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Drax condemns Tory U-turn as “reckless and irresponsible”

Last week, Claire Coutinho, UK shadow net zero secretary, backtracked on the former Conservative government's previous approval of Drax fittings its Selby biomass facility with Beccs (bioenergy with carbon capture and storage) technology.

She claimed the case for the scheme 'simply unravelled' on closer inspection.

She said: “We cannot go green by burning trees at huge cost to the public. If the widespread burning of forests is part of the solution to climate change, then we have to ask ourselves what problem we are trying to solve.”

Will Gardiner, CEO of Drax Group, has released a statement expressing disappointment in political opportunism.

He said: “The Conservative Party’s decision is reckless and irresponsible. It is deeply disappointing that they now care more about political point scoring than the country’s ongoing energy security and ability to meet net zero.

“In government, the party acknowledged the key role Drax Power Station, the country’s largest source of renewable power, plays in keeping the lights on for millions of homes and businesses when the wind doesn’t blow and the sun doesn’t shine.

“As Secretary of State for DESNZ, Claire Coutinho’s name is on the planning approval for Drax’s plans for BECCS at the Selby site. The decision letter clearly stated that the project will support the transition to net zero by 2050.

“Her comments will upset Drax Power Station colleagues who work tirelessly to power the UK. It will also lead to concerns across our country-wide supply chain and among other UK based biomass generators.

“Our priority is working in partnership with the Government who is focused on safeguarding the UK’s energy security and delivering net zero.”

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