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Mr Andrew Dismore AM
Cllr's Anne Clarke,
Nagus Narenthira,
Gill Sargeant and
Zakia Zubairi
London Assembly Labour
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY
City Hall, The Queen's Walk, SE1 2AA

23 March 2021

Dear Andrew, Cllr Clarke, Cllr Narenthira, Cllr Sargeant and Cllr Zubairi,

Re: Your email dated 15 March 2021

Thank you for your email dated 15 March 2021 relating to the Pulse development in Colindale. I appreciate the concerns you have raised and can assure you that our residents' safety is of paramount importance.

I can respond to your individual questions as follows:

1. A summary of the recent fire incident in the waking watch cabin on the Pulse development in Colindale?

Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) is currently awaiting the report from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) in order to understand fully what caused the fire. Following discussion with our Waking Watch provider (Trigion), we can confirm that the fire started in the generator room. Trigion has requested the report from the LFB.

Our understanding of the events which occurred on 11 March 2021, at present, is as follows:

- 01:40hrs. A mobile officer attended site to carry out a welfare check with the 3 Waking Watch officers on site and top up the diesel used for the welfare unit generator.*
- 05:50hrs. A Waking Watch officer became aware of the smell of smoke whilst in the welfare unit and carried out an inspection of the welfare unit. Smoke was detected coming from the generator room. The Emergency stop button was pressed, the alarm was raised, and the Fire Service called. His colleagues were informed of the situation to ensure colleague safety and the Service Operation Centre were informed.*
- 06:03hrs. The London Fire Brigade attended the site.*
- 06:18hrs. The fire was extinguished.*
- 06:18 – 11:00hrs. Relevant personnel were notified, statements collected, and photographic evidence recorded.*

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2. Why was this location chosen?

The location was selected by Crabtree Properties, NHG's managing agents. Due to onsite parking arrangements and restrictions there were limited locations available to locate such a unit. This was away from the accommodation buildings, as we did not want it in close proximity to flammable cladding, identified on the buildings. It did not obstruct traffic flow or impede pedestrians using the site or disturb residents.

3. Why was a flammable cabin selected?

The unit was sourced from a reputable supplier and was considered fit for purpose. It was selected as it was suitable for the task required and was designed to meet the needs of the Waking Watch assigned for that duty. It is a metal cabin with the diesel generator being housed in a secure compartment accessible only from the outside of the unit.

Diesel fuel is more stable than petrol and needed to be used as there was no electrical supply available. The unit is designed to be fire retardant, is fully compliant with health, safety and welfare regulations in the workplace regs 1992. The event was unforeseen and dealt with without delay and at no point was there a risk to residents.

4. Can you inform us of why the waking watch was necessary?

NHG carried out an intrusive survey to the building at The Pulse, Colindale development in June 2020. Following the results of the investigation, we were advised by our Fire Engineer to implement a Waking Watch and install temporary fire alarms until remediation works are completed; advice upon which we promptly acted promptly.

5. Does the Pulse development have ACM cladding, or any other kind of combustible cladding?

The exterior finishes for Pulse buildings are as follows: Expanded Polystyrene with render finish separated by brickwork, full elevation tongue and groove timber cladding, incidental decorative tongue and groove timber cassettes separated by brickwork, Rockpanel mineral composite panels, aluminium composite panels (ACM) at spandrel floor slab locations only and fibreglass reinforced polymer composite sections separated by brickwork.

6. If so, where and what type?

Timber clad facades and incidental timber cassettes are installed on all buildings in various ranges of coverage and on most elevations, but not typically more than 25% in total volume, and it is not known currently if any of the timber facades have been treated with an intumescent or fire-resistant coating. In addition, there are sections of expanded polystyrene (EPS) and good quality render, which in most cases is separated by brickwork. According to our advisors, timber and expanded polystyrene are both materials that if untreated or for the latter untested via the BR135 standard route, can be considered moderate to highly combustible. In the event testing, or where timber exists and has been treated with an intumescent coating, risk of combustion can be considered to be significantly lowered.

7. Are there issues with EWS1 forms, and can you give us an update on remediation?

The buildings at The Pulse, Colindale do not currently benefit from an EWS1 form. NHG are currently engaging in discussion with the Developer to determine the scope of works and programme of remediation works which are required for these buildings. An EWS1 for will be issued once all remedial works are completed.

8. Can you reassure us about the capability of the fire marshals to do their duties, given the fire occurred in their cabin?

We are confident in our supplier's ability to carry out their duties. NHG are currently working with this service provider on other sites where no incidents of this nature have occurred. Upon finding the fire, the waking watch responded quickly in reporting the fire to LFB.

I trust this answers your questions in full, but if you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Andy Mackay

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