ANNEX A

FOI DOF/2025-0081

Request

1. **Proposals and Agreements**
   a) Copies of all proposals, business cases, and justifications submitted by Queen's University Belfast when applying for public funding for the redevelopment of Mandela Hall and the Student Centre.
   b) Copies of any agreements, contracts, or memorandums of understanding between Queen's University and government departments relating to this funding.

2. **Government Oversight and Meetings**

a) Records of any internal reviews, oversight mechanisms, or audits conducted to ensure that public funds were used appropriately and that Mandela Hall would continue to function as a cultural venue.
b) Minutes, agendas, and notes from all meetings involving Queen's University Belfast and representatives from the Department for the Economy and the Department for Communities regarding the Mandela Hall redevelopment.
c) Any correspondence (emails, letters, reports) between Queen's University and government officials discussing the permitted use of Mandela Hall post-redevelopment.

3. **Changes to Venue Use**
   a) Any documentation or internal communications explaining why club nights and electronic music events have been effectively banned in the redeveloped venue.
   b) Copies of any noise impact assessments, licensing conditions, or policy documents that led to the imposition of the 11 PM curfew.
   c) Any formal complaints, objections, or external influences that resulted in restrictions being placed on Mandela Hall's use.

DoF response

I can confirm that the Department of Finance holds some of the information requested. However, some of this information has been withheld as it falls under Section 40(2) and Section 43(2), further details are provided below.

1. Proposals and Agreements

a) Copies of all proposals, business cases, and justifications submitted by Queen's University Belfast when applying for public funding for the redevelopment of Mandela Hall and the Student Centre.
b) Copies of any agreements, contracts, or memorandums of understanding between Queen's University and government departments relating to this funding.

The Department for Economy (DfE) submitted the Queens University Student Centre business case to the Department of Finance (DoF) on 23 March 2023. DoF reviewed and approved the expenditure related to this business case on 23 April 2021.

Please note some of the information you have requested is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would contravene one of the data protection principles in schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Having considered all of the information contained within the Legitimate Interest Test - Lawful, Fairness and Transparency Test (attached as a separate document – Annex H), the department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject and where it relates to the names and contact details of junior staff who could be identified.

Further redactions have been made to Annex B, these documents are exempt from release under Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. This identifies information that is exempt 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). A Public Interest Test (PIT) has been carried out for this, marked Annex I.

Please see the table below of annexes provided and any exemptions applied.

Annex	Description	Exemption applied
B	Email, with attachments, from Department for the Economy (DfE) to Department of Finance (DoF). Submission of the QUB Integrated Student Centre Business Case, Appendices and supporting documentation - 23 March 2021.	40(2) & 43(2)
C	Email from DfE to DoF confirming Economy Minister approval for Business case - 30 March 2021	40(2)
D	Internal DoF Email detailing queries/comments on business case and informal DoF approval – 31 March 2021	40(2)
E	Email communication between DoF and DfE requesting further information – 31 March 2021	40(2)
F	Email with attachment, from DoF to DfE. Supply approval of expenditure related to the business case – 23 April 2021.	40(2)
G	Email with attachment from DfE to DoF. Completed DoF Proforma – 30 April 2021.	40(2)
H	Legitimate Interest Test - Lawful, Fairness and Transparency Test	
I	Public Interest Test (PIT)	

Response to Questions 2.a – 3.c

With regards to questions 2.a – 3.c, the Department of Finance does not hold the information requested.