

22 March 2021
Our ref: 7052026

Thank you for your request received on 23 February 2021, for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to know how many nominations were received for 'local listing' of the art deco National Institute of Medical Research in Mill Hill during the 2017 historic list 'review'.

I'd also like to see copies of the nominations.

Would it be possible to see Barnet Council planning departments' health and safety assessment of the main building prior to approval for demolition. Specifically, I'd like to know what hazardous substances were recognised such as asbestos which may have been in the walls of the building.

What advice did Barnet Council/Re give the developer/builder in regard to asbestos and other hazardous materials that may have been discovered at the site. Hazardous materials may include toxic gas, earth, dust etc.

We have processed this request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Response

I can confirm that London Borough of Barnet holds the information you requested. However, we consider that the following exceptions apply to some of the information requested.

We consider that Regulation 6(1)(b) applies to the information requested because the information requested is already publicly available and easily accessible.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to know how many nominations were received for 'local listing' of the art deco National Institute of Medical Research in Mill Hill during the 2017 historic list 'review'.

No nominations were received.

I'd also like to see copies of the nominations.

N/A

Would it be possible to see Barnet Council planning departments' health and

safety assessment of the main building prior to approval for demolition. Specifically, I'd like to know what hazardous substances were recognised such as asbestos which may have been in the walls of the building.

The planning department don't advise on health and safety matters, this is covered by other legislation.

What advice did Barnet Council/Re give the developer/builder in regard to asbestos and other hazardous materials that may have been discovered at the site. Hazardous materials may include toxic gas, earth, dust etc.

The list of planning permissions that the Council has dealt with in respect of this site can be found here:

www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning/find-and-comment-planning-applications

16/0862/EIA

16/4545/FUL

18/0021/CON

17/8151/CON

17/8152/CON

18/0089/CON

18/2685/CON

18/6893/NMA

19/2239/CON

19/3089/CON

19/3208/S73

19/2299/CON

19/3169/CON

19/2299/CON/

19/5468/CON

19/6061/CON

19/6589/CON

19/6463/CON

20/3151/CON

20/3155/CON

20/1893/FUL

20/3151/CON

20/3155/CON

These two specific references 19/2299/CON and 19/5468/CON deal with contamination.

Due to the nature of the site, the site had to be decommissioned prior to demolition and this was overseen by the Environment Agency; internal decontamination of the building was dealt with before the building was sold.

The officer saw during one of their many visits to the construction site a substantive quantity of asbestos survey reports. There was also a huge amount of documentation (all available online) about contamination. All of which had to be checked. Asbestos is covered by legislation and amongst other mitigation measures the demolition contractors were obliged to water down; have a watching brief; Barratts had contamination consultants on site at all times and monitor the air quality (dust levels).

Asbestos was checked by the HSE; internal stripping by the Environment Agency. Anna Cane has seen this certification on site with Barratt's. LA do not have direct access to risk assessments for construction sites. I have though attached some of the Particulate monitoring reports .

We asked Barratt's to consider doing further asbestos monitoring externally however the slides for the particulate monitoring are not designed to capture light asbestos fibres.

When you monitor for asbestos internally it is sucked through an air pump with a filter which captures the fibres to analyse. The Particulate monitoring carried out is a completely different and not really compatible with capturing the light asbestos fibres but it does monitor PM10, which is the size of particulates that enter the lung. External asbestos monitoring is done rarely on construction sites as the idea is to remove before demolition, this happened on this site. The only asbestos not removed was from shelters in the form of low risk asbestos cement which was well covered and checked by Anna. The Environment Agency have the capacity with large coarse dust monitors for (waste management sites only) to monitor for asbestos but only have 2 monitors in the Thames area booked 6 months in advance to monitor mainly coarse dust in large quantities.

On large sites external asbestos monitoring is very hard to do accurately due to larger volumes of air, wind and rain so the focus on this project is prevention by removal or dust suppression.

The contaminated land remediation and Construction management Plans contain further information about asbestos removal which the Local Authorities have access to through the planning process, residents can also access this information through the Barnet planning portal in the link above.

The Council has asked the Barratts recently and repeatedly to provide their air quality, noise, vibration reports to the public. They have declined; they are only satisfied for us to receive reports.

The Council has released the air quality reports to show although coarse dust levels were likely to be high on occasion in the summer, the PM10 levels that affect residents' lungs were generally acceptable. Coarse dust is removed by nose and throat mechanisms.

As far as the Council is concerned, once a complaint has been received it is investigated, dates are checked and vibration/ noise levels are checked. To date, on each of these occasions there has been no evidence that the levels are unacceptable in terms of statutory nuisance, Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Control of Pollution Act 1974(apart from the recent complaint which led to notice being served and best practice.

Lighting levels are only a likely nuisance if shining directly into residents habitable rooms.

The Council has visited the site regularly when there are complaints of dust and evidenced no likelihood of dust nor dust at a statutory nuisance level. We however , if we saw, anything we thought that might (if the situation got worse than it was) be a problem we asked them to improve it at the time and they did. There was a lot of evidence of dust suppression and watering being carried out but also some dust especially on the site entrances and exits from lorry movements.

All air quality files were checked and they were acceptable. With respect to vibration, at the time Anna checked all the vibration reports and noise reports after any complaint you made to check compliance with best practical means. They were fine.

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information

Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.