Atrium Court
50 Waterloo Street
Glasgow
G2 6HQ
Telephone 0300 013 3385
www.scottish-enterprise.com

Michael Knox
By email: mike.knoxy@icloud.com

23 September 2026

Dear Mr Knox

Thank you for your information request. We are responding to you under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOISA) 2002.

Your original request:

1. Expenditure — a full breakdown of all expenditure by Scottish Enterprise relating to the promotion of Scotland as a data centre location, from 2020 to the date of this request, including staff costs, marketing materials, industry event attendance, engagement with international operators, and contributions to the Host in Scotland programme.
2. Operators Engaged — a list of all hyperscale or large-scale data centre operators Scottish Enterprise has formally engaged with, hosted, or provided information to.
3. Impact Assessment — copies of any assessments relating to cumulative energy demand, consumer grid reinforcement costs, water consumption, or environmental impact of promoted developments.
4. Co-ordination with Other Bodies — correspondence with Scottish Futures Trust, Scottish Development International, Scotland IS, and the Scottish Government Directorate for Digital regarding data centre promotion.
5. Pipeline Knowledge — the total megawatt capacity of data centre developments in Scotland that Scottish Enterprise is aware of, as of the date of this request.

Additional clarification provided:

Q2 (Operators Engaged): Please use the same date range as the original request — 1 January 2020 to 18 June 2026 (the date of the original submission).
Q3 (Impact Assessments): Yes, I'm content with your proposed scope — assessments SE has produced, commissioned, helped fund, or contributed to. Same date range as above: 1 January 2020 to 18 June 2026.
Q4 (Co-ordination): Same date range again: 1 January 2020 to 18 June 2026.
On "coordination" — yes, the green data centre cross-cutting working group is squarely within scope, but the request is not limited to formal partnership arrangements. Please also include informal contact: meetings, calls, briefings, and correspondence (including internal correspondence discussing positions to be taken with these bodies) between Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Futures Trust, Scottish

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Development International, Scotland IS, or the Scottish Government Directorate for Digital, relating to data centre promotion, planning, or policy — whether or not it took place under a named formal structure.

Response:

1 We advise that Scottish Enterprise's formal position is that it does not promote data centres or undertake any proactive lead generation or marketing of Scotland as a destination for potential green data centre investment. Instead, our approach is reactive, working with partners and responding to enquiries received, primarily from data centre developers.

2. We keep a record of enquiries we have received, however the majority of these have been from developers plus landowners rather than operators.

We can advise there is currently one operator/developer on our active list, and two operators on our inactive list, meaning no further engagement / progress was made. We are unable to provide the names of these organisations for reasons of commercial confidentiality, therefore this information is withheld under section 33(1)(b) of FOISA.

Section 33(1)(b) - Substantial prejudice to commercial interests
The section 33(1)(b) exemption has been applied where Scottish Enterprise (SE) identify that the release of the full information would, or would be likely to, harm the commercial interests of third parties. Release would adversely affect those third party's trading if information was disclosed regarding potential business interests.

The effective operation of SE requires businesses to exchange information with us, which we then handle within a private space. SE must be able to assure the businesses that we work with that sensitive information will not be released as a result of their involvement with SE.

Public Interest
We recognise that as a public authority, Scottish Enterprise has a duty to be open and transparent, and so we seek to release information wherever possible, particularly regarding information that is perceived to be of public benefit or interest. However, in our view there is no public interest where such transparency would cause detriment to a third party's commercial activity, due to the release of its private information.

We consider there is significant public interest in agencies protecting the legitimate economic interests of companies, especially where it was expected that information would be held on a commercial in confidence basis. Our conclusion is that the public interest in disclosure is outweighed by the public interest in avoiding substantial harm to legitimate economic interests.

3. SE has not undertaken assessments of promoted developments. As noted above, SE's formal position is that it does not promote any developments.

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4. We have had no named formal structures for the promotion of data centres.

Our engagement with the Scottish Government and local authorities has generally been focused on responding to investor enquiries and discussing specific project opportunities. SE participates in the Green Data Centre Cross Cutting Working Group led by the Scottish Government however this is not intended to actively promote data centres. Instead, it provides a forum for discussion and coordination across organisations on matters such as policy, infrastructure and wider sector related issues.

5. On 25th June 2026 an exercise was conducted to establish the total megawatt capacity of proposed data centres from public domain sources and found that this was 9714MW. We would stress that this concerns proposals, meaning that many of these developments are at a very early pre-planning stage, do not have grid connections, and are viewed as unlikely to progress.

Request for Review

If you consider that your request has not been handled appropriately you have the right under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to request a review. A request for review must be submitted in writing or other permanent form within 40 working days of the date of this letter and should be addressed to:

Adrian Gillespie
Chief Executive
Scottish Enterprise
Atrium Court
50 Waterloo Street
Glasgow
G2 6HQ
e-mail: ceooffice@scotent.co.uk

It must include your name and an address for correspondence (e-mail address is acceptable) and specify the request for information to which the requirement for review relates and the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction with the decision. Scottish Enterprise will respond to any request for review within 20 working days of receipt.

Your right to apply to the Information Commissioner under FOISA

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, you have the right under FOISA to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months following the date of receipt of the review notice.
Appeals can be made online at: https://www.foi.scot/what-if-im-unhappy

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If you do not wish to appeal online, you can appeal by post, or by e-mail. Details are below:

Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle,
Doubledykes Road,
St Andrews,
Fife,
KY16 9DS
Email: enquiries@foi.scot
Tel: 01334 464610

Please note that we will only process the personal data you have provided to respond to this request and in accordance with our privacy notice which can be found on our website: https://www.scottish-enterprise.com/about-us/transparency/privacy-notice/how-we-use-your-information/enquiries

Yours sincerely

Corporate Communications
Scottish Enterprise

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