



The Coal
Authority

Resolving the impacts of mining

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Ros Ward – Project Manager
Durham City Neighbourhood Forum
BY EMAIL ONLY: npf@durhamcity.org.uk

18 December 2017

Dear Ros

Durham City Neighbourhood Plan - Draft

Thank you for the notification of the 3 November 2017 consulting The Coal Authority on the above NDP.

The Coal Authority is a non-departmental public body which works to protect the public and the environment in coal mining areas. Our statutory role in the planning system is to provide advice about new development in the coalfield areas and also protect coal resources from unnecessary sterilisation by encouraging their extraction, where practical, prior to the permanent surface development commencing.

As you will be aware the Neighbourhood Plan area lies within the current defined coalfield.

According to the Coal Authority Development High Risk Area Plans, there are recorded risks from past coal mining activity including; 33 mine entries, recorded and likely unrecorded shallow coal workings and 19 reported hazards.

It is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan appears to propose the allocation of sites for future development. I can see no reference in the Neighbourhood Plan to the potential risks posed to development by past coal mining activity or any evidence that consideration has been given to these issues. The Coal Authority would therefore wish to see consideration given to the risks posed to the proposed developments by past coal mining activity in accordance with National Planning Policy prior to any formal allocation. The Coal Authority is of the opinion that building over the top of, or in close proximity to, mine entries should be avoided wherever possible, even after they have been capped, in line with our adopted policy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-on-or-within-the-influencing-distance-of-mine-entries>

In addition any allocations on the surface coal resource will need to consider the impacts of mineral sterilisation in accordance with National Planning Policy.

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) please continue to consult The Coal Authority on planning matters using the specific email address of planningconsultation@coal.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Lindsley

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