

STAR ENERGY LIAISON COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting held Wednesday 9th April 2008
6pm, in Albury Village Hall

Present: Jonathan Lord, Chairman, *Blackheath Village Society*
Patricia Allen *St Martha Parish Council*
Tim Harrold *CPRE, Surrey Hills Society*
Andrew Oliver, *CPRE*
Walter Wilcox *Albury Pressure Group*
David Wright *Guildford Borough Council*
John Brockwell, *Albury Parish Council*
Peter Gellatly, *Albury Parish Council*
Roy Hogben, *Guildford Borough Council, Albury Parish Council*
Niall Breen, *Blackheath Village Society*
Nicola Savage *Save Blackheath Common*
Paul Lister *Save Blackheath Common*
Paul Dacombe, *Star Energy*
Barrie Hedges, *Daybreak Communications*
Joanna Cadman, *Clerk, Albury Parish Council*

1. **Apologies** were received from N Morris, Blackheath Village Society, A Povey, Surrey County Council, N Wenman, Albury Parish Council

2. **Minutes of meeting held 27th September 2007**

Were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters arising**

It was agreed that these would be covered during the meeting.

4. **Change in Ownership of Star Energy**

The meeting took the form of a presentation from Star Energy, summarized below. Statements as a result of questions from the committee are in italics.

- Following the acquisition by Petronas, Star Energy remains committed to the development of gas storage facilities, including those proposed at Albury
- The UK will increasingly rely on such facilities in future years as imported gas becomes a dominant energy source

5. **New Application for temporary drilling and appraisal**

- Planning officer's report to committee said the need to demonstrate that the work could take place within Surrey noise guidelines was the only outstanding issue that would otherwise have led to a recommendation for approval.
- Report said they were satisfied there was a national need for the development and no appropriate alternative site.
- Application was withdrawn in order to allow implementation of further noise attenuation measures and demonstration of compliance with Surrey noise criteria.
- New application relates to possible Albury phase 2 project.
- Retention of the existing wellsite compound with associated surrounding bunds and associated access and roadway of some 1.51ha.
- Erection of new security fencing.
- Drilling of and flow testing for, hydrocarbons from up to two new appraisal boreholes.
- Installation of appraisal facilities.
- All for a temporary period of up to 3 ½ years.
- Restoration to commercial forestry

- Application documents and drawings available from www.alburygasstorage.info

Slides were shown illustrating:

- Application site
- Work programme
- Daily traffic generation
- Drilling rig
- Drilling phase elevation
- Acoustic fence
- Initial appraisal phase elevation
- Clean enclosed burner

Environmental Appraisal

- Consideration of Alternatives (total of 13 sites)
- Noise and Vibration
- Traffic and Transport
- Tourism and Recreation
- Air Quality
- Landscape and Visual
- Ecology and Nature Conservation
- Environmental Risks
- Health, Safety and Environmental Management

Noise

- Main noise sources on rig enclosed within acoustic enclosures
- In addition, acoustic fence to be erected on south east boundary of wellsite
- Taken noise measurements from clean enclosed burner in Italy.
- Updated predictions show compliance with Surrey noise criteria

Slides were shown which illustrated:

- Acoustic enclosure
- Noise predictions
- *Use of New Road: Traffic engineer believes road is of sufficient standard to take amount of traffic proposed. No specific measures had been recommended. Traffic would probably be monitored by a banksman, who would ensure that vehicles leaving the site were staggered, and could also keep an eye on New Road so that large vehicles did not meet. SCC Highways department would have an overview and would impose such conditions as they believed necessary.*
- *Existing equipment to be removed from site: electricity production to cease, no electricity to be produced in the future.*
- *When fully extended the drill rig would be 30m high, it would only be at this height when actually drilling.*
- *Noise assessment had taken into account noise at different levels. Confirmed that houses on New Road would be able to hear some noise, at a low and acceptable level.*
- *Floodlighting: SE did not believe that this would be visible from Newlands Corner, because of the trees. Concern about the fact that sodium lights would emit an orange glow. The rig would have a red light at night to alert air craft. Lighting would reduce once the drilling was complete, as this is the main part of the operation and would take place 24 hours a day and would need illumination at all times. When flow testing there would be localised low level lighting. After that, site will only be visited intermittently, during daylight hours. Gasrec have lighting 24 hours a day for security, would SE want to do the same? Confirmed not proposing extensive perimeter security lighting, as site will be manned at all times. However, ongoing appraisal will not be manned.*

