



The Coal
Authority

200 Lichfield Lane
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 4RG

T: 01623 637246

E: carlanton@coal.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/coalauthority

Ms Catherine Hedley
Somercotes Parish Council
Sent by email: info@somercotesparishcouncil.org.uk

26 July 2024

Dear Ms Hedley

Granting of Coal Authority permits for proposed housing developments in Somercotes

I wanted to make you aware of our ongoing work in Somercotes, linked to proposed developments by Avant Homes and Miller Homes (East Midlands Limited), as I understand these developments are causing some concerns in the local community.

The Coal Authority is a public body, sponsored by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. We exist to manage the legacy from Great Britain's coal mining past. We're a 24/7 category 2 emergency response organisation taking action to protect life, drinking water and the environment from mining hazards. Our permitting process and our role as a statutory consultee in the planning process help us do this.

Permissions required

Avant Homes and Miller Homes (East Midlands Limited) are planning to create housing developments in Somercotes. To enable them to do this, they require a number of permissions, including some specifically from the Coal Authority.

Amber Valley Borough Council are responsible for granting planning permission, taking into consideration land use and the appropriateness of a location for a specific development. As we are a statutory consultee, and these sites are in a coalfield Development High Risk Area, Amber Valley have consulted with us on these proposals. We have provided advice and recommendations about the risks that should be considered in terms of the mining legacy in the area.

In addition to planning permission, the developers have applied for permits from us to enter into our property, the coal and abandoned mine workings, within the development site. Our permit process ensures that the applicant has identified and properly assessed any mining legacy in the area, and that their planned works have been properly risk assessed. Before we will issue a permit, we need assurance that adequate controls are in place to minimise any risk. You can find further information about our permitting process on our website:

As part of the permit application, the applicant needs to demonstrate that they have provision for monitoring mine gas during their works. We also provide [Guidance on managing the risk of hazardous gases when drilling or piling near coal](#) on our website.

Avant Homes site on Nether Farm

As part of their development of the Nether Farm site, we issued permits to Avant Homes in November 2022 and November 2023 valid for 12 months to allow them to treat shallow mine workings on the site.

Following notification of concerns, we visited the site in April 2023 to carry out an inspection, accompanied by parish councillors. This did not find any evidence of any coal mining-related public safety or public health issues. Following further concerns earlier this year, we revisited the site on 11 April 2024 and were satisfied that Avant Homes were carrying out works in line with the permit.

We understand there have been concerns regarding potential emissions of mine gases associated with the ongoing works at Nether Farm. If residents have any concerns about mine gases at any time, or need to report an emergency they suspect is linked to historic mining, they can contact our hazard line on 0800 288 4242. This number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Where there is a potential risk to public safety associated with historic mining, we can undertake mine gas monitoring and have done so in Somercotes as a result of concerns raised. Should dangerous gases be detected, we take appropriate action to ensure the safety of anyone that may be impacted. We have not needed to take further action based on the monitoring we carried out in Somercotes.

Miller Homes site at Stanley Street

We granted a permit to Miller Homes (East Midlands) Ltd on 11 July 2024 to allow them to install 247 foundation piles, as part of the final phase to remediate land at Stanley Street. The permit is valid for 12 months.

We thoroughly assessed the permit application and have imposed a requirement for monitoring of the gases that can be found in mine workings, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, methane, and hydrogen sulphide during these works. If the monitoring shows increased levels of these gases, work must stop.

We know that some local residents have concerns about the impact of these developments. We'd like to reassure you that public safety is our priority and we are confident that through our permitting process, and our role as a statutory consultee in the planning process, any potential risks have been properly considered and appropriate actions taken to safeguard these. Residents can contact our Customer Services team with any questions or concerns by emailing customerservice@coal.gov.uk or by phoning 0345 762 6848.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Carl Banton
Operations and Sustainability Director