

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT RECEIVED			
17 SEP 2012			
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15th September, 2012

Dear *DAVID*,

Re: **Hilltop Project**

I enclose a copy of a newsletter which we shall be circulating over the next few days to approximately 2000 homes in the vicinity of the Project. I hope that you will find this informative.

The newsletter refers to a Committee of local people to be set up to consider the range of community benefits that may flow from the Project.

I am pleased to report that the first appointments have now been made to the Committee which hopes to commence work in the very near future.

Yours sincerely, Reg 12[3] & 13 ...

Reg 12[3] & 13 Personal Data

JOBSEEKER WELCOMES HILLTOP

"I went to the first public meeting of the action group and attempted to explain that works of this kind could be done without causing people difficulty but they didn't want to know."



Twenty six years old Richard Bull has lived in Holmgate all his life as have both sides of his family. He is currently without regular work as a specialist plant operator and, as economic gloom grips, he believes a well-managed Hilltop scheme would be welcomed by most residents.

"I have worked as a specialist plant operator since I was 18, working all over Derbyshire and Yorkshire, and for the two years to 2011 worked for the plant hire contractor on the remediation and surface mining project at Biwaters.

Unfortunately six months after the conclusion of the Biwaters job I was laid off and since then I have had to take work where I can find it, mostly short stints as a general ground worker, as opposed to a pure plant operator.

Life has been uncertain and money has been short which is worrying as I am getting married next year. "

"When I heard about the possibility of a surface mining and restoration scheme on a site so close to my home I was very interested."

It seems to me that the project would be a good thing for me and for Holmgate.

"If I were to be taken on, (and there are plenty of others seeking regular work in

Holmgate), I would get three years work guaranteed at the start of my married life. And hopefully by the end, there may be a return to prosperity in the construction industry."

For Holmgate, where there is nothing for toddlers, young children and teenagers, an outdoor activity centre and toddler play park would be of immense benefit. And, it's a huge plus that the land will be returned to agricultural use at the end, and not developed."

"I have talked to neighbours, friends and relatives in Holmgate and have no doubt that the majority are of the view that if the works can be done without causing undue disturbance and a community benefit will result, then the sooner the works kick off the better."

"People are fed up with local politicians telling them what they need and what they should be doing. They should start listening to the people of Holmgate."

YES YES YES

At the end of the works the entire site will be restored to high grade agricultural use, there will be no development and community benefits will be legally guaranteed prior to commencement.

MYTH BUSTERS

- NO** excessive noise or dust during the project
- NO** blasting
- NO** waste will be brought onto the site
- NO** material increase in congestion on the A61
- NO** decimation of trees and hedges
- NO** long-term impact on wildlife
- NO** long-term negative impact on house values

HAVE YOUR SAY

This is your town and your children's future. Provectus has an impeccable, local reputation in community relations (as well as remediation projects) and we welcome your comments and your suggestions.

Please contact us at:-
www.hilltop-project.com
or give one of us a ring on
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**HillTOP
PROJECT**
making the most
of your natural
heritage

newsletter

Autumn 2012

"I am a farmer not a property developer and would much rather continue to farm this ground than see it turned into an industrial estate".

Roger Marriott, farmer.

Roger Marriott lives at Woodthorpe Grange Farm, in Old Tupton, and his family has farmed locally for three generations. He explains his reasons for approaching Provectus to investigate the possibility of coal extraction and land remediation on his land.

"Whatever the 'armchair farmers' have to say I can tell you that the ground that I own to the west of the A61 north of Clay Cross is a difficult farming proposition. This is principally due to poor restoration following mining activity in the past.

The land is poorly drained, it has a difficult profile and poor fertility due to sub-standard top soil."

"Over the last few years the economics of farming here have forced me to consider

other options. I could either sell the land for commercial development or take measures to improve the quality of the land on the back of a surface mining operation."

"I agonised over the decision for some time. I did not want to embark on works which would cause distress to the residents of Old Tupton and Holmgate."

