

Our Ref : KOC/ab/FOI240614-1

24 June 2014

Attention :

Robin Yu

Freedom of Information Officer

Royal Borough Kensington & Chelsea Kensington Town Hall

Hornton Street

London W8 7NX

This is the  
response received  
from RBKC to the  
question raised

**Re: Freedom of Information Request**

With reference to the above we would be grateful if you could provide the following information.

Please treat this request as a being made under the Freedom of Information Act.

When responding to this letter please do not consolidate your replies with any other Freedom of Information request.

With reference to the document produced by RBKC entitled "Response to Consultation Responses for the Potential Impact of Basement Excavation on Biodiversity a Paper for the RBKC Planning Department 2014 by Kenny Gunnell, Ecology Service Manager RBKC"

1. RBKC state that basements have led to a decline in vegetated area within London. RBKC make the statement "a basement beneath a garden can contribute to this decline."

Please provide a copy of the study together with a list of addresses where it has been proven that a basement beneath a garden has led to a decline in vegetated area.

**RBKC - The Council has not stated 'basements' have led to a decline....Any evidence is quoted within the document.**

2. RBKC state that "there is a tendency for post development landscaping to contain more hard covers."

Please provide a copy of the detailed study and list of addresses where measurements have been taken to support the statements made by RBKC.

Please note that photographs taken by satellite at a distance of 300-600 miles away will be unacceptable.

**RBKC - Evidence is quoted within the document. The Council can only provide the information it holds.**

3. Please provide evidence to substantiate the statement that "a planning condition requiring habitat enhancement for individual private gardens would need to be practical or enforceable."

**RBKC - No information available.**

4. Please provide a copy of the study referencing basements in RBKC which has been used to support the statement “in one metre of soil there may also be increased risk of the soil profile drying out and once again impacting vegetation growth.”

**RBKC - Pages 7/8 of submitted document BAS 05/15 - Council’s Response to Arboricultural Issues raised by Cranbrook Basements and Basement Force in the July/September 2013 Publication Consultation, RBKC, April 2014 refers. Please note comments made by Mr Barrell representing Cranbrook Basements on the 2009 Subterranean Development SPD quoted in this document.**

5. Please provide a list of all cases where a “mitigation hierarchy is employed on a case-by-case basis.” For the avoidance of doubt RBKC have made a statement that a mitigation process has been carried out on previous projects and it is evidence of that process which we require.

**RBKC - The Council has not made a statement that *"a mitigation process has been carried out on previous projects"*. The actual text and its context in the document should be referred back to. All planning applications and related information is searchable on the Council's website.**

6. Please provide a copy of the report or study that has been carried out together with factual analysis within the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea to support the statement that “cumulative impact (of basements) can cause harm to biodiversity interest.”

**RBKC – Submitted document BAS 36 Impact of Basement Development on Biodiversity, RBKC, February 2014.**

We look forward to hearing from you within the prescribed period.

Yours sincerely

Kevin O’Connor

Director