

Our ref: FOI 26/01

30th January 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information dated 2nd January concerning the bathymetric survey of the Serpentine Lake carried out in 2010 in which you asked:-

"Please provide the full results of the bathymetric survey conducted on the Serpentine lake in Hyde Park in 2010, including any depth maps, reports, or associated documentation."

Applying the exemption in section 39 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we have considered your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), as the information you are seeking relates to the state of water and land and measures affecting those elements.

Information Held

The Royal Parks holds information comprising the bathymetric survey and the associated plans related to it of the Serpentine and the Long Water undertaken in 2010. The purpose of the survey was to improve understanding of the water body to support operational, environmental and asset-management functions.

Information Disclosed

In response to your request, we can confirm the following information:

- A bathymetric survey of the Serpentine was conducted in 2010
- The survey covered the full extent of the Serpentine and the Long Water
- The information has been used to support safe and effective management of the water body.

Information Withheld

Detailed survey outputs - such as scaled bathymetric drawings, precise depth measurements, engineering-level data, and information relating to associated infrastructure - are being withheld. This information is exempt from disclosure under the following provisions of the EIR:

Regulation 12(5)(a) – Public Safety and National Security

Disclosure of detailed bathymetric and infrastructure-related information could increase the risk of harm to public safety. The Serpentine is a man-made impounding reservoir located within a highly frequented public space, and detailed technical data could be misused by hostile actors in a way that presents a real and foreseeable risk.

Some of the withheld information forms part of sensitive records of critical national infrastructure and security. Disclosure could adversely affect the security and integrity of assets for which the authority has ongoing statutory and common-law responsibilities.

Public Interest Test

We recognise that there is a public interest in transparency and in understanding how public bodies manage natural and historic assets. However, we consider that this interest is outweighed by the public interest in maintaining exemptions that protect public safety and critical infrastructure. The Serpentine is situated in a high-profile location, with very high visitor numbers, and given its location and history the Park is an area at risk from hostile actors and there is a real risk that inappropriate disclosure of sensitive technical data relating to this body of water and its profile and integrity could increase risk to people, property and broader public services and operations within the vicinity and also the environment.

We have therefore sought to strike an appropriate balance by providing high-level explanatory information, while withholding detailed technical material.

Advice and Assistance

We would consider any refined request in accordance with EIR.

Right of Review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter, quoting the reference at the top of the page and should be addressed to:

Records Manager
The Royal Parks
The Old Police House
Hyde Park
London
W2 2UH



THE
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Email: records@royalparks.org.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision, quoting the reference at the top of the page. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely,

Records Manager | records@royalparks.org.uk | www.royalparks.org.uk |
The Old Police House | Hyde Park | London | W2 2UH