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Director of Commercial Services
Ribble Valley Borough Council

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

4 August 2011

For the Attention of: Mr John Macholc – Case Officer

Dear Mr Macholc

PLANNING APPLICATION: 3/2011/0537

Proposed erection of casting foundry at rear of operational site (re-submission) at Fort Vale Engineering, Calder Vale Park, Simonstone Lane, Simonstone, Lancashire

Thank you for your consultation letter of 25 July 2011 seeking the views of The Coal Authority on the above planning application.

The Coal Authority Response: Material Consideration

I have reviewed the proposals and confirm that the application site falls within the defined Coal Mining Development Referral Area; therefore within the application site and surrounding area there are coal mining features and hazards which need to be considered in relation to the determination of this planning application.

The applicant has obtained appropriate and up-to-date coal mining information for the proposed development site and has used this information to inform the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Appraisal Report (September 2010), which accompanies this planning application.

The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Appraisal Report correctly identifies that the application site has been subject to past coal mining activity. The Coal Authority records indicate that the site is likely to have been subject to historic unrecorded underground coal mining at shallow depth.

The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Appraisal Report is informed by a range of existing sources of information; including a Coal Mining Report, BGS geological mapping, a Landmark Envirocheck Report, and the results of previous site investigation reports

prepared for a wider area. Based on this review of existing sources of geological and mining information the Report concludes that coal mining legacy poses a low-moderate risk to the proposed development. The Report recommends the undertaking of intrusive site investigation works to address various issues identified; it is assumed these investigations include obtaining a fuller understanding of potential shallow mine workings.

The Coal Authority Recommendation to the LPA

The Coal Authority concurs with the recommendations of the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Appraisal Report; that coal mining legacy potentially poses a risk to the proposed development and that intrusive site investigation works should be undertaken prior to development in order to establish the exact situation regarding coal mining legacy issues on the site.

The Coal Authority recommends that the LPA impose a Planning Condition should planning permission be granted for the proposed development requiring these site investigation works prior to commencement of development.

In the event that the site investigations confirm the need for remedial works to treat the areas of shallow mine workings to ensure the safety and stability of the proposed development, this should also be conditioned to ensure that any remedial works identified by the site investigation are undertaken prior to commencement of the development.

The Coal Authority considers that the content and conclusions of the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Appraisal Report are sufficient for the purposes of the planning system and meets the requirements of PPG14 in demonstrating that the application site is, or can be made, safe and stable for the proposed development. The Coal Authority therefore has no objection to the proposed development subject to the imposition of the above condition.

General Information for the Applicant

Under the Coal Industry Act 1994 any intrusive activities, including initial site investigation boreholes, and/or any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings/coal mine entries for ground stability purposes require the prior written permission of The Coal Authority, since such activities can have serious public health and safety implications. Failure to obtain permission will result in trespass, with the potential for court action. Application forms for Coal Authority permission and further guidance can be obtained from The Coal Authority's website at:

<http://coal.decc.gov.uk/en/coal/cms/services/permits/permits.aspx>

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.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Harrison

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