injured on the SRN – by 2040
- b. Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the SRN by at least 50% (against the 2005-2009 average baseline) by the end of 2025
- c. Reduce delays for people travelling on the SRN so that average delay per mile driven is no worse by the end of the second Road Period (2020-2025) compared to the end of the first Road Period (2015-2020)

4.2.5 What sort of initiatives is National Highways looking to fund?

- a. Route and junction improvements at high risk and high frequency accident locations
- b. New or improved signs and road markings
- c. Reviewing existing speed limits to see where National Highways can make these safer, and introducing measures to improve speed limit compliance
- d. Widening slip roads and approaches to junctions to increase capacity at traffic 'bottlenecks' and improve journey times
- e. Adjusting traffic signals at key junctions to optimise traffic flows
- f. Amending existing roundabout configurations

Environment and wellbeing

4.2.6 This fund is helping National Highways operate in an environmentally responsible way, while making sure sustainability shapes its work from start to finish. It has nine themes which support its vision of a greener, more sustainable road network:

- a. Biodiversity – Maximising biodiversity contributions from National Highways activities to help wildlife thrive, including creating new or enhancing existing habitats.
- b. Noise – Minimising noise to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the people living near the SRN.

- c. Air Quality – Reducing concentrations of harmful pollutants in the air to protect the health of neighbours and road users.
- d. Flooding – Reducing flooding on the SRN and minimising flood risks to the communities who live alongside them.
- e. Water Quality – Stopping harmful discharges running off the SRN into ground and surface water, while restoring damaged and modified waterbodies.
- f. Carbon – Supporting the Government’s ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, including cutting direct National Highways emissions, driving its supply chain to become more energy and resource efficient and helping road users lower their carbon footprint when they travel.
- g. Cultural Heritage – Preserving sites of special historic or cultural interest near the SRN, so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.
- h. Landscape – Protecting and enhancing the character of the landscape surrounding the SRN, helping roads in with their natural setting.
- i. Environmental Legacy – Delivering better environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes from National Highways’ road improvement projects, adding value long after the work is finished.

4.2.7 The aims are to:

- a. mitigate road noise for 7,500 households in ‘Noise Important Areas’
- b. ensure no net loss of biodiversity across all National Highways activities by 2025
- c. bring agreed sections of the SRN into compliance with legal NO₂ limit values as soon as possible
- d. reduce carbon emissions resulting from National Highways’ electricity consumption, fuel use and other day-to-day operational activities during the second Road Period (2020-2025).

4.2.8 What sort of initiatives is National Highways looking to fund?

- a. Enhancing the biodiversity value of its land by upgrading habitat types, such as 'improved grassland habitat', which are in poor condition.
- b. Increasing habitat connectivity by planting woodland that connects separate areas of existing woodland.
- c. Resurfacing roads with quieter surfaces.

- d. Installing noise insulation, such as acoustic glazing, in individual households.
- e. Safely dispersing and diluting pollutants generated along the road network to reduce concentrations of NO₂ at the roadside, including installing air quality barriers.
- f. Helping partners, including local authorities, to improve air quality in urban areas. For example, supporting authorities as they implement their local plans for clean air, including clean air zones in cities.
- g. Traffic management solutions and in-vehicle technology which reduce vehicle emissions. This could include trialling reduced speed limits in areas with poor air quality.
- h. Contributing to flood management schemes delivered by stakeholders and other third parties.
- i. Planting trees on National Highways land to absorb and store carbon dioxide emissions.
- j. Improving public access to heritage sites, and helping to bring the history of these sites alive through signs and information boards.
- k. Enhancing verges and road boundaries in areas of outstanding natural beauty, such as National Parks.
- l. Working with local councils to improve environmental outcomes when National Highways de-trunks roads. Roads are de-trunked when strategic traffic is permanently rerouted to bypass urban areas, and they pass from National Highways control into the control of the local authority.
- m. Preserving and exhibiting archaeological finds from highway improvement projects.
- n. Initiatives such as property level protection or flood barrier construction which further alleviate flooding risks for vulnerable communities.

