



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: Fol/Req 2019/115

4 April 2019

Dear Mr. Foxe,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

*A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
15/08/2018 366243.85 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
06/11/2018 291849.13 Property Management Unit Mundy
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
18/07/2018 260987.37 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
19/09/2018 222866.06 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
20/06/2018 210281.11 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
25/04/2018 206685.43 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
19/10/2018 140612.19 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
16/04/2018 134840.09 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
30/05/2018 120819.78 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
12/01/2018 112958.79 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
22/02/2018 107174.27 Property Management Unit
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
04/12/2018 100564.67 Property Management Unit MUNDY ROOFING
A6MAJORMNT RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY
13/12/2018 82304.61 Property Management Unit Pascoal Monteiro*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 21st March 2019

I have identified 13 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant 12 of the records.

The Embassy network is used by the Department in pursuit of its goals on behalf of the State. They consist of offices and official accommodation which provide platforms for our Missions to promote Ireland's political, economic and cultural interests and values, provide services to our citizens, develop strategic stakeholder relationships and represent Ireland in international organisations. The Department must ensure that security and health and safety standards are met, as well as providing universal access facilities as part of our duty of care to staff, their families and visitors to our buildings. The Department maintains appropriate health, safety and security in our missions and any additional international standards depending on location.

All refurbishment at Embassies are conducted in line with the Department's procurement obligations under Government public tendering and contracting rules, including both National and EU Public Procurement thresholds.

Records 1-3 relate to the relocation of the Embassy of Ireland to The Republic of Turkey in 2017/2018. This has resulted in a modern, secure office for the Embassy staff and Irish citizens seeking to access services. The office provides an improved space for Visa processing to support the trade relationship between Ireland and The Republic of Turkey.

Records 4- 12 relate to the Embassy of Ireland to Great Britain Roof Repair Project. This project was necessitated under our lease obligations and because of significant leaks and other maintenance issues with the roof. The building is a grade 2 listed 19th century building located on a prominent corner overlooking Buckingham Palace Gardens. The roof covers an extensive area and structures. In accordance with the building regulations the Department applied for listed building consent from the local authority. This was granted but a number of conditions were added. Given the size of the roof, the height off the ground and the complexity of the roof works it required significant scaffolding to facilitate the works.

In addition, various building materials and items were required to be approved by the local authority heritage department. This was a significant project to ensure that a water-tight, safe and compliant project could be delivered that met the obligations under the lease, building obligations and statutory obligations. The project addressed significant deterioration in the roof, safety and health issues and the removal of asbestos. This project took approximately 24 months to complete.

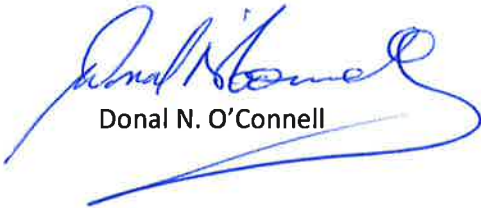
Record 13 is not being released to you at this time. It is not being granted under section 36 of the 2014 Act – Commercially Sensitive Information. The record relates to commercial information where disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in financial loss or gain to the person to whom the information related or could prejudice the competitive position of that person in the conduct of her/his profession/business/occupation. I have considered the public interest in releasing this information as the public have an interest in how the Department spends tax payer's funds.

However, on balance, I believe that the public interest is best served by not disclosing commercial information where it could prejudice the competitive position of the Department. The Department is open to considering granting access to this record on conclusion of this project. This is expected to conclude at the end of the second quarter of 2019. The record which is not being released relates to ongoing capital and refurbishment works.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfa.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857. You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. 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 Department.

Yours sincerely



Donal N. O'Connell