**Nine-year protest camp over**

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* **BY** MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS

ECO-WARRIORS are dismantling their tree-houses and tepees and preparing to leave Britain's longest-running protest camp. For almost nine years they refused to budge from the site near the ancient Nine Ladies Stone Circle as they battled to prevent an area of the Peak District National Park being used for quarrying.

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The protest was sparked when quarry company Stancliffe Stone announced plans to reopen Endcliffe and Lees quarries, at Stanton Moor, near Matlock, Derbyshire, to extract high-quality sandstone.

Fearful of the environmental impact the scheme might have, protestors moved in - living in a caravans and in tree-houses where they remained despite bids to evict them.

Geoffrey Henson, of Stanton Lees Action Group which opposed the plan, said: "We are delighted and all we are waiting for now is the revocation notice, which should come back from the government in the next 12 weeks.

"It is a formality and the dismantling of the camp has already started.

"This is what we've been fighting for and now everyone at the camp will up sticks and go.

"This was based on principle, it was proposed for a national park and this was never right.

"There are no plans for a celebration yet, we shall talk about that when it is over."

Last September Hazel Blears, the local government secretary, decided Stancliffe Stone's planning permission would be revoked in exchange for the right to quarry at Dale View, a quarry in an area which is less environmentally sensitive.

But the remaining 20 protestors refused to pack up until they had it in writing that there would be no quarrying at the site.

Now, after lengthy negotiations the final legal documents have been completed and are expected to be rubber stamped before Christmas.

It will bring to an end years of controversy, court cases and concern over risks to the bronze age remains such as the Nine Ladies Stone Circle.

Stancliffe Stone is voluntarily giving up the planning permission granted in 1952, ending the possibility the quarries may be re-opened.

In exchange, the company will be allowed to extend Dale View quarry, further away from the most-sensitive sites.

Narendra Bajaria, chair of The Peak District National Park Authority, said: "This is a great result for the authority, the company, the community, and most of all for the nationally-important heritage and wildlife of Stanton Moor.