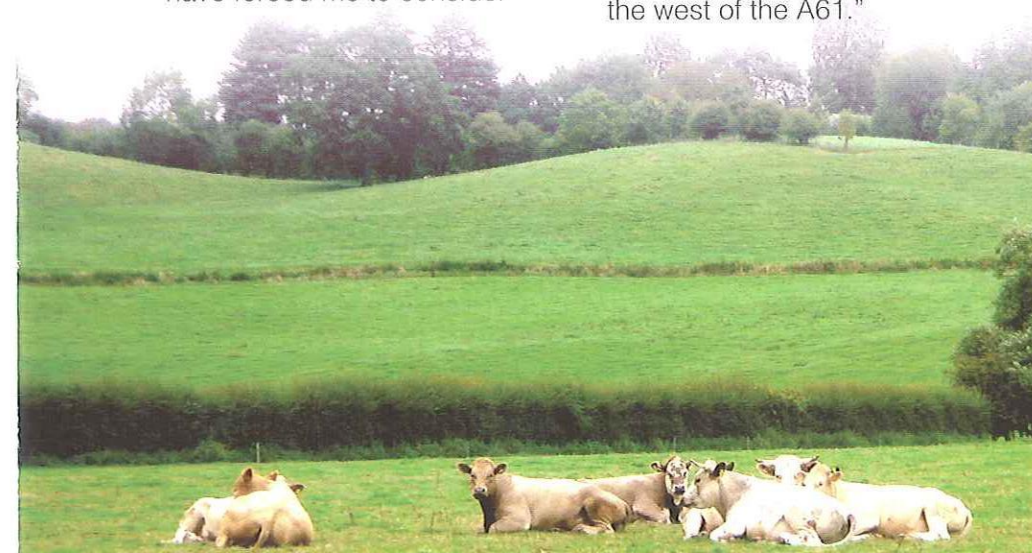
"However, whilst farming the land around the Biwater site, I was able to observe at close quarters the manner in which the remediation work, coal extraction and restoration was conducted. I realised that it was possible to carry out such works without undue environmental disruption and that noise and dust were not really issues and wondered whether the same operating practices could be applied to a similar operation on my land to the west of the A61."

"I got together with my neighbouring landowners and together we approached Provectus, the main Biwater contractors, and commissioned them to conduct an evaluation into the possibility of a surface mining operation followed by a full scale restoration to improve the agricultural value of all of the land."

"If, at the end of the evaluation, I am happy that the works can proceed without causing either undue suffering to local residents or damage to the natural environment then I would be keen for an application for a planning consent to proceed, particularly if there will also be a substantial benefit to the local community."

INSIDE

- **Busting Myths about Hilltop**
- **Your chance to choose community benefits**
- **Jobseeker hopes for Hilltop**
- **Local Estate Agent on property values**



HILLTOP THE STORY SO FAR

- Provectus Remediation Limited has been engaged by a group of local farmers and landowners to conduct an evaluation of the surface coal mining and restoration scheme at Hilltop.
- The proposed surface coal-mining scheme encompasses an area of approximately 30 hectares of land west of the A61 and would involve the excavation of an estimated 175,000 tonnes of coal over a 30 month period.
- The entire scheme would run for a little over three years from soil stripping to completion of restoration.
- Works of extraction and restoration would take place progressively in individual phases of no more than six months working from south to north, and there would be no blasting at any stage on the site.
- During the four years of the Biwater scheme there was not one complaint from local residents about noise or dust and good community relations were maintained throughout.

The land in question has been mined in the past and, due to lack of proper restoration, is currently in poor condition from an agricultural viewpoint while drainage is an issue in some areas. It would be the intention, should surface mining take place on all or some of the area, to restore it to high grade agricultural use, with enhanced biodiversity, better landscaping and public access and improved drainage. Provectus has no interest in developing the land for housing or future industrial use.

