

21<sup>st</sup> June 2023

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**Re: Freedom of Information Request 202318 - Request Part Granted.**

Dear

I refer to your request dated and received by this office on 01/06/2023 which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act) for records held by the Land Development Agency (LDA).

- *copies of any correspondence between the LDA and any local authority with regard to the imposition of residential land tax which related to lands which are zoned and vacant for residential development in the calendar year 2023.*

I wish to inform you that I have decided to part-grant your request on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2023.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

**1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions.**

Details of your request were provided to the relevant sections within the LDA to identify records held which were within the scope of your request.

The records requested are attached to this decision letter for your information.

The FOI Act 2014 provides that in certain circumstances, a public body may refuse the release of certain records or part thereof. As such a number of redactions have been applied to the attached records under sections 37 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014. These redactions are detailed in the Schedule of Records in **Appendix 1**.

**Section 37-Personal Information**

Under the FOI Act, records are released without any restriction as to how they may be used and thus, release under the FOI Act, is in effect, and regarded as being released to the world at large. As a result, I am conscious of my obligations to retain personal information in a confidential and secure manner and prevent personal information from being released into the public domain unnecessarily.

Additionally, while I recognise that work email addresses and phone numbers of public officials are not classified as personal information, the LDA as a matter of course redacts the mobile phone numbers and email addresses of LDA's employees as these are part of the body's IT security management.



Section 2 of the FOI Act defines personal information as follows:

2. (1) *In this Act*

*"personal information" means information about an identifiable individual that, either*

*(a) would, in the ordinary course of events, be known only to the individual or members of the family, or friends, of the individual, or*

*(b) is held by an FOI body on the understanding that it would be treated by that body as confidential, and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, includes*

*(iii) information relating to the employment or employment history of the individual,*

I am satisfied that some of the information contained in the records provided in respect of this request relates to a third party. As such, I am satisfied that the records consist of the personal information of these third parties.

Section 37(1) provides that a public body shall refuse to grant a request if access to the records concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information.

*37. (1) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if, in the opinion of the head, access to the record concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information (including personal information relating to a deceased individual).*

As section 37 requires a public interest test be carried out. I have considered the public interest issues which arise in this case and have taken account of the following factors in favour of release:

- Ensuring openness and transparency of organisational functions to the greatest possible extent.
- The public interest in members of the public exercising their rights under the FOI.
- That there is more than just a transitory interest by the public in this information.
- The right to privacy is outweighed by the needs of the public.

In considering the public interest factors which favour withholding the records, I have taken account of the following:

- The public interest is not best served by releasing these records.
- That the Organisation can conduct its business in a confidential manner.
- That there is a reasonable and implied expectation that sensitive personal information will remain confidential.
- That there is no overriding public interest that outweighs the individual's right to privacy.
- Allowing a public body to hold personal information without undue access by members of the public.

Having balanced the public interest factors both for and against the release, I decided that the public interest in preserving the information and the reasonable expectation that information can be maintained in confidential manner by the LDA outweighs the public interest which would be served were the detail released to you.

## 2. Right of Appeal

In the event that you are unhappy with this decision you may appeal against it. If you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Land Development Agency, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Ashford House, Tara Street, Dublin 2 or by e-mail to [foi@lda.ie](mailto:foi@lda.ie).

Please note that a fee applies. This fee has been set at €30 (€10 for a Medical Card holder). Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque,

and made payable to Head of Finance, Land Development Agency, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Ashford House, Tara Street, Dublin 2.

Payment can be made by electronic means, using the following details:

**The Land Development Agency DAC**  
**IE61AIBK93101264101092**  
**BIC: AIBKIE2D**

You must ensure that your FOI reference number (**FOI 202318**) is included in the payment details.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding the weekend and public holidays. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

Please be advised that the Land Development Agency replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website at [lda.ie](http://lda.ie).

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me by telephone on (01) 9103400.

Yours sincerely,



Monika Szyszko,  
Compliance Manager

## Appendix 1: Schedule of Records

Requester name:		Request Re:202318			
Page number	Description of document	Deletions	Relevant section of FOI Act	Reasons for deletion	Decision Maker's decision
2 pages	Cork City Council Decision Letter 31-3-23	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
4 pages	Letter from LDA to DCC 1-6-2023	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
8 pages	Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Decision Letter 30-3-23	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
5 pages	Letter from LDA to Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council 1-6-2023	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
3 pages	Limerick City and County Council Letter 28-3-2023	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
2 pages	Letter LDA to Cork City Council 1-6-2023	Personal Information	Section 37	Personal Information	Part grant
		<b>Total number of pages</b>			24
		<b>Total number of pages for full release</b>			15
		<b>Total number of pages for partial release</b>			9
		<b>Total number of pages being withheld</b>			0

