

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

██████████
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA040920-3183

30 September 2020

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 3 September 2020. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA) 2000

You asked for:

Further to the Mayor's press release below in respect of replacement of unsafe cladding on buildings in London¹:

Could I please make a Freedom of Information Request with respect to the names of the private and public landlords which have, or a due to, receive the letter in question?

Our response to your request is as follows:

The GLA administers two government funded programmes to remediate unsafe ACM, and the Mayor wrote to building owners that have not started on site but have had funding applications approved.

We cannot publish the names of the recipients to avoid the risks that buildings can be identified. This information has been withheld from disclosure under Section 38(1)(b) – endangering the safety of any individual. Section 38(1)(b) of the Act is duly engaged because of the potential risk to public safety as set out in the Act.

Under FoIA, the 'public interest' is not the same as what might be of interest to the public. In balancing the public interest in disclosure, we consider the greater good or benefit to the community if the information is released or not. The 'right to know' must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

There is a public interest in the release of information that helps to demonstrate the work of public bodies involved funding programmes to remediate unsafe ACM. There is a justifiable public interest in placing into the public domain information that would allow organisations to offer services in relation to this work.

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-demands-action-from-unsafe-building-owners>

The Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government (MCHLG) is responsible for collecting data on buildings affected by ACM cladding, and the information they collect is published in building safety data releases, the latest of which is available on the link below². Specific information on exact number of buildings in each borough, or how many have received cladding remediation funding, is not published to avoid the risk that buildings can be identified.

The GLA is also mindful of the assumption in favour of disclosure in 2(2)(b) the FOIA. Considerations favouring non-disclosure; Conversely the disclosure of this same information would increase if building locations are made public and seen by those intent on causing harm. It is not in the public interest to release information that could be directly used to harm or plan harm to the public.

We have determined that safeguarding the safety of the public is of paramount importance. The public interest favours maintaining the exemption provisions of s.38(1)(b).

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely


Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>