



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

FAO [REDACTED]
By email.

Our ref: RFI6373
Date: 1 April 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Whether an assessment as to the long-term viability of the Noah's Ark Zoo Farm elephant enclosure was completed prior to RDPE funding being awarded.

Thank you for your request for information about whether an assessment as to the long-term viability of the Noah's Ark Zoo Farm elephant enclosure was completed prior to RDPE funding being awarded, which we received on 4 March 2014. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please see below a summary of the information you requested.

I can confirm that a full technical appraisal of the project was carried out by the RDPE Delivery Team prior to funding being awarded. This appraisal included consideration of the sustainability of the project outcome and the welfare of the elephants. The project presented acceptable projections until 2016 and the business was projected to become self-funding on the completion of the RDPE project. The applicants made clear that they were aware of the challenges of keeping elephants in captivity and presented sufficient detail on how these challenges such as diet, stimulation and handling systems would be addressed. The space allocated to the enclosure exceeds regulatory standards and the Zoo met all the necessary Defra and Health and Safety requirements, being inspected annually for this purpose.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.



I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

Annex A

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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