Users and communities

- 4.2.9 This fund helps National Highways look beyond road journeys to do more for its customers and neighbours. It has six themes aimed at meeting their needs:
- a. Integration – Improving how National Highways roads integrate with other local and national roads and modes of travel, connecting the country through seamless journeys.
 - b. Walkers, cyclists and horse riders – Building new infrastructure, and enhancing existing facilities, to encourage sustainable, non-motorised forms of transport.

- c. Roadside facilities – Enhancing roadside facilities for anyone who needs to stop and take a break.
- d. Communities – Supporting the communities most affected by changes to the SRN, understanding their priorities and requirements.
- e. Freight – Making improvements for the UK’s vital freight and road haulage sector, which contributes £11 billion each year to the economy.
- f. Information – Helping road users feel safe, make informed decisions and stay in control of their journeys.

4.2.10 The aims are as follows:

- a. Achieve an 82% road user satisfaction score for the first two years of the second Road Period (2020-2025) with year-on-year increases in the following years.
- b. Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on National Highways roads by at least 50% (against the 2005-2009 average baseline) by the end of 2025.

4.2.11 What sort of initiatives is National Highways looking to fund?

- a. Improving bus passenger facilities to enable multi-modal journeys.
- b. Increasing the options customers have for multi-modal travel where it improves their journeys and reduces traffic on National Highways roads.
- c. Improving existing crossings or providing new ones. This could include improving connectivity to the Public Right of Way network.
- d. Improving or building new dedicated lanes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, safely connecting people to where they want to go.
- e. Supporting new and upgraded lorry parking where it is needed. This will help reduce illegal parking and improve journey experiences for commercial drivers.
- f. Improving the information customers have access to before they set off, and while on the road, so they can make informed choices about their journey.

Innovation and modernisation

4.2.12 Through this fund, National Highways is looking for new ways to improve safety and journeys, connect the country and drive the economy. It has five themes which are revolutionising travel and work on its roads:

- a. Design, construction and maintenance – Finding innovative and more effective ways to design, build and maintain National Highways roads.

- b. Connected and autonomous vehicles – Supporting the move to semi-autonomous and autonomous vehicles, while putting users' safety at the forefront of emerging technologies.
- c. Customer mobility – Providing seamless and sustainable journeys for customers through reliable, information-rich highways.
- d. Energy and environment – Saving energy, reducing National Highways' environmental impact and delivering value for money through sustainable road enhancements and renewals.

4.2.13 What sort of initiatives is National Highways looking to fund?

- a. Connecting drivers to real-time, personalised information through in-vehicle communications.
- b. Responding to the operating requirements of car sharing and ride hailing services.

4.3 Net zero

4.3.1 National Highways is undertaking a number of studies, reports and actions to design and implement a path to net zero. These include plans to:

- a. present a report in 2022 to the Secretary of State for Transport on global HGV technology trials and National Highways' proposals for UK trials
- b. report in 2023 how it can help reduce empty lorry movements
- c. publish a blueprint for electric vehicle charging services and energy storage by 2023
- d. publish a plan to improve public transport on the SRN in 2023
- e. support 'Project Rapid' which aims to deliver £950 million of charging infrastructure at motorway service areas in 2023
- f. investigate energy storage to support electric vehicle charging at motorway service areas in 2025
- g. have a preferred investment plan for HGV charging by 2028

4.3.2 These will contribute to making the Project net zero.

4.4 Sustainable travel

4.4.1 More locally, National Highways has established the Lower Thames Crossing Sustainable Transport Working Group (STWG) with a range of local partners – Thurrock Council, Essex County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, London Borough of Havering, Kent County Council, the Thames Estuary Growth Board, the Port of Tilbury, and the Port of London Authority. It is investigating sustainable travel and cross-river connectivity enhancements that could be delivered in future to complement the Project, and had its inaugural meeting in September 2020.

