

Gill Claxton
Welwyn-Hatfield District Council
Development Control
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AE

Our ref: NE/2019/129773/01-L01
Your ref: 6/2018/2768/OUTLINE
Date: 6 February 2019

Dear Gill

Hatfield Business Park Hatfield AL10 9SL

Outline application for a large-scale mixed use development including 1,100 new homes and supporting infrastructure including a primary school, local centre and open space with all matters reserved

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. **We object** to the planning application as submitted, because the risks to groundwater from the proposed development are unacceptable.

We have reviewed the following chapters of the Environmental Statement, which are relevant to the protection of the water environment:

- LAND TO THE WEST OF HATFIELD. Environmental Statement – Chapter 8: Ground Conditions and Contamination. Prepared for Arlington Business Parks GP Limited by Baynham Meikle Partnership Ltd. Version No: FINAL. Date: October 2018.
- LAND TO THE WEST OF HATFIELD. Environmental Statement – Chapter 13: Water Resources, Flood Risk and Drainage. Prepared for Arlington Business Parks GP Limited by (unknown). Version No: FINAL. Date: October 2018.

The applicant has not supplied adequate information to demonstrate that the risks posed to groundwater can be satisfactorily managed. Therefore we recommend that planning permission should be refused on this basis in line with [paragraph 170](#) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Reasons

The proposed site overlies groundwater that is polluted with bromate and bromide, which is not acknowledged in the submitted information.

Any planning application for this site must demonstrate the activities will not significantly change the existing groundwater flow regime, which might cause the boundaries of the groundwater plumes of bromate and bromide to move. Furthermore, the site is potentially affected by contamination due to its previous use as a commercial and military aerodrome. This is briefly mentioned in Chapter 8 but not included in the

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conclusions or recommendations for further work in this chapter.

We anticipate that the aspects of the proposal that could potentially mobilise shallow contamination and/or affect the groundwater are:

- construction activities (including foundations/piling/services),
- infiltration drainage of surface water from roofs and areas of impermeable hard standing,
- sewerage,
- interference with groundwater monitoring and mitigation measures for adjacent/overlapping sites.

Our approach to groundwater protection is set out in [Groundwater Protection Position Statements](#). In implementing the position statements in this guidance we will oppose development proposals that may pollute groundwater especially where the risks of pollution is high and the groundwater asset is of high value.

Groundwater is particularly sensitive in this location due to the need to avoid exacerbating the existing groundwater pollution. Therefore to ensure development is sustainable, applicants must provide adequate information to demonstrate that the risks posed by development to groundwater can be satisfactorily managed.

In this instance the applicant has failed to provide this information and we consider that the proposed development may pose an unacceptable risk of causing a detrimental impact to groundwater quality.

There are also some errors in Chapter 13 that are of concern. For example:

- 13.3.8 Potable water states "Thames Water is to be approached with regard to the new water demand requirements." Thames Water are not the potable water supplier in this area, Affinity Water are.
- Also, Table 13.8: Summary of Unmitigated Potential Effects includes rows referring to "Lambeth Group and Thanet Formation". These geological strata are not present beneath this site.

It is extremely important that the drainage strategy is drawn up with careful consideration of the unique groundwater situation in this location and in consultation with a competent person, as defined in the NPPF guidance.

Overcoming our objection

In accordance with our [Groundwater Protection](#) guides we will maintain our objection until we receive a satisfactory risk assessment that demonstrates that the risks to groundwater posed by this development can be satisfactorily managed.

We recommend that developers should:

1. Follow the risk management framework provided in [CLR11, Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination](#), when dealing with land affected by contamination.
2. Refer to the [Environment Agency Guiding principles for land contamination](#) for the type of information that we required in order to assess risks to controlled waters from the site. The Local Authority can advise on risk to other receptors, such as human health.

3. Consider using the [National Quality Mark Scheme for Land Contamination Management](#) which involves the use of competent persons to ensure that land contamination risks are appropriately managed.
4. Refer to the [contaminated land](#) pages on GOV.UK for more information.

Advice to Applicant

If you would like us to review a revised technical report prior to a formal submission, outside of a statutory consultation, and/or meet to discuss our position, this will be chargeable in line with our planning advice service.

If you wish to request a meeting, or document review, please contact our team email address at HNLsustainableplaces@environment-agency.gov.uk

Further information on our charged planning advice service is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-advice-environment-agency-standard-terms-and-conditions>

Should you have any queries regarding this response, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

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