



Proposed Surface Mining of Coal on Land west off the A61, Hill Top Farm, Clay Cross, Derbyshire

Summary Report

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1 Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Provectus is a multi-disciplinary environmental contracting and consultancy business providing a range of strategic risk management advice to land remediation and development projects. Recently, Provectus have successfully completed a surface coal mining scheme at the former Biwater Works site, off Market Street, Clay Cross (known as the 'Biwater Scheme'). This involved excavation of almost 4 million tonnes of overburden and the recovery of approximately 95,000 tonnes of coal and associated facilities over an 18 month period. The coal was removed in conjunction with contaminated land remediation as part of a wider redevelopment scheme, primarily business and housing development approved as outline planning permission by North East Derbyshire District Council in August 2010.
- 1.2 The Biwater scheme was successfully completed in the summer of 2011 by Provectus with minimal disturbance to the local community. The site has been restored to a condition that facilitates the proposed business and housing development in accordance with the terms of the planning permission.
- 1.3 In terms of the current proposal, Provectus has land holding interest on land to the north of Clay Cross, immediately west of the A61. PROVECTUS has been considering potential options of developing a surface coal mining scheme at this site. To assist the evaluation process, drilling works have been undertaken between 17th October and 1st November 2011 in accordance with a Coal Authority Licence. Provectus are now considering submitting a planning application seeking planning permission for a surface coal mining operation on the site.

2 Site Location & Description

- 2.1 The proposed surface coal mining scheme would be located in between the A61 (Derby Road) and west of the settlement of Woodthorpe Grange in Derbyshire. It lies at the north western edge of Clay Cross and to the south of the village of Old Tupton. The site falls within the administrative boundary of North East Derbyshire District Council.
- 2.2 The current landuse is predominately agricultural with a mix of arable land and grazing/pasture land. The agricultural land is generally in a poor state, mainly as a result of the sub-standard restoration works that have taken place following the previous mining activities on the site. The topography of the area is gently rolling. The A61 separates the site and the higher ground between Old Tupton and Egston to the east.
- 2.3 In terms of vegetation, the site contains a relatively small number of mature trees mainly contained within existing hedgerows across the site. The trees and hedgerows break up views across the site and surrounding land.
- 2.4 The residential area of Woodthorpe Grange is situated to the west of the proposed development. In the northern part of the settlement Far Tupton Wood lies centrally within the housing estate. Between the northern part of the site and the housing estate a belt of mature trees separates the land uses. The south western part of Woodthorpe Grange is at a lower level than the site.
- 2.5 Hill Top Farm contains a residential property and a small group of farm buildings and lies adjacent and immediately west of the A61, roughly in the middle part of the site. Hill Top Farm is owned by one of the project sponsors and may be used as a site office.

Electricity

- 2.6 There are overhead electricity lines that are present across the southern part of the site. Two lines are present running generally west to east across the site, one from behind the snooker club running west to the housing development adjacent to the site. The second runs from Hill Top farm again going west to the adjacent housing development. These two lines are then connected by a third overhead line running from north to south from approximately 100m behind Hill Top farm down to the rear of the snooker

club. Two underground low voltage lines are also present, both of these are short and one feeds into Hill Top Farm with the second providing a feed for the communication mast.

- 2.7 Provectus have met with the electricity supply company to discuss potential diversion routes of the overhead lines. The outcome of the discussions concluded that diverting the lines to facilitate the proposed development was not insurmountable.

Gas

- 2.8 There are two underground gas mains present on site. The first runs approximately east to west from a gas governor adjacent to the A61 north of the bus depot across the site to the housing development to the west. A second smaller main connects into the main above and runs from south to north across the field adjacent to the A61 and connects to Hill Top Farm.
- 2.9 Provectus has assessed the potential constraints of the gas mains and has concluded that the proposed surface mining operations are capable of working around the apparatus.

Water

- 2.10 Two large water mains are present running from north to south across the entire site. These are 21 inches and 33 inches in diameter respectively. Along the southern section of the site both of the mains are shown to run side by side along the western boundary so are not considered to have any effect. However, both of the pipes separate across the northern two fields and run from north to south bisecting both of the fields.
- 2.11 The southern of the two fields is mainly impacted by the eastern pipe which runs diagonally across the whole field. However, in the northern field the eastern pipe is shown to run close to the eastern boundary with the western pipe now across the middle of the field. It is considered that both of these pipes will have an impact to the potential for open cast works in their current positions.
- 2.12 Two smaller 4 inch service pipes are also shown near the southern end of the site running from west to east. Both of these run from the housing

development to the west and feed into the commercial area to the south of the snooker hall.

