

CONTROL OF

# Pollution & Noise from Demolition & Construction Sites

Demolition

Noise

Construction

Pollution

MAY 2008

**CODE OF PRACTICE**





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## **PART 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1** There is a need to ensure that residents and businesses are protected from environmental disturbance during the construction of both major and smaller developments.
- 1.2** This Code of Practice has been prepared to help developers and their contractors ensure that they undertake their works in the most considerate manner, in order to reduce the impact of the work on local communities.
- 1.3** This document has been prepared by the Environmental Health Departments of the London Boroughs of Bromley, Croydon, Lewisham, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth, who have long experience dealing with environmental problems arising from demolition and construction sites. The Code of Practice is the policy of these authorities' Environmental Health Departments and will be attached to relevant planning approvals and building control applications and circulated to contractors working in the respective boroughs.
- 1.4** Noise and environmental nuisance can also be controlled through the prior consent principle under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 Section 61 and also through the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 80.
- 1.5** A local authority may serve a legal notice imposing noise requirements (including vibration) as to the way in which the works are to be carried out. The person served with a notice is guilty of an offence under the relevant Act if, without reasonable excuse, any requirement of the notice is contravened.
- 1.6** Adherence to this Code will demonstrate a positive attitude and commitment towards minimising environmental disturbance to local residents.
- 1.7** The contractor should always comply with the provisions of:-
  - The Control of Pollution Act 1974 Part IV
  - The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
  - The Clean Air Act 1993
  - The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- 1.8** Developers and their contractors should also have regard to the London Best Practice Guidance entitled "The control of dust and emissions from construction and demolition". This guidance evaluates sites as Low, Medium and High risk sites and is of particular significance to development sites that are greater than 1,000 square metres in area and where the development consists of more than ten properties. This document is available via your Council Environmental Health Department or directly from the Greater London Authority ([www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)) or London Councils ([www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/](http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/)).

## 2. Purpose of Code

- 2.1** The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that disturbances due to noise, vibration, dust and smoke arising from demolition and construction works on all building sites, including the Public Highway, are kept to an acceptable level without the imposition of unnecessary or unduly onerous restrictions on contractors.
- 2.2** The Code is also intended to provide guidance to contractors in circumstances where there is not a need to implement the formal procedure detailed in Sections 60 and 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. It is not intended to supersede any other published guidance.
- 2.3** The term “construction works” in this Code applies to site activities, preparation, demolition, excavation, tunnelling works, building operations, structural alteration and maintenance and transportation of materials and spoil to or from the site. Contact your borough Environmental Health Department for advice on their requirements for the demolition of buildings (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).
- 2.4** Although all contractors are expected to adopt the full provisions of the Code, it may not be appropriate to apply all the provisions to some smaller developments. However, all developers should comply with the spirit of the Code.
- 2.5** If contractors seek to vary the provisions of the Code, this must be done in consultation with the local Environmental Health Department prior to implementation. Details of the procedure are included within the Code.

## 3. General

- 3.1** The contractor will be held responsible for ensuring that all plant and equipment, including any which may be on hire, is well maintained, properly silenced and used in accordance with the manufacturers instructions and BS 5228.
- 3.2** The effectiveness of all measures included in this Code shall be monitored frequently by the main contractor, reviewed at least weekly, and may be subject to inspection by Officers from the Environmental Health Department.



# Control of **Pollution & Noise from Demolition & Construction Sites**

## 4. Protection of The Public and Buildings

- 4.1** The contractor should ensure that measures are taken to:
- (i) Protect residents, users of buildings close by and passers by from nuisance or harm and
  - (ii) Protect buildings from physical damage caused by vibration.
- 4.2** Contractors should be aware that the Health and Safety Executive are responsible for enforcing safety legislation on demolition and construction sites. For advice contact the Health and Safety Executive (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).
- 4.3** Contractors should be aware that Building Control officers are responsible for enforcing safety legislation in relation to dangerous structures. They operate a 24 hour service and if called to a site to investigate, remove and or make good what may be considered to be a danger to the public e.g. unsafe hoardings, and the owner of the site will be responsible for the payment of costs in relation to the service. For advice phone your local Building Control section (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

## 5. Hours of Work

- 5.1** Where residential occupiers are likely to be affected by noise, the hours of noisy works shall normally be restricted to:-
- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Monday – Friday          | 8.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.       |
| Saturday                 | 8.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.       |
| Sunday and Bank Holidays | No noisy activities on site |
- 5.2** However you must check with your local authority as there may be additional conditions set e.g. planning conditions specifying hours of work.
- 5.3** Instructions should be given to ensure that vehicles and plant arriving at and leaving the site comply with the stated hours of work. (See 5.1).

