



Government Legal Department

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Our reference: BVFOI/139/16 re Douglas Platt

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

You asked for the following information from the Government Legal Department ("the Department"):

Please can you tell me the value of the above estate and give me details of any administrator responsible for its distribution.

Your request will be dealt with by the Bona Vacantia Division ("the Division") under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Division holds some of the information that you have requested.

The Division holds information concerning the exact value of the estate. I am withholding this information as it is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a) of the Act. Section 31(1)(a) provides that information is exempt from disclosure if that disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. We believe that disclosure of the requested information to any member of the public would, or would be likely to, help enable the commission of fraud or other criminal activity. In applying the exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that the Division's activities are conducted in an open, transparent and honest way. However, disclosure of the exempt information could help enable the commission of fraud which would be likely to result in a loss to the public purse. There is a strong public interest in protecting the public purse and it is therefore considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption in section 31(1)(a) in this case outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Division also holds information concerning the approximate value of the estate. This information is detailed in the advertisement issued in the Daily Mail on 23 March 1988. Copies of this paper can be obtained from Readers' Editor, Daily Mail, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry street, London W8 5TT or from their website <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/sitemaparchive/index.html>. The value of the estate was also issued in the Derbyshire Times (previously known as Chesterfield Advertiser) on 24 March 1988. Copies of this paper can be obtained from Spire Walk, off Derby road, Chesterfield, England, Derbyshire, S40 2WG or from their website <http://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/grassroots/guide-to-archive-acquisitions-1-463668>. The information is reasonably accessible to you by other means and is therefore exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the Act. This exemption confers absolute exemption from the requirement to provide information pursuant to section 1(1) (b) of the Act.

The estate remains unclaimed and was administered by the Treasury Solicitor.

