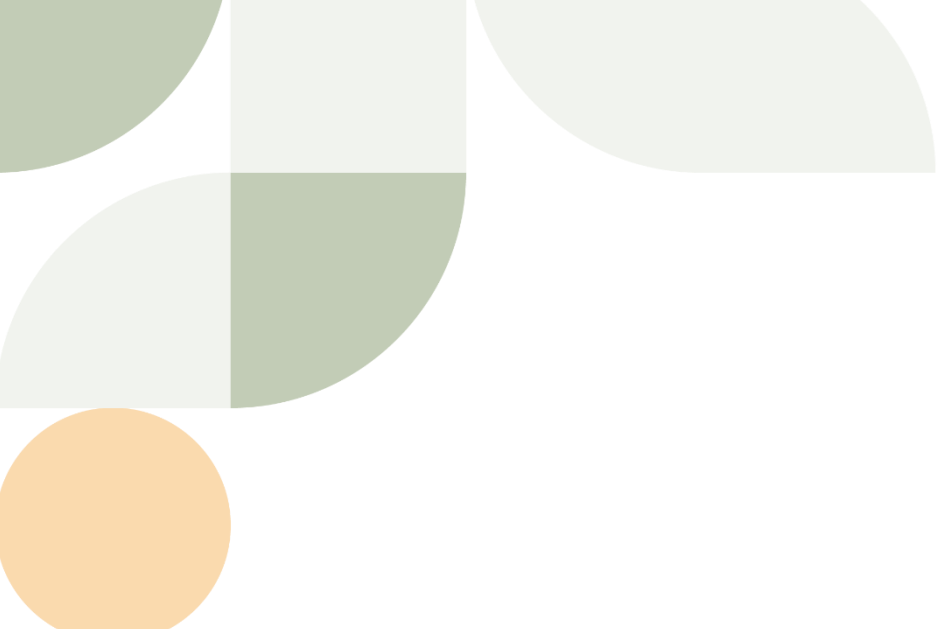




Lime Down

Solar Park

Statement of Common Ground with National Highways (Clean)

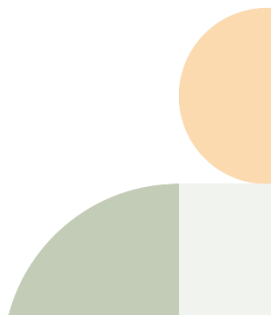
August 2026

Revision 2

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010168

Document Reference: EXAM/8.8

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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Statement of Common Ground Signatures

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by Lime Down Solar Park Limited (the Applicant) and National Highways.

Signed on behalf of Lime Down Solar Park Limited

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

Signed by National Highways

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signature

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared as part of the proposed Lime Down Solar Park Development Consent Order (DCO) (the Application) made by Lime Down Solar Park Limited (the Applicant) to the Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero (the Secretary of State) pursuant to the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008).
- 1.1.2 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available in the deposit locations and/or the Planning Inspectorate website.
- 1.1.3 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority (ExA) where agreement has been reached between the parties, and where agreement has not yet been reached. SoCGs are an established means in the DCO consenting process of allowing all parties to identify and 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) Lime Down Solar Park Limited as the Applicant and (2) National Highways.
- 1.2.2 Collectively, Lime Down Solar Park Limited and National Highways are referred to as 'the parties'.

1.3 Terminology

- 1.3.1 In the tables in Section 3 of this SoCG:
- "Agreed" indicates where the issue has been resolved.
 - "Not Agreed" indicates a final position, and
 - "Under discussion" indicates where these points will be the subject of ongoing discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties.

