

Jim Conboy

HS2@chilternsociety.org.uk

Date as email

Dear Jim Conboy

FOI-23-5125

Thank you for your information request which was received on 2 August 2023. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I have processed your request under the Environmental Information Regulations ('EIR') 2004 ('the Regulations') because the information you have requested concerns work affecting the environment according to the definition in Regulation 2. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act ('FOI') 2000 ('the Act') exempts environmental information from the Act but requires us to consider it under the Regulations.

REQUEST

1. The application includes 4 planting plans¹ which specify the species to be planted, but not the proportions of each species. Please supply any information held regarding the proportions of each species in each of the categories indicated in the boxes, for each plan.
2. Please supply copies of any documents held, which indicate the objectives to be achieved, when deciding on the species to be included in the planting plans.
3. The written statement (HS2-SOUTH_HEATH_CUTTING_WRITTEN_STATEMENT-4462252.pdf) para 4.7.6 refers to the need for bat mitigation planting. Please indicate (preferably on a plan) which areas are regarded as providing bat mitigation.

RESPONSE

HS2 Ltd previously submitted its proposals for the Chiltern North Tunnel area to the local planning authority, as part of a Schedule 17 application. The information included within the application is provided indicatively only and is not for approval at that stage. Indicative measures outline an overall package of mitigation and compensation that would be

associated with landscape and visual impact, woodland loss and wildlife habitat. The indicative measures would include woodland creation; existing woodland edge planting; hedgerow creation and lineside vegetation planting.

The level of detail underpinning these measures (including the proportions of plant species and specific detail relating to bat mitigation) is still being developed and is not completed. When nearer to completion the plans will be subject to assurance before being submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority. Species related mitigation, to be included within the final design, is being informed by ongoing ecological survey and designs may be subject to any appropriate licensing conditions specified by Natural England.

In terms of the developing design, the species mixes and locations will be determined to ensure the meeting of each asset's primary objective, which includes visual screening, landscape integration (including landscape mitigation planting and scrub) and biodiversity/ecology (including woodland and hedgerow habitats, grassland creation and wetland planting). Very early proposals for assets were shown as part of the Parliamentary design that formed the indicative proposals described in the published Phase One Environmental Statement Volume 2 CFA map books held here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-volume-2-community-forum-area-reports-and-mapbooks>

As the plans are still being developed, we are withholding any further information by virtue of Regulation 12(4)(d) – Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents and incomplete data. Please see **FOI-23-5125 - Annex A** attached for a full explanation of the legislation applied.

Right to Review

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may complain in writing to HS2 Ltd. Please find below details of HS2 Ltd's complaints procedure which includes your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

Please remember to quote reference number **FOI-23-5125** in any future communication relating to this request.

Yours sincerely,

Briefings, Correspondence and FOI Adviser

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited