

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme TR010036

8.8 Draft Statement of Common Ground with Defence Infrastructure Organisation

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009
April 2018



Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

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

**A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling
Scheme**

Development Consent Order 201[X]

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

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STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by (1) Highways England Company Limited and (2) Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Signed.....
[NAME]
Project Manager
on behalf of Highways England
Date: [DATE]

Signed.....
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[POSITION]
on behalf of [Defence Infrastructure Organisation]
Date: [DATE]

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") has been prepared in respect of the proposed A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme ("the Application") made by Highways England Company Limited ("Highways England") to the Secretary of State for Transport ("Secretary of State") for a Development Consent Order ("the Order") under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ("PA 2008").
- 1.1.2 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available in the deposit locations and / or the Planning Inspectorate website
- 1.1.3 The SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties to it, and where agreement has not (yet) been reached. SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by (1) Highways England as the Applicant and (2) Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).
- 1.2.2 Highways England 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 Highways England made provision for all legal rights and obligations of the Highways Agency, including in respect of the Application, to be conferred upon or assumed by Highways England.
- 1.2.3 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) that plays a vital role in supporting the armed forces by building, maintaining and servicing the infrastructure needed to support defence.

1.3 Terminology

- 1.3.1 In the tables in the Issues chapter of this SoCG, "Not Agreed" indicates a final position, and "Under discussion" where these points will be the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties. "Agreed" indicates where the issue has been resolved.
- 1.3.2 It can be taken that any matters not specifically referred to in the Issues chapter of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to Defence Infrastructure Organisation, and therefore have not been the subject of any discussions between the parties. As such, those matters can be read as agreed, only to the extent that they are either not of material interest or relevance to Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

1.4 Record of Engagement

1.4.1 A summary of the meetings and correspondence that has taken place between Highways England and Defence Infrastructure Organisation in relation to the Application is outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Record of engagement

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes (the topics should align with the issues tables)
14 January 2019	Meeting	Discussion held regarding the proposed designation of the right of way across the Camel Hill signal station site.
21 November 2018	E-mail	Birdstrike safeguarding was found to be the DIO concern and mitigating measures were identified. Suggestions for the DIO to assist in the design of ponds was requested for discussion.
15 November 2018	Meeting on RNAS site proposal for a new set of landing lights (LL)	Planned defence infrastructure required for the operation of RNAS Yeovilton DIO discussed with the landowners but no formal agreement yet. Number of hectares to be confirmed. DIO is planning on conducting UXO surveys Approval for the footpath granted but not for bridleway.
1 October 2018 to 1 November 2018	E-mails re: LL	Arranging a meeting with the LL project manager for the proposed LL plans and solicit agreements.
25 September 2018	E-mail (I) re: Footpath	Follow-up email regarding the progress with the Footpath Creation Report that was previously sent.
18 July 2018	E-mail	Asking access to MOD property at Camel Hill
12 July 2018	E-mail	Intention to use the field (for the proposed new LL) as a construction compound during the work
12 July 2018	E-mail	Request to upgrade the footpath to a bridleway. Plan/drawing is provided.
9 July 2018 & 3 July 2018	E-mails	Footpath creation report and the Creation Agreement were requested to discuss.
22 June 2018	E-mail	Review of the draft Statement of Common Ground. Mr. Dunlavey queried the "junction request", which has been clarified that the junction is key to providing access to and from the base.
19 June 2018	E-mail	The 3 accesses to the Camel Hill property will be affected. Three accesses have been labelled A-C and provides an explanation of each in terms of its location. Access A will be closed permanently. Access B will only be accessible from the southern end of Gason Lane therefore Gason Lane / A303 junction will be closed permanently. Access C will only be accessible from the southern end of Traits Lane as Traits Lane / A303 junction will be closed permanently. These have been annotated on a plan
11 June 2018	E-mail	Requests access to projectwise to overlay the design onto the land plots.
7 June 2018 & 2 June 2018	E-mails	Query about noise as part of the noise modelling regarding aircraft. Discussed also the noise from construction regarding the proposed compound north of Eyewell House.