A planning application would only be lodged if the evaluation process demonstrates that the site can be worked in an environmentally acceptable manner.

The results of the impact and environmental studies are anticipated in Autumn 2012. Watch our website for details: www.hilltop-project.com

NO EFFECT ON HOUSE PRICES

Neil Hunt BSc FRICS is Managing Director of the area's largest independent estate agent, Wilkins Vardy Residential Limited, and has over 35 years experience in selling houses in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire.

He tells us; "I feel that the residents of Tupton and Holmgate may, in reality, have little to fear from the Hilltop Surface Mining Project and in many respects may come to be glad of it."



"Nobody who, like me, has experience of the National Coal Board's Open Cast Mining activities in the 1980s and 1990s, would be anything but alarmed at the prospect of a mine opening in close proximity to their home."

"Fortunately, things have changed and the nature of surface coal extraction is totally different from how it was done then. Technological improvements and stringent environmental controls have combined to significantly diminish the negative impacts of surface coal extraction, with a consequential reduction in the adverse effects on neighbouring home owners."

"Re-assurance can be taken from the nearby Biwater site which was surface mined between 2008 and 2011 with minimum nuisance and no detriment to the nearby Taylor Wimpey Housing Development."

"Once completed, I do not consider that the Hilltop Surface Mining Project will have any detrimental effect on surrounding property values."

"The availability of additional land for garden enlargement for the properties on Woodland Way that back onto the site, and the long term protection of the mined site from development, can both have a positively beneficial impact on values in the locality."

"It has to be accepted that during the course of the mining process, there is likely to be some negative effect on property saleability, but given the speed of the process, this will probably be fairly short lived, I would anticipate no more than a few months."

"The absence of blasting will ensure that there is no risk of damage to property from the operation and the protective bunds will virtually eliminate any visual impact on neighbouring properties."

NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

We have already received some excellent suggestions from individuals, clubs, and associations in the area and the most popular are listed below.

Provectus is firmly committed to leaving the final choice to a committee made up of local people and details of this will be announced shortly.

Community benefits to be considered will include:

- **All weather games area and toddler park in Holmgate**
- **Flood prevention scheme for North Street**
- **Improved public footpaths**
- **Woodland Way boundary adjustments**
- **Ashover Light Railway heritage scheme**

Watch out for details on our website www.hilltop-project.com or in the local press



ASHOVER LIGHT RAILWAY SOCIETY REVEALS PLANS

"We would be keen to become part of any post-mining development, which shared similar aims of attracting tourism and jobs to the area through an educational visitor experience."

The short, narrow gauge Ashover Light Railway, opened in 1925, was built and operated by the men of the Clay Cross Company which was then a major private enterprise controlled by the Jackson family. It was built primarily to convey limestone and fluorspar from the company's quarries at Ashover, Fallgate, and Milltown back to the works where they were used in the iron making process. For the first ten years, however, it also provided scheduled and excursion passenger services, and it is for these that it is still remembered with great affection. Many older residents of the area tell of their excitement at riding the 'Peggy' railway to Ashover Butts, and of visiting the 'Where the Rainbow Ends' café, which was located there.

The Ashover Light Railway Society, formed in 2006, seeks to do more than simply restore a length of railway line as a tourist plaything. It believes any such venture should form part of a wider educational experience, which tells the story of the origins of Clay Cross, and the part which the railway, the company, and the skilled local people played in its growth. This coupled with the fascinating social history connected to the line could help create a successful and sustainable new attraction for the area, bringing a much-needed boost to the local economy.

The Society is keen to establish a location where it could lay the foundations for such an educational facility, and is continuing to explore a number of possibilities. We are adopting a neutral stance towards the proposed opencast operation, believing this must be for the local people to decide whether it proceeds, but should it do so, on restoration, there is an obvious possibility of a start point on the exact line of the original track.

Richard Booth

Ashover Light Railway Society www.alrs.org.uk

