

Lower Thames Crossing

5.4.5.5 Draft Agreed Statement of Common Ground between (1) National Highways and (2) Thames Chase Trust (Tracked changes version)

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Infrastructure Planning (Applications:
Prescribed Forms and Procedure)
Regulations 2009

Volume 5

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VERSION: 2.0

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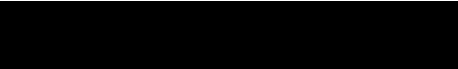

Revision history

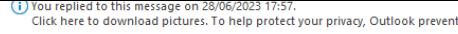
<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Submitted at</u>
<u>1.0</u>	<u>31 October 2022</u>	<u>DCO Application</u>
<u>2.0</u>	<u>18 July 2023</u>	<u>Examination Deadline 1</u>


Status of the Statement of Common Ground

This is an Agreed Draft Statement of Common Ground with matters outstanding.
National Highways and Thames Chase Trust agree that this draft Statement of Common
Ground is an accurate description of the matters raised and the current status of each
matter.

SoCG - Thames Chase Trust

  Wed 28/06/2023 16:41

 You replied to this message on 28/06/2023 17:57.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.


Dear 

Thank you for your email containing the draft SoCG for consideration.

I am pleased to confirm that Thames Chase Trust agrees with the draft SoCG. We are content that it reflects the current status of matters, and we accept this will be submitted for Examination Deadline 1.

I trust all is in order. Please let me know if you require any further information.

All the best



A high-level overview of the engagement undertaken since the DCO application was
submitted on 31 October 2022 is summarised in Table A.1 in Appendix A.

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the DCO Application was submitted on the 31 October 2022.....27

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Table C.1 Engagement activities between National Highways
and Thames Chase Trust 24¶
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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 on 31 October 2022.
- 1.1.2 The SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between National Highways (the Applicant) and Thames Chase Trust, and where agreement has not yet been reached. Where matters are yet to be agreed, the parties will continue to work proactively to reach agreement and will update the SoCG to reflect areas of further agreement.
- 1.1.3 This version of the SoCG has been submitted at Examination Deadline 1.

1.2 Principal Areas of Disagreement

- 1.2.1 On the 19 December 2022 the Examination Authority made some early procedural decisions to assist the Applicant, potential Interested Parties and themselves to prepare for the Examination of the DCO application.
- 1.2.2 One of these procedural decisions was to use a tracker recording Principal Areas of Disagreement in Summary (PADS).
- 1.2.3 The PADS tracker would provide a record of those principal matters of disagreement emerging from the SoCG and should be updated alongside the SoCG as appropriate throughout the examination with the expectation that a revised PADS Tracker should be submitted at every Examination deadline.
- 1.2.4 Thames Chase Trust elected not to produce a PADS Tracker at pre-examination stage, indicating to the Applicant that they were content that the number of outstanding matters within the SoCG was insufficient to warrant the exercise.

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 following significant engagement, and “Matter under discussion” where these points will be the subject of ongoing discussion

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Deleted: <#>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.¶

Thames Chase Trust was established in 1990 to improve landscapes in East London and South Essex. It is one of the twelve Community Forests set up across England to regenerate and enhance the natural environment. Formally managed and funded by a Joint Committee of the four local authorities in which Thames Chase Trust is situated and Essex County Council, Thames Chase Trust Community Forest is now managed by the Thames Chase Trust and funded by small grants from these authorities and large grants from national and charitable organisations.¶

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wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties. “Matter agreed” indicates where the issue has now been resolved.

2 Matters

2.1 Movement of outstanding matters

2.1.1 Following submission of the previous version of this Draft SoCG between the Applicant and Thames Chase Trust, further discussions on the outstanding matters have taken place. These discussions are summarised in Table A.1 in Appendix A and the outcome of these discussions is summarised below.

