

Lower Thames Crossing

5.4.5.3 Statement of Common Ground between (1) National Highways and (2) Higham Parish Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared in respect of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the proposed A122 Lower Thames Crossing (the Project) made by National Highways Limited (National Highways) to the Secretary of State for Transport (Secretary of State) under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008.
- 1.1.2 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application Documents. All Application Documents may be available on the Planning Inspectorate website.
- 1.1.3 The SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties named below, and where agreement has not (yet) been reached. SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific matters that may need to be addressed during the examination.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared in respect of the Project by (1) National Highways, and (2) Higham Parish Council
- 1.2.2 National Highways became the Government-owned Strategic Highways Company on 1 April 2015. It is the highway authority in England for the strategic road network and has the necessary powers and duties to operate, manage, maintain and enhance the network. Regulatory powers remain with the Secretary of State. The legislation establishing National Highways made provision for all legal rights and obligations of the Highways Agency, including in respect of the Project, to be conferred upon or assumed by National Highways.
- 1.2.3 Higham Parish Council is a civil parish and electoral ward in the borough of Gravesham in Kent, England. The village lies just north-west of Strood, in the Medway unitary authority, and south-east of Gravesend.

1.3 Terminology

- 1.3.1 In the matters table in section 2 of this SoCG, “Matter not agreed” indicates agreement on the matter could not be reached, and “Matter under discussion” where these points will be the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties. “Matter agreed” indicates where the issue has been resolved.
- 1.3.2 It is agreed that any matters not specifically referred to in Section 2 of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to Higham Parish Council. As such, those matters can be read as agreed, only to the extent that they are either not of material interest or relevance to Higham Parish Council. However, if new matters arise Higham Parish Council reserves the right to comment on those matters as it considers appropriate.

1.4 Overview of previous engagement

- 1.4.1 A summary of the meetings and correspondence undertaken between the two parties in relation to the Project is outlined in Appendix C.

1.5 Status of the Statement of Common Ground

- 1.5.1 It is agreed that this statement is an accurate description of the matters raised by Higham Parish Council and the current status of each matter.
- 1.5.2 It is agreed that Appendix C is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) National Highways and (2) Higham Parish Council relation to the matters addressed in this Statement of Common Ground.

2 Matters

2.1 Matters agreed, not agreed or under discussion

2.1.1 Table 2.1 details the matters which have been agreed, not agreed, or are under discussion between (1) National Highways and (2) Higham Parish Council.

2.1.2 It is acknowledged there are some matters where further discussion may take place during the detailed design stage of the Project to finalise detail, but the matter is agreed in principle. Matters to which this applies have an asterisk (*) next to them.

Table 2.1 Matters

Topic	Item number	Higham Parish Council comment	National Highways comment	Document Reference	Status
Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives					
Route Selection	2.1.1	Higham Parish Council are still fundamentally opposed to the proposed route and believe that a tunnel from Dartford to Thurrock bypassing Junctions 1 & 2 on the south side of the river, as suggested during the debate on this crossing in the House of Commons in March of this year, is the best option as it would: (i) reduce congestion; (ii) maximise use of existing infrastructure; (iii) reduce pollution in and around the existing crossing approaches by creating an M25 through route,	The Project objectives were agreed through extensive discussions with the Department for Transport (DfT) and outline what the Project should achieve. The objectives are: a. To support sustainable local development and regional economic growth in the medium to long term. b. To be affordable to government and users. c. To achieve value for money. d. To minimise adverse impacts on health and the environment. e. To relieve the congested Dartford Crossing and approach roads, and improve their performance by	Need for the Project (Application Document 7.1)	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>leaving the existing crossing to take traffic to/from the A2 and A13; (iv) reduce the agricultural land take.</p>	<p>providing free-flowing, north-south capacity. f. To improve resilience of the Thames crossings and the major road network. g. To improve safety. Whilst objective (e) and (f) do not specifically refer to the south to north capacity, reduction in congestion at the Dartford Crossing and its approach roads; a reduction in journey time and improvements in resilience and connectivity alongside benefits to both the local and regional economy, are the principal benefits which would be delivered through the Project. The 'Need for the Project' (Application Document 7.1) sets out how the identification, selection and design process has responded to the Scheme Objectives and how a collaborative engagement process has been used to inform the proposed Project. The Project is predicted to result in a significant reduction in traffic flow at the Dartford Crossing, which will also lead to an improvement in air quality at that location.</p>		
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Design – Road, Tunnels, Utilities					
Extension of tunnel portal	2.1.2	Higham Parish Council support the extension of the tunnel but would urge National Highways to consider extending it further South.	National Highways have further amended the Tunnel portal design by extending it further south by 350m.		Matter Agreed
Layout of the A2/M2 junction	2.1.3	Higham Parish Council are concerned over A2/M2 widening and layout. Access to/from the A2/M2 between junction 1 and Marling Cross (Gravesend East) with the number of roundabouts especially as the Shorne/Cobham junction no longer has direct access results in the convoluted access routes on and off the A2/M2. The large number of roundabouts to be negotiated will deter drivers and will lead to congestion on a range of rat runs and associated additional traffic through the villages on what are mostly narrow rural roads. Higham Parish Council urge National Highways to look again at these routes and junctions.	National Highways has looked at the junction configuration and have provided more direct connectivity between Gravesend and the M2 eastbound & redesigned the Gravesend East junction and link roads to improve journey times and will reduce the impact on the local roads.	n/a	Matter Not Agreed
A226 junction	2.1.6	Higham Parish Council oppose the A226 junction and want to see it removed as soon as possible which in turn would alleviate some of their concern re increase in traffic, noise and pollution	National Highways removed the A226 Junction from the design in Nov 2017.	n/a	Matter Agreed
Reduction of lanes on the A2	2.1.5	Higham Parish Council note that the junction of the new approach roads	National Highways note the concern in relation to the A2 junction. The	n/a	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>with the A2 causes them significant concern. As they understand the proposals, Lower Thames Crossing will be removing the hard shoulder from the A2/M2 in this area. Travelling east, the A2/M2 will only have 2 lanes going straight on and not 3 lanes as at present. There will be a single lane effectively forming the start of the A289 and continuing as the A2 to Rochester, and a single lane going into the tunnel.</p> <p>(i) There is no resilience built into this junction. If there is an incident or an issue at Dartford, the proposals will become gridlocked and there will be a consequential ‘rat-running’ through Gravesham and the Medway towns. The Dartford Bridge is now closed on a regular basis because of very high winds and we expect that traffic will be encouraged to use the Lower Thames Crossing when this happens. Higham Parish council ask, how is the volume of traffic which will be diverted to the Lower Thames Crossing expected to be safely accommodated by forcing it into one lane?</p> <p>(ii) The A2 takes all traffic including agricultural tractors and trailers, which, depending on traffic conditions, already cause significant congestion. Reducing the number of lanes will make this worse;</p>	<p>junction has been designed in compliance with design standards and has been assessed using the Project’s transport model as well as more detailed microsimulation modelling to ensure the design is appropriate. In response to the further points:</p> <p>i) roads in the UK are not designed to accommodate traffic flows that may be experienced during an incident. National Highways acknowledge that during incidents there will inevitably be disruption, but the Lower Thames Crossing will mean that for many motorists there is a reliable way to cross the Thames. The bridge at Dartford is not closed regularly because of high winds, but for a variety of other reasons many of which are linked to the high levels of traffic using the crossing.</p> <p>ii) the number of lanes has been altered as the proposed design splits A2 and M2 traffic (two lanes for the A2 and two for the M2 (which become four once lanes from Lower Thames Crossing merge). The vehicle types mentioned would not be able to use the A122 or M2 links, and so would use the new A2 lanes which would provide connectivity to/from Brewers Road (eastbound only), the A2 into Strood and A289.</p>		
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		<p>(iii) The proposed flyover which carries the two 'straight on' lanes should be built as 3 lanes so that it has a hard shoulder, a break down at this point will cause significant congestion and, if your modelling is wrong (which we believe it is) it will be very expensive to correct the problem at your fifth-year review;</p> <p>(iv) The A2 is often congested from west of the M25/A282 junction to the M2. Creating a bottleneck at the junction with the new road will make this worse. The existing junction with the A289 causes significant tailbacks because of the need for traffic to get into one lane before the junction. The same happens with the junctions with the A227 and at Marling Cross (Valley Drive). At the latter junction, traffic currently queues on the A2 eastbound in order to exit and going westbound at busy times traffic drives through the service area and along the long slip road because of the tailback from the existing junction down the slip road and on to the A2.</p>	<p>iii) It is not a flyover and does have a hard shoulder. The Lower Thames Area Model (LTAM) has been built specifically to examine the forecast impacts of the Lower Thames Crossing on the road network. In areas close to the Project we have included a significant level of detail and made use of the capabilities of the software to reflect local conditions. We have as mentioned above also used detailed microsimulation modelling to assess the design at these complex junctions.</p> <p>iv) The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.</p> <p>An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.</p>		
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Footbridge over the tunnel approach	2.1.6	Higham Parish Council have concerns on the Public Rights of Way south of the river and urge National Highways to look again - particularly in relation to the foot bridge over the tunnel approach road near to the portals. Higham Parish Council believe this creates a massive risk in relation to people who might be inclined to jump from this point and believe if the tunnels were to be extended further south this problem would be solved.	National Highways amended the Tunnel portal design by extending it a further 350m and footbridge over the tunnel was diverted in January 2020	n/a	Matter Agreed
Lack of hard shoulder	2.1.7	Higham Parish Council question the lack of a hard shoulder through the tunnel - is this safe? will it cause major problems if there is an accident or breakdown(s) in the tunnel?	<p>Improving safety is one of the project's objectives. The Lower Thames Crossing would be an all-purpose trunk road, similar to the A13 and other A-roads. It is being designed and built to the highest safety standards recommended, but we will continue to adapt our proposals in line with new guidance.</p> <p>The new road's safety features would include vehicle detection, emergency areas, variable mandatory speed limits and lane closure signals in the event of an incident, such as a vehicle breakdown or collision. Control measures across the route, including in the tunnel, would identify vehicles stopping in a live lane and allow for rapid changes of traffic management to avert danger. In the tunnels, recovery services would be</p>	Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1)	Matter Not Agreed

