

Dame Meg Hillier
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons

1 February 2023

Dear Dame Meg,

I am writing further to my letter of 12 January, which provided the Committee with information on an asbestos related incident that occurred on the Fielden House construction project. I was informed yesterday that the ongoing comprehensive investigation has discovered the incident occurred on 6 September, not December 22.

The investigation is examining all aspects of the incident, including the reasons incorrect information was initially provided, and we will ensure lessons are learnt.

I have corrected the table I sent you last month, which is attached.

Yours sincerely,



Sir John Benger
Clerk of the House of Commons

Sir John Benger

Date	Location	Incident	Action
October 2022	Norman Shaw North	Asbestos containing materials discovered during ground excavation works and moved without necessary precautions to prevent fibre release. Risk of exposure judged to be “very low” and incident does not meet the criteria for reporting under RIDDOR Regs Incident happened within the confines of the CDM2 ¹ area, with no interface with any house staff or teams	Works stopped and Principal Contractor undertook immediate investigation - Area sealed while arrangements for removal made - Incident being treated as high potential near miss - Strategic Estates as the CDM Client have ensured a comprehensive investigation has been undertaken by all parties and that the Principal Contractor has actioned the relevant findings and updated their arrangements to ensure continued site safety.
September 2022	Fielden House	An inspection hatch was cut into a ceiling without appropriate controls in place. Asbestos insulation lagging debris and insulation to pipework and associated intrusions was found within the ceiling void. There does not appear to have been contamination of the area and it is expected the risk of exposure to persons is low.	I have initiated a comprehensive investigation, to establish the facts, verify the initial assessment and examine the root and underlying causes.

¹ CDM refers to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

Fire incidents

Date	Location	Incident	Action
October 2022	Portcullis House	Overheating Aquavac	Dealt with by contractors
November 2022	Norman Shaw North	Steam cleaning machine caught fire on scaffolding	Dealt with by Contractors
December 2022	Palace of Westminster	Overheated fan belt	Investigated by in house mechanical engineers
December 2022	1 Parliament Street	Item of clothing left on portable heater	Removed by Fire Protection Team, left with In House electrical engineers

Stone masonry falls

There have been no reported incidences of stone masonry falls since 29 March 2022.