Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project

Draft Statement of Common Ground - Ministry of Defence

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the project

1.1.1 Southern Water Services Limited (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') is developing proposals for the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project (the Project). The Project is a water supply scheme that will ensure the Applicant can maintain essential water supplies to customers, especially in a drought, while protecting the rare and sensitive River Test and River Itchen chalk streams.

1.1.2 The Project would use advanced treatment techniques to turn highly treated wastewater, that is usually pumped far out to sea, into purified recycled water at a new water recycling plant in Havant. This purified recycled water would be pumped via a pipeline to the Havant Thicket Reservoir where it would mix with spring water. Water from the reservoir would then be pumped along another pipeline to the Applicant's Otterbourne Water Supply Works where it would be treated to strict drinking water standards before being sent into supply.

1.2 Purpose of this Statement of Common Ground

1.2.1 The purpose of this Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is to set out the areas of agreement and disagreement between the Applicant, and the Ministry of Defence in relation to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the Project.

1.2.2 This document has been updated at Deadline 1 to reflect further engagement, progress in resolving outstanding matters and any changes to the parties' positions following submission of the DCO application. References to other Application documents have been updated from the original submission. Please refer to the latest version of the Guide to the Application (Document reference 1.3, DCO Volume 1) for the list of current versions of documents.

~~1.2.2~~1.2.3 This SoCG has been prepared with due regard to guidance issued under Section 50 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) concerning pre-application processes, including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024) Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ('Pre-application Guidance 2024'). This SoCG should be read alongside the Secretary of State for Defence's Relevant Representation [RR-0297], which sets out the Ministry of Defence's detailed position on matters relevant to the Examination. References in this SoCG are intended to complement, and where appropriate cross-reference, the issues raised in that Relevant Representation.

1.3 Parties to this statement

1.3.1 This SoCG has been prepared by (1) Southern Water Services Limited as the Applicant and (2) the Ministry of Defence.

1.3.2 Collectively, Southern Water Services Limited and the Ministry of Defence are referred to as 'the parties'.

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1 Table 1-1 outlines the terminology in the status column of Table 3-1. It can be taken that any matters not specifically referred to in Table 3-1 are not of material interest or relevance to the parties' representation and therefore have not been considered in this document.

Table 1-1: Status terminology

Term	Explanation
Matter agreed with other party	Indicates that both Southern Water and the Ministry of Defence have reached a consensus on the specific issue, with no disagreements.
Provisional agreement pending application evidence	Indicates that while consensus has been reached on certain issues, confirmation of agreement is contingent upon the Ministry of Defence reviewing and accepting the supporting evidence.
Matters subject to further discussion	Indicates that the specific issues are still under discussion, and no final agreement has been reached yet.
Matter not able to be agreed	Indicates that an agreement on the specific issue has not been reached, and it is unlikely that further discussions will resolve the disagreement.

2 Record of post DCO submission engagement

2.1.1 The Applicant has engaged with the Ministry of Defence ~~on a limited basis to date~~ throughout the development of the DCO application and continues to engage with the Ministry of Defence following submission of the application.

2.1.2 A comprehensive record of pre-application engagement, including statutory consultation carried out under section 42 of the PA 2008, is provided in the Statement of Engagement (Statement of Commonality appended) ~~(Document reference 5.9, DCO Volume 5)~~[APP-072] and the Consultation Report (Document reference 5.1, DCO Volume 5~~).~~) [APP-029].

~~2.1.3 This SoCG has been prepared for submission~~ This version of the SoCG is submitted at Examination Deadline 1 (DL1). It represents an update to the draft SoCG submitted with the DCO application, which had a reporting cut-off date of ~~22 November 2026. Engagement~~ 27 April 2026, and has been updated to reflect engagement with the Ministry of Defence ~~has continued beyond this~~ since that date ~~and will remain ongoing throughout the Examination. Accordingly, while this submitted version reflects all engagement up to 22 November 2026, the SoCG will continue to evolve as a live document, with further updates provided as additional discussions take place and outstanding matters progress.~~

~~2.1.4~~2.1.3 ~~This version of the~~, where appropriate. The SoCG is ~~submitted in draft and~~currently unsigned ~~form. The content of this version has nevertheless~~ but has been reviewed and agreed by the relevant officer(s) at the Ministry of Defence. The Applicant confirms that ~~at the reporting cut-off date, this version~~it accurately reflects the matters discussed and the current position between the parties. Formal agreement and signing of the SoCG will be progressed as engagement continues during the Examination.

