

Save Longstone Edge Campaign

Save Longstone Edge Group Newsletter – December 2011

Fluorspar Quarrying to Resume on Longstone Edge

Dear Supporters

When Ineos, the owners of Glebe Mines and therefore of Cavendish Mill and of some of the mineral rights on Longstone Edge, decided to shut Cavendish Mill and not to continue quarrying fluorspar, we thought that this probably meant the end of fluorspar extraction in the Peak District and, indeed, in Great Britain. Mexichem, which had bought the fluorspar processing plant at Runcorn from Ineos, seemed likely to want to continue to feed the plant with fluorspar from Mexico.

When a company called Cavendish Minerals bought Glebe Mines on 5 September, and we were told that another company called Fluorspar UK had been set up to trade fluorspar, we immediately sought a meeting with Cavendish. This meeting has now taken place.

It is expected that fluorspar processing at Cavendish Mill will resume in the New Year. Fluorspar will be sourced from a number of places, including the existing Deep Rake quarry on Longstone Edge, Tearsall near Darley Dale and the underground Milldam Mine at Great Hucklow. Long term plans for fluorspar extraction will be drawn up.

Fluorspar processed at Cavendish Mill will be sold to Mexichem at Runcorn, some other small scale customers in the UK and probably elsewhere in Europe.

We have a further meeting with the new owners in the New Year when we hope to get further information about their plans.

We have made it clear to the new owners that we will oppose any new quarrying on Longstone Edge. We also made it clear that we expected the company to ensure that there can be no further flooding and pollution from the settling ponds at Cavendish Mill, and we were told that the new owners shared these concerns.

However, it is a fact that the new owners are the fourth in not much more than a decade. Previous owners have been unable or unwilling to invest enough money to minimise the environmental impact of fluorspar extraction in a way that meets the needs of visitors to and residents of the National Park.

We have expressed these concerns to the National Park Authority, and have told them that we believe that the last 2 years have demonstrated that there is no national need for fluorspar quarrying in the Peak District and quarrying in

the Peak District is not necessary to preserve jobs in the chemical industry in Runcorn. We believe that any new fluorspar extraction on Longstone Edge should only be by underground mining in order to minimise environmental damage.

In an entirely separate issue spoil heaps at Wagers Flat have now been ruining views of Longstone edge from many directions for several years. These are the responsibility of Bleaklow Industries which has done nothing to restore any of the damage it has done to the Edge at Wagers Flat or at Backdale.

The Save Longstone Edge Group has widespread support in our local communities and more broadly from visitors to the Peak District National Park. We also have the support of a coalition of national organisations which include the Ramblers, the Campaign for National Parks, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, the British Mountaineering Council, Friends of the Earth, Plantlife and the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. In the past we have attracted the interest of Government Ministers through the support we have from local Members of Parliament. We will not hesitate to do everything needed to prevent further damage to Longstone Edge.

John Lambert - Chairman, SLEG