2 Record of Engagement

2.1 Summary of Engagement

2.1.1 The parties have been engaged in consultation since 29 January 2025. A summary of the meetings and correspondence that has taken place between the Applicant and National Highways is outlined in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Summary of Engagement

Date	Form of Correspondence	Key Topics Discussed and Key Outcomes
29 January 2025	Email	Statutory notification under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 issued by the Applicant to National Highways for the launch of the statutory consultation.
20 February 2025	Scoping Opinion Response	Scoping response covered baseline conditions, construction programme and vehicle trip generation, traffic impact, construction vehicle access and routing, abnormal loads and outline CTMP and directional drilling for cable route corridor. NH considered that the development is unlikely to have any other significant adverse impacts on the SRN.
3 June 2025	Email	Statutory notification under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 issued by the Applicant to National Highways for the launch of the targeted consultation.
17 June 2025	Online MS Teams Meeting between Applicant, Project Team and National Highways	Meeting to discuss study area and baseline conditions, construction programme and vehicle trip generation, construction vehicle access and routing, abnormal loads and outline CTMP and directional drilling for cable route corridor. NH considered that the development is unlikely to have any other significant adverse impacts on the SRN.
29 October 2025	Email / letter	Notice under Section 56 of the Planning Act 2008 issued by the Applicant to National Highways.
9 January 2026	Relevant Representation	NH submitted a relevant representation to the Planning Inspectorate.
18 March 2026	Online MS Teams Meeting between	Meeting to discuss National Highways Relevant Representation. The Applicant and National Highways discussed outstanding

Date	Form of Correspondence	Key Topics Discussed and Key Outcomes
	Applicant, Project Team and National Highways	issues and concluded that it most issues could be resolved subject to agreement of the protected provisions and agreement on amendments required by NH to the DCO.
13 April 2026	Email	The Applicant provided NH with the draft SoCG document for their review and comment
14 April 2026	Email	NH requested update on the updated protected provisions and side agreement
17 April 2026	Email	Applicant provided draft Side Agreement between Lime Down Solar Park and National Highways.
23 April 2026	Email	NH provided the Applicant with comments on the draft SoCG document
1 May 2026	Written Representation	NH submitted a written representation to the Planning Inspectorate
5 May 2026 and 26 May 2026	Emails	Applicant informed NH that an updated draft DCO which contains updated Protective Provisions and Side Agreement was submitted at Deadline 1 (1 May 2026) and requesting comments. A follow up email was issued on 26 May 2026.
18 May 2026	Formal submission	Signed acceptance by NH of the Applicant's CD622 Geotechnical Certificate following submission of PSSR GIR & GDR Documentation
27 May 2026	Written submission	Comments on the Applicant's Comments received at Deadline 1A on National Highways Relevant Representations
14 July 2026	Written submission	NH submitted comments on Comments on submissions received at Deadline 3
03 and 06 August 2026	Emails	NH seeking to agree certain outstanding matters relating to requirements that NH have sought to be consulted on.
13 and 19 August 2026	Emails	NH and the Applicant seeking to agree and close out remaining matters on PP and side agreement

3 Matters Raised

3.1.1 This section sets out a table for each relevant topic, identifying where matters are agreed, still under discussion, or not agreed.

