

Our Ref: ZZ25061/250806-kc

6 August 2025

FAO Karen Darlington (planning.conditions@knowsley.gov.uk)

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

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Dear Karen

Kirkby Valley Golf Club (Application No 21/00744/COND2)

We have been provided with a copy of your letter dated 31 July which contains comments on our reports prepared for the above site and have been asked to respond.

Please find below our response to each of the comments and observations presented in your letter.

Condition No 5 – Knowsley Comments & Observations

1. *Noted a Materials Management Plan is to be formulated to manage the importation of inert and clean, naturally occurring soil and mineral material. Whilst MEAS have no objection to the use of the Public Open Space (parks) Generic Assessment Criteria being used for Phases 2a and Phase 2b, MEAS would query whether any of the remaining areas i.e. adventure golf may also fall into this category. Any preliminary risk assessment should be based on the most sensitive applicable scenario in the first instance.*

This is a large and varied development with different conceptual models for the various elements. We do not believe that it is appropriate to use the 'most sensitive scenario' but rather that each phase of the development is assessed on its own merits.

In terms of the adventure golf area, we understand that this will be a combination of hard-standing and artificial grass laid on a sand/gravel sub-base which effectively breaks any potential contaminant pathway between the soil fill and the end users, therefore the assessment criteria for POS (parks) might be considered quite conservative.

For other areas of the development eg the clubhouse or academy building the assessment criteria for commercial land use may be the most appropriate.

2. *Agreed that it would not be acceptable to introduce contamination through the use of wastes which are not already present at the site ie materials with a significantly greater contaminant loading than is currently present should not be imported. Which is why it is important that a site baseline is established (see comments on the requirement for a proportional site investigation in relation to Condition 8).*

As detailed at Section 12 of the Desk Study report ZZE has made recommendations for further investigations which will enable the developer to establish background conditions.

The first phase of intrusive investigation has been undertaken & the findings are presented in the attached report.

Further details are provided in response to the comments & observations for Condition 8.

3. *Noted that asbestos is only to be tested when it is identified to be present on the donor site (although not within the material to be sorted) or where anthropogenic material is present. Given the general prevalence of asbestos and the volume of material to be tested, it is recommended that an agreed proportion of samples are screened for asbestos. Noted that no assessment criteria for asbestos has been provided in Appendix A.*

The developer agrees to test every third sample for asbestos, although given that the material imported under the MMP will need to meet CL:AIRE's requirement for clean naturally occurring soils which are likely to be largely cohesive in nature and once placed are to be re-covered with the existing topsoil we feel the risks of potential exposure to asbestos are very low.

There is no recognised and accepted assessment criteria for asbestos. For highly sensitive developments such as residential it might be appropriate to take a zero-tolerance approach however for this development that would be inappropriate & disproportionate.

We suggest a limit of 0.05% as a screening value, which is half the limit for hazardous waste.

4. *Further details are required on the proposed sampling strategy. Are they to be collected in situ, bulk, composite etc.*

We propose single spot samples collected from deposited soil, ideally linked to an individual load or donor site. Samples to be collected in the appropriate containers supplied by the laboratory for the scheduled testing.

Sample locations shall be recorded using What3words in case it proves necessary to relocate any contaminated material.

5. *MEAS advise that the proposals for the assessment and verification of material are broadly acceptable, subject to the comments above. The document will need to be revised before it can be approved.*

We have amended the MMP Verification Plan based on the comments received, see attached.

6. *The schedule of inspection should be shared with the LPA as they may want to attend, organised and ad hoc visits.*

We can give the LPA notice of site inspections or would be willing to agree dates with the LPA for joint visits at 7-days notice.

7. *Noted that topsoil is to be scraped and stockpiled ready for reuse. Are there any plans to test this material?*

The initial phase of investigation did not include any topsoil testing but accept that it might be a good idea. We will liaise with the developer & devise a suitable sampling strategy.

8. *Noted that the Verification Reports are to be provided six-monthly. This is welcomed and will assist in meeting the requirements of the relevant planning condition, MMP as well as for Waste Local Plan purposes.*

Noted.

Condition No 8 – Knowsley Comments & Observations

A proportionate site investigation is necessary to confirm the Conceptual Site Model and inform the subsequent preliminary risk assessment.

