

Odour Affecting Proposed Housing



David McLean Homes Ltd and Persimmon Homes sought to develop housing near a poultry processing plant in Hereford. The Council raised concerns that odour from the process could affect the amenity of future residents. The Airshed was appointed by the developers to assess if odour was a material consideration and if the development site was likely to be exposed to offensive odours from the adjacent industry. The proposed development site was 200m from the main source of odorous process emissions

The process causing concern is subject to controls under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (PPC), enforced by the Environment Agency (EA). EA Guidance requires that odour from processes should not give reasonable cause for annoyance and proposes the adoption of $1.5 \text{ OU}_E/\text{m}^3$ 98thile as a performance benchmark. Planning Guidance requires that planning authorities should work on the assumption that the relevant pollution control regime will be properly applied and enforced.

The process operator declined to provide any information regarding odour emissions. It was not practicable to measure odour at the site boundary due to measurement and analytical uncertainties. A dispersion modelling exercise was therefore conducted to determine the pattern of odour around the site. In the absence of process specific odour data, the assessment assumed that land would be suitable for housing provided odour on the development site was less than odour at existing sensitive receptors.

The predicted odour at the proposed development site was shown to be $\frac{1}{2}$ the predicted odour concentration at the nearest sensitive receptor. Thus the developer was able to argue that future residents would be unlikely to have reasonable cause for annoyance, provided the process achieved Best Available Technique.

The odour study indicated that most of the development site was suitable for housing, provided the process operator meets current environmental standards. The Airshed secured the necessary technical agreement on the model predictions with the local EHO and EA, helping to address their concerns about the planning application.



The Airshed