

Cumbria coal mine decision shows “government is the pits” on tackling the climate crisis



7 December 2022

Commenting on Levelling-Up Secretary Michael Gove's go ahead for the Cumbria coal mine, Green Party of England and Wales co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“It's a disgrace that this decision has been cynically delayed until just after we have ceased to hold the COP Presidency. This government really is the pits.

“England and Wales have huge natural advantages and the economic strength to harness renewable wind, wave and solar power. The government should be leading the world toward renewable forms of energy not encouraging it to move backwards.

“The government's environmental credentials are in tatters. Around the world, countries are striving to tackle the climate crisis by closing coal mines, yet here the government is opening one.

“This latest decision follows the green light for new North Sea oil and gas licences.

“Global leadership must begin at home and we need to see a clear commitment from this government to keep fossil fuels in the ground. This means no new fossil fuel mining and a clear pathway to move rapidly away from oil, coal and gas in favour of renewables and a nationwide programme of home insulation to cut both emissions and energy bills.

“The mine will not be ‘carbon neutral’ as previously claimed and its coking coal is not essential to the future of steel production. At most, only 13 per cent of the coal from this mine is destined for the UK market [1]. The rest will be exported.

“Steel production is currently one of our most carbon intensive industries. That has to change and the companies themselves know it. Low carbon production technology exists and should be encouraged by government, not held back by creating new sources of dirty fuels.

“There is no doubt West Cumbria needs jobs but over-promising in order to open a new coal mine is not the answer. There needs to be investment in the green technologies that will create the sustainable jobs of the future.”

Jill Perry, Green Party councillor on the Shadow Authority of Cumberland Council and long-term campaigner against the coal mine, said:

“This is really bad news for local people, because what we really need are green jobs that benefit everyone in the community, not dirty jobs in an old industry where the profits are sucked out and hidden in tax havens.

“If we invest in retrofit of insulation and renewable technologies in our leaky housing stock, a lot of which isn’t even on the gas network, it will provide more jobs, cheaper heating bills and keep the money circulating in the local area.

“The steel industry doesn’t need this coking coal plant and neither do we.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://theecologist.org/2022/dec/01/cumbrian-coal-mine-decision-imminent>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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