



Comment on Dewley Hill Surface Mine, February 2020 Planning Application Reference Number: 2019/0300/01/DET

Following examination of Bank's response to a request for 'further information', Northumberland Wildlife Trust has made an additional comment on this application. The Trust welcomes the proposals for restoration mitigation, and hopes that the long term management and protection of these habitats will be put in place to ensure their success well into the future.

We thank the developers for clarification on drainage and water management of the site, and we are satisfied that it is not expected that run off will have any impact on the Ouse Burn.

However, the Trust still feels that mitigation for the loss of habitat or disturbance to a number of farmland bird species including skylark, lapwing and yellowhammer during the active phase of the mine does not go far enough. As mentioned in our last comment, even temporary loss of habitat can factor into population declines for these species, and we cannot ignore these short-term negative impacts. The removal of mature trees and 4.8km of internal hedgerows is concerning as it will limit animal movement through the site, reduce foraging and roosting opportunities for bat species, and reduce nesting habitat for a number of breeding birds. Restored habitat will take time to recreate the value of these lost mature trees and hedgerows.

Finally, Northumberland Wildlife Trust once again raised our ongoing concern with the continued extraction and use of coal. Any form of coal extraction reduces the ability of the UK government to meet carbon budgets, and tackle the issue of climate change. Therefore, we feel that mining developments that assist in prolonging our reliance on coal-powered energy should be opposed.

