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Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Website: www.dft.gov.uk
Email: highspeedrail@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: E0008892
Your Ref: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX,

EIR request – costs of HS2 spur to Heathrow

Thank you for your letter of Tuesday 8 May 2012. You requested the following information:

1. Written confirmation from the Department for Transport that:

(a) The £2.5bn - £3.9bn figures for the HS2 spur to Heathrow were the figures relied upon by the Secretary of State for Transport at the time of her HS2 decision on 10 January 2012; and

(b) £1.8bn is the current estimate for the HS2 spur to Heathrow relied upon by the Department for Transport and, if so, the date when this superseded previous estimates.

2. If the £2.5bn - £3.9bn figures for the HS2 spur to Heathrow were not ones relied upon by the Secretary of State at the time of her HS2 decision on 10 January 2012, please provide copies of all documents (whether held in electronic or hard copy form or otherwise) including the dates of such documents that were before the Secretary of State on 10 January 2012 that demonstrate that some other figure or range of figures for the cost of the HS2 spur to Heathrow were relied upon and the amount of that figure or range of figures.

Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information.

The basis for the Secretary of State's decisions on serving Heathrow are set out in the published decision documentation – notably the *Review of the Government's Strategy for a National High Speed Rail Network* and the *Review of HS2 London to West Midlands Route Selection and Speed*, as well as the main decisions document (all are available at www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail).

These documents show that the more important factor in choosing between serving Heathrow via a spur or a through-route running close to the airport was not the respective costs of the options. The more important factors were the slower journey times for the vast majority of travellers on HS2, who would wish to access central London, and the poor interchange with the airport terminals from a through route, given that the only feasible station options would be some distance from the terminals.

Nonetheless, the issue of costs is discussed briefly in the Decisions Document, and at slightly greater length in the *Review of the Government's Strategy*, which notes at para 7.3.37 that the spur is the cheaper option.

This reflects the published information on the comparative costs of options available to the Secretary of State in taking her decision, which was that set out in HS2 Ltd's September 2010 report on serving Heathrow.¹ The analysis in this report showed that a spur link to Heathrow would cost, as you note, between £2.5 billion and £3.9 billion, with the Government's central proposal of a mainly surface spur to T5 costing c. £3.1bn. In contrast adjusting the main line to run via Iver would entail a total additional cost of c. £4.5bn (£2.9bn for the route + £1.6bn for the people mover).

The Secretary of State had, by the time of her decision, received an oral briefing from HS2 Ltd which indicated that, on the basis of ongoing design work, the final cost of the proposed spur line was likely to be lower than that in the September 2010 report, at roughly £1.8bn - £1.9bn. It is this figure that was included in the correspondence that XXXXXXXXXX received via XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. This is consistent with HS2 Ltd's earlier findings that the spur was the cheaper option (see the report referenced above) but the Secretary of State did not rely on it in making her decision. As set out above, her decision was based on the publicly available information at the time.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. The Department will, therefore, be simultaneously releasing to the public the information you requested, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within 40 working days of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/01
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

¹ This report contains the most current assessment of the comparative costs of Heathrow connection options and is available at:
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110131042819/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/rail/pi/highspeedrail/proposedroute/routesupplement/pdf/routesupplement.pdf>

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

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Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within 40 working days of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF