

Canal row firm 'won't get away with this'

By Mike Cotton

A DEVELOPER who destroyed a stretch of former canal must fully restore it to its original state, according to a senior Barnsley councillor who insists 'they will not get away with it'.

Barnsley Council has ordered unauthorised works to stop along the former canal to the rear of Jewson and other businesses at Barnsley Trade Park at Stairfoot, where two new units are to be constructed.

The disused canal bank has been totally dug out, lowering the level of the land by several metres without planning permission.

Coun Roy Miller, cabinet member responsible for the planning department, went to the site this week and was alarmed at the scale of the unauthorised work.

He has vowed the developer will not 'get away with it' and wants the canal bank rebuilt to return the possibility of it one day being used as a canal again.

"We had an agreement, and it is the policy of the council that wherever possible, we would protect the route of the canal which runs through Barnsley," said Coun Miller.

"This was an agreement made with the canal group, with the



DESTROYED: How the former canal looks this week. SP000563

potential that it could be brought back into leisure use."

He said he had been inundated with emails from people furious about the work which has destroyed a 'hidden beauty spot'.

"It is total disregard for planning regulations, and our green belt, and it is clearly destroying the environment," he said.

"I have asked our planning department to issue a legal notice to cease all work in the area.

"I want them to restore the

canal route and the banking, and replace the clay lining, and to restore and replant the shrubbery and trees they have ripped out.

"Despite many requests from planning, they have continued working and left the council no alternative but to take action."

Michael Singh, of Swift Property and Management Ltd, got planning permission for two trade and warehouse units at Barnsley Trade Park, Wombwell Lane, last year.

The council has confirmed

that the work at the site extends beyond the area covered by that planning application.

A Temporary Stop Notice (TSN) was served on the developer which requires all unauthorised works to cease immediately for 28 days.

During this time the council is considering what further action should be taken.

Mr Singh was not available for comment.

■ 'Malicious and deliberate destruction' – see page six.