- *Hydrogen sulphide or similar: SE confirmed that there would be none left after combustion. They also confirmed that the flare flame will be enclosed.*
- *Bletchingley is now fully operational and uses exactly the same rig. It would be possible to visit, drilling would continue for the next 4 to 6 weeks.*
- *Application provides for restoration to forestry after 3.5 years. If the application to Secretary of State is successful, this will not happen. Permissions for temporary works are generally granted on the basis that the intention is to restore the site when finished. SE confirmed that SCC would have control over the running of the site, as the permission would be for the wellsite. The application to the Secretary of State would be for subsurface work, all other applications would be to SCC.*
- *A suggestion had been made that the same operation could be carried out from the Gasrec and SITA landfill site, which would avoid the problem of using New Road. SE responded that the problem with using the landfill site was that it is an active and ongoing concern. It was pointed out that the current SE site already exists, a new one is not being created.*

6. Update on application for preliminary storage authorisation

Awaiting decision from Secretary of State on preliminary application made in July 2007. Will update liaison group once decision announced.

A meeting will be convened once decision received. If get permission, will set out plans. If not, would have to look at reasons, which might mean that it is not possible to continue at all, or may be able to continue with Phase 2. Present status: report has been prepared and given to Secretary of State. Officers won't divulge their recommendations, as Secretary has right of final decision. There are no legislative restrictions, he is able to take as long as he considers necessary to come to a decision, but it is hoped that this will be received by June.

Previously announced that gas processing facility would not be at Albury Park
When laying pipeline, will avoid trees wherever possible. .
Would noise increase if this application is successful: SE have to meet SCC's noise criteria, drilling is noisiest part and will meet criteria.

Phase 1 project proposes 4 wellheads, Phase 2 may involve 6 wellheads in addition to existing, although the Phase 2 project has not yet been designed. Phase 1 drilling from the existing wellsite would necessitate a small extension. Another acceptable site had not been identified. The existing site is at the eastern limit of the gasfield and was perceived as being the best site of those considered to date..

CPRE expressed concern about the proposed increase in size and visual effect of the site. The organization was in the process of opening up the North Downs, using lottery money. Tree felling at St Marthas has given wonderful views over the countryside, it was proposed to start work at Newlands Corner and the paths from Dorking to Guildford to restore to their original less wooded state. SE's site will be prominent. SE pointed out that there are two telecom masts on the site at present, one 30m high, the other 35m, and they were hard to see from Newlands Corner without binoculars. However, if the timber around the site was felled, the site would be exposed. The Committee agreed to ask Michael Baxter for his plans in this respect.

Would the proposed storage have an effect on searches when selling a house above the field? The field is 600 metres below ground level, and houses have been sold above the existing field for many years without any adverse reports.

7. Establishment of Star Energy Community Fund

- *A corporate fund providing monies on an annual basis to community based initiatives / organisations which promote sustainable development, community services etc.*

- The fund will support community based initiatives / projects which are based within the parishes where Star Energy has existing operations or projects.
- The existing operation at Albury Park makes Albury Parish eligible
- Eligible organisations include constituted regeneration or development partnerships, charities, small businesses and social enterprises
- Decisions made by grant panel including independent representatives
- Launch Summer 2008
- Eligible projects must achieve one of the following objectives:

–Support community development and improvement for the benefit of the residents of the Parish

–Conserve or enhance the environment and secure natural resource protection

–Enhance the historic environment and heritage

–Retain rural services such as shops and transport to give rural communities access to leisure, education, jobs and other vital services

–Enhance the economy through the development of rural business including social enterprise

8. Any Other Business

1. *Number of unexploded bombs around the area:* concern expressed that vibrations might set one off. PD confirmed that a survey had been undertaken for the previous planning application, nothing had been found within the circumference of the site, and the vibrations from the drilling would not be significant.
2. *Surrey Hills AONB:* will be rigorously protected, and the type of lighting proposed for the site might not be acceptable. SCC were considering removing all orange street lighting across Surrey. The location of the site is within countryside which is considered to be of national importance.
3. *Security and Maintenance:* Gate unlocked for several weeks. SE replied that the photographs that were submitted to the Parish Council had been taken by someone who had entered the site without permission. The gate was locked last time it was inspected and it is inspected regularly. HSE had visited the site and asked for a report from SE. Following their site inspection and receipt of the SE report, the HSE had stated that they were happy with the existing operation.
4. *Start date:* If application receives approval in late May, hope to be on site by the summer. SE will provide contact numbers so that people can ask questions and voice concerns.
5. *Ripley:* SE had taken a road show around all parishes with an interest in the project and will re-institute that process when the next stage was clear. Ripley PC want to facilitate a meeting where all parishes can send representation, they would probably lead this as the processing plant will be in their parish.

9. Date of next meeting

- The next meeting will take place at an appropriate date after the current planning application has been heard.
- If receive approval from Secretary of State, will call a meeting to explain the next stage.
- Agreed that if members of the committee believed that a meeting was necessary because of issues arising, should liaise through the Clerk.