



## Application by National Highways for the Lower Thames Crossing

Case reference: TR010032

### Examining Authority's Note of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI) undertaken on 5 and 7 June 2023 (USI-04)

#### Background to Site Inspections

Information about the background to and purposes of unaccompanied inspections by the Examining Authority (ExA) is provided in its note for USI-01 [\[SI-001\]](#) which can be found here. That note and the notes for USI-02 [\[SI-002\]](#) and USI-03 [\[SI-003\]](#) taken together describe the inspections undertaken so far. A summary key plan showing the routes of all unaccompanied inspections carried out up to March 2023 is in **Annex A** to the USI-03 note [\[SI-003\]](#). These inspections are in addition to those shown there.

#### Particulars of the Inspection

The ExA undertook its fourth unaccompanied site inspection (USI-04) on 5 and 7 June 2023, to support examination of an application for development consent for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) (the application).

The inspections were undertaken by the ExA: Rynd Smith (Panel Lead), Janine Laver, Ken Pratt, Ken Taylor and Dominic Young (Panel Members).

The purpose of the inspection was primarily to ensure that remaining elements of the application site to the furthest northern extent (generally adjacent to the M25 between junctions 29 and 28) and to the furthest southern extent (generally adjacent to the A2/M2 and in the environs of Bluebell Hill) were completed. Routes forming part of the wider road network connecting to the M25 and the existing Dartford Crossing were also driven.

The inspection was carried out over two days around Part 1 of the Preliminary Meeting.

The first day, 5 June 2023 (**Day 1**) was held in the local authority area of Dartford Council and the Greater London area (the London Boroughs of Bexley, Greenwich, Tower Hamlets and Newham). Members of the ExA travelling to Part 1 of the Preliminary Meeting in Stratford took the opportunity to observe strategic routes connecting East London to the M25 and the existing Dartford Crossing (north and) south of the River Thames and the existing Blackwall Tunnel.

The second day, 7 June 2023 (**Day 2**) was held in the Greater London area (the London Boroughs of Newham, Barking and Dagenham and Havering) and local authority areas of Thurrock and Brentwood Councils (unitary authorities and districts in Essex) and Dartford, Gravesham, Medway, Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone Councils (unitary authorities and districts in Kent). Members of the ExA observed strategic routes connecting East London to the M25 and the existing Dartford Crossing north of the River Thames. The ExA subdivided subsequent inspections. Dominic Young inspected existing

and proposed intersections north of the River Thames along the A13 corridor in relation to traffic effects and access to port facilities. A number of these locations were specifically referenced in the Relevant Representations from Port of Tilbury and London Gateway.

The route numbers recorded here are new and commence numbered in sequence from Route 12 (the final route in USI-03). Detailed mapping for individual routes and groups of routes within a common locality can be found in **Annex B** to this note.

## **Day 1**

Day 1 inspections were undertaken by car commencing at 2 pm and concluding at 3-30 pm. The following routes were taken:

### **Afternoon**

- Route 13: A2 westbound from the M25 Junction 2 to Kidbrooke by car;
- Route 14: A102 northbound from Kidbrooke to the Blackwall Tunnel by car (existing Thames crossing points and related routes); and
- Route 15: A12 northbound from the Blackwall Tunnel to Stratford.

The weather was clear, with excellent long-range visibility throughout.

## **Day 2**

Day 2 inspections were undertaken by car and on foot, commencing at 9 am and concluding at 4-15pm. The following routes were taken:

### **Dominic Young**

- Route 16: A13 eastbound from Stratford to M25 Junction 30; and
- Route 17: Intersections in Essex relevant to traffic effects and ports access.

### **Rynd Smith, Janine Laver, Ken Pratt and Ken Taylor**

- Route 18: A13 eastbound from Stratford to Aveley and local roads / B1421 to Thames Chase Forest Centre;
- Route 19: B187 east and northbound to Warley Street, A127 westbound, M25 Junction 29, Folkes Lane;
- Route 19.1: on foot from Folkes Lane Woodland carpark to proposed Hole Farm Community Woodland;
- Route 20: A127 eastbound, M25 Junction 29, B186 northbound to St Mary the Virgin, Great Warley; and
- Route 20.1: on foot from St Mary the Virgin, Great Warley to Hole Farm.

### **Rynd Smith and Ken Taylor**

- Route 21: B186 Great Warley to central Brentford;
- Route 22: A1023 Brentwood, M25 Junction 28, M25 southbound, A282 Dartford Crossing, A2 westbound, M2 Westbound, A229 Bluebell Hill;
- Route 23.1: on foot via Warren Lane and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) to Bluebell Hill proposed nitrogen site (western end);

- Route 23.2: by car and on foot via Lower Warren Road, PRow and Bell Lane to Bluebell Hill proposed nitrogen site/ consultation for exclusion (eastern end); and
- Route 23.3: by car and on foot via Rochester Road and PRow to Burham proposed nitrogen site/ consultation for exclusion.

**Janine Laver and Ken Pratt**

- Route 24: M25 Junction 29 to Dunnings Lane/ Fen Lane, Bulphan.
- Route 25: Fen Lane, Bulphan to Stifford Clays Road, North Stifford

The weather was overcast at the start, clearing by midday. There was good long-range visibility throughout.

The routes are itemised in the following tables.

**Route 13** (A2 westbound from the M25 Junction 2 to Kidbrooke by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at the M25 Junction 2	Route of the A2 westbound from the M25 towards central London, passing through the Dartford Council area and the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich.
Kidbrooke station interchange on the A2 westbound	The inspection ended at the Kidbrooke station interchange with the A102.

