

# Information evolution

## The pre-construction information evolves as the client, together with their advisers and designers, narrows down options and agrees details

The preconstruction information sets out what the existing asset is and what the client requires to be changed. Included in this is any significant information that may make the work particularly difficult, dangerous or uncertain so that those who are tendering for the work can take these matters into account in their pricing structure.

## Who provides the pre-construction information?

It is the client's duty to provide information about the project that they have or could reasonably obtain. Principal designers have a duty to assist the client in this, which duty may be more onerous for inexperienced clients and on more complex projects. Others, including designers and principal designer must both provide information that is relevant, and request the information they need to fulfil their own duties. It is important to recognise here that the information they request must be for the project and not just a generic set of information that may or may not be useful. Designers and principal designers are advised to explain why they need a particular set of information to be provided.

## What is the pre-construction information?

The pre-construction information is the pre-cursor to the construction phase plan that will be developed by the principal contractor and, for projects where there is an existing CDM health and safety file, may be an evolution of an existing health and safety file together with updates covering new works requirements and any local changes that might affect the project. Appendix 2 to the Guidance on CDM 2015 provides a useful reference text. It specifically states that the information must:

- (a) be relevant to the particular project;
- (b) have an appropriate level of detail; and
- (c) be proportionate to the risks involved.



It is important to understand when producing this information exactly what kind of organisation will receive it. Procurement staff have an important part to play in providing this kind of information. For instance, a risk that may be routine for a specialist is unlikely to be so for a generalist. This means designers and principal designers, who are advising their clients on the content of the pre-construction information will need to modify their advice depending on a wide range of project and client specific circumstances.

## Who receives the pre-construction information?

The pre-construction information is for any organisation or individual who is tendering for work or is part of the team developing the design and works planning. Different content is needed for different recipients at different stages and this needs to be established by the client and their advisers as the project progresses into design and delivery stages. This is clearly explained in Paragraph 9 of Appendix 2 to CDM 2015 Guidance which states:

- 9 The stage at which it is practicable to provide information will depend on a number of factors such as the scale and complexity of the project, when dutyholders are appointed and when information is obtained. However, the client, together with the principal designer, must also take account of when designers and contractors will need pre-construction information to enable them to carry out their duties. For example:
- (a) designers or contractors who are seeking appointment for work on the project should have sufficient information made available to them at a time which allows them to put together a bid based on a clear understanding of the nature of the work involved;
  - (b) designers already appointed should be provided with sufficient information at a stage early enough to enable them to judge whether it is reasonably practicable to eliminate any foreseeable health and safety risks in the design process and, where it is not, the steps they should take to reduce or control the remaining risks. It may not be possible to provide this information all at once, in which case it should be provided as soon as it becomes available;
  - (c) contractors already appointed should be provided with the information they will need to plan, manage and monitor their work.

## Non-health and safety content of the pre-construction

### Information

The building and construction industry is extremely diverse and different sectors have evolved different ways of managing projects. These differences may not be obviously health and safety matters but may have a significant impact on health and safety. For instance rules around public procurement, historic buildings, planning restrictions or environmental constraints. CDM 2015 requires all those who wish to accept commissions as duty holders to have the necessary skills knowledge and experience. It will be necessary for those who advise clients to have expertise in a broader range of skills than just health and safety to achieve success in health and safety management on projects. This information is not required explicitly but will need to be considered in the general duties to establish management arrangements (the client) and to plan, manage and monitor (the principal designer and principal contractor).

It is important to remember too, that parties to the project team cannot enforce compliance as the regulators can. They will need to depend on contracts and formal agreements such as contracts, Building Information Management (BIM) contracts and protocols, project team meeting arrangements and reporting etc. The overall arrangements must be established early on in the project and will need to be explained in the pre-construction information.

Life outside the tick box.