

Excavation and loading affecting an embankment

Checklist Topics: Structural

The canal is cut into the hillside and retained by an embankment as it passes through this urban setting. On the hillside immediately beneath the canal a large scale industrial complex proposed new buildings on newly formed ground adjacent to a main road.

This involved bringing significant quantities of material to the site to raise ground levels at the roadside of the site. The consultation documents concentrated on the street scene impact of the proposal, but the proposal also involved changes to ground levels and a new

building adjacent to the towpath. Excavations, a retaining wall and infill were proposed against the canal embankment. The works against the embankment had the potential to cause land instability through excavation and/or vibration.

Paragraphs 170 & 178 of the NPPF advise on the importance of considering risks arising from land instability, and indicate that decisions should take account of such issues and of any proposals to mitigate potential adverse impacts on land stability. Land stability is also the subject of more detailed discussion in the NPPG. It

should be noted that Building Regulations safeguard the structural integrity of the building proposed, but not the adjacent land/structures.

A condition requiring agreement of a method statement detailing how earthmoving and excavations were to be carried out was included on the planning permission by the LPA following the Trust's consultation response. This was requested to minimise the risk of breaching, or overloading, the embankment wall during the construction process.



The Trust encourages consultation from the LPA on details submitted to discharge conditions where they affect the waterway.

Developers and LPAs should be aware that structural integrity and land stability issues affect industrial/business development proposals as well as residential developments.