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Green group Reclaim the Power left red-faced after blockading wrong building

Will Humphries

July 30 2019, 5:00pm,
The Times

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The protesters chained themselves to what they thought were the offices of the energy company Drax

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[Climate change](#) activists chained themselves to the wrong building in the City of London after failing to realise that the fossil fuel company they wanted to disrupt had moved last year.

The protesters instead brought chaos to the entrance of a building that houses the offices of a leading renewable energy company.

About 200 members of the group Reclaim the Power, dressed in white boiler suits, targeted the building in Moorgate during rush hour, unfurling a banner that read: “No Borders, No Nations, No Gas Power stations.”

They thought they would be disrupting workers at the energy company [Drax](#), which plans to build a gas power station in north Yorkshire. However, Drax has moved its London headquarters to Noble Street half a mile away.

Bemused workers at Statkraft, a Norwegian hydropower company that describes itself as “Europe’s largest generator of renewable energy”, were confronted with the protest. An employee told the *London Evening Standard*: “They’re protesting against Drax but they don’t live here any more. I understand [the protesters’ aims] but it helps if they check the facts.”

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Drax is owned by the FTSE 250 energy group of the same name. The company, which reported profits of £14 million last year, employs more than 2,700 people. Its power station near Selby was built in the 1970s and 1980s to burn coal but most of its units have been converted to burn woodchips.

Drax also operates a business energy supply division and recently acquired gas-fired, hydroelectric and pumped storage plants from Scottish Power.

Meanwhile, 180 miles away in Lincolnshire, Reclaim the Power activists were blocking the correct site of SSE’s new Keadby 2 gas power plant. Milo Phillips, from the protest group, said they were protesting against Drax’s and SSE’s “role in driving the climate crisis”.

“Drax and Keadby are the first in a possible wave of a new generation of dirty mega projects, built to pollute for decades,” he said.

SSE, which is headquartered in Perth, central Scotland, employs 20,000 people in the UK.

A Drax spokeswoman said: “Everyone has a right to peaceful protest. Climate change is the biggest challenge the world faces.

“Natural gas has an important role to play in supporting the growth of renewables like wind and solar . . . Building new, more efficient gas power stations will help the UK to meet its climate objectives while ensuring homes and businesses have the power they need at a price they can afford.”

An SSE spokesman said: “When completed, we expect Keadby 2 to be the cleanest and most-efficient gas-fired power station in

Europe.”

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