

## **West Newton Liaison Committee**

**7pm on 22 May 2013**

**Densholme Care Farm, Great Hatfield**

### **Notes of Meeting**

**Attendees:** David Montagu-Smith (Chairman, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - DM-S  
Ron Kostiuk (Connaught Oil and Gas Limited and a Senior Explorationist for Rathlin Energy (UK) Limited) - RK  
Tom Selkirk (Project Manager, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - TS  
Philip Silk (Planning Manager, Moorhouse Drilling and Completions) - PS  
Jonathan Foster (HSE Manager, Petroleum Safety Services Limited) - JF  
Caroline Foster (Field Manager, Rathlin Energy (UK)) - CF  
Tony Fildes (HSE Manager, Petroleum Safety Services Limited) - MM  
Ron Jagger (Resident of Burton Constable) - RJ  
Don Fields (Representing Burton Constable Parish Council) - DF  
Steve Croft (Representing Withernwick Parish Council) - SC  
Geoff North (Representing Aldbrough Parish Council) - GN  
Karen Parker (Representing Ellerby Parish Council) - KP  
John Mann (Representing Withernwick Parish Council) - JM  
Simon Taylor (Rathlin Communications) – ST

**Apologies:** None received

#### **1. Welcome**

DM-S opened the liaison group meeting, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He introduced Ron Kostiuk from Connaught Oil and Gas Limited who is a Senior Explorationist for Rathlin Energy (UK) Limited and welcomed him to the meeting.

#### **2. Operations Update**

PS said, that since the last meeting, site construction was now complete. He said that the liner and perimeter ditch were fully in place and that relevant site safety signage, including notices for overhead lines had been installed. He then presented resident representatives pictures that showed how the site looked including the drilling cellar. Resident representatives commented on how well the site looked describing it as very clean and exceptionally tidy.

JF then explained about the conductor rig installation. Firstly, he showed a schematic drawing of the well formation. He explained that the rig, which had been supplied by Magpie Drilling of Newcastle, was like a small water well style rig that would drill down to a depth of 75m. He then showed some pictures of the rig in situ.

He said the objective of the current operations was to:

- Complete the operation safely and with minimal environmental impact
- Prevent damage to the aquifer
- Drill a vertical hole to a depth of +/- 75m (60m below sea level)
- Install 26" Casing from surface to depth (+/- 75m)  
Cement Casing and provide a competent casing shoe

He said that the company had been drilling now for seven days for 12 hours a day although they had now started continuous operations over 24 hours. He said that the rig and auguring equipment was pretty much all that was on the site at that time.

PS talked about the chalk and geology and what has been found so far and said that it was as Rathlin had expected it to be. He said that the next day would see the team start running the casing and that they would be continuing to work 24 hours a day. He said that the first casing string would be 26" in diameter.

TS said that progress has been good and that there had been no accidents or incidents. He said the clay down to 40m was very wet. Between 40-50m the clay became very dry and laminated, before the chalk was reached at approximately 60m. Luckily the team had not encountered any significant boulders as had been predicted.

JF said that he expected work to be finished over the forthcoming weekend with the rig leaving the site on the following Tuesday (after the Bank Holiday).

He said the bigger drill would then move over to West Newton once the work was finished at Crawberry Hill.

He said that there would be a bit of remedial work at the site to get it ready for the main rig's arrival once the conductor rig had been dismantled and removed. JF said that the main rig would be 50m in height. An image was shown of the main rig and its component parts. PS explained how it worked. PS then showed how the rig is put together and the phased approached.

He said that there would be six lorries on rotation with between 12 and 15 vehicle movements a day. He explained that there would be around 70 loads in total plus staff cabins.

He explained that the main traffic movements would be over a 10 day period. PS restated that the company and its contractors will abide by the traffic management plan as specified. He said that the A165 would be the route the lorries and associated vehicles would use. He said that they would take the A1079 before joining the A165 where the lorries would be held in a layby so that there can be phased access and egress to minimise disruption. Vehicle movements would be controlled by radio with staff placed at intermediate points to direct them in safely.

