Drought Permit No.	DP2026-2839160078

Please quote the reference number in all correspondence

Environment Agency

Drought Permit – modify existing abstraction

- Section 79A Water Resources Act 1991 as amended by the Environment Act 1995

The Environment Agency grants this drought permit to:

Thames Water Utilities Limited ("the Water Company")
Clearwater Court
Vastern Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 8DB
Company registration number 02366661

This drought permit authorises the Water Company to abstract water pursuant to 28/39/16/0078 ("the Licence") but with the provisions of that Licence suspended and/or modified as set out in the Schedule to this drought permit.

This drought permit commences from the effective date shown below and shall remain in force until the date of expiry shown below.

All other provisions of the said Licence remain in full force and effect.

Signed .....

.....
Joe Cuthbertson
Thames Area Director

Environment Agency
Red Kite House,
Benson Lane, Wallingford,
OX10 8BD

Date of issue.....29 September 2026

Date effective .....29 September 2026

Date of expiry.....29 March 2027
(date not exceeding 6 months from the date of becoming effective)

Note: References to "the Agency" are to the Environment Agency or any successor body.

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SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. FURTHER CONDITIONS

1.1 In the Licence under condition 10 'Further Provisions' the first paragraph which states,

'At any time when the 'naturalised' mean daily flow in the River Thames as recorded by the Agency's flow gauging station at Farmoor (at National Grid Reference [redacted] is less than 136,380 cubic metres per day abstraction shall not exceed the following quantities:

2,546 cubic metres per hour
59,100 cubic metres per day.'

Shall be replaced in its entirety by the following:

At any time when the 'naturalised' mean daily flow in the River Thames as recorded by the Agency's flow gauging station at Farmoor (at National Grid Reference [redacted] is less than 136,380 cubic metres per day abstraction shall not exceed the following quantities:

3,750 cubic metres per hour
90,000 cubic metres per day.

At any time when the 'naturalised' mean daily flow in the River Thames as recorded by the Agency's flow gauging station at Farmoor (at National Grid Reference [redacted] marked A on the map) is between 346,422 cubic metres per day and 105,480 cubic metres per day abstraction under this permit shall not allow flow at the Agency's flow gauging station at Farmoor to be reduced below 46,380 cubic metres per day.

At any time when the 'naturalised' mean daily flow in the River Thames as recorded by the Agency's flow gauging station at Farmoor (at National Grid Reference [redacted] marked A on the map) is less than 105,480 cubic metres per day abstraction under this permit shall not exceed the following quantities:

2,546 cubic metres per hour
59,100 cubic metres per day.

The Water Company shall notify the Agency's River Control Room immediately by phone and the Agency in writing at least 1 hour prior.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

2.1 The Water Company shall undertake environmental monitoring as set out in Appendix 1 attached to this permit.

2.2 The Water Company shall undertake environmental monitoring and Storm Tank monitoring as set out in Appendix 2 attached to this permit.

2.3 The Water Company shall undertake flow monitoring as set out in Appendix 3 attached to this permit.

3. MITIGATION CONDITIONS

3.1 Immediately upon finding any signs of environmental impacts, including but not limited to those specified in Appendix 1, the Water Company shall notify the Agency in writing and by telephone on 0800 80 70 60 and shall provide details of the environmental impacts and the location.

3.2 If environmental impacts or a significant risk to the environment is identified in accordance with condition 3.1, or if the Agency so specifies in writing, over-pumping as required in condition 3.4, and/or abstraction under the drought permit shall cease and the Water Company shall return to the abstraction rates specified in licence 28/39/16/0078.

The Water Company shall return to the stated abstraction rates as soon as possible and within 12 hours of receipt of written notification from the Agency.

3.3 At any time when condition 3.2 applies, the return to abstraction rates and cessation of over-pumping invoked under condition 3.2 shall continue to apply until the Water Company has notified the Agency in writing that appropriate remedial action has been taken, and the Agency has confirmed in writing that it is satisfied with this.