2.1.4 ~~Since the reporting cut-off date, where necessary~~Where appropriate, bilateral engagement with the Ministry of Defence has continued since submission of the application on unresolved matters from the pre-application phase, matters arising during Pre-examination/Examination, and areas where further clarification is required ~~has continued. Where~~. Table 2-1 sets out this engagement ~~has occurred, any records relevant to these matters~~. Engagement remains ongoing throughout the Examination, and this SoCG is a live document, which will be ~~set out~~ updated and resubmitted as appropriate to reflect ongoing discussions, progress in ~~future iterations of this section.~~resolving matters, and any changes to the status of issues identified by the parties.

Table 2-1: Record of post-submission engagement

Name	Purpose	Date
N/A	N/A	N/A

3 Statement of Common Ground

3.1.1 Table 3-1 provides a summary of the key matters discussed between the Applicant and the Ministry of Defence in relation to the DCO application for the Project. Each matter is categorised according to its status, as defined in section 1.4. Table 3-1aims to clearly present the areas of agreement, those still under discussion, and any unresolved issues.

Table 3-1: Summary of matters

Row ID	Topic	Ministry of Defence position	Latest position in resolving the issue	Application document reference	Status
DCO and planning					
MOD-ES-002	Consents and licences	Ministry of Defence does not anticipate a barrier to granting a licence under the Protection of Military Remains Act (PoMRA) 1986 for Pigeonhouse Farm World War II aircraft crash site. The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre have provided a Letter of No Impediment in confirmation.	The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that any concentration of remains at this site would have been most likely excavated in 1979. Although there could be fragmental remains scattered and moved by agricultural ploughing over the years, Ministry of Defence has confirmed that that would not present a barrier to a licence being issued for the Project. The Applicant has presented the latest Order Limits to the Ministry of Defence and confirmed that the Order Limits are 92m from the crash site at their closest, meaning the crash site is avoided with a buffer. However, a PoMRA licence is needed for works in the vicinity of the crash site to provide authority for recovery of any military remains scattered by past excavation and agriculture. The Applicant is not planning to seek the PoMRA licensing through the DCO process but will apply post-consent in line with the Ministry of Defence's preference. The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre has provided a Letter of No Impediment in respective of this future PoMRA licence application. The confirmed Ministry of Defence process would be to issue a licence for a period of one year but, once issued, renewal would be a straightforward, streamlined process allowing one licence to follow another. The Applicant would be required to re-apply for the licence on an annual basis.	Other Consents and Licences Position Statement ~~(Document reference 5.4, DCO Volume 5)~~[APP-055]	Matter agreed with other party
MOD-ES-003	Consents and licences	Ministry of Defence do not anticipate a barrier to granting a licence under the Protection of Military Remains Act (PoMRA) 1986 for Frith Farm World War II aircraft crash site. The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre have provided a Letter of No Impediment in confirmation.	The Applicant has presented the latest Order Limits to the Ministry of Defence and explained that this site cannot practicably be avoided by the Project. The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that, as there was no fatality involved at this site and as the site was partly excavated in 2019 (where limited wreckage was discovered), it does not anticipate any objection to providing a PoMRA licence.	Other Consents and Licences Position Statement ~~(Document reference 5.4, DCO Volume 5)~~[APP-055]	Matter agreed with other party

