

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Land Instability – former Coal Workings



Supplementary Planning Guidance
to the Local Development Plan for the
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

Adopted 22 June 2011
Technical Update May 2014



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National Park**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) provides information on land instability in relation to former coal workings in the National Park. This SPG is aimed at helping planning applicants to consider the potential for such land instability at an early part of the planning process. Paragraph 4.117 of the Local Development Plan identifies the Authority's commitment to provide Supplementary Planning Guidance on land instability as a result of former coal working.
- 1.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance does not form part of the Local Development Plan, but as it has been adopted¹ has significant weight in deciding whether a proposal can receive planning permission.
- 1.3 A report of consultations detailing how the Guidance was consulted upon is available to view on the Authority's website.² [This guidance has been updated to reflect the current terminologies used by The Coal Authority and its development management guidance and GIS data. Technical updates are shown as track changes, with footnotes to give an explanation for each change. The updates to this guidance were inserted in May 2014.](#)
- 1.4 Land instability can be both natural and man made. Man made land instability can be caused through excavation or mining processes for example. Land instability from natural processes and from mining operations other than coal, for example zinc or copper mining do not fall within this SPG. Further information about other types of mine operations can be obtained from the British Geological Survey³.

2. National and Local Planning Policy

- 2.1 Mineral Technical Advice Note 2: Coal (January 2009) requires planning authorities to show areas of past, present or possible future coal mining in the Local Development Plan. These may be surface, shallow or deep coal workings. There is no present coal working within the National Park and no known areas for possible future working. Known areas of past working are currently limited to former shallow coal workings (i.e. up to 30 metres in depth). Workings up to 30 metres in depth are most likely to be associated with surface land instability.
- 2.2 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 4 February 2011) confirms that the responsibility for determining the extent and effects of unstable ground remain that of the developer (13.8.3), and that the responsibility and subsequent liability for safe development and secure occupancy of the site rests with the developer and/or landowner (13.9.2).

¹ [By resolution of the National Park Authority on the 22nd June 2011](#)

² <http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=183> weblink to report of consultations

³ <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/>

3. Background and Context - Former Coal Working

- 3.1 The Pembrokeshire (Daugleddau) coalfield is predominantly in a band of some 2-6 miles wide from the Tenby to Telpyn Point coast in the east, to the Little Haven to Haroldston coast in the west. There is also a coastal section between Nolton Haven and Newgale on the same coast of St Brides Bay. The extent of the coalfield as it occurs within Pembrokeshire is shown at Map 1 attached to this SPG.
- 3.2 Coal has been extracted in the past by a variety of deep and shallow mining methods. There has been working for many centuries on a small scale with a number of deep mines in the early part of the 20th century, but since the 1940's interest in the Pembrokeshire coalfield has generally waned, although some mining has taken place since then under special licence.
- 3.3 Whilst the extent of the coalfield is known the old mining records relating to the period of and extent of coal workings are incomplete. There will be occasions when old workings, for example bell pits come to light in places where there are no longer any obvious signs on the surface of past disturbance.
- 3.4 Abandoned coal workings have been required to be deposited under the Coal Mine Regulations of 1872, which have been transferred to the custodianship of the Coal Authority since 1994. Prior to 1872, many workings had been abandoned and no records deposited, and the knowledge about those workings has been lost.
- 3.5 In addition, earlier mine plans may not have been as accurate as more modern plans, and in some cases show that workings exist rather than their exact location.

4. The Role of the Coal Authority

- 4.1 The Coal Authority is a statutory consultee for development within the defined coal mining areas⁴ and has introduced an approach which refines the defined coalfield areas into areas of higher risk (~~Coal Mining Development Referral~~Development High Risk Area) and lower risk (~~Standing Advice~~Development Low Risk Area). Maps of these areas within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park are appended at Maps 2 to 4. The National Park Authority can confirm whether a proposal will sit within an area of higher or lower risk.