3.4 (i) At any time when the upstream level at Kings Lock as recorded by the Agency's level monitor (at National Grid Reference) falls below 58.47 mAOD for 3 consecutive days, over-pumping will take place unless otherwise directed in writing by the Agency or specified by the Agency as follows:

Location and map reference	National Grid Reference	Means of abstraction
Seacourt Stream Map reference: D		Variable rate mobile pump rated to 10Ml/d
Osney Stream* Map reference: E		Variable rate mobile pump rated up to 5Ml/d
Bulstake Stream Map reference: F		Variable rate mobile pump rated up to 5Ml/d
Castle Mill Stream* Map reference: G		Variable rate mobile pump rated up to 5Ml/d
Wolvercote Mill Stream* Map reference: H		Variable rate mobile pump rated up to 5Ml/d

**Over-pumping only required at these locations if existing weir arrangements do not enable sufficient flow through the streams*

(ii) The appropriate variable rate referred to in the table above at each location will be agreed in writing by the Agency (or failing agreement it shall take place at such rate as notified by the Agency).

(iii) Triggers for initiating over-pumping at all sites except Kings Lock referred to in (i) above will be determined by weekly walkovers, implemented as agreed with the Agency (or failing agreement as notified by the Agency).

3.5 At any time when the determinant trigger for dissolved oxygen as specified under the heading 'Water Quality Monitoring' in Appendix 2 is reached in the River Thames at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works for a period of 2 consecutive hours, abstraction under this drought permit shall cease immediately and abstraction shall be carried out in accordance with licence 28/39/16/0078 until such time that the determinant trigger for dissolved oxygen is exceeded for 2 consecutive hours.

3.6 At any time when the level monitor installed on the first storm tank at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works shows that the tank is 60% full over-pumping and abstraction under the drought permit shall cease immediately and abstraction shall be carried out in accordance with licence 28/39/16/0078.

3.7 At any time when the Event Duration Monitor installed between the storm tanks
at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works and the River Thames records any spilling from the storm tank to the River Thames over-pumping and abstraction under the drought permit shall cease immediately and abstraction shall be carried out in accordance with licence 28/39/16/0078.

3.8 At any time when abstraction ceases in accordance with conditions 3.6 or 3.7 no abstraction under this drought permit or over-pumping shall recommence for 24 hours after the storm event has finished, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Agency.

3.9 If the flow monitoring specified in Appendix 3 shows the over-pumping efficacy
is insufficient, the Water Company shall alter the operation of the over-pumping
or carry out mitigation actions or revert to abstraction in accordance with licence 28/39/16/0078 as directed in writing by the Agency. The Agency's assessment of the over-pumping efficacy is conclusive.

3.10 (i) No over-pumping shall take place unless the Water Company has installed a fish and eel screen on the pumps for the over-pumping abstraction points specified in conditions 3.4 of an aperture to be agreed in writing with the Agency to prevent the entrapment, entrainment or impingement of fish at points of abstraction associated with over-pumping.

(ii) The Water Company shall maintain, repair or replace the fish screen in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications AND to ensure that it remains effective at all times and keep records of such maintenance.

(iii) The Water Company shall keep records of such maintenance and shall
make them available during all reasonable hours for inspection by the Agency.

4. MEANS OF MEASUREMENT OF WATER ABSTRACTED/DISCHARGED

4.1 (i) The quantity of water abstracted for the purpose of over-pumping shall be measured by the number of hours of operation of the pump multiplied by the defined output of the pump in one hour.

(ii) The Water Company shall also retain supporting documentation, including certification details of the pumps used in over-pumping, the pump rates and times of pump operation which enables the defined output, flow rate and volume in time to be calculated for each pump associated with over-pumping.

5. RECORDS

5.1 Records of the hours of operation of the pumps associated with over-pumping, together with the corresponding quantity calculated by the means specified in condition 4.1 above, shall be taken and recorded by the Water Company at the same time each day during the whole of the period during which over-pumping is authorised or as otherwise approved in writing by the Agency.

5.2 The Water Company shall send a copy of the record or summary data from it to the Agency within 28 calendar days of being so directed in writing by the Agency.

