

Simon / Amelia

Further to my email below, as advised, the applicant Gleeson Land has instructed RSK to undertake further ground investigations following concerns raised from local residents. The survey objectives are to identify any land contamination and/or geotechnical constraints of the site; and to identify the need for any additional investigation or remediation works.

In summary, the survey found that:

- Ground Model: no significant visual or olfactory evidence of soil contamination was observed during the course of intrusive investigation; and
- Geo-environmental Assessment: the site investigation and GQRA confirmed the absence of elevated contaminant concentrations within the soil profile across the site. It also found that the site is not located within an area that requires radon protective measures. Notwithstanding this, the report recommends that vigilance should be maintained during development for any undiscovered adverse ground conditions. A watching brief should be implemented during any development works at the site, with a strategy to address any unforeseen ground conditions that may affect the identifies sensitive receptors.

Reference has also been made to a residents' concerns with regard to the grid positioning used and, as you'll see from the attached, the site investigation report includes an investigation strategy and methodology section containing objectives, selection of investigation methods and the adopted investigation strategy (targeted and non-targeted boreholes and trial pits). Appendix A (page 97) provides a detailed overview and justification of the process which should provide clarification sought by the resident.

I trust the attached report provides further clarification surrounding the ground conditions of the site. This report has been uploaded onto the website, together with the email from the agent accompanying the report. Your comments in response to the report would be appreciated within the next 21 days, having regard also to the concerns that have been expressed by third parties.

I will arrange for a formal consultation to be sent in the usual manner.

Regards  
Dave

**David Kenyon**  
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**Please note that my email address has now changed to [david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk)**



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**From:** David Kenyon <[david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 21 April 2023 15:16

**To:** SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>;  
Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk; amelia.cockings@naturalengland.org.uk  
**Subject:** 22/03560/OUT. land OS 6975, South of Bowden Road, Templecombe

Simon / Amelia

With reference to the above application 'Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access, for up to 140 dwellings (use class C3), public open space, landscape planting and biodiversity enhancements, vehicular access from Bowden Road, community use (flexible use class E, F1 and/or F2), and associated infrastructure works'

Natural England was consulted about this email on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 but, to date, no formal consultation response appears to have been received.

Meanwhile, several representations have been received from local residents stating that there are contaminated land issues with this site because there is "compelling anecdotal evidence" that within the four fields forming the proposed development that circa 1967, during the then outbreak of 'foot and mouth disease', part of the land was used as a burial site for slaughtered animals and their carcasses interred therein. So strong is this claim that residents are stating that this must be thoroughly investigated. It is understood DEFRA (Department for Environment and Rural Affairs) would require strict controls over any disturbance and use of such land.

This Council's Environmental Health Officer has been advised about these concerns and he has replied as follows:

*"The strict control on disturbance of DEFRA sites for Foot and Mouth relates to the last outbreak whereby carcasses were buried. It is my understanding that from the last outbreak, no animals were buried that had a positive test result, only culled animals as part of a preventative spread policy and had a negative result were buried. DEFRA's own research shows that this risk of Foot and Mouth being present is after 20+ years is very low. Consultation should be sort before disturbance of sites from the last outbreak.*

*The risks from earlier outbreaks of the 1950s and 1960s still being present is negligible.*

*The contaminated land condition requested should take into account the potential for the site to be a burial site of animals from whatever Foot and Mouth outbreak and include the correct consultations with government depts such as DEFRA, and investigations, including the relevant and necessary sampling and soil description. The first part of the condition includes a desk study which should incorporate the consultation with DEFRA. Environmental Health will review any submissions of contaminated land reports when submitted as part of a planning condition discharge request as is normal. The contaminated land condition is a pre commencement condition. As long as the investigation is carried out in accordance with industry best practice and British Standards, there should be no risk to members of the public or investigation personnel."*

I have now received an email from the applicant's agent making me aware of the recent site investigations undertaken at the application site. From review of the public comments received, the applicant/agents understand that many residents have expressed concern that the land south of

Bowden Road was formerly used as a burial site during the foot and mouth breakout. Whilst initial site investigation showed no evidence that the site was used as a burial ground, Gleeson Land have instructed further investigations in order to provide absolute clarity on the matter. I am now informed that, following the site investigations, the agents have received a call from their ground investigations team who were on the site and they have confirmed that they did not find any evidence of the site being used as a burial site. They are in the process of preparing a full report which should be available in the next 1-2 weeks which will be sent onto me accordingly. Upon receipt of such a report I will upload it onto the website and will get notifications sent to the Parish Councils and third parties informing them of receipt of the report. I will also send copies of the report directly to Natural England, and also to the Council's EHO and the EA inviting comments.

Probably not surprisingly, I have received a couple of emails from local residents who have noted the investigations being carried out on the site. Those emails have been uploaded onto the website and you will note various concerns raised.

In particular the comment that *"The grid system plotted by GPS should be at the minimum of 10 meter centres. This would then define geological hazards, soft alluvial materials, contamination and groundwater. The applicants are aware of the contaminated areas consequently the large grid system is being used to avoid these areas."*

I have advised the agent that it would be useful to have the ground investigation team's response to this within the report or in an accompanying letter.

Regards

Dave

**David Kenyon**

Development Management Specialist

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