

# Lower Thames Crossing

## 5.4.3.8 Final Agreed Statement of Common Ground between (1) National Highways and (2) EXA Infrastructure (Clean version)

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Infrastructure Planning (Applications:  
Prescribed Forms and Procedure)  
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**DATE: December 2023**  
**DEADLINE: 8**

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**VERSION: 3.0**

## Revision history

Version	Date	Submitted at
1.0	31 October 2022	DCO Application
2.0	18 July 2023	Deadline 1
3.0	5 December 2023	Deadline 8

## Status of the Statement of Common Ground

This is the Final Agreed Statement of Common Ground between (1) National Highways (the Applicant) and (2) EXA Infrastructure.

At Examination Deadline 1, the Applicant and EXA Infrastructure agreed that the Statement of Common Ground was an accurate description of the matters raised as it stood at that time. The Statement of Common Ground was left open during Examination in case new matters emerged. However, no new matters have emerged and so this Statement of Common Ground has been converted to final.

Both parties have reached agreement on the position on the status of all nine matters. Of the nine matters, seven are agreed and two will remain under discussion, to be discussed at the detailed design stage of the Project.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 30, 2023 6:48 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LTC - ExaInfra Statement of Common Ground

Hi [REDACTED],

All happy from our side.

Thanks and regards

[REDACTED]  
Lead Engineer Duct and Fibre UK  
Mobile: [REDACTED]  
[www.exainfra.net](http://www.exainfra.net)



## 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 (the Applicant) 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 EXA Infrastructure own several UK Telco companies; Interoute, KPN International, Vtesse and Hibernia and provide managed telecommunication services and dark fibre to businesses. The company has a national and international footprint.
- 1.1.3 Instalcom maintain assets owned by KPN & Interoute for EXA Infrastructure that are affected by the Project.
- 1.1.4 EXA Infrastructure is a successor to GTT-KPN, however, their interests within the Project are held in Interoute Networks Limited, which is a subsidiary of EXA Infrastructure. Their registered address is: Interoute Networks Limited, 5th Floor, Strand, London, WC2N 5RN. Companies House #03773255. Any reference to GTT-KPN within the SoCG refers to discussions or agreements entered into prior to the formation of EXA Infrastructure when the company was still known as GTT-KPN.
- 1.1.5 The SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the Applicant and EXA Infrastructure, and where agreement has not been reached.
- 1.1.6 This final version of the SoCG has been submitted at Examination Deadline 8.

## 1.2 Principal Areas of Disagreement

- 1.2.1 On the 19 December 2022 the Examining 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 EXA Infrastructure elected not to produce a PADS Tracker, indicating to the Applicant that they were content that the number of outstanding matters within the SoCG was insufficient to warrant the exercise.

## 2 Matters

### 2.1 Final position on matters

- 2.1.1 A position statement on engagement undertaken between the Applicant and EXA Infrastructure is presented in Appendix A.
- 2.1.2 Table 2.1 details and presents the matters which have been agreed or are under discussion between (1) the Applicant and (2) EXA Infrastructure.
- 2.1.3 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’.
- 2.1.4 At Examination Deadline 8 there are nine matters, of which seven are agreed, and two that will remain under discussion.
- 2.1.5 With regards to the two matters under discussion, it is acknowledged there are some matters where further discussion may need to take place during the detailed design or construction stages of the Project to finalise detail and, as such, there are some matters that will remain 'under discussion' until that time. There are two matters in this SoCG to which this applies, and this is indicated via an asterisk (\*).
- 2.1.6 This is the Final Statement of Common Ground between the Applicant and EXA Infrastructure.

**Table 2.1 Final Position on Matters**

Topic	Item No.	EXA Infrastructure Comment	The Applicant’s Response	Application Document Reference	Status
<b>DCO and consents</b>					
Order Limits Boundary	2.1.1	EXA Infrastructure assets within the Order Limits should be identified and agreed.	The assets have been identified, shared and agreed (29 March 2020).	Draft DCO [Document Reference 3.1 (10)]	Matter Agreed

