

Julie James MS
Minister for Climate Change
Welsh Government
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Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.wales

05.06.2023

Dear Minister,

RE: Reclamation work at Ffos Y Fran Opencast site

We welcome the recent action taken by Merthyr Tydfil Council to order cessation of works on the Ffos Y Fran opencast site by 27th June, however, we have grave concerns over the reclamation of the site.

I'm sure you will be aware of the litany of former opencast works around Wales that have failed to be restored to the standard that was promised before operations were carried out. We are seeking assurances that Ffos Y Fran will not be another one.

One of the conditions given on the approval of the opencast in 2005 was that the operators (then Miller Argent) would restore the former industrial land to green hillside as work progressed. However, councillors at a recent meeting heard that "insufficient funds" have been set aside to complete the restoration of the land.

They were informed that it is now estimated that the funds needed for the restoration of the site were between £75m and £125m. The councillors also heard that the current operators have only deposited approximately £15m into an Escrow account for the reclamation works.

With a deficit of approximately £60 – 110 million needed for the reclamation work, CPRW join many concerned residents in the area who are worried that this reclamation work will either not take place to the standard required, or that the taxpayers will be left footing the bill to do so.

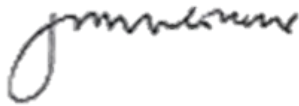
Can you reassure CPRW, our members and local residents that you will pursue the current operators Merthyr Ltd, or even previous operators, Miller Argent, to ensure that the full reclamation of the site will occur, and the cost will not be saddled upon the taxpayer?

Cont.



If you are unable to do so, can you inform us of what action, if any, the Welsh Government is doing to ensure the reclamation work takes place in full?

Yours Sincerely,



Jonty Colchester
Chair
CPRW

CC. Gerald Jones MP
Dawn Bowden MS Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Delyth Jewell MS Natasha Asghar MS
Laura Anne Jones MS



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