



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Lower Thames Crossing
<b>File reference</b>	TR010032
<b>Status</b>	<b>FINAL</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	8 June 2022
<b>Meeting with</b>	Highways England
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update Meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### ***Programme Update***

The Applicant stated that there were no significant changes to the programme as set out previously and is working towards DCO submission later this calendar year. Non-Statutory Consultation has also commenced, due to close on 20 June 2022. The Applicant provided an overview of the level of response it has received to date.

### ***Engagement Update***

The Applicant is continuing its engagement and technical work with a view to preparing application documentation.

The Inspectorate confirmed it had met with a number of host Local Authorities recently as it has done sporadically over the course of the Pre-Application stage. The discussion noted the potential for an in-person tripartite meeting later in the autumn with the Applicant, representatives of local authorities and the Inspectorate. The Applicant expressed its support for the proposal and the Inspectorate agreed to scope out the principle and potential dates with local authorities.

### ***Feedback on proposals to record commitments (SAC-R)***

The Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (SAC-R) is a new proposed control document in the DCO application. Following engagement with stakeholders, the Applicant

explained there was a perception that some of the commitments asked will not fit into the wider control plan framework.

The proposed document provides a securing mechanism for Interested Party requests of actions and commitments in the DCO application. The Applicant explained that these commitments would be implemented during either the construction or operation of the proposed development. These would not be commitments required to mitigate the environmental effects of the proposed development (which are already secured).

The Inspectorate was interested by the proposal to introduce a new document at this stage in the Pre-Application programme of such a complex scheme and questioned its relationship with other proposed documents and whether there was potential for confusion.

## ***Feedback on Traffic and Transport Assessment 2.0***

The Applicant stated that the Environmental Statement (ES) will not include a traffic and transport chapter. However, it will assess environmental impacts caused by changes in traffic and transport, based on information taken from the Traffic and Transport Assessment. The Inspectorate noted the content of the Applicant's memorandum on the subject and advised that while the decision to not include a stand-alone chapter within the ES is for the Applicant to take, the key will be to ensure that the detailed information which supports the assessment of significant effects in the ES is reflected and accessible. The Applicant assured the Inspectorate that this is its intention for the ES.

## ***Review of recent topics***

The Applicant provided an update of its on-going discussions with Port of Tilbury around land designated for the Tilbury Freeport and the proposed approach to traffic modelling in respect of the lack of maturity in the plans shared to date.

The Applicant reiterated that whilst proposals for Tilbury Link Road are being progressed separately, there is consideration of how the proposals will relate to each other in this location in terms of design, construction and potential future operation.

The Applicant confirmed its position in respect of the recently withdrawn application for The London Report, that no sensitivity analysis would be undertaken of the traffic modelling.

The Applicant explained that some Local Authorities were continuing to note concerns in respect of the engagement programme, sharing of information and the consultation activities.

The Applicant presented a summary on the air quality impacts on ecological receptors, highlighting the mitigation and compensation measures that were included in its Local Refinement Consultation. The Applicant continues to define the design principles and outline designs for each area.

The Applicant presented a qualitative health impact assessment to be undertaken, which will use the outputs of the air quality assessment.

The Applicant explained how it was intending on tracking and responding to the anticipated draft of the National Networks National Policy Statement. The Applicant also noted the

relevance of recent Department for Transport Development Consent Order decisions. The Inspectorate drew attention to some general facets of the decisions and advised the Applicant to carefully consider their relevance to Lower Thames Crossing.

The Applicant noted its engagement with Natural England and Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on developing the detailed design of measures to ensure the best outcomes in respect of nitrogen deposition compensation and AONB enhancements. The Inspectorate queried the degree of alignment between Natural England and the AONB in terms of their positions and advice. The Applicant responded that response to the proposals was generally positive and that progress was being made.