



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/20/218

Date: 9 December, 2020

Dear Ms. Colgan,

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:

*'Copies of correspondence sent by members of the public to the Department of Foreign Affairs concerning the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to Ireland in March 2020.'*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 19 November, 2020.

I have identified 6 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to part-grant all 6 of the records.

Access has only been partially granted for these records as the exemption from release under section 37(1) Personal Information applies to each.

### **Section 37 – Personal Information**

While Section 37 (1) Personal Information is a mandatory exemption, I am still obliged to consider whether the public interest would be best served by releasing the records in full. I have taken into account the benefit to the public to be given access to correspondence in a manner which demonstrates transparency and accountability of the Department. In the main, the information redacted relates to personal information and details of personal identification and does not affect the overall substance of the record. I have particularly considered whether releasing the personal information would provide any additional benefit in this regard. I have weighed this against the right of individuals to have their personal information remain private and have found that there is a clear prerogative for this information to remain private.

This visit to Ireland by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in March 2020 was the first undertaken by these senior members of the UK royal family. The intensive and positive media coverage of their visit helped to highlight the close ties between Ireland and Great Britain in political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. Their visit also provided a valuable platform

to highlight the excellent work done by social and environmental organisations in the community across Ireland.

The visit took place over three days in Dublin, Co. Meath, Co. Kildare, and Galway and was subject to high levels of interest from the public as well as both Irish and international media. 260 registered media covered the visit. The event proved to be a valuable opportunity for these senior members of the UK royal family to discuss a whole range of issues with a wide range of representatives from various political, cultural, reconciliation, and arts and civil society groups from across the island of Ireland.

### **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](mailto: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, (€10 for medical card holders). A copy of the medical card should be provided to avail of the reduced fee. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at [foi@dfa.ie](mailto:foi@dfa.ie), or 01-4082618.

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,

**Ciarán Doyle**

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