

STAR ENERGY LIAISON GROUP

Minutes from the meeting, held Thursday 12th October 2006 At 7.00 pm, in the Village Hall

Present: Jonathan Lord (Chairman) (Blackheath Village Society)
Michael Baxter, Albury Estate
Prue von Radowitz (chairman, Albury Parish Council)
Paula Grosvenor (Albury Parish Council)
Patricia Allen, St Martha Parish Council
Dr Andrew Cross (Chairman, Brook Residents Association)
Chris Tydeman, Brook Residents Association
Nicola Savage, SaveBlackheathCommon
Christian Staunskiaer, Brook Residents Group
Robin McKie, Commercial and Lands Director, Star Energy
Roger Pearson, Group Operations Director, Star Energy
Adrian Fernando, Business Development Director, Star Energy
Barrie Hedges, Communications Advisor, Daybreak Communications
Joanna Cadman, Clerk to Albury Parish Council (minute taker)

1. **Apologies** were received from Paul Lister, Andrew Povey, Nick Morris. .
2. **Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 13th July** , were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
3. **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

JL noted that this meeting had been postponed in order to be able to discuss the new planning application. He was grateful to SE for withdrawing their first application when they had rather than waiting until the last minute.

He proposed that SE's presentation should take the following form:

1. discussion of planning application for appraisal well
 2. update on need for gas storage in the UK
 3. the way forward.
4. **Report from Star Energy**

Planning Application for Appraisal Well

This had been formally submitted and copies provided for the parish council, the consultation process would start soon. RMck advised that SE hoped that they had answered all the questions put by officers at SCC at this stage and that SE hoped that the application would move through the system fairly quickly. It was hoped that it would be at committee in December. SCC had said that an EIA was not necessary for this application, but SE had prepared it to EIA standard.

The proposal was that two bore holes would be drilled from the existing site, using a new rig which enabled directional drilling. The application was for a period of 3 ½ years, to ensure that extra time was available to the geologists if they required it

- An existing rig in Iceland had been noise tested and proved to have no brake squeal.
- Drilling would continue 24 hours a day for 9 weeks for each bore hole.

Additional work would be carried out on the Albury rig to ensure that noise was kept to a minimum. The rig would be removed as soon as drilling was complete.

- Site traffic would come in from the A25 and up New Road. SE intended that little or no traffic should go through Albury village.
- One benefit of using the existing site was that there would be no need for stone lorries to create a new access route.
- A ground flare would ensure that flames were not visible.
- Once the rig was finished with on this site, it would be used elsewhere in the country.
- *Site:* the new drilling equipment for the boreholes would be contained on the same site as existing, with all the existing equipment, with the exception of the transformer and switch room, being removed prior to drilling. The trees surrounding the site reach heights of approximately 100' and the rig mast is 30 metres, so will therefore be camouflaged by the trees. MB confirmed that he did not intend to log in that area for 30 years.
- *Risk Assessment:* SE develop a programme which lays down the process step by step. The drilling programme and risk assessment would be scrutinised by an independent well examiner. SE confirmed that drilling was highly regulated with well designs being independently assessed and with HSE confirming they have reviewed the drilling work programme before drilling could be begin. In addition a full risk assessment is carried out prior to any operation.
- Noise level SE confirmed they would comply with SCC noise guidance criteria and that the rig would not be used unless it could demonstrate to the satisfaction of the SCC noise expert that it did comply.

Need for Gas Storage in UK

- A Parliamentary Statement of Need relating to the gas infrastructure had been produced in May. It recognised that the Great Britain needed a significant gas infrastructure as 2005 had been the first year that gas had been imported into the country for some time and GB was entering a period of import dependence .
- GB has a very small proportion of gas supply compared to consumption compared to other large, import dependent gas consumers (4% compared to over 20% in France, for example)
- Gas from the UK sector of the North Sea is declining and gas will come from further and further away. GB is at the end of the network for piped gas.
- Gas storage would facilitate smooth consumption: usage varies depending on the time of year, gas could be purchased when at its cheapest and stored until needed
- The UK is investing in LNG import infrastructure, but it would not replace the need for gas storage.

