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W: www.gov.uk/coalauthority

For the attention of: Jenni Perkins – Case Officer
Wrexham County Borough Council

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

4 June 2026

Dear Jenni

Re: P/2026/0118

Conversion of outbuilding to dwelling; Smelt Farm, Minera Road, Ffrith, Wrexham, LL11 5LS

Thank you for your notification of 22 May 2026 seeking the views of the Coal Authority on the above.

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: **Material Consideration**

I have reviewed the proposals and can confirm that the application site fall within the defined Development High Risk Area.

The Coal Authority records indicate that within the application site and surrounding area there maybe coal mining features and hazards which should be considered as part of development proposals.

The Coal Authority Recommendation to the LPA

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 (CMRA) to support the planning application.

Notwithstanding the above, we note the submitted Coal Mining Risk Assessment (30 April 2026, prepared by Groundsolve Ltd), the content of which recommends intrusive site investigations. However, when considering this particular proposal, on the basis that it constitutes an exempt form of development, we do not consider that it would be reasonable to ensure the investigations by way of a planning condition and **do not object** to this planning application.

Notwithstanding the above, and the interests of public safety the Coal Authority would recommend that, should planning permission be granted for this proposal, the following wording is included as an Informative Note within the Decision Notice:

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

It is recommended that information outlining how former mining activities may affect the proposed development, along with any mitigation measures required (for example the need for gas protection measures within the foundations), is submitted alongside any subsequent application for Building Regulations approval (if relevant).

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 0345 762 6848. 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

Chris MacArthur

Chris MacArthur *B.Sc.(Hons), DipTP, MRTPI*
Planning Liaison Manager

<u>Disclaimer</u>

The above consultation response is provided by The Coal Authority as a Statutory Consultee and is based upon the latest available data and records held by The Coal Authority on the date of the response. 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.



Making a **better future** for people
and the environment **in mining areas**