

M3 Junction 9 Improvement Scheme

Scheme Number: TR010055

7.12.5 Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (Rev 1)

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Planning Act 2008

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Procedure) Regulations 2009**

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7.12.5 STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND WITH NATURAL ENGLAND


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Rev 0	15 June 2023	Deadline 2 Submission
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STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by (1) National Highways Company Limited and (2) Natural England

Signed........
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on behalf of National Highways
Date: 10 November 2023

Signed..........
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Date: 10th November 2023

Contents

1 Introduction 1

 1.1 Purpose of this document 1

 1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground..... 1

 1.3 Terminology 1

2 Record of Engagement..... 3

3 Issues..... 6

Tables

Table 2.1: Record of Engagement..... 3

Table 3.1: Issues Table 6

Appendices

Appendix A Letter of No Impediment

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 M3 Junction 9 scheme (the Scheme) made by National Highways Company Limited (National Highways) to the Secretary of State for Transport (Secretary of State) for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended).
- 1.1.2 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the DCO application documents. All DCO application documents are available on the Planning Inspectorate's 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) National Highways as the applicant and (2) Natural England.
- 1.2.2 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, including in respect of the Application, to be conferred upon or assumed by National Highways.
- 1.2.3 Natural England is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Natural England is the government's advisor for the natural environment in England, helping to protect England's nature and landscape for people to enjoy and for the services they provide.

1.3 Terminology

- 1.3.1 In the Table 3.1 in **Section 3** of this SoCG:
- *"Agreed"* indicates area(s) of agreement
 - *"Provisionally agreed"* indicates areas that are agreed in principle. Both parties expect the issues to be *"agreed"* shortly after the close of the Examination
- 1.3.2 It can be assumed that any matters not specifically referred to in **Table 3.1** in **Section 3** of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to Natural England, 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 Natural England.

2 Record of Engagement

2.1.1 A summary of the key meetings and correspondence that has taken place between National Highways and Natural England in relation to the Application is outlined in **Table 2.1** below.

Table 2.1: Record of Engagement

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
19 January 2021	Meeting with Natural England	Discussed the scope of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (7.5, APP-158) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical HRA work Baseline data Upcoming HRA work Nutrient Neutrality Water quality (silt) Environmental mitigation and enhancements
18 February 2021	Email from National Highways to Natural England	Project update on delay of consultation.
20 May 2021	Email from National Highways to Natural England	Project update, statutory consultation dates, Stakeholder Briefing Session for Statutory Environmental Bodies to be held on 26 May 2021.
26 May 2021	Letter from National Highways to Natural England	Section 42 letter and Section 48 Notice, electronic link to 2021 Preliminary Environment Information Report (PEIR), PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS), PEIR Appendices.
7 July 2021	Letter from Natural England to National Highways	Formal Section 42 response received.
29 July 2021	Meeting with Natural England	Principles for protected species mitigation. Badger/Dormice: Overall mitigation proposals seem appropriate, although Natural England would require further information on detail before acceptance of approach. Reptiles: Natural England directed project to their Standing Advice
28 September 2021	Meeting with Natural England	Environmental Mitigation Design, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and HRA matters.
9 December 2021	Letter from National Highways to Natural England	Project update issued.

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
10 May 2022	Email from National Highways to Natural England	Project update - DCO submission delay
26 August 2022	Meeting with Natural England	Project update meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project update ▪ HRA ▪ Drainage ▪ BNG ▪ Protected Species ▪ SoCG
22 September 2022	Email from National Highways to Natural England	Project update including slides from a Members Briefing and a copy of letter to be sent to landowners.
18 November 2022	Meeting with Natural England	Project update meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project update ▪ Review of Appendix J (Stage 3 Temporary (Construction) Drainage Strategy) of the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) ▪ SoCG
1 December 2022	Email from National Highways to Natural England	Project update informing that the DCO Application was submitted on 21 November 2022.
15 February 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Project update meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, APP-132) comments ▪ Construction and operation drainage strategy comments ▪ Biodiversity and BNG comments ▪ SoCG review
17 March 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting with species licencing team to discuss the Draft Dormouse Licence Application.
7 June 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting to discuss Natural England's comments on various application documents and the SoCG.
8 June 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting with Natural England's Air Quality specialists to discuss comments on Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
		Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, APP-132).
24 August 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting with species licencing team to discuss the Draft Dormouse Licence Application.
18 October 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting with species licencing team to discuss the Draft Dormouse Licence Application.
8 November 2023	Meeting with Natural England	Meeting to discuss Natural England's comments (including those provided on 6 September and 4 October 2023) relating to Air Quality and the SoCG.

- 2.1.2 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and other forms of consultation and engagement undertaken between (1) National Highways and (2) Natural England in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG.

