



The Coal
Authority



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RTPI
Learning Partner

200 Lichfield Lane
Berry Hill
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 4RG

Tel: 01623 637 119 (Planning Enquiries)

Email: planningconsultation@coal.gov.uk

Web: www.gov.uk/coalauthority

For the Attention of: Ms J. Townsend – Case Officer
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

[By Email: development.control@bury.gov.uk]

27 July 2022

Dear Ms Townsend

PLANNING APPLICATION: 68530

Hybrid application at Land at the Junction of Hollins Brook Way and Pilsworth Road, Bury, BL9 8RR

Thank you for your consultation letter of 7 July 2022 seeking the views of the Coal Authority on the above planning application.

The Coal Authority is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. As a statutory consultee, the Coal Authority has a duty to respond to planning applications and development plans in order to protect the public and the environment in mining areas.

The Coal Authority Response: Material Consideration

The application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area; therefore within the site and surrounding area there are coal mining features and hazards which need to be considered in relation to the determination of this planning application.

More specifically, the Coal Authority's information indicates that a coal seam of potentially workable thickness is conjectured to outcrop across the site, and that this seam may have been worked at shallow depth beneath the western part of the site. Voids and broken ground associated with such workings can pose a risk of ground instability and may give rise to the emission of mine gases.

The planning application is accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment report (January 2022, prepared by Groundtech Consulting). Based on a review of relevant sources of coal mining and geological information, the report concludes that possible

unrecorded mine workings associated with a sub cropping coal seam pose a potential risk of subsidence at the site. According, it goes on to recommend that an intrusive investigation is undertaken to further assess the risk posed by any such workings.

In light of the above, we are pleased to note that the applicant has also submitted a Geo-Environmental Appraisal (31 March 2022, again prepared by Groundtech Consulting) in support of their application. This report indicates that intrusive investigations were have been carried out, which included the drilling of boreholes to a maximum depth of 45.0m bgl in order to assess the shallow coal mining situation.

Section 6.12 of the Geo-Environmental Appraisal indicates that significant depths of superficial deposits were encountered during drilling, with sandstone bedrock present to the base of both boreholes. It indicates that no coal or evidence of mine workings was encountered during the investigation.

The report goes on to conclude on the matter that "*The depth of superficial deposits and presence of groundwater indicates the presence of unrecorded mine entries or workings is highly unlikely. In addition, the depth of rock cover proves in excess of ten times the thickness of the coal seams in accordance with CIRIA C758, therefore the risk to the stability of the surface of the site is Very Low and no further action is required.*"

The Coal Authority Recommendation to the LPA

The Coal Authority's Planning & Development Team considers the content and professional opinions expressed within the Coal Mining Risk Assessment report and the subsequent Geo-Environmental Appraisal to be sufficient for the purposes of the planning system, in demonstrating that the application site is safe and stable for the proposed development. We therefore wish to raise **no objection** to the proposed development.

Mine Gas

It should be noted that wherever coal resources or coal mine features exist, there is the potential for mine gases to exist. These risks should always be considered by the LPA.

The Planning & Development team at the Coal Authority, in its role of statutory consultee in the planning process, only comments on gas issues if our data indicates that gas emissions have been recorded on the site. However, the absence of such a comment should not be interpreted to imply that there are no gas risks present. Whether or not specific emissions have been noted by the Coal Authority, local planning authorities should seek their own technical advice on the gas hazards that may exist, and appropriate measures to be implemented, from technically competent personnel.

SuDS

Where SuDS are proposed as part of the development scheme consideration will need to be given to the implications of this in relation to the stability and public safety risks posed by coal mining legacy. The developer should seek their own advice from a technically competent person to ensure that a proper assessment has been made of the potential interaction between hydrology, the proposed drainage system and ground stability,

including the implications this may have for any mine workings which may be present beneath the site.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss the above matters further.

Yours sincerely

James Smith

James Smith *BSc. (Hons), Dip.URP, MRTPI*
Planning and Development Manager

Disclaimer

The above consultation response is provided by The Coal Authority as a Statutory Consultee and is based upon the latest available data on the date of the response, and electronic consultation records held by The Coal Authority since 1 April 2013. The comments made are also based upon only the information provided to The Coal Authority by the Local Planning Authority and/or has been published on the Council's website for consultation purposes in relation to this specific planning application. The views and conclusions contained in this response may be subject to review and amendment by The Coal Authority if additional or new data/information (such as a revised Coal Mining Risk Assessment) is provided by the Local Planning Authority or the Applicant for consultation purposes.

In formulating this response The Coal Authority has taken full account of the professional conclusions reached by the competent person who has prepared the Coal Mining Risk Assessment or other similar report. In the event that any future claim for liability arises in relation to this development The Coal Authority will take full account of the views, conclusions and mitigation previously expressed by the professional advisers for this development in relation to ground conditions and the acceptability of development.