

Request 8194 – HR Wallingford

South Cambs District Council recently engaged HR Wallingford to perform an investigation / assessment of the environmental impact of the Northstowe development on local ponds.

I would like to request, under the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the Statement of Work agreed with HR Wallingford.

Response

In response to the above questions, please find attached (available on request) Northstowe Kingfisher Pond Brief

Northstowe Kingfisher Pond Brief – From HR Wallingford_Redacted

Please note due to our obligations as regards personal data, and some commercial information, redactions have been made where S40(2) personal data of third parties and S43(2) Commercial interests applies. We are not required to provide any further explanation on the use of S40(2) – personal data, as this is an absolute exemption.

We are required to undertake a public interest test on the use of S43(2). The application of S43(2) applies to a small amount of contractual information held within the document that is specific to the relationship between this contractor and the Council.

It is in the public interest to show transparency in the award of public funds and management of contracts for work undertaken on the Council's behalf, however, this should not be at the detriment to any party including the Council. Some of the detail you have requested relates to a current live contract and there is a risk that the disclosure of specific details could adversely affect the commercial interests of all parties. Disclosing such detail could have a detrimental effect to the businesses concerned, create unfair competition and damage the procurement process that occurs under an expectation of confidence.

The public interest will be in ensuring fair competition takes place in the award of contracts without the risk of detriment to any party involved, including the Council. Therefore, we consider the public interest is currently served in maintaining the exemption on this small amount of commercially sensitive information.