The Way Forward

- The Ripley above ground installation (AGI) referred to is in fact 2k from the

prison, north of West Horsley. There is an existing AGI and SE propose to tie in the pipeline there. The consultants are still appraising different routes and investigating environmental and safety issues.

SE would prefer the plant to be sited next to the existing site, but at present were looking at all options, together with Risk Assessments. They agreed that there were not many likely sites between here and Ripley and that Albury was currently the preferred site.

- An EIA was currently being drawn up and would form the basis of the application for the plant. It was first necessary to go through a series of appraisals and assessments.
- The consultants had been instructed to do work for Phase 1 and Phase 2, so the impact of the larger unit could be discussed. They would consult widely, not just SCC but also local groups, English Nature, etc. SE proposed to share the results with this Panel and seek input. AF believed it would be helpful to give details of how the wider consultation was carried out.
- AF reiterated that as SE would be sharing information at an early stage they would not have answered all the questions. He requested the Panel bear that in mind when discussing information.
- BH suggested that a public exhibition might be arranged, and a newsletter, as part of the consultation.
- *Albury Estate*: required SE to make adequate and acceptable provision for the environment, traffic, etc. If satisfied, they would then hope to come to an agreement. MB confirmed that his woodland management programme allowed for a 'cordon sanitaire' around the site and this was built into the planning application.
- *Phase 2*: RP undertook to bring details of any incremental impacts of Phase 2 to another meeting, as more detail would emerge during the consultation period. He preferred to deal with matters progressively, rather than attempting to deal with them all in one meeting. SE was warned that there had appeared to be a hidden agenda in the past, that the whole issue of gas storage had not emerged until quite late, and good consultation with local people would be essential.
- *Legislative process*: The 1965 Gas Act would apply. This meant that an application for gas storage would be made to the Energy Minister, and the local planning authority would be a consultee. Concern was expressed that the Ministry might not take any notice of comments made by consultees.

5. The Future

- RP advised that an application for extraction could be made through Town and Country Planning, but an application for storage would go to the Ministry. This current application would be the last one made to the local authority. AF confirmed that some storage facilities had gone through the local authority, but this depended on the type of storage. Salt caverns, for instance, could not use the '65 Gas Act, which was designed for applications for storage of gas in natural strata. The application in Lincoln, which had been refused, had been for

storage in an oil field. (This was currently at appeal).

- RP emphasised the value of the opportunity to discuss matters at local level, which was not always possible. He confirmed that SE would continue to consult and discuss through this panel while we progressed a 1965 Gas Act application.
- With respect to the appraisal drilling RP reiterated that everything would be contained within the banded area shown on the plan. SE confirmed that nothing at all would be seen on the Heath when drilling was complete as the drill pipe would be some way down in the ground.
- SE confirmed that they would not build a drill site on the Heath.
- The existing generators would be refurbished. For gas storage first the gas would be extracted and then the vacated reservoir pore space used for storage. The same plant would be used for extraction as for storage.
- SE were asked at what stage they would know if they intended to use the area for gas storage. RP said this would depend on a number of factors, including rate of flow. Some gas fields proved unacceptable for gas storage.
- AF confirmed that the processing plant would take two years to build. It was agreed that SE would take the panel through the process of what would be involved in terms of traffic movements, noise impact, etc, at a future meeting. Concern was expressed at the access, which is on the brow of a hill, and at the width and condition of New Road. SE confirmed that they were in consultation with County Highways.
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6. Public Exhibition

It was agreed that there should be an public exhibition of the planning application, taking the same form as the public exhibition last January. The date was set for Tuesday 14th November, from 4pm to 8pm. BH and JC would liaise over posters and flyers.

7. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that meetings should be held on a regular basis, so that issues could be discussed and information shared as soon as these arose. Monthly meetings would be held if necessary.

The next meeting was arranged for Thursday 30th November, 6.30pm, in the Memorial Library