

## Lower Thames Crossing

### 5.4.3.24 Agreed Statement of Common Ground between (1) National Highways and (2) Vodafone Limited (Tracked changes version)

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

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

Volume 5

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**Revision history**

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<a href="#">1.0</a>	<a href="#">31 October 2022</a>	<a href="#">DCO Application</a>
<a href="#">2.0</a>	<a href="#">18 July 2023</a>	<a href="#">Examination Deadline 1</a>

## Status of the Statement of Common Ground

The Applicant and Vodafone Limited agree that this draft Statement of Common Ground is an accurate description of the matters raised and the current status of each matter.

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 8:11 AM

**Subject:** RE: LTC - Vodafone Updated SoCG

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for the delay in response. On the whole I don't think there is any issue with the amended wording and Vodafone are happy to agree the SOCG as per your most recent draft.

## Lower Thames Crossing

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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 Vodafone Limited, and where agreement has not 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 Vodafone Limited elected not to produce a PADS Tracker at pre-examination stage, indicating to the Applicant that they did not have any principal areas of disagreement and were content that Table 2.1 within this SoCG adequately presented their matters.

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

**Deleted:** <#>This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application Documents. All documents may be available on the Planning Inspectorate website.¶

**Deleted:** <#>the parties named below

**Deleted:** <#>(yet)

**Deleted:** <#>SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific

**Deleted:** <#>that may need

**Deleted:** <#>addressed during

**Deleted:** <#>examination.

**Deleted:** <#>Parties to this Statement of Common Ground¶

**Deleted:** <#>prepared in respect of the Project by (

**Deleted:** <#>) National Highways, and (2) Vodafone Limited

**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.¶

Vodafone Limited ("Vodafone") is part of the Vodafone Group, which is one of the largest mobile and fixed network operators in Europe with 300 million mobile customers, more than 27 million fixed broadband customers, over 22 million TV customers, and has Europe's largest 5G network. Vodafone has apparatus that are affected by the Project.¶

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- 1.3.2 In Table 2.1, relevant issues relating to the dDCO articles and Requirements in Schedule 2 to the dDCO have been identified under the heading 'DCO and Consents'.
- 1.3.3 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 Matters

### 2.1 Movement of outstanding matters

- 2.1.1 Following submission of the previous version of this Draft SoCG between the Applicant and Vodafone Limited, further discussions on the outstanding matters have taken place. These discussions are summarised 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 'Protective Provisions'
- 2.1.3 Table 2.1 details and presents the matters which have been agreed, not agreed, or are under discussion between (1) the Applicant and (2) Vodafone Limited.
- 2.1.4 At Examination Deadline 1, all 6 matters are agreed.

**Deleted: <#>Overview of previous engagement ¶**  
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¶**  
Vodafone Limited has not yet been able to complete their review of this Statement of Common Ground and so this Statement of Common Ground is presented as an 'unsigned' Statement of Common Ground.¶  
**National Highways considers that this Statement of Common Ground is an accurate description of the matters raised by the Vodafone Limited and the status of each matter, based**

**Moved (insertion) [1]**

**Moved up [1]: Matters¶**

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**Deleted: Matters agreed, not agreed or under discussion¶**  
Table 2.1 details

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**Table 2.1 Matters**

Topic	Item No.	Vodafone comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
<b>DCO and Consents</b>					
Land Agreements	2.1.1	Vodafone understands that the apparatus to be interfered with as part of the works is all within public adopted highway and that, following completion of the works, will remain within public adopted highway. On that basis, the land position can be considered agreed. For the avoidance of doubt, if these assumptions are not correct then this matter would be considered 'Not Agreed' and Vodafone reserves the right to comment further.	<u>The Applicant confirms</u> that all Vodafone apparatus will remain in the adopted highway following the works for the Project.	Draft DCO <u>[Additional Submission AS-038]</u>	Matter Agreed
<b>Operation and Maintenance</b>					
Redundant Assets	2.1.2	Vodafone will not be responsible for any redundant assets.	<u>The Applicant</u> will remove redundant assets during construction, if required. National Highways will ensure service drawings regarding these assets are maintained during the construction period.	N/A	Matter Agreed
<b>Construction</b>					
Construction Contract	2.1.3	Vodafone has no objection to the delivery through the New Road and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) save that the Communications Code and the	<u>The Applicant welcomes</u> the agreement from Vodafone that the works can be delivered through NRSWA. <u>The Applicant</u>	N/A	Matter Agreed

