

## **ESCRICK PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Representation on the Planning Application Reference 12/03385/FULM, North Selby Mine, New Road, Deighton, York.**

"Demolition of existing buildings and re-profiling of bunds and areas of the former mine, construction of an anaerobic digestion combined heat and power facility and horticultural greenhouse and associated infrastructure and works."

### **Notification of the Decision of the Parish Council**

The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to the proposal which is located within the civil Parish of Wheldrake on the planning grounds set out below:

### **Introduction**

The Parish of Escrick lies immediately adjacent to the Parish of Wheldrake. Whilst the North Selby Mine is located in Wheldrake Parish, it should be noted that the main access road to the site is located immediately north of the village of Escrick, off the A19, and the village is a significant settlement within close proximity of the site. Any development here would therefore have a significant affect on the residents of our village.

The Parish Council acknowledges that there are National and Local requirements to deal with waste materials in a way which are sustainable and minimise the impact on the environment, and understands that such requirements are already being planned for elsewhere by the Council. The Parish Council also recognises the need to reduce carbon emissions resulting from the production of electricity and heat. However, we are concerned about the impact the proposed development would have on the Green Belt where exceptional circumstances have to be demonstrated for any development to be permitted; we do not believe that these have been shown in any way that would override the presumption against major developments in the Green Belt. . We also believe there would be various significant amenity implications for our residents including those of visual amenity, noise, smells, light and, most importantly, traffic.

### **Grounds of Objection**

1. The Parish Council considers that the proposal would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and that the "special circumstances" required to permit the development have not been demonstrated. The proposed structures would be on an industrial scale which includes tall structures (tanks and stacks), massing (A.D. plant and greenhouse building) and the associated lighting and noise emission. There are no special circumstances as to why this development is needed within the Green Belt and not within a more suitable location, apart from the fact that the owners do not wish to reinstate the site to agricultural use as they previously promised to do when originally granted planning consent. . This scale of development is not appropriate in a rural area and especially within the York Green Belt.
2. There is no certainty about the sources of suitable waste materials needed to power the operation, a large proportion of which is likely to originate from

outside the local area. We do not believe that it is appropriate to import feedstock and other waste materials predominantly from outside the York and Selby area, with the impact that will have on the transport infrastructure, and particularly on the A19 through Escrick. It is also not sustainable for these materials to be transported long distances when it would be far more appropriate and sustainable to locate the plant close to the source of these materials, which is also more compatible with Government advice.

3. The proposal indicated that a large proportion of the waste feedstock would originate via the M62 corridor. We understand that a site search indicated that the best site was Kellingley Colliery. Peel Environmental has recently started the consultation process for a large 'energy from waste' facility to be developed at Kellingley which is well located to receive feedstock via the M62 corridor. The Parish Council considers that the AD facility would be better located at the large Kellingley site or an alternative site near the M62 corridor which has road, rail and/or canal direct links. These are not Green Belt locations, close to the strategic road network and therefore far more appropriate locations for such a development.

4. The proposed facility would require significant movement of vehicles to import waste feedstock, remove residual products and transport employees. Whilst the submitted traffic surveys indicate that the vehicle movements generated by the development would not have a significant effect on the overall traffic movements on the A19, the Parish Council believes that the A19 corridor is already highly congested and experience significant delays both at peak times and at weekends. You will no doubt be aware that there were never previously any significant levels of traffic associated with North Selby Mine as employees operated a shift system and all coal was transported underground. The proposed net increase of traffic will exacerbate the already congested highway network and will make travel for local residents even more difficult. In addition the Parish Council is concerned about the routing of "merchants" vehicles which will be uncontrolled until they enter the site access road. This could result in a high proportion approaching via the Escrick Parish. We believe that a large proportion of traffic will travel through Escrick, coming from the M62 corridor. In any event, the A19 is already congested going both north to York and the A64 and south towards Selby and the M62, with significant delays experienced which the proposed additional traffic will severely add to.

5. There is also no information proposed regarding the eventual decommissioning of the plant and equipment, any measures for decontamination of the site and its following use or status. Please advise how these measures will be dealt with in an enforceable way.

### **Concluding comments**

The Parish Council recognises that a semi-derelict site exists at the former North Selby Coal mine and that action needs to be taken. We have strongly urged City of York Council to enforce the planning conditions attached to the original consent for the mine which require the site to be restored to agricultural use, as was

originally agreed by the vendor in exchange for the original planning consent, which is an appropriate Green Belt function.

There have been a number of public exhibitions and consultations within our village undertaken by the applicant where the overwhelming majority of attendees strongly objected to the proposals.

The view of Escrick residents is that the site must be restored to agricultural use in accordance with the previous consent. The York Green Belt has historically performed an important function in preserving the setting of the City of York and there have been no exceptional circumstances demonstrated in this application to overturn this principal. We strongly **object** to the application and request that it be refused.

I look forward to hearing from you further in due course in response to the above. I would also be obliged if you would advise us of City of York Council's decision on the application in due course.

**Steve Snowton, Chairman**

on behalf of Escrick Parish Council