



Ministry of Defence

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Mr Les Wilson

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21 April 2020

Ref. FOI 2020/04314

Dear Mr Wilson

Thank you for your email of 2 April 2020 requesting the following information for St Georges Barracks:

- * what percentage of the total required testing has been done and evaluated?*
- * what type of contamination has been revealed?*
- * how much of contamination either revealed or anticipated arises from the storage in the period starting from 1940 of weapons of any nature that have been or are being held on-site?*
- * which organisation will be paying for the contamination clearance?*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held and can be found below.

- *what percentage of the total required testing has been done and evaluated?*

Land Quality Assessments (LQA) were carried out in the 1990's and evaluations made. As part of the forthcoming planning application it is expected that these surveys will be reviewed and updated.

- *what type of contamination has been revealed?*

A high-level summary of ground constraints can be found on pages 27-28 of the masterplan which is publicly available and can be found online via the link below:
<https://www.stgeorgesrutland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/St-Georges-Evolving-Masterplan-November-2018.pdf>

- *how much of contamination either revealed or anticipated arises from the storage in the period starting from 1940 of weapons of any nature that have been or are being held on-site?*

A high-level summary is provided within the masterplan relating to contamination. The document refers to potentially contaminated areas of the site though it would not be possible to guarantee links of contamination to specific dates / activities.

- *which organisation will be paying for the contamination clearance?*

The MOD does not hold any information in relation to this question.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to know that it is expected that the LQA reports will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming planning application. All potential hazards that could pose a risk of contamination to receptors will be reviewed.

The current requirement for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) regarding contamination specifically Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance is as below:

DIO will seek to sell land 'as is' with full and open disclosure of the UXO hazards that are likely to be present. DIO will not normally procure ordnance clearance activity prior to sale, unless it is considered that the risk presented by UXO could not be reasonably managed by the new owner, if necessary, supported by a specialist UXO contractor. For example, legacy chemical weapons or where an unacceptable level of risk or potential liability from UXO has been identified.

It is likely therefore that the purchasers of individual parcels will remedy any contamination on that particular land parcel. Any associated costs will be factored into the eventual land receipt. DIO will provide full and open disclosure of the UXO hazards. A risk-based survey will be commissioned when the site is vacated by the military as part of the handover closure process to determine higher risk areas based on historical use and information.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made in writing within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

DIO Secretariat