			<p>provided for any stopped vehicle. Technology would also help the emergency services to access incidents. This includes signage that can be changed to alert road users of lane closures, speed restrictions and incidents ahead. If one tunnel is blocked, emergency vehicles could access incidents using the pedestrian cross-passages that connect the two tunnels at regular intervals.</p> <p>More information is presented in the Consultation Report (Application Document 5.1).</p>		
Construction					
Construction traffic impacts - A226	2.1.8	<p>Higham Parish Council expected the 'Local Refinement Consultation' to address issues raised in last year's consultation, but it has not.</p> <p>There are still no mitigation proposals for the proposed increase in traffic on the A226, which is particularly severe during construction.</p> <p>Higham Parish council believe that the current consultation says a lot about cycleway and similar provisions but ignores the fact that the existing provision on the A226 does not comply with current guidance and needs significant upgrading to make it safe to use with the existing level of traffic let alone with your predicted increase in increase in volume.</p>	<p>National Highways explained that works are required both north and south of the A226. A Transport Assessment (TA) of the construction phase forms part of the DCO (Application Document 7.9)</p> <p>National Highways is committed to an Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (OTMPfC) in the DCO, which will be developed post DCO consent (if approved) by the Contractor, in line with the controls in the approved Code of Construction Practice (CoCP). Where possible haul routes and the use of the strategic road network have been used for access to minimise use of the local road network. In some instances</p>	<p>Transport Assessment (Application Document 7.9)</p> <p>Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (OTMPfC) (Application Document 7.14)</p> <p>Code of Construction Practice (CoCP)</p>	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>Currently these cycle lanes are not used as much as might be expected, which is not surprising with large vehicles passing in very close proximity.</p> <p>The existing metalled surface should be of sufficient width to allow the proper provision of cycle facilities, its division into traffic lanes and cycle paths just needs reorganising and included in your proposals.</p>	<p>where alternatives are limited, the use of the local road network would be required.</p> <p>The OTMPfC outlines the arrangements for a Traffic Management Forum (TMF) to be formed with key stakeholders along with other interested parties invited as required. These will be held on regular basis and address cycle routes.</p>	<p>(Application Document 6.3, Appendix 2.2).6.3, Appendix 2.2).</p>	
Construction traffic impacts - A226	2.1.9	<p>Higham Parish Council would like to see the inclusion of a Traffic light system at Forge Lane/Crutches Lane junction.</p>	<p>Temporary traffic management measure proposals will be consulted on with the relevant highway authority as set out in the OTMPfC which refers specifically to the role of the TMF and traffic manager, with attendees, consultees and contributors listed. As such, the length, nature and duration of temporary traffic management measures will be discussed and relevant highway authority comments, issues considered and incorporated where reasonably practicable.</p>	<p>Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (OTMPfC) (Application Document 7.14)</p>	Matter Not Agreed
Duration of construction	2.1.10	<p>Higham Parish Council are very concerned regarding the impact of the lengthy works and long working hours which will mean six years of dust, noise and disruption for 12 hours minimum Monday - Friday. The use of the A226 as a main</p>	<p>National Highways has sought to reduce its impact on local community during its construction phase. Measures are included in the CoCP (REAC) to minimise the potential for dust, noise, and mitigation.</p>	<p>Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (Application Document 6.3, Appendix 2.2).</p>	Matter not Agreed

