

From: Godwin, David [<mailto:David.Godwin@agresearch.co.nz>]
Sent: Friday, 20 December 2013 1:44 p.m.
To: Graham McKerracher
Subject: Official Information Act request

Dear Mr McKerracher,

I am writing in respect of your request under the Official Information Act dated 26 November 2013 regarding AgResearch's future blueprint proposal for Invermay.

The information you requested is the documentation referred to by the Minister of Science and Innovation as reported in a story in the Otago Daily Times on Monday 18 November 2013. In particular you requested:

- 1) the document or documents that the Minister has described in regard to the proposal for building a scientific hub in Christchurch and the downgrading of the Invermay campus in Dunedin. Of particular interest is any document with hundreds of pages outlining the detailed reasons behind the proposal.
- 2) the cost of the number of staff hours spent producing the documentation that Minister Joyce referenced.
- 3) the names of the author/s of the report/s.

Proposal Documents

We would like to point out that the Future Footprint Project has been operating for at least two years and during that time has accumulated a significant volume of documentation that fits within your request. There has been considerable material contributed to this project by a number of staff. Locating and considering all of that information would be a considerable drain on AgResearch resources and would be a diversion of those resources from carrying on the important day to day functions of the organisation. Without a more limited scope, AgResearch withholds the supply of this information under section 18(f) of the Act as it cannot be made available without substantial collation.

You have also specifically requested any document with hundreds of pages. While there are a number of individual documents of varying length (the business case is 102 pages long) we are not aware of any single document that is hundreds of pages.

You have indicated that the redacted version of the Future Footprint business case and the Future Footprint proposal presented to staff have already been supplied to the Dunedin City Council. In addition, those documents have been made publicly available on AgResearch's website. Accordingly, they are being withheld on grounds that they are publicly available (section 18 (d) of the Act).

We would be happy to assist you to limit the scope of your request so that we can respond without undue impact on AgResearch's operations. Please let me know if you would like to discuss how we could assist in limiting the scope of that request.

Cost of staff hours

As noted above there has indeed been substantial staff time devoted to the Future Footprint Proposal. However, AgResearch does not keep records of the individual staff hours spent on the project. We are accordingly refusing the request on the basis that AgResearch does not hold the information (section 18 (g)).

Names of Authors

We are withholding the names of the authors of the documents requested to protect the privacy of the individuals (section 9 (2) (a)) who have prepared the various reports, briefings and other documents.

I am obliged to advise you of your right to complain to the Office of the Ombudsman if you are unhappy with any response by AgResearch to your Official Information Act request.

Yours sincerely,

David Godwin

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