Appendix 1

Walkover and environmental monitoring schedule

Assessment type	Visual monitoring "walkover surveys" of the riverine environment. Water quality monitoring using spot water quality samples in the centre of the channel to measure real-time values of dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/l) and saturation (%), conductivity, temperature and pH. Water quality monitoring using laboratory analysis of orthophosphate and total oxidised nitrogen concentration to identify environmental impacts on the fine-lined pea mussel which may be affected or caused by the Water Company abstracting under this drought permit. The Water Company shall discuss and agree with the Agency any proposed changes to this monitoring schedule in advance of carrying out any survey work.
Duration and frequency of monitoring	The visual monitoring walkover surveys in Reach 1, Reach 2 and Reach 3 shall take place on the first, second and fifth days from the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit as notified under condition 1.1 and then fortnightly or at a frequency specified in writing by the Agency. Walkover surveys shall be carried out once before the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit. Walkover surveys shall be carried out until the drought permit expires or is revoked. The water quality monitoring shall take place once before the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit, then on the first, second and fifth days from the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit, followed by fortnightly or at a frequency specified in writing by the Agency until the drought permit expires or is revoked.
Environmental impacts	The following are suggested signs of environmental impacts but are not exhaustive. If advice is required, then the Agency can be contacted on 0800 80 70 60. • Fish in distress, for example gasping at the surface or leaping out of the water. • Dead or dying fish. • Concentration of fish in restricted areas/pools which could increase susceptibility to predation. • Inhibition of movement of fish past river structures or other barriers.

	• Reduced habitat availability for adult and juvenile life stages (including spawning/nursery areas). • Signs of polluting discharges during walkover surveys, problems exacerbated during lower flows and/or reduced dilution. • Algal blooms • Changes in wetted width and exposure or normally submerged marginal feature in the watercourse. • Exposure of key functional habitat, particularly where there are reduced flows over or siltation of brown trout redds. • Stranding of fish in marginal areas. • Signs of pollution • Changes to geomorphology e.g. changes in wetted width and exposure of normally submerged marginal features. • From general water quality spot surveys; low levels of dissolved oxygen below the boundary of WFD moderate and poor status may indicate drought impacts.
Monitoring Method & Standard of Assessment	The Water Company shall measure and record the following information. For all environmental impacts identified: • The location of the site of environmental impacts observed. • Dissolved oxygen concentration, water temperature and pH measurements should be taken and recorded anywhere in the survey area where (if) signs of environmental stress are identified. • A photo or photos should be taken of any signs of environmental distress. • Weather conditions at the time of the observations. Where relevant to the environmental impact observed: • Approximate number of dead fish. • Any signs of damage or disease. • Approximate number of fish in distress, gasping at the surface or leaping out of the water. • Whether the fish are being stranded in shallow pools. • Description of structures and stretches of any watercourses that have no flow or significantly reduced flow. • Approximate size of the fish affected. • The species affected. • Signs of pollution. • Presence of algal blooms/scums. • Species, location and extent of invasive non-native species. Fish and eel rescue and relocation: • If fish continue to show signs of distress, they should be captured and held for a short period, allowing recovery of both the fish and the levels of instream dissolved oxygen. • If water levels fail to recover, the fish should be moved to a suitable release site downstream where appropriate conditions exist on the day.

	• Fish should be relocated across barriers where fish movement is restricted between two areas as a result of an instream barrier. • Any eel captured should be kept in a separate tank to all other fish species as they secrete mucus which can infest the gills of other fish. • Dissolved oxygen concentration should be monitored and optimum concentrations maintained by continuous infusion, using an oxygenation unit.
Location of Monitoring	The below walkover locations may be reviewed and altered as specified in writing by the Agency. Control site: between [redacted] <u>Reach 1 walkover surveys</u>: Walkover 1: between [redacted] Walkover 2: between Walkover 3: between Walkover 4: between <u>Reach 2 walkover surveys (distributaries)</u>: Walkover 1: between [redacted] Walkover 2: between Walkover 3: between Walkover 4: between Walkover 5: between Walkover 6: between Walkover 7: between Walkover 8: between Walkover 9: between Walkover 10: between Walkover 11: between Walkover 12: between <u>Reach 3 walkover surveys</u>: Walkover 1: between [redacted] Walkover 2: between Walkover 3: between Walkover 4: between Walkover 5: between Walkover 6: between Walkover 7: between Fine-lined pea mussel water quality sampling sites: River Thames at Farmoor intake: [redacted] River Thames at Sutton Bridge Kennington Pool SNCI:

Survey Results	In addition to any notification given under condition 3.1 a copy of the monitoring results shall be sent to the Environment Agency (Integrated Environmental Planning Team) IEP_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk within 14 days of the survey taking place.
Responsibility	Unless otherwise discussed and agreed in writing, the Water Company will be responsible for all of the costs associated with this monitoring programme. Health and safety requirements whilst carrying out the surveys are the responsibility of the Water Company.

