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For the attention of: Rebecca Owens – Case Officer

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

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

11 July 2024

Dear Ms Owens

Re: P/24/0125

New MUGA, floodlights and fencing and associated works including the creation of paths and ramps; DOWLAIS PRIMARY SCHOOL JUNIOR DEPARTMENT, HIGH STREET, CAEHARRIS, DOWLAIS

Thank you for your notification of 4 July 2024 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 site location plans and the proposals and supporting information submitted and available to view on the LPA website and can confirm that the site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area.

The Coal Authority records indicate that a coal seam of workable thickness is recorded to outcrop at or close to the surface at the northern part of the site that may have been historically worked from the surface to shallow depths beneath the site.

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, it does not appear that any substantial foundations or earthworks are proposed to facilitate the development. On this basis we do not consider that requiring a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed in this particular case and **do not object** to this planning application.

We do however recommend that, should planning permission be granted for this proposal, the following wording is included as an Informative Note on any planning permission granted:

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. These hazards can include: mine entries (shafts and adits); shallow coal workings; geological features (fissures and break lines); mine gas and previous 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 development taking place.

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, digging of 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 may result in the potential for court action.

Property specific summary information on past, current and future coal mining activity can be obtained from: www.groundstability.com or a similar service provider.

If any of the 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/coalauthority

In areas where shallow coal seams are present caution should be taken when carrying out any on site burning or heat focused activities.

It should be noted that the site also lies within an area of **recorded shallow ironstone workings**. However, as our remit extends to coal mining legacy only, we are unable to advise whether shallow ironstone workings will cause any land instability / public safety issues. We would advise the LPA that it is the responsibility of the applicant / developer to demonstrate to the LPA that the site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability (Planning Policy Wales paras. 6.9.23 – 28).

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

Disclaimer

The above consultation response is provided by the Coal Authority as a Statutory Consultee and is based upon the latest available coal mining 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.