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes (the topics should align with the issues tables)
19 March 2018 to 3 April 2018	E-mails	Proposed parallel road and the possible impact on the MOD signalling station had been discussed and asked feedback from the MOD safeguarding team.
9 March 2018	E-mail	Discussion on the proposal of a footpath diversion across land currently owned by the Secretary of State for Defence.
2 March 2018	E-mail	Plan showing the possible impacts on the MOD signalling station, for review by the MOD safeguarding team.
10 November 2017	E-mail	The DIO have no objection to the scheme in principle, but require to be kept informed of any further amendments to this scheme.
30 October 2017	E-mail	DIO was provided with the design plans and portal login. In addition to a request for work to commence on the plans.
24 January 2017	E-mail	Request regarding access to ecology survey (KS/0063E/001)

1.4.2 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) Highways England and (2) Defence Infrastructure Organisation in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG.

2 ISSUES

Topic	Sub-section	Defence Infrastructure comment	Highways England response	Status
General support to the scheme	General support for the scheme	The DIO supports the scheme and agrees for the need.	Acknowledged.	AGREED
Aerodrome safeguarding	Bird-strike safeguarding.	The plan to build ponds to contain permanent standing water would attract birds and increase the risk for bird-strikes.	An assessment has been undertaken to determine the bird-strike risk and the risk is considered to be low for the following reasons: There are limited records of problem bird species in the area; Ponds are generally sheltered apart from pond 4, which may require some additional planting to shelter it. Adjacent road noise is likely to deter birds; and There will be no public access to these ponds to eliminate possible bird feeding. Please see Appendix A for more detail.	UNDER DISCUSSION
	Approach envelope safeguarding – construction equipment.	The information on the heights of the machinery like cranes, piling equipment is requested including the appropriate assessment to be made to safeguard military radar and air safety at the base.	A calculation has been undertaken to determine the height restrictions adjacent to the airfield and this information has been passed on to the contractor. Generally, a height restriction of 21m above ground has been determined. Please see Appendix B.	AGREED
Bridleways	Bridleway proposed across land owned by	We are content with a footpath diversion across the MOD land as shown on the	Highways England has requested confirmation as to the reasoning	NOT AGREED

Topic	Sub-section	Defence Infrastructure comment	Highways England response	Status
	Secretary of State for Defence at Camel Hill.	proposed plan; however, this will be on the basis that we will not be responsible for the construction or upkeep of the footpath. We would also like to see a fence line to be installed to make the route through the wood irrefutable. We are not content with a bridleway diversion. (Email received 16/04/2018 – copy attached in appendix A).	behind the decision to ascertain if anything can be done to resolve any concerns.	
		We do not want horses through the land and therefore request that the bridleway is amended to a footpath.	Highways England to amend the bridleway to a footpath.	UNDER DISCUSSION
National Security Issues	National Security Issues	We can confirm the scheme presents no national security issues.	HE Acknowledged.	AGREED
Junction Request	Junction Request	Junction at Camel Cross is required to allow access to RNAS Yeovil.	HE Agreed, a junction has been provided.	AGREED
Access	Access to Camel Hill Signal Station	The DIO accept the proposed amendments to the access arrangements to this site	HE Acknowledged.	AGREED
Construction	Main site compound	The main site compound lies in the location for which new landing lights have been proposed. Potential for construction activities to interfere with these landing lights.	Highways England intend to submit a request to the Examining Authority to move the main site compound.	UNDER DISCUSSION

3 APPENDIX A – Bird-strike Analysis

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is concerned that the proposal to construct six ponds which will contain permanent bodies of water could attract birds to the area and increase the risk of bird-strikes.
- 3.1.2 An assessment has been undertaken to assess the risk of bird-strikes, which is summarised below.

3.2 Bird Species

- 3.2.1 Most bird species do not pose a significant risk to aircraft. The main problems are from large birds which are those bigger than 1kg such as Canada Geese (*Branta Canadensis*), and birds that typically flock in groups of more than ten (10) individuals like gulls (Milsom, 1990). The small birds which do not flock and rarely take to the air like coot or moorhen are not considered a significant issue.
- 3.2.2 The main problem bird species are gulls, swans, geese, wading birds, dabbling ducks, herons and starlings. However, not all of these bird species are present in the area. The data from the Somerset Environmental Record Centre (SERC) showed that there are limited records of problem bird species which are within three kilometres (3km) of the red line boundary of the scheme. The 2017 bird surveys identified the following related birds and their location:
- British lesser black-backed gull and 1 herring gull from Yeovilton Airfield, approximately 1.7km south of the scheme1 herring gull territory,
 - 2 mallard territories, and 1 individual starling all to the north of the scheme.