Appendix 2

Sewage Treatment Works monitoring schedule

Assessment type	Water quality monitoring using in situ probe reading and spot water quality sampled in the centre of the channel to measure real-time values of dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/l) and saturation (%), conductivity, temperature and pH. Storm tank monitoring by means of the Storm Tank Level Monitor and the Event Duration Monitor relating to Sewage Treatment Works Storm Tanks prevent spilling from the storm tank at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works to the River Thames. This is in order to minimise the risk of environmental impacts on the River Thames that may be affected or caused by the Water Company drought permit during storm events. The Water Company shall discuss and agree with the Agency any proposed changes to this monitoring schedule.
Duration of Monitoring	From the commencement of abstraction under this drought as notified under condition 1.1 of this permit and for the entire period of abstraction under this drought permit.
Monitoring Method & Standard of Assessment	<u>Water quality monitoring</u> The Water Company shall measure and record the level of Dissolved Oxygen. The trigger is reached if Dissolved Oxygen drops below 6.0 mg/l or 80% saturation. <u>Storm tank monitoring</u> At any time when storm tank level monitoring indicates the first storm tank is 60% full at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works. An event where the Event Duration Monitor installed on the storm weir between the main works and the storm tank records any spilling from the storm tanks at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works.
Frequency of monitoring	Continuous for the duration of monitoring.
Location of monitoring	<u>Water quality monitoring</u> River Thames at Cassington Sewage Treatment Works in-river monitoring

	Upstream location and Downstream location: [redacted] Storm tank monitoring Cassington Sewage Treatment works
Survey Results	Monitoring results recorded upstream and downstream of the Cassington Sewage Treatment Works shall be shared with the Environment Agency (Integrated Environmental Planning Team) IEP_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk in real-time, or in any near real-time method as is available. Any data recorded by the Event Duration Monitors at Cassington Sewage Treatment Work will be shared with the Environment Agency (Integrated Environmental Planning Team) IEP_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk in real-time, or in any near real-time method as is available.
Responsibility	Unless otherwise discussed and agreed in writing, the Water Company will be responsible for all of the costs associated with this monitoring programme. Health and safety requirements whilst carrying out the surveys are the responsibility of the Water Company.

Appendix 3

Flow measurement survey schedule

Assessment Type	Flow measurement on the Seacourt Stream, Bulstake Stream, Wolvercote Mill Stream, Castle Mill Stream and Osney Stream. The Water Company shall discuss and agree with the Agency any proposed changes to this schedule in advance of carrying out any of the survey work.
Duration of Monitoring	Flow measurements shall take place on the first, second and fifth days from the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit as notified under condition 1.1 and then fortnightly or at a frequently specified in writing by the Agency. For the duration of the permit at any time a walkover is conducted in accordance with Appendix 1. Flow measurements shall take place within 7 days of the first day that any over-pumping commences.
Monitoring Method & Standard of Assessment	Unless otherwise advised by the Agency, the flow measurements shall be conducted using either: i) An impellor type current meter, or ii) Acoustic doppler current profiling. The flow monitoring survey shall endeavor to establish current conditions; understand better the accretion at the specified location and assess the effect the over-pumping has upon the distributaries of the River Thames. Within each survey the local weather conditions shall be recorded, along with comments on any significant weather events during the preceding days that could influence the survey results.
Frequency of Monitoring	Once before the commencement of abstraction under this drought permit. As soon as possible after over-pumping commences and at any time a walkover is conducted in accordance with Appendix 1.
Location of Monitoring	At the locations listed below. Any changes to flow monitoring sites will be specified in writing by the Agency Seacourt Stream Bulstake Stream Wolvercote Mill Stream

	Castle Mill Stream Osney Stream At the walkover locations in accordance with Appendix 1.
Standard	All current meter flow measurements shall be conducted to ISO 748:2007 standard, or current equivalent. All flow measurements using an ADCP (Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler) method shall be conducted to the appropriate and accepted standard.
Results	Following the completion of each of the flow measurements the Water Company shall provide: • Confirmation of the calculated flow valve. The results shall be sent to the Environment Agency (Integrated Environmental Planning) team IEP_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk within 7 days of completion of each of the surveys, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Agency.
Responsibility	Unless otherwise discussed and agreed in writing with the Agency, the Water Company will be responsible for all of the costs associated with this monitoring programme. Health and safety requirements whilst carrying out the surveys are the responsibility of the Water Company.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Note: the following information is provided for information only. It does not form part of the permit.

REASONS FOR SUSPENSIONS AND/OR MODIFICATIONS

Condition 1 the hourly and daily volume at the Farmoor intake. This is to allow the Water Company to abstract at higher rates at lower flows in order to fill Farmoor Reservoir during low flows.

