



11 October 2016

Ref. FOI2016/08796

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 14 September 2016 requesting the following information:

"I would be grateful if you could please advise me when the Ministry of Defence first notified Colchester Borough Council of its intention to sell the Middlewick Firing Ranges, Colchester, for residential development. In addition to the date, in what form and by what means was the information notified to the Council?
Who from the MOD notified the Council?
To whom at the Council was the notification sent?"

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and I can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found enclosed at annex A & B.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd Floor, Zone N, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

DIO Secretariat

From: DIO Sec-Parli (MULTIUSER)
Sent: 06 September 2016 14:42
To:
Subject: Ministerial Announcement- _Middlewick
Attachments: 20160906-Letter to _Middlewick_BC.doc
Importance: High

Please find attached a letter from the Ministry of Defence concerning the future of Defence land/sites in your council area. This follows a Written Ministerial Statement made by the Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans on 06 September 2016. I would be grateful if you would share this with your media office.

Regards

Defence Infrastructure Organisation Secretariat

MOD Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

0207 218 4695

E-mail:
www.gov.uk/DIO

06 September 2016

Chief Executive
Colchester Borough Council

Dear

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) will today announce further findings of the Department's Estate Optimisation Strategy. This Strategy aims to provide a smaller, more sustainable, fit for purpose estate for the men and women of our Armed Forces and the capabilities they provide through releasing land surplus to Defence requirements. In addition this work also seeks to contribute toward the Government's commitment to release public sector land for house building in this parliament in order to meet the ever growing housing demand.

The announcement outlines the disposal of 13 sites; the release of which is expected to contribute over £225 million in land receipts which will be reinvested in the Defence budget; it will also enable the provision of more than 17,000 homes in support of the Government's housing target. After careful consideration and planning the Department has concluded that there is no longer a continuing defence requirement for Middlewick Ranges. It is intended that the site will close before the end of this Parliament in 2020.

MOD officials will now begin the process of detailed planning and necessary engagement with the stakeholders concerned. I would appreciate your support as we go through this process. You will note that the announcement suggests that up to 2,000 homes may be built on the site. This is a desk level assessment and MOD officials will work with you in order to confirm this figure.

Yours Sincerely,

Director of Asset, Strategy & Portfolio

MOD Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

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