Ein cyf/Our ref: CAS-269808-P0F8
Eich cyf/Your ref: P/2024/1151

Wrexham County Borough Council
The Guildhall
Wrexham
LL11 1AY

Dyddiad/Date: 21 January 2025

Annwyl Syr/Madam/Dear Sir/Madam,

BWRIAD/PROPOSAL: RHYDDHAU AMOD 7 (HALOGIAD) CANIATÂD CYNLLUNIO P/2021/0676/DISCHARGE OF CONDITION 7 (CONTAMINATION) OF PLANNING PERMISSION P/2021/0676

LLEOLIAD/LOCATION: LAND NORTH EAST OF MAELOR WORKS, CROSS LANES, WREXHAM, LL13 0UW

Thank you for consulting Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru (CNC)/Natural Resources Wales (NRW) about the additional information for the above, which we received on 02 December 2024.

We continue to have concerns with the application as submitted. We do not recommend your Authority discharges condition 7 for the following reasons.

Condition 7

We have reviewed the additional information provided to you by the agent in their email dated 15/11/2024.

Phase I Report Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) Report (Reference GSI 2006 MP PI Report dated December 2023):

We note the comment that a figure presenting where potential sources of contamination may be located on site *'is never required at the phase 1 stage'*. The Phase I report identified potential sources of contamination as highlighted by the desk top study / preliminary risk assessment which may merit further investigation, to be addressed under the Phase II. Whilst a figure or plan detailing this is not a requirement of the Phase I stage, it is often included within a Phase I as part of the development of the initial conceptual site model to inform the subsequent further investigations.

The entirety of the site, as outlined by the redline boundary presented on Drawing Number GSI 2006/02 lies on top of a principal bedrock aquifer (the Kinnerton Sandstone Formation). The superficial deposits underlying the northern section of the Site, adjacent to the River

Clywedog, are classified as a Secondary A aquifer (Alluvium). The hydraulic connectivity between the two has not been discussed in the report, and as such both aquifer units are considered receptors.

Phase II Site Investigation (SI) Report (Reference GSI 2006 EW PII Report dated April 2024):

Linking to the advice above regarding a figure or plan showing the locations of potential contaminants, we advise that further information on the placement of site investigation locations relevant to areas of potential contamination should be submitted. We note from the email dated 15/11/2024 that the exploratory holes locations were "*placed across the site as general coverage and informed by the Phase I desk review".* However, it remains unclear whether the site investigation was targeted based on the historical activities at the site; this is important information to understand whether the site investigation has been sufficient at investigating the potential sources of contamination at the site. We advise that additional information is provided to clarify how the locations of the exploratory holes were selected.

At sites of higher environmental sensitivity such as this, with potential sources of contamination relating to historical use of the site, it is important to ensure site investigation works target potential sources of contamination in order to adequately assess the risk profile of the site.

This is particularly relevant due to the absence of groundwater investigation information to ensure soils have been appropriately investigated in areas of possible concern, i.e. former railway infrastructure former pond ('potentially infilled feature'), areas of known made ground fill ('artificially landscaped ground') and areas with the 'potential for burn pits, disposal sites, laboratories, smelting and chemical plants' as identified in the Phase I report (Preliminary Risk Assessment of land at solar farm, Wrexham. GeoCon Site Investigations Limited, Report Ref: GSI 2006 MP PI Report V1, dated: December 2023).

We therefore continue to advise that further information regarding the following points should be submitted to the LPA:

- a figure which clearly presents where the potential sources of contamination may be located
- clarification on how the locations of the exploratory holes were selected
- The suite of chemicals that were analysed for does not appear to have included chemicals that are generally associated with munitions/ordnance manufacture and potential use. Unless definitive evidence can be presented as to why it would not be useful to assess for such chemicals at this development site, a definite and potentially sizeable chemical characterisation data gap is considered to exist at this site for both soils and groundwater
- an assessment of groundwater quality based on the aquifer designation or clear rationale for excluding this from the scope of investigation

Based on the above uncertainties and data gaps, we are currently unable to recommend the discharge of Condition 7.

Advice for the Developer

Please note that groundwater dewatering is a licenced activity if volumes greater than 20m^3/day of groundwater are needed to be pumped and is subject to applying to NRW for a Groundwater Investigation Consent (GIC) which is needed to obtain a groundwater

abstraction licence. A Hydrogeological Impact Appraisal (HIA) will also be required to support any groundwater abstraction licence application.

Please also refer to GP3 – Groundwater Protection which was re-published in 2018: The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection (publishing.service.gov.uk). Although it is currently being reviewed for an update the current version contains a section on Infrastructure which includes guidance on buried high voltage cables, notably in relation to the depth to groundwater.

Other Matters

Our comments above only relate specifically to matters included on our checklist, *Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics* (September 2018), which is published on our website. We have not considered potential effects on other matters and do not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other interests.

We advise the applicant that, in addition to planning permission, it is their responsibility to ensure they secure all other permits/consents/licences relevant to their development. Please refer to our website for further details.

If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully,

Rachael Burke
Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu/Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales

E-bost/E-mail: northplanning@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb i hynny arwain at oedi./Correspondence in Welsh is welcomed, and we will respond in Welsh without it leading to a delay.