



# STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – SAVE CROSSNESS NATURE RESERVE CAMPAIGN GROUP: 8.1.26

**DECARBONISATION**

## Cory Decarbonisation Project

PINS Reference: EN010128

**January 2025**

**Revision D**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1. Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

- 1.1.1. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a written statement produced during the application process for a Development Consent Order (DCO) and is prepared jointly by the applicant and another party.
- 1.1.2. Paragraph 007 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (formerly Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) guidance entitled 'Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects'<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to as MHCLG Guidance) describes a SoCG as follows:

*'A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and another party or parties, setting out any matters on which they agree, or indeed disagree. A SoCG helps to ensure that the evidence at examination focusses on the material differences between the main parties and therefore makes best use of the lines of questioning pursued by the Examining Authority.'*
- 1.1.3. This SoCG has been prepared in accordance with the MHCLG Guidance. The aim of a SoCG is to assist the Examining Authority in examining the DCO by providing an understanding of the status of discussions or negotiations between the applicant and the other party. The effective use of the SoCG aids an efficient examination process.
- 1.1.4. A SoCG may be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate either prior to the start of, or during, an Examination and is updated as necessary or as requested during the Examination.
- 1.1.5. This SoCG has been prepared on behalf of Cory Environmental Holdings Limited ('the Applicant'). It accompanies the application for a DCO ('the DCO Application') in relation to the Cory Decarbonisation Project in Bexley, London. The DCO Application has been made in accordance with Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and submitted to the Secretary of State (the SoS) of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-examination-stage-for-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects>

- 1.1.6. The DCO, if granted, would authorise the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Cory Decarbonisation Project (the Proposed Scheme). The Proposed Scheme is to be located at Norman Road, Belvedere in the London Borough of Bexley (National Grid Reference/NGR 549572,180512).
- 1.1.7. The Proposed Scheme is described in Chapter 2: Site and Proposed Scheme Description of the Environmental Statement (Volume 1) (ES, APP-051) and includes:
- the Carbon Capture Facility (including its associated supporting plant and ancillary infrastructure);
  - a Proposed Jetty to allow for export of the captured carbon by vessel;
  - a Mitigation and Enhancement Area;
  - Temporary construction compounds; and
  - Utilities Connections and Site Access Works.

## **1.2. Introduction To Save Crossness Nature Reserve Campaign Group**

- 1.2.1. Crossness Nature Reserve is a 25.5 hectare local nature reserve, forming part of the Erith Marshes Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (MSINC). Crossness Nature Reserve is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve, Metropolitan Open Land and Open Space. The site is adjacent to Crossness Sewage Treatment Works, which forms the reserve's western boundary. It was created under a section 106 planning agreement in 1994 and is owned and managed by Thames Water.
- 1.2.2. Save Crossness Nature Reserve (SCNR) is a campaign group made up of local residents, bird watchers, local campaigners and environmentalists, many of whom are members of the Friends of Crossness Nature Reserve (FoCNR).
- 1.2.3. This SoCG addresses topics of interest to the SCNR group and has been prepared between the SCNR group and the Applicant (jointly referred to as the Parties) in relation to the DCO Application.

## **1.3. STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND STRUCTURE**

- 1.3.1. Following this introduction, Section 2 summarises all engagement to date of relevance to this SoCG and Section 3 details whether matters are Agreed, Under Discussion, or Not Agreed between the Parties.

- 1.3.2. In respect of matters relevant to the Proposed Scheme, but not referred to in this SoCG, the SCNR group has no further comments to make at this point, but SCNR reserves the right to make further points as they are discovered/arise.
- 1.3.3. This SoCG is a document that is expected to evolve during the Examination, concluding with a version that confirms the Parties' positions on relevant matters, before the close of the Examination.

## 2. RECORD OF ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1.1. The Applicant has previously engaged with the Friends of Crossness Nature Reserve as set out in the Statement of Common Ground prepared with them (Document Reference 8.1.6).
- 2.1.2. Having received Relevant Representations from SCNR (RR-178), Table 1 sets out the key meetings and emails of note that have taken place between the Parties.

