

## **ALBURY PARISH COUNCIL / STAR ENERGY LIAISON WORKING GROUP**

### **Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Present:** Cllr Nick Wenman, Cllr John Brockwell, Cllr Peter Gellatly, Joanna Cadman (clerk to Albury Parish Council), Sophie Tucker (Star Energy Project Manager), Joseph From (Star Energy Drilling Manager), Barrie Hedges (Daybreak Communications).

#### **1 Drilling operations**

Sophie Tucker reported on issues with the drilling operations since the last meeting. She advised that the first part of the well up to the beginning of the horizontal section had been drilled and cased off as planned and, that the drilling of the horizontal section had almost been completed but not cased off. She explained that the company had continued to comply with the noise regulations and that there remained only one occasion on which noise limits had been briefly exceeded.

However, to ensure compliance with the noise limits and in view of complaints from immediate residents about a specific tonal noise, it had been necessary to reduce the speed of the drilling operation at night. The slower speed resulted in slower removal of cuttings from the well which had contributed considerably toward the condition of the uncased horizontal well section deteriorating. Between the end of September and mid-October, the condition of the uncased horizontal section deteriorated significantly and could no longer be drilled and cased off. The plan now was to "side track" a new well from the point at which the well had been cased.

Accepting the need to further dampen the tonal noise and enable drilling at full speed during both day and night time whilst complying with the noise limits the company had commissioned the erection of a specialised noise baffle, mounted on scaffolding which would almost completely enclose the rig to a height of some 32 metres. While ST stressed that this would not make the rig completely inaudible from the nearest properties, it would certainly help to suppress the tonal noise emanating from the top drive which had been identified as the source of concern amongst neighbours.

In terms of timing, it would take an estimated four weeks to erect the noise baffle before drilling could resume. It was not possible at the time of the meeting to predict how long drilling would then take but there was no doubt that the operation would need to go on beyond the previous time limit of 9 January 2010 re Planning Condition 4. The company was in touch with Surrey County Council regarding the necessary amendment of that Condition. ST advised that SCC was aware of the noise baffle.

The company was in the process of bringing its nearest neighbours up to date with the change in plans.

Nick Wenman thanked ST for the update and said that he would appreciate a further progress report prior to the next Albury Parish Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December. He also asked whether the company would have any objection to it commissioning its own acoustics expert if it was felt appropriate during the resumed drilling operation. ST said there would be no objection.

**Action:**

- (a) ST to provide NW / JC with a progress report prior to the next Parish Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December.
- (b) ST would ensure that all immediate neighbours were brought up to date.
- (c) Consideration would be given to the further dissemination of information to the wider Albury community via the Parish Council and via the project website. (NW / ST/ BH).

**2 Star Energy Community Fund**

BH provided an update on five projects in Albury and the immediate area that had received grants from the Star Energy Community Fund in March 2009:

- Albury village enhancement project (£10,000)
- The history of Albury: a flower festival (£2,500)
- Blackheath Church mural restoration (£10,000)
- Relateen (youth counselling) in the Albury area (£6,200)
- Shere Recreation Ground – pavilion improvements (£9,000)

Grant applications were now being invited for 2010, with full applications needed by 31 December 2009.

JB mentioned the separate £500 donation made by Star Energy towards the staging costs of the Albury Music Festival. He said the final outcome of the event was a £3,500 distribution to local charities.

**3 Next meeting**

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm.