

16-May-2021

The Environment Agency (by Email)

Cc: Lord Berkeley

REQUEST TO APPROVE THE CHILTERN TUNNEL - HNL21397JH

Dear EA,

Thank you for responding and supplying the documents as requested. We note that you have withheld information under exemptions 13(1), to which we have no objection, and 12(5)(a), which appears unreasonable.

As you will know, in the case EA/2020/0088V¹ (Sarah Green appealing against a decision by HS2), the First Tier Tribunal stated (in relation to the location of Affinity Water abstraction points)² that

"if regulation 12(5)(a) did apply to the redacted material it certainly only applied to some of the redactions and that the net effect of disclosure in terms of public safety would have been minimal. Overall, we are quite satisfied that the public interest in disclosure of this material would have outweighed that in maintaining the exception provided by regulation 12(5)(a)."

The locations of these abstraction points is in any case common knowledge, particularly among Geologists. One HS2 works notification even refers to "the pumping station at Mill Lane in Chalfont St Giles."³, so we would ask you to unredact this information.

A more serious complaint is the absence and redaction of borehole information gathered between Chalfont St Giles and Little Missenden, precisely the area where the Misbourne River is at risk from tunnelling operations. This information clearly is not covered by exception 12(5)(a), and so should not have been withheld. We request that you provide unredacted copies of "Site Specific Groundwater Monitoring" as soon as possible, with an unredacted copy of page 58, borehole logs for the boreholes referenced from that page, and unredacted copies of pages 226-274, where the last column of the borehole information sheet has been obscured.

¹ <http://stophs2.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/144-190421-Green-S-EA2020-0088V-Judges-Final-DECISION-19.04.21-.pdf>

² Paragraph 56

³ <https://hs2inbucksandoxfordshire.commonplace.is/news/hs2-works-notification:-affinity-water-pipeline,-june-to-december-2020>



Regards,

Dr James Conboy

(for the Chiltern Society)

