



The Coal
Authority



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For the Attention of: Ms C. Pulley – Case Officer
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

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

20 January 2023

Dear Ms Pulley

PLANNING APPLICATION: P/22/0321

Proposed new changing room building at The Wern Field, Methyr Tydfil Rugby Club, Ynysfach - RECONSULTATION

Thank you for your consultation email of 16 January 2023 seeking the further views of The Coal Authority on the above planning application.

The Coal Authority Response: Material Consideration

As you are aware, the application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area. More specifically, the Coal Authority's information indicates that a coal seam outcrops at or close to the surface of the site, which may have been worked in the past. Voids and broken ground associated with such workings can pose a risk of ground instability and may give rise to the emission of mine gases.

We last commented on this application in a letter to the LPA dated 3 January 2023. In this letter, we objected to the proposals due to concerns that the supporting Geo-Environmental Report (28 November 2022, prepared by Blandford Consulting) did not provide any conclusion as to whether the site is considered to be safe and stable for the proposed scheme of development, in terms of coal mining legacy.

We are therefore pleased to note from your reconsultation email that the LPA is now in receipt of an email from Dr Malcolm Blandford of Blandford Consulting, dated 13 January 2023, which seeks to address our concerns. Taking into account the results of investigations carried out at the club, Dr Blandford is able to conclude that coal mining legacy poses no risk to the proposed development. As such, no further investigations or remedial / mitigatory measures are proposed in this regard.

Based on the additional information now submitted and the professional opinions contained therein, which discount any risk posed by coal mining legacy, the Coal Authority's Planning & Development Team wishes to **withdraw its objection** to this planning application.

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.

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

Yours sincerely

James Smith

James Smith *BSc. (Hons), Dip.URP, MRTPI*
Planning and Development 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.

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.