



The Coal
Authority



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For the Attention of: Helen Pressley – Case Officer
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

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

3rd May 2023

Dear Ms Pressley

PLANNING APPLICATION: 69513

Erection of a new single storey ED modular unit extension; Fairfield General Hospital, Rochdale Old Road, Bury, BL9 7TD

Thank you for your consultation notification of 20 April 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. 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: Fundamental Concern

I have reviewed the site location plans, the proposals and the supporting information submitted and available to view on the LPA website. I can confirm that the site falls partially within the defined Development High Risk Area.

The Coal Authority records indicate that there is a recorded off site mine entry reference 383411-014 circa. 19m from the eastern site boundary, with a zone of influence that extends marginally within the footprint of the proposed single storey ED modular unit. Our records suggest that this shaft was discovered during site works in 1995, although we have no knowledge of what if any treatment works were afforded to this shaft. Mine entries pose a potential risk to surface stability and public safety.

As you will be aware, the Coal Authority's general approach in cases where development is proposed within the Development High Risk Area is to recommend that the applicant obtains coal mining information for the application site and submits a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to support the planning application.

However, when considering the nature of this particular development proposal, in this instance only a small part of the extension appears to be within the Development High Risk area and does not appear to require substantial foundations or earthworks. We also acknowledge that the existing building to the east of the site is positioned between the proposed extension and the plotted position of the mine shaft.

On this basis we do not consider that requiring a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be proportionate to the nature of the development proposed in this particular case and **do not object** to this planning application.

However, the Coal Authority does recommend that, should planning permission be granted for this proposal, the following wording is included as an Informative Note on any planning permission granted:

Informative Note

The proposed development lies within an area that has been defined by the Coal Authority as containing coal mining features at surface or shallow depth. These features may include: mine entries (shafts and adits); shallow coal workings; geological features (fissures and break lines); mine gas and former surface mining sites. Although such features are seldom readily visible, they can often be present and problems can occur, particularly as a result of new development taking place.

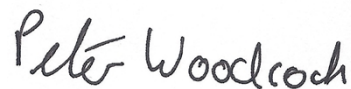
Any form of development over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry can be dangerous and raises significant land stability and public safety risks. As a general precautionary principle, the Coal Authority considers that the building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry should be avoided. In exceptional circumstance where this is unavoidable, expert advice must be sought to ensure that a suitable engineering design which takes into account all the relevant safety and environmental risk factors, including mine gas and mine-water. Your attention is drawn to the Coal Authority Policy in relation to new development and mine entries available at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-on-or-within-the-influencing-distance-of-mine-entries

Any intrusive activities which disturb or enter any coal seams, coal mine workings or coal mine entries (shafts and adits) requires a Coal Authority Permit. Such activities could include site investigation boreholes, excavations for foundations, piling activities, other ground works and any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings and coal mine entries for ground stability purposes. Failure to obtain a Coal Authority Permit for such activities is trespass, with the potential for court action.

If any coal mining features are unexpectedly encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Coal Authority on 0800 288 4242. Further information is available on the Coal Authority website at:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority

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

Yours sincerely,



Peter Woodcock | BSc (Hons)
Trainee Planning 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.