

FROM MICHAEL HESELTINE, RICHMONDSHIRE NORTH
26th AUGUST 2008

Mr Chairman

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very contentious application which is in my electoral division. It has certainly had a long gestation period before reaching committee, nearly 20 months in fact, but here we are at last. Throughout, I have felt there should be a very comprehensive site visit before any decision is taken, and I am therefore supporting the recommendation this morning. I will confine my present remarks to this issue.

The application is complex, and it is essential to look at the details on the spot and carefully. I hope committee members will look at the site thoroughly, and use the occasion to seek out the details they regard as essential in making a fair and valid decision. Your decision will have extensive ramifications for many people for many years ahead.

Beyond this I do hope you will use the occasion to get into your vehicles and explore the surrounding area, and particularly the relative position of the two neighbouring villages of Middleton Tyas and Barton and other nearby settlement, and also the relative location of Barton Quarry. It is very very important too for you to examine local *transport* communications, and in particular the possibilities of links with the A1 Trunk road.

I would add one further plea. I hope that before a site visit, committee members will be issued with a map which is much more useful than that which appears on page 104 of your committee papers today. Even I find it difficult to sort out the details and boundaries of the application from this.

Finally, Mr Chairman, it may seem curious that this matter is to be decided by a committee which does not include a single member from Richmondshire. At the same time, a really good site visit, followed by an inevitably very detailed report at the next meeting, would go a long way to make up for this.