**Table 1 Schedule of Meetings and Correspondence**

Date	Form of Engagement	Summary of Matters
31 July to 05 August 2024	Email exchange with CNR manager	Enquiring whether SCNR and FoCNR would like to engage in preparation of SoCG. Applicant provided information on the purpose of the SoCG.
21 August 2024	Email	Response from SCNR that it and FoCNR would like to pursue a SoCG.
30 August & 1 September 2024	Email exchange	First draft SoCG sent to SCNR and FoCNR. Receipt acknowledged.
19 & 20 September 2024	Email exchange	Applicant checking in to see if SCNR ready to discuss the SoCG. SCNR confirmed it and FoCNR had been working on the SoCG and would send comment back the following week.
08 & 09 October 2024	Email exchange	Applicant noting receipt of Rule 6 letter, including the first deadline of 22 October, and enquiring whether SCNR ready to discuss the SoCG over the next week. SCNR confirmed they and FoCNR have been working on the

		SoCG, were waiting for advice before returning and were aware of the deadline.
17 & 18 October 2024	Email exchange	<p>Applicant requesting sight of SoCG this week recognising any updated version should be submitted to the ExA next week. Noted that it was not necessary to submit a revised document if not enough time to do so, but a good opportunity to agree a draft for submission.</p> <p>SCNR response that both they and FoCNR will return the amended SoCG by Tuesday and sought confirmation of whether they or the applicant would submit to the ExA.</p> <p>Applicant advised it would submit the SoCG and had hoped there would be time to discuss it prior to submission. Request for the SoCG to be provided by the end of day on Monday so that it can be included in all the submissions to be made.</p>
22 October 2024	Email exchange	<p>Applicant advised SCNR and FoCNR that to make a timely submission, intended to post required documents by 1pm. SoCG sought in the next hour or so, and noted that Deadline 1 could be used instead.</p> <p>SCNR confirmed SoCG would be available shortly.</p>
22 October 2024	Email exchange	<p>SCNR Advisor emailed SoCG with comments, apologising for delay as was waiting for barrister input. Requested Applicant to submit, but if that they would submit in any event.</p> <p>Applicant advised that it had completed its documents for submission and looked forward to discussing the SoCG to be submitted at Deadline 1.</p>

		SCNR Advisor confirmed would submit SCNR SoCG with comments directly to the ExA, noting it had not been discussed with the Applicant. Also confirmed not acting for FoCNR.
05 November 2024	Email	Applicant returned revised SoCG for discussion.
19 November 2024	Email	SCNR Advisor returned further revised SoCG for discussion.
21 November 2024	Online meeting	Meeting between representatives for the Applicant and SCNR.
22-26 November 2024	Email exchange	Exchange of revised SoCG for discussion and submission.
08 & 09 January 2025	Email exchange	Exchange of revised SoCG for discussion and submission.



### 3. ISSUES

#### 3.1. Terminology

3.1.1. The phrasing used in this SoCG are understood to have the following meanings:

- “Agreed” indicates where the issue has been resolved;
- “Under discussion” indicates where these points are the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties; and
- “Not Agreed” indicates a final position of the parties that is not agreed.

#### 3.2. MATTERS AGREED

3.2.1. Table 1 below details the matters agreed between the SCNR group and the Applicant (Cory).

**Table 2 Matters Agreed**

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Agreed
<b>Crossness Nature Reserve</b>	Formation	On 21 January 1994, outline planning permission was granted (reference 91/01318/OUT) for the ‘ <i>construction of a sewage sludge incinerator using the fluidised bed process with dewatering, ash collection and gas cleaning facilities.</i> ’ The consent was subject to a s.106 agreement, also dated 21 January 1994, with principal commitment for Thames Water to ‘ <i>maintain and enhance the Conservation Land for a period of 99 years from the date of approval of the Management Plan by the Chief Planning Officer in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Conservation Land Specification and the Management Plan...</i> ’ (paragraph 4.3 of the s.106 agreement.) The Conservation Land referred to within the s.106 agreement is the Crossness Nature Reserve.
	Funding	As required under clause 4.4 of the s.106 agreement, Thames Water paid a sum of money (to the value of not less than £150,000 and not more than £300,000) for the future objectives of

		<p>maintenance and enhancement of the Crossness Nature Reserve. Thames Water funds a full time Manager for the Crossness Nature Reserve.</p> <p>Public funds (in 2005 and 2014) were secured for works on Crossness Nature Reserve and Erith Marshes, including the stable block located in the Stable Paddock, which would be lost to the CCF, requiring relocation of the stable block.</p> <p>Maintenance and management works are undertaken by Thames Water, with assistance from the FoCNR and other volunteers as required.</p>
	Designation	<p>Crossness Nature Reserve is a Local Nature Reserve located within the Erith Marshes Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Metropolitan).</p> <p>It is also designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).</p> <p>It also meets the definition of “open space” in EN-1, the London Plan 2021 and “green infrastructure” in the Bexley Local Plan.</p> <p>These and other relevant policy designations and allocations are shown on Figure 2 of the Planning Statement.</p>
	Species and habitats	<p>Crossness Nature Reserve supports an important population of water vole, one of Britain's most endangered mammal species that has suffered steep declines in distribution and abundance in Britain in recent decades. It is listed as endangered under the GB Red List and is protected from killing, injury and damage to its place of rest/shelter under the WCA.</p> <p>Numerous scarce and rare bee species are present on Crossness Nature Reserve and Norman Road Field, including England's rarest and fastest declining bumblebee, the Shril Carder, the Brown-banded Carder and the Moss Carder.</p> <p>Barn owls have bred at Crossness Nature Reserve since 2005.</p>

		<p>Visiting migrants including Sedge and Reed Warblers travel from Africa every year to breed in the reedbeds across Crossness Nature Reserve. Cetti's Warbler – once a rare migrant species – is now a resident species.</p> <p>The rare Lesser Emperor dragonfly breeds at Crossness Nature Reserve. The rare Southern Migrant Hawker and Norfolk Hawker are also present.</p> <p>Numerous Red Data Book terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates are present.</p>
	Horse grazing	<p>Grazing by horses is an important element of the management of Crossness Nature Reserve to maintain its habitats and their ecological value by maintaining plant diversity and open conditions and creates microhabitats for invertebrates through poaching (trampling).</p> <p>Graziers have been in this area for generations by families with historic ties to the land.</p>
	Public access	<p>Many parts of Crossness Nature Reserve are not publicly accessible.</p> <p>Inaccessible parts of Crossness Nature Reserve can be observed from the footpaths and other publicly accessible areas, particularly from the viewing screens and platforms created specifically for this purpose.</p> <p>The Protected Area of Crossness Nature Reserve can be accessed by anyone with membership - which is free and only involves completing a form and providing a photo – and their guests.</p>
<b>Carbon Capture Facility</b>	Principle of development	<p>Climate change is a global priority and the UK Government is seeking rapid decarbonisation, with a legal requirement for the UK to achieve Net Zero by 2050.</p> <p>The Cory Decarbonisation Project is proposed to capture the majority (at least 95%) of carbon dioxide emissions from Riverside 1 and Riverside 2. Both fossil and biogenic carbon would be captured, as waste from households and businesses is composed of materials which contain biogenic carbon such as paper, cardboard, and wood, as well as fossil carbon from materials containing plastics.</p>

		<p>The Cory Decarbonisation Project would not reduce the amount of carbon dioxide produced by Riverside 1 and Riverside 2 – rather it would capture carbon dioxide produced from the management of residual waste, that would otherwise enter the atmosphere, for transfer to a regulated geological storage site. The Carbon Capture Facility itself, and the process of transporting and storing the carbon dioxide, would require energy usage, which could result in carbon dioxide emissions, depending on the fuel used and recognising that the Carbon Capture Facility is proposed to be powered off the decarbonised electricity generated by Riverside 1 and Riverside 2.</p> <p>The statement that “<i>at least 95% of CO2 emissions</i>” will be captured refers only to direct emissions from Riverside 1 and Riverside 2. It does not include indirect emissions from the operation of Riverside 1 and Riverside 2 (for example, resulting from operational energy usage, which are outside the scope of the EIA and are separately Permitted), or the emissions resulting from the operation of the proposed carbon capture facility or the subsequent storage of the captured carbon dioxide, which are considered in determining the separate net emissions savings figures identified for the Proposed Scheme as set out in Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement.</p>
	Site location	<p>The Carbon Capture Facility is proposed to be located on land immediately adjacent to, and on the western side of, Norman Road.</p> <p>The site of the Carbon Capture Facility is made up of 69% land allocated as Strategic Industrial Location (SIL) within the Bexley Local Plan. Local plan policy allocates industrial use, such as delivery of the Carbon Capture Facility, on SIL. Bexley Local Plan makes specific reference to intensification and optimising of SIL, including specific reference to waste facilities.</p> <p>The remaining 31% of the Carbon Capture Facility site involves development on and loss of a portion of the Crossness Nature Reserve land, which is designated Local Nature Reserve, Metropolitan Open Land, SINC, open space (as defined in EN-1), and a Habitat of Principal Importance (coastal grazing marsh).</p>