3 Issues

Table 3.1: Issues Table

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
1. Draft Development Consent Order						
1.1	Articles and Requirements within the draft Development Consent Order (3.1, Rev 2) .	draft Development Consent Order (3.1, Rev 2)	Natural England have confirmed that they have no comments on the draft Development Consent Order (3.1, Rev 2) .	The draft Development Consent Order (3.1, Rev 2) has been agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	12 May 2023
Environmental Statement (ES)						
2. Chapter 8 Biodiversity						
2.1	Scope of the assessment Paragraph 8.4.1 in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) outlines the scope of the assessment. The assessment covers the impacts upon biodiversity receptors (including statutory and non-statutory designated sites, habitats and species) during both the construction and operation of the Scheme.	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	Natural England agrees with the scope of the assessments in terms of statutory designated sites.	The scope of the assessment has been agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	28 September 2022
2.2	Assessment Methodology Section 8.4 in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) provides the methodology used to undertake the assessment on biodiversity. The methodology used is DMRB LA 108 Biodiversity (National Highways, 2020) and Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018).	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	Natural England would agree with this assessment methodology, provided that this represents current best practise.	DMRB LA 108 Biodiversity (National Highways, 2020) and Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018) represent current best practice.	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.3	Assessment Methodology In-combination methodology and worst-case scenario for air quality associated with traffic	Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, Rev 1)	Natural England has engaged with National Highways on this topic before and during the examination. Additional information provided by National Highways at Deadline 6 and discussed at a meeting on 8th November provided sufficient certainty that the opening year would be a worst case in terms of NOx emissions, with further information to be provided confirming NH3 and N deposition impacts are also worst case.	The application of Opening Year traffic flows and emission date is a reasonable worst-case assessment approach and no further assessment of potential in-combination effects post 2027 is necessary. Responses to each of Natural England comments are provided in Applicant Response to Questions from the ExA in the Report on the Implications for European Sites (8.26, REP6-027) submitted at Deadline 6.	Agreed	10 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
			Subject to this information being received from the applicant, Natural England considers this point to be agreed.			
2.4	Assessment Methodology In-combination methodology for air quality associated with non-road sources	Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, Rev 1)	Natural England considers that exclusion of the AD plant from the non-traffic in-combination assessment is appropriate, as the M3J9 project had been considered in the in-combination assessment for the AD plant.	The anaerobic digestion (AD) facility highlighted by Natural England falls outside the requirements for assessment and therefore was not included in the Environmental Statement (6.1-6.3, APP042 – APP-153) . Responses to each of Natural England comments are provided in Applicant Response to Questions from the ExA in the Report on the Implications for European Sites (8.26, REP6-027) submitted at Deadline 6.	Agreed	10 November 2023
2.3	Section 8.5 in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) summarises the selection of study areas used to undertake the assessment. The selection of study area is in accordance with the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018). The study areas are presented in Figures 8.1 – 8.5 of the ES (6.2, APP-070)	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) and Figures 8.1-8.5 of Chapter 8 (Biodiversity - Figures) of the ES (6.2, APP-070)	Natural England agree with the study areas as described in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	The study areas have been agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.4	Baseline information A data gathering exercise has been undertaken to establish the existing baseline conditions including for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated sites (SACs, SSSIs, etc) - Habitats, notable plants and invasive plants - Amphibians (including great crested newts) - Aquatic invertebrates - Badgers - Bats (foraging and commuting) - Bats (roosting) - Breeding birds - Hazel dormouse - Otter 	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) Appendices 8.1a – 8.1y of the ES (6.3, APP-104 – APP-128)	Natural England's licensing team would also be happy to comment on the appropriateness of the methodologies outlined where they are likely to support a licence application. If this is required by the scheme, please do let us know. Natural England have reviewed the methodology for the draft dormouse licence application. Justification is required for areas not surveyed in the North-West and South of the site; these areas are to either be partially impacted or utilised as a receptor site. By way of an update to the above, as translocation is proposed it is more practically complex and requires detailed collaboration. At this stage,	National Highways has responded to Natural England's Licencing Team by explaining that survey coverage across the site was very good, and covered the majority of habitats where impacts will occur. Where some parcels of habitat were not surveyed due to access or safety reasons, dormouse presence has been assumed, and data from adjacent similar habitats has provided useful context on population density. At a meeting on 17 March 2023, Natural England's licencing team were happy with this response. An updated licence application was submitted to Natural England on 17 July 2023. This updated licence application	Agreed	8 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
	<p>The methodologies adopted to undertake the data gathering and the results are outlined within Appendices 8.1a – 8.1y of the ES (6.3, APP-104 – APP-128).</p> <p>Section 8.6 Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049), outlines the existing baseline and future baseline scenario and describes European designations, other statutory designations, non-statutory designations, habitats and species.</p>		<p>based on the information received, it is still feasible for a Letter of No Impediment to be issued in advance of 10th November 2023. Some caveats to the LONI will apply, which include considerations surrounding the extent of the translocations, the 'unknowns' within the present data and expectations within the full licence application. These have been discussed with the customer prior to committing them to the decision outcome.</p>	<p>contained further information requested by Natural England.</p> <p>National Highways met with Natural England on 24 August 2023. Natural England indicated that it was satisfied with the draft licence application and should be in a position to issue a 'Letter of No Impediment'. However, following further review, on 15 September and 9 October, Natural England provided additional comments and requested additional information.</p> <p>On 18 October National Highways met with Natural England to discuss these additional comments, and to agree the additional information that National Highways would provide to satisfy Natural England. The representatives from Natural England were confident that, assuming the additional information was provided promptly by National Highways, they would be in a position to issue a 'Letter of No Impediment' to the Examination.</p> <p>The requested information was provided by National Highways on 19 October.</p> <p>Natural England responded on 24 October advising National Highways that they will again consult internally on providing a response to the information provided by National Highways and would prioritise providing that response by Deadline 8.</p> <p>It is National Highways' view that Natural England has all the information required to be in a position to issue a 'Letter of No Impediment' to the DCO Examination before Deadline 8.</p> <p>The 'Letter of No Impediment' can be found in Appendix A.</p>		

