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The Coal
Authority

For the Attention of: Lisa Jackson – Case Officer
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

[By Email:

30th May 2023

Dear Ms Jackson

PLANNING APPLICATION: SMD/2023/0130

Erection of detached dwelling and associated works; Land South of Shay Lane, Ipstones

Thank you for your consultation notification of 09 May 2023 seeking the further views of The Coal Authority on the above planning application.

The Coal Authority is a non-departmental public body sponsored by 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: Substantive Concern

I have reviewed the site location plans, the proposals and the supporting information submitted and available to view on the LPA website. I can confirm that the site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area.

The Coal Authority records indicate that there is a recorded off site mine entry reference 402349-006 circa. 2m from the application site boundary and within the blue line area assumed to be in the applicant's ownership. We hold no treatment details for this feature and its recorded position may be subject to significant departure. Untreated mine entries also pose a potential risk to surface stability and public safety. We acknowledge that the zone of influence of this offsite mine entry does not encroach onto the proposed building footprint.

Our records also show that the site is in an area of likely historic unrecorded coal workings at shallow depth. If shallow coal workings are present then these pose a potential risk to surface stability and public safety.

We note that this application is accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment report (23 2577) prepared by Sladen Associates, dated April 2023. The report has been based upon a review of coal mining and geological information, and concludes that unrecorded underground coal mine workings at shallow depth may be present beneath the site. The report also acknowledges the presence of off-site mine entry 402349-006, but comments this it is in an area of land that is not within the current application area and is approximately 25m east of the proposed development.

The Coal Authority welcomes the recommendation for the undertaking of ground investigations on the site in order to establish the extent of any unrecorded shallow mine workings and to inform any remedial works and mitigation measures needed to ensure the site is safe and stable.

With regards to offsite mine entry 402349-006 although the report does not consider that this feature poses any significant risk to the proposed new residence, the report comments that *"unless it is located and treated, public access to the shaft area from the present study site should be restricted"*. As such the report recommends that a 7m calculated collapse zone around the shaft, taking into account anticipated ground conditions, should be fenced off to prevent public access.

The Planning Team at The Coal Authority notes the options put forward to address the safety and stability risk posed by the mine entry. However, the applicant should be requested to clarify which of the options they intend to implement in this instance. Should the applicant propose restricting access over the area of potential instability, a plan should be provided of the alignment of the fencing (relative to the recorded position of the shaft) and confirmation that the design of the fencing will be sufficiently robust and of suitable height to prevent access.

Until the above matter has been satisfactorily addressed, the Coal Authority's Planning Team must object to the application.

We would be pleased to receive for further consultation and comment any additional information submitted by the applicant.

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

Yours sincerely,

Peter Woodcock BSc (Hons)
Trainee Planning 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.