



Homes
England

Date: 17 July 2020
Our Ref: RFI3006
Tel: 0300 1234 500
Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

Making homes happen

██████████
By Email Only

Windsor House
Homes England – 6th Floor
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Dear ██████████

RE: Request for Information – RFI3006

Thank you for your request for information which we have processed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

For clarification, you requested the following information:

On 7th April 2020 Homes England announced an update on the Housing Infrastructure Fund including a grant of '£140 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the 'South Lancaster Growth Catalyst' proposal which will unlock up to 9,185 homes.'

Please state: -

- 1. How the figure of 9185 homes has been calculated*
- 2. The location or locations of the 9,185 homes defined by their distribution within their various specific six-character postcodes*
- 3. Within what timescale is it planned to spend the £140M*
- 4. Please provide a breakdown of how the £140M is to be allocated - as between road building, public transport schemes and provision for cyclists and pedestrians*
- 5. Over what timescale are the 9185 houses expected to be built?*

Response

We can confirm that we do hold some information that falls within scope of your request. We will address each of your questions in turn for ease.

1) *How the figure of 9185 homes has been calculated*

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold the information detailed in your request. In order to conclude that the information is not held, we have searched with our HIF team who would have the requested information if held.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty under section 1(1) is only to provide the recorded information held.

OFFICIAL



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The full text of section 1 in the legislation can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/1>

Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with Section 16 of the FOIA. To comply with this duty we are able to confirm that the proposed number of homes is calculated by the local authority before submission to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The local authority submits a business case with a figure of homes that is proposed to be developed should the local authority receive the funding for the surrounding infrastructure development.

As part of the HIF process the business case is assessed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Homes England. The determination of the funding amount considers the proposed infrastructure development required to unlock the number of homes proposed in the bid.

We would advise that Lancashire County Council may be likely to hold the information in this part of your request.

2) *The location or locations of the 9,185 homes defined by their distribution within their various specific six-character postcodes*

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold the information detailed in your request. In order to conclude that the information is not held, we have searched with our HIF team who would have the requested information if held.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty under section 1(1) is only to provide the recorded information held.

The full text of section 1 in the legislation can be found here:

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Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with Section 16 of the FOIA. To comply with this duty we can advise that postcodes are not allocated until a property is built. The HIF bid submission only contains outline plans that do not detail the specific location of homes, as the HIF programme function is to unlock the infrastructure surrounding the development of homes.

The location of homes will not be determined until the planning application stage. The planning applications will be undertaken by Lancashire County Council, and therefore they may hold information relating to this part of your request.



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3) *Within what timescale is it planned to spend the £140M*

We can confirm that the conditions of the HIF funding require the £140 million to be spent by 2023/2024.

4) *Please provide a breakdown of how the £140M is to be allocated - as between road building, public transport schemes and provision for cyclists and pedestrians.*

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold the information detailed in your request. In order to conclude that the information is not held, we have searched with our HIF team who would have the requested information if held.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty under section 1(1) is only to provide the recorded information held.

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Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with section 16 of the FOIA, in order to fulfil this duty we can confirm that exact figures will not be known until a contractual agreement has been reached. However, the figures below were submitted as part of the business case;

- Strategic Highways - £87 million
- Highways/Roads/Bridge works - £42 million
- Utility works - £11 million

The HIF works are part of a wider infrastructure package which includes;

- bus rapid transit system;
- park & ride scheme;
- cycle super highway; and
- city centre gyratory system.

5) *Over what timescale are the 9185 houses expected to be built?*

We can confirm that Homes England does not hold the information detailed in your request. In order to conclude that the information is not held, we have searched with our HIF team who would have the requested information if held.

The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. The duty under section 1(1) is only to provide the recorded information held.

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Advice and Assistance

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance in accordance with section 16 of the FOIA, in order to fulfil this duty we can confirm that the HIF is directly involved in funding the infrastructure that unlocks the housing. As part of the process a local authority submits a delivery plan that is assessed and used as a guideline in terms of a timeframe. However this may change over time, depending on matters such as prevailing market and economic conditions.

You might wish to direct this specific question the local authority who may hold information in terms of the timeframes for building.

Extension of timeframe in order to consider the Public Interest under Section 43(2)

We wrote to you on 30 June 2020 to advise that we did hold recorded information that fell within the scope of your request, but that we were extending the timescale for response in order to consider the public interest in releasing the information.

In this case, we were considering the sensitivity surrounding release of the timescale that the funding would be required to be spent by. We considered that release may have placed commercial difficulties on the local authority in achieving planning applications or negotiating with contractors if the public were aware of a timescale. However, in this case, we concluded that the public interest was in favour of disclosure.

Right to Appeal

If you are not happy with the information that has been provided or the way in which your request has been handled you may request an internal review by writing to;

The Information Governance Team
Homes England – 6th Floor
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL
Or by email to infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

You may also complain to the Information Commissioner however, the Information Commissioner does usually expect the internal review procedure to be exhausted in the first instance.

The Information Commissioner's details can be found via the following link;
<https://ico.org.uk/>

Please note that the contents of your request and this response are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Homes England may be required to disclose your request and our response accordingly.

Yours sincerely,
The Information Governance Team
For Homes England