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
2.5	Baseline information Due to the mobility of species and potential for changes in habitats, to make certain the ecological baseline is up-to-date and suitable to inform the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and the discharge of Requirements, baseline ecological surveys would be updated prior to construction. The surveys would include, but are not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated habitat and notable plant survey Updated bat roost surveys of all trees and buildings affected during construction Updated badger survey Updated dormice survey Updated otter survey Updated invasive species survey Updated reptile survey 	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the ES (6.1, APP-049) and first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)	Natural England agrees with the proposal to update baseline ecological surveys prior to construction. Surveys for white-clawed crayfish should also be updated as necessary as the proposals progress.	The updating of baseline surveys prior to construction are agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.6	Mitigation Section 8.8 in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) , outlines embedded and essential mitigation proposed to be implemented to avoid or reduce environmental effects during construction and operation. Mitigation includes: Embedded mitigation during construction The route of the western (proposed footpath and cycle path) route is located wholly outside the River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), other than the proposed new foot/cycle bridge which spans these designated areas. The proposed new foot/cycle bridge over the River Itchen SAC/SSSI would be a clear span structure, with no piers within the river channel. In addition, the abutments would be set back from the riverbank, outside of the SAC and SSSI.	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	Natural England agrees with the proposed embedded mitigation. Setting back the abutments will help maintain the connectivity of the river bank.	Embedded mitigation during construction for the proposed foot/cycleway is agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.7	Mitigation Embedded mitigation during operation The operational drainage system has been designed to modern highway standards and is likely to provide an improvement of water treatment compared to the existing situation. The drainage design includes a range of features	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (The Scheme and its	The proposals for other embedded mitigation such as the proposed fencing, the enhancement of habitat connectivity and the design of the pedestrian bridge with the abutments set back from the riverbank to avoid	National Highways has agreed to include 5 years post construction monitoring, as suggested by Natural England.	Agreed	7 June 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
	<p>to treat highway runoff including wetlands, attenuation basins, and swales. The drainage strategy is set out in Appendix 13.1 (Drainage Strategy Report) of the ES (6.3, APP-142, APP-143).</p> <p>The design of the new foot/cycle bridge, with abutments set back from River Itchen would allow passage of wildlife, in particular otter, to be maintained along the riverbank during operation. The bridge deck also follows the same horizontal alignment as the existing adjacent road bridges (Itchen Bridge and Kings Worthy Bridge), to make certain it does not present an additional blockage to animals such as bats commuting along the River Itchen.</p> <p>New areas of woodland and scrub within the landscape design have been located to maintain and enhance connectivity for wildlife (including bats and dormice) within the Scheme and wider landscape during operation. Much of the additional woodland and scrub planting is adjacent to existing woodlands, or provides habitat links, which would enhance their ecological function (refer to Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (The Scheme and its Surroundings – Figures) of the ES (6.2, APP-062)</p> <p>Fencing would be provided along the footpath/cycleway either side of the River Itchen to prevent pedestrians from entering woodland habitat potentially used by otter.</p> <p>Wildlife fencing to be provided in key locations as part of the Scheme to prevent mammals (e.g. badgers and otters) crossing onto the highway, and to direct animals to alternative suitable habitat. One way return gates would also be provided through the fence to allow animals to exit the highway network.</p> <p>Lighting has only been incorporated into the design of the Scheme within the subways and underpasses, where it is essential for safety reasons. There would be no lighting elsewhere within the Scheme</p>	<p>Surroundings – Figures) of the ES (6.2, APP-062) and Appendix 13.1 (Drainage Strategy Report) of the ES (6.3, APP-142, APP-143)</p>	<p>impacts on the designated sites are welcome.</p> <p>Post-construction monitoring should be undertaken until all the drainage features are established and are fully operational, and that it can be demonstrated that the works have not resulted in increased sediment loading or pollutants entering the watercourse. This is recommended for a period of 5 years to allow for corrective measures to be applied as necessary; this timeframe will also allow for any vegetated features to have matured and be functioning to their full potential.</p>			

