



The Coal  
Authority

## **Warrington - Updated Proposed Local Plan 2021 Consultation**

### Contact Details

Planning and Development Team



Planning Email:  
Planning Enquiries:



### Date

11 November 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Warrington - Updated Proposed Local Plan 2021 Consultation**

Thank you for your notification received on the 4 October 2021 in respect of the above consultation.

The Coal Authority is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. 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.

Our records indicate that within the Warrington area coal mining legacy features are present at surface and shallow depth. These recorded coal mining features include 5 mine entries and a mine gas site. The records we hold also indicate that surface coal resource is present in the area.

As you may be aware, in its capacity as a statutory consultee for Planning, the Coal Authority has no legislative justification for requiring the safeguarding of surface coal resource. Although in the past we have encouraged the protection of coal reserves, including consideration of prior extraction, our formal remit in this respect lies in providing data to MPAs to assist local decision making, but nothing more. It is noted that coal is still identified as a nationally important mineral and guidance on identifying safeguarding areas for such minerals is set at national level. We also appreciate that given the climate change agenda, the use of coal as a general energy resource may raise concerns, but that

coal may also have specialist uses such as for metallurgical and other manufacturing processes.

With national policy for a low-carbon future in mind, in January 2021 it was agreed corporately that although we will continue to provide the GIS surface coal data to authorities, all decision making regarding the safeguarding of surface coal will lie with the responsible authority. We will therefore no longer be requiring those authorities with responsibilities for minerals to specifically include surface coal resource within Mineral Safeguarding Areas. We will leave this decision to the relevant authority in recognition of their superior knowledge and understanding of local circumstances and responsibility for local environments and communities.

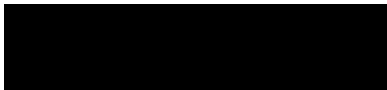
On this basis we will no longer be commenting in detail on proposed policies in respect of surface coal resource protection/safeguarding or coal extraction.

### **Policy ENV8 – Environmental and Amenity Protection**

The Planning team at the Coal Authority supports the inclusion of this policy, specifically criteria 6 and 7 (Land Quality) which seeks to ensure that development proposals need to take account of the potential risks posed by unstable land. We are pleased to see that this policy identifies that on land affected by instability development will only be permitted where the land can be made suitable for the proposed use.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss these comments further.

Yours faithfully



**Melanie Lindsley** *BA (Hons), DipEH, DipURP, MA, PGCertUD, PGCertSP, MRTPI*  
**Development Team Leader (Planning)**