**Route 14** (A102 northbound from Kidbrooke to the Blackwall Tunnel by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Kidbrooke station interchange on the A2 westbound	Route of the A102 northbound to the Blackwall Tunnel and the northbound bore of the Blackwall Tunnel.
The A102/ A12/ East India Dock Road	The inspection ended north of the Blackwall Tunnel northbound bore portal, at the intersection of the A102 with the A12 and the East India Dock Road.

**Route 15** (A12 northbound from the Blackwall Tunnel to Stratford by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at the end of the A102 (Blackwall tunnel)	Route of the A12 northwards from the Blackwall Tunnel to Stratford.
Stratford High Street/ Bow Road	The inspection ended at the A12 intersection with Stratford High Street / Bow Road.

**Route 16** (A13 eastbound from Stratford to M25 Junction 30 by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced on the A13 eastwards of the A406 junction	Observed the flow of traffic east/west bound on the A13 with a particular focus on the approach to the M25 interchange.

**Route 17** (Intersections in Essex relevant to traffic effects and ports access) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at junction of the A13/A1089 and continued until junction 28 of the M25	<p>Observed the operational performance of the A1089 Dock Approach Road between Tilbury 1&amp; 2 and the A13.</p> <p>Observed the proposed construction route through the port as far as practically possible.</p> <p>Observed Fort Road, Gun Hill and Coopers Shaw Road</p> <p>Travelled eastwards via the A13 to observe the access arrangements and highway connections to DP London Gateway.</p> <p>Observations also made of junctions 28-30 of the M25</p>

**Route 18** (A13 eastbound from Stratford to Aveley and local roads / B1421 to Thames Chase Forest Centre by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Stratford. Local roads to B1421. Then to Thames Chase Forest Centre.	Observed the local road network/connections and wider environs of the application site. Observed proposed work areas around Ockendon Road (B1421).

**Route 19** (B187 east and northbound to Warley Street, A127 westbound, M25 Junction 29, Folkes Lane) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Thames Chase Forest Centre travel to Folkes Lane.	Observed the local road network/connections and wider environs of the application site. Observed proposed work areas around M25 J29.

**Route 19.1** (on foot from Folkes Lane Woodland carpark to proposed Hole Farm Community Woodland) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Folkes Lane Woodland Car	Observed M25 from footbridge. Observed proposed ecological habitat creation and receptor site (Work

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Park. Walk over footbridge to Hole Farm site.	E50) looking east. Also observed location for Work ULH01 and Work OSC12.

**Route 20** (A127 eastbound, M25 Junction 29, B186 northbound to St Mary the Virgin, Great Warley) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at a Folkes Lane. A127 east. Exit to B186. Head north/Warley Street to St Mary the Virgin church.	Observed the local road network/connections and wider environs of the application site.

**Route 20.1** (on foot from St Mary the Virgin, Great Warley to Hole Farm) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at access to church. Walk into ecological habitat creation and receptor site (Work E52) along footpath (heading west) past south side of Hole Farm then head north through farm complex. Continue north on footpath through Work E52.	Observed proposed ecological habitat creation and receptor site (Work E52) looking west and north.

**Route 21** (B186 Great Warley to central Brentford by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at St Mary the Virgin Church, Great Warley. Drive, heading north then north east on the B186.	Observed the local road network/connections and wider environs of the application site.
Travel through central Brentford including Kings Road and High Street	Observed the local road network/connections and wider environs of the application site.

**Route 22** (A1023 Brentwood, M25 Junction 28, M25 southbound, A282 Dartford Crossing, A2 westbound, M2 Westbound, A229 Bluebell Hill by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at central Brentford, travel west along A0123, join M25 at J28 traveling clockwise, A282 Dartford Crossing, leave M25 at Junction 2 heading east on A2/M2, exit to A229 at J3, enter	Observed the local road network/connections and areas of M25 and A2 where works are proposed.

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Blue Bell Hill Village to Warren Road	

**Route 23.1** (on foot via Warren Lane and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) to Bluebell Hill proposed nitrogen site (western end)) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Warren Road. Walk east through Warren Woods to western edge of proposed ecological habitat creation and receptor site (work E1)	Observed proposed Blue Bell Hill ecological habitat creation and receptor site (work E1) looking east.

**Route 23.2** (by car and on foot via Lower Warren Road, PRoW and Bell Lane to Bluebell Hill proposed nitrogen site/ consultation for exclusion (eastern end)) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Warren Road. Drive to top (east) of Lower Warren Road. Walk Byway to Bell Lane.	Observed proposed Blue Bell Hill ecological habitat creation and receptor site (work E1) looking north, and south/south east including areas of land proposed to be removed under the Applicant's Minor Refinement Consultation.

**Route 23.3** (by car and on foot via Rochester Road and PRoW to Burham proposed nitrogen site/ consultation for exclusion) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at Lower Warren Road. Drive west along Rochester Road/Pilgrims Way. Walk from bus stop in Burham (near Greenway Farm) to Burham ecological habitat creation and receptor site (work E2)	Observed proposed Burham ecological habitat creation and receptor site (work E2). (Note: land proposed to be removed under the Applicant's Minor Refinement Consultation.)