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
2.8	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Essential mitigation during construction</p> <p>Paragraphs 8.8.12 to 8.8.29 in Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) sets out the essential mitigation for the construction phase.</p> <p>Essential mitigation measures are outlined in the fiEMP (7.3, Rev 2) and the Temporary (Construction) Phase Drainage Strategy (which forms an Appendix to the fiEMP), in accordance with LD 120 Environmental management plans (National Highways, 2020). This document includes commitments to when working near watercourses they would be carried out in accordance with CIRIA guidance, in particular C532 Control of water pollution from construction sites, C650 Environmental Good Practice on Site, and CIRIA C648 Control of water pollution from linear construction projects. This includes selecting appropriate probability rainfall events (10-year return period) and overspill contingencies. Due to the sensitivity of the receptors, Factors of Safety would be incorporated, to be agreed with the regulatory bodies (Lead Local Flood Authority and the Environment Agency).</p>	<p>Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049), first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and Appendix J (Stage 3 Temporary (Construction) Drainage Strategy) of the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)</p>	<p>National Highways has engaged with Natural England with regard to the Appendix J (Stage 3 Temporary (Construction) Drainage Strategy) of the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and have provided updates and clarification to this document in light of Natural England's advice, which is welcome.</p>	<p>The essential mitigation measures during the construction phase have been agreed with Natural England.</p>	Agreed	7 June 2023
2.9	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Mitigation also includes a commitment to ensuring the construction of the Scheme would adhere to guidance issued by the Environment Agency on working methods and timing restrictions in relation to avoiding impacts to fish within the River Itchen, including the qualifying species of the River Itchen SAC/SSSI. In-river working required for installation of drainage outflows would avoid sensitive periods (1 October to 31 May inclusive for salmonid fish, and 15 March to 15 June inclusive for cyprinid fish). Where dewatering of sections of the river is required to facilitate construction, fish would be removed from these areas using electrofishing, in agreement with the Environment Agency and under any necessary permits. Piling works required for the construction of the new foot/cycle bridge would be carried out using vibro-piling methods, or if percussive piling is used works would adhere to the timing restrictions.</p>	<p>Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) and first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)</p>	<p>Natural England agrees with the proposed essential mitigation to minimise impacts to the River Itchen during construction, but note that the Environment Agency may wish to comment further on this aspect.</p>	<p>National Highways continues to engage with the Environment Agency. The mitigation relating to fish within the River Itchen is agreed with Natural England.</p>	Agreed	15 February 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
2.10	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Where practicable, construction phase lighting would be designed to reduce light spill and duration of artificial light use on important light-sensitive important biodiversity features, in particular the River Itchen corridor which is known to support bats and otters. Measures would also include reference to measures in Section 10.4 (Temporary Floodlighting) of <i>Dark Skies Technical Advice Note 2</i>, (South Downs National Park, May 2021).</p>	<p>Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) and first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)</p>	<p>The proposals to minimise light pollution during the construction phase are welcome.</p> <p>Should any protected species licences be applied for, these should include greater detail of the baseline light levels prior to construction, along with detail on how light spill/ artificial light design will avoid light-related impacts on these species.</p>	<p>National Highways notes Natural England's comments on light pollution. Currently the only licence National Highways is seeking from Natural England is a dormouse licence.</p>	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.11	<p>Other mitigation measures include:</p> <p>Design of the habitat compensation and enhancement package after consultation with stakeholders, including the South Downs National Park Authority. The habitat creation package can be viewed on Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (The Scheme and its Surroundings – Figures) of the ES (6.2, APP-062) with further details provided in Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102).</p> <p>Pollution prevention measures including source control, settlement tanks, silt fencing and dust suppression would be provided to avoid accidental pollution events during construction, with particular regard to the River Itchen.</p> <p>Installation of fencing of adjacent designated areas and retained important habitats for protection and avoidance of accidental damage and species mortality. Easton Down SINC located within the Application boundary to be fenced and protected throughout the construction phase.</p> <p>Provide measures to avoid entrapment of animals during constructions e.g. provide escape ramp, or if not possible, covering of excavation at night.</p> <p>Programming of habitat clearance to avoid sensitive periods for fauna, or if not possible, carry out an ecological watching brief prior construction.</p> <p>Produce and implement a Reptile Mitigation Strategy to allow reptiles to be safeguarded throughout the construction and operational phases.</p> <p>To avoid risk to white-clawed crayfish and other aquatic species from introduction of non-native species or pathogens biosecurity measures, such as disinfecting all</p>	<p>Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049), first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102)</p>	<p>Natural England has provided comments on Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102), and these were discussed further in a meeting on 7 June 2023.</p> <p>Natural England has provided comments on Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) which National Highways responded to on 3 May 2023.</p>	<p>Comments provided by Natural England on the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102) have been incorporated into those documents, or where there comments on the detail these will be included in the siEMP or LEMP, secured through Development Consent Order Requirement.</p> <p>Mitigation set out in the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) and Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102) have been agreed with Natural England, including the implementation of fencing of adjacent designated sites, and the Easton Down SINC.</p>	Agreed	7 June 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
	equipment, PPE and machinery with a broad-spectrum disinfectant, will be implemented when carrying out works in watercourses. No in-river working activities to the river channel or its banks would be undertaken without prior checks for white-clawed crayfish. If found to be present within the working area, white-clawed crayfish would be moved to an adjacent (unaffected) section of the River Itchen. If required, a licence would be obtained for the works. The timing of in-river works would be scheduled between 1 July and 30 September to avoid the sensitive period for white-clawed crayfish.					
2.12	Mitigation To compensate for the loss of a main badger sett, an artificial badger sett would be provided. A licence under the PBA 1992 would be obtained to legally allow closure of the existing sett and would include full details of appropriate mitigation strategies. All works affecting badgers shall be undertaken in accordance with the licencing requirements, and standing advice from Natural England. To compensate for the loss of the main sett, an artificial sett would be constructed and retained in perpetuity. The artificial sett would be located within the Application Boundary as close as possible to the existing main sett, but to avoid disturbance would be outside the area of main works and temporary works. Other setts identified within the Application Boundary would be retained and protected during the construction phase.	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	Class licences to exclude badgers or destroy setts can only be used between 1 July and 30 November. Before work commences, Natural England will need to approve the site registration (further details here).	National Highways notes the specific comments relating to badger setts and licences and continues to engage with Natural England on this matter. Bait marking surveys were undertaken in 2022 and confirm only 1 clan is present, and that badgers have been recorded in the location of proposed artificial sett. The surveys have been undertaken by a national badger specialist who holds a class licence to close setts. Following grant of the DCO, and construction of the artificial sett, the existing sett will be closed using their class licence once there is evidence of the artificial sett being used by badgers. The use of a class licence means that there will be no application for a badger licence from Natural England.	Agreed	14 June 2023
2.13	Mitigation To compensate for the loss of hazel dormice habitat (woodland, scrub and hedgerow) within the Application Boundary, the landscape planting has provided compensatory planting to enable a net increase in dormouse habitat within the Application Boundary in the long term, and to maintain connectivity across the wider landscape. Dormice present with retained woodland to the north of the Highways England depot will become isolated from other areas of dormouse habitat by existing and proposed infrastructure. Dormice in this area will likely need to be	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049)	As translocation is a non-standard mitigation method for hazel dormice, detailed proposals should be fully explored with Natural England in terms of this approach. As part of this process we will need to consider the specifics of the proposals - including, but not limited to, population estimates of the proposed translocation areas and receptor sites, habitat suitability within receptor sites and the ability of these areas to support additional animals, the logistics of the proposed translocation (including	National Highways submitted a draft Dormouse Licence application to Natural England on 22 December 2022. Comments were received from Natural England 13 March 2023, and this was followed up with a meeting on 17 March 23. Natural England has requested further supporting information. An updated licence application was submitted to Natural England on 17 July 2023. This updated licence application	Agreed	8 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
	<p>translocated to a receptor site within retained dormouse habitat to ensure their ongoing survival. Given the likely presence of dormice within suitable habitat in the wider landscape it unlikely that a suitable woodland will be present which does not currently support dormice. Therefore, dormice will be translocated to woodlands, which will have been enhanced for dormice in advance, to increase their carrying capacity through additional planting, provision of dormouse boxes, and habitat management.</p> <p>A European Protected Species licence would be obtained to legally allow clearance of dormouse habitat and translocation of dormice.</p>		<p>location / setup of holding facilities, how often these will be checked, details of food and water provision) and a disease risk analysis.</p> <p>As translocation is proposed it is more practically complex and requires detailed collaboration. At this stage, based on the information received, it is still feasible for a Letter of No Impediment to be issued in advance of 10th November 2023. Some caveats to the LONI will apply, but these have been discussed with the customer prior to committing them to the decision outcome.</p>	<p>contained further information requested by Natural England.</p> <p>National Highways met with Natural England on 24 August 2023. Natural England indicated that it was satisfied with the draft licence application and should be in a position to issue a 'Letter of No Impediment'. However, following further review, on 15 September and 9 October, Natural England provided additional comments and requested additional information.</p> <p>On 18 October National Highways met with Natural England to discuss these additional comments, and to agree the additional information that National highways would provide to satisfy Natural England. The representatives from Natural England were confident that, assuming the additional information was provided promptly by the Applicant, they would be in a position to issue a 'Letter of No Impediment' to the Examination.</p> <p>The requested information was provided by National Highways on 19 October.</p> <p>Natural England responded on 24 October and advised National Highways that they will again consult internally on providing a response to the information provided by National Highways and would prioritise providing that response by Deadline 8.</p> <p>It is National Highways' view that Natural England has all the information required to be in a position to issue a Letter of No Impediment to the DCO Examination before Deadline 8.</p> <p>The 'Letter of No Impediment' can be found in Appendix A.</p>		