- 4.4.2 The STWG has proposed several local priorities and opportunities for feasibility studies for future funding applications. There were initially 79 proposals, including several proposals to enhance cross river connectivity. The Group has now agreed to pursue nine specific projects through an agreed sifting and shortlisting process. The nine Stakeholder Priority Measures include ferry service improvements, feasibility studies for cycling and e-bike initiatives, and a Walking, Cycling and Public Realm Action Plan for Tilbury.
- 4.4.3 The information on each measure has been co-ordinated in a way that aligns with the National Highways Designated Funds expression of interest form, to make it simpler for stakeholders to use much of the information when applying for contributions from this funding stream. Designated Funds are considered the appropriate mechanism for providing these measures, which fall outside of the remit of the DCO, but may be facilitated by it to lead to improvements in sustainable modes and forms of transport across the River Thames.

5 Work to date

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Over £30 million of designated funds have been allocated to Lower Thames Crossing and National Highways is working with partners to identify suitable projects, focused on five areas:
- a. Environment
 - b. Heritage
 - c. Employment and skills
 - d. Sustainable transport
 - e. Communities
- 5.1.2 The Project has established an overarching Benefits Steering Group and four working groups to oversee and drive forward initiatives that maximise benefits. The objectives of the Benefits Steering Group are as follows:
- a. To provide strategic oversight and make key decisions that support the shared ambition to maximise the wider benefits of the investment in Lower Thames Crossing, by working in partnership with others
 - b. To set up and provide support to specialist working groups that will identify and deliver initiatives beyond the core Project proposals
 - c. To maximise use of National Highways' designated funds, and other external funding sources
 - d. To identify where wider government policy interventions or investment are needed to maximise the transformational potential for the South East
- 5.1.3 Membership of the Benefits Steering Group has so far included:
- 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. SELEP
- o. Thames Estuary Growth Board
- p. Thurrock Council

5.1.4 Dartford Borough Council and Medway Council have also recently requested to join the group.

5.1.5 Working Groups have been set up across a number of delivery themes (listed below). These working groups comprise a combination of the stakeholders listed above. These Working Groups typically include stakeholders who have the powers to deliver the projects.

Environment Working Group

5.1.6 The working group is developing and delivering a programme of activity that increases biodiversity and habitat connectivity, enhances the landscape and improves public access to green space. The group has recently produced a Delivery Plan and secured over £2.5 million and is now focusing on identifying additional opportunities whilst also investigating the opportunity to pursue National Nature Reserve designation south of the river.

Heritage Working Group

5.1.7 The working group is developing and delivering a programme of activity that protects and enhances heritage, through restoration and conservation, and is also connecting communities with their heritage by supporting community-led archaeology and increasing interpretation.

Skills and Employment Working Group

5.1.8 The working group is developing a programme of activity designed to provide local communities with the skills that will be needed to deliver the project and the significant planned investment in the region.

Sustainable Transport Working Group

5.1.9 The working group is focussing on developing and delivering improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure, including improving cross-river transport connectivity. The group has also successfully identified a number of locations potentially suitable for future installation of electric vehicle charging points to encourage increased take-up.

5.2 Detailed Proposals

5.2.1 The remainder of this section sets out how National Highways is working with local partners in three geographic areas: Havering and Brentwood, Thurrock and Grays. Across these areas, over £5 million has already been allocated to projects under four themes:

- a. Environment
- b. Heritage
- c. Sustainable travel
- d. Communities

5.3 Havering and Brentwood

5.3.1 National Highways is already working with five key stakeholders (London Borough of Havering, Brentwood Borough Council, Essex County Council, the Essex Wildlife Trust and Forestry England) to deliver projects worth around £1.38 million.

