



The Coal
Authority



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For the Attention of: Ms M Rees-Jones – Case Officer
Wrexham County Borough Council

[By Email: planning@wrexham.gov.uk]

04 June 2021

Dear Ms Rees-Jones

PLANNING APPLICATION: P/2021/0422

**ERECTION OF 2 BUNGALOWS AND FORMATION OF VEHICULAR ACCES; Wylfa,
Bowers Road, Acrefair, Wrexham: Re-consultation**

Thank you for your notification of 26 May 2021 seeking the views of the Coal Authority on further information submitted in support of the above planning application.

The Coal Authority Response: Material Consideration

As you are aware, the Coal Authority objected to this planning application in our previous letter to you dated 14 May 2021 as no Coal Mining Risk Assessment had been submitted at that time.

The planning application is now accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment, May 2021 prepared for the proposed development by Earth Environmental & Geotechnical Ltd. The Assessment has been informed by a range of sources of geological, historical and coal mining information, including site investigation / grouting reports from an adjacent site (Section 1.6).

Having carried out a review of the available information, the report author considers that currently the site is at risk from former coal mining activity (recorded shallow coal mining) beneath the site. As a general rule of thumb, if there is less than the standard 10 x rock cover to seam extraction ratio, this

could affect the surface stability for the redevelopment of a site (CIRIA C758D Abandoned mine workings manual).

Therefore, in order to confirm the actual ground conditions (depth / condition of the coal seam / competent rock cover) recommendations have been made that ground investigations are required. The findings of the ground investigations should enable the applicant's technical consultants to design an appropriate mitigation strategy if deemed necessary, to ensure the safety and stability of the proposed development (Planning Policy Wales paras. 6.9.23 – 28),

The intrusive site investigations should be designed and undertaken by competent persons and should be appropriate to assess the ground conditions on the site in order to establish the coal-mining legacy present and the risks it may pose to the development and inform any mitigation measures that may be necessary.

The applicant is aware that Permission is required from the Coal Authority Permit and Licensing Team before undertaking any activity, such as ground investigation and ground works, which may disturb coal property.

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 & 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.

The Coal Authority Recommendation to the LPA

The Coal Authority concurs with the conclusion / recommendations of the a Coal Mining Risk Assessment, May 2021, based on the informed professional opinion of Earth Environmental & Geotechnical Ltd, that there is currently a risk to the proposed development from recorded shallow coal mine workings. In order to mitigate the risk (confirm the exact ground conditions present beneath this site) and inform the extent of remedial / mitigatory measures that may be required to ensure that the development is safe and stable (Planning Policy Wales paras. 6.9.23 - 28), intrusive site investigations should be undertaken prior to commencement of development.

The LPA may wish to consider the imposition of planning conditions that cover the issues set out below.

1. No development shall commence until;

- a) a scheme of intrusive site investigations has been carried out on site to establish the risks posed to the development by past coal mining activity, and;
- b) any remediation works and/or mitigation measures to address land instability arising from coal mining legacy, as may be necessary, have been implemented on site in full in order to ensure that the site is made safe and stable for the development proposed.

The intrusive site investigations and 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.

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 Coal Authority **withdraws its objection** to the proposed development **subject to the imposition of the conditions** to secure the above.

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

Yours sincerely

D Roberts

Deb Roberts M.Sc. MRTPI
Planning & Development Manager

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>

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.