



# Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

BEIS Space Directorate  
Department for Business, Energy &  
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Our ref: FOI2021/17478

7 September 2021

Dear Mel Fisher,

Thank you for your email of 8 July where you refined your initial request (our ref: FOI2021/15173) to -

*“please focus on correspondence and meetings involving BEIS senior civil servants that had responsibility for space at the time the space landscape review was formally commissioned.”*

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

The Department can confirm that it holds some information falling within the scope of your request. However, the Department considers the information to be exempt under the provisions of section 35(1)(a) of the Act. Section 35(1)(a) deals with the formulation of government policy. Section 35 is a qualified exemption and the Department has therefore considered the balance of the public interest in reaching its judgement as follows:

## **Public Interest in Disclosure:**

- The Landscape Review affects the organisational structure and role of an important national institution.
- Disclosure could provide better insight into the policy relating to the Review.

## **Public Interest in Withholding Information:**

- Ministers and officials need to be able to discuss policy options fully and frankly and for the space in which such discussions take place to be protected. If this information were made public, we believe the nature of such frank discussion and debates on key public policy issues would be inhibited, and the Department would be prevented from taking decisions based on the fullest understanding of the issues involved.
- Our records of relevant correspondence is not complete and any information released could be misunderstood.

Having considered the public interest, on balance, we consider that, in this case, the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by the public interest considerations in favour of withholding the information for the reasons stated above. We have therefore withheld the information requested, under Section 35(1) of the Act.

## **Appeals Procedure**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request and should be addressed to the Information Rights & Records Unit. It would be helpful if you can tell us why you are dissatisfied with the response to your request so we may address this during the internal review.

Information Rights & Records Unit  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
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Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

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. Complaints can be made to the Information Commissioner via their website at: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>.

Yours sincerely,

BEIS Space Directorate