		<p>construction route will have a huge impact on the village.</p> <p>Higham Parish council ask, what are National Highways planned mitigation measures for the A226 during construction and operation?</p>	<p>A balanced approach between working hours and lengthening the overall duration has been made. The CoCP highlights the working hours strategy, with the aim to keep majority of works to core hours with the exception of certain works (e.g. tunnelling) which require longer working hours.</p> <p>Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration includes noise and visual assessments from construction activities including working hours from several perspectives (e.g. noise) which has informed mitigation measures.</p> <p>Dust and mitigation is also covered in the Environmental Statement Air quality assessment in Chapter 5.</p> <p>The OTMPfC also outlines measures available to our contractor to reduce the impact on the local community including journey time reliability, access, severance and safety. Once appointed, our contractors would produce a plan in accordance with the OTMPfC for their use when working on the new road</p> <p>The A226 Gravesend Road has been included in the Order Limits to allow</p>	<p>Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration (Application Document 6.1)</p> <p>Environmental Statement Chapter 5 Air quality (Application Document 6.1)</p> <p>Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (OTMPfC) (Application Document 7.14)</p>	
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			<p>temporary road-widening if required to maintain the safety of other road users while it is used by construction traffic.</p> <p>Construction traffic impacts will also be minimised by the Project introducing a right-turn-only movement for construction HGVs when exiting the Southern tunnel entrance compound.</p>		
Construction phase noise and Vibration – A2/M2 junction	2.1.11	Higham Parish Council have raised questions at Community Impacts Consultation specifically relating to the construction phase noise levels in the vicinity of the Three Crutches by the A2/M2 junction. Can we be provided with the promised response. We reserve our comments on these predictions.	<p>National Highways explained that Construction related road traffic noise effects are presented in the Community Impacts Consultation ‘Construction Update’ document, chapter 7, pages 215-243. Based on data available at the time, the change in road traffic noise level near Three Crutches by the A2/M2 junction is predicted to be less than 1dB(A), which is below the threshold of human hearing and as such the significance of road traffic noise during construction within this area would be considered to be negligible.</p> <p>Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and vibration includes further information and mitigation measures.</p>	<p>Construction Update document, chapter 7, pages 215-243 of the Community Impacts Consultation.</p> <p>Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration (Application Document 6.1)</p>	Matter Not Agreed
Construction phase noise and Vibration – Lower Rochester	2.1.12	Given that Lower Rochester Road/Chalk Road in Higham and their continuation as Lower Road in Shorne are not meant to be used for construction traffic according to the	National Highways explained that the increase in traffic flows and road traffic noise levels along Lower Rochester Road/Chalk Road in Higham in years 3 and 4 of the	n/a	Matter Not Agreed

Road/Chalk Road		draft Control Documents, Higham Parish council ask National Highways to please explain why these roads are expected to suffer an increase in noise levels in years 3 and 4 of the construction phase.	construction phase is likely to be due to non-project related traffic changing their route as a result of traffic management measures elsewhere. National Highways explained that the OTMPfC outlines the proposed construction routes and also proposed banned routes. P10 (Table 2.2) states that <i>the project will introduce a construction HGV ban on Lower Higham Road and provide a primary access to the A226 Gravesend Road Compound from the A226</i>		
Construction impacts - A226 by Gads Hill School	2.1.13	Higham Parish Council note that within the draft control documents, there will be traffic lights to facilitate construction vehicles entering and leaving the construction compounds 3 and 3a from/to the A226. Given the increase in traffic volumes resulting from construction traffic, Higham residents will have additional problems leaving their houses and local roads and crossing and joining the A226. Higham Parish Council perceive this to be a particular problem at the staggered crossroads formed by Forge Lane and Crutches Lane with the A226 by Gads Hill School. The Gads Hill School car park is accessed via Crutches Lane and used by parents to drop off and	National Highways explained that temporary traffic management measure proposals will be consulted on with the relevant highway authority as set out in the OTMPfC, alongside the Traffic Management Forum and traffic manager, with attendees, consultees and contributors listed. As such, the length, nature and duration of temporary traffic management measures will be discussed and relevant highway authority comments, issues considered and incorporated where reasonably practicable. There is a commitment from National Highways that HGV movements will not be allowed to pass school	Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		collect their children, as well as staff and visitors, so they do not park on the main road. Because of the difficulty in exiting Crutches Lane, some parents stop on the A226 to drop off their children, despite the school discouraging this. In addition, those children who walk to school have to cross the A226 at this point, as do those wishing to go to/from the bus stop in the vicinity. Higham Parish Council require this junction to be traffic light controlled both during the construction phase and subsequently.	entrances during drop off/pick up (p17 Table 2.3 Stakeholder Considerations within the OTMPfC)		
Construction impacts- traffic form the Crematorium	2.1.14	Higham Parish Council state that special consideration needs to be given both to the effect of the construction traffic on the funeral corteges and other traffic going to and from the Crematorium on the A226 and ease of access and egress for such traffic. This then needs to be carried forward to the operational phase when traffic levels are predicted to be even higher.	National Highways explained that special consideration will be given to the crematorium. National Highways is engaging with the crematorium and measures will be considered in collaboration with them so that disruption is kept to a minimum. Crematoriums are taken into account within the OTMPfC on p14 Table 2.3 under Stakeholder Considerations: <i>Access and egress is to be maintained throughout the construction period with the exception of night-time and weekend closures when required for specific planned works</i> <i>Advance warning and particular sensitivity around significant events, particularly evenings and weekends.</i>	Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14) on p14 Table 2.3	Matter Not Agreed