2.1.2 The following matters have moved from ‘matter under discussion’ to ‘matter agreed’:

a. 2.1.6

b. 2.1.8

2.1.3 The following matters have moved from ‘matter under discussion’ to ‘matter not agreed’:

a. 2.1.7

b. 2.1.13

2.1.4 Table 2.1 details and presents the matters which have been agreed, not agreed, or are under discussion between (1) the Applicant and (2) Thames Chase Trust.

1.1.2 In the column ‘Item No’ in Table 2.1, ‘Rule 6’ indicates a matter entered in the SoCG as a result of a request in the Rule 6 letter, ‘RRN’ indicates a matter entered into the SoCG as a result of content in the Relevant Representation, ‘RRE’ indicates an existing SoCG matter that was also raised in the Relevant Representation and ‘DLX’ indicates a new matter added during examination at/around that deadline.

2.1.5 At Examination Deadline 1, there are 24 matters in total, of which 16 are agreed, 7 are not agreed and 1 that remains under discussion.

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

Status of the Statement of Common Ground¶

It is agreed that this statement is an accurate description of the matters raised by Thames Chase Trust and the current status of each matter.¶

It is agreed that Appendix C is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) National Highways and (2) Thames Chase Trust relation to the matters addressed in this Statement of Common Ground.¶

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Table 2.1 details

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Table 2.1 Matters

Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Need for the Project					
Need for the Project	2.1.1	Thames Chase Trust does not support the need for the Project.	Noted	N/A	Matter Not Agreed
Route selection, modal alternatives & assessment of reasonable alternatives					
<u>Route selection</u>	2.1.2	Thames Chase Trust does Not agree with the proposed route alignment.	Noted	N/A	Matter Not Agreed
Route alignment					
Consultation and engagement					
Adequacy of Consultation	2.1.3	Thames Chase Trust is satisfied with the adequacy of consultation on the Project.	Noted	N/A	Matter Agreed
Land and Compulsory acquisition					
<u>Infrastructure/Landscape Integration</u>	2.1.4	Thames Chase Trust requests that the Project continues to clearly communicate with Forestry England and Thames Chase Trust, with regard to the land currently occupied by the solar farm and identified by the Project as 'replacement land'. Thames Chase Trust understands that the Project will build an access track through this location for the purposes of the scheme, and which will mean that the	The land is owned freehold by Cranham Golf Course Ltd and leased to 'WEL Solar Park 12 Ltd'. It has been identified as 'replacement public open space' land and as such will be transferred to Forestry England free of the solar park which will discontinue in this location. During construction only, there will be a construction access track running north-south along the western edge of the road	N/A	Matter Agreed
Land currently occupied by the solar farm					

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
		Thames Chase Forest Centre will not be used for this purpose, which will clearly not be tolerated by Thames Chase Trust.	alignment (i.e. within the current order limits) from St <u>Marys Lane</u> all the way down to <u>Ockenden Road</u> compound in the field to the south of Hobb's Hole pond. This temporary access track therefore goes through Broadfields Farm to the east of the visitor centre, as per the current plans. National Highways does not intend to retain the track once construction is completed.		
Mitigation Parcel of land to the east of the M25	2.1.5	The parcel of land to the east of the M25 is proposed as environmental mitigation. Thames Chase Trust would like to explore how this land will be used in the future. If it is not suitable for tree planting, could it provide connectivity or another important form of habitat mitigation.	Discussions ongoing. Not proposed for tree planting but open mosaic / grassland and Great Crested Newts ponds – National Highways will require a third party to manage this land. <u>National Highways has started to hold workshops to further develop the framework for the Project's landscape and ecology mitigation with parties including Thames Chase Trust.</u>	<u>General Arrangement Plans (Volume C) [Application Document APP-017]</u>	Matter Under Discussion
Access Severance of trails	2.1.6	Thames Chase Trust believes that the impact on the site would be reduced if severance of trails were minimised, particularly in the western parcel, which contains the	National Highways has requested a plan be provided by Thames Chase Trust, <u>showing the existing trails and any proposed trails for the consideration of the Project at</u>	N/A	Matter Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
		<p>natural play trail, attracting high numbers of visitors. Thames Chase Trust requires public access to be retained between the parcels of land, retaining the existing underpass.</p>	<p><u>the detailed design stage</u>, National Highways believes that this issue is more likely to be resolved at detailed design stage, but <u>is</u> exploring whether this could be included as a 'landowner commitment' at this stage.</p> <p><u>It is envisaged that some of the trails within the Order Limits and the culvert beneath the M25 will be temporarily restricted for access by users at differing periods of the construction phase for varying amounts of time, depending on the type of works that impedes their use. For example, the trail that passes beneath the existing overhead powerlines and adjoins the western connection point of the proposed footbridge will need to be closed while each of those works are completed. However, the schedule of when the works are undertaken may present a period in which the route could be re-opened. During these works, the temporary access route will be considered by National Highways and, if available without having detrimental effect to</u></p>		