Resident representatives asked if the transport company, Fox, would be used to move the main rig. JF said that it wouldn't be Fox during this phase of the operation because the drilling contractor, KCA, tends to use its own known and trusted suppliers.

He said that security guards would be located at the layby, at Ellerby and then on Marton Road. He stressed again that Rathlin was committed to getting this right and that KCA was aware of the importance of this.

JF explained the logistical arrangements of de-rigging at Crawberry Hill and rigging up at West Newton. PS then showed a picture of the rig in place – using pictures from Crawberry Hill.

The confidentiality of any sub surface findings was also discussed. The 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> rounds of licensing were discussed to illustrate why the finds are commercially sensitive.

DM-S reiterated importance of reporting any issues that might arise with traffic – although he stressed that all possible was being done to keep disruption to a minimum.

Resident representatives raised concerns about responsible developers, like Rathlin, selling commercial wells on to other organisations that might not share the company's commitment to health, safety and community engagement. DM-S talked through the importance of oil and gas companies developing long-term relationships and that most organisations know that this is a 'condition of entry'. He said that most nowadays do work hard to engage with nearby residents. Re: health and safety, he reassured that technology, staff competence and the required health and safety monitoring regimes were such that any risk of inappropriate behaviour or short cuts was small.

DM-S explained that Rathlin is producing some promotional material which will be presented in due course to show how small the operations for gas and oil extraction facilities actually are.

Resident representatives again asked if any permanent equipment could be painted green to blend into the local environment. TS said that this is something that Rathlin would look into.

Resident representatives asked how any find would be extracted and logistically moved away from the site. JF said that gas would be piped away into the National Transmission System and that oil will be taken by oil tankers.

JF talked about noise, explaining that 106dB was the maximum noise limit for day time operations in the planning application. He said that noise monitoring at Crawberry Hill had revealed that the bigger rig operated consistently below 100dB.

He said that the Crawberry Hill liaison committee there had been pleasantly surprised how quiet the rig was in practice. He explained that the acoustic cladding around the rig is very effective.

Resident representatives were reminded that there is only a one in 10 chance of success. DM-S said that this was conventional oil and gas exploration.

Resident representatives asked how far the closest properties to the Crawberry Hill site are. PS confirmed that they were 800m-900m away.

PS confirmed that Caley Cottage and Old School House, at 600-700m away, were the closest properties at West Newton.

Resident representatives asked if the lights could be pointed downwards as they are very bright (as opposed to shining out of the site). They asked if they could be positioned so as not to face dwellings in the 'sight line'.

PS said that the lights on the lighting towers would be reviewed in view of the feedback received. He said that there should be absolutely no need for lights on the mast to be pointing outwards.

PS then talked through the proposed well design and drilling process as well as the drilling timeline (60 days – including mobilisation, 32 drill days and running casing). He said that mobilisation would take place 12-hours a day and that the drilling would take place 24 hours a day.

JF explained that if the well was found to not be commercial, it would be abandoned in accordance with relevant standards and guidance. He then explained that the land would be restored to the pre-works standard.

### **3. Any Other Business**

DM-S asked if there was anything else that Rathlin could address. Resident representatives said that there was nothing specific at that stage. D-MS asked again for feedback and urged resident representatives and the local community to let the company know if there were any concerns whatsoever (e.g. traffic, lighting or noise). He said that Rathlin wanted to be in a position to respond quickly if there were any issues at all.

TS confirmed that there would be fewer lorry movements for the rig installation process than during the site preparation. JF also confirmed that more signs would be installed to direct lorries into and out of the site.

DM-S discussed possibility of site visit for up to 12 people. Week commencing 10 or 17 June are the indicative dates discussed at this stage (pencil in).

4. **Date and time of the next meeting:**

The next meeting will be held straight after the site visit at the site itself – date and time to be confirmed around the site visit.

Further updates will be available via Rathlin's website: [www.rathlin-energy.co.uk](http://www.rathlin-energy.co.uk)

24-hour emergency number: 0800 1959154.