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
2.14	Mitigation An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) would be present on site during key periods of the construction phase. The EcoW would be required to make certain that all committed mitigation measures are adhered to.	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) and the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)	Natural England would expect suitable ecological supervision for works to be in place, in line with best practice guidance.	The presence of an EcoW is agreed with Natural England. A commitment has been made in Table 3.2 Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) of the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2) to ensure an EcoW will be present during key periods of the construction phase.	Agreed	15 February 2023
2.15	Mitigation Essential Mitigation during operation Paragraphs 8.8.30 to 8.8.31 Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) , outline the essential mitigation for the operational phase, with further details provided within Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102) , with a full LEMP secured through a DCO Requirement in agreement with statutory consultees. Monitoring of the badger and dormice populations as part of the licencing agreement would be agreed with Natural England.	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the ES (6.1, APP-049), Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of the ES (6.3, APP-102) and first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 2)	The ongoing management and monitoring of habitat creation and enhancement measures is welcomed. Natural England welcome the use of native species of local provenance as a key design principle, and the inclusion of appropriate biosecurity measures. Detailed comments, for example relating to the species mix within the habitats proposed, will be incorporated into the landscape design during the detailed design phase.	The essential mitigation during operation is agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	9 June 2023
2.17	Residual effects and conclusions Section 8.9 of Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-049) outlines the residual effects of the Scheme following the implementation of mitigation. Potential impacts from construction, operation, and maintenance of the Scheme that could relate to important biodiversity receptors include: habitat loss and gain, fragmentation of populations or habitats, disturbance, habitat degradation, and species mortality. The mitigation hierarchy has been embedded within the assessment process, whereby the design has sought to avoid adverse impacts in the first instance through an iterative approach to design, e.g. informing alignment to avoid sensitive receptors where possible. In areas where avoidance is not possible, measures have been included to prevent or reduce potentially significant negative effects. As a last resort, measures to compensate negative effects have also been included, e.g. habitat creation to offset impacts associated with habitat loss and fragmentation	Chapter 8 (Biodiversity) of the ES (6.1, APP-049)	Natural England agrees with the mitigation hierarchy approach. Any residual effects impacting Habitat sites should be reflected in the HRA. Discussions about air quality impacts have taken place before and during the examination period. We understand that further information on critical loads will be provided in relation to relevant SSSI sites. Provided this does not result in any changes to the conclusions of residual effects, we raise no further comments on this aspect. This item is therefore 'provisionally agreed'.	National Highways is engaging with Natural England on this matter. National Highways has updated Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, APP-132) at Deadline 4 to address Natural England's comments. Responses to each of Natural England comments are provided in Applicant Response to Questions from the ExA in the Report on the Implications for European Sites (8.26, REP6-027) submitted at Deadline 6.	Provisionally agreed	10 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
	<p>where these cannot be avoided. A package of mitigation measures have been provided, including provision of substantial areas of habitats of ecological value which are appropriate to the local area (including chalk grassland, native broadleaved woodland and scrub).</p> <p>The assessment identifies a number of adverse and beneficial impacts to biodiversity receptors, however in all cases the residual effects are not significant.</p>					
3. Chapter 15 Cumulative Effects						
3.1	<p>Chapter 15 (Cumulative Effects) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-056) considers two types of cumulative effects of the Scheme. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative effects – effects that occur as a result of changes caused by other developments acting cumulatively with the effects of the Scheme. Combined effects – effects from the combined effect of several different impacts acting together on a single receptor, such that the combined effect would be more significant than the individual effects. 	Chapter 15 (Cumulative Effects) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, APP-056)	<p>No cumulative effects have been identified to biodiversity during the construction and operational phases, when mitigation for the M3J9 Scheme have been taken into account. Natural England has no further comments on this aspect of the proposals.</p> <p>Natural England is aware that further work is being undertaken to assess the impacts of any changes in air quality in combination with other plans and projects. Natural England agrees with the consideration of cumulative effects provided that no updates are required as a result of the air quality updates (which Natural England would be happy to review if required).</p>	The consideration of cumulative effects is agreed with Natural England.	Agreed	4 April 2023
4. Habitats Regulations Assessment						
4.1	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (7.5, Rev 2) has been undertaken for the Scheme. It outlines both the HRA screening and appropriate assessment stages and concludes no significant effects (alone or in-combination) on the integrity of European Sites including the River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Mottisfont Bats SAC, and Kennet and Lambourne Floodplain SAC.	Habitat Regulations Assessment (7.5, Rev 2)	<p>Natural England agrees in principle with the HRA screening and the proposed mitigation outlined at appropriate assessment.</p> <p>Discussions about air quality impacts have taken place during the examination period. Following detailed engagement on this topic, provided that the HRA is updated to reflect these discussions, we have no further comments on the overall conclusions of the HRA.</p>	<p>Following ongoing consultation with Natural England on HRA matters, at Deadline 4 National Highways resubmitted the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (7.5, Rev 1) and supporting information including Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, Rev 1) and Chapter 5 Air Quality.</p> <p>The Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (7.5, Rev 2) was further updated at Deadline 5.</p>	Provisionally agreed	10 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