<p>Construction Impacts - Lower Higham Road</p>	<p>2.1.15</p>	<p>Higham Parish council feel that the various documents seem confused as to the use which is to be made of Lower Higham Road for construction traffic. To be clear we do not expect the Lower Higham Road to be used as an access point for compound 3a, especially given its narrow width. It should be used as an emergency access only</p> <p>Given that the Lower Higham Road is not wide enough for 2 HGVs to pass except at points where the road edge/verge/hedge has been worn away to allow two large vehicles to pass despite the fact that it is a recognised HGV route, we do not understand how a contraflow is expected to work during the period of the utility diversion works. The length of these works should be minimised, although both are shown as lasting 2 weeks in table A.3 of the outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction, this conflicts with their classification in Plate A.3. Please clarify your intentions and add to Table 4.3. Disruption should be kept to a minimum.</p>	<p>National Highways explained that the OTMPfC outlines the proposed construction routes and also proposed banned routes.</p> <p>P10 (Table 2.2) states that <i>The project will introduce a construction HGV ban on Lower Higham Road and provide a primary access to the A226 Gravesend Road Compound from the A226</i></p> <p>As regards the utility diversion works, the Statutory Undertaker has highlighted that the asset will not withstand the settlement calculated for the tunnel boring machine (TBM) passing underneath and as such needs reinstating in a resilient material. The impact to the actual highway will be the points of connection; in the absence of knowing the exact point, the size of the connection required nor the amount of traffic in proximity to the workforce, traffic management has been forecasted. Re the width, It is envisaged the works will be carried out in the verge or on the edge of the carriageway so National Highways will only need to close what is needed.</p> <p>The contraflow will consist of a short section of road which will be closed on one lane and traffic lights will be used to allow bidirectional travel along the remaining open lane.</p>	<p>Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)</p>	<p>Matter Not Agreed</p>
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			National Highways will continue to engage with Higham Parish Council to clarify the utility diversion works.		
Construction	2.1.16	Higham Parish Council would like to see the inclusion of the points made re cycle lanes, traffic lights, use of Lower Higham Road and access to the crematorium within the Control Documents – CoCP, oTMPfC, etc.	Commitments from National Highways have already been made regarding Lower Higham Road and the crematorium within the OTMPfC. National Highways explained that the OTMPfC has been produced following our work with the relevant local authorities, businesses and emergency services. Once appointed, our contractors would produce a Traffic Management Plan for Construction in accordance with the OTMPfC for their use when working on the new road.	Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed
Construction compensation	2.1.17	Higham Parish Council feel that National Highways consider ways to "compensate" local communities for the massive impact during the construction phase and the longer-term implications for residents once the tunnel and the approach road are operational.	National Highways notes Higham Parish Council's position on this matter. Since this comment was made there has been an establishment of a Lower Thames Crossing Community Legacy Forum to assess potential areas for enhancement which included Higham Parish Council representation and input. Some of the ideas raised in the workshops and other meetings have not yet been taken further but will continue to be developed as the project progresses. A Community Fund will also be established.	n/a	Matter Not Agreed

Construction – traffic management measures	2.1.18	Higham Parish Council would like to clarify what traffic management measures will be put in place to manage and alleviate the predicted higher levels of HGVs in the local area during construction	<p>National Highways explained that HGVs will be banned from some routes, as outlined in OTMPfC. The use of the strategic road network and local road network is required to deliver the works. Existing restrictions will be respected.</p> <p>National Highways explained that the OTMPfC has been produced following our work with the relevant local authorities, businesses and emergency services. Once appointed, our contractors would produce a Traffic Management Plan for Construction in accordance with the OTMPfC for their use when working on the new road.</p> <p>Temporary offline haul routes will be constructed directly off the strategic road network where possible.</p>	Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed
Construction traffic exclusion zones	2.1.19	Higham Parish Council would like to clarify the level of involvement they would have in the proposed traffic management measures for construction traffic.	<p>National Highways explained that Higham Parish Council will be represented at the Traffic Management Forum and will be able to raise any concerns during the works.</p> <p>The Traffic Management Forum as detailed in the oTMPfC, will work collaboratively to ensure appropriate planning and coordination of traffic management measures required for the Project construction works packages, and other schemes, would</p>	Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

			take place to avoid potential conflicts and minimise disruption to road users.		
Operation & Maintenance					
Smart motorway systems	2.1.20	Higham Parish Council wish to express great concern over the use of Smart Motorway Systems on the route. They note that whilst the Lower Thames Crossing is not categorised as a smart motorway as such, it is one in nature.	National Highways confirm that the proposed Lower Thames Crossing would operate as an all-purpose trunk road.	n/a	Matter Not Agreed
Tunnel service road	2.1.21	Higham Parish Council is not convinced that the service road to the tunnel will remain as a service road and are concerned it will suffer the same fate as the area around the Dartford Tunnel. Higham Parish Council require the area to be properly gated and controlled. Higham Parish Council ask National Highways to confirm that the access slip road arrangement on the Gravesend Road/A226 are still confirmed as maintenance usage only? and that no scope creep can happen after?	National Highways confirmed that the link road to the southern tunnel portal would only be for emergency and National Highways vehicles.	n/a	Matter Agreed
Charging					
Charging	2.1.22	Higham Parish Council would like a firmer confirmation (rather than an intention) that Gravesham residents will be entitled to discounts for	Schedule 12 to the draft DCO (Application Document 3.1) contains the powers for the Secretary of State to provide a Local Residents Discount Scheme on the same basis as		Matter Not Agreed

		journeys made through the tunnels as Dartford residents are now	Dartford (for Thurrock and Gravesham)		
Traffic and economics					
Traffic Modelling	2.1.23	<p>Higham Parish Council believe that the traffic flow modelling is fundamentally flawed as it appears to fail to take into account existing width restrictions and signposting.</p> <p>Higham Parish Council would like to know how the Project works will co-ordinate with the Nuralite works, A289 & Hoo Infrastructure Plan works & Swanscombe London Resort.</p> <p>Higham Parish Council would like to know if Lower Thames Crossing are doing any more modelling? Both for the construction phase and once the route is operational?</p>	<p>The National Highways model is built in line with guidance from DfT - the Transport Analysis Guidance and standards as set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. The model has been assessed by an independent assessor within Highways England and has been accepted as suitable for assessing the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing on the highway network. Whilst the model does include a range of detailed network parameters to reflect existing conditions, such a model can never reflect the conditions on every road, particularly those on the local road network.</p> <p>Updated operational modelling and more details of the impacts during construction were shared at the Community Impacts Consultation in summer 2021.</p> <p>The Project's Transport Assessment (TA) contains outputs and analysis of both the construction and operational stages of the Project using the latest modelling. This modelling represents updated analysis from that presented at Community Impacts Consultation.</p>	<p>Transport Assessment Application Document 7.9</p> <p>Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report Application Document 7.7</p>	Matter Not Agreed

