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The Coal Authority
200 Lichfield Lane
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire NG18 4RG

Date: 3rd January 2024

Dear Coryn Reynolds,

Thank you for the information you supplied under the Freedom of information Act 2000, regarding your reference: FOI 82-2020. Building application made by Avant Homes application reference: 19/03143/FUL.

There have been some developments regarding coal in Owlthorpe. Many residents have witnessed Avant Homes building directly on top of coal.

Residents of Owlthorpe want answers. As reported in Sheffield Star, by Lucy Ashton 30th March 2022, Sheffield MP calls for answers about new housing estate being built on top of coal. The Sheffield South East MP was contacted by concerned residents and has raised the issue with **Sheffield Council**, the **Coal Authority**, developer Avant Homes and the **NHBC** which assesses new homes. <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/politics/sheffield-mp-calls-for-answers-about-new-housing-estate-being-built-on-top-of-coal-3633718> More than 18 months on and the foundations of new homes are still being built on top of surface coal. Many residents of completed homes have moved in to their new homes, are they safe?

In your report dated 2nd January 2014

Your reference: 71000493264001

Comments on Coal Authority information

In view of the mining circumstances a prudent developer would seek appropriate technical advice before any works are undertaken.

Therefore if development proposals are being considered, technical advice relating to both the investigation of coal and former coal mines and their treatment should be obtained before beginning work on site.

Report No. 1792/2 March 2014 GEOENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL of land at MOORTHORPE GATE, OWLTHORPE
Prepared for KIER SERVICES for (LITHOS Consulting)

Mining & Quarrying Summary

“The site is underlain by two seams of coal: • The Sitwell Coal (typically is 0.6m thick; maximum recorded thickness of 0.9m) which is shown on Geological Plans to outcrop across the centre of the site. • The Sitwell Thin Coal (typically is 0.4m thick; maximum recorded thickness of 1.0m), which lies about 8m below the Sitwell Coal. No evidence of shallow mineworking’s in either the Sitwell or Sitwell Thin seams has been recorded in any of 25 probe holes drilled.”

PROBEHOLE LOGS

On close examination of the **PROBEHOLE LOGS** results shows coal is present on many of the probe holes. Also, In the Reports from LITHOS Consulting; Probe hole **Log 18** Strata Wet between 14.2m and 18m, **heavy water inflow below 14.8m depth**. Probe Hole **Log 21** Strata wet between 17.5m and 18.2m depth. Probe Hole **Log 22** Strata wet between 16.8m and 17.4m depth. Probe **Hole 24 Heavy water inflow from 20.5m depth**. The reports from LITHOS Probe hole Logs show heavy water much nearer the surface than 60m. Many of the Probe Hole Log's show surface coal is present at most locations.

In KIER SERVICES Report No. 1792/2 March 2014 there is no mention of Underground coal mining Past. The property is in the likely zone of influence from workings in 2 seams of coal at 60m to 180m depth, and last worked in 1932. The mines that run under Owlthorpe had to have water pumped out to stop miners from drowning, it was the Ochre in the mine water that gave the Ochre Dyke its name. The mines that run under Owlthorpe are still in a constant state of flooding.

There are several coal seams running under Owlthorpe: Sitwell Thin Coal, Sitwell, Rawmarsh and Silkstone. History shows that coal in Owlthorpe has been mined by several pits including the Birley group of pits.

Brook Lane Opencast Mine: The reference to coal at or near the surface is a direct result of coal outcrop of the Flockton (also named Chavery) seam running west to east through the middle of the Owlthorpe area. The seam dips in a northerly direction beneath Owlthorpe. As with most coal outcrops there is a high likelihood that it may be worked at some point in the past due to the easy accessibility of the coal. This is further endorsed by the fact that former Brook Lane opencast immediately to the north-west was worked over the outcrop.

Relatives of residents of Owlthorpe worked in both underground and Brook Lane Opencast Mines. Officials and so-called experts were informed of this fact but ignored historic mining in Owlthorpe.

In Appeal Decision by Inspector O S Woodward, decision notice date: 2 March 2021, I cannot see any evidence that Avant Homes have been instructed to remove coal before starting to build. In this regard I believe that Inspector O S Woodward was negligent.

27 September 2019 For the Attention of: Howard Baxter Sheffield City Council [By Email: dcscan@sheffield.gov.uk]
Dear Howard Baxter PLANNING APPLICATION: 19/03143/FUL

"The Coal Authority Response: Material Consideration I have reviewed the proposals and confirm that the application site falls within the defined Development High Risk 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 Coal Authority records indicate that the application site is likely to have been subject to historic unrecorded coal mine workings at shallow depth associated with a thick coal outcrop."

This document was not supplied to the Inquiry?

Information supplied by the Coal Board is clear. Permission to remove coal should have been obtained from the Coal Board before the construction took place.

New properties have been built on top of coal and residents have moved in. How can this situation be rectified?

I have several questions under the freedom of information Act:

1. How will coal be extracted from under these properties?
2. Will new properties have to be jacked up to remove coal?
3. Will new properties have to be demolished and re-built?

Thank you for your attention

Michael Meredith