<b>Riverside 1 and Riverside 2</b>	Designations	<p>Riverside 1 and Riverside 2 are energy recovery facilities that have gained the necessary planning permission and Environmental Permit. They are located on land allocated as Strategic Waste Management in the Bexley Local Plan. Middleton Jetty is a safeguarded wharf.</p>
<b>Norman Road Field</b>	Existing ecological mitigation obligations	<p>On 25 January 2005, outline planning permission was granted (reference 02/03373/OUTEA) for the construction of a business park nearby to Crossness Nature Reserve, and the Eastern Thamesmead Industrial Estate, known as ‘Veridian Park’.</p> <p>The corresponding s106 agreement required the developer at clause 24 to “adopt and implement the ‘Ecological Master Plan’ and in particular the active management of Area 5”, with Area 5 being the Norman Road Field (see the plan on page 51 of the Ecological Master Plan).</p> <p>The proposed habitat creation and enhancement works for Area 5 expressly that were set out in the Ecological Master Plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creation of two new ditches;</li> <li>• enhance value of existing ditches for water voles, rare and scarce plants typical of Erith Marshes, breeding birds, grass snakes, smooth newts, water shrews and invertebrates;</li> <li>• implementation of a management regime suitable for grazing marshes, with management taken in consultation with the warden of Crossness Nature Reserve;</li> <li>• creation of several small scrapes just above the water table to encourage colonisation of wetland and marsh plants and to provide high tide roosts for wintering waders;</li> <li>• that it may be necessary to manipulate water levels in the ditches via a system of sluices, in order to ensure an appropriate hydrological regime;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementation of a grazing regime aimed at restoring the grazing marsh grassland – either by cattle or horses, the latter to be supplemented by cutting or hand removal of vigorous species during the first year of management to permit the colonisation of finer, less-competitive species;</li> <li>• creation of specific drinking points using fencing to reduce the risk of poaching damage;</li> <li>• creation of a monitoring system to ensure over- and under-grazing do not occur.</li> </ul> <p>The Ecological Masterplan was intended to be implemented through a series of ‘Management Plans’ which would provide detailed prescriptions and specifications for habitat creation and management of the habitat in the long-term. The Management Plans are required to be written to cover a ten-year period and to include annual monitoring so that the condition of the habitat can be recorded and adjustments made to the management regime accordingly. It has not been possible to locate these Management Plans.</p>
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### **3.3. MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION**

3.3.1. There are no matters remaining Under Discussion between SCNR and the Applicant (Cory).

### 3.4. MATTERS NOT AGREED

3.4.1. Table 3 below details the matters Not Agreed between SCNR and the Applicant (Cory).

**Table 3 Matters Not Agreed**

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Not Agreed
<b>Carbon capture and storage</b>	Efficiency of carbon capture	<p>SCNR does not agree that 95% capture of carbon emissions from Riverside 1 and Riverside 2 can be achieved or guaranteed. The existence of an environmental permitting regime does not guarantee that this target will be achieved.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that capture of direct emissions from Riverside 1 and Riverside 2 is the best measure of the benefits of the proposed scheme in terms of carbon capture, as it fails to consider the full picture of carbon production resulting from the proposed scheme.</p> <p>SCNR notes that a report from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis dated 1 September 2022 found that “underperforming carbon capture projects considerably outnumber successful projects globally, and by large margins, with both the technology and regulatory frameworks found wanting”. Of the 13 projects studied, seven under-performed, two failed and one was mothballed.</p> <p>Cory’s position is set out in the Application documents particularly Chapter 13, Greenhouse Gases of the Environmental Statement and its Appendices and the Applicant’s Response to Relevant Representations. Further, that the Carbon Capture Facility will be operated under a separate Environmental Permit which will set expected carbon dioxide capture rates.</p>
	Critical national priority (CNP)	<p>SCNR does not agree that the CNP Infrastructure presumption under national policy statement EN-1 is engaged because the ecological mitigation hierarchy has not been applied: not only because Cory has not avoided the harm by delivering the Proposed</p>



	Infrastructure presumption	<p>Scheme on a reasonable site alternative (in the East Zone), but also because they have failed to adequately mitigate the ecological harms caused. SCNR interprets EN-1 such that the CNP presumption is only engaged when the mitigation hierarchy has been followed.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents, particularly the Planning Statement, the TSAR, the TSAR Addendum, the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations and with further explanation provided in its Deadline 1 submissions.</p>
	Natural carbon sequestration	<p>SCNR's position is that carbon dioxide is naturally captured from the atmosphere by plants, through a process called natural biologic carbon sequestration. This is a passive and inexpensive method of capturing carbon and can serve as one tool to combat the climate crisis.</p> <p>SCNR believes that the Cory Decarbonisation Project would reduce the amount of carbon naturally sequestered by Crossness Nature Reserve by consequence of construction of carbon capture facilities on part of it.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents particularly Chapter 13, Greenhouse Gases of the Environmental Statement and its Appendices and the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations. Further that deployment of a full tool box of decarbonisation techniques will be required to meet national and global policy priorities responding to the climate crisis.</p>
	Pollutants	<p>SCNR considers that the operation of the proposed carbon capture facility would require the use and production of pollutants, such as ammonia, nitrogen dioxide and nitrate and sulfuric acid. These pollutants would not be captured by the Carbon Capture Facility.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents particularly Chapter 5 Air Quality of the Environmental Statement and associated appendices, the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations and with further explanation provided in its</p>

		Deadline 1 submissions. Further, that the Carbon Capture Facility will be operated under a separate Environmental Permit which will set maximum emissions levels.
<b>Site location</b>	Site alternatives assessment	<p>SCNR does not agree that there are no other reasonable site alternatives.</p> <p>SCNR believes locations in the East Zone would achieve all three Project Objectives, being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Located in the vicinity of the Riverside Campus and the River Thames”; and</li> <li>• “of sufficient size to accommodate the Carbon Capture Facility”</li> <li>• “deliverable in a timely manner”.</li> </ul> <p>SCNR does not agree that it is appropriate for the site location to be assessed by reference to the Optioneering Principles determined by Cory, with each Optioneering Principle placed on an equal footing. Assessment should instead be guided by planning requirements.</p> <p>SCNR further believes in any event that site locations in the East Zone would better satisfy the Optioneering Principles compared to the South Site,</p> <p>SCNR believes that Cory’s selected site fails to achieve Optioneering Principles 1, 2 and 4 above.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that the environmental mitigation hierarchy has been sufficiently applied regarding site selection.</p> <p>Cory’s position is set out in the Application documents particularly the Planning Statement, the TSAR, the TSAR Addendum, the Applicant’s Response to Relevant Representations and with further explanation provided in its Deadline 1 submissions.</p>