Wider Network Impacts					
Long term monitoring	2.1.24	Higham Parish Council note the 3 year long term monitoring that will take place post opening but would like to understand how local communities can feedback after the initial opening?	<p>Monitoring would be conducted in the year before the Lower Thames Crossing opens to establish a baseline, then one and five years after the project.</p> <p>The management of the strategic road network is the responsibility of National Highways, and the remainder of the road network is the responsibility of other highway authorities, who work with local planning authorities. It is appropriate that authorities with accountability for the management of planning and the road network be formally consulted on the relevant matters. Other organisations will be able to make representation into the process through their local planning authorities.</p>	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed
Wider Network Impacts – A229/ M2	2.1.25	<p>Higham Parish Council are of the opinion it is essential that the wider road network is reviewed and that the improvements and upgrades are factored in, costed and funded - particularly the A227, A228, A229 and A249.</p> <p>Higham Parish Council appreciate that the wider network issues (e.g., A229/M2) are not within the scope of the Project works but, question what National Highways are doing to join up with Kent County Council to</p>	National Highways is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>dovetail works to produce the best overall result for the Kent network? Higham Parish Council, specifically LR con point out that the current proposals indicate that a lot of new vehicle movements resulting from the crossing can be expected around Junction 3 of the M2. Higham Parish Council have previously raised the need for this junction to be included in National Highways proposals but have been told that it was not part of the scheme and should not be included in our consideration. Higham Parish council are pleased that National Highways now appear to accept that this area will have increased traffic flows as traffic from the Channel Tunnel uses the A229 to reach the Lower Thames Crossing. The existing junction needs to be upgraded simultaneously with construction of any new crossing east of the M25.</p>	<p>An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.</p>		
<p>Wider Network Impacts – A2/M2</p>	<p>2.1.26</p>	<p>Similarly, Higham Parish Council have concerns that traffic will divert from Folkestone to use the A2/M2 and not the M20 to travel to/from the Channel crossings. The current two lane section of the M2 is already heavily congested at times and is not capable of taking more heavy goods traffic without bringing it to a standstill</p>	<p>The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making</p>	<p>Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)</p>	<p>Matter Not Agreed</p>

		(as it already is at times, even without an 'incident').	through existing funding mechanisms and processes. An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.		
Wider Network Impacts mitigation on local roads	2.1.27	<p>Higham Parish council understand that National Highways are predicting a significant increase on a number of roads in the general area, such as the A227, Henhurst Road, Pear Tree Lane, Thong Lane and urban roads such as Valley Drive and Hall Road. How will National Highways mitigate the effects of such increases (in some cases the increase is over 20%)?</p> <p>Higham Parish Council believe that the changed designs look likely to affect traffic flows and volumes in Higham Village and data supplied indicates that there could be increased traffic on the A226 traversing Higham and at the junction with the Wainscott Bypass.</p> <p>The increase in traffic flows leave Higham Parish Council greatly concerned about the impact on the small/narrow country roads which are not going to cope with increases both from construction traffic and normal</p>	<p>The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.</p> <p>An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.</p>	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>traffic levels once the Lower Thames Crossing is open let alone when a problem arises either in the Lower Thames Crossing area or at Dartford.</p> <p>There is concern about the model and National Highways statements about the unreliability/accuracy of outputs in relation to A226 and narrow, often single track, village roads Will National Highways share the outcomes of the modelling of the roads in Higham? i.e., the non-primary roads. How do National Highways categorise the A226?</p> <p>What are National Highways plans to mitigate the impact of increases in traffic flows in current low/medium flow areas? There will be an impact on Higham Parish Council residents even though these might be below the National Highways thresholds for concern?</p>			
Brewers Road junction	2.1.28	<p>Higham Parish Council believe that the inability of traffic at the Brewers Road junction on the A2 to join the A2/M2 eastbound it uses Pear Tree Lane and the A226, or the new local road to join the bypass and then effectively U turn at the A226 junction, means that there will be a lot of confusion and inappropriate traffic on local roads caused by drivers failing to turn off in time.</p>	<p>The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.</p>	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		Higham Parish Council would like to know National Highways plans to manage the fall-out on village roads from this? Is the Design frozen or will National Highways re-visit this?	An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.		
Rat runs	2.1.29	<p>Rat runs onto the village roads are of great concern to Higham Parish Council and they ask what can be done to minimise and mitigate these when incidents occur?</p> <p>In additional Higham Parish Council have concerns that Brewers Road junction will have to wait until 5 years after opening to assess if measures need to be taken, especially if National Highways are aware of the issues outlined here and in conversations over the last 2 years? Surely the 5 years after opening assessment is for unforeseen issues. Higham Parish Council ask whether National Highways have any plans for managing traffic flow within the centre of the village? (Villa Road, Forge Lane, School Lane, Taylors Lane, Telegraph Hill, +?) to ensure/enable local journeys to take place with minimum impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed, weight, width limits? • Traffic calming? • How would any measures be monitored/enforced? <p>Higham Parish Council also ask for the proposals for modification to the</p>	<p>The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.</p> <p>An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.</p>	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		junction of the A226/Pear Tree Lane/Villa road and whether National Highways anticipate these as temporary changes or permanent?			
Traffic forecasts	2.1.30	<p>Higham Parish Council are disappointed that there is no sign of traffic forecasts for most of the rural roads. There is some indication of increased levels of traffic on the rural roads - these are often narrow roads - which will have a massive impact on local residents. HPC are very concerned about increases to traffic movements in "normal" conditions, but when any incidents happen at Dartford now - the local networks are hugely affected. It is essential that the wider road network is reviewed and that improvements and upgrades are factored in, costed and funded - particularly the A227, A228, A229 and A249.</p> <p>Also the A229/M2 junction, which cannot cope with current traffic levels What are your plans for HE maintenance regimes for the roads which have increased volumes of traffic?</p> <p>Higham Parish Council are still very concerned about National Highway traffic model's predictions on increasing traffic on local roads which are not suitable for taking the proposed increased traffic flows, and</p>	<p>The Project is proposing to monitor the impacts of the Project on traffic on the local and strategic road networks. If the monitoring identifies issues or opportunities related to the road network as a result of traffic growth or new third-party developments, then local authorities would be able to use this as evidence to support scheme development and case making through existing funding mechanisms and processes.</p> <p>An updated Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan (WNIMMP) is included in the application, providing information about the proposed traffic monitoring.</p>	Wider Network Impacts Monitoring and Management Plan (Application Document 7.14)	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>also the potential for 'rat running' if there is an incident. When there are problems on the Dartford Crossing at present, we already experience this as drivers (including HGVs) try to avoid the congestion on the A2. In these circumstances, HGV drivers seem to ignore road restrictions, such as width and weight limits causing significant blockages on local roads. More thought, planning and consideration is needed about this. We have also observed that the model changes traffic flows in places which are not logical (e.g somewhere without a traffic junction) which still causes us to question the veracity of the model (as does the reduction in through lanes mentioned above).</p>			
EIA methodology					
EIA Assessment Method	2.1.31	<p>Higham Parish Council understand that the Environmental Impact Assessments have not been completed and that further matters may require consideration following announcements expected this autumn related to mitigating any effects of infrastructure projects on Climate Change. Will there be further consultation on environmental matters once the assessments have been finalised? Higham Parish Council disagree that ancient woodland with its eco systems at a micro level developed over a century</p>	<p>National Highways explained that an Environmental Impact Assessment is an iterative process and once completed will form the Environmental Statement of the DCO Application. There will not be further consultation on the extent of effects.</p> <p>National Highways agree that an ancient woodland could not be moved without impact, and that Lower Thames Crossing presents a significant environmental effect on the ancient woodland. National Highways</p>		Matter Not Agreed