## 6. Publicity

- 6.1** Prior to any works starting, the contractor shall inform occupiers of all properties which may be affected by noise, dust or vibration arising from construction works of the nature of the works, proposed hours of work and their expected duration. In particular, it is recommended that a notice be placed in a conspicuous position, informing them of the agreed hours of work.
- 6.2** In all instances publicity should include the name and telephone number of a main contact within the contractor's organisation who is able to give further information and deal with any complaints or emergencies that may arise at any time.

## 7. Variation from Normal Working Hours

- 7.1** It is recognised that there may be circumstances where the restriction on hours of work in 5.1 cannot be adhered to. In these circumstances the contractor will be required to justify fully any proposed deviation from this Code of Practice and provide written justification to the local authority before any works start outside normal hours.
- 7.2** Provided the contractor has been able to justify the case to the local authority, works may be allowed to proceed in accordance with appropriate alternative conditions.
- 7.3** The local authority will confirm all agreed variations in writing to the contractor.
- 7.4** In any instance where it is necessary or desirable to deviate from this Code of Practice the contractor should be able to demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise disturbance from the works. Where appropriate, consideration shall be given to:
- (i) Screening to reduce noise levels.
  - (ii) The offering of temporary accommodation to residents likely to experience severe and prolonged disturbance.
  - (iii) Publicised “rest periods” during which noisy operations are temporarily ceased.
  - (iv) The provision of public refuges away from severe noisy works.
- 7.5** Prior agreement for works involving any deviation from this Code of Practice should be sought from your local authority, preferably at least 3 days prior to the works commencing, on form A in this document (see Appendix 1).
- 7.6** In the absence of prior agreement for noisy works, the Council may serve a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 to prohibit or restrict works in accordance with this Code of Practice.
- 7.7** In exceptional circumstances, where works being carried out on the Public Highway would cause severe disruption to traffic, permission to work outside the hours stated in 5.1 may be given by the Highways Engineer/Transportation Group in conjunction with the Environmental Health Department (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

## **PART 2 NOISE AND VIBRATION**

### **8. Plant and Equipment**

- 8.1** Noisy plant or equipment shall be situated as far as possible from noise sensitive buildings. Barriers (e.g. site huts, acoustic sheds or partitions) to reduce noise reaching noise sensitive buildings shall be employed where practicable. Old buildings around the site perimeter waiting to be demolished can provide effective noise screening.
- 8.2** 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 and efficient working order and operated in such a manner as to minimise noise emissions. The contractor shall ensure that all plant complies with the relevant statutory requirements.
  - (ii) Machines in intermittent use should be shut down or 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 which breaks concrete, brickwork or masonry by bending or 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, rotary drills and bursters activated by hydraulic, chemical or electrical power shall be used for excavating hard or extrusive material.
  - (vi) Where practicable, equipment powered by mains electricity shall be used in preference to equipment powered by internal combustion engine or locally generated electricity.
  - (vii) 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.
  - (viii) Plant shall be maintained in good working order so that extraneous noise from mechanical vibration, creaking and squeaking is kept to a minimum.
  - (ix) Noise emitting machinery which is required to run continuously shall be housed in a suitable acoustically lined enclosure wherever practicable.



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

## **9. Piling**

- 9.1** The noise sensitivity of the area should be considered when determining the method of piling to be used. Building Control and the Environmental Health Departments should be consulted on the chosen method.
- 9.2** Sheet piling should, wherever practicable, be carried out using hydraulically operated or vibratory hammers.
- 9.3** The use of conventional impact hammers should, wherever possible, be avoided. Where practicable, jacked piles shall be used in preference to piles driven using other methods. Any pile driving shall be carried out by plant equipped with a recognised noise reducing system.
- 9.4** Where surface contamination is present on site, appropriate piling techniques should be adopted. (See also Section 13).
- 9.5** In some circumstances the Environmental Health Department may limit the hours of piling further than those quoted in 5.1.

## **10. Sandblasting**

- 10.1** The work area will be close sheeted to reduce dust nuisance from grit. Routine checking is required to ensure that the sheeting remains sound or sealed during the operation. Particular attention shall also be given to the working platform to ensure that it is properly sheeted or sealed to contain dust.
- 10.2** Non siliceous grit will be used to avoid long term irreversible lung damage from silica dust.
- 10.3** Proper protection will be provided for any structure painted with lead based paint.
- 10.4** In cases where water is used for large scale cleaning and blasting the requirements of the Environment Agency should be followed.

