



**The Coal
Authority**



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For the Attention of: Ms H Leach
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

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

26 June 2023

Dear Ms Leach

PLANNING APPLICATION: 69706

Partial demolition and replacement of 1 no. dwelling; The Gatehouse, Woodhill Road, Bury, BL8 1BN

Thank you for your consultation letter of 16 June 2023 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 for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). 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

I have reviewed the proposals and confirm that the application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area; therefore within the application 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.

The Coal Authority records indicate that the site is underlain by recorded shallow coal workings and probable unrecorded underground shallow coal workings. 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 site also lies within a Surface Coal Resource Zone.

The applicant has obtained appropriate and up-to-date coal mining information for the proposed development site, including the undertaking of an intrusive site investigation.

This information has been used to inform a Shallow Mining Site Investigation Works (April 2023, prepared by LK Consult) to accompany the planning application.

To investigate potential coal mining related hazards a total of 3no. rotary open hole boreholes were sunk to 30-40mbgl across site. The report indicates evidence of potential coal workings was identified as soft drilling and loss of flush was in RH3 between 10.70-12.60mbgl with small voids recorded. Intermittent flush returned was recorded until 26.00mbgl, when full flush returned. Fast drilling with no loss of flush was recorded in RH1 between 7.50-12.60mbgl.

The report contends that the above is likely to represent workings with the Arley coal seam, in line with desk-based assessments. The report author indicates that the investigation has proven that there is <10t of rock cover overlying the coal seams in all investigation locations. Accordingly, stabilisation work is recommended.

The proposed remediation work should be designed and undertaken by competent persons and should be appropriate to render the site safe and stable to accommodate the proposed development.

The applicant should note that Permission is required from the Coal Authority Permit and Licensing Team before undertaking any remediation activity which may disturb coal property. Please note that any comments that the Coal Authority may have made in a Planning context are without prejudice to the outcomes of a Permit application.

Mine Gas

It should be noted that wherever coal resources or coal mine features exist at shallow depth or at the surface, there is the potential for mine gases to exist. These risks should always be considered by the LPA. The Planning and 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.

Sustainable Urban Drainage

It should be noted that 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.

The Coal Authority Recommendation to the LPA

The Coal Authority concurs with the recommendations of the Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report; that coal mining legacy potentially poses a risk to the proposed development and that remediation works should be undertaken prior to development in order to ensure the safety and stability of the site.

Accordingly, the Coal Authority recommends the imposition of the following conditions:

1. No development shall commence until remediation works and/or mitigation measures to address land instability arising from coal mining legacy have been implemented on site in full in order to ensure that the site is made safe and stable for the development proposed.

The remedial works shall be carried out in accordance with authoritative UK guidance.

2. Prior to the occupation of the development, or it being taken into beneficial use, a signed statement or declaration prepared by a suitably competent person confirming that the site is, or has been made, safe and stable for the approved development shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. This document shall confirm the methods and findings of the intrusive site investigations and the completion of any remedial works and/or mitigation necessary to address the risks posed by past coal mining activity.

The Coal Authority therefore has **no objection** to the proposed development **subject to the imposition of the conditions to secure the above**.

This is our recommendation for condition wording. Whilst we appreciate that you may wish to make some amendment to the choice of words, we would respectfully request that the specific parameters to be satisfied are not altered by any changes that may be made.

The following statement provides the justification why the Coal Authority considers that a pre-commencement condition is required in this instance:

The undertaking of intrusive site investigations, prior to the commencement of development, is considered to be necessary to ensure that adequate information pertaining to ground conditions and coal mining legacy is available to enable appropriate remedial and mitigatory measures to be identified and carried out before building works commence on site. This is in order to ensure the safety and stability of the development, in accordance with paragraphs 178 and 179 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Langrick

Ashley Langrick BA (HONS) Dip TRP MRTPI
Planning and Development Manager (Corporate Projects)

General Information for the Applicant

Under the Coal Industry Act 1994 any intrusive activities, including initial site investigation boreholes, and/or any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings/coal mine entries for ground stability purposes require the prior written permission of The Coal Authority, since such activities can have serious public health and safety implications. Failure to obtain permission will result in trespass, with the potential for court action. In the event that you are proposing to undertake such work in the Forest of Dean local authority area our permission may not be required; it is recommended that you check with us prior to commencing any works. Application forms for Coal Authority permission and further guidance can be obtained from The Coal Authority's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-a-permit-to-deal-with-a-coal-mine-on-your-property>

The Coal Authority's records indicate that surface coal resource is present on the site, although this should not be taken to imply that mineral extraction would be economically viable, technically feasible or environmentally acceptable. As you will be aware those authorities with responsibility for minerals planning and safeguarding will have identified where they consider minerals of national importance are present in your area and related policy considerations. As part of the planning application decision making process consideration should be given to such advice in respect of the indicated surface coal resource.

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.