<b>Terrestrial Ecology</b>	<b>Mitigation and Enhancement Area</b>	<p>SCNR does not believe that the harm to Crossness Nature Reserve has been properly assessed – this includes whether the effects have been correctly assessed and whether the baseline is accurate, particularly in light of key areas not being entered. It also includes whether the surveyors commissioned by Cory were suitably qualified to carry out the survey and data analysis.</p> <p>SCNR does not believe that the mitigation and enhancement proposed in the Norman Road Field and Crossness Nature Reserve will sufficiently mitigate the harm caused by the loss of Crossness Nature Reserve land.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that that the baseline for the Norman Road Field is accurate and considers that a correct approach factors in the planning controls relating to Norman Road Field pursuant to the Veridion Park permission 02/03373/OUTEA (extended by 10/0063/OUTEA).</p> <p>SCNR does not believe that the requirements of the above application have been fully complied with: while some initial enhancement works occurred, such as creation of ditches and wader scrapes, there is no evidence of implementation of Management Plans or any long-term management.</p> <p>SCNR believes that lawful implementation of the above application could not have occurred until at least late 2015, and the ten-year period in which the Management Plans are required to run could only begin from this point at the earliest.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that there is sufficient certainty that Crossness Nature Reserve can continue to be effectively managed under Cory's ownership. Cory proposed a tripartite management agreement with Peabody and Thames Water which was rejected by Thames Water.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out at the Application documents particularly the draft DCO, the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7), the Outline LaBARDS, the Applicant's</p>
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		Response to Relevant Representations, the draft Deed of Obligation, and with further explanation provided in its Deadline 1 submissions.
	Habitats and species	<p>SCNR does not agree that Cory has conducted adequate surveys in terms of survey format, length of survey, time of year, and area covered.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that Cory has correctly identified all relevant habitats and species within Crossness Nature Reserve</p> <p>SCNR has identified the following high value plant species and indicators of ancient grazing marshland present on Crossness Nature Reserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass,</li> <li>• Frog Rush,</li> <li>• Toad Rush,</li> <li>• Round-fruited Rush</li> <li>• Marsh Dock,</li> <li>• Strawberry Clover,</li> <li>• Narrow-leaved Bird's-foot Trefoil</li> <li>• Narrow-leaved pepperwort</li> <li>• Divided Sedge</li> <li>• Field Scabious</li> <li>• Pink Water-speedwell</li> <li>• Hairy Buttercup</li> <li>• Wild Celery</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slender Thistle</li> <li>• Few-flowered Spike-rush</li> </ul> <p>SCNR notes the presence of common cuckoo on Crossness Nature Reserve.</p> <p>SCNR believes the absence of lapwing in recent years is related to the construction of Riverside 2.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out at the Application documents particularly the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7) and its Response to Relevant Representations. Cory has not had sight of the survey or other evidence documents reporting the species listed above.</p>
	Status as ancient grazing marsh	<p>SCNR believes that Crossness Nature Reserve constitutes ancient grazing marsh, noting Ordnance Survey Drawings dating back to 1799 show the land has been part of Erith Marshes for at least 225 years.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents, particularly the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7) and its appendices. Cory does not consider the grazing marsh within the Order limits to be ancient, not least as the area was arable land before reverting to grassland and becoming a grazing marsh. It hasn't existed in its current form since 1600 or pre-industrial times.</p>
	Ecological value of Crossness Nature Reserve	<p>SCNR does not agree that grazing has limited the ecological value of parts of Crossness Nature Reserve</p> <p>Cory's position is set out at the Application documents particularly the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7). Further, that the condition assessment of the East Paddock has shown this fails Core Criteria D for this habitat type (that 'Cover of bare ground is less than 5%') contributing to its overall poor condition score. The cause of this high level of bare ground is poaching by horses being grazed in this area.</p>

	Biodiversity Net Gain	<p>SCNR does not agree that the biodiversity baseline for the former Thamesmead Golf Course has been correctly assessed, in part due to the assessment of conditions being undertaken when many flowering plants would not be in evidence.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that the biodiversity proposals for the former Thamesmead Golf Course have been adequately set out.</p> <p>SCNR does not agree that the biodiversity harm to Crossness Nature Reserve has been correctly assessed.</p> <p>Accordingly, SCNR does not consider that 10% biodiversity net gain can be achieved.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents, particularly the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7) and the Outline LaBARDS, the BNG Report and its Response to Relevant Representations.</p> <p>Habitat condition assessment at Crossness Nature Reserve and in Norman Road Field was undertaken at an optimum time of year for this purpose (July). The assessment of habitat condition at the former Thamesmead Golf Course was undertaken at the end of summer, September 2023, at a time when many flowering plants would not be in evidence. However, given the modified habitat types present, and the plants that were in evidence, it was possible to be confident in the habitat types and conditions assigned to habitats, and that timing of the condition assessment has not limited the correct assessment of baseline conditions.</p>
	Public access	<p>SCNR believes that the Applicant's proposed extension of public access, through the construction of additional pathways and raised walkways, poses a threat to habitats and species, through the construction works, and the increased footfall, noise and littering that may result.</p>



		<p>Cory's position is that the Mitigation and Enhancement area primarily consists of land that is publicly accessible, and this is proposed to be maintained. The indicative locations of new and altered Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are detailed within the Outline LaBARDS (as updated alongside this submission), however confirmation of the exact routes will be determined as part of the detailed design process, pursuant to Requirement 12 of the draft DCO (AS-056) and alongside the discharge of the full LaBARDs. Further explanation is provided in its Deadline 1 submissions.</p>
	Riverside 2	<p>SCNR believes current construction works on Riverside 2 will have a temporary negative impact on species and habitats (even after mitigation), which is likely to have impacted the data. The construction compounds (Borax Fields) were, until the start of the work on R2, annual breeding ground for Skylarks, Meadow Pipit and Cetti's Warbler and (occasionally) Ringed Plover. SCNR members have spotted Skylarks on site after 2019.</p> <p>Cory's position is that the construction works for Riverside 2 are being undertaken in accordance with the approved Code of Construction Practice and Biodiversity and Landscape Mitigation Strategy to appropriately protect species and habitat.</p> <p>Data from the Crossness Local Nature Reserve Management Plan indicate the last recorded breeding pairs of Skylark on Borax North/Borax South was 2019, four years before the onset of work for Riverside 2, and indicating a decline in importance of the nature reserve for such species outside the influences of current developments. Cory has not had sight of the Skylark observations reported by SCNR above.</p>
Open Land	Accessible Open Land	<p>SCNR does not believe that the accessibility of the land lost is relevant to the assessment of planning harm arising from loss of Local Nature Reserve, Metropolitan Open Land, SINC and open land (as defined in EN-1).</p> <p>SCNR does not believe that extended public access to the remaining parts of the nature reserve mitigates the above harms.</p>