3.3 Ponds

- 3.3.1 There are six ponds to be constructed as part of the proposed scheme. The risk factor for each pond had been identified based on size, depth and surrounding habitat, that are shown in the table 3.

Table 3 – Pond Risk Assessment

Pond No.	Plan Area of Permanent Water (m ²)	Depth of Permanent Water (m)**	Surrounding habitat ***	Overall risk
1	1250	0.4	Sheltered by existing vegetation to the north and a proposed hedgerow to the south	Low risk.
2	2650	0.4	Sheltered by proposed hedgerow to the north; proposed A303 carriageway to the south	Low risk.
3	2720	0.4	Sheltered by proposed A303 carriageway to the north; proposed trees, shrubs and hedgerow to the south	Low risk.
4	680	0.4	Existing trees and shrubs to the north; proposed grassland and arable land to the south	Medium risk – with additional planting, this can be reduced to low risk.
5	4610	0.4	Existing trees and shrubs to the north and west; proposed wildflower grassland to the south (however open views are not possible due to the proposed A303 to the south of this)	Low risk.
6	160	This is the proposed wildlife pond – no depth has yet been specified. Would be beneficial for GCN as well as reducing bird strike for it to be fairly shallow.	Existing trees and shrubs to the north; proposed wildflower grassland to the south (however open views are not possible due to the proposed A303 to the south of this)	Low risk.

* Lower risk ponds are those less than 300m²

** Shallow water would deter most risk species if the pond is also sheltered by surrounding vegetation

*** Many birdstrike risk species prefer wide views across open landscape to have advance warning of predators

3.3.2 The following figures show the layout of the ponds.

Pond 1



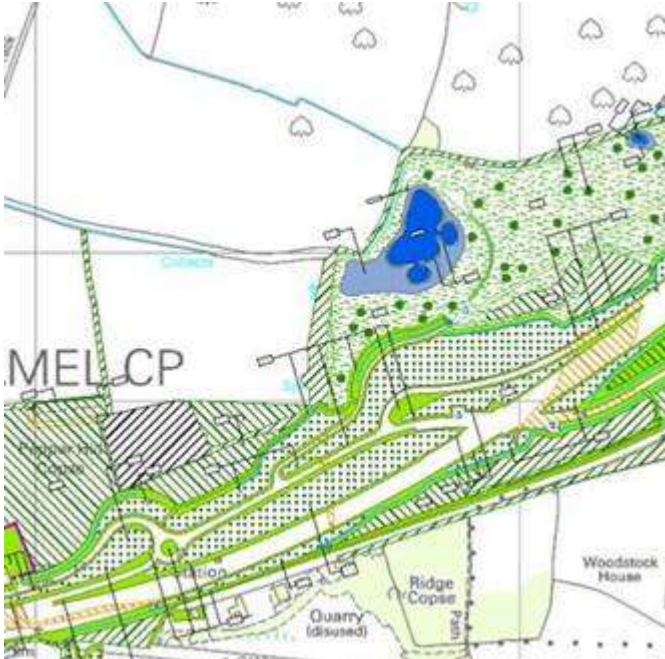
Ponds 2 and 3



Pond 4



Ponds 5 and 6



3.3.3 These ponds are generally sheltered and do not provide open views of the countryside except for the pond 4 that has open views to the south.

3.4 Conclusion

3.4.1 The data suggested that the proposals are not high risk in terms of birdstrikes as:

- There are limited records of problem bird species in the area;
- Ponds are generally sheltered apart from pond 4, which may require some additional measures.
- Adjacent road noise is likely to deter birds; and
- There will be no public access to these ponds to eliminate possible bird feeding.

3.5 Recommendation

- The planting adjacent to Pond 4 will be reviewed.
- Further discussion with the DIO's bird-strike safeguarding team would be useful.

4 APPENDIX B – Calculated Height Restrictions Adjacent to Airfield

Figure 4.1 – Calculated height restrictions, metres above ground.

