

Bishop Burton and Walkington Liaison Committee (Crawberry Hill)

30 October 2012

Bishop Burton Village Hall

Notes of Meeting

Attendees: David Montagu-Smith (Chairman, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - DM-S
Margaret Hebb (Bishop Burton Resident) - MH
Jason Chester (Bishop Burton Resident) - JCH
John Castle (Walkington Resident) – JC
David Drew (Councillor, Walkington Parish Council) - DD
Tom Selkirk (Project Manager, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - TS
Caroline Foster (Field Manager, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - CF
Philip Silk (Planning Manager, Moorhouse Drilling and Completions) - PS
Jonathan Foster (HSE Manager, Moorhouse Drilling and Completions) - JF
Mat Martin (Site Construction Manager, Moorhouse Drilling and Completions) – MM
Mark Allen (Allen Archaeology) - MA
Simon Taylor (Rathlin Communications) - ST

Apologies: David Oxtoby (Chair, Bishop Burton Parish Council) – DO
Phyllis Pollard (Ward Member, Beverley Rural and Chair of East Riding of Yorkshire Council Planning Committee)

1. Welcome and Introductions:

DM-S opened the liaison group meeting, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.

DM-S introduced MA explaining that his company, Allen Archaeology, had now completed the archaeological work at the site (referred to in the notes of the last meeting). MA would be giving a brief presentation about what was done later on in the meeting.

DM-S asked if anybody had any specific issues to raise since the last meeting. No issues were raised.

2. Notes from the Previous Meeting (25 September 2012):

The notes from the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of what was discussed and agreed.

3. Planning Update:

PS explained that notifications had been submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire about Rathlin's proposed work programme and the commencement of site operations (there is a requirement to give 14 days' notice). The proposed start date on site is 05 November 2012.

PS confirmed that the traffic management plan had been submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Highways Department and that imminent approval was expected. He said that the dilapidation survey had started today (30 October 2012) and that it was expected to finish tomorrow (31 October 2012).

PS said that there were already a set of markings on the road in the area around the well-site. He confirmed that these lines were not associated with Rathlin's work. He said that the council had been doing some work in the area to identify pot holes and the general consensus was that the local authority was responsible for that particular set of markings. PS added that the company completing the survey on behalf of Rathlin may also add their own markings to the road.

PS said that the 40mph speed restriction would come into force on Monday 05 November 2012 (as per the original proposal). He said that signs will be installed at each of the junctions explaining what is happening (repeated every 350 metres).

DD raised about concerns about wagons turning at Copleflat Lane onto Walkington Heads as they tend to move over on to the opposite side of the road (described as 'a difficult crossroads'). PS said that both the Parish Council and Rathlin should raise this problem with the highways department as it is a problem that only they can help resolve. However, PS confirmed that a message will be passed onto drivers associated with Rathlin's work to ensure they turn correctly without cutting the corner.

PS confirmed that appropriate signage will be used to promote the new speed restrictions and that site entrance signs will be installed so that everything is as clear as it possibly can be. Everything that will be installed will be exactly the same as outlined in the planning application.

4. Construction Update

MM circulated a copy of the construction programme (appended to these minutes) and this was discussed at length with members of the liaison committee. MM agreed that it would be circulated for posting on parish websites and that Rathlin would also post it on its website.

More generally, MM confirmed that, on Thursday (01 November 2012) and Friday (02 November 2012), he and his team would be arranging the installation of the site signage. He said that residents will, as a consequence, see a mini excavator in the nearby verge. He described this as roving works and that workforce wearing Hi-Visibility vests would be working in and around the site and Walkington Heads.

He said that the final planning re: site design (following the geotechnical survey), had now been undertaken and that having tested 1.4m down he could confirm that his team will be building on 'very solid ground'.

MM confirmed that Fox (Owmbly) will be undertaking the site construction work on behalf of Rathlin. During this time, more technical personnel will be on site as the team undertakes the necessary 'cut to fill' exercise, which will take about a week and a half to complete.

Also, MM said that works associated with forming the site entrance will begin (curbs and bell mouth). He said, that traffic lights will be in place for a week or so and then the site entrance will be tarmac'd.

MM said that the liner is scheduled to go down during week three - once the levelling work is completed. He also confirmed that security personnel would be on site outside normal working hours. MM said that the safety of the public, his workforce and protection of the land are of paramount importance to him and to Rathlin.

MM said that electronic vehicle tracking systems had been installed on all of Fox's vehicles (so that they are easily identifiable and to enable the site team to have greater control over their movements). He restated Rathlin's commitment to ensure clear separation from all other activities in the area and to ensure vehicles do not travel through the villages of Bishop Burton and Walkington.

MM said that the approved hours of operation are between 07.30am and 6pm – Monday to Friday only. He said that deliveries to the site would always be made outside peak hours wherever possible.

MM said that liaison members were very welcome to come up to the site for a viewing if they want to see, first-hand, what is happening there. He just asked that people give plenty of notice so that arrangements can be made.

