

HS2 Ltd response to Residents' Commissioner's report 13

In this letter, High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd CEO, Mark Thurston, responds to the twelfth Residents' Commissioner's report published in March 2020.

The Residents' Commissioner's report explains what activity has taken place since the previous report and looks in particular at HS2 property schemes and complaints process.

The Residents' Commissioner acts as an impartial monitor, ensuring that HS2 Ltd is open and transparent in its communications with residents affected by HS2.

Rough sleeping funding: grant determination letter

Published 1 November 2018

Last updated 2 April 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 2 April 2022

Added the 'Section 31 grant determination 2022 to 2023: rough sleeping funding' letter.

2. 19 April 2021

Added 'Section 31 grant determination 2021 to 2022: rough sleeping funding'.

3. 6 July 2020

Added 'Section 31 grant determination 2020 to 2021: rough sleeping funding'.

4. 22 March 2019

Added the grant determination letter for 2019 to 2020.

5. 1 November 2018

First published.

Exports bring home the bacon for UK family farm

With pubs and restaurants now reopening, Essex-based Wicks Manor is returning to supplying its premium pork products to eateries across the country.

However, the family business has certainly not been quiet since the lockdown began, having experienced a surge in demand for its premium bacon and sausages in the Middle East and Asia.

During the Coronavirus lockdown, the family farm faced a sharp drop in sales to pubs and restaurants, which typically account for 45% of its revenue.

Eager to find alternative routes to market, Wicks Manor sought support from the Department for International Trade (DIT), to help the business ramp up its exports to supermarkets in Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Since April exports have increased by 100% with Wicks Manor supplying products to customers worldwide.

Owner Fergus Howie says international trade has provided a lifeline during the Coronavirus pandemic:

Our exports would usually account for 20% of sales, however since April we have been able increase them to 40%.

The importance of diversifying our sales across different markets has been laid bare during this difficult time. We are now focused on maintaining export growth while preparing to return to supplying pubs and restaurants.

We're grateful to the Department for International Trade for the support they have provided in securing new routes to market, and I would certainly encourage other UK food producers to do the same.

Wicks Manor's pigs are either born and bred on the farm or sourced from local East Anglian rearers. They are fed grains grown on site, and the pork is then prepared and packaged at the family butchery, allowing the company to maintain complete control over the production of its meats from start to finish.

The business started exporting in 2010, when it secured a contract with a supermarket in Dubai. Since then it has expanded to 10 new markets across Asia, Middle East and Europe, where its products are especially popular with British expats missing a taste of home.

Thanks to the recent export growth, the family business has been able to maintain nearly a full staff count of 45 employees and avoid food going to waste during the pandemic.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

Even in these challenging times, businesses like Wicks Manor are showing that there is clear appetite for British produce around the world.

Exporting will play a vital role in the UK's economic recovery from the Coronavirus, and my department is committed to delivering greater export opportunities for UK businesses through new free trade agreements.

Now, more than ever, we need UK businesses to follow in the footsteps of exporters like Wicks Manor and showcase their produce on the world stage”.

Last month the UK Government [announced](#) that it intends to pursue accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) as a key part of its trade negotiations programme.

In 2019, exports of bacon, ham, sausages and related products were worth £107.4 million, an increase of 9.3% compared to 2018.

UK announces first sanctions under new global human rights regime

Forty-nine individuals and organisations involved in some of the most notorious human rights violations and abuses in recent years have been designated for sanctions under a [powerful new regime](#) established today by the UK, the Foreign Secretary has announced.

The individuals and organisations are the first wave of [designations under the new regime](#), with further sanctions expected in the coming months.

From today, the ground-breaking global regime means the UK has new powers to stop those involved in serious human rights abuses and violations from entering the country, channelling money through UK banks, or profiting from our economy.

The measures will target individuals and organisations, rather than nations.

It is the first time that the UK has sanctioned people or entities for human

rights violations and abuses under a UK-only regime, and will allow the UK to work independently with allies such as the US, Canada, Australia and the European Union.

The UK's first wave of sanctions under this new regime targeted:

- 25 Russian nationals involved in the mistreatment and death of auditor Sergei Magnitsky, who uncovered widespread Russian corruption by a group of Russian tax and police officials
- 20 Saudi nationals involved in the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi
- 2 high-ranking Myanmar military generals involved in the systematic and brutal violence against the Rohingya people and other ethnic minorities
- 2 organisations involved in the forced labour, torture and murder that takes place in North Korea's gulags

Underlining the UK's position as a global force for good, this new regime showcases our commitment to the rules-based international system and to standing up for victims of human rights violations and abuses around the world.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, said:

Today we're designating 49 people and organisations for responsibility in some of the worst human rights abuses in recent memory.

This is a demonstration of Global Britain's commitment to acting as a force for good in the world.

Following his [announcement in Parliament](#), the Foreign Secretary will meet with Sergei Magnitsky's widow and son Natalia and Nikita, along with his friend and colleague Bill Browder, at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

The regime will allow the UK to target individuals and organisations around the world unlike conventional geographic sanctions regime, which only target a country.

It could also include those who commit unlawful killings perpetrated against journalists and media workers, or violations and abuses motivated on the grounds of religion or belief.

A special unit will consider the use of future sanctions, with teams across the department monitoring human rights issues.

They will ensure targets under the landmark regime will have to meet stringent legal tests before the UK decides to designate, ensuring the sanctions are robust and powerful.

The suite of measures can also apply to those who facilitate, incite, promote, or support these violations/abuses, as well as those who financially profit from human rights violations and abuses.

The UK will continue to utilise a range of tools to tackle serious human rights violations and abuses around the world, including the UN and EU multilateral sanctions regimes.

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UN Human Rights Council 44: Statement for Interactive Dialogue with UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women

The United Kingdom commends the work of the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls on protecting women's human rights in the changing world of work. Addressing this issue is critical as societies respond to, and recover from, COVID-19.

When women have access to opportunities for economic participation, the benefits extend far beyond individual girls and women to societies and economies as a whole. Therefore, we must make women's economic empowerment and women's rights, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, central to the global COVID-19 recovery.

Education is the key to unlocking economic growth and sustainable development. That is why we reaffirm our commitment to 12 years of quality education for every girl everywhere.

We welcome the Working Group's report which identifies barriers to the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work such as the persistent gender pay gap – the UK upholds our commitment to equal pay for equal work. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we must accelerate action to tackle these obstacles.

We would welcome advice from the Working Group on how Member States can best support their work to counter a global roll-back on women's rights.

Thank you.