			<p>Therefore, whilst we are awaiting the final version of the HRA, discussions and information provided by National Highways at deadline 6 have provided sufficient confidence that there will not be AEOI – despite of the changes needed to the HRA to reflect discussions around the methodology for assessment and presentation of results.</p> <p>This item is therefore 'provisionally agreed' given the above. Natural England will be happy to review an updated HRA in due course. We understand that further information on critical loads will be provided in relation to relevant SSSI sites (although this is not for inclusion within the HRA).</p>	<p>In comments provided on 4 October, Natural England has confirmed that adverse effects on the integrity of the River Itchen SAC, resulting from the Scheme alone, can be excluded.</p> <p>National Highways has provided responses to these within Applicant Response to Questions from the ExA in the Report on the Implications for European Sites (8.26, REP6-027) submitted at Deadline 6.</p> <p>National Highways met with Natural England on 8 November 2023. National Highways took an action to provide further information about critical loads and levels.</p>		
4.2	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Scope and mitigation measures	Habitat Regulations Assessment (7.5, Rev 2)	<p>Natural England agrees with the scope of this HRA in that it considers the relevant designated sites.</p> <p>Discussions regarding air quality impacts have taken place during the examination period. As detailed under point 4.1 above, we await an updated HRA to reflect discussions around the methodology for assessment and presentation of results, however this would not affect the scope of the HRA or mitigation measures required.</p> <p>Natural England would be happy to review an updated HRA in due course.</p> <p>If the mitigation measures need to be changed at a later date for any reason an updated HRA should capture these updates to the Scheme.</p>	<p>It is welcomed that Natural England agree with the scope of the HRA. Mitigation relied upon within HRA is set out in the first iteration Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 6).</p> <p>The application includes a commitment to produce a second iteration Environmental Management Plan (siEMP), which will be secured through a DCO Requirement. The siEMP will be drafted in consultation with statutory regulators, and there will be regular engagement with these parties through the subsequent detailed design and delivery (construction) phases.</p> <p>Following ongoing consultation with Natural England on HRA matters, at Deadline 4 National Highways resubmitted the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (7.5, Rev 1) and supporting information including Appendix 8.3 (Assessment of Operational Air Quality Impacts on Biodiversity) of the ES (6.3, Rev 1) and Chapter 5 (Air Quality) of the</p>	Agreed	10 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
				<p>Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, Rev 2).</p> <p>The Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (7.5, Rev 2) was further updated at Deadline 5.</p> <p>In comments provided on 4 October, Natural England has confirmed that adverse effects on the integrity of the River Itchen SAC, resulting from the Scheme alone, can be excluded.</p> <p>Natural England had two outstanding comments on the potential in-combination effects from air quality. The Applicant has provided responses to these within Applicant Response to Questions from the ExA in the Report on the Implications for European Sites (8.26, REP6-027).</p>		
5. Landscape and Visual						
5.1	<p>Regarding landscape and visual Natural England, stated they would like to see direct and indirect effects assessed on the National Park, details of local landscape character areas mapped, assessment of visual effects on the surrounding area / landscape together with physical effects of the development, a full assessment of potential impact of the development using Landscape Character Assessments, consideration of character and distinctiveness of the area, measures taken to build to high standards, details of alternatives and justification for the preferred option, cumulative effects and reference to National Character Areas.</p> <p>The points raised by Natural England are included within Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual) of the ES (6.1, Rev 1) together with Chapter 3 (Assessment of Alternatives) of the ES (6.1, Rev 1). In addition, there has been engagement with the South Downs National Park Authority regarding landscape and visual throughout the design and assessment of the Scheme.</p>	<p>Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, Rev 1)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (Assessment of Alternatives) of the ES (6.1, Rev 1)</p> <p>Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (The Scheme and its Surroundings – Figures (Part 2 of 4)) of the ES (6.2, Rev 1)</p>	<p>Natural England welcomes the engagement with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in developing the scheme proposals. Natural England understand there are a number of points under discussion with the SDNPA, which may result in updates to the scheme design and we would be happy to review any such updates in due course.</p> <p>Natural England would defer to the detailed consideration of these matters that the SDNPA have given this project before and during the examination. Natural England advise that great weight is given to advice provided by the South Downs National Park Authority regarding this application. Their knowledge of the site and its wider landscape setting, together with the aims and objectives of the National</p>	<p>National Highways confirms that no changes are proposed to the preliminary design. National Highways is seeking consent on the design described and detailed in Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual) of the Environmental Statement (ES) (6.1, Rev 1).</p> <p>National Highways has consulted Natural England on Appendix 7.6 (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP)) of the ES (6.3, APP-102).</p> <p>National Highways has responded to the points raised by Natural England at various stages of the Examination, and with South Downs National Park Authority, including those specifically relating to the temporary main construction site compound and tree belt. National Highways position is outlined in Appendix C (Construction</p>	Agreed	9 November 2023