		or more can just be uplifted and placed elsewhere.	propose to provide a level of compensation, with an understanding that it is not possible to fully compensate for the loss of ancient woodland. National Highways are proposing to salvage the soils and use them in the woodland habitat which will be created in the area.		
Air quality					
Air Quality mitigation	2.1.32	Higham Parish Council note that the Air Quality assessments show very high levels just south of the parish at the existing A2/M2 junction which are likely to breach air quality standards. Except on the stillest of days, air movement is likely to move the pollution around to the detriment of parishioners. The scheme should be designed so that it does not cause air quality standards to be breached in the first 15 years of operation. Higham Parish Council ask, what mitigation will be undertaken to stop this breach of air quality standards?	National Highways explained that a detailed air quality modelling assessment is being undertaken to assess the potential air quality impacts of the Lower Thames Crossing during construction and operation. If Lower Thames Crossing is predicted to result in significant air quality effects according to the guidance by which road infrastructure projects are assessed in England, then mitigation would be required. The project would then need to demonstrate that the mitigation is effective and can remove the significant effect. For air quality, mitigation measures may include techniques such as the use of roadside barriers or managed speed limits. The air quality effects of the project, including the significance and mitigation requirements will be fully detailed in the Environmental	Environmental Statement Chapter 5 Air quality (Application Document 6.1)	Matter Not Agreed

			Statement as part of the DCO application.		
Air Quality impacts	2.1.33	Although the preliminary air quality assessment shows that levels of air pollutants comfortably meet air quality standards outside Gads Hill School and at other points along the A226, Higham Parish Council are still concerned.	<p>National Highways explained that the preliminary air quality assessment undertaken to date shows that levels of air pollutants comfortably meet air quality standards on the A226 with the Project (in vicinity of Gads Hill School). Further air quality modelling and assessment work will be undertaken for the Environmental Statement, and mitigation would be required should any changes in air quality be considered significant according to national policy and guidance.</p> <p>There will also be a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) with more information specifically on air quality and human health.</p>	Environmental Statement Chapter 5 Air quality (Application Document 6.1)	Matter Not Agreed
Air Quality assessments	2.1.34	Higham Parish Council feel that National Highways have not appeared to have considered other pollutants, e.g., CO2 and particulates. Higham Parish Council have asked National Highways to please provide this data	National Highways explained that the preliminary air quality assessment considered the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing on nitrogen dioxide and particulates at human health locations (e.g. houses). These are the only air pollutants of concern associated with traffic. emissions in the UK, when considering the risk of exceedances of air quality standards and limit values. The impact of the Lower Thames Crossing on nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (PM2.5	Environmental Statement Chapter 5 Air quality (Application Document 6.1)	Matter Not Agreed

			and PM10) will be presented in the Air Quality chapter of the Environmental Statement. Impacts of the Lower Thames Crossing on carbon dioxide emissions will be considered in the Climate chapter of the Environment Statement.		
Landscape and visual					
Impact on Thong Village	2.1.35	Higham Parish Council have concerns about the impact on Thong village and would like to see more cut and cover on as much of the route as possible between the tunnel and the A2/M2	National Highways explained that environmental mitigation has provided for Thong Village, but has been balanced against the existing heritage requirements for the village’s conservation area. Earthworks and a wide belt of woodland planting has been designed to the south-west of the village to screen views of the junction. Open views to the west of the village have been retained where Lower Thames Crossing has gone into cutting. This is a key characteristic of the conservation area and the local landscape area as its historically had open views. The level of tunnel lighting at the tunnel entry and exit portals (referred to as the “Threshold” zones) will be set in response to the external lighting levels recorded at the tunnel approaches and exits. This is done to allow drivers eyes to best adjust to their new environment, i.e. to prevent a “black hole” effect upon entering the tunnel and thereafter to prevent the “dazzling” effect when exiting the	n/a	Matter Agreed

			tunnel environment and re-emerging into natural daylight conditions.		
Landscaping safeguarding	2.1.36	Higham Parish Council are not convinced that the amount of land put aside is reasonable and would like assurances to be given that the land earmarked for tree planting etc will have some form of long term commitment (legally binding) - so that it is kept for this purpose and will never be used for development - Businesses or Housing Development. There needs to be a long term management plan for these areas	<p>National Highways will be responsible for long term management and maintenance of environmental mitigation unless it is agreed with a third party (usually another statutory body, such as Natural England, Forestry England, etc) for them to manage at a later date.</p> <p>National Highways won't apply for planning consent for change of use of those environmental mitigation areas as the deviation from what is secured in the Development Consent Order would be a criminal breach of control for National Highway</p> <p>The land required for the Project has to be clearly defined for the Development Consent Order (DCO) application, and the reasons for the inclusion of compulsory powers and temporary possession for each plot of land has to be explained in a document called the Statement of Reasons.</p> <p>Any future development outside the land required to construct, operate and maintain the Project would be decided by the relevant local planning authority or other relevant approval body. For more information about local authority aspirations for future</p>	n/a	Matter Agreed

