

Community Benefits

Permission should not be given for the extraction of coal unless the proposal is environmentally acceptable, or can be made so by planning conditions or obligations; or if not, it provides national, local or community benefits which clearly outweigh the likely impacts to justify the grant of planning permission.

This extract from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) should be sufficient for Derbyshire County Council to turn down Provectus's proposal.

There are far too many people living in close proximity to the site and no benefit will ever be substantial enough to justify granting permission for this proposal, weighed against the misery it would cause to so many.

Multi-Use-Games-Area(MUGA)

The only real Community Benefit that Provectus have included in their proposal is the Multi-Use-Games-Area(MUGA). However the land intended for this benefit belongs to Clay Cross Parish Council and Hilltop Action Group have it on good authority that the council are not prepared to consider granting a lease for the construction of a MUGA on the site. There are plans in place to upgrade Kenning Park and beyond, part of which include recreational facilities for all ages. This apart, any lease would not be with Provectus, but with Holmgate Tenants & Residents Association who would then not only have the cost of leasing the land, but also the cost of maintenance and management of the MUGA and Public Liability Insurance. Provectus make it very clear that they do not intend to involve themselves in any aftercare of this proposed MUGA.

Boundary Adjustments

"Woodland boundary adjustments east side of Woodland Way, Old Tupton."

This statement is ambiguous and now seems to relate to increased woodland being advantageous to the site landowner. It was originally interpreted as extra land to be added to those gardens on Woodland Way backing onto the proposed site. However, this does not now appear to be the case. The only beneficiary is the landowner as the gardens already back onto existing woodland.

New Public Footpath

"The provision for the facilitation of Clay Cross regeneration aspirations, namely the establishment of a public footpath linking the proposed Egstow Country Park with Kenning Park and the creation of the heritage route of the Ashover Light Railway to include the restoration of the Pirelli bridge."

This statement is very misleading. It does not mean that Provectus will provide all these benefits. The land will be left so that the Clay Cross Regeneration Programme can proceed but the regeneration work and cost will be the responsibility of North East Derbyshire District Council.

Flood Prevention Scheme

“Flood prevention scheme for Holmgate residents”

Firstly this proposal does not deal acceptably with the flood prevention on the site (Please see Hilltop Action Group’s objection on the Derbyshire County Council Planning website entitled “Geological And Hydrogeological Issues). As the proposal stands there is the danger of increased flooding to the site and locally.

Secondly there are several other parts of the affected district which suffer from flooding but only Holmgate is mentioned.

Restoration

“The site will be predominately restored back to agriculture with additional benefits being incorporated into the overall scheme. The scheme will provide the following:

- *Restoration back to enhanced agricultural land*
- *Improved drainage conditions*
- *Implementation of a soil restoration strategy*
- *Overall ecological enhancement through habitat creation and species rich planting*
- *Offsite recreational benefits*
- *The provision of land to support the aspiration of enhanced linkages to accord with the Clay Cross Regeneration Framework document”*

In answer to these statements Hilltop Action Group argue:

This land has been farmed for many years (as stated in the Provectus proposal) and the community have seen crops growing successfully as they drive or walk up and down the A61 past the site, or as they walk the public footpaths which have served the community year after year. Any upgrading of the land would only benefit the farmer and not the community.

Improved drainage conditions and implementation of a soil restoration strategy again might benefit the owner but not the community.

Ecological enhancement is not needed. The land already has a huge amount of wildlife, habitat and many plant and tree species and if this proposal is allowed it will take years for the ecology to return to its current levels, if ever.

Offsite recreational benefits seem only to be:

“allotment fencing to the east of North Street will be repaired and, where necessary, replaced.”

This does not appear to be a benefit for the whole community just a small part of the Holmgate district again.

The provision of the MUGA is dealt with above.

Provision of the land to enhance linkages to accord with the Clay Cross Regeneration Framework (CCRF) document would be at the discretion of the owner of the land.

Provectus would not be providing the community benefit here. If the owner so wished this could be achieved with no disturbance to the land or community.

Jobs

“The provision of 15 direct jobs”

Although the scheme will provide 15 full time jobs, the majority of these will be subcontracted drivers of the heavy plant used in the excavation and on-site haulage. It is unlikely that the subcontracted company will come from the immediate locality.

More worrying is the negative impact the Hilltop scheme will have on the Clay Cross Regeneration Plans. Rather than creating jobs the Hilltop scheme is likely to deter companies from moving to Clay Cross.

This proposal provides no local or community benefits which could possibly outweigh the likely impacts to justify the grant of planning permission.

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