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			<p>something else, such as requiring the removal of other vegetation, further discussions with Thames Chase Trust would need to take place to find an alternative arrangement.</p> <p>The Applicant does not propose to permanently restrict the use of the trails and the culvert for the users of Thames Chase Forest Centre once the works are completed. Some of those existing affected trails would be replaced or modified as part of the Project's design. Some of these trails, such as the route from the Thames Chase Forest Centre to the culvert, will be used as maintenance routes during routine operation, maintenance and inspection of the culvert and may be subject to restrictions on their use for safety reasons during those infrequent periods.</p> <p>National Highways will continue to engage with Thames Chase Trust during the detailed design and construction planning stage.</p>		
Impacts	2.1.7	The proposed route north of the river will have an impact on the vision, objectives and 13 strategic	National Highways and Thames Chase Trust have agreed to change the status of this matter to	N/A	Matter Not Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Impact on Strategic opportunities	RRE	opportunities identified within the Thames Chase Plan. <u>This is the overarching strategy for the continued creation and protection of the area known as Thames Chase Community Forest. This covers 70 square miles and Thames Chase Trust is concerned that the proposed route north of the river will have an adverse impact on the Community Forest landscape, particularly the potential to reverse progress achieved since its inception, in 1990.</u>	<u>'Matter Not Agreed' on the basis that the examination of the development consent order is progressing. However, National Highways will continue to engage with Thames Chase Trust to identify potential opportunities to mitigate where possible.</u>		
Impacts Impact on the 'Land of Fanns'	2.1.8	Thames Chase Trust requests more information regarding impact on 'the Land of Fanns', stating that the Mardyke project footpath 136 will be severed during the construction of Lower Thames Crossing.	there will be a section of footpath 136 that would be realigned during the works, a number of other footpaths will also need to be closed temporarily in order to upgrade them or realign them. Once works are complete, footpath 136 will be reconnected via an equestrian standard bridge over the Project alignment. This can be found in the Design Principles and the Project Design Report, Part B: Policy Context and <u>Project Design Process,</u>	Design Principles [Application Document APP-516], <u>Project Design Report Part B [Application Document APP-507], Part C [Application Document APP-508],</u>	Matter <u>Agreed,</u>

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			Chapter 5: Part C: Design Rationale and Part D: <u>General Design</u> North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25.	<u>Part D: General Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25</u> [Application Document APP-510]	
Construction					
<u>Mitigation</u> Construction phase impacts – general	2.1.9	Thames Chase Trust has concerns about the environmental impacts of the construction phase, particularly dust pollution and noise levels. <u>Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways has carried out on the environmental impacts to date. Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to environmental impacts as presented in the Environmental Statement and is content with the mitigation provided and will await for the approach to be assessed via the Development Consent Order process.</u>	National Highways refers Thames Chase Trust to Environmental Statement chapter 5: Air Quality, which <u>presents</u> a full assessment of air quality, and <u>Environmental Statement</u> chapter 12: Noise and Vibration, which <u>presents</u> a full assessment of noise and vibration. Information <u>is also</u> provided in the Register of environmental actions and commitments on how potentially significant adverse effects will be mitigated.	Environmental Statement chapter 5: Air Quality [Application Document APP-143] Environmental Statement chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [Application Document APP-150]	Matter Agreed

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Project Design Report (Application Document 7.4)

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Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to environmental impacts as presented in environmental statement and is content with the mitigation provided and will await for the approach to be assessed via Development Consent Order process.

