



**Ministry
of Defence**

Secretariat
Defence Infrastructure Organisation
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10 March 2017

Ref. FOI2017/02134

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 10 February 2017 requesting the following information:

'I am writing to you to request some information about Ministry of Defence (MOD) activities, using the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act.

I am requesting information concerning the proposed closure of Fulwood Barracks in Preston Lancashire and the re-location of army units and personnel based there, as announced in the Better Defence Estate's document published by the MOD on 7th November 2016.

In particular, I would like to receive copies of the following documents:

- 1. Correspondence between the Commander of HQ North West based at Fulwood Barracks and the Defence Infra-structure Organisation, concerning the closure of Fulwood Barracks, prior to the publication of the Better Defence Estate's document on 7th November 2016.*
- 2. Correspondence between the Defence Infra-structure Organisation and the Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Michael Fallon, concerning the closure of Fulwood Barracks, prior to the publication of the Better Defence Estate's document on 7th November 2016.'*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and I can confirm that no information in scope of part one your request is held.

In relation to part two of your request I can confirm that 'A Better Defence Estate Strategy' document was submitted to the Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Michael Fallon ahead of its publication. This information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemption provided for at Section 21 (information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means) of the act and has been withheld. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) please see the link available for 'A Better Defence Estate Strategy': <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CCB90AB8-13B1-4AEB-8F71-6B80DFBCC305/ABetterDefenceEstateStrategy>

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