3.2 Draft Development Consent Order

Table 3-1: Draft Development Consent Order

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
3.1.1	Protective provisions	In order to facilitate the withdrawal of National Highways' objection to the DCO and the Authorised Development, National Highways has requested that the Applicant includes the National Highways protective provisions at Appendix 1 to the draft Order [REP1-007] at the next deadline. National Highways has engaged with the Applicant to seek agreement on the protective provisions and subject to: insertion of the following wording into the definition of detailed design information for both the road works and cable works: "where relevant, details of any hedgerows and trees that are required to be removed or anticipated to be impacted by the [cable][road] works, details of any	Further to ongoing engagement with National Highways, the protective provisions in the draft DCO are being updated at Deadline 6 to include the requested drafting relating to hedgerows and trees. In addition, the Applicant is including a reference to article 25 (private rights); 33 (statutory undertakers); and article 38 (Application of landlord and tenant law) into paragraph 53(3). It has been agreed that Article 11 does not need to be included. The Applicant has provided an updated side agreement to National Highways and is awaiting comments.	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		replacement hedgerows and trees and details of tree and hedgerow protective fencing;" • insertion of articles 11 (construction and maintenance of altered streets); 25 (private rights); 33 (statutory undertakers); and article 38 (Application of landlord and tenant law) into paragraph 53(3); and • agreement of a side agreement the form of protective provisions should be agreed..		
3.1.2	Draft DCO Articles	National Highways object to the powers provided to the Applicant under the Articles, which apply to land that includes the M4, which forms part of the strategic network that National Highways is responsible for. National Highways' request the Applicant to obtain it's consent for any works affecting the strategic road network or land in which National Highways has an interest.	The Applicant has made the requested amendments to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 6 and is awaiting comments on the side agreement.	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		National Highways' objection is addressed through paragraph 53(3) of the protective provisions in Part 5 of Schedule 15 requiring consent before powers are exercised, subject to that paragraph being updated to include the articles referenced above. Any such consent must not be subject to deemed consent under article 47 and this has been provided for in paragraph 53(8) of National Highways' protective provisions .		
3.1.3	Article 21 (Compulsory acquisition of land)	National Highways acknowledge that there are no proposals to permanently acquire the freehold interest of NH land. The DCO does seek powers to acquire rights or interfere with plots owned or used by National Highways as noted below. These plots are essential for maintaining the Strategic Road Network (SRN). National Highways objects to the DCO and compulsory powers over these plots without protective provisions requiring the consent of National Highways before powers are exercised, arguing that granting such powers without safeguards would harm the SRN.	There are no proposals to permanently acquire the freehold interest of NH land. The Applicant has made the requested amendments to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 6 and considers that NH's concerns have been addressed.	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		and lacks sufficient public interest justification. Paragraph 53(3) of National Highway's protective provisions in Part 5 of Schedule 15 now includes reference to article 21 (compulsory acquisition of land); article 24 (compulsory acquisition of rights); article 27 (power to override easements and other rights); article 29 (acquisition of subsoil only); article 30 (rights under or over streets); article 31 (temporary use of land for constructing the authorised development); article 32 (temporary use of land for maintaining the authorised development).		
3.1.4	Temporary possession and acquisition of rights in respect of NH land interests	The Applicant is seeking the power to take temporary possession of the land referred to in schedule 11 and any other order land without the consent of National Highways. National Highways are concerned that while Schedule 11 does not include any land which they have an operational interest in, it is noted that the article also applies to other Order land.	The Applicant has agreed the form of Protective Provisions with National Highways, which include restrictions on the use of DCO powers in relation to NH's land and the SRN. The agreed form of protective provisions are included in the updated Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3] submitted at Deadline 6.	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		National Highways must have control over the operations being carried out on its network and the Applicant should be required to obtain National Highways' consent in the event the activities effect the strategic road network or any land National Highways has an interest in. Paragraph 53(3) of National Highway's protective provisions in Part 5 of Schedule 15 now include reference to article 31 and 32 and so this addresses National Highway's concern. This just leaves an outstanding Information Request relating to several plots being included in the Book of Reference (09-018, 09-19, 09-20 and 09-021) as a consequence of drainage and gully apparatus, easements, and conveyances. In relation to these plots, NH's position is that the additional information requested is still required to enable NH to understand the impact of any interference with drainage and gully apparatus, easements, and conveyances. In this regard the		

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		shapefiles, which the Applicant has agreed to provide, are awaited.		
3.1.5	Article 40 (Felling or lopping of trees and removal of hedgerows)	National Highways are concerned that this article provides the Applicant with the power to fell or lop any tree or shrub near any part of the authorised development. National Highways have environment mitigation commitments that may be affected by the authorised development and may put National Highways in breach of its own statutory obligations. It notes that Hedge CH170 (hedgerow) and CRH173 (important hedgerow) are located on the boundary of the network, and CRH172 (important hedgerow) is close to the boundary. National Highways will need further clarity from the Applicant on the works within Works No 5A that may impact CRH170, CRH173 and CHR172 so that National Highways can assess the impact of these hedgerows cumulatively. This is to be addressed through the protective provisions in the dDCO being updated to provide that the	Work No. 5A consists of laying the grid connection cable for the Scheme. This will be laid using trenchless techniques below the strategic road network. The agreed form of protective provisions provides NH with plan approval rights, ensuring it will not be put in breach of its statutory obligations. The agreed form of protective provisions is included in the updated Draft DCO [REP4-004] submitted at Deadline 1. In regard to the comment about Written Representations, the Applicant assumes this should be a reference Relevant Representations provided at Deadline 1 as responses to the former will be provided at Deadline 2. The response provided in the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations (Part 1) [PDA-009] states that CRH170 and CRH173 lie within an 'Avoidance Area'. The proposed construction methodology in the Avoidance Areas is presented in	Agreed

