

15th June 2020

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Re: FOI Request Response IE_FOI_347

Dear [REDACTED],

I refer to your request dated 04th February 2020 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which was received on that date for records held by Iarnród Éireann your request sought:

All relevant documentation relating to:

- any correspondence received or sent by Irish Rail relating to the removal of hedge rows along the Waterford to Limerick Junction rail line. This part of the request to cover the period 1 July 2019 to date of receipt of the request.
- copies of any briefings, memos, reports, submissions, or other such review or overview documents prepared for management or the board of Irish Rail with regard to removal of hedge rows as above and during same time period.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically, ideally in its original electronic format.

I, [REDACTED], have now made a final decision to grant your request on 15th June 2018.

You have sought access to the records as listed above and I consider this an appropriate form of access in this case. Accordingly, a copy of the records is now attached including a copy of the schedule to these records.

Rights of appeal

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you can make an appeal in relation to this matter, you can do so by writing to the FOI Unit, Corporate Communications, Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, Connolly Station, Amiens St, Dublin 1 or by e-mail to foi@irishrail.ie. You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays, however, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

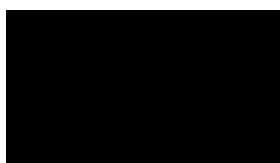
Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Officer on 01, 7034293.

Yours sincerely,

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Decision Maker

P.P

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Freedom of Information Office

Freedom of Information Request:
Schedule of Records for **IE_FOI_347** : Summary for Decision Making

Record No.	Date of Record	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Section of Act if applicable	Record Edited/Identify Deletions
1	27.01.2020	Fwd: Irish Rail hedgerow removal Co Tipperary _Redacted	2	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
2	22.01.202	Meeting Proposal re hedgerow removal _Redacted	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
3	04.02.2020	RE: External_RE: Removal of Hedgerows _Redacted	2	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
4	21.01.2020	RE: Hedgerow removal between Limerick Junction and Waterford _Redacted	2	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
5	11.12.2019	RE: Irish Rail Response _Redacted	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
6	04.02.2020	RE: Removal of Hedgerows _Redacted	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others

7	28.01.2020	Save our Hedgerows Correspondence 28.01.2020	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
8	05.02.2020	Save our Hedgerows Correspondence 05.02.2020	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others
9	04.02.2020	Tipperary Council Correspondence 04.02.2020 _Redacted	1	Part Grant	Section 37 - Personal Information	Personal Information relating to others

Signe

Freedom of Information / Data Protection Office

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Irish Rail hedgerow removal Co Tipperary
Date: Monday 27 January 2020 19:06:46

For your information [REDACTED],
A

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Jan 27, 2020 at 6:40 PM
Subject: Re: Irish Rail hedgerow removal Co Tipperary
To: [REDACTED]

On Mon, Jan 27, 2020 at 6:33 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

You may remember covering a story in Fethard last year when the Council removed our lime trees... some good news in that they replanted, but of course young trees can't ever replace mature ones as you know.

Anyway we have a new problem locally. This time it's Irish Rail who have contractors currently on site along the Limerick Junction to Waterford line near Cahir, grubbing up long sections of ancient 150 year old native hedgerows and replacing with concrete and wire fencing. We reckon at least a kilometre has been removed already. The work is ongoing today..

I'm secretary of a newly formed 'Save our Hedgerows' group in response to this destruction. We've been calling for a moratorium on the work pending a meeting with Irish Rail officials and the Irish Rail ecologist [REDACTED].

We've been exchanging emails since 15 January with [REDACTED], Corporate Communications manager for IR with a view to achieving the moratorium and the meeting but we are being stalled and the date keeps being pushed out while the works go on.

What is particularly striking here is that Irish Rail is a prominent signatory to the All Ireland Pollinator Plan which has a Transport Corridor section. In this, the principles of minimum intervention to hedgerows are laid out. https://pollinators.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Transport-Corridors_actions-to-help-pollinators-2019-WEB.pdf

I have a short email correspondence with [REDACTED] that I can share if you are interested in the story. Essentially he's claiming that IR are following legislation in the matter. He refers to the need to keep cattle off the line, though much of the land concerned is arable. Meanwhile an IR engineer told us that the work was to allow visibility near signals but that doesn't accord with the facts either. **The truth would appear to be that it's easier for the contractor to clear the old hedge completely to facilitate new fencing. We believe that this flies in the face of the Pollinator Plan recommendations.**

I'm attaching a summary and a few photos. The link refers to a photo of a protest meeting by our group just before Christmas at Cahir Station.

http://cahirnewsonline.com/cnwp/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/80216718_1055835278103491_2780263524771823616_n-1024x576.jpg

Any publicity you can give us would be great. Locals here are very upset and Irish Rail are effectively fobbing us off.