		Cory's position is set out in the Application documents particularly the Planning Statement, the TSAR, the TSAR Addendum, the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations and with further explanation provided in its Deadline 1 submissions.
<b>Visual and Townscape</b>	Visual and Townscape Impact	<p>SCNR considers that the level of impact has been underestimated.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents, particularly Chapter 10 Townscape and Visual of the Environmental Statement and its appendices.</p>
<b>Statutory undertakers' land</b>	Compulsory purchase of statutory undertakers' land	<p>SCNR believes that Thames Water owns and manages the land in its function as the water and sewerage undertaker for the Thames region.</p> <p>SCNR believes that Thames Water has statutory duties to further the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and conservation of flora and fauna (pursuant to section 3 of the Water Industry Act 1991), and to have regard to conserving biodiversity (pursuant to section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006). These duties apply to its management of Crossness Nature Reserve.</p> <p>SCNR accordingly believe that s127 of the Planning Act 2008 is engaged.</p> <p>Cory does not agree that the Crossness LNR is held as part of Thames Water's statutory undertaking. The requirement to maintain it falls as a result of the 1994 s.106 Agreement.</p>
<b>Heat</b>	Heat	<p>SCNR is doubtful of the benefits of the additional heat from the carbon capture process. Firstly, there is already a requirement to deliver a district heat network pursuant to the Riverside 1 and 2 developments, so the only benefit attributable to the Proposed Scheme would be the heat exported by the Proposed Scheme itself, above what is already required. Secondly, given the failure to deliver the district heat network to date, SCNR doubts that the district heat network will be delivered within the lifetime of the Proposed Scheme. Further, the benefit of any heat exported to the</p>



		<p>heat network must be considered against the adverse environmental impacts of heat produced by the Proposed Scheme that is not exported (i.e. wasted).</p> <p>Cory has been involved in the Bexley District Heating Partnership, with other partners including London Borough of Bexley and Greater London Authority. Cory has recently employed a Managing Director for Heat and is progressing a strategic programme of delivering a district heat network in the locality and deploying mobile heat batteries.</p> <p>Cory considers the heat available to be exported from the carbon capture process as an additional benefit of the Proposed Scheme, which includes the infrastructure necessary to export it from site. This action minimises heat waste, delivering national and local policy priorities for low carbon and affordable energy.</p>
<b>Gannon land</b>	Harm from loss of OMH	<p>SCNR notes that the Gannon land is required to be restored to OMH pursuant to the Riverside 2 development. The Proposed Scheme will prevent this from happening, effectively constituting the loss of 1 ha of OMH, which would also constitute open space and green infrastructure. This harm has not been accounted for in Cory's assessment. Cory has also failed to consider how this might affect the SIL designation of this land.</p> <p>Cory's position is set out in the Application documents, particularly the Environmental Statement (Chapter 7) and the Outline LaBARDS, the BNG Report and its Response to Relevant Representations. Further submissions are made in its Response to Interested Parties' Deadline 2 submissions. In short, the OMH at Gannon Land has been fully accounted for and is proposed to be replaced at the former Thamesmead Golf Course. There is no reasonable prospect of the Gannon Land not being allocated as SIL.</p>

## 4. SIGNATORIES

	Save Crossness Nature Reserve Campaign	Cory Environmental Holdings Ltd (the Applicant)
<b>Signed</b>		
<b>Printed Name</b>	Laurence Pinturault	Richard Wilkinson
<b>Title</b>	Member	Project Director
<b>On behalf of</b>	Save Crossness Nature Reserve Campaign Group	Cory Environmental Holdings Ltd
<b>Date</b>	09 January 2025	9 January 2025



## DECARBONISATION

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