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		detailed information that needs to be submitted to National Highways is to include "details of any hedgerows and trees that are required to be removed or anticipated to be impacted by the [cable][road] works, details of any replacement hedgerows and trees and details of tree and hedgerow protective fencing;" In addition, this article has been added to paragraph 53(3) of National Highway's protective provisions in Part 5 of Schedule 15 so National Highways' consent is required were the article is to be exercised on the SRN or on land in which National Highways has an interest. The Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (EPMS) [REP1-106] has been updated to confirm that the Applicant will engage with National Highways in relation to those parts of the ecological protection and mitigation strategy which relate to land within close proximity or adjacent to	Section 1.3 of ES Volume 2, Appendix 3-2: Cable Installation Method Statement [APP-183]. The Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations (Part 1) [PDA-009] stated that up to a 12 m wide section of CRH172 may be removed temporarily for cable route installation works, to enable construction of a cable trench and temporary haul route. On completion of temporary construction, works the section of hedgerow removed will be reinstated or replanted. The method statement for temporary habitat removal and reinstatement is provided in Section 6.3 in the Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (EPMS) [REP1-106].	

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		the Strategic Road Network (SRN) or that could have an impact on the SRN. The Applicant will also consult National Highways if there are any changes or amendments to the ecological protection and mitigation strategy which relates to land within close proximity or adjacent to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) or that could have an impact on the SRN. the outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy [APP-284])		
3.1.6	Article 41 (Trees subject to tree preservation order)	National Highways noted that the reference to Part 4 of Schedule 12 is an error since there is only Parts 1-3 of Part 12. National Highways acknowledge that this error has now been corrected but the form of protective provisions in the dDCO do not currently address its concerns with this article and Part 3 of Schedule 12. Part 3 sets out trees subject to TPO's and notes that these relate to Work Nos5A and 8A for TPO Tree N/TPO8 and N/TPO42 (both shown on sheet 9 of 23 of the TPO and Hedgerow Plan). National Highways have no comment on	The referencing error has been corrected in the updated Draft DCO [REP4-004] submitted at Deadline 1. The agreed form of protective provisions included in the updated Draft DCO [REP4-004] at Deadline 6 provides for details of any tree or hedgerow removal to be provided to NH. As set out in Table 4 of the Outline CEMP [REP5-071], all machinery used for trenchless solutions (e.g. HDD) will be situated outside the RPAs of retained trees. Entry and exit points for the trenchless solutions will be sited more than 15m from retained tree stems.	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		TPO8 on the basis that is located a distance away from its network. However, TPO42 is in close proximity to National Highways' network and therefore our comments above in relation to culminative impact apply equally here. It is noted that TPO7 is not referred to in Schedule 12 but is adjacent to the SRN and forms the boundary to the same. The Applicant was requested to review Schedule 12 in light of the TPO and Hedgerow Plan (sheet 9 of 23). National Highways have environment mitigation commitments that may be affected by the authorised development and may put National Highways in breach of its own statutory obligations. National Highways wish to ensure that TPO7 is appropriately protected and/or that it is compensated for any loss. National Highways note Wiltshire Council's comments on this issue (response to ExQ2 EB2.18) [page 29 of [REP5-112]] that the information currently presented does not fully demonstrate that unacceptable impacts	Trenchless solution depths will exceed 1m under RPAs. Details of trenching and HDD will be provided at the detailed design stage which the above principles being adhered to.	

