

STAR ENERGY LIAISON GROUP

Minutes from the meeting, held Thursday 13th July 2006 At 7.00 pm, in the Village Hall

Present: Jonathan Lord (Chairman)
Prue von Radowitz (chairman, Albury Parish Council)
David Wright, Borough Councillor
Nick Morris, Wonersh Parish Council
Patricia Allen, St Martha Parish Council
Niall Breen, Blackheath Village Society
Chris Tydeman, Brook Residents Association
Nicola Savage, SaveBlackheathCommon
Paul Lister, SaveBlackHeathCommon
Robin McKie, Commercial and Lands Director, Star Energy
Roger Pearson, Group Operations Director, Star Energy
Adrian Fernando, Business Development Director, Star Energy
Joanna Cadman, Clerk to Albury Parish Council (minute taker)

1. **Apologies** were received from Andrew Povey (Surrey County Council, Barrie Hedges (Communications Adviser, Star Energy), Keith Childs (Guildford Borough Council), Michael Baxter (Albury Estate), Paula Grosvenor (Albury Parish Council).
2. **Minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 31st May 2006**, were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman. CT commented that these had not been circulated to substitute members. JC proposed that she circulate to the same list each time, and that they be passed to substitute members by those responsible.
3. **Matters Arising**
PL asked for clarification on the status of this committee and was advised that SCC knew and approved of its existence, but that it was not strictly an authorised body. JL confirmed that it had never been the intention to seek that status and that the committee's main purpose was not statutory, but to share information between Star Energy and local residents. It was **agreed** to send minutes of each meeting to the relevant case officers at SCC.
4. **Report from Star Energy**
 - Currently looking at pipeline routes from the existing well site up to Ripley (between East Clandon and West Horsley), where access to the grid was located. Currently five routes had been identified as possibilities. *SE to advise on exact location of tie in location.* SE in discussion with landowners regarding this pipeline.
 - A new planning application was currently being prepared and SE had held some meetings with Planners at SCC to discuss such factors as noise, the landscape, traffic issues, etc. This application would be to drill two wells from the existing site, using an Italian rig which they hoped to be able to import. SE were working to establish full details of the rig, to superimpose on the planning application. They planned to discuss as much detail of the application as possible with SCC planners, in order to identify information that was needed for the application.

- An EIA would not be needed as the new application would involve the existing site. The infrastructure was already there, and traffic movements would only involve those required to bring in the new rig. However, SE intended to put the same information as that required by an EIA into the planning application.
- *Noise:* a detailed noise analysis was being prepared. SE's understanding was that the Italian rig was very quiet and that noise was not an issue, but the analysis would form part of the application. PL asked if noise levels would be assessed against noise standards appropriate for rural rather than urban areas and RP confirmed this would be the case.
- *Sandy Lane application:* this was due to be heard on the 19th July and officers had recommended refusal. RMcK voiced his disappointment at this recommendation, as he would have liked to have been able to hold the application until the new application had gone through. SE were currently considering whether to withdraw the existing application.
- PL pointed out that SE had given assurances that there would not be gas storage facilities on Blackheath Common. But no assurances had been given that the site at Blackheath would not be used as a well head in the future. RMcK advised that they were trying to appraise the structure and did not at present have any plans for the Blackheath site. The current plan was to drill from the existing site. RP clarified that if it was established that gas could not be extracted from the existing site, SE would have to try a suitable alternative site. At present no alternative site had been identified, nor were there any active plans to do so.

NB asked: if SE were to put a drill point at Shalford, how would they get gas from there to Ripley without using Blackheath Common. RMcK explained that they would look at the existing infrastructure or use a different route. At present all indications were that they could extract from the existing site. RP advised that the seismic survey had indicated that it should be possible to extract gas from the existing site. There would be no point in looking at a new site unless it was possible to access the grid from it.

- *New Application:* RMcK hoped that this would be submitted to SCC within the next four or five weeks or so, but there was still a lot of information to be collected. The need for the noise report might delay the application. EIA-type issues would include screening. The nearest dwelling was the game keepers cottage, about 250 metres away. SE's report would deal with these issues.

Discussions had been taking place over a long period with the Italian company who would supply the rig. Assessing the noise levels would require visiting an existing rig, the nearest being in Iceland. The rig was currently using air to drill and it was not possible to make a proper acoustic assessment until it was in drilling mode using mud which would be the case at Albury. DW considered it would be useful for people to know how this would compare with the noise levels from the existing site. RMcK advised that this would be contained in the noise report, but he would bring the

details of the comparison to the committee. There would be two wells, but one well head.

