

Our Reference: RFI: 6025-12

BY EMAIL ONLY

9 November 2012

Dear Mr Handley

Request for Information

We recently responded to your request for information which was split into three parts. For clarification, your original request is below:

Can you please supply me with following in relation to Lightmoor Village, Telford. under the banner "Joint Venture"

Details/ processes of QA to ensure the quality of the works that were being completed was to an acceptable standard.

If this was carried out by a clerk of works, is this person employed direct or contracted?

Copies of any reports generated as part of the quality inspections.

We were able to answer the first two parts and informed you that we weren't in the position to respond to the last part. At the time we were not able to determine whether we held the information and indeed whether locating it would be reasonable. We are now able to inform you that from our assessment we have estimated it will cost more than the 'appropriate limit' to consider your request.

Section 12 of the Freedom of information Act (the Act) makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for government agencies is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 working hours in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

In accordance with our duty to offer advice and assistance under Section 16 of the Act we provide the following breakdown of how we have calculated this estimate.

Homes and Communities Agency
Maple House, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 7BN

0300 1234 500
homesandcommunities.co.uk

No specific 'quality inspection reports' were produced or filed under a 'works quality inspections' or similar folder. However there may be parts of other reports on the progress of the Lightmoor project which are in the nature of 'quality inspections' and/or include content pertaining to the quality of works and would be within the scope of your request. Therefore, to produce an estimate of the quantum of the job, we ran electronic searches of our filing systems for Lightmoor using the keyword "quality". This produced the following results:-

The FLOC system (record of paper file archive)	-	43 files
SFS (Structural Filing System – electronically archived files)	-	46 files
Working Area (electronic live files)	-	86 files

A total of 175 files could contain information/documents relevant to your request, necessitating review.

FLOC (File List on Computer)System

Review

- The correspondence within the file was roughly 8mm thick.
- The Area Team advised that files in relation to this project can be anywhere up to 5 times this thickness (up to 40 mm).
- It took a total of 20 minutes to quickly read and review each item upon the file.
- It should be noted that assuming a file thickness of 5 times this (see above), this could take up to 100 minutes.

Copy

- It is estimated that to copy each item on the sample file (removal of staples, copying and re-stapling and refilling), a total of at least 30 minutes.
- It should be noted that assuming a file thickness of 5 times this (see above), this could take at least 150 minutes.
- It should also be noted that documents may be in bound or spiral bound format adding further time to the process.

Summary

- It can therefore be concluded that the sample file would take a total time of at least 50 minutes to review and copy items
- It should be noted that for a file 5 times this thickness (see above), this time could increase to 250 minutes

In summary, there are a total of 43 files that, by the search parameters deployed, would need to be requested and reviewed. The following timescales can therefore be assumed on the basis of files between 8mm and 40mm thick (see above);

- Requesting 43 files is likely to take 30 minutes of officer time;
- Review time between 860 minutes/14.33 hours (43 x 20 minutes) and 4,300 minutes/71.66 hours (43 x 100 minutes);
- Copy time between 1,290 minutes/21.5 hours (43 x 30 minutes) and 6,450 minutes/107.5 hours (43 x 150 minutes);
- total time between 2,180 minutes/36.33 hours and 10,750 minutes/179.67 hours;
- 36.33 hours + 179.67 hours = 216 hours/2 = 108 hours average.

Working Area & SFS Systems

Review

A similar exercise was performed as on the FLOC system above. However, because the search identifies electronic reports and documents rather than larger, more generic paper files, the exercise to review and identify information is generally quicker, typically in the range of 10 to 40 minutes per file/document.

Print and collate

Assuming at least 50% of the items reviewed require printing ($132/2 = 66$), it is estimated that to send these to print, then visit the printer and programme it to release the print job batch, return from the printer and collate, staple etc would be at least 1 hour..

Summary

In summary, between the two systems there are a total of (46 + 86) 132 files that, by the search parameters deployed, would need to be reviewed and possibly printed. The following timescale range can therefore be assumed;

- Accessing SFS system and relevant folders is likely to take 15 minutes of officer time; accessing the Working Area system is likely to take 5 minutes.
- Review time between 1320 minutes/22 hours (132 x 10 minutes) and 5,280 minutes/88 hours (132 x 40 minutes);
- Print and collate time (assuming 50% print/collate rate) 1 hour;
- total time between 1,400 minutes/23.33 hours and 5,360 minutes/89.33 hours
- 23.33 hours + 89.33 hours = 112.66 hours/2 = 56.33 hours average.

Aggregate Cost Estimate

The Agency is permitted to charge officers time at £25 per hour which, based on the foregoing calculations, makes the total cost of complying with your request $108 + 56.33 = 164.33$ hours x £25 = **£4,108.25**

If you narrow the scope of your request, we may be able to provide you with the information you are interested in and free of charge as it would cost less than the appropriate limit to do so.

The HCA do not have folders or files related to 'QA'/quality inspections' or the like and indeed it may be that we do not hold reports retaining that sort of information (to the extent

that it exists) as that level of detail would be for Bourneville Village Trust as our project managers.

However to assist you in refocusing your request to a particular area of the Lightmoor Development we have attached four documents to this letter. Any reformulated request that the Agency receives will be treated as a fresh Freedom of Information Request.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding this response or any further queries. If you are unhappy with the way Homes and Communities Agency has handled your request you may ask for an internal review. You should contact

Head of Legal Services
Homes and Communities Agency
Maple House
149 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 7BN

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. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at

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

Yours sincerely

Naomi McMaster
Information Access Officer
Homes and Communities Agency