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Contamination Risk Report, Site of former Provender Mill, Under-the-Hill, Biddulph Moor, PP-05803883

1. Site Details:

Former Provender Mill
Under the Hill,
Biddulph Moor,
Staffordshire,
ST8 7RR

OS Grid Ref SJ 903 587
Easting 390380
Northing 358738



Fig. 1. The Former Provender Mill.

2. Introduction

2.1 The application site lies within the north Staffordshire Greenbelt on the north side of Bailey Hill in Biddulph Moor. It is in an elevated position with wide ranging views out towards Mow Cop.

2.2 The site is occupied by a former provender mill and it is proposed that the building be demolished to make way for a dwelling.

2.3 Since the use would be vulnerable to presence of contamination, a contamination risk report is considered necessary. This report considers contamination risk, sensitivity to potential sources of contamination and what if any site remediation may be required. The report may be used to asses whether contamination is a determining factor in decision making.[1]

1 NPPF para. 120, PPG Para: 007 Reference ID: 33-007-20140612

2.4 The main body of the building is constructed from brick under a fibre cement roof. A taller brick and corrugated iron building is attached at the northern side.

2.5 The main part of the building was constructed just after the war and prior to the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act which came into effect on the 1st July 1948. The rear part of the building was added in the early 70's.

2.6 Two small parcels of agricultural land lie on either side. The larger parcel on the western side contains the ruins of former glass houses and had until recently become overgrown. The smaller panel on the eastern side of the mill contains a former poultry unit.

2.7 The report makes reference to an Envirocheck desktop contamination report and a report from the Coal Authority.

3. Environmental Considerations

3.1 The premises were used by an agricultural feed merchants and contains a workshop, feed store and feed mill.

3.2 The workshop was used to service the feed delivery vehicles and has a pit in the floor. The floor of the workshop is concrete and is in good condition. There is no evidence of heavy staining through major spillage of fuels or lubricants so it is unlikely that hydrocarbons would have been able to contaminate the underlying soils.

3.3 Since the building contained a workshop, there would be no reason to service vehicles outside. Although the hardstanding in front of the building is now overgrown, at the time the building was in use it had a bound surface.

3.4 A steel fuel tank is sited outside the building so it is conceivable that minor spillages occurred whilst fuelling. However, the Envirocheck report and site sensitivity context map indicates that the underlying soils are low permeability drift deposits with low leaching potential so pollutants are

unlikely to penetrate the soil layer into underlying secondary bedrock aquifer.[2]

2 Envirocheck Data Sheet p7

3.5 The roof of the main part of the building is fibre cement and given the age, may contain white asbestos. The asbestos fibres should be contained within the cement and are relatively low risk. Care should be taken whilst dismantling the roof. It is advisable to dampen down the roof and avoid the use of abrasive cutting tools. The sheets should be wrapped in polythene, taped and disposed of by a licensed waste contractor.

3.6 The site is not within a flood risk area and has limited potential for groundwater flooding.[3]

3 Envirocheck Data Sheet p1

3.7 The soil is estimated to contains normal trace levels of toxic metals such as arsenic and cadmium.[4]

4 Envirocheck Data Sheet p13

3.8 The potential for ground collapse or landslip is very low and there is no risk of ground dissolution, ground compression, running sand or clay shrinkage or heave.[45]

5 Envirocheck Data Sheet p17

3.9 The site is within an area affected by coal mining, however the underlying bedrock is Chatsworth Grit and is evident in the small outcrops at Job Wills Rocks and the quarry pits at Bailey's Hill. Despite the proximity of the Chatterley Whitfield coalfield, the Coal Authority Report shows no history of coal mining or underlying workings at this site.

3.10 The risk that the radon level exceeds the 200 Bq/m^3 action level is less than 1% and no special precautions are required under building regulations. Conversion will require compliance with Building Regulations, Part L and basic radon protection will in any event need to be provided through works to insulate and damp proof the floor.[6]

6 Envirocheck Data Sheet p17

3.11 A non specific Staffordshire County Council and SMDC landfill coverage record refers to possible historic use of the site for landfill. The record is not pinned to a specific location.[7]

7 Envirocheck Data Sheet p11

3.12 The main health risk with historic land fill sites is ground gas, including light alkanes from decaying vegetable matter.

3.13 The historic map regression accompanying the report shows no indication of such use at the application site. Field boundaries remain unaltered and

the only change to the site occurs with the construction of the building which first appears on the 1:10,000 OS map of 1955.

3.14 Although some disturbance to ground levels has occurred as a result of construction, a site walkover suggests that the landform is natural rather than man-made through landfill.

3.15 The applicant's family lived in the village for generations. The applicant is not aware of any reports that the site was formerly used as a landfill site.

3.16 The 1st and 2nd 1:6 inch maps published in 1877 and 1899 show some small quarries at Bailey's Hill, approximately 380m to the south. The Envirocheck report flags these as potentially infilled land.[8]

8 Envirocheck Data Sheet p11, 1-10,000 Sensitivity Map ID 34

3.17 Given that the application site was originally agricultural ground in an elevated and prominent location at the edge of the village it would seem an unlikely location for an historic landfill site.

3.18 The nearby quarries at Bailey's Hill would be far more suitable. Indeed it appears from the map regression and current aerial photography that the quarries centred around Springfield Farm have been partially infilled.

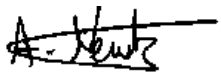
3.19 Given that distance between the application site and these quarries exceeds 250m, the risk of ground gas is considered to be low.

4. Conclusion

4.1 There is negligible risk arising from the former use of the site as a provender mill, there are no hydrological or geological constraints, the risks of ground gas and radon are low and the asbestos risk is low providing the fibre cement roof is disposed of by a licensed waste contractor. Therefore further investigation work and a scheme of remediation are considered unnecessary.

4.2 If, during the course of construction work, unexpected contamination is found, or is suspected, it should be reported to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation should be carried out and an agreed remediation scheme implemented.

4.3 Contamination should not be a determining factor in deciding whether or not to approve the redevelopment of the site for residential use.



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