- Timeframe: subject to planning, it was hoped to commence work at the end of 2006, so work would continue through 2007.
- DW asked if the possibility of extracting gas from the existing site was likely. RP said that SE was hopeful that it would be possible to develop the exploration wellsite into an extraction wellsite, subject to planning permission. He believed that the proposed rig would make it possible to do this and to extract all the gas required from this site. It should also be possible to use the existing site to inject gas for storage. However, he could not give absolute guarantees that it would be possible to manage reservoirs in this way. The benefit of the liaison committee, in his opinion, was that these issues could be discussed as they arose.
- The possibility of drilling from Shalford was discussed. NB considered that a pipeline from Shalford would cause huge disruption to the local community. RP explained that the existing pipeline might not take the volume of gas that might be present. As it stood, SE were now looking at extracting gas from the existing site, but if they went to Shalford he could not envisage a situation where a pipeline would be run across Blackheath Common. SE was not a utility, and permissions would be very hard to obtain.

PL asked why investors were receiving statements about the precise capacity of gas storage at this site. RP advised that the figures released were an interpretation of the seismic survey.

NS asked if SE considered that there might be a lot more gas there than originally estimated. RP advised that it was possible to see the pressure change when extracting gas from the existing site and the exploratory well would remove uncertainty about what was actually there. The multiple horizons meant that they would probably go into the existing known horizon, and then come back and go into lower horizons. They would drill down about a mile vertical depth.

RMcK advised that the rig would fit on the existing site. PL asked why the existing application was for a bigger site, RMcK advised that the site at Blackheath was long and narrow, and so more room would have been needed. On the existing site, the processing plant could be located adjacent to the well site. NB had understood at the last meeting that it was unlikely that the processing plant would be at Albury, but now it seemed that it was more likely to be here. RP advised that it there were operational advantages in having the storage facility combined with the extraction facility.

- DW reminded SE that they had said at the last meeting that there were a number of non-green belt sites between here and Ripley, but he believed it was all green belt land from Albury to West Horsley. AF advised that they looked at land ownership when they looked at the pipeline route, and took into account factors such as planning permission and landowners' permission. They would also look at siting the processing plant next to AGI.

NM reminded the meeting that two pipelines were discussed at the previous meeting, and there was talk about going out to near Godstone. This would be a determining factor on where the processing plant would go. RP advised that they could not go down the same route as Transco, whose pipeline ran from Ripley AGI round the M25. It was not possible to connect to this, as the pressure in the Transco pipe was too low, but the pipeline may run parallel.

- PL asked for clarification on the gas storage facility and whether the required overground structures would be the same as those detailed in the Welton planning application. RP explained that the reservoir conditions were different for different sites. The pipeline would transport gas, which would flow into the wells. The pipes would have safety controls, and flow controls, and the gas injected would mix with what was already in the reservoir. Water would be removed, so the gas would be put through silos containing silica gel, which would absorb the water. The gas would be heated for this exercise to remove the water vapour, and so air coolers would be required. There would also be an emergency vent. No H²S is present in the gas.

PL said that it would be helpful to have a list describing the function and size of structures that would be required for a possible gas storage facility in Albury Park. He was advised that it would be similar to Humbly Grove, except that Humbly Grove had an existing oil plant, so in essence it would be approximately half the size. AF advised that the engineers had been instructed to make this possible site more compact. RP hoped to have some lay-out drawings by the date of the next meeting.

5. Status of Existing Planning Application

PA could not understand the rationale which made it necessary for the existing application to remain on the table. RMcK explained that SE wanted it to remain within the system in order to keep all options open.

CT recalled that SE had told the last meeting that they had presented extra information to SCC, but SCC said that they had not received the information requested. SCC had significant concerns about the use of Sandy Lane, so why was it necessary to keep the application in the system? AF explained that SE hoped to keep discussions open.

PL asked for clarification on the current situation. RP advised that SE were seriously considering withdrawing the existing application and the probability was that it would be withdrawn before it was considered.

DW asked if SE had had any discussion with central government. AF advised that SE had been in discussion with the regulators and central government on general issues, not specific projects. The energy review had just been released, it did not seem likely that any significant changes would happen immediately.

PL asked if SE had established a preferred method of access to the Blackheath Common site if this location was to be considered again. RMcK advised that the company had carried out a transport study, and from an engineering point of view,

the preferred means of access would be through Blackheath. However, there had been considerable local opposition and one landowner would not give permission.

6. Any Other Business

There was no further business to discuss.

7. Date of next Meeting

Date of next meeting was set for Thursday 14th September, 7pm, in the Village Hall.

The Chairman thanked SE for coming. He had a much better understanding of what the possibilities were now and believed that this liaison was very useful. He thanked SE for their frank answers to the committee's questions.

All joined in sending Barrie Hedges and his wife every good wish.