5. Development ~~Referral~~High Risk Areas

- 5.1 The Coal Mining Development ~~Referral~~High Risk Areas contain a range of specific mining legacy risks to the surface, including mine entries; shallow coal workings (recorded and probable); workable coal seam outcrops; mine gas sites and areas; recorded coal mining related hazards; fissures and previous surface mining records.
- 5.2 If the development proposal lies within a Coal Mining Development ~~Referral~~High Risk⁵ Area, the National Park Authority has a duty to consider ground stability issues when determining planning applications.

⁴ Article 10(j) of the GDPO 1995 (as amended).

⁵ Text updated to reflect current Coal Authority terminology.

5.3 In these areas a Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report will be required and should set out the position in relation to former mining activities and assess the risks from coal mining activities on the proposed development. There may be a need for appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that there will be no future ground instability and public safety issues arising from the development. The Report must be prepared by a suitably qualified person. The Coal Authority will be consulted on non-householder applications within the Coal Mining Development Referral-High Risk Area. The Coal Mining Risk Assessment should form part of the information available to the Coal Authority.

Key principle: If the development proposal is within a Development Referral-High Risk Area and would intersect the ground, a **Coal Mining Risk Assessment** should be submitted with the planning application, except for householder applicants⁶. For EIA related development the Coal Mining Risk Assessment can form part of the Environmental Statement.

6. Standing Advice Development Low Risk Area

- 6.1 Within the rest of the defined coalfield area past coal mining activity has also taken place. However this activity was at depth, with no recorded surface hazards, and therefore poses a lower risk to development proposals. Unrecorded mining hazards might still exist within the Standing Advice Development Low Risk⁷ Area however.
- 6.2 The Coal Authority will not be consulted on Householder applications, and applications within the Standing Advice area, where the standing advice of the Coal Authority will be issued by the National Park Authority.
- 6.3 The flow chart at page 5 indicates the procedure for development within the coal referral and standing advice areas, and for householder applications.

⁶ Householder applications will not need to provide a Coal Mining Risk Assessment as land instability from former coal workings will be considered under the building regulation process.

⁷ Text updated to reflect current Coal Authority terminology.

7. Useful Contacts

- 7.1 As mentioned above the National Park Authority can confirm whether a site sits within an area of higher or lower risk.
- 7.2 The Coal Authority has put together advice about Coal Mining Risk Assessments, including what they should cover and where to obtain one. This and other useful advice can be obtained from the Coal Authority at the contact point given below or via the Coal Authority web site. www.coal.gov.uk/services/planning

Contact points

For further information regarding this guidance please contact

Richard James
Planning Officer (Park Direction)
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority,
Llanion Park,
Pembroke Dock.
SA72 6DY.

Tel 0845 345 7275
DevPlans@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

For advice on making a planning application please contact

The Development Management Team
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority,
Llanion Park,
Pembroke Dock.
SA72 6DY.