**Deleted:** <#>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. ¶

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**Deleted:** Highways comment

**Deleted:** National Highways confirm

**Deleted:** Draft DCO (Application Document 3.1)

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**Deleted:** National Highways welcome



Topic	Item No.	Vodafone comment	National Highways' Response	Application Document Reference	Status
		agreed form protective provisions also need to be applied between the parties.	<u>acknowledges</u> that Vodafone require further discussions on the status of the Electronic Communications Code (ECC) and protective provisions and hopes to reach a resolution shortly.		
<b>Protective Provisions</b>					
Maintenance Access	2.1.4	The need for emergency access at all times is being discussed between the parties as part of the protective provisions.	Maintenance access to Vodafone's assets is protected in the protective provisions which use the ECC.	Protective provisions, Schedule 14, <u>draft DCO [Additional Submission AS-038]</u> ,	Matter Agreed
Protection of existing Assets	2.1.5	Vodafone recognises that the draft protective provisions provide a mechanism for the protection of Vodafone's existing apparatus. Notwithstanding this, Vodafone considers that the cost recovery mechanism should be more closely aligned with that within the Electronic Communications Code, and Vodafone is discussing this point (and others) with the Applicant.	<u>Vodafone's</u> assets are protected via the protective provisions. These robust provisions effectively protect Vodafone and numerous other telecoms operators. Vodafone has agreed to the protective provisions from <u>the Applicant</u> ,	Protective provisions, Schedule 14, <u>draft DCO [Additional Submission AS-038]</u> ,	Matter Agreed
Protective Provisions	2.1.6	The parties continue to discuss the terms of the Protective Provisions.	<u>The parties have now agreed protective provisions and these will be formalised shortly.</u>	Protective provisions, Schedule 14, <u>draft DCO</u>	Matter <u>Agreed</u> ,

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(Application Document 3.1)

**Deleted:** Vodafone

**Deleted:** National Highways.

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(Application Document 3.1)

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**Deleted:** National Highways recognise that Vodafone are seeking standard commercial terms, in addition to the robust protective provisions which adequately protect numerous other telecoms operators. Although National Highways are confident that the existing protective provisions adequately protect Vodafone's interests, National Highways will continue to discuss such matters with Vodafone in the hope of reaching an agreement.

Topic	Item No.,	Vodafone comment	National Highways' Response,	Application Document Reference	Status
		<p>Vodafone has a statutory function to deliver a service and Vodafone needs to ensure that there is no detriment to its undertaking as a result of the works.</p> <p>Accordingly, Vodafone has put forward additional standard commercial terms in relation to ensuring that there will be adequate access to its apparatus at all times (including for emergency works) and adequate cost recovery provisions for any damage to its apparatus.</p>		<p><a href="#">[Additional Submission AS-038]</a></p>	

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(Application Document 3.1)

## Appendix A Engagement activity

The Applicant and Vodafone have had extensive engagement since the inception of the Project. There has been engagement and dialogue through the statutory and non-statutory consultation, the various design iterations and releases. The engagement has been in the form of face-to-face meetings, Microsoft Teams meetings, telephone calls and email correspondence.

A.1.1 The parties are content for their engagement to be captured and presented in the SoCG in this manner.

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Documents considered within this Statement of Common  
Ground¶

N/A¶

## Appendix B Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Development Consent Order	DCO	Means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
Electronic Communications Code	ECC	The electronic communications code (the Code) is set out in Schedule 3A of the Communications Act 2003. It is a set of rights that are designed to facilitate the installation and maintenance of electronic communications networks.
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.
New Road and Street Works Act 1991	NRSWA	An Act to amend the law relating to roads so as to enable new roads to be provided by new means; to make new provision with respect to street works and, in Scotland, road works; and for connected purposes.

**Moved up [2]:** and Vodafone have had extensive engagement since the inception of the Project. There has been engagement and dialogue through the statutory and non-statutory consultation, the various design iterations and releases.

**Moved up [3]:** The parties are content for their engagement to be captured and presented in the SoCG in this manner.¶

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 ¶  
**List of engagement activities**¶  
 National Highways

**Deleted:** The engagement has been in the form of face-to-face meetings, MS Team meetings, telephone calls and email correspondence.¶

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