Joan Walley MP  
Chair  
Environmental Audit Committee  
14, Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9NB  

29 October 2014

Dear Joan,

Thank you for your recent correspondence concerning the environmental effect of HS2.

HS2 Ltd has given evidence before the Environmental Audit Committee alongside Robert Goodwill MP, the Department for Transport and the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs. Your Committee has heard from us on a range of matters relating to the environmental effect of the proposals. Our response is on record and Government has formally responded to the earlier EAC hearing.

I should reiterate that the Environmental Statement (ES) provides a comprehensive assessment of the significant environmental effects of the railway at the national, route-wide and local level to inform Parliament’s decision on whether to approve the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill and that avoiding significant environmental effects wherever reasonably practicable has been at the heart of the development of HS2 to date and will continue to be at the heart of the detailed design of the railway following Royal Assent.

The assessment was based on known, reliable sources of information, such as from Environmental Resource Centres, and, where practicable and where access to land was made available to us by third parties, appropriate surveys on the ground. Where access was not available the assessment was based on a precautionary approach, which was developed using existing data, to present a reasonable worst case of the likely significant environmental effects.

Since Bill deposit and publication of the ES we have been able to negotiate access to more land and commissioned further ecological surveys that are due to be complete by this autumn.

A Supplementary Environmental Statement (SES) will be prepared to account for those additional surveys together with any changes made to the current proposals arising from the HS2 Bill Select Committee.

Any SES would be published alongside an Additional Provision to the Bill and presented to Parliament in due course. The SES would be subject to consultation in accordance with Standing Orders and those affected would have the opportunity to make their views known by way of petitioning Parliament and making representations to the Select Committee.

The environmental information that HS2 Ltd relies upon before the HS2 Bill Select Committee comes from our published material or is derived from published material.

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High Speed Two (HS2) Limited, registered in England and Wales.  
Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Simon Kirby
Chief Executive
Hs2 Ltd

Cc: Cheryl Gillan MP, Robert Syms MP and Robert Goodwill MP