Condition 2 of this drought permit has been included to allow monitoring of signs of environmental impacts that may be caused by or affected by the Water Company reducing abstracting higher rates at low flows and using over-pumping to augment flows within the Oxford watercourses downstream of the abstraction.

Condition 3 of this drought permit has been included to mitigate any environmental impacts that may be caused by or affected by the Water Company reducing abstracting at lower flow and using over-pumping of offtake structures to augment flows within the Oxford watercourses downstream of the Farmoor intake.

Condition 4 of this drought permit has been included as a means of measuring the abstraction of water associated with over-pumping.

Condition 5 of this drought permit requires that the measurements are recorded.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Screening

The Agency may have regard to its best practice guide, the Eel Manual: Screening at intakes and outfalls: measures to protect eel (or equivalent guidance) in agreeing where, how and what type of eel screen should be installed and together with the results of any monitoring in determining whether the eel screen is properly effective and maintained, and in judging whether it is necessary to require repair or replacement of the eel screen.

Mitigation

With regards to condition 3, the Agency will take into consideration any other actions the Water Company are taking or plan to take in order to mitigate effects on the environment, such as mitigation actions identified in their Environmental Assessment Report: Farmoor Drought Permit: Drought Permit Implementation 2026.

Naturalised Flow

For the purpose of this permit 'naturalised' flow shall mean the recorded mean daily flow at Farmoor Gauging Station plus the quantity abstracted at Farmoor Intake (Point 'A' in licence 28/39/16/0078) during the previous 24 hour period plus the wash-water discharge from Farmoor treatment works to the River Thames during the preceding 24 hour period. The wash-water discharge quantity shall not exceed the consented daily volume.

Environment Agency River Control Room

For the purpose of conditions 1.1, the Environment Agency's River Control Room shall be notified in writing by email: rcdo-reading@environment-agency.gov.uk and by phone on 0800 141 2698

Contact details
The Water Company will contact the Agency in writing by email: IEP_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk to seek our agreement where this is specified in the permit conditions.

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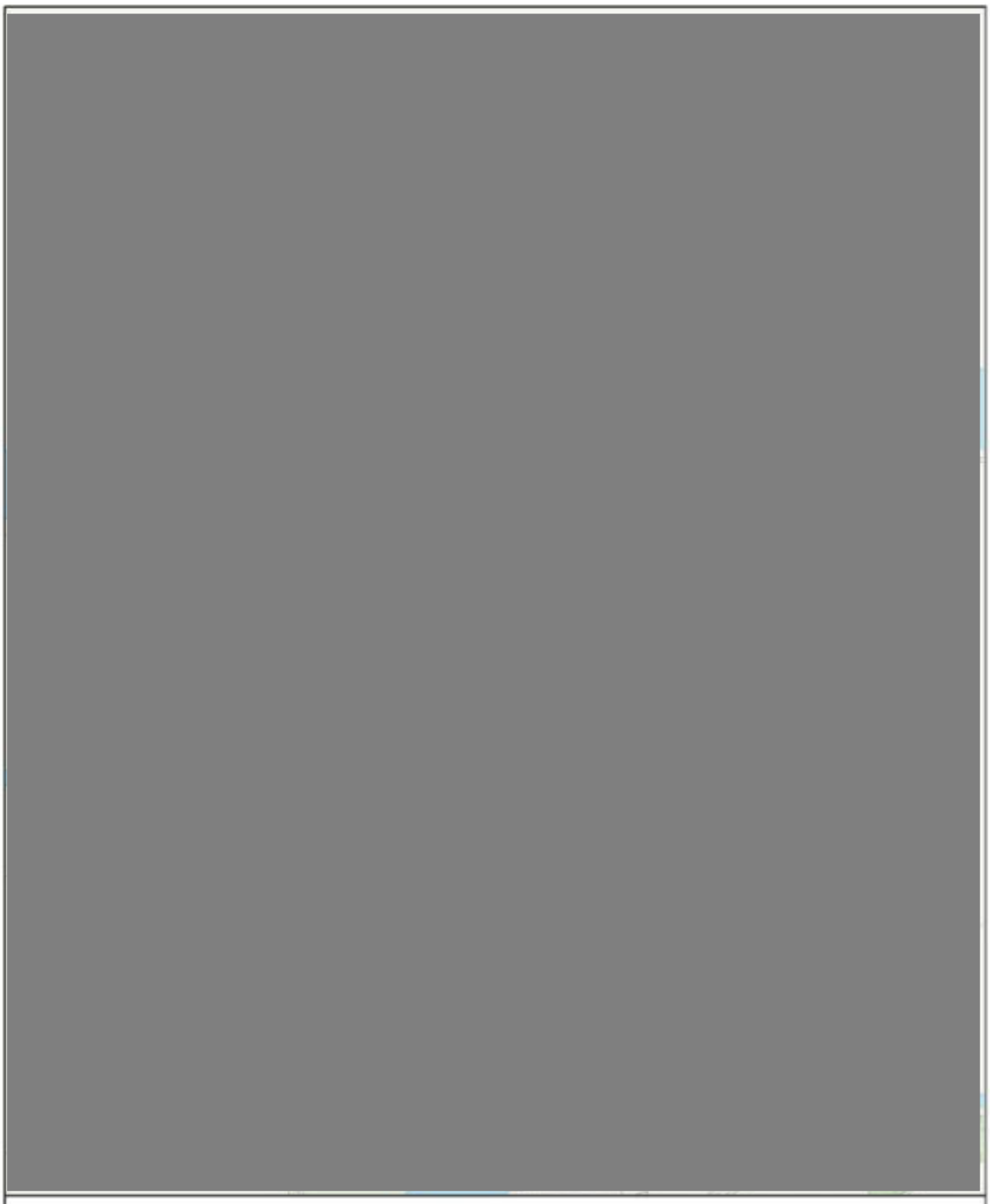

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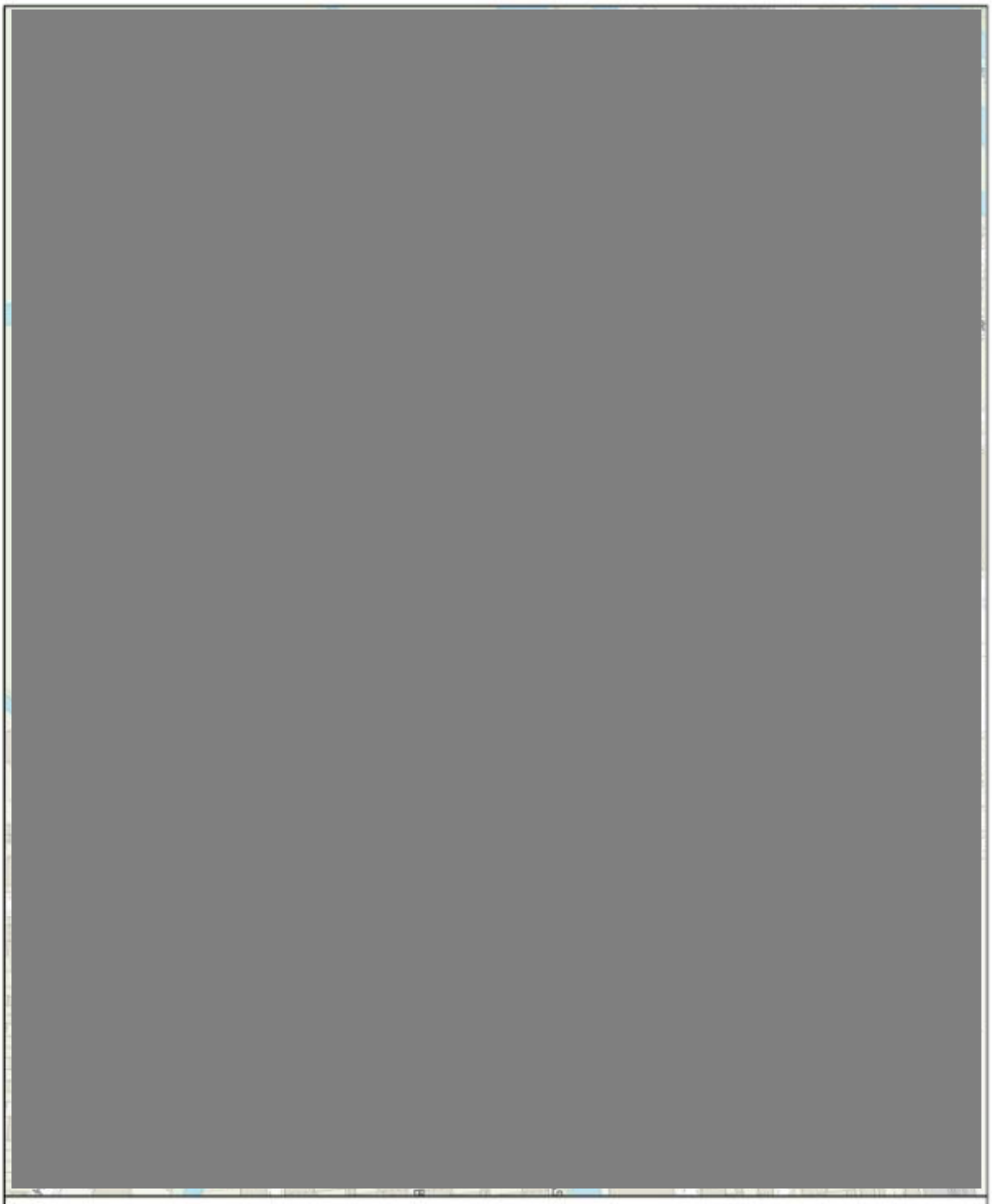