Tel. 0845 345 7275
DC@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk⁸

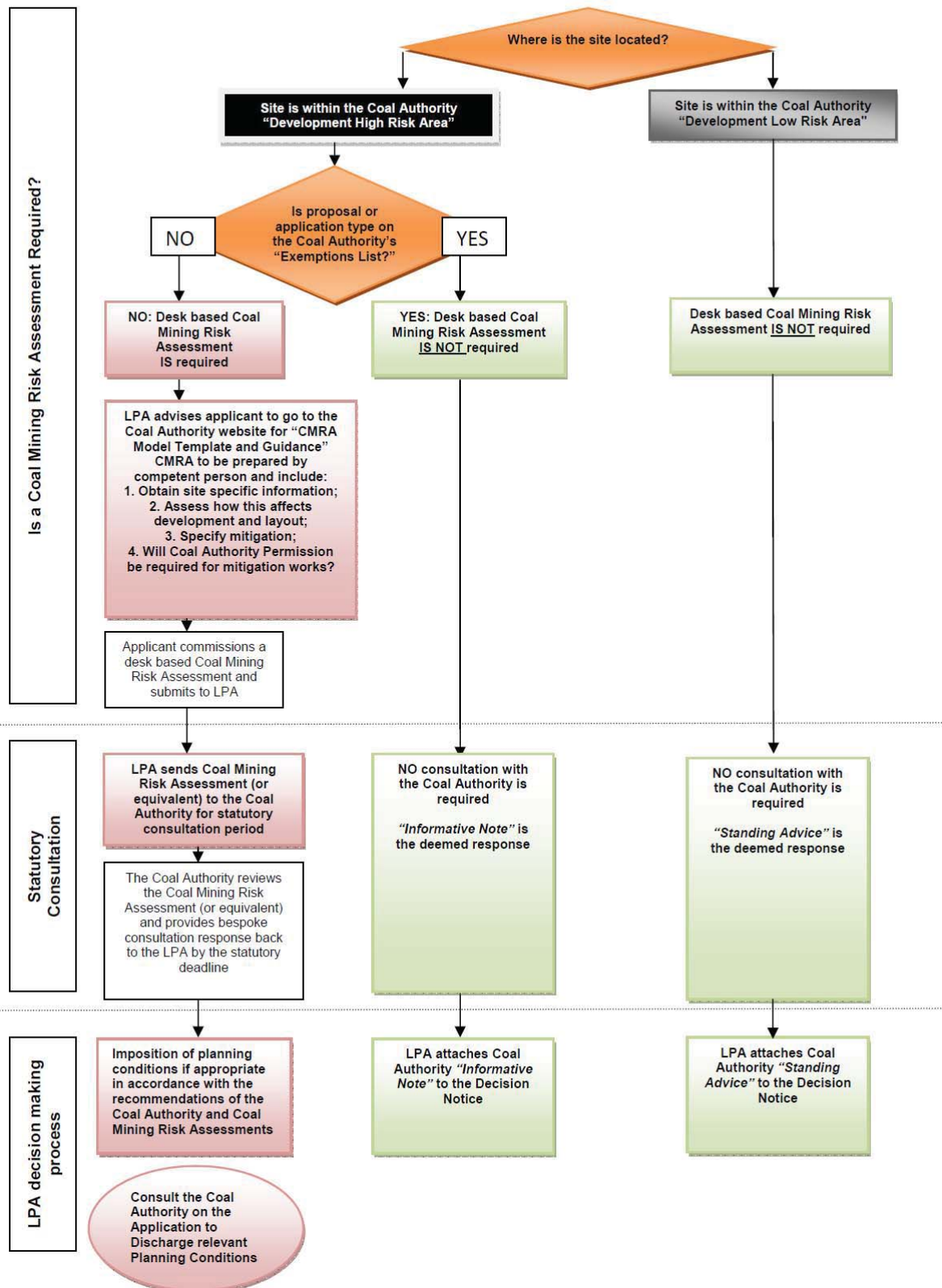
For advice from the Coal Authority please contact

The Coal Authority
200 Lichfield Lane
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 4RG