**Route 24** (M25 Junction 29 to Dunnings Lane/ Fen Lane, Bulphan by car) viewed the following:

Location(s)	Relevant Observations
Inspections commenced at the M25 Junction 29 and proceeded south along Great Warley Street/Warley Street(B186)	The intention was to proceed on foot into the Mardyke valley to inspect the proposed LTC alignment. This area was inspected from PRoWs by bike in USI-01, but Janine Laver and Ken Pratt did not attend that inspection. The Inspectors intended to pick up the Mardyke Way on foot from the intersection of Fen Lane/Dunnings Lane/Harrow
West on to St Mary's Lane (B187)	

<b>Location(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Observations</b>
South on to Clay Tye Road / Ockendon Road (B186)	Lane, Bulphan but no safe nor suitable location could be found to park the car that the Inspectors were travelling in to allow them to obtain easy access to the Mardyke Way Right of Way.  Having scoped the time available to park further away and inspect the Mardyke Way on foot via PRowWs, having regard to the long walking time required and the distance between publicly accessible areas and most of the proposed LTC alignment, the Inspectors decided to try and find an alternative point of access from the south. The Inspectors drove to North Stifford.
East on to Fen Lane to intersection with Dunnings Lane/Harrow Road	

**Route 25** (Fen Lane, Bulphan to Stifford Clays Road, North Stifford) viewed the following:

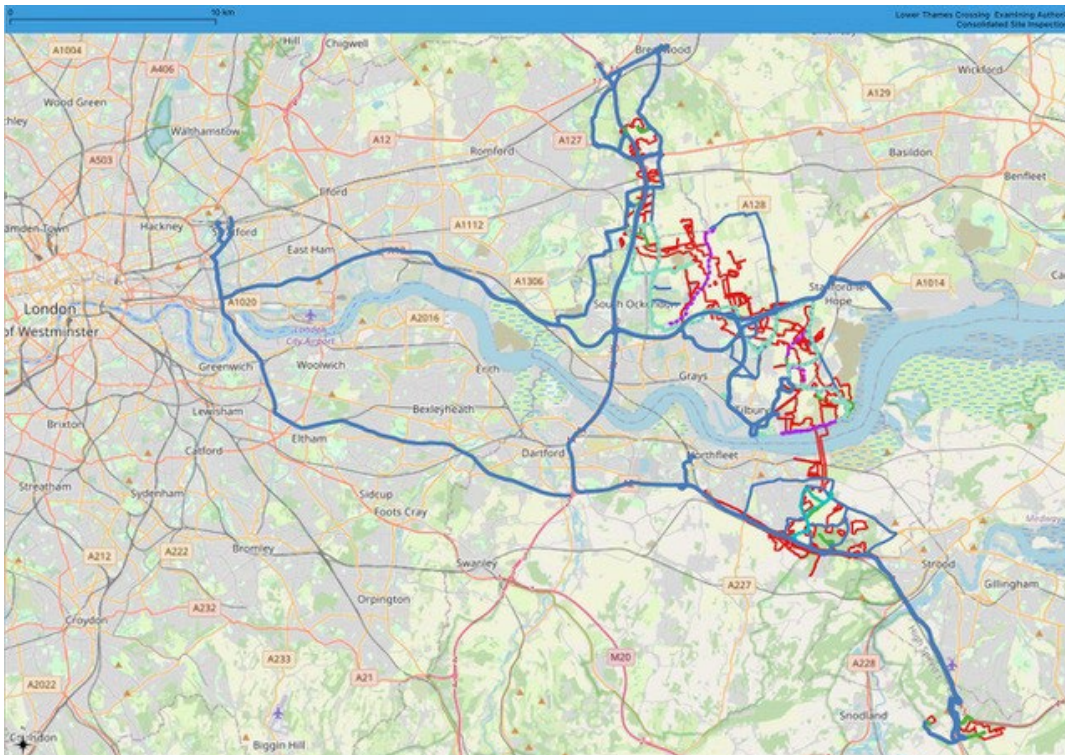
<b>Location(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Observations</b>
Inspections commenced at Fen Lane/Dunnings Lane, Bulphan	Arriving at Stifford Clays Road to the west side of Medebridge Road, the Inspectors followed a narrow vehicular track for about 150m and encountered a sign saying Private Road. This prevented the inspectors being able to park to access the Mardyke Way from the south side.  The Inspectors decided that as there was no suitable and safe location to park to commence their walk of the Mardyke Way they would not proceed with this element of the inspection. The ExA will make a request to the Applicant to facilitate access to the proposed alignment in the Mardyke valley from private land in due course, as part of an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI). We are also considering whether a footage taken from a drone overflight of this part of the alignment would assist.
Proceeded East on Fen Lane to Bulphan By-Pass (A128)	
South on Bulphan By-Pass/Brentwood Road to Orsett Cock Roundabout	
West from Orsett Cock Roundabout to A13 passing over Baker Street	
Exited at Stifford Clays Roundabout onto Stifford Clays Road/High Road	
Drove east on Stifford Clays Road past Medebridge Road.	

## Annex A

### Key

- Draft DCO Boundary
- Car-based inspections
- Inspections on foot
- Inspections on foot (USI)
- Inspections on bike

### Consolidated Site Inspections Summary Plan



All maps - Base Map Source: © [Open Street Map](#) Contributors (EPSG: 3857 – WGS 84) via QGIS (June 2023)  
Do not scale.



