

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
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Sent by email only

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Dear Jonathan

221160/NMA Weldale Street Reading

Further to your email dated 2nd November 2022, the Energy Strategy for the Blocks B1 and B2 on the Weldale Street site have been reviewed and further detail has been provided on why the decentralised air source heat pumps have been chosen.

Open loop ground source heat pumps have been considered in detail by Hydrock with technical input from Fairhurst but have been discounted. This is because the installation of these wells will penetrate contaminated ground and create potential pathways for contamination to enter the chalk aquifer below the site, as such if installed they would run the risk of the development contravening the Contaminated Land Regime under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Their installation and operation would require a number of consents from the Environment Agency which, in view of the contamination risk, are unlikely to be granted.

With regards to the future District Heating, further work has been carried out which demonstrates that there is scope to retrofit the required infrastructure in the future. There is sufficient space within the basement car park for the routing of the heating pipes where it can be distributed to serve the apartments. This would involve the relocation of a cycle store, but there is adequate space within the basement to ensure that no cycle spaces would be lost.

I can confirm that Ropemaker Properties would be willing to accept a condition regarding the potential to connect to the future District Heating Network if it could be demonstrated that it met the six tests for conditions in line with paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

It must be acknowledged that the revised energy strategy for decentralised Air Source Heat Pumps together with the addition of PV's on the roof represents an improvement over the approved scheme, resulting in a reduction of carbon emissions and will ensure that blocks B1 and B2 meet the most recent Building Regulations.

Overall, the attached document prepared by Hydrock with specialist input from Fairhurst explains why the proposed energy strategy has been chosen and demonstrates that it is an improvement over the currently approved scheme. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that District Heating could be accommodated within the building if it were to come forward in the future.

In light of this detailed justification, it is requested that this NMA is now looked upon favourably.

Yours sincerely

Emma Wilsdon
Team Manager
For Ridge and Partners LLP