

Detailed submission by Wakefield and District Trades Union Council

Interested Party reference number: 20032312

Drax Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage PINS Reference: EN01012

Wakefield and District Trades Union Council wrote an initial objection to the preliminary enquiry of the Examining Authority because of our long-stated commitment to a sustainable future. In recent years we have inserted "Green" into the Trade union slogan,

"The past we inherit -the **green** future we build."

Amongst our many thousands of affiliated members we have several thousand people employed in education, who face the aspirations hopes and fears of the next generations of workers in the daily interactions in the workplace. Our members report the anxiety of the next generation to us, we report it to you.

Wakefield Trades Council, as part of West Yorkshire Association of Trades Union Councils, were pleased to propose the motion, "Addressing the Climate Emergency with Positive actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions"

This was debated and overwhelmingly passed at last year's 2022 Conference of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional TUC.

This AGM believes that faced with these realities, it is imperative that future generations' fears are answered with actions, and all opportunities possible are taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including ending financial support for problematic & misleading large-scale biomass, fracking, fossil fuels, carbon capture and continuing reliance on nuclear power and the waste which it produces.

It is attached in full with this submission.

It would be wonderful if Carbon Capture was a proven technology already capturing carbon and sequestering it so that carbon emissions were on the pathway down. This is not the case, despite the decades of research and innovation funding that have promised results and have not delivered.

Unfortunately for us, and our Planet, the only reliable form of carbon capture are trees in the forests that are being cutdown to feed the large-scale biomass burners at Drax and elsewhere.

For more detailed arguments on the implications for jobs for the next generations and for the current workforce at Drax and surrounding area, we agree with the submission of Leeds Trades Council. We concur with the points they have raised, regarding jobs in the construction phase, and the limited numbers of long-lasting jobs.

We too question the validity of claims of quality of jobs that will be created at Drax, when Drax workers are currently in long running dispute on terms and conditions; and with outstanding health and safety issues due to be heard at Leeds Crown Court.

We are fully aware of the work of our partner organisation Just Transition Wakefield and the details of their submission. We concur with their submission and share their frustration that Drax is seeking to use net zero accounting to justify clear felling mature forests, not to actually bring down carbon emissions.

It cannot be right to define burning biomass as carbon zero-rated, when forests are cleared, and transported, to be pelleted, and pellets dried, all to fuel the burners at Drax.

Carbon is emitted at every stage of that sequence, and yet because of carbon accountancy Omissions, too few of the Emissions are counted; and the timescale, well beyond 2050, that the replacement trees could grow to maturity.

We endorse the submissions by Just Transition Wakefield and Leeds TUC.

At the recent meeting of West Yorkshire Association Trades Union Councils we passed another motion recognising that,

- 1) Humanity's future is dependent on a living planet;
- 2) Without more urgent decarbonisation we are on the verge of irreversible tipping points leading to "an uncharted territory of destruction" in our lifetimes.

There is not the time, or the possibility to waste any carbon burning trees when renewables are so much more reliable at not emitting carbon. Drax and the workforce should be using their infrastructure and combined expertise in developing genuinely renewable solutions.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE - 8-9 JANUARY 2022

PLEASE NOTE THIS RESOLUTION SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE REGIONAL TUC OFFICE BY NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER 2021 – IF IT COULD BE SENT ELECTRONICALLY IN WORD FORMAT TO [REDACTED]@tuc.org.uk IT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED.

Addressing the climate emergency through positive actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

This TUC YH AGM notes that the Secretary General of the United Nations has warned we are on Code Red for Humanity.

The Conference of the Parties was the 26th time world governments have met and yet greenhouse emissions continue to rise. Present policies of carbon markets are not working.

The Climate Emergency is real. The implications of climate scientists' warnings are clear to young people in our schools and colleges, causing them huge anxiety for the future. Mental health services nationwide are reporting increasing cases of Eco Anxiety in all ages especially the young.

The current National Curriculum, exam syllabi and training offered in colleges does not address the urgency of Climate Emergency.

In addition to the local and national governments; new regional bodies across the UK could provide leadership on the Climate, specifically the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and the new Metropolitan Mayors. The Metro Mayors have responsibility for public transport and exert considerable influence over regional policy in training and employment.

This AGM believes that faced with these realities, it is imperative that future generations' fears are answered with actions, and all opportunities possible are taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including ending financial support for problematic & misleading large-scale biomass, fracking, fossil fuels, carbon capture and continuing reliance on nuclear power and the waste which it produces.

This AGM further believes that a just transition should be paid for through general & corporate taxation and not by levies and increasing tax burdens on working people.

This AGM calls on the Metro Mayors in the Region, along with the government, councils, and other public bodies; to heed the increasing anxiety of the population, and address their concerns with the following actions:

Encourage everyone to use Public Transport through providing free bus and mass transit systems, by bringing services under public ownership.

Push all training and education establishments to develop new courses to train students in fossil-fuel-free technologies and the essential retrofitting, resilience, and adaptation measures, and cease training for the outdated fossil fuelled economy.

To make carbon literacy a compulsory part of all Continuous Professional Development and school and college curricula.

Encourage all schools to sign up to [REDACTED] and join networks like West Yorkshire Eco Educators and Schools' Climate Education South Yorkshire to support each other in the process.