## Annex B

### Key

Draft DCO Boundary



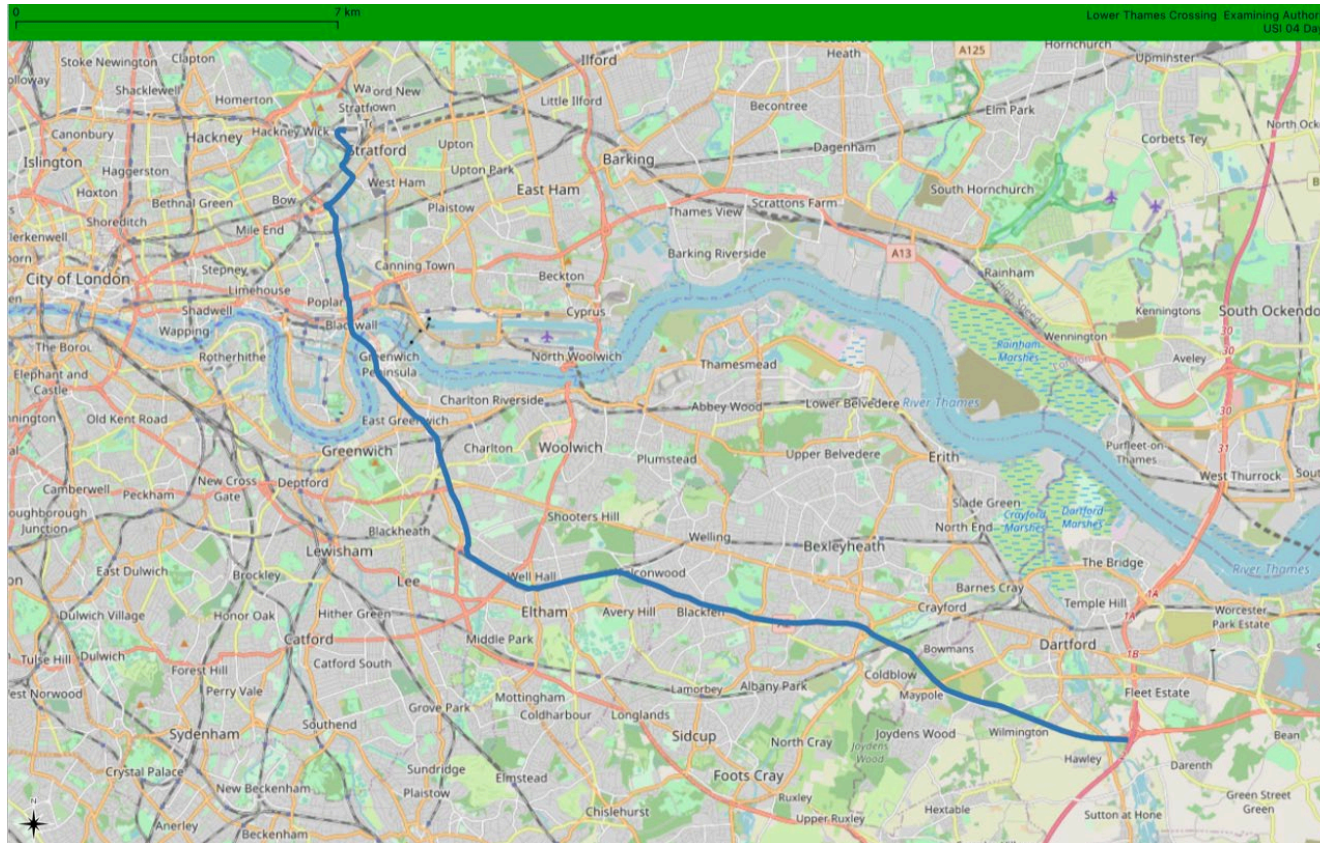
Car-based inspections



Inspections on foot

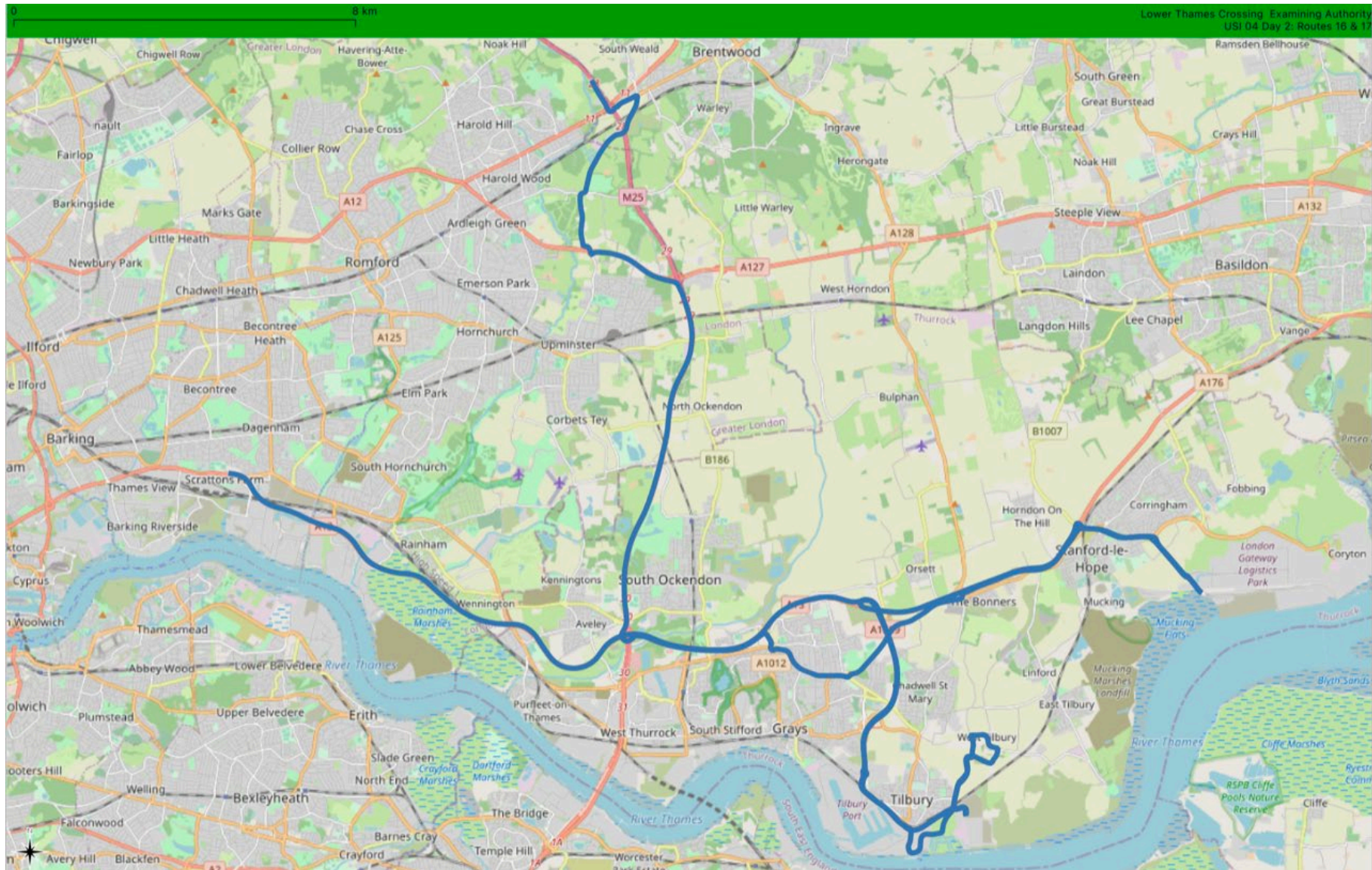


