[redacted]

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30th September 2026

Dear [redacted]

Our Ref: EIR2026/00791 (IDA_311048)

Thank you for your request made under the Environmental Information Regulations and the Freedom of Information Act. Your request is for:

> *1. For each financial year from 2021–22 to 2025–26 inclusive: the number of GeoReports sold by BGS, broken down by product code (including but not limited to GRC_C003, GRC_C105, GRC_C106, GRC_C107 and GRC_C108) and, where held, by customer region or country.*
>
> *2. For each calendar year from 2021 to 2025 inclusive: the number of notifications of water well or borehole construction received by BGS pursuant to the Water Resources Act 1991, broken down by county or, if not held at that level, by region.*

The first part of your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the second request, which is for environmental information, has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

1. For each financial year from 2021–22 to 2025–26 inclusive: the number of GeoReports sold by BGS, broken down by product code (including but not limited to GRC_C003, GRC_C105, GRC_C106, GRC_C107 and GRC_C108) and, where held, by customer region or country.

With regard to your first request, we believe the information you have requested falls under the scope of Section 43(2) of the FOIA. This exemption is used where disclosure would likely result in a person's (an individual, a company the public authority itself or any other legal entities) commercial interests being prejudiced.

This is a qualified exemption, and a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs public interest in disclosure.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

- There is a general public interest in the disclosure of this information to ensure transparency and openness of a public organisation.
- There is also a public interest in transparency in order to ensure the accountability of public organisations and how they spend public funding.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- GeoReports is a commercial project which generates income for BGS. BGS is only partially funded by public money, having to generate more than half of its operating costs. This includes income earned via commissioned reports. Releasing information that would give competitors help to identify the most commercially successful products, markets and regions and inform their own pricing, product development and market strategy would undermine BGS's business in this market.
- It is in the public interest that BGS is able to work for the public good, to offer impartial expert advice to government, other decision-makers, public authorities and commercial companies. Income from bespoke reports and other charged services supports BGS's ability to do this. We believe therefore that it is not in the public interest to impede the ability of BGS to earn an income.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, we reached the decision that the need for commercial confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosure; therefore the information is exempt from disclosure.

BGS has considered whether there is any information that it could provide without causing economic harm to its own business, and therefore we have provided aggregated data on the number of reports in total sold per year:

	Total number of reports sold
2021-22	1783
2022-23	2876
2023-24	2528
2024-25	2427
2025-26	2025

2. For each calendar year from 2021 to 2025 inclusive: the number of notifications of water well or borehole construction received by BGS pursuant to the Water Resources Act 1991, broken down by county or, if not held at that level, by region.

Please find this information in the accompanying spreadsheet with the county or region mostly represented by the letters of the postcode area which may be used to establish the county for each. The location field is a free text field and therefore a full address including county is not always provided. Where a postcode was not provided we have manually added the county if available. For some of the sites, only a property name was given and in these cases the county/region field is blank.

If you have any queries regarding our response or you are unhappy with the outcome of your request and wish to seek an internal review of the decision, please contact:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: https://ico.org.uk/
If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see UKRI's complaints policy: https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/

Yours sincerely

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