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(Application Document 6.1)

Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
<u>Mitigation</u> Construction phase impacts – landscaping	2.1.10	Thames Chase Trust is concerned that the construction phase will have a detrimental impact on landscape, people and wildlife. Thames Chase Trust stated that the area has suffered greatly from excessive levels of heavy goods vehicles traffic associated with the gravel extraction and landfill industries. This will be extended and exacerbated during the additional construction works associated with the Project. <u>Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways have provided on construction impacts to date. Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to construction impacts as presented in environmental statement and Register of Environmental Action and Commitments and is content with the mitigation provided and will await for the approach to be assessed via Development Consent Order process.</u>	The Environmental Statement outlines potential impact and proposed mitigation measures for works that may affect landscape, people and wildlife in the Thames Chase area. National Highways is aware that Thames Chase Trust's concerns stem from previous nuisances from gravel pits, landfill, etc. The Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments will provide detail on committed mitigation such as location of stockpiles to act as noise and visual barriers. The Applicant would maintain continued dialogue with Thames Chase Trust during the construction phase to deal with any issues and monitor the effectiveness of any mitigation measures as part of the SoCG.	<u>Environmental Statement Appendix 2.2: Code of Construction Practice</u> <u>[Application Document APP-336]</u> <u>Environmental Statement Chapter 5: Air Quality</u> <u>[Application Document APP-143]</u> <u>Environmental Statement chapter 12: Noise and Vibration</u> <u>[Application Document APP-150]</u>	Matter Agreed
<u>Road alteration and maintenance</u>	2.1.11	Access to the eastern side of the Broadfields site needs to be	National Highways confirms that access to the Broadfield site will be always maintained.	N/A	Matter Agreed

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Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways have provided on construction impacts to date.¶
Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to construction impacts as presented in environmental statement and Register of Environmental Action and Commitments

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Access to the Broadfields site		maintained during the Projects works.	National Highways, as agreed with Thames Chase Trust, needs to close the culvert that is currently used to provide access under the M25 during the construction phase for safety reasons. This is to allow the existing culvert structure and M25 embankment to be extended and a new bridge structure installed. A temporary access route from St Marys Lane is proposed to maintain access to the eastern side of the M25 during the construction phase. As part of the Lower Thames Crossing works a new bridge is proposed <u>to provide access for walkers, cyclists and Horse Riders over the M25</u> . National Highways is also looking at options to bring construction of the new bridge forward so that this can be made available earlier in the programme and thus minimise the period the temporary diversion is required.		
<u>Construction traffic impacts</u>	2.1.12	One of the main concerns for the Thames Chase Trust at the Forest Centre is the reassurance that works traffic will not use Pike	National Highways has amended the construction access routes following feedback. The construction works are now	<u>outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction</u>	Matter Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Construction routes		Lane, Broadfields Drive, Thames Chase Car Park, and the track past the Forest Centre complex of buildings. Thames Chase Trust believes that access for the Project's works needs to be either directly from St. Mary's Lane or Ockendon Road and not Pike Lane or the Thames Chase Forest Centre. <u>Thames Chase Trust notes the change to access and agrees this item.</u>	proposed to be accessed from a combination of Ockendon Road, St Marys Lane, temporary slip roads providing the site with direct access to the M25 and haul routes within the Project site boundary. <u>While</u> , National Highways does not propose to use Broadfields Drive and the Thames Chase Car Park, some vehicles will <u>need</u> to <u>travel</u> along the southern section of Pike Lane from Ockendon Road for a brief period to access the area west of the Upminster and Grays railway line for installation of a water pipeline. For further details please refer to the Outline Traffic Management Plan <u>for Construction</u> , which sets out the roads to be used for access for construction. These are Warley Street, St <u>Marys</u> Lane, Clay Tye <u>Road</u> , Ockendon <u>Road</u> , North road, and direct access off M25.	<u>[Application Document APP-547]</u>	
Traffic and economics					
<u>Modelling Wider Network Impacts</u>	2.1.13	Thames Chase Trust is concerned that the existing M25 and A13 routes already experience	The <u>Applicant</u> has recognised that, as a result of the Project, there will be changes across the	Transport Assessment <u>[Application</u>	Matter <u>Not Agreed</u>

