



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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Ms Susan Meadows
WDTK

Date: **13 January 2020**

Dear Ms Meadows

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - 4736778

Thank you for your request for information which was received on 11 November 2019. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. As you are aware, we extended the deadline of the request on 10 December 2019, in order to consider the public interest tests under sections 35 and 43 of the FOIA.

Your request was:

“(1) Please send me the application documents, together with all other associated documentation, for the town of Southwold's bid for funding made to the Coastal Communities Fund, for which earlier this year an award of £995,000 for the 'Southwold Enterprise Hub' was made. This is to include both the 'Stage 1' and 'Stage 2' applications, the 'Business Plan', the 'Capital Delivery Plan', the 'Capital Cost Plan', etc.

(2) A list detailing all documents (including correspondence) relevant to this application(s) and the award is requested here, also.”

We can confirm that the information requested is held by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and we are able to provide you with the majority of this information.

Some of the information requested is publicly accessible at the Southwold Town website, including the Stage 2 application and Business Plan, at the following link:

<https://southwoldtown.com/station-yard-development/#34-station-yard-developmentp1>

We hold a copy of 'Southwold Town Centre; a Forward Framework', which can be found at the following link:

<https://people-places.net/wp-content/uploads/Southwold-Town-Centre-Strategy-a-Forward-Framework-2.pdf>

We hold a copy of the Southwold Town Council 'Our Strategy for the Future of Southwold' document, which can be found at the following link:

<https://southwoldtown.com/download/22/documents/563/strategy-for-the-future-of-southwold.pdf>

We hold a copy of the Southwold Economic plan, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Business/Coastal-Community-Teams/Southwold-Coastal-Community-Team-Economic-Plan.pdf>

As these documents are accessible by other means, the Department is exempt from disclosing them, under section 21(1) of the FOI Act.

We have provided a number of documents associated with the Coastal Communities Fund project, but some information has been withheld under section 35(1)(a) of the FOI Act as it relates to the formulation and development of government policy; and section 43(2), which relates to the commercial interests of Southwold Town Council.

These exemptions are engaged as this project is part of Coastal Communities Fund, which is a live government policy; and the cost model contains sensitive commercial information and would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Southwold Town Council.

Information falling within these exemptions must still be provided, however, unless it is not in the public interest to do so.

There will always be some general public interest in disclosure to promote transparency and accountability of government Departments. The Department recognises that this public interest allows for the scrutiny of the decision-making process and Government policy. Information and correspondence about the Southwold Town Council's Coastal Communities Fund application is of public interest as it would allow transparency and give specific details about the process.

However, the Department must also consider that government needs a safe space to develop ideas and reach decisions away from external interference and distraction. The information you have requested relates to a live policy and disclosure of the information would erode unacceptably the safe space mentioned above. Ministers must feel able to consider the information and advice before them and be able to reach objective, fully-informed decisions without impediment and free from distraction that such information will be made public.

The Southwold Enterprise Hub CCF Cost Model contains sensitive commercial information about the project and disclosing such level detail would likely lead to an increase in project cost throughout the duration for Southwold Town Council. A summary of the costs has been included in the Stage 2 application as this information is of less commercial sensitivity.

We have decided, on balance, that it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time.

Some information is also exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOI Act as it is personal, about another individual and, as that person could not reasonably expect that his or her personal information would be disclosed, doing so would breach the Data Protection Act.

Here is a list of documents and correspondence held by the Department:

304529-IW-01-00-DR-A-3500-P1_B1 GA Grd Plan & B.Regis Spec
304529-IW-01-XX-DR-A-3520-P1_B1 Elevations, Sheet 1
304529-IW-02-00-DR-A-3502-P1_B2 GA Grd Plan & B.Regis Spec
304529-IW-02-XX-DR-A-3525-P1_B2 Elevations, Sheet 1
304529-IW-XX-XX-DR-A-2201-P1_Existing Site Plan
304529-IW-XX-XX-DR-A-2205-P4_Proposed Site Location Plan
304529-IW-XX-XX-DR-A-2401-P3_Proposed Site Plan
Activity Timetable
Adnams Letter of Support
Annex A - Starting Your Grant
Annex B - Communications Agreement
Building Regulations Initial Notice
Capital Cost Plan Round 5
Cumbria Press Release
Decision Amendments and Compliance Notice
Devon Working Hubs
Dorset Press Release
Drainage Strategy
Durrants Letter of Support
Email to East Suffolk Council
Email to Thérèse Coffey MP
Emails with East Suffolk Council
Gloucestershire Press Release
Heritage Impact Assessment
High Level Forecast
Kent Press Release
Land Ownership
Letter of support from Southwold Coastal Community Team
Letter to Thérèse Coffey MP
MHCLG Emails
Neighbourhood Plan
Phase I and II GeoEnvironmental Assessment
Project Budget Staff Posts
Protected Species Assessment

Southwold CCT Economic Plan
Southwold CCT Terms of Reference
Southwold Enterprise Hub Business Plan
Southwold Enterprise Hub Cost Model
Southwold Enterprise Hub Logic Model
Southwold Enterprise Hub Risk Register
Southwold Stage 1 Application
Southwold Town Council Annual Governance Statement
Southwold Town Council Application
Southwold Town Council Funding Letter
Southwold Town Council Strategy
Southwold Town Entrance Study
SRS Letter of Support
Suffolk Press Release
Town Centre Strategy Forward Framework
Transport Statement
WDC Letter of Support

Complaints procedure

If you are unhappy with this response, we will review it and report back to you. (This is called an internal review.) If you want us to do this, let us know by return email within two months of receiving this response. You can also ask by letter addressed to:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Knowledge and Information Access Team
4th Floor SE, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this internal review, you can ask the independent Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at email address casewoxx@xxx.xxx.xx or use their online form at ico.org.uk/concerns or call them on 0303 123 1113.

Yours sincerely

MHCLG FOI Team