			development, refer to their relevant local plans.		
Terrestrial Biodiversity					
Ancient Woodland	2.1.37	Higham Parish Council do not understand how an ancient woodland can be relocated. These have developed in their own unique way over centuries as they have reacted to soil conditions, climatic events (such as the mini Ice Age), general natural events (such as storms) and human activity (e.g. collecting firewood), resulting in their current biodiversity and ecosystems. Destroying existing woodland will remove these environments for ever; they cannot simply be moved or replicated. A substantial amount of carbon will be released into the atmosphere increasing climate change emissions and any replacement planting will take decades to reproduce mature trees to replace the ones destroyed. Similarly, replacement sites for protected species will take many years to establish. They certainly cannot be properly established in the short period of time implied by the aim of opening the crossing in 2030.	National Highways explained that there is no proposal to relocate ancient woodland as part of the application. Where practicable, ancient woodland soils will be salvaged and used as planting medium in areas identified as ancient woodland compensation planting. This helps inoculate these areas with some of the fungi and seed bank present in these soils; a process which has been shown to produce a more diverse ground flora more rapidly than when areas are planting into a standard planting medium. The time taken for all ecological mitigation measures to become established and suitable for use by a range of species is taken into account within the Lower Thames Crossing impact assessment. Where habitats are required to translocate animals into, the establishment of these habitats is built into the Project programme before any translocation can occur.	n/a	Matter Not Agreed
Ancient Woodland – protection	2.1.38	Higham Parish Council state that ancient woodland compensation sites, protected species receptor sites and ecological compensation sites	National Highways explained that establishment periods have been identified for all areas of ecological mitigation / compensation and, where	n/a	Matter Not Agreed

		need to be closed off for all of them to become established and once established, public access should be restricted to protect the environments created.	necessary, public access is restricted to ensure this establishment is successful. Management of all mitigation areas would be sensitive to, and include the ability to address, recreational pressures. The management of these sites will remain the responsibility of National Highways. Where land is not required post-construction, this will be returned to the landowner in line with its condition at the time of compulsory acquisition. In many cases this will be a return to farmland.		
Chalk Park	2.1.39	The shape of 'Chalk Park' is somewhat haphazard, leaving areas which will be difficult to farm with modern machinery and thought should be given to regularising the boundaries and returning areas to farmland.	The shape of Chalk Park is defined by the existing contour pattern. Areas returned to farmland retain existing gradients that are currently being farmed at (albeit raised by a few metres). By regularising the boundary, we would probably lose areas of land to be returned to farmland, our intention was to maximise the area we could return.	n/a	Matter Not Agreed
Material Assets and Waste					
Material Assets & Waste	2.1.40	Higham Parish Council would like to see more consideration given to managing the noise and pollution during the construction phase. The amount of spoil produced during	Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and vibration includes noise and visual assessments from construction activities as well as the Code of Construction Practice and	Environmental Statement - Chapter 11 Material Assets and	Matter Not Agreed

		<p>construction will be huge - it is not clear how this will be removed from the site. Higham Parish Council would like to see this clarified and guarantees given that local roads will NOT be used to remove the spoil. Higham Parish Council ask whether spoil could be removed by rail or river?</p> <p>There is insufficient detail of how some aspects of the construction will be managed -e.g. removal of the spoil. The impact on the whole area will be massive for up to 7 years so HPC urge HE [National Highways] to consider ways to reduce noise and pollution during the construction phase. It is essential that the villages and urban communities are protected from construction traffic.</p> <p>Higham Parish Council ask if some of the spoil could be used for improvements to local roads?</p>	<p>REAC which provides mitigation measures on how noise and pollution will be managed during construction.</p> <p>The Outline Traffic Management for Construction (App Document 7.14) details how construction traffic will be managed to mitigate effects on the local community.</p> <p>National Highways have provided an assessment on waste which quantifies the likely material arisings (e.g. spoil) and applies measures to divert from landfill. This is in the Environmental Statement - Chapter 11 Material Assets and Waste (Application Doc 6.1). Environmental Statement App doc 2.2 - Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (App doc 6.3) will provide detail on committed mitigation such as location of stockpiles to act as noise and visual barriers.</p> <p>The Project has developed its commitment to river usage for material transportation and committed to a target for use of port facilities for transportation of bulk aggregates. This is defined in the updated Outline Materials Handling Plan (OMHP).</p>	<p>Waste (Application Doc 6.1)</p> <p>Environmental Statement App doc 2.2 - Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (App doc 6.3)</p> <p>Statement App doc 2.2 - Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (Application doc 6.3)</p> <p>Outline Materials Handling Plan (OMHP) (Application doc 6.3)</p>	
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Noise and Vibration					
Noise assessment for the A226	2.1.41	Higham Parish Council pointed out that there is no assessment as to increased noise levels on the A226 during construction. Higham Parish Council asked if this be provided, please?	National Highway explained that construction related road traffic noise effects are presented in the Community Impacts Consultation 'Construction Update' document, chapter 7, pages 215-243. Based on data available at the time, the change in road traffic noise level along the A226 within Higham is predicted to be less than 1dB(A), which is below the threshold of human hearing and as such the significance of road traffic noise during construction within this area would be considered to be negligible. The full road traffic noise assessment will be presented within the Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration.	Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration (Application Document 6.1)	Matter Not Agreed
Noise and Vibration	2.1.42	Higham Parish Council believe that Figure 2.16 within the Ward Impact Summaries is too simplistic. If there is going to be the predicted increase in traffic along the A226 and other roads as shown in figures 2.4-2.9 of this document, then there will be an increase in noise related to the increase in traffic which will adversely affect those living and working on these roads, as well as the schools. Please provide these assessments.	Based upon the currently available data, National Highways is of the opinion the increase in traffic flow along the A226 would result in an increase in road traffic noise of less than 1dB(A) based upon the 18 hour annual average weekly traffic (AAWT), which is below the threshold of human hearing and as such the significance of road traffic noise along the A226 would be considered to be negligible. Traffic figures 2.4-2.9 also show the morning peak, interpeak and	Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration (Application Document 6.1)	Matter Not Agreed

			<p>evening peak, whilst noise figure 2.16 is based on 18 hour AAWT.</p> <p>Noted, the intention was to make the ward summary information less technical to enable better public understanding of the local impacts. The full road traffic noise assessment will be presented within ES Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration.</p>		
Climate					
Loss of agricultural land	2.1.43	<p>Higham Parish Council object to the increasing land take from previous consultations, especially prime grade 1 and 2 agricultural land. The total land take appears to have increased by about 10% or 215 hectares over the last 12 months. This dramatic increase seems mainly to be because of sites for “ancient woodland compensation”, “receptor site[s] for protected species” and “Ecology compensation planting”. The country, as set out in the Governments Food Strategy, needs to produce at least as much food as it does at present and to increase production of certain foods. Taking land out of production for reasons associated with the scheme will lead to increased imports of food, more food miles, and potentially more lorries importing food travelling on roads through Kent. All</p>	<p>National Highways explained that the loss of productive farmland will be included as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment which supports the DCO application and will be considered by the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State.</p>	n/a	Matter Not Agreed

