

Your Ref:
Our Ref: P.6531.GE.L.002.A

Date: 3 September 2024

Email: [REDACTED]

Harry Howard
Hill Group
The Power House,
Gunpowder Mill,
Powdermill Ln,
Waltham Abbey EN9 1BN

By Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Harry

[RE: 29 Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 3BQ](#)

Background

It is understood that an apparent hydrocarbon odour was noted by BH Drilling Services Ltd whilst advancing a borehole within the north western area of the site. No Geoenvironmental consultant was present on site to verify the apparent hydrocarbon odour and no samples were collected.

From further review of the information it is understood that the apparent hydrocarbon odour was encountered on groundwater recovered at a depth of 20.5m below Piling Platform Level (PPL) which is at an elevation of 61.81m AOD. No evidence of potential hydrocarbon contamination was noted on soils at the depth of the groundwater strike or within any of the overlying soils.

Previous Investigation

We have reviewed the approved Geotechnical and Geo-environmental Assessment report undertaken by South West Geotechnical Ltd (ref 13896) dated October 2023. We note that the investigation identified potential contamination within shallow soils and that groundwater testing from water perched within these shallow soils identified no significant contamination.

No significant risk to controlled waters was identified.

Planning Consent

There is a Planning Condition (d) requiring that: "In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition (a) and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition (b), which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition (c)."

The apparent hydrocarbon odour encountered in the borehole advanced by BH Drilling Services Ltd are considered unexpected potential contamination and as such should be reported to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with conditions on the Planning Consent.

Based on the wording of the Planning Condition there appears to be no requirement to cease works. This should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Site Preparation Works

Site enabling works have been undertaken with a two metre deep reduced level excavation across 80% of the site to accommodate the proposed basement. The remainder of the site has had a site strip. No contamination has been encountered during these site preparation works.

Initial Assessment

Based on the absence of contamination identified in soils it is considered that the apparent hydrocarbon odour recorded by the drillers, if present, is likely to be associated with groundwater and be from an off-site source.

Risk Assessment

As no source has been identified in soils during the site preparation works or in soils above 20.5m below ppl it is considered that there is no risk to site users. In addition, there is no source identified in soils which the current piling works can mobilise.

The method of piling is Continuous Flight Auger (CFA) which it is considered does not pose a risk to mobilisation of any hydrocarbon, if present in groundwater.

Therefore if hydrocarbon trace is present in groundwater it is considered that the piling operations should have no adverse risk.

Proposed Approach

It is proposed that the piling works continue. Initially a watching brief will be provided by an Environmental Consultant to assess whether a hydrocarbon odour is present at the depth of groundwater. If identified, samples will be collected for laboratory testing.

It is proposed to undertake a watching brief during the first 2 days of piling and again when piles are advanced in the area of the borehole.

This approach should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Yours sincerely,

For and on behalf of Enzygo



Steve Rhodes BSc(hon) MSc DIC CEng CGeol MIMMM MIEnvSc FGS

Director

Enzygo Geoenvironmental Ltd