### USI-04 Day 1: Routes 13, 14 and 15





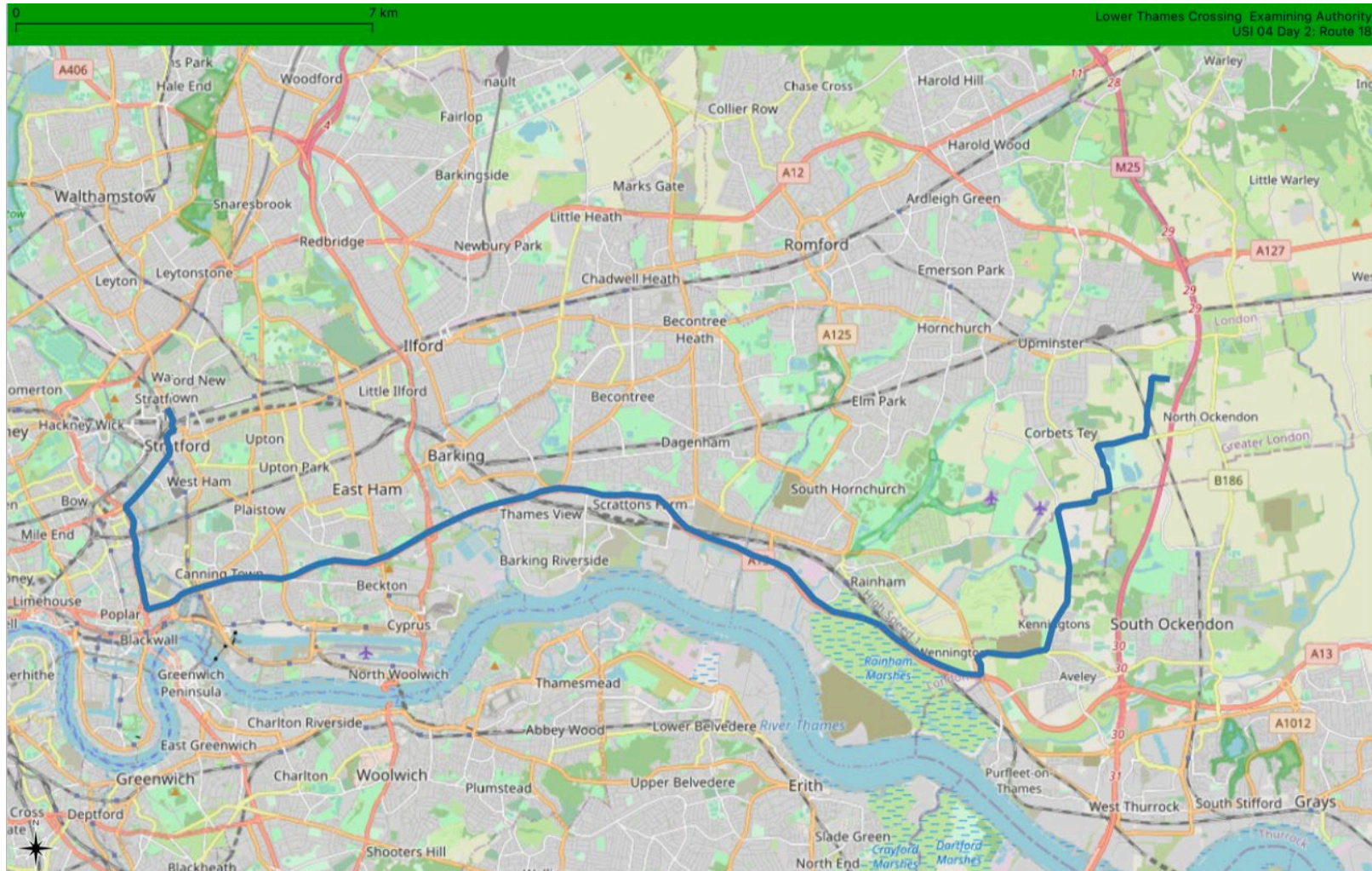
## USI-04 Day 2: Routes 16 & 17 (Traffic Effects and Ports Access)