Table 5.1 Projects with funding in Havering and Brentwood

Organisation	Project	Funding
Environment	Creating new or enhanced habitat, and improving public access to green spaces	
Essex County Council	Restoration of country park land through the introduction of conservation grazing at Thorndon Country Park and an extension to the conservation grazing at Weald Country Park	£308,000
Forestry England	Developing proposals for a community tree nursery and education centre at the new Hole Farm Community Woodland	£205,000
Heritage	Conserving and preserving local heritage assets, increasing access to heritage finds and improving regional interpretation	
London Borough of Havering	Preserving heritage features across Dagnam Park and helping the local community promote the history of the site through interpretation	£91,000
Essex Wildlife Trust	Preservation works at Warley Place by the restoration of the heritage-at-risk historic walled garden at Great Warley and improvements of the community interpretation of the site	£251,000
Essex County Council	Developing a strategy for displaying and storing archaeological finds	£10,000
Sustainable Travel	Increasing the options available for people to use alternative modes of transport	

Organisation	Project	Funding
London Borough of Havering	Undertaking assessments on two strategic cycle routes that would improve connections between sites within the Thames Chase Community Forest	£40,000
Essex County Council	Undertaking an assessment of a new crossing of the A127 near Thorndon Country Park to facilitate long-distance leisure routes	£20,000
Communities	Improving quality of life for communities	
Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)	Installing high-speed internet fibre to facilitate connections to rural communities at Great Warley and West Horndon	£455,000
Total		£1.38 million

5.4 Thurrock

5.4.1 National Highways is working with five key stakeholders (Thurrock Council, Essex County Council, the Essex Wildlife Trust, the RSPB and the Association of South Essex Local Authorities) and private landowners to deliver projects worth over £3 million.

Table 5.2 Projects with funding in Thurrock

Organisation	Project	Funding
Environment	Creating new or enhanced habitat, and improving public access to green spaces	
Thurrock Council	Delivering a new Masterplan for the Mardyke Valley Country Park	£15,000
Private landowner	Creating a wild seam through an arable farm to create a biodiverse habitat and improve connectivity to a SSSI	£600,000
Essex Wildlife Trust	Restoring habitats across the Chafford Gorges nature reserve and supporting the water vole population across Essex	£316,108
RSPB	Contributing towards anti-predator fencing being installed at Rainham Marshes to protect the ground-nesting birds	£50,000
Heritage	Conserving and preserving local heritage assets, increasing access to heritage finds and improving regional interpretation	
Thurrock Council	Developing conservation and management plans for heritage-at-risk sites throughout the district	£50,000
Essex County Council	Developing a strategy for displaying and storing archaeological finds	£10,000
Sustainable Travel	Increasing the options available for people to use alternative modes of transport	

Organisation	Project	Funding
Thurrock Council	Undertaking assessments on seven strategic cycle routes that would facilitate movements between communities, leisure sites and employment hubs	£190,000
ASELA	Improving 6km of coastal footpath along the north bank of the River Thames.	£900,000
Communities	Improving the quality of life for communities	
Thurrock Council	Investing in masterplans for six urban parks within Grays and Orsett	£100,000
ASELA	Installing high-speed internet fibre to facilitate connections to rural communities at North Ockendon	£455,000
Essex Wildlife Trust	Creating a community picnic area and birdwatching area adjacent to the new England Coastal Path	£265,000
Total		£2.95 million

5.5 Gravesham

5.5.1 National Highways is working with eight stakeholders (Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, Forestry England, Kent Downs AONB, North West Kent Countryside Partnership, RSPB, National Trust and West Kent Downs Countryside Trust) to deliver projects worth over £1 million.

Table 5.3 Projects with funding in Gravesham

Organisation	Project	Funding
Environment	Creating new or enhanced habitat, and improving public access to green spaces	
Gravesham Borough Council	Restoring grassland to create floristically diverse habitats in Gravesham, and creating a Masterplan for future improvements at Northfleet Urban Country Park	£88,000
Kent County Council	Improving the condition of woodland and establishing conservation grazing to restore grassland	£66,623
National Trust	Relocating self-established trees to restore an area of wood pasture and diversifying an area of chestnut coppice	£125,000
Forestry England	Restoring floral meadows and creating areas of wetland in a known great crested newt area	£293,889
West Kent Downs Countryside Trust	Improving the condition of woodland and creating a network of ponds in an area with great crested newts	£79,000