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Concerns regarding impacts to the M25 and A13		numerous problems, currently placing major pressure on local roads. Increased traffic associated with the Project will potentially further delays and local gridlock.	Lower Thames region as traffic re-routes to take advantage of the additional and reliable capacity that the Project would bring. This would mean that on some roads traffic flows would reduce, while, on others traffic would increase.	Document APP-529 , Wider Network Impacts Management and Monitoring Plan [Application Document APP-545]	
Air quality					
Assessment of likely significant effects Air quality impacts	2.1.14	Thames Chase Trust is concerned about the impact the Project will have on air quality in the area. Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways have provided on air quality in the area. Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to air quality and environmental impacts as presented in the Environmental Statement and Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments and is content with the mitigation provided and will await for the approach to be	National Highways has engaged with Thames Chase Trust about the air quality in the area, and as a result Thames Chase Trust understands that it is unlikely that the Project will have significant impacts on air quality in the area. National Highways will continue to engage with Thames Chase Trust throughout the construction of the Project. National Highways has clarified that the Thames Chase Community Forest is located within Havering Air Quality Management Area. National	Environmental Statement Chapter 13: Population and Human Health [Application Document APP-151] , Environmental Statement Appendix 2.2: Code of Construction Practice [Application	Matter Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
		<p><u>assessed via the Development Consent Order process.</u></p>	<p>Highways' preliminary air quality assessment suggests that there are unlikely to be significant air quality effects from the Project during construction and operation. Receptors located within 200m of construction activities (i.e. on the western side of Thames Chase Community Forest) may experience air quality impacts as a result of dust and plant emissions. These impacts will be controlled and minimised through the wide range of measures outlined in the Code of Construction Practice. Air quality monitoring would be undertaken, in line with the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments, to ensure that the mitigation measures effectively control dust emissions. The air quality effects of the Project will be fully considered and presented in the Environmental Statement. Other community and footpath network impacts on Thames Chase <u>Community Forest</u> are assessed within <u>Environmental Statement Chapter 13: Population and Human Health</u>.</p>	<p><u>Document APP-336]</u></p>	

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Landscape and visual					
<u>Plants and woodlands</u>	2.1.15	Thames Chase Trust requires any planting lost as a result of the delivery of the Project, including memorial trees and those planted by the local community since the 1990s, to be replaced within the Forest Centre. <u>Thames Chase Trust notes the addition to the Design Principles and accepts this item.</u>	The Project's replacement planting is shown within the order limits within Thames Chase Community Forest, as agreed with Thames Chase Trust, replacement planting will be provided in the land parcel south of Thames Chase Community Forest in the open space replacement parcel. The location of the culvert access track/water mains diversion will be designed to limit tree loss within Thames Chase-Community Forest as far as reasonably practicable. The Project has now added to the design principles that the design of the new areas of the woodland planting south of the Thames Chase Community Forest, including the location of the memorial tree planting and replacement trees, will be developed in collaboration with Thames Chase Trust and Forestry England. Please refer to the Design Principles and the Project Design Report, Part D: <u>General Design</u>	Design Principles [Application Document <u>APP-516</u>], <u>Project Design Report Part D: General Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25</u> [Application Document <u>APP-510</u>]	Matter Agreed
Re-planting					

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			North of the River → North of the A13 Junction to the M25, <u>Section</u> 9.3.		
<u>Infrastructure/ landscape integration</u> Acoustic bunding	2.1.16	Thames Chase Trust states that acoustic bund earthworks at the Forest Centre should extend and be positioned along the entire length of the eastern edge of the western land parcel, adjacent to the M25, to reduce noise and visual impact.	National Highways states that acoustic bund earthworks are located along the eastern edge of the Forest Centre to provide visual and noise screening and transition south until the adjacent carriageways are in cutting at the depth equivalent to the acoustic bund. The acoustic bund extends north to the culvert beneath the M25.	N/A	Matter Agreed
<u>Impacts</u> Biodiversity commitment	2.1.17	Thames Chase Trust would like a clear understanding of what the Project's biodiversity commitment is.	<u>The Project design has been developed with a view to increasing the biodiversity value wherever possible across the Project and has sought to deliver a landscape scale approach to habitat mitigation through improved connectivity and links with areas of retained habitats as well as new areas of habitat creation associated with other projects. This aligns with the advice provided by Natural England.</u> <u>Details of the habitats proposed, areas of landscaping, ecological</u>	<u>Environmental Statement Figure 2.4: Environmental Masterplan [Application Document APP-159 to APP-168]</u> <u>outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [Application</u>	Matter Not Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			mitigation and compensation, and flood compensation are shown on the Environmental Masterplan and in the planting specifications. The objectives of these habitats, including management and monitoring proposals, are detailed in the outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and in the Design Principles.	Document APP-490 Design Principles [Application Document APP-516]	
Impacts Loss of habitats/impacts at tunnel portals	2.1.18	At the location of the North/South tunnel entrances, Thames Chase Trust is extremely concerned at the prospect of notable loss of habitat, loss of access routes and adverse impact on heritage assets.	Through engagement with Thames Chase Trust, National Highways has agreed the following approach to mitigation. The Project will be designed following the mitigation hierarchy of avoid, mitigate and then compensate. All efforts have been made to avoid impacting on environmental receptors, and where this has not been possible compensation has been proposed. In the north and south portal areas, extensive survey, ground investigation and archaeological investigation has been undertaken to understand the likely level of impacts from the project.	N/A	Matter Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Impact of utility diversions – general</p>	2.1.19	<p>Thames Chase Trust states that parts of the land-use plans appear to show that some of the proposed acquisition is for temporary use, and for the diversion of utilities. Thames Chase Trust states that provided such utilities are located underground, and land subject to temporary use is appropriately restored, impact will be reduced.</p>	<p>National Highways considers that the routing of utilities in this area is the best viable option. National Highways has engaged with Thames Chase Trust to explain the constraints to the utilities routing and welcomes Thames Chase Trust's acceptance of the necessity of rerouting the utilities, without undergrounding.</p> <p>National Highways acknowledges that Thames Chase Trust's preference remains for all utilities to be undergrounded. National Highways cannot deliver this under the instruction of the asset owner.</p> <p>The latest proposals were shown at Local Refinement Consultation, alignments were represented in Map Book 1: General Arrangements, and the associated land use shown in Map Book 2: Land Use Plans.</p> <p>At the Local Refinement Consultation (2022), an amended proposal for the existing overhead lines was consulted upon,</p>	N/A	Matter Not Agreed

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			<p>whereby the existing 132kV overhead lines crossing through the site and over the M25 are to be diverted north of its current alignment via the construction of two taller pylons, one each side of the M25.</p> <p>The overhead lines on wooden poles are proposed to be diverted underground for the spans that cross the M25, via the new footbridge.</p> <p>There is no change to the proposals for the water pipeline that runs north –south, west of the M25/A122 embankments.</p> <p>The Land Use Plans represent the limits of deviation and the associated land for the acquisition of Rights, it is envisaged that there will be a further reduction in the extent of the 'blue land', once the pipeline alignment is known, which will be developed within the detailed design stage.</p>		
<p>Impacts</p> <p>Impact of utility diversions – Community Tree Nursery</p>	2.1.20	Thames Chase Trust seeks agreement that the proposed Community Tree Nursery extension site will not be used for utilities work or the Project works.	The Community Tree Nursery, located at the north -eastern corner of the Visitors Centre, only has one element of proposed works in proximity, which is the	N/A	Matter Agreed

