

[REDACTED]

24 September 2020

INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE 20-009

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your information request, received on 2 March 2020. You asked the London Legacy Development Corporation (Legacy Corporation) to provide the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

“Under the Freedom of Information Act can you please provide me with actual attendances at the London Stadium for every West Ham game since the stadium opened for football in August 2016? By this I mean the figure that actually attended each game rather than the number of tickets sold for the game.”

I can confirm that the Legacy Corporation holds information relevant to your request, however, this information is being withheld under section 43(2) – commercial interests.

Section 43(2) - Commercial interests.

(2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption and subject to the prejudice test and the public interest test. Under the prejudice test we have to consider if disclosure of this information would, or would be likely to, prejudice our commercial interests or the commercial interests of a third party.

Consideration is also given to the harm disclosing this information would be likely to cause, combined with other information already in the public domain (mosaic effect) or possibly released at a future date (precedent effect). The public interest test considers and balances the public interest in disclosing this information against the public interest in not disclosing this information and uses this assessment to decide whether there is sufficient justification in withholding this information under this exemption.

Information disclosed under the FOIA is considered to be public information, and while there is a presumption towards disclosure, consideration needs to be given as to who will have access to this information beyond the requestor and the purposes for which they could use the information.

In accordance with the statutory Code of Practice issued by the Information Commissioner's Office, as part of the public interest assessment, the Legacy Corporation contacts third parties referenced in the information, to give them the opportunity to provide examples of

any harm from their perspective that there may be from releasing the information. Under FOIA, the Legacy Corporation cannot assume what information might be exempt, and therefore any third party that may be affected by disclosure is asked to provide details of the harm that releasing the information would have on its commercial interests. The Legacy Corporation take the views of affected third parties into consideration when undertaking the public interest assessment. In line with this process West Ham were contacted for their views.

Prejudice to commercial interests

The Legacy Corporation has assessed the impact of releasing the information redacted under the exemption section 43(2) – commercial interests in order to decide whether disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice their commercial interests or those of any third party(ies). They have concluded that prejudice to commercial interests would be caused by disclosure so that the exemption is engaged.

West Ham considers the physical attendance information to be commercially sensitive. While physical attendance is something that is out of the control of West Ham due to a multitude of reasons including kick off times, whether the game is televised, midweek or rearranged fixtures as well as transport issues, this is commercially sensitive with respect to ticket sales.

Public Interest Test

There is, of course, a public interest in promoting transparency of public authorities' decisions and accountability, however, the Legacy Corporation consider that releasing the attendance figures would prejudice West Ham's commercial interests as it would reveal commercially sensitive information that other clubs are not obliged to make public. Releasing the attendance figures into the public domain would provide commercial information to West Ham's competitors and this in turn would be likely to harm West Ham's commercial interests.

It is the view of the Legacy Corporation that, at this time, the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an internal review of our decision, you should write to:

Deputy Chief Executive
London Legacy Development Corporation
Level 10, 1 Stratford Place
Montfichet Road
London, E20 1EJ

Email: FOI@londonlegacy.co.uk

Please note: complaints and requests for internal review received more than two months after the initial response will not be handled.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may appeal directly to the Information Commissioner at the address given below. You should do this within two months of our final decision. There is no charge for making an appeal.

Further information on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is available from the Information Commissioner's Office:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Telephone 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45

Website www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

FOI / EIR Co-ordinator
London Legacy Development Corporation