

PROTESTERS TO FIGHT CABINET DECISION TO SELL LAND TO BIOMASS DEVELOPERS AND WILL HOLD MP TO PLANNING CONDITIONS PLEDGE

The action group against the proposed biomass plant for Bishop's Castle has vowed to fight on following yesterday's decision by Cabinet to ignore the advice of its own Scrutiny committee to reconsider the sale of land for a biomass incineration development on the Town's business park and instead approved the sale of the land to the biomass developers who had never obtained an option on the land before obtaining planning permission.

“We are down but by no means out” said Karen Bavastock, the Chairman of the Bishop's Castle Group, “over 120 people attended yesterday's mid-day meeting from our town and they all felt that we had been ‘stitched-up’ as they put it to me by the Cabinet, our representations were ignored, as indeed were the representations from their own Scrutiny Committee and as a result we will be redoubling our efforts to fight this development”

Karen also said that the Group would be calling on local MP Philip Dunne to uphold his stance that should the scheme go ahead the community should seek comfort that the 37 conditions imposed by the planning inspector following the public inquiry would be upheld and not varied and went on to say “we have repeatedly said that conditions are near to meaningless as the developers would seek to vary them at the earliest opportunity – well, now we will be holding Mr Dunne to his word that the conditions will be imposed as defined and not varied by even one comma or word – we will be watching and waiting for any variation on the conditions and holding him to his word”

Michael Dawes, Vice Chair of the group commented that “Richard Cooke, one of the developers, said on the Radio yesterday that in time the community would grow to appreciate their project and that it would be good for the community and good for the country – well it might be good for their profits but it will certainly not be good for the community or for the country. Mr Cooke has said that the public hostility is due to

‘misinformation’ – we challenge Mr Cooke to say where this mis-information is, not once in the nearly four years we have been fighting this proposal have they pointed out to us any factual mis-information, we even have a link from our website www.bishopscastlegroup.org.uk to the developers website – a courtesy they don’t reciprocate!”

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*(paragraph re Martin Taylor Smith temporarily removed...)
Martin Taylor Smith is unhappy with us using words such as predetermination. This paragraph has been removed pending clarification from Martin Taylor Smith as to his objections to it. Mr Taylor Smith has invited the group to take this up with the Standards Board which we are considering at the BCGroup’s meeting on 18th October. We have invited Mr Taylor Smith to this meeting but he has unfortunately declined as he has a prior engagement*

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Paula Middleton Secretary to the Bishop’s Castle Group said “it was interesting to note that the only councillor not present at Cabinet, Mal Price, was the member for Battlefield – where the incinerator has just been refused permission, what a strange coincidence that the only absentee was from a ward where incineration pollution issues have been clearly studied and understood and rejected by councillors”.

Karen concluded “The Bishop’s Castle Group are reconvening next week to determine whether we have reached the end of the democratic process or whether other legal challenges are available, and to consider future actions. We are bitterly disappointed that the cabinet had taken this decision based on, it seems, claims which had been made over 3 years ago and it seems that all the research, experts and opinions given by the town has counted for absolutely nothing”.

ENDS

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