Ecological Owlthorpe

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Kellie Webb Records Officer

The Coal Authority

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Date: 8th September 2026

Dear Sirs,

I am making this request under the Freedom of Information Act.

In the past you kindly supplied information regarding the proposed Building in Owlthorpe. Your report was very thorough. Coal had to be removed before building could take place. The probe holes drilled showed Heavy Water Near the surface on some sites. We knew both Moor Hole pit and Dent Main both flooded, and water had to be pumped out into the Ochre Dyke to stop miners from drowning. It is The Ochre in the mine water that gives the Ochre Dyke its name.

In 2024 a 200ft sinkhole was found just behind Birley Moor Garden Centre, just across the road from Owlthorpe, it is believed the sinkhole leads down to Dent Main Colliery.

"Investigations have confirmed this incident was caused by historical coal mine workings and our engineering team are now designing a permanent solution to make the site safe."

On the pathway up to the header waters of the Ochre Dyke there seems to be a lot of ground movement above Dent Main.  Is the mine safe?

With the recent collapse under the Supertram many local residents and commuters are concerned for the health & safety of the **Dent Main Colliery**.

Also, the Supertram blue route takes the tram over **Holbrook, Westhorpe, and Birley East collieries** are they Safe?

Under the freedom of information ACT, I make the following requests:

1. Could you please supply a copy of the report regarding the 200ft Sinkhole & the subsequent recommendations.
2. Could you supply a copy of work carried out to make the site safe.
3. Were health & Safety issues regarding the Mine workings overlooked when the Super Tram was first built? **Michael Heseltine served as the Secretary of State for the Environment at the time. He was involved in the project by throwing out subsequent calls for a public inquiry in April 1991, allowing construction to begin later that year.**
4. As the recent hole that appeared under the Supertram track was over a coal field. The LAW of the land states that before building near or on former coal mines permission is to be sought from the Coal Authority. The Coal Authority produces a report and makes proposals with regard to any work that needs to be undertaken before construction. Work cannot be carried out until there is a full report from the Coal Authority. Could you please supply a copy of your report together with recommendations.

5. An ACT of Parliament formed the **Coal Authority** in 31 October 1994, so in June 1995: when Michael Heseltine returned to the region in his role as President of the Board of Trade to conduct the official opening ceremony for further extensions of the network. Was the **Coal Authority** consulted?

The problem with the Super tram is causing much debate amongst both Commuters and local residents. We are all looking for answers.

Kind Regards

Michael Meredith

PS; a copy of this communication is sent to my Sheffield City Councillor, Stuart Walace.