

# There's no need for

# concern . . .

YOUR correspondent D. Owen ("Who's doing the kidding?", Postbag, Monday, August 20) succeeds in combining factual inaccuracy and deliberate distortion with ignorance of the most elementary features of coal mining and coal preparation technology.

The proper surveying of coal reserves is a continuing task essential to the forward planning of the coal industry's future operations. Seismic surveys — far from being "a waste of money" — are the cheapest and most effective way of carrying out this vital task and thus safeguarding the long term viability of our mining operations.

Tipping of waste from Kinsley Drift (10 miles away) has never been envisaged at Askern, nor is any other mine involved. The sole purpose of the tip extension at Askern is to meet the future needs of that colliery alone. There has never been any intention of tipping Thorne pit waste at Hatfield — as Mr. Owen goes on to suggest.

Equally puzzling (and inaccurate) is Mr. Owen's claim that excess capacity has been provided at the new coal preparation plants at Askern and Stainforth.

In fact, both plants have been designed specifically to meet the needs of the collieries concerned and to enable these long-life mines to continue to meet the quality demands of their important customers. The new plants are part of a massive investment programme in Doncaster coal aimed at ensuring industrial prosperity and job continuation well into the next century.

My purpose in writing to you is not to educate Mr. Owen, but to try to ensure that his letter, which verges on the irresponsible, does not cause unnecessary concern to the residents of Askern, Stainforth and Hatfield.

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