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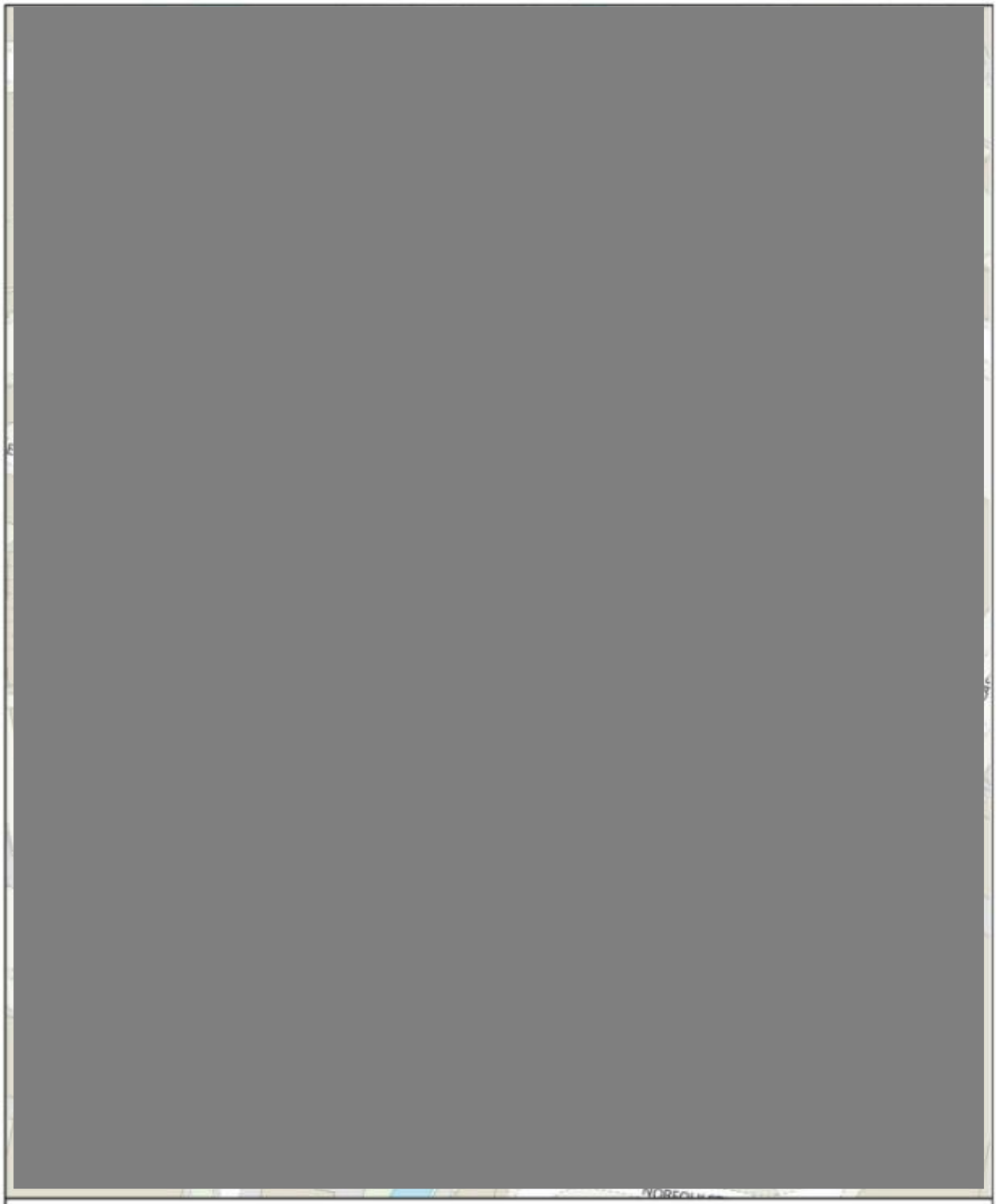

