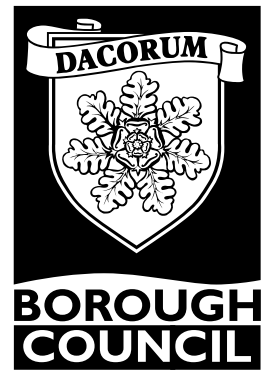


Minimising Environmental Impacts from Building and Demolition Sites



1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that disturbance by reason of noise, vibration, dust, smoke etc arising from building works is kept to an acceptable level without the imposition of unnecessary or unduly onerous restrictions on contractors. Its primary objective is to minimise nuisance and it should be noted that health and safety issues are beyond the scope of this document.

2.0 Measures to Minimise Disturbance by Noise

The following provisions should be adhered to wherever practicable:

- (i) Vehicles and mechanical plant used for the purpose of the works shall be fitted with effective exhaust silencers, maintained in good working order and operated in such a manner so as to minimise noise emissions. The contractor shall ensure that all relevant plant complies with the relevant statutory requirements.
- (ii) Machines in intermittent use should be shut down where possible or otherwise throttled down to a minimum when not in use
- (iii) Compressors should be fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers, which should be kept closed whenever in use. Pneumatic percussive tools should be fitted with mufflers or silencers of the type recommended by the manufacturers.
- (iv) Equipment that breaks concrete, brickwork or masonry by bending, bursting or nibbling shall be used in preference to percussive tools, where practicable. Avoid the use of impact tools where the site is close to occupied premises.
- (v) Where practicable, equipment powered by mains electricity shall be used in preference to equipment powered by internal combustion engine or locally generated electricity.
- (vi) Neither any part of the works nor any maintenance of plant shall be carried out in such a manner as to cause unnecessary noise or vibration except in the case of an emergency when the work is absolutely necessary for the saving of life or property or the safety of the works.
- (vii) Plant should be maintained in good working order so that extraneous noise from mechanical vibration, creaking and squeaking is kept to a minimum.

- (viii) Noise emitting machinery that is required to run continuously shall be housed in a suitable acoustic lined enclosure wherever practicable.

Care should be taken to reduce noise when loading or unloading vehicles or dismantling scaffolding or moving materials etc.

3.0 Working Outside Normal Working Hours

As a general rule, where residential occupiers are likely to be affected, it is expected that works of demolition and construction shall be carried out during normal working hours, i.e. 07.30 to 18.30 hours Monday to Saturday, with no works audible at the site boundary being permitted outside these hours.

Where it is necessary for noisy works to be carried out outside normal working hours contractors will be required to demonstrate and justify the need to do so in advance.

Full details of the proposed works shall be submitted to the Environmental Health in writing for approval at least twenty eight days prior to commencement in accordance with the Control of Pollution Act (COPA) 1974 s.61.

Work outside of normal hours will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances a COPA s.6 application form can be found on www.dacorum.gov.uk alternatively call 01442 228455 for a hard copy.

4.0 Dust Control Measures

In assessing the need for dust control measures regard shall be paid to:

- The nature of the works.
- Proximity of dust sensitive properties.
- Effects on the general public and road users.

A mains water supply should be available on site from the commencement of works.

The choice of plant and equipment and the method of work should reflect the necessity to employ best practicable means in the control of dust. Generally, where alternative methods exist, intrinsically dusty operations such as dry sweeping or dry sandblasting are not acceptable.

Where adequate dust control cannot be achieved by the choice of appropriate plant, equipment and work method the most common means of dust suppression involve the use of water and/or containment by screening and enclosure.

Water suppression of dust may be employed to good effect for operations such as the cutting or sandblasting of stone or concrete as well as in more general applications where dampening can prevent excessive wind whipping of dust from stockpiles and operational areas of the site, or from demolition.

Where dust is likely to be a persistent problem water spray systems should be available from the commencement of works. The use of such systems can be particularly effective in operations such as demolition and removal of soil during construction.

Finely divided materials such as sand and cementitious products should be stored where practicable under cover or in sealed containers. In some circumstances screening or enclosure may be required in addition to water suppression, and if correctly designed can have the added advantages of noise attenuation and limiting visual intrusion.

Both water suppression and screening have practical limitations. In warm weather, for example, water will evaporate quickly from dusty materials leaving the site in a condition likely to result in dust emissions due to wind whipping or vehicle movements.

As far as practical constraints will allow, obvious sources of dust such as spillages of finely divided materials should be removed promptly using a wet cleaning technique.

The importance of cleaning would also apply to internal roadways and the highway which may become coated with dust from other operations and can become a secondary source of dust emissions.

