



Industry news : June 2007

- [New Government waste strategy announced](#)
- [New Scottish gold mine planned](#)
- [UK developments in commercial tidal energy](#)
- [Investment into Nottinghamshire coal mine methane](#)
- [Quarry Products Association comments on AM2005](#)
- [Opposition to Scottish Quarry](#)
- [Wind turbines approved for Northumberland](#)
- [Plans to restart deep coal mining in Scotland](#)
- [Geological disposal of nuclear waste in Scotland](#)
- [Completion of processing plant at Omagh gold mine](#)

New Government waste strategy announced

The Governments new waste strategy was announced on 5 June and although it contains no new specific policy changes for minerals waste it does state that the Government “is considering in conjunction with the construction industry a target to halve the amount of construction demolition and excavation wastes going to landfill by 2012”. The Quarry Products Association (QPA) is concerned by this statement and believes that inert waste could be sustainably used in restoring disused quarries and additional regulations on minerals waste could have a negative impact on quarry restoration. The QPA also indicate that production and use of secondary and recycle aggregates is nearing capacity so there is little scope for further aggregate recycling.

Sources : <http://www.qpa.org/07-release009.htm> and <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/strategy/strategy07/index.htm>

New Scottish gold mine planned



UK alluvial gold

Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/downloads/start.cfm?id=>

Following its discovery in 1984 the Connish gold deposit near Tyndrum in Scotland may finally be developed. Scotgold Resources have bought the gold and silver assets in the area from previous owners the Swiss-based Oak Consortium for £800 000.

Scotgold suggests there could be up to £70 million worth of gold and silver in the deposits. They have unveiled plans to bring the project into production within two years and operate the mine for eight years, although they have yet to gain permission from the Crown Estate who owns the rights to all gold in the UK . The gold produced would primarily be used in the manufacture of Celtic Scottish jewellery.

Source : <http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=839412007>

UK developments in commercial tidal energy



Strangford Lough

Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

Strangford Lough in County Down , Northern Ireland is to host the world's first commercial operating tidal energy system. It will consist of one turbine installed at the mouth of the lough which has one of the fastest tidal flows in the world. The turbine will have the capacity to produce 1.2 megawatts of electricity, enough to power around 1 000 homes. The SeaGen system will principally act as a prototype for larger tidal energy schemes and in the future the company hopes to develop other tidal energy projects in the UK .

In a related story the New and Renewable Energy Centre has announced development of a prototype tidal energy testing chamber, to be installed on the Tees Barrage at Stockton on Tees . This prototype device aims to demonstrate how similar models would operate once scaled up for use on the open seas.

Sources : http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/6728073.stm and <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/tees/6733477.stm>

Investment into Nottinghamshire coal mine methane

Alkane Energy, which currently runs several plants extracting methane from redundant coal mines for use in power generation, has announced that it will expand its existing operations at Mansfield, Bevercotes and Warsop in north Nottinghamshire. The company plans to invest £2 million in developing a further two coal mines by drilling into the old workings and extracting methane. Alkane Energy currently produces enough energy to power around 2000 homes.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/nottinghamshire/6748603.stm>

Quarry Products Association comments on AM2005



UK sand and gravel production
Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

Following the recent release of the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Aggregate Minerals Survey (AM2005) the Quarry Products Association (QPA) suggests it has identified “a very real threat to future sand and gravel supplies” in England and Wales . The Aggregate Mineral Survey is a four-yearly publication which reports production and consumption of minerals based on survey returns from industry operators. The QPA's concerns directly relate to the reduction in “overall land-won permitted aggregate reserves at active quarries” reported in AM2005 compared with the previous survey in 2001. The QPA is specifically concerned about declining sand and gravel reserves which it suggests at current production levels will only last for nine years based on current permissions.

Source: <http://www.qpa.org/07-release010.htm>

Opposition to Scottish Quarry

Considerable opposition has developed against plans to restart quarrying at Murrayshall Quarry near Stirling in Scotland . Stirling District Council granted detailed planning permission for the site in 1982 and now claim the decision cannot be revoked. It is claimed that further quarrying at Murrayshall would destroy Gillies Hill, a site of significant historical importance, and severely alter the landscape. Local Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) Bruce Crawford claims “local authorities reserve the right to modify or revoke any planning permission when it judges that 'material considerations' warrant it”. Stirling Council has responded by saying that a report on the matter will be presented to the council following the summer recess.

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/6768623.stm

Wind turbines approved for Northumberland



Scottish wind turbines

Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

Plans by Scottish Power to erect up to seven wind turbines close to the Alcan aluminium smelter at Lynemouth have been approved by Wansbeck Council. The planned turbines measure more than 120 metres high and will be constructed on agricultural land owned by Alcan. The £35 million construction project will create 60 jobs. The site straddles the local government boundary separating Wansbeck from Castle Morpeth. Original plans included the construction of an additional seven turbines on the Castle Morpeth part of the site which were rejected by their planners. The new turbines mean that Northumberland should be able to generate 812 megawatts of renewable energy in three years time. The national target is for renewable energy to provide 10 per cent of the nation's power by 2010.

Sources: <http://www.wansbeck.gov.uk/index.cfm?page=viewnews.cfm&id=411> and <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/tyne/6735747.stm>

Plans to restart deep coal mining in Scotland

Scottish Coal has asked for backing from the Scottish Executive and Westminster in relation to their plans to exploit Scotland's deep coal reserves. In 2006 Scottish Coal submitted a document to the DTI Energy Review in support of indigenous coal production. Scottish Coal suggests that, with the introduction of clean coal technology, deep coal reserves, which typically have a high sulphur content resulting in excessive pollution, could be burnt in Scottish power stations.

Scottish Coal indicates that, in addition to making a considerable contribution to the economy, indigenous coal production provides security and reliability of supply for consumers and its relatively modest price lowers electricity bills. First Minister Alex Salmond responded to Scottish Coal's plans as follows "If we can reduce carbon emissions, coal can play a vital role in giving Scotland the diversity of energy sources which is essential for security of energy supply."

Sources: <http://www.scottishresourcesgroup.co.uk> and <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/6696043.stm>

Geological disposal of nuclear waste in Scotland



Dounreay nuclear power station.

Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

The Scottish Executive has refused to participate in consultation regarding geological disposal of nuclear waste. UK ministers are currently seeking opinions on underground radioactive waste storage. The Scottish National Party (SNP) Environment Secretary Richard Lochhead has indicated that the SNP does not want any involvement in future geological disposal of nuclear waste. He went on to state "We do not accept that it is right to seek to bury nuclear waste, which will remain active for thousands of years, in a deep geological facility or to expect any community to host such a facility". Last year, the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) recommended underground disposal as a long-term solution for Britain 's nuclear waste.

Sources: <http://news.scotsman.com/politics.cfm?id=994422007> and

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/6237080.stm>

Completion of processing plant at Omagh gold mine

The Galantas Gold Corporation that is developing Ireland 's first gold mine, has completed commissioning of the processing plant at the site about 5 km south-west of Omagh in County Tyrone , Northern Ireland . Since the end of May three containers containing approximately 70 wet tonnes of concentrate have been shipped to Canada for processing. Temporary equipment has been installed to demonstrate the ability to recover free gold which will be used in the Company's certified Irish gold jewellery production. Galantas is currently hiring additional staff in order to allow the processing plant to operate 24 hours a day, 5 days a week.

Source: <http://www.galantas.com/corporate/s/NewsReleases26062007.html>