JF said that the site is on a very small footprint – the smallest possible – so arrangements would need to be made in advance so that liaison committee members can observe what is taking place in a very safe manner. MM said that Rathlin would be happy to pick people up and bring them to the site – and that people must not simply turn up unannounced.

5. Archaeological Update

MA kindly gave an update on the archaeological work his company had undertaken. Allen Archaeology was brought in by Moorhouse Drilling and Completions on behalf of Rathlin Energy to undertake the archaeological investigation of the Crawberry Hill wellsite prior to its construction.

The first phase of work comprised a geophysical survey by magnetometry, which was completed prior to submitting the planning application. This method maps the magnetic signature of deposits beneath the ploughsoil, so where a former ditch for example, now soil-filled, has a differing magnetic signature to the surrounding geology then the survey should be able to identify it.

On this occasion, the survey only picked up some potential pits that lie outside the site strip, and several ephemeral linear anomalies. The linear anomalies did not respect the current field boundaries so were not caused by ploughing; they were also not found when the site was stripped of soil. The likelihood is that they were shallow boundaries that have been ploughed up, leaving only a slight magnetic trace in the survey data.

As the survey suggested that the area was unlikely to contain abundant archaeological deposits. The development control archaeologist, Dave Evans from Humber Archaeology, requested that a strip, map and record survey was carried out. This entailed a small team of archaeologists being present to monitor the ploughsoil and any overburden being stripped from the site onto the natural crushed chalk geology, so that any archaeological remains exposed could be sufficiently excavated and recorded.

The site works bore out the geophysics in that only a limited number of prehistoric pits were encountered, as well as naturally-formed hollows and tree throws (i.e. the bowl-shaped depression when a tree falls).

The prehistoric pits contained quantities of pottery and worked flints, with the pottery likely to be mainly of a type known as Food Vessels of early Bronze Age date (c.2,000 – 1,500 BC) that is most common in Yorkshire over any other part of the British Isles. Other large pieces resemble Bucket Urns, which are slightly later in date normally (middle Bronze Age, c.1,500 – 1,000 BC).

The pottery will be sent to a local specialist for analysis, as will the worked flints, and a small quantity of animal bone. In addition the soil from the pits will be analysed for environmental indicators at the time, with further data on the contemporary environment coming from pollen samples. The dating for the features will also be refined through selective radiocarbon dating.

MA explained that all of the above will enable Humber Archaeology and East Riding of Yorkshire Council to build up a detailed picture of prehistoric activity on the site, and the environment in which it occurred. It will also aid the company's understanding of the wider regional landscape during prehistory.

6. Drilling Update

JF mentioned that drilling engineers are currently working on a drilling programme and they have gone out to the market to assess suitable drilling rig availability. He said that Rathlin would not just take first drilling rig that becomes available – the company will be seeking the right, best and safest solution. He confirmed that Rathlin will choose a rig that has the ability to perform to the best possible standard (and in accordance with Rathlin's/Moorhouse's safety ethos. He also said that it might also be possible to use the same drilling rig at other sites across the East Riding, planning permission permitting, and that this would be borne in mind during the procurement process.

In terms of timescales, JF confirmed that the surface conductor would, in all likelihood, be on site by mid to end of January. He said that this would look very similar to an auger rig/waterwell rig. He explained that the process involves a dual rotary/reverse circulate to enable Rathlin to drill safely and insert the necessary casing.

He said that in the worst case scenario, the mast height would be 35m although generally they are much less. He said that this would be a four week process. He also said that, depending on technique, drilling might take up to 12 hours a day although it could be up to 24 hours. He said that there would be low level lighting. He said that everything would be acoustically housed and that the sound power levels for both rigs would not exceed the levels used during the noise assessment. He said that noise monitoring will take place to ensure Rathlin follows, to the letter, what the company agreed in its planning applications. He said that the main drilling works may begin in early March 2013.

7. AOB.

Resident representatives asked about the ground water monitoring. PS said that Rathlin is still discussing the matter with the Environment Agency and that the company wants to test the water at three borehole locations, before, during and after the drilling work begins.

PS said that Rathlin plans to start sampling the water between now and Christmas (preferably two to achieve a baseline) before drilling works begin in the New Year.

Resident representatives asked if the Environment Agency was being overly cautious. PS said that the project wasn't a major concern to them. He said the main issue surrounded their own telemetry and their clear desire for Rathlin's work not to impact and/or affect their existing systems. He said that this was understandable and not unusual.

Resident representatives asked how the Environment Agency's surveys would differ from Rathlin's. PS explained the boreholes identified for sampling were used by the Environment Agency for level monitoring and not water quality monitoring. However, the proposed sampling methodology is similar to what the Environment Agency may use.

Resident representatives asked if the information that Rathlin gathers will be made available to the Environment Agency. PS said that although there is no requirement to do so, Rathlin will proactively share the information with the Environment Agency.

8. Date and time of the next meeting:

The next meeting will take place at 7pm on Tuesday 20 November 2012 at Bishop Burton Village Hall.

MH kindly agreed to check and confirm the Hall's availability.