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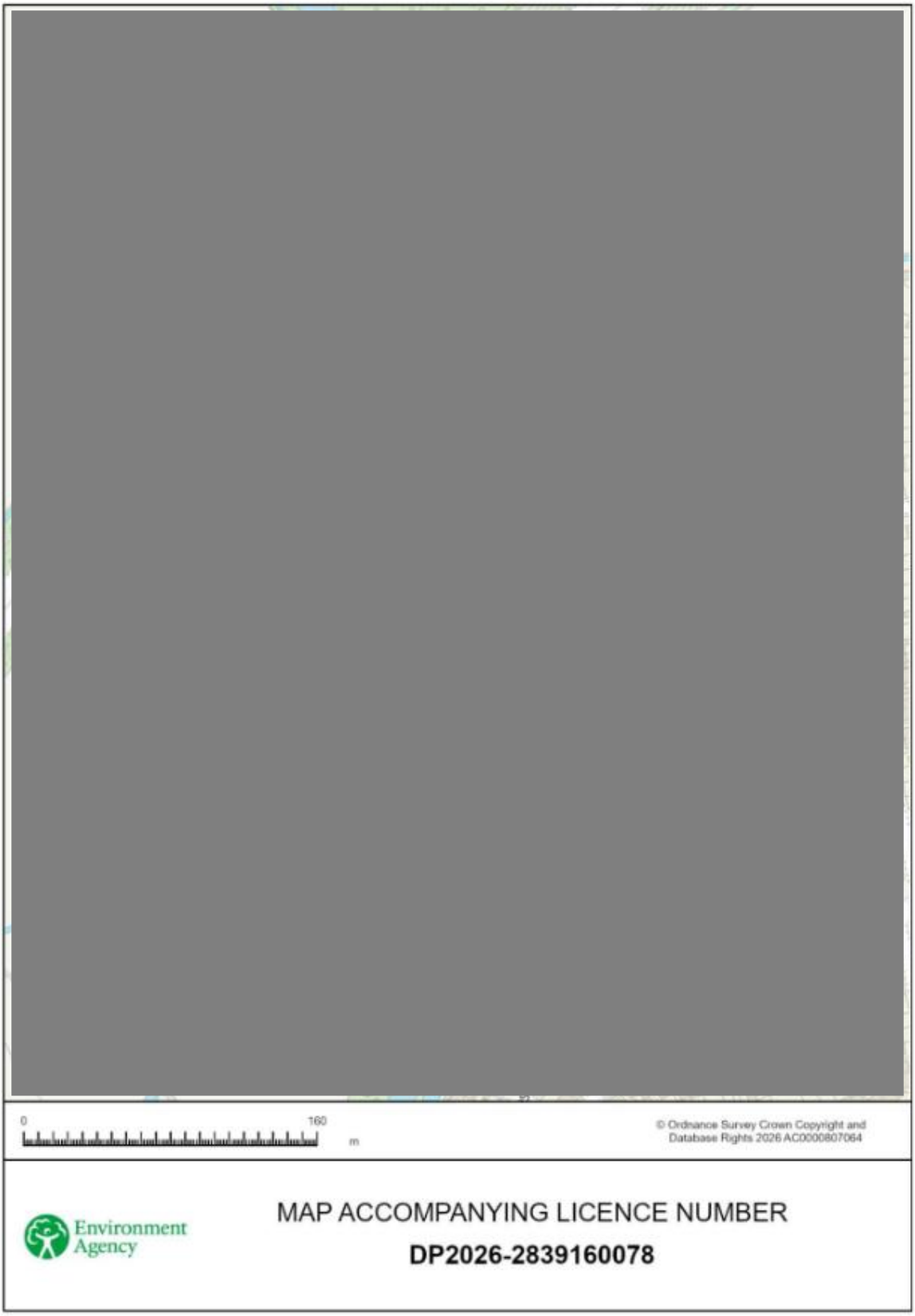

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