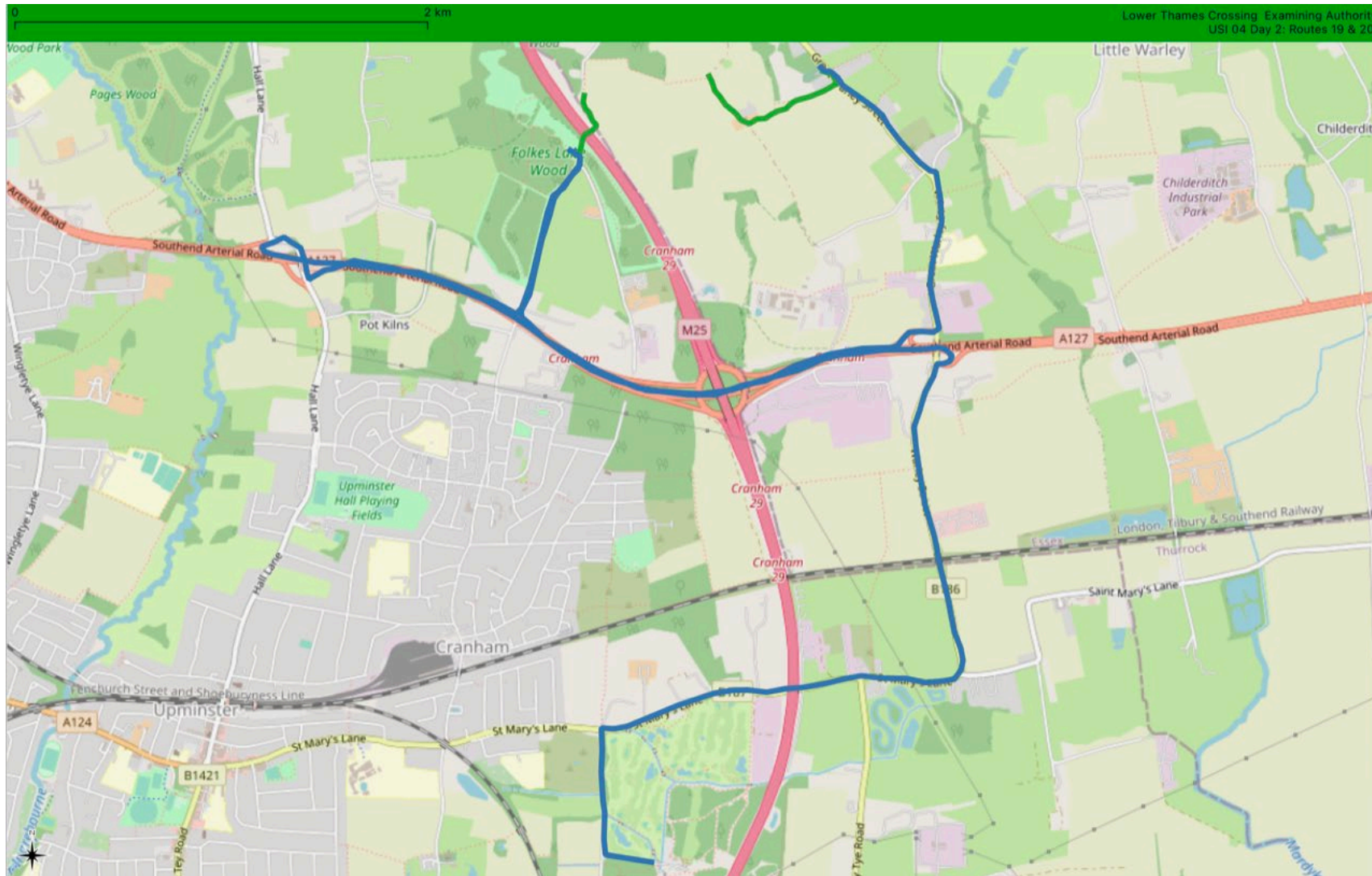


## USI-04 Day 2: Routes 18 - 20 (A13, M25 from Junction 29, Hole Farm and Great Warley)

### Route 18

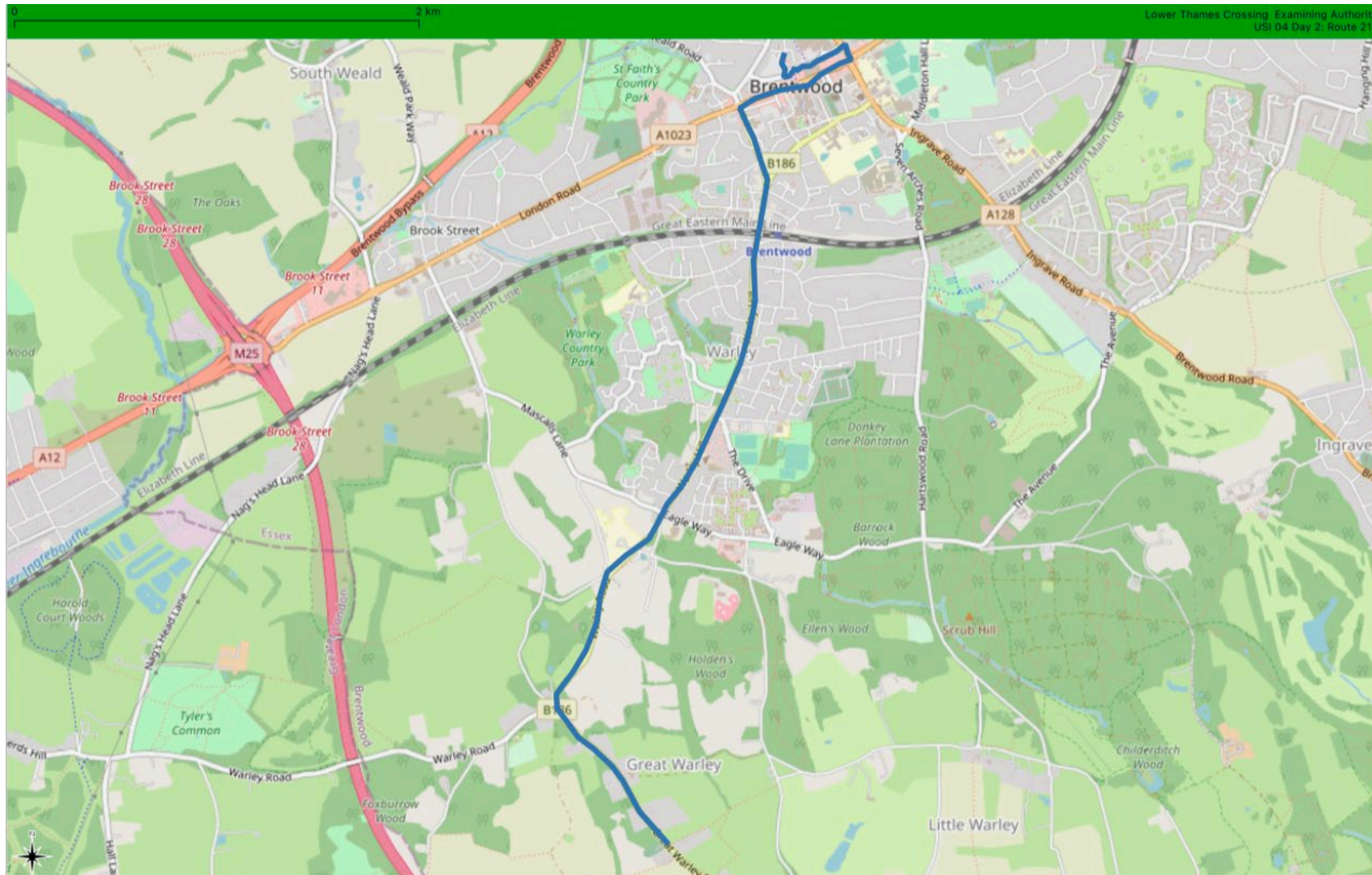


Routes 19 – 20



