

From members of the HS2 Barn Owl Action Group  
27<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Mark Thurston, Chief Executive Officer  
James Patmore, Ecology Review Group  
Philippa Richards, HS2 Barn Owl Action Group

Dear Mark, James and Philippa,

As you may know, HS2 Phase One is predicted to destroy 80 Barn Owl nest sites, a nationally significant impact. The Barn Owl is protected under Schedule One of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and was voted Britain's most popular farmland bird in an RSPB poll.

We have considered, in detail, versions one and two of the Draft Barn Owl Mitigation Plan for Phase 1 of the HS2 scheme but our comments have not resulted in adequate changes being made. Consequently we, the undersigned organisations, wish it to be known that the above Plan does not have our support.

Specifically, we do not support the proposed mitigation because the Plan:

- Does not commit to the creation of compensatory foraging habitat at a safe distance
- Does not commit to the minimisation of owl-train collisions by extensive screening
- Consists of little more than the provision of nestboxes on trees
- Is extremely short-lived. The nestboxes are expected to last 20 years compared to HS2's projected 100-year lifespan
- Does not include any owl mortality monitoring

We firmly believe that the Plan as it stands will not reduce the impact of HS2 on Barn Owls to an insignificant level, or achieve an overall neutral/positive effect.

For an overview of our suggested changes to the draft Plan, please refer to the comments already submitted. We look forward to further discussions on how effective Barn Owl mitigation may be delivered.

Yours sincerely,



on behalf of

Annie Ottaway on behalf of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

Kate Dewey on behalf of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Colin Wilkinson on behalf of the RSPB

David Ramsden on behalf of the Barn Owl Trust

Andy Coulson-Phillips on behalf of Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust

Matt Jackson on behalf of the Wildlife Trusts for Bedfordshire, Cambridge, & Northamptonshire