



Department for

**Communities**

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**Commonities**

[www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

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Belfast Regeneration Directorate  
Level 8  
Causeway Exchange  
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BT2 7EG  
Email:  
BRDBSUGovernance@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: DFC/2025-0049  
11 March 2025

Dear Ms Jennings

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I am responding with regard to your request for information, which I received on 14 February 2025.

I have attached a copy of your request at **Annex A** and a response at **Annex B**.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with this response and wish to request a review of our decision or make a complaint about how your request has been handled, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. You should write to the Information Access Manager, Department for Communities, Information Management Branch, Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, BELFAST, BT2 7EG, or send an email to [foi@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@communities-ni.gov.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of our original decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane

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Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

**Patrick Anderson**  
**Belfast Regeneration Directorate**

## **Request**

*This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.*

*We are seeking to understand the extent to which the procedures outlined in the Department of Finance [guidance document](#) on Disposal of Surplus Land and Property (October 2018) have been applied to the DFC-owned Mackies site, currently subject to transfer to Belfast City Council.*

*The DOF guidance defines surplus land and property as “any land or property in the ownership of the public sector bodies which is no longer required for the purpose for which it was acquired or held” (p. 4).*

*1. Is the Mackies site considered to meet this definition?*

*2. If not, why not? Please explain.*

*The procedures outlined in the DOF guidance for disposal of surplus land and property include a number of components. For each, please explain the extent to which they were or were not complied with with regard to the Mackies site:*

*3. Filling in a D1 (Disposal 1) form, “the form that an asset owner should complete in order to advise CAU that they have declared an asset surplus” p.3*

*4. Circulating word of the surplus asset to other public bodies (2.11) in the ‘public sector internal market’ (2.13), giving regard to the 2014 Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy (2.14)*

*The guidance further appears to stipulate a role for LPS (2.16), including for instance “a review of the end to end process for disposal of surplus property”.*

*5. Has this occurred for the Mackies site?*

*Additionally, the text states:*

*DfC recently initiated the Public Land for Housing (PLfH) Project within its Housing Division. The main objective of the project is to create a digital spatial catalogue of public sector assets that that may be suitable for re-use as housing. At this stage work has been completed in relation to DfC assets and is planned to be rolled out across more departments in the coming years. The establishment of the PLfH Project recognises the need for central government to increase the rate of release of unused land to support the development of both social and affordable housing.” (2.15)*

*6. What is the status of this project? Has the Mackies site been considered for inclusion in the project? If not, why not?*

*Finally, the text states,*

*the disposal process needs to be managed effectively throughout and carefully monitored by public bodies from the time the property is identified as surplus in its AMP or forms part of its disposal programme. This includes ensuring all due diligence is conducted in a timely fashion. (3.13)*

*7. Has this been done with regard to the Mackies site?*

*Please include copies of information which you hold on paper or in electronic form. I would be grateful if you would supply this information in the form of photocopies or, if possible, by email.*

*If I can help to clarify this request please contact me by email at [paige@pprproject.org](mailto:paige@pprproject.org) or by phone at (028)90313315. I look forward to hearing from you promptly, as required by the legislation, and in any case within 20 working days.*

**Response to FOI Request DFC/2025-0049**

The Department for Communities (DfC) has not declared the lands in question as surplus. The land was acquired and held for development or redevelopment.

The DfC Public Land for Housing (PLfH) project completed in April 2021. The 'Mackies' site was not taken forward as part of the PLfH project as its development potential was already under consideration with Belfast City Council for the Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.



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Level 8  
Causeway Exchange  
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BT2 7EG  
Email:  
BRDBSUGovernance@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: DFC/2025-0039  
20 February 2025

Dear Ms Jennings

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I am responding with regard to your request for information, which I received on 4 February 2025. In that request, you asked:

*This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.*

*Following on from earlier Freedom of Information requests (most recently 10 July 2024), please provide the most current ownership status, transfer timetable, and any updated plans for the lands that belonged to the former Mackies industrial site located between the Springfield Road and Ballygomartin/Highfield in West Belfast.*

*Please include copies of information which you hold on paper or in electronic form. I would be grateful if you would supply this information in the form of photocopies or, if possible, by email.*

*If I can help to clarify this request please contact me by email at [paige@pprproject.org](mailto:paige@pprproject.org) or by phone at (028)90313315. I look forward to hearing from you promptly, as required by the legislation, and in any case within 20 working days.*

We have provided a response to your request at **Annex A**.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with this response and wish to request a review of our decision or make a complaint about how your request has been handled, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. You should write to the Information Access Manager, Department for Communities, Information Management Branch, Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, BELFAST, BT2 7EG, or send an email to [foi@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@communities-ni.gov.uk).

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Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

**Patrick Anderson**  
**Belfast Regeneration Directorate**

**Response to FOI Request DFC/2025-0039**

**The Department for Communities currently owns the lands in question (shaded red on the map at Annex B).**

**The land transfer process, for the area marked 'A' on the map, is currently ongoing with Belfast City Council (BCC). This area has already been developed as part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.**

**There are no updated plans. The Department and BCC have an agreement in place to work together to consider future phases of the greenway on the lands marked 'B' (river course) and 'C' on the map. There is no transfer timetable at this point.**



**Map showing Springvale Lands and Surrounding Ownership**