Tel : Planning Contact : 01623 637 119
planningconsultation@coal.gov.uk

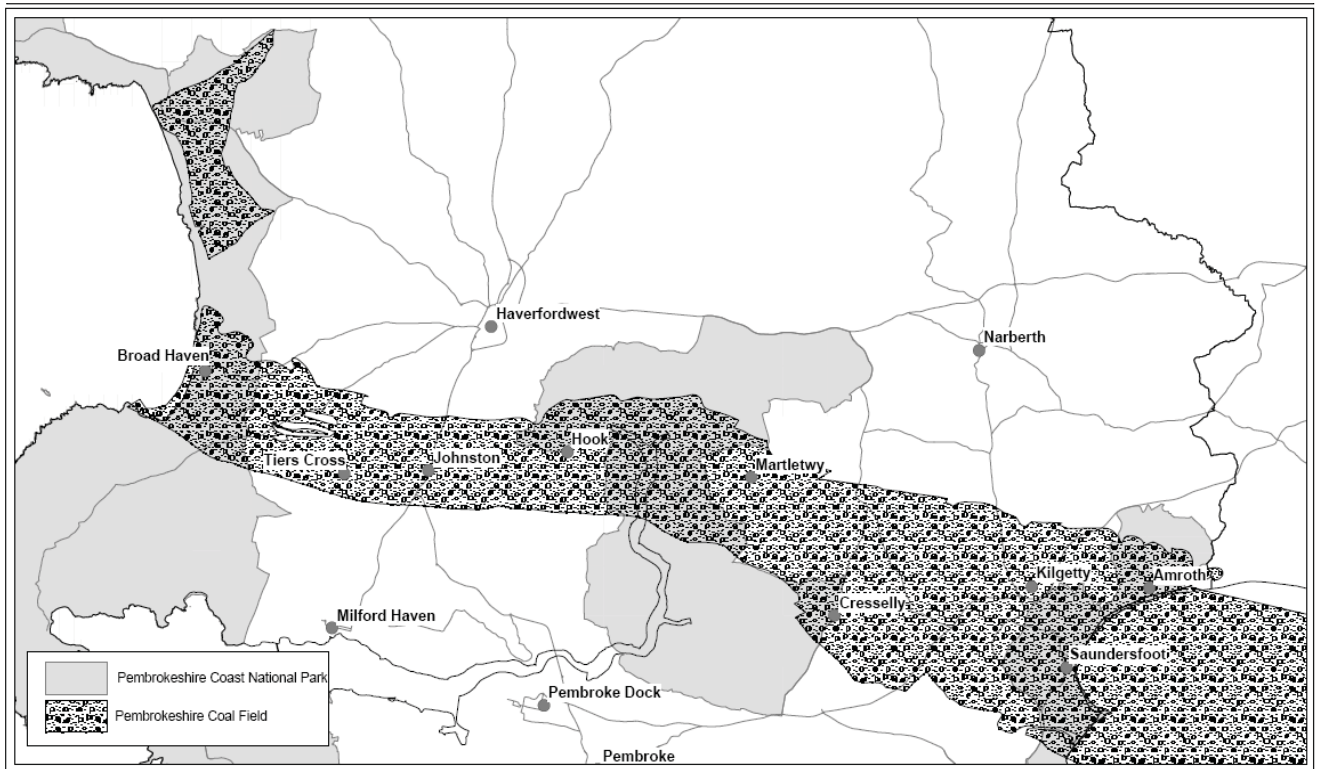
⁸ Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority contact information updated.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN COALFIELD AREAS



⁹ Flow chart updated to reflect current Coal Authority guidance. Available on: <http://coal.decc.gov.uk/en/coal/cms/services/planning/strategy/strategy.aspx>

Map 1: The Daugleddau Coal Field



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Not to scale

Former Coal Mining Areas Maps

KEY



Development High Risk Areas

An area defined by the Coal Authority as containing a range of specific legacy risks to the surface