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		on retained and / or protected trees would be avoided in all locations across the Order Limits. Wiltshire Council have requested: "the detailed design to consider the category of tree to ensure that there is no removal of any Category A tree to facilitate the HDD. A clear methodology for dealing with inadvertent drilling returns, bore collapse, settlement or other construction anomalies that may affect root protection areas is required. The Applicant should provide detailed trenchless crossing drawings showing entry and exit points, horizontal and vertical offsets from the Root Protection Area (RPA), and tree-specific assessments where trenchless techniques are proposed within or immediately adjacent to RPAs of Category A, Veteran, or Ancient trees, and protected trees subject to TPOs, thereby demonstrating that there will be no significant loss of rooting volume, and there is no unacceptable risk of soil fracturing, heave, settlement or		

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		desiccation affecting the structural rooting environment." National Highways endorse this request and require clarity on how this is to be secured. National Highways would want to be consulted on the details submitted where this relates to N/TPO7.		
3.1.7	Requirements	Regarding multiple parcels of land, the Applicant is required to obtain a National Highway's consent in the event the activities effect the SRN or any land NH has an interest in. National Highways requested that: A definition of relevant highway authority is required NH also requested to be consulted on the discharge of Requirement 3 (approved documents and plans), 7 (written landscape and ecological management plan), 8 (written ecological protection and mitigation strategy), 10 (means of enclosure), 11 (surface water drainage scheme), 13	(1) The Applicant added a definition of 'relevant highway authority' to the draft DCO submitted into Examination at Deadline 3. (2) National Highways, as 'relevant highway authority' will be consulted on the discharge of: - Requirement 15 (construction traffic management plan (CTMP)) - Requirement 16 (public rights of way and permissive paths) - Requirement 20 (decommissioning and restoration). NH must also be consulted in respect of measures in the detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan	Under Discussion

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		(construction environmental management plan), 14 (operational environmental management plan) as set out in its Relevant Representations [RR-3426] in relation to matters relating to NH's statutory function. In terms of outstanding matters: - Requirement 3, National Highways maintains its position that National Highways should be given an opportunity to review any variations to the approved documents and plans to ensure that any changes do not adversely impact the SRN. This is in the interest of maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the SRN - Amendments are also required to Requirement 5 as set out in NH's Relevant Representations [RR-3426] to add work 5a to ensure that it specifically includes the cable crossing works across the M4. In addition, the works must	(CEMP) where these are located in the vicinity of the SRN, to ensure no adverse effects are caused to the SRN. This requirement is included in the Outline CEMP [REP4-049] submitted at Deadline 1, and provides proportionate consultation on matters including fencing, drainage and dust suppression close to the SRN. The Applicant added similar provisions to an updated Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) [REP4-051] in respect of replacement activities. In addition, the Applicant added a requirement to consult with National Highways in respect of the outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy at Deadline 5. The Applicant therefore considers that it is not necessary for National Highways to be a named consultee in respect of Requirements 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 or 14. The Applicant has included updated wording at Schedule 16 (Procedure for the discharge of requirements) to the Draft DCO [REP4-004] submitted at Deadline 1 which requires that, in respect of an application to amend an	

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		be in accordance with DMRB standards.	approved document under Requirement 3, any named consultees must also be consulted in relation to the approval of that amended document. This followed discussions between the Applicant and National Highways. As such, National Highways will be consulted on any amendments to the final CTMP, public rights of way and permissive paths management plan and decommissioning strategy (pursuant to Requirements 15, 16 and 20 respectively).	
3.1.8	Draft Development Consent Order – Schedule 1	National Highways had Insufficient Information on Proposed Works: Details for works 5A and 8A affecting the SRN (Schedule 1 of the draft order) are unclear. Without full information, National Highways could not assess or manage potential impacts. Protective provisions are needed and have been provided to ensure relevant information is provided. . Discussions with the relevant technical teams within National Highways in respect of the detail of the geotechnical specification for the directional drilling have occurred and comments and documentation for the CD622 M4 HDD	The Applicant has received the geotechnical certification signed by the DGA on 18 May 2026, and counter signed on 10 June 2026 by the OOGA for NH confirming the submitted PSSR GIR & GDR documents for geotechnical activity meet all requirements.	Agreed