With kind regards,



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Meeting proposal re hedgerow removal
Date: Wednesday 22 January 2020 08:36:38

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email yesterday in response to the concerns of 'Save our Hedgerows.'

Whilst noting your comments about the rationale for hedgerow removal on the Limerick Junction to Waterford line, we remain very concerned about aspects of these works which would appear to fall outside both the legislative requirements you mentioned as well as the recommendations of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan .

We greatly welcome your offer to meet with us, and in that regard it's clear that an onsite meeting will be the best way to proceed.

Given the urgency of the situation with work ongoing, we would welcome a meeting next week and would also respectfully suggest that it might be very helpful if a representative of the National Biodiversity Centre in Waterford be invited to attend also.

A section of the railway line at Lisnamuck near Cahir would be illustrative of our concerns and is quite accessible.

Both myself and our group's Chair [REDACTED] can make ourselves available any day next week from 3.15pm onwards.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Secretary 'Save our Hedgerows'

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [External] RE: Removal of Hedgerows
Date: Tuesday 4 February 2020 10:37:45

Thanks for that [REDACTED] I was not informed of that.
Thank you for your prompt reply and your input to date.
I was not informed of that meeting.
regards [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 4 February 2020 at 10:12:55 GMT
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] RE: Removal of Hedgerows

Dear [REDACTED],

I am sorry that you have been misinformed on this. A meeting has been arranged with our Infrastructure Manager and Environment Officer for Weds 12th February with the Save our Hedgerows Group. Notwithstanding this, the group has decided to proceed with the protest, as is their prerogative. We will outline for them the plans for replanting which will occur, with native species.

Regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 February 2020 10:05
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Removal of Hedgerows

Hi [REDACTED]

I am very disappointed that following our meeting in Tipperary last Monday week there has been no contact regards to a meeting with your relevant engineers. In the meantime, the hedgerows are been removed in totality with no replacement planting.

I have been informed of a protest at Limerick Junction this Wednesday at 3.30 and maybe an opportunity to meet the group before or after the protest.

I must stress that the group are not against the maintenance of the hedgerows and welcome the maintenance but it's into the ground mulching that's the issue and the lack of replanting.

This is against all the principles of the national pollinator plan.

I look forward to your progress report on this matter as it is of great concern.

Regards [REDACTED]

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council
www.tipperarycoco.ie

[Tipperary County Council Disclaimer](#)

Iarnrod Éireann Irish Rail, cuideachta ghníomhaíochta ainmnithe, faoi theorainn scaireanna, claraithe in Eirinn ag Stáisiún Uí Chonghaile, Baile Átha Cliath 1, Úr. 119571 Úr. CBL: IE 4812851 O
Iarnrod Éireann Irish Rail, a designated activity company, limited by shares, registered in Ireland at Connolly Station, Dublin 1, No. 119571 VAT No. IE 4812851 O

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann

Tipperary County Council

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Hedgerow removal between Limerick Junction and Waterford
Date: Tuesday 21 January 2020 08:08:49

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email, and I'm sorry for the delay in replying.

Sections of life expired fencing have been replaced over the past 2 months along the Limerick to Waterford Line. Under existing legislation IE are obliged to fence along the railway line in order to prevent trespass and animal incursion. This new fencing was installed in compliance with our current fencing specification, and in some locations necessitated the removal of hedgerows.

In consultation with our Environment Officer, it is intended to replant these new fencing sections with native hedging over the coming planting seasons.

I'd be happy to arrange a meeting to discuss further, to address the concerns you have.

Let me know when would suit best over the coming weeks, and I'll check availability here.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Corporate Communications Manager,
Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail*

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 15 January 2020 10:36

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Hedgerow removal between Limerick Junction and Waterford

'Save our Hedgerows'

c/o

Sladagh

Fethard

Co Tipperary

15th January 2020

[REDACTED]

Corporate Communications Manager
Irish Rail

Dear [REDACTED]

On behalf of the the 'Save our Hedgerows' group, I am writing to you to request an immediate moratorium on current hedgerow removal works along the Limerick Junction to Waterford railway line.

This request is based upon our sincere belief that these works are in direct breach of the obligations and recommendations of the Transport Corridor section of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan to which Irish Rail is a prominent signatory.

https://pollinators.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Transport-Corridors_actions-to-help-pollinators-2019-WEB.pdf

This is an urgent matter given that this hedgerow removal work is currently in progress. We would therefore be grateful for a prompt response to this letter.

We would be happy to meet with relevant representatives from Irish Rail to discuss our concerns in more detail in the very near future.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Secretary, Save our Hedgerows.

mobile: [REDACTED]

cc [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Irish Rail Response
Date: Wednesday 11 December 2019 15:27:50

Hi [REDACTED]

For a 500 metre section on both sides of the line adjacent to Nicholstown Crossing, we are undertaking vegetation removal and fencing installation.