Section 12 of the Desk Study report contains phase by phase investigation recommendations which we feel are appropriate & proportionate. As noted in the PRA, it is not necessary to undertake all the investigations upfront. If you have any specific comments or observations regarding what has been proposed, please provide them.

We think that the management of this planning condition could be quite difficult given the varied nature of the development and have produced a simple phase by phase matrix which might clarify things for all parties, see attached.

1. *The Desk Study identifies several potential sources of contamination including:*
- A former landfill in the south west area of the site (thought to be filled with uncontaminated inert soils deposited by Liverpool City Council)*
 - Infilled land including ponds and the former route of the River Alt.*

We have since undertaken intrusive investigation at the former landfill. The findings are presented in the attached Ground Investigation report (Report No ZZ25061/3, dated August 2025).

The old ponds and river channel were filled in almost 100 years ago. In the case of the river channel, it is highly likely that they used the soil excavated from the new canalised route to backfill the old channel. Given the very low potential risks associated with these features we do not propose that they are specifically targeted for further investigation.

Should any visual contamination be identified as part of the watching brief, particularly during the topsoil strip further investigation and assessment shall be carried out as detailed in the report.

2. *MEAS advise that all potential sources of contamination need to be investigated. Whilst the Desk Study concludes that the risk to human health and controlled waters is considered low/negligible, intrusive works are required to confirm this assessment. Greater knowledge of the nature and contamination status of the infilled materials identified on site is required before work begins. The proposed Watching Brief is not considered sufficiently robust in areas where potential hazards have been identified i.e. the former route of the River Alt.*

We do not feel that it is appropriate or proportionate to investigate 'all potential sources of contamination' for the reasons provide in response to Comment 1 above. ZZE has considered the potential risks and hazards on a phase-by-phase basis and made specific recommendations for further intrusive investigation.

The former landfill has been investigated and potential risks to all potential receptors assessed, refer to the Ground Investigation report attached.

Potential risks to controlled waters will be reviewed as the intrusive works are undertaken. The greatest risk is the uncontrolled release of suspended solids following clearance of the site vegetation and importation of soil fill. This potential issue is addressed in the Construction Management Plan.

3. *MEAS advise that the scope of all intrusive works should be agreed in advance with the Local Planning Authority.*

The scope of the initial intrusive investigation was not agreed in advance, but we can submit any future proposals for the LPA's agreement. Please can you confirm how long you need to review any submissions?

4. *The results of any investigation should feed into the proposed Materials Management Plan to assist in assessing the suitability of material for reuse.*

The MMP Verification Plan has been updated with the initial investigation findings, see attached.

5. *MEAS advise that the Environment Agency should be consulted on the risk that the site poses to controlled waters. (Environment Agency has been consulted 31.07.2025).*

The EA was consulted three times during the application process and also at the approval stage when the LPA was formulating the planning conditions. I'm not sure what consulting them again will achieve.

Is it right to assume that the LPA has reconsulted the EA? Do you know when a response might be available?

6. *Please could more information be provided on ZigZag Environmental. We are unable to access the stated website for the company.*

Zig Zag Environmental Ltd is a relatively new consultancy, formed in October 2024, but its technical staff have more than 65 years of environmental consultancy experience. We previously worked for Arley Consulting from its formation in 2000 to its closure in September 2024. Our services include:

- Coal Mining Risk Assessment
- Construction Quality Assurance Engineers (for numerous landfill lining, capping and infrastructure projects)
- Contaminated Land Assessments & Validation
- Environmental Monitoring (for landfill & contaminated land/development projects)
- Environmental Permitting & Permit Compliance
- Expert Witness
- Hydrogeological Risk Assessment
- Landfill Design
- Landfill Management & COTC Holder
- Materials Management Plans & Qualified Person Declarations
- Preliminary Risk Assessments
- Site Investigation
- Waste Management

We have had some issues in setting up the website & have been very busy so we haven't needed to promote the new business through an on-line presence. We hope to have something on-line soon.

I trust that these responses and the additional information provided addresses the queries raised. If not, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues with the reviewer to agree the best way forward.

Yours sincerely



MARTIN LOVELOCK
Technical Director

Enc

cc Richard Gee, Roman Summer
Michael Hanlon, Green Circle Ventures