

Ian Thompson
Corporate Director for Planning Growth and Sustainability.
Buckinghamshire Council
Walton Street Offices
Walton Street
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HP20 1UA

1st March 2022

Dear Mr Thompson

HS2 and Flood Risk

The Society has been in correspondence over the past 8 months with the Environment Agency with regard to the impact of tunnelling through the aquifer under the Misbourne Valley. Copies of this correspondence can be accessed at <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/hs2-tunnelling-risks-response-questions-and-concerns/>

As you will see in their last letter, they have us asked us to deal with Buckinghamshire Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The area of concern that we have relates to where the tunnels cross under the River Missenden at Little Missenden. Over a period of time a significant amount of ground investigations (GI) has been carried out. This has identified that there are large amounts of water flowing through faulting and joint systems within the aquifer at what appears to be the same depth as that at which the tunnels will cross the valley (18m below ground level). The water table is already high in Little Missenden, generally being approximately 1m below ground level. HS2 have identified a risk that the tunnels may block the fast flowing in the aquifer which would give rise to either the water diverting away or more probably rising to get over the tunnel (see Para 6.3 of the GW Assessment for Construction Tasks - Tunnel & Cross Passages 1MC05-ALJ-EV-NOT-CS02_CL04-400048_C04). They dismissed this as a risk as there is no evidence of springs in the Misbourne Valley. Unfortunately, this is untrue. Local landowners indicate that there are a small number of springs in the valley. Also prior to the building of the main drainage sewer down the valley, there were over 20 springs in Little Missenden.

Our concern is that unnecessary risks of flooding are being taken with the current depth at which the tunnels pass under the River Misbourne. This could be mitigated by lowering the tunnel by at least 10m as this would allow the fast-flowing water to follow its existing paths. This would also mitigate the risk of substantially reducing the water supply to Amersham PWS.

We look forward to hearing about your assessment of these risks.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon Kearey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Simon Kearey

Chairman

cc Tom Beeston

John Gladwin