

Reading Borough Council - Development
Control
READING, RG1 7TD

Reference: PA-0003439/02
Customer reference: PL/25/1188
12 June 2026

**Discharge of condition 5 (Contamination Assessment) of planning permission
PL/22/0258, as allowed on appeal (Ref: APP/E0345/W/23/3315618) on 02/04/2024.**

220 ELGAR ROAD SOUTH, READING, RG2 0BW

Dear Mr Jonathan Markwell,

Thank you for consulting us on the agents responses to our letter via email. Our responses to your points are laid out below. We are unable to recommend partial discharge of condition 5 i or ii at this time.

Point 1

‘The Phase II Investigation Report Reference: GWPR6817/SIR/April 2026 supersedes the Technical Note and does include the soil analysis from the trial pits proposed. The additional testing did not find any VOC exceedances in the soils. The only one was a marginal exceedance of trichloromethane during the Hydrock investigation. The capping system is to address the widespread PAH exceedances and localised asbestos lead, arsenic and trichloromethane from a human health perspective NOT groundwater.’

Please can you provide a page reference for the soil analyses since I am still only able to find one soils analysis in Appendix F of the Phase II Investigation Report Reference: GWPR6817/SIR/April 2026. This is for TP207 at a depth of 0.2m.

Point 2

As per above, GWPR6817 Phase 2 report supersedes the technical note. The above is noted.

Point 3

'The evidence throughout the report suggests that the VOCs originate from an off-site source and the historical use of the site would not have caused SVOC/VOC contamination the reference in the Phase II Investigation Report to and therefore a DQRA would not really provide any further clarification where our client would not be responsible for the remediation of the plume, only protecting the end users of their site from it and to not make the site situation worse (which using CFA piling they shouldn't be). We have however suggested groundwater sampling during and post piling to confirm that the levels are not made worse by the piling process.'

More evidence is required since a research laboratory and infilled brick pits as previous uses on site does not provide sufficient evidence of the likely absence of SVOC/VOCs

We welcome the proposed groundwater sampling during piling but it remains essential to adequately characterise the site and the associated risks. While CFA may be the preferred option for piling, it does not totally preclude the risk of contaminant migration.

Further comments and advice

In the event that full soils analyses for the total depth of the unsaturated zone show the absence of VOCs/SVOCs are provided, this does not demonstrate that the source is only off-site. As volatile substances, it is likely that there will have been partial or complete volatilisation from the soils. Further, it has been stated that not all buildings have been demolished and therefore there are parts of the site which have not yet been sampled. We seek clarification on whether or not this is still the case.

You have stated that the technical note is superseded by the new 6817 phase 2 report. We therefore take the Technical Note (GWPR6817/TN/February 2026 V1.01) (a copy of which was also provided at the time of March 2026 consultation) as being out of date.

We look forward to receiving the full soils analyses, evidence for the presence/absence of SVOC/VOCs, in particular chlorinated solvents together with proposed further investigation and assessment.

If you have any questions regarding our response, please contact planning_thm@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

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