- 2.13 No sewerage mains are considered to have any impact although a main does run along the western boundary of the fields to the north.

Previous Mining History

- 2.14 Information obtained from the Coal Authority has indicated various mining activities over the site area. Historical deep mining has mainly comprised removal of the Cannel seam from across most of the southern area. This has resulted in the presence of 7 known mineshafts within this area across the site although, at this stage it is not clear whether they would be within any proposed opencast areas.
- 2.15 Some shallower deep mining has also been carried out historically across the northern two fields to extract the Old Tupton coal seam. This has been further clarified by the recent drilling works although one location has indicated that this may have been undertaken using pillar and stall methods. These works have also resulted in the presence of 1 known mineshaft within the southern of the two northernmost fields.
- 2.16 Opencast workings have also been carried out more recently across the southern area of the site and these comprised workings to the east for Tupton and Three Quarters seams and to the west for Yard and Cannel seams.

3 The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposed surface coal mining scheme encompasses an area of approximately 30 hectares of land as shown on the Outline Proposals Plan (drawing number 100759-OC Rev A). This drawing shows the extent of the development area edged with a red line which contains land within the control of Provectus.
- 3.2 The proposed surface coal mining scheme would involve the excavation of an estimated 200,000 tonnes of coal over a 30 month period. The entire scheme is approximately 3½ years, from soil stripping to completion of restoration.
- 3.3 The proposed coaling operations would be worked in 8 main phases with the first cut at the southern end of the site and the last cut to the north of Hill Top Farm adjacent to the A61 as shown on drawing number 100759-OC Rev A. The location of the first cut and last cut are designed to ensure that the volumes are equal. The general direction of working would be from south to north. It is anticipated that, apart from the first and last cuts which would be worked in approximately 2 months, the main phases of development would take roughly 6 months to complete.
- 3.4 Coal from the excavated area would be transported to the proposed coal processing area situated immediately to the west of Hill Top Farm where it would be screened and loaded into road going lorries for despatch to market. It is anticipated that the majority of the coal is likely to travel east to Radcliffe Power Station. A compound would be established between the coal processing area and the Hill Top Farm buildings in the central part of the site. The compound would contain site offices and associated mess facilities. The existing office area, weighbridge, plant yard and coal processing area would be lit during the winter.
- 3.5 A new access point would be established onto the A61, approximately 400 metres north of Hill Top Farm, as shown on drawing number 100759-OC Rev A. It is anticipated that the proposal would involve an average of 15 articulated lorries per day (with a peak flow of 20 per day). A new internal haul road would be established into the site. Wheelwash facilities would be established near the site entrance to minimise the potential for mud and detritus being carried onto the public highway.

- 3.6 In terms of lorry routeing, Provectus is considering two main options. The first is to provide a left out and left in scenario. HGVs turning left out onto the A61 would head towards the A6175 to meet the junction with the M1 (J29). On the return trip, HGVs would follow the agreed lorry routeing of the Biwater scheme to meet the A61.
- 3.7 The second option is to upgrade the existing lay-by on the eastern side of the A61 to enable HGVs to wait beyond the flow of traffic before turning right into the site by crossing the road. This option would involve the movement of HGVs on a left turn out and right turn in basis only.
- 3.8 New water treatment facilities would consist of a series of lagoons and flow attenuation ponds would be constructed and established before any substantial areas of soils are stripped. The water treatment facilities would be located on the western side of the site as shown on drawing number 100759-OC Rev A.
- 3.9 The proposed working hours of operation are:
- 0700 to 1900 hours Monday to Friday
 - 0700 to 1300 hours on Saturdays.
 - Outside these hours only pumping would take place.
- 3.10 Although the site has previously been put forward through the District Council's Local Plan for residential and commercial development, the Company's proposed restoration scheme will be to agricultural use in close collaboration with the current land ownersto to ensure the quality of land is improved for farming in the future. The proposed restoration contours will be designed to generally follow those of the existing landform by replacing the overburden and soils (in accordance with best practice). Provectus proposes an agricultural use for the majority of the site incorporating features to enhance the biodiversity of the land.