5.0 Crushing Machines

Any plant used for the crushing of materials should be issued with a permit by a local authority under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000. All work should be carried out in accordance with the conditions of the permit. Where plant is used to recycle materials, the appropriate licence from the Environment Agency should be obtained. The process operator should notify the local authority in whose area the process is proposed prior to operation.

6.0 Smoke

Smoke can be considered to constitute a Statutory Nuisance within the terms of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 if it affects the occupiers of other properties. The emission of dark smoke from the site would constitute an offence under the Clean Air Act 1993. Contractors are therefore advised that lighting fires on construction sites is not permitted and are advised to find alternative means of disposal of wastes.

7.0 Waste Disposal

Legal Requirements

- (i) Ensure that evidence of the registration of any waste carriers is seen before you start removing waste from site.
- (ii) Before work begins, identify sites which can take the types of waste material that you expect to produce. Waste must not be burned on site under any circumstances. Any site where you intend to send waste must have a Waste Management Licence.

The Duty of Care requires that you ensure that:

- (i) Waste is handled, recovered or disposed of responsibly and by individuals or companies that are authorised to do so.
- (ii) A full record is kept of all wastes received or transferred by a system of signed notes.
- (iii) Signed, and fully completed, 'Waste Transfer Notes', (WTNs) should be retained for 2 years, or if your waste is 'Hazardous Waste' then 'Consignment Notes' should be retained for 3 years. Sites must register with the Environment Agency if hazardous waste is produced.
- (iv) If you are a sub-contractor and the main contractor arranges for the recovery or disposal of waste that you produce, you are still responsible. If you are transporting building or demolition waste, even if it is your own waste, you will need to be registered as a waste carrier with the Environment Agency.
- (v) Examples of wastes classed as hazardous include: asbestos; lead-acid batteries; electrical equipment containing components such as cathode ray tubes (e.g. computers); oily sludges; solvents; fluorescent light tubes and chemical wastes.

8.0 Asbestos

A Type 3 or refurbishment/demolition survey is necessary before carrying out any work that may disturb the building fabric of buildings that predate the year 2000. The purpose of this survey is to locate Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) so that they can be removed before the refurbishment or demolition work starts. This type of survey is likely to be intrusive and destructive. Intrusive inspection techniques are employed where appropriate to lift carpets and tiles, and break through walls, ceilings, cladding and partitions. All asbestos surveys must be completed by a competent person and most asbestos removal work must be undertaken by a licensed contractor. Further guidance on the requirements of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 can be acquired from the Health and Safety Executive.

7.0 Contaminated Land

The developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the purpose for which it is intended. Therefore it is the responsibility of the developer to identify land affected by contamination and, if necessary, to ensure that remedial action is undertaken to secure a safe development and secure occupancy of the site. This will normally be enforced through planning conditions that require a developer to perform a land contamination assessment for their site.

On a precautionary basis, the possibility of contamination should be assumed in relation to all land subject to or adjacent to previous industrial use and/or where uses are being considered that are particularly sensitive to contamination (e.g. housing, schools, hospitals, children's play areas).

It is important to identify actual and potential contamination issues at an early stage in order to avoid unexpected costs and delays during and after development. Suitably qualified professionals should be employed to investigate and address contaminated land issues.

The developer is responsible for ensuring that site workers and members of the public are protected from the potential effects of contamination during the entire development process. The developer must pay due regard to the Health & Safety Executive guidance HS(G)66 'Protection of workers and the general public during the development of contaminated land' (HMSO, ISBN 011 885657X, 1991).

If unexpected contamination is encountered during site works, then the Council must be informed without delay, advised of the situation and an appropriate course of action agreed.

If land is discovered to be affected by contamination following development of a site, local authorities have powers to take action to investigate the land and secure any necessary remediation. Legal action may be taken to ensure that land is sufficiently remediated and costs may be recovered from the developer.

8.0 Failure to Comply with Guidance

In the event of a contractor failing to comply with this guidance or any agreement reached with the Environmental Health Department they may be served with a Notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. This Notice will be used to restrict days and hours of work, plant and machinery used on site and work methods etc. Other legislation may also be used such as the nuisance provisions contained in the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

9.0 Recommendations

The Council recommends that all contractors be members of the Considerate Construction Scheme.

Contractors should also be aware of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Guidance on Controlling Pollution Emissions from Construction Sites.

Liaison with local residents who may be affected by construction works is essential. The local residents should be informed of the nature of the works, proposed hours of work, the expected duration and a contact name and telephone number. A copy of this letter should also be sent to the Dacorum Borough Council's Environmental Health Department.

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