Development Low Risk Areas

A coal mining area in which unrecorded mining hazards may still exist



Neighbouring Planning Authority Area

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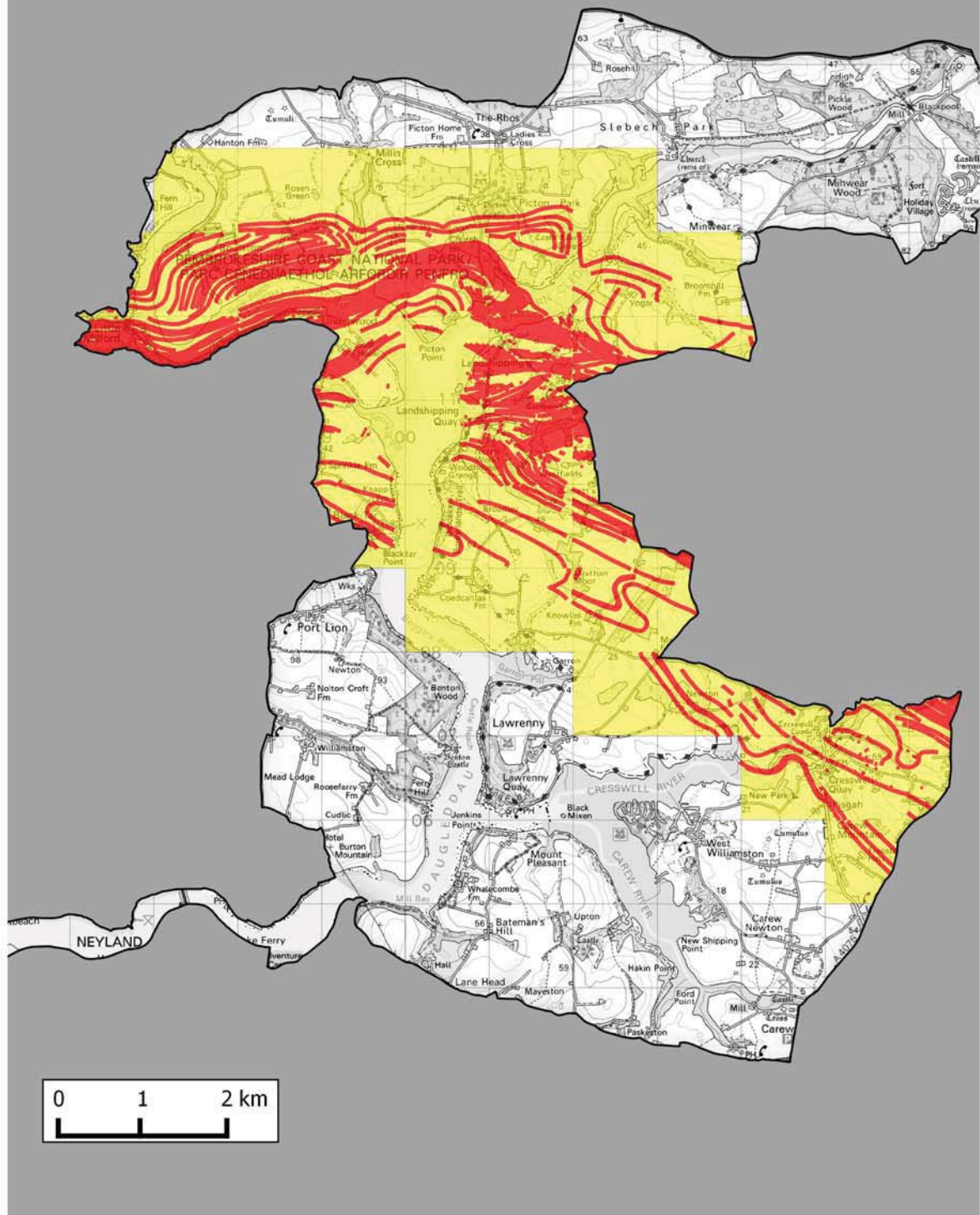
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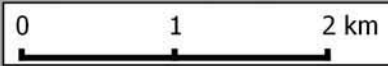
The following areas of former coal working areas are defined using the best available information provided by the Coal Authority. They are not necessarily exhaustive and the responsibility remains with the developer to ensure that the extent and effects of land instability are properly accounted for.¹¹

¹⁰ Key updated to reflect the current Coal Authority terminology.

¹¹ Maps have been updated to reflect current GIS data available from The Coal Authority.

Map 2 : The Daugleddau Area





Map 3 : The South East Area

