



West Chiltington Parish Council

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West Chiltington Parish Council were first approached in the Autumn 2016 by UK Oil and Gas (UKOG). They explained they had all the necessary permissions to drill an exploratory well on the Broadford Bridge oil pad site at Wood Barn Farm, on land to the west of the B2133 just inside our parish. The pad site is screened by trees and according to its submission to the Environment Agency is totally isolated from the environment and all liquids found on site including rain water are removed by tanker and disposed of responsibly. The drilling is believed to be conventional in nature and target naturally fractured kimmeridge limestone, where previous exploration in the weald had discovered highly desired light crude oil. The whole of the weald area overlays this kimmeridge limestone which may contain huge light oil deposits. UKOG hold a licence for part of this area estimated at 200sq km. UKOG underlined to us that this was not fracking. In the event that commercial quantities of oil were found then UKOG would seek further permissions from government and county council to extract this oil. This would involve drilling a number of bore holes at 45 degrees but all on the current pad capturing the oil from a large radius, and then transporting in to a refinery, probably Fawley near Southampton by tanker. It is suggested that between 3 and 12 tankers per day would be required, which is a major concern to the Parish Council. The content of this discussion was reported at next parish council and parish planning meetings. At the planning meeting pictures of what the production site would look like were also presented. These meetings were open to the general public and included in the minutes of the meetings and are available on the Parish Councils web site.

Oil extraction in the UK is regulated and administered by the government through the Environment Agency whose websites, detail all their interactions with UKOG.

A second meeting was held with UKOG in the Spring 2017 giving probable start dates and offering the opportunity of regular UKOG council liaison meetings. This was discussed and the Parish Council decided that on balance it would be better to retain a formal channel of communication with the company. This has led to the formation of a liaison committee made up of representatives of West Chiltington Parish Council, Pulborough Parish Council, Billingshurst Parish Council, the Adversane Residents Committee and West Sussex County Council. Once again this was discussed and recorded at subsequent Council and Planning meetings, which are available on our website.

As well as providing a forum for questions and answers UKOG also agreed to hold a series of short tours of the site, four have so far taken place.

UKOG have indicated that they are prepared to make a financial contribution to the Parish councils involved in line with government guidelines. So far, no offer has been made and the Parish Council will need to decide if it wants to accept offer. In the event that this well was turned into a production well, under current government policy 4% of revenue will be paid to the County Council (WSCC) and 2% to the Local Council.

A variation to the planning permission was applied for to the EA. At that time, the Parish Council objected on the grounds that any gas naked flare was unacceptable, that no details had been provided regarding

acidisation, and that our fears regarding possible contamination of the environment had not been satisfied. The company since then has confirmed to the Environment Agency that the flare on the exploratory well will be undertaken in a shroud. If production commences, any gas produced will be used to generate electricity with any excess fed into the national grid. This variation has now been granted by the EA. UKOG have applied for an extension to their drilling licence to complete flow tests and return the site to its Spring 2017 state. This is with WSCC and can be viewed as ref WSCC/029/17/WC.

UKOG claim that in the event this becomes a production site, it could keep producing oil for many years. Once the flow becomes uneconomic the bore holes will be capped and the site returned to farm land. It should be noted that if the site were commercially viable then it might be supposed that the whole of the Weald overlays this oil deposit and therefore this and other oil companies will search for other suitable sites. The government has indicated it wants changes to the regulations by which planning for this is granted centrally. Until then normal planning regulations will apply.

West Chiltoningon Parish Council liaises and consults with our parishioners but only has the authority to comment on planning applications

As promised the members of the liaison group from West Chiltoningon have asked specific questions requested by our parishioners. So far, we have had some of these questions answered which are detailed below. We also include details of websites from where more detailed information can be found.

Q1 What is acidisation, is it another name for acid fracking.

UK Oil & Gas Response

When drilling through limestone the drill created fine particles which can block the flow of oil. These are dissolved away by 15% hydrochloric acid which is pumped down the bore at a pressure just above the pressure of resistance caused by anything escaping from the bore hole. This pressure is far lower than the thousand of PSI needed to hydraulic frack rock. Around 18,000 litres of acid is used which is neutralised by the rock and a penetration into the limestone of around 10 cm is anticipated. The waste liquid now a solution of calcium chloride is returned to the surface and is tankered away and disposed of responsibly. This is a technique used not only in oil well drilling but also in water boreholes. This is therefore not fracking or acid fracking. Other acids including hydrofluoric acids are not used.

Q2 What are the dangers to our drinking water.

UK Oil & Gas Response

There are no aquifers near this site. As drilling proceeds telescopic steel tube acts as a barrier between the surrounding rock and the bore hole. When complete cement is pumped between the rock and the bore hole to ensure complete segregation between rock and the bore hole. Furthermore the drilling passes through a layer of clay which also prohibits anything passing up the outside of the bore hole.

Q3 What chemicals are put into the bore holes.

UK Oil & Gas Response

The drilling lubricant used is a natural potato starch. Once the bore hole is lined with steel a biocide is used inside the steel tube to prevent algae growing. The algae produce chemicals which can cause corrosion to the steel pipe. This is only added once the telescopic steel tube is cemented in place and therefore cannot contaminate the environment

Q4 Why do you require and years extension to the drilling time.

UK Oil & Gas Response

Drilling is now complete we require to continue the flow test for a few weeks beyond the licence dead line date. A year's extension is the Environment Agency's standard extension period. The remainder of the time will be spent returning the pad to the state in which we found it.

Other sources of information regarding drilling at Broadford Bridge can found at:-

Environment Agency

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

www.gov.uk/government/publications/rh14-9ed-kimmeridge-oil-gas-limited-environmental-permit-issued

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626128/Application_Standard_Rules_SR2015_No_2_-_Decision_Document.pdf

National Government

www.gov.uk/government/publications/rh14-9ed-kimmeridge-oil-gas-limited-environmental-permit-application-advertisement-eprab3806cgv003/rh14-9ed-kimmeridge-oil-gas-limited-environmental-permit-application-advertisement

www.gov.uk/government/publications/rh14-9ed-kimmeridge-oil-gas-limited-environmental-permit-issued

www.gov.uk/government/publications/rh14-9ed-kimmeridge-oil-gas-limited-environmental-permit-issued-eprab3806cgv003

www.parliamentarybriefing.net/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=443440

West Chiltonon Parish Council

www.wchilt-parishcouncil.org.uk

West Sussex County Council

www.westsussex.gov.uk/planning/find-a-planning-application