Organisation	Project	Funding
RSPB	Gaining hydrological control over Shorne Marshes and improving the soil at Northward Hill, for invertebrates	£218,813
Heritage	Conserving and preserving local heritage assets, increasing access to heritage finds and improving regional interpretation	
Kent County Council	Developing a strategy for displaying and storing archaeological finds across the region, and delivering a network of interpretation across Shorne Woods Country Park	£120,000
Gravesham Borough Council	Removing the invasive scrub from New Tavern Fort and introducing species that will not damage the structure	£36,000
Sustainable Travel	Increasing the options available for people to use alternative modes of transport to the private car	
Gravesham Borough Council	Identifying future enhancements to rural walking and cycling infrastructure	£10,000
Communities	Improving the quality of life for communities	
Gravesham Borough Council	Investigating how Cascades Leisure Centre could be powered by carbon-neutral means	£27,000
Total		£1.06 million

6 Future projects

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The projects that have already been funded, and detailed in the previous section, total over £5 million. The indicative allocation of designated funds for this area to be spent by 31 March 2025 is £30 million. There is therefore a significant amount of money that has not yet been allocated.
- 6.1.2 National Highways continues to work with stakeholders through the working group framework to identify and promote measures that can be taken forward through designated funds.
- 6.1.3 This section briefly summarises the programmes of work currently being promoted or developed by working groups but which have not (at the time of submission) yet received confirmation of funding.

6.2 Proposed measures

- 6.2.1 There are five key investment programmes that are currently under development:
- Improvements for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders
 - Improving access to heritage
 - Encouraging sustainable transport
 - Improving green spaces
 - Developing local skills and employment

Improvements for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders

- 6.2.2 As set out in section 5, work is currently being undertaken to assess the feasibility of delivering 11 new or enhanced routes along the scheme. These include:
- Potential upgrade of parapets on the Folkes Lane overbridge to improve the route for horse-riders between Folkes Lane Woodland and the new Hole Farm Community Woodland
 - Potential upgrade of a footpath to a bridleway, north of the B187 in London Borough of Havering
 - Improvements to routes leading to the proposed A127 overbridge connecting Moor Lane and Folkes Lane
 - New bridleway route south of Dennises Lane to Belhus Country Park in Thurrock
 - Potential new public right of way across Little Belhus Park, from Gatethorpe Drive to Dennis Road
 - Potential new bridleway linking Stifford Road to Belhus Chase
 - Potential new cycleway over the Mardyke, connecting to the Mardyke Way

8. Potential cycleway upgrade to the Aveley to Purfleet footbridge over the A13
9. Potential new shared-user route along Buckingham Hill Road, linking three existing footpaths
10. Potential shared-user route to extend the Muckingford Road bridge provision into Chadwell St Mary
11. Improved route from the Thong Lane green bridge into Gravesend town centre.

6.2.3 The funding also provided to date to Gravesham Borough Council to identify future enhancements to rural walking and cycling infrastructure is also likely to identify other potential projects that would be suitable for funding.

6.2.4 Approximately half of the remaining £25 million of unallocated designated funds is expected to be spent delivering these enhancements.

Improving access to heritage

6.2.5 The Heritage Working Group intends to continue to develop a regional interpretation strategy that will link both sides of the River Thames. This will likely include securing funding for a community archaeologist to work with communities to increase understanding of local heritage, improving how hard-to-reach groups are engaged, and developing a new heritage display centre.

6.2.6 A concept for a digital platform is also being developed; if successful, further funds will be sought to roll this out to enable communities to interact virtually with finds from across the region.

6.2.7 Unallocated funds will be targeted to deliver a programme of conservation and restoration based on the work being undertaken to date. This is expected to include investment in Belhus Park, Thorndon Country Park and Coalhouse Fort, subject to establishing agreement of its future use by Thurrock Council.