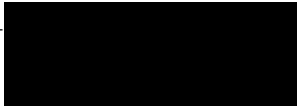
		of this will work against the government’s stated aim of achieving ‘Net Zero’. Land is a finite resource and not just there for the taking. As current global events show, combined with the shortage of HGV drivers both in the UK and Europe, the more food we can produce in the UK the more robust the supply of foodstuffs will be.			
Nitrogen Deposition					
Speed limit on M2, junctions 3 and 4	2.1.44	Higham Parish Council do not understand why National Highways consider a speed limit between junctions 3 and 4 is potentially needed as traffic will not be increased in this area.	<p>Traffic data shows that the speed limit is exceeded by some motorists on some sections of the road network. Driving at faster speeds increases nitrogen emissions, so by enforcing the speed limit on certain sections of road, average vehicle speeds can be brought down, reducing nitrogen deposition on nearby designated sites.</p> <p>Following our assessment of nitrogen deposition, we have been considering whether installing speed cameras on the M2 between junctions 3 and 4 (once the Lower Thames Crossing is open would be effective in encouraging road users to drive at the legal speed limit, on top of existing enforcement measures. This would provide additional encouragement for motorists to obey speed limits, on top of existing speed enforcement</p>	n/a	Matter Not Agreed


			<p>measures. This location has been chosen because our traffic modelling shows that some motorists are likely to exceed the speed limit here when the Lower Thames Crossing is open. There would be no change to the speed limit, which would help maintain traffic flows and journey times. National Highways are reviewing whether additional speed enforcement measures at this location would be feasible, taking into account all relevant considerations (e.g.cost, technical feasibility).</p>		
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3 Agreement on this Statement of Common Ground

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

3.1.1 **This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by (1) National Highways Limited and (2) Higham Parish Council.**

Name	Eva Simunovic
Position	Stakeholder Manager
Organisation	National Highways
Signature	

Name	John Grey
Position	Chairman
Organisation	Higham Parish Council
Signature	

Appendix A Documents considered within this Statement of Common Ground

A.1.1 A.1.1A summary of the documents which have been considered in the development on this SoCG outside of the DCO application documents are provided below.

a) Consultation materials released by the Project at the following stages of consultation:

- Route Consultation (Opened January 2016, closed March 2016)
- Statutory Consultation (Opened October 2018, closed December 2018)
- Supplementary Consultation (Opened January 2020, closed April 2020)
- Design Refinement Consultation (Opened July 2020, closed August 2020)
- Community Impacts Consultation (Opened July 2021, closed September 2021)
- Local Refinement Consultation (Opened May 2022, closed June 2022)

b) Consultation responses received from Higham Parish Council during the stages of consultation.

Appendix B Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Code of Construction Practice	CoCP	Contains control measures and standards to be implemented by the Project, including those to avoid or reduce environmental effects.
Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report	ComMA	The purpose of the Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report is to inform decision makers and stakeholders on how the evidence underpinning the business case has been developed, from the initial identification of the underlying problem through the collection of data and the production of any supporting traffic models and forecast impacts of the Project on traffic to the eventual economic appraisal.
Development Consent Order	DCO	Means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
Environmental Impact Assessment	EIA	A process by which information about environmental effects of a proposed development is collected, assessed and used to inform decision making. For certain projects, EIA is a statutory requirement, reported an Environmental Statement.
Health Impact Assessment	HIA	An assessment of potential impacts on human health. Not a legal requirement but good practice and will almost certainly be done for the Project.
Lower Thames Crossing	LTC	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.
National Policy Statement for National Networks	NPSNN	The NPSNN sets out the need for, and Government's policies to deliver, development of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects on the national road and rail networks in England. It provides planning guidance for promoters of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects 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 Projects	NSIPs	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.
Outline Materials Handling Plan	OMHP	A document which sets out the approach and high-level principles for handling construction materials and waste on the Lower Thames Crossing Project, both inside and outside the Order Limits.
Outline Traffic Management	OTMPfC	The outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (oTMPfC) has been produced to provide an outline framework and principles that will be applied for the design

Plan for Construction		and management of construction traffic management and transport logistics for the Lower Thames Crossing Project.
Public Right of Way	PRoW Network	A right possessed by the public to pass along routes over land at all times. Although the land may be owned by a private individual, the public may still gain access across that land along a specific route. The mode of transport allowed differs according to the type of Public Right of Way, which can consist of footpaths, bridleways and open and restricted byways.
Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments	REAC	The REAC identifies the environmental commitments that would be implemented during the construction and operational phases of the Project if the Development Consent Order is granted, and forms part of the Code of Construction Practice (Application Document 6.3, ES Appendix 2.2).
Statement of Common Ground	SoCG	A Statement of Common Ground is a written statement containing factual information about the proposal which is the subject of the appeal that the appellant reasonably considers will not be disputed by the local planning authority.
Traffic Management Forum	TMF	The TMF would review planned traffic management arrangements and receive comments as to their appropriateness. The TMF would also monitor, review, and provide updates to the TMPs when required.
Transport Assessment	TA	A document that sets out assessments of the transport implications of development, and Transport Statements are a 'lighter-touch' evaluation to be used where this would be more proportionate to the potential impact of the development (i.e. in the case of developments with anticipated limited transport impacts).
Wider Network Impacts Monitoring & Management Plan	WNIMMP	A document which sets out a traffic impact monitoring scheme to be carried out a year prior to opening (to establish a baseline) and one and five years after the road opens.

Appendix C List of engagement activities

- C.1.1 A summary of the meetings and correspondence undertaken between the two parties in relation to the Project is outlined in Table C.1 below.
- C.1.2 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) National Highways and (2) Higham Parish Council in relation to the matters addressed in this SoCG.

Table C.1 Engagement activities between National Highways and Higham Parish Council.

Date	Form of contact/ correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
26/07/22	Meeting	Discuss and review design and traffic and transport SoCG issues
29/06/22	Meeting	To review latest SoCG document and agree main issues are captured
10/05/21	Meeting	To go through design and alignment SoCG issues
09/04/21	Meeting	To go through traffic & transport & wider network issues
09/03/21	Meeting	SoCG workshop on traffic & transport issues

- C.1.3 In addition to the meetings listed in Table 2.1, there has been ongoing regular engagement between (1) National Highways and (2) Higham Parish Council since the preferred route announcement (PRA) in 2017. This includes project update meetings, Higham Parish Council attendance at consultation events (including previews), information sessions, mobile information centres (in Higham village and train station), community events, as well as email updates on all project developments and survey works.

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