



HM Treasury

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Christopher Roper

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9 February 2018

Dear Mr Roper

Ref: FOI2018/00699

## Freedom of Information Act 2000: Geospatial Commission

Thank you for your Freedom of Information enquiry of 12 January 2018.

You asked for the following information:

*"In presenting his budget last November the Chancellor announced a new "GeoSpatial Commission, supported by £40 million of new funding in each of the next two years", saying it would drive the move to use spatial data more productively - "unlocking up to £11 billion of extra value for the economy every year".*

*I would like to understand the analysis that supported the prediction of "up to £11 billion of extra value". Can this analysis, or its quantitative basis be made available? Was the analysis produced internally, by HM Treasury or the Office of National Statistics, or by an external body?"*

We can confirm that HM Treasury does hold information within the scope of your request. However, the exemption at section 22(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOI Act) – information intended for future publication – is engaged in relation to your request. Section 22 is a qualified exemption, requiring us to consider the public interest balance in disclosure.

There is a public interest in transparency and openness. However, public authorities must, within reason, have space to be able to determine their own publication timetables and deal with the necessary preparation, administration and context of publication. The FOI Act recognises that the coincidence of individual requests for information should not determine the publication timetables of public authorities, for example by forcing them into premature publication. This protection is afforded whether it is the public authority itself, which is the case here, or another person that intends to publish.

Given these considerations, we judge that the balance of interest lies in not disclosing the information held at this time. The Geospatial Commission is in the process of being established, including decisions about its strategic priorities. The Government then intends to publish the requested information later this year. The analysis was produced by an external body for UK Government Investments.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us. Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

*Yours sincerely*

Information Rights Unit

## **Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

If you are not happy with this reply, you may request a review by writing to HM Treasury, Information Rights Unit, 3/Red, 1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ or by emailing us at the address below. Any review request must be made within 2 months of the date of this letter.

Email: [foirequests@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk)

It would assist our review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

If you are not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner will not make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by HM Treasury.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.