Encouraging sustainable transport

6.2.8 The ongoing work outlined in the previous section is also expected to lead to a number of proposals being developed by the Sustainable Transport Working Group. These are expected to include:

1. Upgrading the utility infrastructure needed to install high-powered electric vehicle charging infrastructure at 5 public recreation sites at Cascades Leisure Centre, Shorne Woods Country Park, Belhus Park, Jeskyns Wood and Thorndon Country Park
2. Potential extension of the Dartford Demand Responsive Transport system to serve communities north of the river
3. Developing the business case for introducing a direct bus connection across Lower Thames Crossing once construction is complete

6.2.9 Applications for funding will be submitted once the initial feasibility work is complete, subject to funding criteria being met.

Improving green spaces

- 6.2.10 As set out in Section 5, funding has been provided to develop Masterplans that will improve public access and biodiversity at 6 urban parks in Thurrock (King George's Park, Koala Park, Anchor Fields, Fielding Avenue, Orsett Heath & Chadwell Recreation Ground and Wickham Fields) in order to promote healthy active lifestyles and improve the public realm, and Northfleet Urban Country Park in Gravesham. This work is ongoing.
- 6.2.11 Completion of the Masterplans is expected to identify opportunities for further investment that align with the designated funds criteria and can be delivered by 31 March 2025.
- 6.2.12 A Masterplan has also been produced for the Mardyke Valley which aligns with the South Essex Estuary (SEE) Park vision created by Association for South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA).
- 6.2.13 If agreed by Thurrock Council, delivery of the Masterplan could secure up to £2.5 million of investment through designated funds that would include upgraded entrances, signage, woodland and wetland planting.
- 6.2.14 In addition to these initiatives, National Highways continues to work with local stakeholders to identify and bring forward additional measures that will maximise biodiversity and connectivity across the region.

Skills and employment

- 6.2.15 The Employment and Skills working group is continuing to identify and support a range of new and existing initiatives that can be supported along the route to upskill local communities. These are in addition to those secured through the SEE Strategy in the Section 106 - Heads of Terms (Application Document 7.3).

7 Conclusions

- 7.1.1 As a responsible applicant and the organisation responsible for operating and maintaining the SRN, National Highways is committed to delivering benefits both directly from the Project and from its wider role.
- 7.1.2 The Project will directly deliver a range of transport benefits, mitigation and outcomes that form part of the Project, or which are secured through legal mechanisms in the DCO. Beyond that, National Highways will continue to deliver a range of other interventions outside of the DCO process.
- 7.1.3 The Project will, therefore, leave a legacy of benefits that go beyond narrow planning requirements and last beyond the construction phase through to its ongoing operation.
- 7.1.4 These include the transport economic efficiency and wider economic benefits that come from the Project itself. The Project addresses real need – the long-standing traffic problems at the Dartford Crossing – and includes a wide-ranging package of mitigation and compensation that will address Project impacts and provide benefits such as skills and employment training.
- 7.1.5 As a responsible applicant working in the area, National Highways is using designated funds to address a range of issues that local stakeholders are concerned about, and that extend beyond the proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing. Using the designated fund framework, National Highways is delivering projects in the area that support the local community but which are not required or intended to address adverse impacts arising as a result of the Project. The objectives of designated funds are closely aligned with the concerns of stakeholders, such as heritage, active travel and public transport integration, biodiversity and other environmental concerns.
- 7.1.6 National Highways has demonstrated a track record of listening to stakeholders and responding. Following consultation, some issues that concerned stakeholders and that National Highways intended addressing through designated funds will now be addressed through secured mechanisms, such as including the SEE Strategy and the Community Fund as part of the Section 106.
- 7.1.7 National Highways will continue to work with stakeholders to support them in applying for funds and in ensuring that the Project leaves a positive legacy in the local community.

References

Department for Transport (2014) National Policy Statement for National Networks.

Highways England (2020) Designated funds plan 2020-2025.

Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
A122		The new A122 trunk road to be constructed as part of the Lower Thames Crossing project, including links, as defined in Part 2, Schedule 5 (Classification of Roads) in the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1)
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.
A122 Lower Thames Crossing/M25 junction		New junction with north-facing slip roads on the M25 between M25 junctions 29 and 30, near North Ockendon.
A13/A1089/A122 Lower Thames Crossing junction		Alteration of the existing junction between the A13 and the A1089, and construction of a new junction between the A122 Lower Thames Crossing and the A13 and A1089, comprising the following link roads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved A13 westbound to A122 Lower Thames Crossing southbound • Improved A13 westbound to A122 Lower Thames Crossing northbound • Improved A13 westbound to A1089 southbound • A122 Lower Thames Crossing southbound to improved A13 eastbound and Orsett Cock roundabout • A122 Lower Thames Crossing northbound to improved A13 eastbound and Orsett Cock roundabout • Orsett Cock roundabout to the improved A13 westbound • Improved A13 eastbound to Orsett Cock roundabout • Improved A1089 northbound to A122 Lower Thames Crossing northbound • Improved A1089 northbound to A122 Lower Thames Crossing southbound
A2		A major road in south-east England, connecting London with the English Channel port of Dover in Kent.
Application Document		In the context of the Project, a document submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the application for development consent.
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.
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.
Development Consent Order	DCO	Means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
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.
Highways England		Former name of National Highways.
M2 junction 1		The M2 will be widened from three lanes to four in both directions through M2 junction 1.
M2/A2/Lower Thames Crossing junction		New junction proposed as part of the Project to the east of Gravesend between the A2 and the new A122 Lower Thames Crossing with connections to the M2.
M25 junction 29		Improvement works to M25 junction 29 and to the M25 north of junction 29. The M25 through junction 29 will be widened from three lanes to four in both directions with hard shoulders.
National Highways		A UK government-owned company with responsibility for managing the motorways and major roads in England. Formerly known as Highways England.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	A framework published in March 2012 by the UK's Department of Communities and Local Government, consolidating previously issued documents called Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Practice Guidance Notes (PPG) for use in England. The NPPF was updated in February 2019 and again in July 2021 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
National Policy Statement	NPS	Set out UK government policy on different types of national infrastructure development, including energy, transport, water and waste. There are 12 NPS, providing the framework within which Examining Authorities make their recommendations to the Secretary of State.
National Policy Statement for National Networks	NPSNN	Sets out the need for, and Government's policies to deliver, development of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) on the national road and rail networks in England. It provides planning guidance for promoters of NSIPs on the road and rail networks, and the basis for the examination by the Examining Authority and decisions by the Secretary of State.
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.
North Portal		The North Portal (northern tunnel entrance) would be located to the west of East Tilbury. Emergency access and vehicle turn-around facilities would be provided at the tunnel portal. The tunnel portal structures would accommodate service buildings for control operations, mechanical and electrical equipment, drainage and maintenance operations.
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.
Project road		The new A122 trunk road, the improved A2 trunk road, and the improved M25 and M2 special roads, as defined in Parts 1 and 2, Schedule 5 (Classification of Roads) in the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1).
Project route		The horizontal and vertical alignment taken by the Project road.
South Portal		The South Portal of the Project (southern tunnel entrance) would be located to the south-east of the village of Chalk. Emergency access and vehicle turn-around facilities would be provided at the tunnel portal. The tunnel portal structures would accommodate service buildings for control operations, mechanical and electrical equipment, drainage and maintenance operations.
The tunnel		Proposed 4.25km (2.5 miles) road tunnel beneath the River Thames, comprising two bores, one for northbound traffic and one for southbound traffic. Cross-passages connecting each bore would be provided for emergency incident response and tunnel user evacuation. Tunnel portal structures would accommodate service buildings for control operations, mechanical and electrical equipment, drainage and maintenance operations. Emergency access and vehicle turn-around facilities would also be provided at the tunnel portals.

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