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Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways has

Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
		<p><u>Thames Chase Trust are content with the engagement National Highways has provided on the Community Tree Nursey extension to date.</u></p> <p><u>Thames Chase Trust has accepted the approach to utility works being carried out and will await for the approach to be assessed via the Development Consent Order process.</u></p>	<p>undergrounding and diverting of a section of the <u>overhead line</u>, heading east. It is extremely unlikely, with the proposals as known, that there will be utility works within an extension of this site <u>because</u> the extension <u>site</u> does not envelope the existing infrastructure.</p>		
Population and human health					
<p><u>Maintenance</u></p> <p>Management of bridleways following project completion</p>	2.1.21	Thames Chase Trust requires clarification on the management of the new bridleway paths in Thames Chase created by the Project once the project is completed.	National Highways states that the new bridleways will remain within the permanent boundary of the Project. <u>However</u> , the <u>Applicant</u> , shall be looking to enter into agreement(s) with local authorities and other partners to ensure the management and maintenance of these routes.	N/A	Matter Agreed
<p><u>Bridges and structures</u></p> <p>Temporary closures of the underpass</p>	2.1.22	Thames Chase Trust requires more detail regarding, "During the construction of the Project there will be a temporary access closure through the existing underpass under the M25 to their eastern site."	<p>National Highways has provided further information, as below, which Thames Chase Trust has since confirmed is sufficient</p> <p>The culvert that is used as an underpass between the two parts of Thames Chase Community</p>	N/A	Matter Agreed

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¶ Thames Chase Trust has accepted this approach to the Community Tree Nursery approach to utilities works being carried out and will await for the approach to be assessed via Development Consent Order process,

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			Forest Centre is retained in the proposal, although this will need to be closed during works to widen the M25. In the proposal, a new bridge is provided across the M25 and slip roads to improve connectivity between the two land parcels. A temporary route that crosses the M25 at St Marys Lane will ensure connectivity while neither the underpass nor new bridge are available, so connectivity will remain at all times.		
Bridges and structures Pedestrian footbridge design	2.1.23	Thames Chase Trust supports the proposed new pedestrian footbridge, however Thames Chase Trust would need this to be created to bridleway specification as a minimum to allow access for walkers, horse riders and cyclists.	National Highways confirms that the proposed new pedestrian bridge will allow for walkers, cyclists, and horse riders as stated in Design Principles. The bridge at Thames Chase Community Forest will be to equestrian and cycle standard. The bridge at Thames Chase Community Forest has been designed to meet the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards for width of a cycle-equestrian bridge, although in the context of the relatively large span it looks narrow, it has a clear width of 4.5m.	Design Principles [Application Document APP-516], Project Design Report Part B [Application Document APP-507], Part C [Application Document APP-508], Part D: General	Matter Agreed

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Topic	Item No.	Thames Chase Trust comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			National Highways refers Thames Chase Trust to the Design Principles and the Project Design Report, Part B: Policy Context and Project Design Process, Chapter 5; Part C: Design Rationale, and Part D: General Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25.	<u>Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25</u> [Application Document APP-510]	
<u>Bridges and structures</u> Pedestrian footbridge design	2.1.24	Thames Chase Trust (principally, for the benefit of Forestry England) would ideally like to see the accommodation of vehicular access for monitoring and maintenance of the Forestry England estate either side of the Lower Thames Crossing route. It is of strategic importance to link the Forest Centre with longer distance pedestrian routes and public rights of way. Forestry England requires operational vehicle access for their land parcel to the east of the Lower Thames Crossing route and Thames Chase Trust would support this. The footbridge is a significant length and comparatively narrow as it extends over the existing M25 and the proposed new slip roads.	National Highways recognises the strategic importance of Thames Chase Community Forest in developing the Public Rights of Way network in this area and improving access to the countryside east of the M25, principally by forming connections between Thames Chase Community Forest and South Ockendon/footpath 135 and footpath 232. However, National Highways considers Vehicle access to the eastern side of Thames Chase Community Forest sufficient and will remain as existing via the track from Ockendon Road.	Design Principles [Application Document APP-516], <u>Project Design Report Part B</u> [Application Document APP-507], <u>Part C</u> [Application Document APP-508], <u>Part D: General Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction</u>	Matter Not Agreed