Row ID	Topic	Ministry of Defence position	Latest position in resolving the issue	Application document reference	Status
			The confirmed Ministry of Defence process would be to issue a licence for a period of one year but, once issued, renewal would be a straightforward, streamlined process allowing one licence to follow another. The Applicant is not planning to seek the PoMRA licensing through the DCO process but will apply post-consent in line with the Ministry of Defence's preference. The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre has provided a Letter of No Impediment in respective of this future PoMRA licence application. The Applicant would be required to re-apply for the licence on an annual basis.		
Engagement and consultation					
MOD-ES-004	Land	Ministry of Defence to agree with the Applicant the best process for engaging with occupiers of military housing beneath which tunnelling will occur during the construction of the Project. To date insufficient information has been provided to enable the Ministry of Defence to fully understand the impacts and therefore be in a position to raise concerns as regards the tunnelling construction methods. In particular, the Ministry of Defence has concerns over the depth indicated for Section D and the potential impacts on military housing.	The Ministry of Defence owns land containing military housing adjacent to Farlington Avenue, to the south of Portsdown Hill Road. During the construction of the Project, tunnelling is planned under Farlington Avenue~~.~~ (Section D). No works are planned at surface level in the vicinity of the military housing.~~ The Applicant has confirmed a scheme-wide commitment to a 2.5m minimum depth for trenchless crossings. However, the indicative design has the following minimum depths within Section D: The Water Recycling Plant (WRP) site to Portsdown Hill:~~ ~~• Section D (WRP to Portsdown Hill) = 15m~~ ~~• Farlington Avenue = 20m~~ ~~The Applicant cannot commit to these depths not changing during detailed design, but they are very unlikely to get shallower. The depths along Section D of the Project are governed by the depth under the critical crossings of the A27 and railway.~~ The indicative design has concluded that the minimum depth of the tunnel within the relevant part of Section D will be no less than 15m. The Applicant has included a new design principle which states that the Pipeline would be installed at a minimum depth of 15m below surface level within this area. This is reflected in an updated version of the Design Principles Document submitted at Deadline 1 (Document reference 5.11, DCO Volume 5, Version 1).	Pre-application Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker (Document reference 4.4, DCO Volume 4~~)~~, Version 1) Design Principles Document (Document reference 5.11, DCO Volume 5, Version 1) The Applicant's responses to Relevant Representations from local authorities, parish councils, and statutory consultees (Document reference 8.5, DCO Volume 8, Version 0)	Matters subject to further discussion The Applicant's Lands Team are continuing to progress discussions regarding the draft HoTs, with a view to concluding a voluntary agreement for the rights needed for the Project.

Row ID	Topic	Ministry of Defence position	Latest position in resolving the issue	Application document reference	Status
			In its response to the Ministry of Defence's Relevant Representation submitted at Deadline 1 (The Applicant's responses to Relevant Representations from local authorities, parish councils, and statutory consultees (Document reference 8.5, DCO Volume 8, Version 0)), the Applicant has responded to the Ministry of Defence's concerns about potential impacts including noise, disturbance, vibration and ground movement or settlement. The Applicant will continue engaging with the Ministry of Defence to understand whether the Ministry of Defence is satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to enable full understanding of the impacts. Engagement continues in relation to the required land agreements. In August 2025, a Ministry of Defence Surveyor undertook to review whether to proceed using existing agreements with the Applicant or their standard Heads of Terms (HoTs), and to progress the s.135 consent with the Ministry of Defence legal team. Both HoTs and s.135 consents will need to run in conjunction. In October 2025, the Ministry of Defence confirmed that external solicitors have been instructed to review the HoTs and s.135 consent requirements. ~~The Applicant's Lands Team are now in the process of finalising the draft HoTs, with a view to issuing these to the Ministry of Defence prior to DCO submission so voluntary agreement discussions can continue.~~The Applicant issued populated Heads of Terms to the Ministry of Defence on the 5 May 2026. The Applicant and the Ministry of Defence are discussing appropriate terms with the objective that the Ministry of Defence's obligations, statutory duties and operations will not be materially impacted and appropriate accommodations will be put in place. The Applicant continues to pursue this necessary consent from the Ministry of Defence. Further details regarding the status of negotiations are included within Pre-application Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker (Document reference 4.4, DCO Volume 4, Version 1).		

Row ID	Topic	Ministry of Defence position	Latest position in resolving the issue	Application document reference	Status
Miscellaneous and administrative					
MOD-ES-001	Major accidents and disasters - assessment	The Ministry of Defence's Defence Infrastructure Organisation reviewed the Project details and, from a statutory safeguarding perspective, has no concerns with the Project impacting Ministry of Defence Estate for which it statutorily safeguards. Ministry of Defence has also confirmed that there are no offshore concerns given no planned physical amendments to the Eastney Long Sea Outfall.	The Ministry of Defence's Defence Infrastructure Organisation reviewed the Project details and, from a statutory safeguarding perspective, has no concerns with the Project impacting Ministry of Defence Estate for which it statutorily safeguards. Ministry of Defence has also confirmed that there are no offshore concerns given no planned physical amendments to the Eastney Long Sea Outfall.		Matter agreed with other party

4 Signatories

4.1.1 This SoCG is agreed between Southern Water Services Limited (the Applicant) and the Ministry of Defence on the date below.

Signed for the Ministry of Defence
Name
Position
Date
Duly authorised for and on behalf of the Ministry of Defence

Signed for Southern Water Services Limited
Name
Position
Date
Duly authorised for and on behalf of Southern Water Services Limited


WATER
for LIFE®
from
Southern
Water®