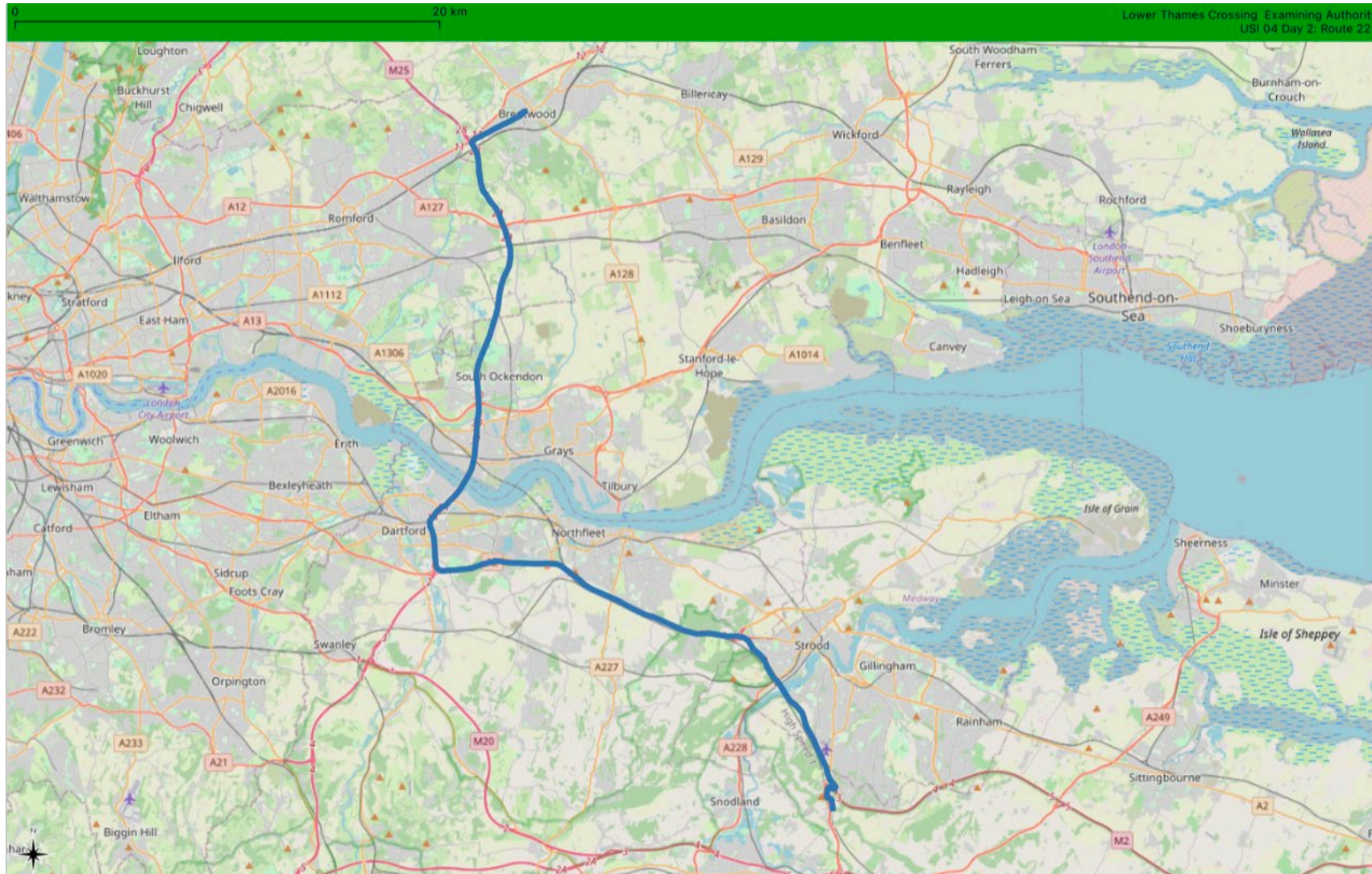


## USI-04 Day 2: Route 21 (Brentwood Town Centre)

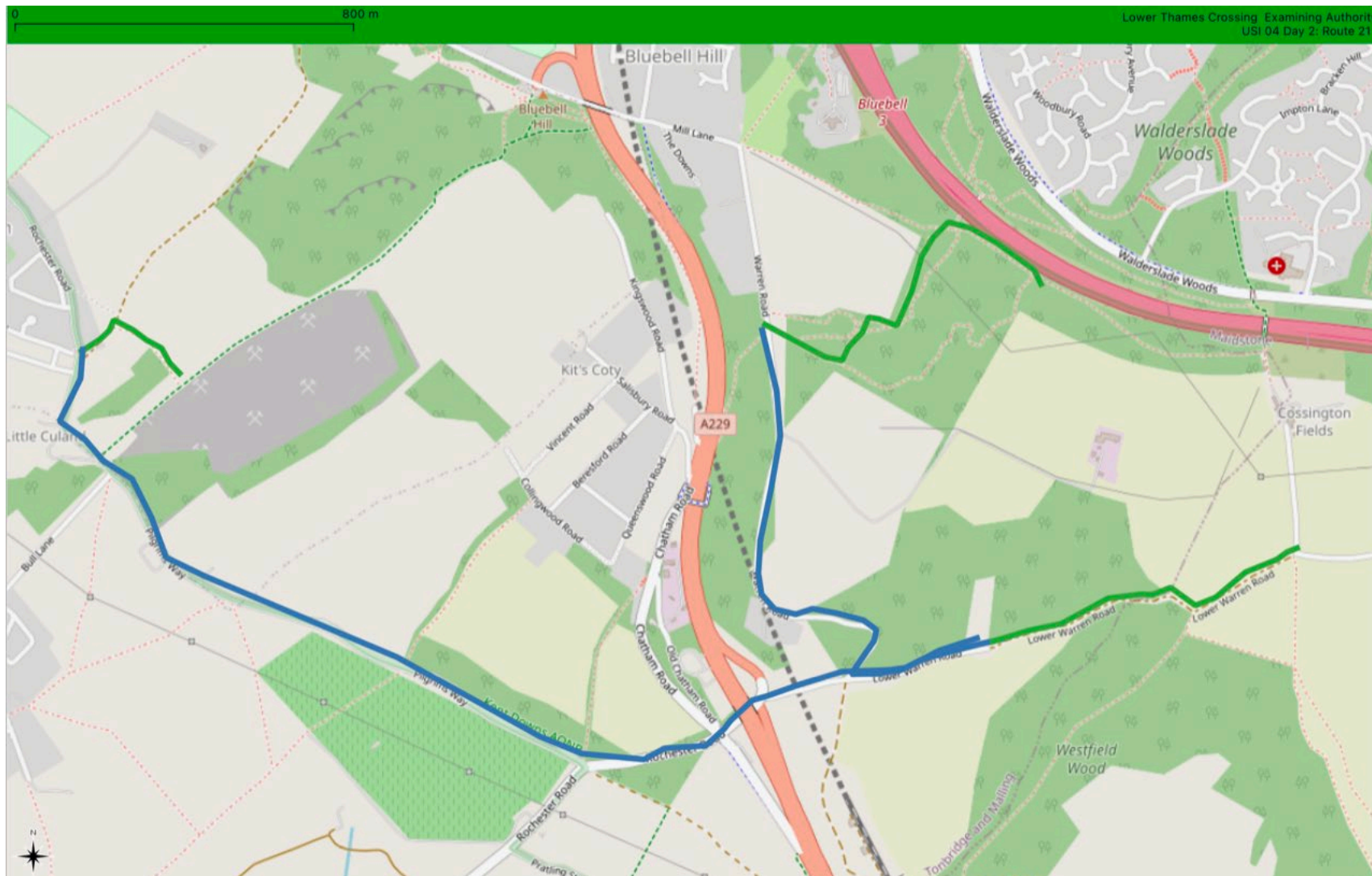




## USI-04 Day 2: Route 22 (Brentwood – Medway via M25 Junction 28 and Dartford Crossing to A2/M2)



## USI-04 Day 2: Routes 23 (Bluebell Hill and Burham)



**USI-04 Day 2: Routes 24 & 25 (Mardyke Valley)**

Inspections reserved for Accompanied Site Inspections. Tracking and mapping not taken.