

Bishop Burton and Walkington Liaison Committee (Crawberry Hill)

07 November 2013

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) - JC
John Castle (Walkington Resident) - JC
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, PSSL) - JF
Simon Taylor (Rathlin Communications) - ST

Apologies: Apologies were received from:

David Oxtoby (Chair, Bishop Burton Parish Council) - DO
Peter Rolinson (Walkington Resident) - PR

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

DM-S explained that the purpose of this meeting was to update community representatives and the wider community on what has been happening since the last meeting and what the next steps will be.

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

2. Notes from the Previous Meeting (10 September 2013)

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

3. General Update

TS indicated that the geological analysis of the well, following the drilling work over the summer, suggested that further testing is warranted.

TS said that the next phase of testing, which will now be in the New Year, would involve three separate elements and that two would be very deep down in the well. He said that the objective is to acquire information about the reservoir properties of the rock to understand the pressure and mechanical characteristics.

The other test, higher up the well, is to establish if there is gas and if it can be produced.

TS explained that if gas is tested, then a daily rate of flow needs to be determined as part of the commercial evaluation.

He confirmed that similar operations would be taking place at West Newton (WN). He reassured resident representatives that the process would be relatively straightforward with limited pieces of equipment and consequently much fewer traffic movements. He reminded resident representatives that this work formed part of the original planning application.

DM-S said that the sites at Crawberry Hill and West Newton had very similar characteristics and that this was not surprising with the two locations only being 15 miles apart.

TS then went on to explain that the Environment Agency (EA) had issued new guidelines as part of its permitting process.

He said that EA permits are now required because oil and gas operations are categorised as a mining waste operation. Consequently, additional permits are required before work can begin which focus specifically on extractive waste. TS said that the permits are not being applied because there are any additional risks. He said it is simply a case of them implementing new procedures. TS confirmed that the permit application will align with the existing planning permission for the site.

The new categorising (i.e. as a mining operation) means that there are now permits to be obtained in relation to ground water – which includes any rock strata which is likely to hold water, whether it is freshwater or brine – and that everything is classed as ground water. This is different from the original WR11 permits for well boring which were specific to the protection of the near-surface aquifers. TS said that this is an EU Mining Waste Directive. As part of the process there is a plan to flare any gas during the testing. This requires a permit under the EU Industrial Emissions Directive.

TS said there was a four-week public consultation period and then a seven to thirteen week period of determination for the EA permits.

JF said that this would not have any impact on the way Rathlin Energy (UK) conducted previous operations nor expected/future operations at either site. He explained the permits essentially cover what goes in and what comes out of the well during the drilling and testing phase.

JF explained that although the new process had been determined at a national policy level, Rathlin Energy UK was working with a newly formed department in the EA which has regional offices in Leeds.

JF explained the legislation covered mine waste and that it didn't apply to water wells. He also explained it covered waste, which if any gas was flared in a testing capacity, then it is classed as waste, therefore the new permits are required.

JF explained the EA was working with industry to simplify the process. TS said permits were being progressed in parallel at WN and CH. He said that Rathlin Energy (UK) anticipate a 13-week period before the testing can commence from the date of submission, which is expected to be at the end of November.

JC asked when it is likely that Rathlin Energy (UK) will be back on site. JF said that realistically, subject to due process taking its full course, it could be at the beginning of March. However, he hoped it might be sooner.

JF explained that when the next phase of work begins, flaring will occur. He said that this was catered for in the approved planning application. However, he confirmed that this would now also be subject to the benefit of additional scrutiny by the EA.

He explained that flaring is likely to last for a number of days. He said that his aim would be to minimise the visual impact of any flaring as outlined in the planning application and confirmed that screens around will minimise the extent of any heat and the glow.

JC asked if there would be any odour from the flare. JF said that this wouldn't necessarily be the case. JF said that this will be monitored very closely. Heat radiation will be localised and will dissipate very quickly. He said that Rathlin Energy (UK) would happily share the flare modelling information with the liaison committee.

JF showed an example in pictures and a video clip. He said the top of the flame is likely to be 20-30ft.

He reassured resident representatives that Rathlin Energy (UK) will inform them before any future works begin.

4. **Members' Matters Arising**

MH said that it's important that the matter be communicated well and a commitment was given for MH and ST to get together to draft some suitable words for the Walkington and Bishop Burton Parish newsletters nearer the time.

5. **AOB**

None

6. **Date and Time of the Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will take place at 7pm on 28 January 2014 at Bishop Burton Village Hall. The meeting is to coincide with the possible issue of the Environment Agency permits.

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

DM-S closed the meeting and thanked resident representatives once again for attending.