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		crossing have been accepted by National Highways.		
3.1.9	Schedule 16	NH request the amendment Schedule 16 as agreed in Green Hill Draft Development Consent Order.	The Applicant confirms that Schedule 16 (Procedure for the discharge of requirements) to the Draft DCO [REP4-004] submitted at Deadline 1 was amended to align with the wording agreed between National Highways and Green Hill Solar Farm Limited. This amendment requires that, in respect of an application to amend an approved document under Requirement 3, any named consultees must also be consulted in relation to the approval of that document. As such, National Highways will be consulted on any amendments to the final CTMP, public rights of way and permissive paths management plan and decommissioning strategy (pursuant to Requirements 15, 16 and 20 respectively).	Agreed
3.1.10	Side Roads and Order Plots	2.5 Side Roads Order Plots (Plots 21-004 to 21-007): For plots forming part of a Side Roads Order for the M4 scheme, NH confirms that the LHA is responsible, not NH, given the Side Road Order. Accordingly, for these	The Book of Reference, at National Highway's request, was updated to remove National Highways as the reputed owner of these plots. However, as National Highways is now stating that it is the owner of the subsoil then their	Agreed

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		plots, provided works are not in the subsoil, NH have no interest. These plots have been removed from the Book of Reference but if works are in the subsoil beneath the operational highway then agreement by way of an easement is required from National Highways. The Applicant is requested to provide NH details confirming the depth of the works.	interest will be re-inserted in the next iteration of the Book of Reference. The exact depth of the cable at this location cannot be confirmed at this stage in the process.	

3.3 Transport and Access

Table 3-2 Transport and Access

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
3.2.1	Legislation and Policy	National Highways provided no comments on the legislation and policy used for the Transport and Access assessment.	The Applicant considers that ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Transport and Access [REP1-019] has identified and appropriately considered all applicable transport legislation and policy.	Agreed
3.2.2	Methodology	National Highways provided no comments on methodology adopted for the Transport and Access assessment.	The Applicant considers that the methodology adopted within ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Transport and Access [REP1-019] has identified and appropriately considered all applicable transport legislation and policy.	Agreed
3.2.3	Baseline	National Highways provided no comments on baseline conditions in the Transport and Access assessment.	The baseline conditions which are detailed in ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Transport and Access [REP1-019] of the ES are representative of the baseline site conditions.	Agreed
3.2.4	Traffic Impact – Construction Phase	On the basis that the traffic impact represents a low percentage increase in M4 vehicle flows, the Applicant is not proposing to undertake any further assessment of traffic impacts for the SRN. It should be noted that National Highways would not usually accept	The Applicant welcomes National Highways' confirmation that no further capacity assessment is required for the SRN. Construction vehicle movements will be managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. An Outline CTMP	Agreed

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
		percentage-flow changes as a measure of traffic impacts on the SRN, but it is recognised that the impact will be temporary for the construction period only and is considered unlikely to result in an unacceptable or severe impact on the M4 and junctions 17 and 18 in accordance with the NPPF and DfT Circular 01/2022. No further capacity assessment in respect of the SRN is therefore sought. The Applicant has submitted an outline construction traffic management plan and it will be necessary for National Highways to review a final plan as noted above under Requirement 15 in respect of M4 measures. At deadline 1, NH requests to be consulted upon the outline CTMP and the final CTMP and National Highways note that this has been provided for in Requirement 15.	[APP-277] has been prepared and submitted with the Application. The CTMP sets out measures to ensure that the effect of construction traffic on the local highway network is minimised, including defined construction access points, approved HGV routes, coordination of deliveries, and timing restrictions to avoid peak traffic periods where practicable. The preparation, approval and implementation of the final CTMP, substantially in accordance with the outline CTMP, are secured through Requirement 15 of Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [REP4-004], ensuring construction traffic effects on the M4 are appropriately managed throughout the construction phase. National Highways is a named consultee (as the relevant highway authority) for the purposes of Requirement 15.	
3.2.5	Traffic Impact – Operational Phase	National Highways confirm that once operational, the scheme will generate minimal traffic which is not expected to result in any material impact on the SRN.	The Applicant welcomes National Highways' confirmation that no further capacity assessment is required for the SRN.	Agreed

Reference	Sub-topic	National Highways Position	Applicants Position	Status
3.2.6	Traffic Impact – Decommissioning Phase	National Highways confirm that vehicle movements associated with the decommissioning phase are not expected to exceed those generated during the construction period.	The Applicant welcomes National Highways' confirmation that no further capacity assessment is required for the SRN.	Agreed