Reference	Issue	Document References (if relevant)	Natural England's Position	National Highways' Position	Status	Date
			<p>Park's management plan, is a valuable contribution to the planning decision.</p> <p>We understand that mitigating measures for outstanding concerns, including the location and design of the construction compound and the width of the proposed tree belt for visual screening have been proposed by the SDNPA.</p>	<p>Compound Position Paper) of Applicant Summaries of Oral Case for Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) (8.13, REP4-034). Commitments to support environmental visual screening are included in Table 3.2 (Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments) of the first iteration Environmental Management Plan (fiEMP) (7.3, Rev 7).</p>		
6. Access and Recreation						
6.1	<p>Natural England recommended early engagement with South Downs National Park Authority to discuss incorporating measures to improve access to the National Park and links to the wider footpath network. Engagement has been undertaken with the South Downs National Park Authority throughout the design of the Scheme and the design of the new proposed footway, cycleway and horse-riding route, proposed footway and cycleway and proposed footpath and cycle path - in total, an extra 4.8km of public rights of way will be provided.</p>	<p>Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (The Scheme and its Surroundings – Figures) of the ES (6.2, APP-062)</p>	<p>Natural England welcomes the engagement with the South Downs National Park Authority throughout the project design. Natural England understand that the South Downs National Park Authority are broadly satisfied with the proposals and are currently working with National Highways to finalise details on this aspect, which is welcomed.</p>	<p>Access to the South Downs National Park has been discussed and agreed with Natural England. We welcome the ongoing discussions with the South Downs National Park Authority to finalise the details of this element of the scheme.</p>	Agreed	18 November 2022