These works are taking place in line with our vegetation management and environmental protocols, and are taking place well outside the nesting season. We sought and obtained the permission of all adjacent landowners prior to undertaking the works.

The works are for safety and service reliability reasons. The views at the crossing will be improved and the safety of fencing transformed as existing fencing was in very poor condition.

We have also experienced extensive low rail adhesion in this area during leaf fall season, which will be addressed. We plan to follow up the fencing works with planting of native and non-shedding hedgerows as part of our programme to maintain and manage biodiversity along the rail line.

Regards,
[REDACTED]

On 11 Dec 2019, at 13:30, [REDACTED] wrote:

[REDACTED],

Tomorrow morning we will have [REDACTED] on Tipp Today about the removal of hedgerows along the line between Cahir - Clonmel.

They will have "Save Our Hedgerows" protest demonstration beside Nicholastown Railway Crossing at 4p.m. this evening, would it be possible to get a statement on the removal of the Hedgerows we can read out in the morning.

Best Wishes,
[REDACTED]

The information transmitted is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and / or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from any computer

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Removal of Hedgerows
Date: Tuesday 4 February 2020 10:09:25

Dear [REDACTED],

I am sorry that you have been misinformed on this. A meeting has been arranged with our Infrastructure Manager and Environment Officer for Weds 12th February with the Save our Hedgerows Group. Notwithstanding this, the group has decided to proceed with the protest, as is their prerogative. We will outline for them the plans for replanting which will occur, with native species.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 February 2020 10:05
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Removal of Hedgerows

Hi [REDACTED]

I am very disappointed that following our meeting in Tipperary last Monday week there has been no contact regards to a meeting with your relevant engineers. In the meantime, the hedgerows are been removed in totality with no replacement planting.

I have been informed of a protest at Limerick Junction this Wednesday at 3.30 and maybe an opportunity to meet the group before or after the protest.

I must stress that the group are not against the maintenance of the hedgerows and welcome the maintenance but it's into the ground mulching that's the issue and the lack of replanting.

This is against all the principles of the national pollinator plan.

I look forward to your progress report on this matter as it is of great concern.

Regards [REDACTED]

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council
www.tipperarycoco.ie

[Tipperary County Council Disclaimer](#)

Sladagh

Fethard

Co Tipperary

[REDACTED]

Infrastructure Manager

Limerick Junction Station

Monatogher

Co Tipperary

28th January 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you on behalf of the 'Save our Hedgerows' environmental group in relation to ongoing hedgerow removal works along the Limerick Junction to Waterford line.

We believe that the work being carried out is in breach of the recommendations and guidelines set out in the Transport Corridor section of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan to which Iarnrod Eireann is a prominent signatory. In this regard we refer to the requirement outlined in the document to

'ensure that the impact on the habitat is minimal' (P.9, Action 2)

Having unsuccessfully sought a meeting with Iarnrod Eireann and an interim moratorium on the work, we have decided to call for a public demonstration and deputation next Wednesday at Limerick Junction at 3.30pm.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Secretary 'Save our Hedgerows'

cc [REDACTED], Chief Executive Iarnrod Eireann, HQ, Connolly Station, Dublin1

Sladagh
Fethard
Co Tipperary



Infrastructure Manager
Limerick Junction Station
Monatogher
Co Tipperary
5th February 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

On behalf of 'Save our Hedgerows', I am repeating our call for a moratorium on further hedgerow removal by contractors working on behalf of Irish Rail pending a review of the methodology being used in this operation. Such a review should be carried out by a suitably qualified expert who is independent of Irish Rail.

We regret that you are unable to meet with us today at Limerick Junction. We confirm our availability to meet with you on February 12th at 2pm.

You have already received our proposed agenda via email on January 31st and trust that this is acceptable.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Secretary, 'Save our Hedgerows'





Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Comhairle Contae
Thiobraid Árann,
Oifigí Cathartha,
Cluain Meala,
Co. Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council,
Civic Offices, Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary

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Oifigí Cathartha,
An tAonach,
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Civic Offices, Nenagh,
Co. Tipperary

t 0761 06 5000
e customerservice
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tipperarycoco.ie

[REDACTED]
Infrastructure Manager,
Irish Rail,
Limerick Junction,
Tipperary.

4th February, 2020

A Chara,

I am making representations on behalf of a Tipperary Organisation "Save our Hedgerow". They have brought to my attention the current situation regarding the grubbing of kilometres of mature hedgerow in Clonmel.

I have no issue with the need to replace fencing along the railway line. However, I have concerns about how the work is being carried out and the implications that this will have to the loss of major habitats within the area and the knock on effect that it will have locally.

I am available to meet on site with you to discuss the matter further. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
**Cathaoirleach,
Tipperary County Council**