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		The experience is likely to be unpleasant when exposed to the climate and environment above multiple lanes of traffic. Other design options should be considered to improve the user experience. Thames Chase Trust's preference is for the footbridge to be upgraded to enable vehicular access, to improve operational access between both land parcels on either side of the motorway.	National Highways refers Thames Chase Trust to the Design Principles and the Project Design Report, Part B: Policy Context and Project Design Process, Chapter 5, Part C: Design Rationale, and Part D: General Design North of the River – North of the A13 Junction to the M25.	to the M25 [Application Document APP-510]	

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Appendix A Engagement activity

Engagement activities between the Applicant and Thames Chase Trust since the DCO
 Application was submitted on the 31 October 2022.

Date	Overview of Engagement Activities
12/01/2023	The Applicant emailed Thames Chase Trust about PADS Tracker request and received confirmation from Thames Chase Trust that they do not see the need for a PADS Tracker.
09/02/2023	Thames Chase Trust emailed the Applicant requesting latest SoCG document, information about the Community Fund and details of new Chair and Vice Chair of Thames Chase Trust. The Applicant responded with the requested information and a request about availability for a meeting.
02/03/2023	The Applicant emailed Thames Chase Trust about organising a meeting and shared some updates and signposts for the outstanding Matters Under Discussion. Thames Chase replied to the Applicant with a meeting set up for April 2023.
19/04/2023	Thames Chase Trust and the Applicant met in person at the Thames Chase Visitor Centre to welcome new Chair of the Trust and new Visitor Centre manager. A general project update was provided, discussion about the two year rephase and SoCG Matters Under Discussion were reviewed. Both parties agreed that four items would change status.
26/04/2023	Communication from Thames Chase Trust to confirm matters from previous meeting and provide text relating to item 2.1.7 in SoCG.
28/04/2023	The Applicant shared latest SoCG for review by Thames Chase Trust with some suggested amends to text to clarify the position of the trust. Thames Chase Trust responded accepting the suggested amendments.

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 Agreement on this Statement of Common Ground¶
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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.
Design Manual for Roads and Bridges	DMRB	A comprehensive manual which contains 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 the 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.
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.
Forestry England		A division of the Forestry Commission, responsible for managing and promoting publicly owned forests in England.
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.
National Grid Electricity Transmission	NGET	A UK company that builds and maintains the electricity transmission network in England and Wales.
National Highways		A UK government-owned company with responsibility for managing the motorways and major roads in England. Formerly known as Highways England.
Public Right of Way	PRoW	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

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Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
		subject of the appeal that the appellant reasonably considers will not be disputed by the local planning authority.
Thames Chase Trust		The Thames Chase Trust is an environmental charity managing and promoting the Thames Chase Community Forest.
United Kingdom Power Networks	UKPN	An energy network operator. Owns and maintains the electricity cables in South East England, the East of England and London.
Utility Logistics Hub	ULH	Temporary compounds required for specific utility works. They would receive, store and distribute the plant machinery and materials for specific utility works. They may include offices, welfare facilities, refuelling stations, security hubs, vehicle/wheel washing sites and parking areas similar in size to the main works satellite compounds.

- Deleted:** TCT
- Deleted:** was established in 1990 to improve landscapes in East London
- Deleted:** South Essex. It is one of
- Deleted:** twelve
- Deleted:** Forests set up across England to regenerate and enhance the natural environment
- Deleted:** UHL
- Deleted:** The ULH receives, stores
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List of engagement activities¶
 A summary of the meetings and correspondence undertaken between the two parties in relation to the Project is outlined in Table C.1 below.¶
 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) National Highways and (2) Thames Chase Trust in relation to the matters addressed in this SoCG.¶
Engagement activities between National Highways and Thames Chase Trust¶
 Date

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