Appendix A Letter of No Impediment

Date: 10 November 2023
Our ref: 2022-63581-EPS-AD1
(NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECT)



Dr Michele Rodericks
Environmental Manager
VolkerFitzpatrick Ltd

Sent by e-mail only

Wildlife licensing
Natural England
Horizon House
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AH
Email:
wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk
Tel: 020 8026 1089

Dear Dr Michele Rodericks

DRAFT MITIGATION LICENCE APPLICATION STATUS: INITIAL DRAFT APPLICATION
LEGISLATION: THE CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017
(as amended)/THE WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (as amended)
NSIP: M3 Junction 9
SPECIES: Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)

Thank you for your draft dormouse mitigation licence application in association with the above NSIP site, received in this office on the 22 December 2022. As stated in our published guidance, once Natural England is content that the draft licence application is of the required standard, we will issue a 'letter of no impediment'. This is designed to provide the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State with confidence that the competent licensing authority sees no impediment to issuing a licence in future, based on information assessed to date in respect of these proposals.

Assessment

Following our assessment of the draft application documents, I can now confirm that, on the basis of the information and proposals provided, Natural England sees no impediment to a licence being issued, should the DCO be granted.

However, please note the following issues have been identified within the current draft of the method statement that will need to be addressed before the licence application is formally submitted. Our Wildlife Adviser, George Ridsdale, discussed this matter with Simon Witney via e-mail correspondence on the 07 November 2023 where it was confirmed that the necessary amendments would be made. Please ensure that the method statement is revised to include these changes prior to formal submission. For clarity these include:

- Natural England agrees that translocation is appropriate across some parts of the site where displacement (persuasion) is not feasible however, it is expected that the extent of translocation is reduced. Specifically, this includes habitat at the northern ends of the central translocation area (between the M3 and A34). Both translocation and persuasion via single stage habitat clearance are currently proposed here. However, translocation may not be appropriate if persuasion can be undertaken.
- Natural England acknowledges that there are unknowns at this stage. This includes the expected numbers of dormice to be captured, the age/sex of dormice to be captured,

NSIP-LICTEMP-LONI Caveats-101023-PV
NSIP LONI (10/2022)

and the presence of vacant territories at the receptor sites. Dormouse presence has been found (or assumed) in all three translocation receptor sites. Further surveys/monitoring must be undertaken at each receptor site prior to translocation. Alternative receptor sites will need to be considered if monitoring results indicate that these receptor sites are no longer suitable.

Next Steps

Should the DCO be granted then the mitigation licence application must be formally submitted to Natural England. At this stage any modifications to the timings of the proposed works, e.g. due to ecological requirements of the species concerned, must be made and agreed with Natural England before a licence is granted.

If other minor changes to the application are subsequently necessary, e.g. amendments to the work schedule/s then these should be outlined in a covering letter and must be reflected in the formal submission of the licence application. These changes must be agreed by Natural England before a licence can be granted. If changes are made to proposals or timings which do not enable us to meet reach a 'satisfied' decision, we will issue correspondence outlining why the proposals are not acceptable and what further information is required. These issues will need to be addressed before any licence can be granted.

I should also be grateful if an open dialogue can be maintained with yourselves regarding the progression of the DCO application so that, should the Order be granted, we will be in a position to assess the final submission of the application in a timely fashion and avoid any unnecessary delay in issuing the licence.

I hope the above has been helpful. However, should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Slocombe

Tel: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Annex - Guidance for providing further information or formally submitting the licence application.

Important note: when submitting your formal application please mark all correspondence 'Formal LICENCE APPLICATION 2022-63581-EPS-AD1 – Dormouse'

Submitting Documents.

Documents must be sent to the Natural England Wildlife Licensing Service (postal and email address at the top of this letter).

Changes to Documents –Reasoned Statement/Method Statement.

Changes must be identified using one or more of the following methods:

- underline new text/strikeout deleted text;
- use different font colour;
- block-coloured text, or all the above.

Method Statement

When submitting a revised Method Statement please send us one copy on CD, or by e-mail if less than 5MB in size, or alternatively three paper copies. The method statement should be submitted in its entirety including all figures, appendices, supporting documents. Sections of this document form part of the licence; please do not send the amended sections in isolation.

Customer Feedback – Wildlife Licensing

To help us improve our service please complete the following questionnaire and return to:

Wildlife Licensing Natural England, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AH.

or email to wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk

<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/wildlife-licences>

NATURAL
ENGLAND

Natural England Reference Number (optional):	Please tick to indicate your role:	Consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Developer (Applicant/Licensee)	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. How easy was it to get in contact with the Wildlife Management & Licensing team of Natural England?

Difficult (1)

☐

OK (2)

☐

Easy (3)

☐

Very Easy (4)

☐

If 1 please specify who you initially contacted in relation to your issue/enquiry?

2. Please tell us how aware you were (BEFORE you contacted us) of wildlife legislation and what it does/does not permit in relation to your enquiry?

Unaware (1)

☐

Very Limited Awareness (2)

☐

Partially Aware (3)

☐

Fully Aware (4)

☐

3. How would you rate the service provided by Natural England?

	Poor 1	Fair 2	Good 3	Excellent 4	Not applicable
Ease of completion of application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice provided by telephone (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our web site (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarity and usefulness of published guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpfulness and politeness of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and clarity of explanations provided during Method Statement assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and clarity of explanations provided during Reasoned Statement assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speed of process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 1 or 2 to any of the above please specify why:

4. Was your issue/enquiry resolved by the activity authorised under licence or advice provided by us?

Fully

☐

Partially

☐

Unresolved

☐

If not fully resolved please state what you think could have been done instead (note legislation affects which actions can be licensed):

5. Was there a public reaction to any action taken under the licence or as a result of our advice?

Positive support

☐

No reaction

☐

Negative reaction

☐

6. Would you use a fully online licensing service if it could be made available in the future?

Definitely

☐

Possibly

☐

Unlikely

☐

No

☐

7. Do you have any further comments to make or suggestions for improving our service, if yes please specify (continue comments on an additional sheet if necessary). If you are happy to be contacted at a later date to explore possible improvement options, please tick this box ☐ and ensure your Natural England reference number is at the top of this page.