## **PART 3 DUST AND AIR POLLUTION AND SOIL CONTAMINATION**

### **11. Dust and Air Pollution**

- 11.1** Burning of materials on site shall not be permitted.
- 11.2** The London Best Practice Guide provides detailed methods to mitigate emissions of dust and other pollutants. Emphasis should be placed on the following to minimise the risk of air pollution:-
- (i) Using processes which do not generate hazardous fumes and hazardous dust
  - (ii) Ensuring that airborne hazards do not escape from the site to affect members of the public and surrounding environment.
- 11.3** Dust pollution will be minimised during demolition by the complete screening, if practicable, of the building or structure to be demolished with debris screens or sheets. Old buildings around the site perimeter waiting to be demolished can provide effective air pollution screening.
- 11.4** The watering down of the area should be carried out where necessary to minimise dust transfer into neighbouring premises. Wheel wash facilities should be provided on larger sites. Contact your Environmental Health Department for their requirements (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).
- 11.5** Stockpiles of earth shall be damped down or otherwise suitably treated to prevent the emission of dust from the site. Stockpiles should be planned and sited to minimise the potential for dust generation. The handling of spoil should be kept to a minimum and when materials are deposited onto a stockpile it should be from the minimum possible height.
- 11.6** The contractor shall ensure that the area around the site, including the public highway, is regularly and adequately swept to prevent any accumulation of dust and dirt.
- 11.7** Skips and removal vehicles shall be properly covered when leaving the site. Spoil should be handled in such a way so that it does not give rise to excessive dust. Watering of rubble chutes shall be undertaken where necessary to prevent dust emission.
- 11.8** The contractor should take all necessary precautions to prevent smoke emissions or fumes from plant or stored fuel oils from drifting into residential areas. In particular, measures should be taken to ensure that all plant is well maintained and not left running for long periods when not in use.

- 11.9** General advice can be obtained from the “Control of dust from construction and demolition activities”, February 2003 published by the Building Research Establishment (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

## **12. Asbestos**

- 12.1** The contractor shall consult with the Health and Safety Executive when removing asbestos materials (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

## **13. Contaminated Land**

- 13.1** The contractor shall consult with the Environment Agency and the Environmental Health Department when dealing with any contaminated soil or contaminated groundwater on the site.
- 13.2** Certain contaminants may affect construction materials and advice should be sought at an early stage. Contact Building Control and the Environmental Health Departments for further advice (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

## **14. Crushing Machines**

- 14.1** 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 shall be obtained. The process operator should notify the local authority in whose area the process is proposed prior to operation.

## **15. Monitoring**

- 15.1** The developer and contractor should conduct a regular air monitoring programme where there is evidence of volatile or airborne hazardous materials or there is a risk of fumes or dust affecting the local area and take any necessary corrective action. They should also contact the Environmental Health Department (see list of contacts in Appendix 2) for advice, further information and any additional requirements.

## **PART 4 DRAINAGE FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS**

### **16. Drainage**

- 16.1** Following the demolition of a building the disused drains must be “sealed off” at the junction with the sewer under the public road. Generally the local authority will not allow you to re-use old drainage systems for new buildings. However in certain cases this may be permitted subject to a satisfactory closed circuit television (CCTV) survey.
- 16.2** The Environmental Health Department may require you to provide a CCTV survey and may itself be able to provide a CCTV service. Additional services may be available such as carrying out a drain seal off service by remote control without the unnecessary expense and disruption of digging up the public road. These services are chargeable.
- 16.3** For further details on these or other technical services available please contact your local authority (see list of contacts in Appendix 2).

# Appendix 1

## Form A

### **LONDON BOROUGH OF ..... ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Application for works not conforming with the **“Control of Pollution and Noise from Demolition and Construction sites” Code of Practice.**

When completed please send and/or fax to the relevant Environmental Health Department (see list of contacts in Appendix 2), together with any supporting documents

Applicant .....

Registered Office:.....

Telephone..... Mobile.....

Fax..... Email .....

Contact Name/s.....

.....

Address for correspondence (if different from above)

.....

.....

Telephone..... Mobile .....

Fax..... Email .....

Contact Name/s.....

.....

Location of works.....

.....

Control of

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Proposed start date.....

Estimated duration of works.....

Proposed hours of work – (where not in accordance with Code of Practice)  
.....  
.....

Full details of proposed works – Please give full details of plant and machinery to be used and any other proposed deviations from the Code of Practice  
.....  
.....

Reasons for not adhering to Code of Practice.....  
.....  
.....

Details of advance publicity, consultation and measures taken/proposed to minimise noise, dust and pollution  
.....  
.....

Signed..... Date.....

Designation.....

For use by Environmental Health Department

Comments:  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signed ..... Date .....





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