

## **PRESS RELEASE**

21<sup>st</sup> January 2009

### **UPDATE ON PLANS FOR EASTGATE RENEWABLE ENERGY VILLAGE**

Weardale Task Force submitted an outline planning application for Eastgate Renewable Energy Village in March last year and at that time a planning decision was anticipated in autumn 2008.

Since then, additional information has been requested by statutory consultees and a decision is now potentially expected in late spring 2009.

One NorthEast's John Topliss, project manager for Eastgate Renewable Energy village, says: "We are currently discussing a number of issues with statutory consultee colleagues and are providing additional information where necessary.

"Additional ecology, landscape and other assessment work is being undertaken in specific areas to supplement the substantial Environmental Statement already submitted for the proposed development. This is not unusual for a major planning application such as that proposed for Eastgate."

Designed to create jobs and revitalise the whole of Weardale's economy, Eastgate Renewable Energy Village will encompass a mix of homes, office and workshop accommodation, a hotel and a public geothermally heated spa – only the second in the UK.

The entire site, including the actual Renewable Energy Village, Riverside Meadows, The Slopes (hillside) and The Tops (quarry areas) will cover a vast area of 330 hectares, equivalent to 500 football pitches.

Unique in this country, Eastgate will be the only Renewable Energy Village to feature all five forms of land-based renewable energy available in the UK – hydro, solar, wind, biomass and geothermal. It will generate sufficient 'clean' electricity to offset the energy consumption of the whole of Weardale.

For a range of information on the project, go to [www.weardale-works.com](http://www.weardale-works.com), call 01388 761571 or email [regeneration@wearvalley.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@wearvalley.gov.uk).

## ENDS

### **Media Enquiries:**

Robson Brown PR

Liz Luff / Lee Marshall

(0191) 2446659 / (0191) 244 6653

0797 4698759

[lizl@robson-brown.co.uk](mailto:lizl@robson-brown.co.uk) / [lee.marshall@robson-brown.co.uk](mailto:lee.marshall@robson-brown.co.uk)

### **About Eastgate Renewable Energy Village:**

Eastgate Renewable Energy Village is a regeneration project on the site of the former Lafarge Blue Circle cement works for the benefit of people of Weardale. It will maximise the potential of the site to provide an eco-friendly living, working and learning environment and visitor attraction.

It will demonstrate best practice in sustainability by utilising all five forms of land-based renewable energy available in the UK, which are wind, solar, hydro, biomass and geothermal – a unique concept in this country.

The project will enhance the lives and prosperity of the existing population of the Dale by creating sustainable jobs, homes and recreational facilities for local people within a development that is at the forefront of eco-friendly living. It will also provide opportunities for links with other businesses and leisure facilities in the Dale.

The new Renewable Energy Village will provide one of only two public hot springs in the UK utilising geothermal hot water, and a centre for education for residents and visitors to learn about renewable energy, sustainable living, life in the Dale and the surrounding North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The outline planning application was submitted in late March 2008, with planning permission hoped for in early 2009.

### **About Weardale Task Force:**

Weardale Task Force is the body responsible for overseeing the formulation of a master plan for the proposed Renewable Energy Village and is made up of members from One NorthEast, Wear Valley District Council, Durham County Council and Lafarge Cement UK.

Local residents are requested to contact the Task Force with any queries or concerns on:

(01388) 761571

[economic.regeneration@wearvalley.co.uk](mailto:economic.regeneration@wearvalley.co.uk)