Topic	Item No.	EXA Infrastructure Comment	The Applicant’s Response	Application Document Reference	Status
<b>Design – road, tunnels, utilities</b>					
Diversions: Clashes with Project Permanent Works	2.1.2	EXA Infrastructure / Instalcom has shared their designs with the Project.	<p>Outline (Single) option diversions have been proposed by EXA Infrastructure and considered by the Project. Further development of these is required at the detailed design stage in conjunction with the Contractor.</p> <p>The Applicant does not consider these matters resolvable at this stage. Instead, they will be dealt with post consent between contractors. In the meantime, EXA Infrastructure receive protection over outages under the protective provisions. The Applicant’s works will be subject to the procedures set out in the Electronic Communications Code, and paragraph 17 of the protective provisions makes provision for reasonable compensation in case of interruption to the supply of services. While this point remains “under discussion” the Applicant does not expect any detailed discussions until it is closer to carrying out the works through an appointed contractor.</p>	N/A	Matter Under Discussion*
Operational Outages (constraints)	2.1.3	EXA Infrastructure cables must remain in working condition at all times, planned outages will be controlled by EXA Infrastructure and its contractors. All planned outages Works to be coordinated across the Project and to be scheduled in parallel.	The Protective Provisions confirm that the Applicant will continue to comply with the obligations in Part 10 (undertaker’s works affecting electronic communications apparatus) to the Electronic Communications Code. The Applicant considers that this should provide EXA Infrastructure with reassurance and resolve any concerns on outages.	Protective Provisions in Schedule 14 of the draft DCO [Document Reference 3.1 (10)]	Matter Agreed

Topic	Item No.	EXA Infrastructure Comment	The Applicant's Response	Application Document Reference	Status
Coordinated Design	2.1.4	EXA Infrastructure / Instalcom has shared their designs with the Project.	The Project has shared the Draft Coordinated Design to understand GTT-KPN assets in relation to other Statutory Undertakers (issued 1 May 2020). All of the Project design requirements are to be coordinated at the detailed design stage and where relevant, will be discussed with EXA Infrastructure prior to the commencement of works. Discussions with EXA will progress at the detailed design phase when the Applicant expects this matter to be agreed.	N/A	Matter Under Discussion*
Redundant Assets	2.1.5	EXA Infrastructure are not responsible for removing any redundant assets.	The Project will remove any redundant assets wherever possible and where not feasible will be identified and marked for the construction period.	N/A	Matter Agreed
<b>Construction</b>					
Construction Contract	2.1.6	The understanding is that this will be delivered under New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) using the C3 – C9 process.	The works are to be delivered under NRSWA.	N/A	Matter Agreed
<b>Operation and maintenance</b>					
Maintenance Access	2.1.7	EXA Infrastructure need to retain access to their network for maintenance throughout the duration of the Project 24*7. EXA Infrastructure apparatus should be returned to public highway on completion of the works.	Maintenance access requirements will be developed with the Contractor for both the temporary and permanent scenarios. Any restriction of this access will be on the grounds of safety and the Contractor will liaise with EXA Infrastructure in advance of the restrictions.	Protective Provisions in Schedule 14, of the draft DCO <b>[Document</b>	Matter Agreed



Topic	Item No.	EXA Infrastructure Comment	The Applicant’s Response	Application Document Reference	Status
			The Applicant considers the Protective Provisions, which incorporate the Electronic Communications Code, adequately protect EXA Infrastructure’s access to apparatus for maintenance.	<b>Reference 3.1 (10)]</b>	
<b>Protective Provisions</b>					
Protective Provisions	2.1.8	The parties continue to discuss the terms of the Protective Provisions. EXA Infrastructure has a statutory function to deliver a service and EXA needs to ensure that there is no detriment to its undertaking as a result of the works.	The Applicant considers the Protective Provisions, which incorporate the Electronic Communications Code, adequately protect EXA Infrastructure’s existing assets. EXA Infrastructure has agreed to standard National Highways Protective Provisions.	Protective Provisions in Schedule 14, Part 2 of the draft DCO <b>[Document Reference 3.1 (10)]</b>	Matter Agreed
Protection of existing Assets	2.1.9	EXA Infrastructure recognises that the draft protective provisions provide a mechanism for the protection of EXA’s existing apparatus.	The Protective Provisions provide adequate protection for EXA Infrastructure assets. Protection of those assets impacted by the Project will be discussed at the detailed design stage, prior to the commencement of works, where relevant.	Protective Provisions, Schedule 14, Part 2 of the draft DCO <b>[Document Reference 3.1 (10)]</b>	Matter Agreed

## Appendix A Engagement activity

- A.1.1 The Applicant and EXA Infrastructure have had extensive engagement since the inception of the Project.
- A.1.2 There has been engagement and dialogue through the statutory and non-statutory consultation, the various design iterations and releases.
- A.1.3 The engagement has been in the form of face-to-face meetings, Microsoft Teams meetings, telephone calls and email correspondence.
- A.1.4 The parties are content for their engagement to be captured and presented in the SoCG in this manner.

## Appendix B Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Development Consent Order</b>	<b>DCO</b>	Means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
<b>New Roads and Street Works Act 1991</b>	<b>NRSWA</b>	Legislation for the coordination of street works and works for road purposes and related matters.
<b>Statement of Common Ground</b>	<b>SoCG</b>	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.

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