

## The Lench Meadows

### Independent Review - Background Briefing and Summary Findings

#### Background

In December 2022, Stratford Town Trust commissioned Hydrock, a Land Contamination specialist, to carry out an independent post project review of work to date on the Lench Meadows. Work on the Lench Meadows formed part of the wider CWLEP funded Stratford Riverside project for which Stratford District Council, as the majority landowner, are the client.

Hydrock were asked to review:

- The remediation taken following the discovery of asbestos containing materials and, in their opinion, any immediate or future risk to the public.
- Earthworks and materials management across the site relating to the reuse of excavated materials around the site to create new wildlife habitats and a new pathway; and removal of surface vegetation in some areas to remove dominant species and enable planting.

#### Site Visit 27th January 2023

*“ A site visit was undertaken [ ... ] on 27th January 2023. Weather conditions were cold, overcast, dry with light winds. We met at the Fisherman's Car Park and walked the new cycle path towards Stratford-on-Avon, veering off the path to assess the large mound to the west in the old landfill area, the smaller mound to the east and the area of main asbestos finds at 'Butterfly Banks' to the southwest of the site. Due to the wintertime visit, new vegetation growth has not yet started therefore the areas of earthworks remain as bare earth at present. Ground conditions could be described as 'claggy' with newly placed materials adhering to footwear. The Butterfly Banks area is fenced off to enable vegetation growth to mature where new soils have been placed. During my visit I did not witness any suspected asbestos pieces or fragments. I did point out to the Trust that on the smaller mound to the east there was a small area of materials I considered to be inappropriate where there were*

*pieces of glass, half bricks and brick fragments. I recommend that the contractor returns to hand pick near surface inappropriate materials and the area is dressed in appropriate clean soils. Aside from this, notwithstanding vegetation needs to recover during one or more growing seasons, the project partners appear to have restored the ground to a suitable standard to produce a valuable green space for the community.”*

### Summary Findings

*“Across the two [ground] investigations, the spread of testing could be considered reasonable. It is difficult to form a view as to whether the contractor or consultant should have identified visual asbestos during the course of the works. Nevertheless, the consultant has later identified asbestos presence and an action plan was formed to deal with the problem which appears to be proportionate to the risks identified.”*

*“I discussed my initial findings with Stratford Town Trust on 24th November 2022, after which the Trust requested that a verification report be produced to detail what remedial works had been undertaken, where and when, with verification of materials placed. I was provided with the verification report by Crossfield [Consulting] on 13th January 2023. I find that the report clarifies the queries over the work I had and sufficiently details the work undertaken and the quality of the materials imported and placed.”*

*“The material reviewed to date suggests that investigations undertaken were reasonably proportionate and identify little potential for ongoing contamination risks.”*

*“An additional measure that I recommend is to undertake airborne monitoring assessment to indicate asbestos fibre release from the ground. Whilst I think it is highly unlikely that any fibres will be detected this can provide further reassurance that the work undertaken is satisfactory and the site is considered suitable for use. At this time of year, airborne monitoring would be largely worthless due to the ground being saturated (that was certainly the case at the time of the site visit). I recommend that monitoring is undertaken in the summer months after a period of at least 2 weeks without rain to demonstrate 'worstcase' conditions. The testing should take account of wind conditions on the day to be effective and be undertaken from multiple locations.”*

*“Ground investigation undertaken in advance of the earthworks identified Made Ground and the site was a known landfill site. Whilst I believe there was no intention to move landfill materials as part of this project, the boundary of the fill material is not clear and Made Ground materials may have been moved around the site and an MMP produced in accordance with DoWCoP and declared by a QP with CL:AIRE should have been the route followed. The project consultant should have advised at an early stage that a MMP prepared in accordance with the DoWCoP and declared by a QP be undertaken to avoid the potential for a waste prosecution for the import of materials to the site. This is required regardless of the soils being clean, naturally occurring. This was not done and cannot be applied for retrospectively. An alternative is to apply for an environmental permit, this is very onerous and unnecessary if preparing a MMP and declaring it with CL:AIRE. Again, these cannot be applied for retrospectively.”*

*“The risk of those materials movements to the public during the earthworks and upon completion [...] suggests that there is minimal risk to the public from contaminated materials placed or disturbed during the project and in its completed state.”*

*“It is my recommendation that Stratford-on-Avon District Council (as the client) provides this note and the background information which supports it to the Environment Agency to enable them to assess the information.”*

### Recommendations

- 1. That an area on the smaller mound is subject to a further hand pick to remove near surface inappropriate materials (glass, half bricks and brick fragments) and the area is dressed in appropriate clean soils.*
- 2. That an airborne monitoring assessment is undertaken to indicate any asbestos fibre release from the ground.*
- 3. That Stratford-on-Avon District Council provides Hydrock’s findings and the background information which supports it to the Environment Agency.*

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Hydrock are a British-owned integrated engineering design, energy and sustainability consultancy with specialists in land contamination.

