

Minutes of an on-line meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 6th July 2020 at 7.00pm.**

Present: Cllrs Kimber, Calloway, Dodson, Healy, Roberts and Verey.

In attendance: IWC Cllr Mosdell, Sheila Caws (Clerk), ten members of the public and a representative from the Press.

140/20 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Cooper, Cllr Orchard (both unable to attend online at present).

141/20 Questions from the public

Members of the public were given an opportunity to give their opinion on and to ask questions about the planning application. Many points were raised, most of which have been taken into consideration in the response that will be sent to Planning.

142/20 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011. To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 145/20 – it was noted that many of the councillors were acquainted with the landowner.

143/20 Planning and Appeals

To consider any applications recently received:-

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| Reference | 20/00513/FUL |
| Alternative Reference | Not Available |
| Application Received | Wed 18 Mar 2020 |
| Application Validated | Tue 21 Apr 2020 |
| Address | Land to the North East of New Barn Business Park Sandown Road Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3BT |
| Proposal | The construction, operation and decommissioning of a well site for the exploration and appraisal of hydrocarbon minerals from one exploratory borehole (Arreton-3) and one side-track borehole (Arreton-3z) for a temporary period of three years involving the siting of plant and equipment, the construction of a new access track, a new junction with the Newport to Sandown highway (A3056), the erection of boundary fencing, entrance gates and other ancillary development with restoration to agriculture |

After some discussion, it was agreed to object to this application for the following reasons:-

- i) Traffic – the members have noted the contents of the report from Island Roads and strongly support the objections contained therein. There is therefore no need to re-iterate those points.
- ii) They wish to emphasise that the A3056 is a busy road with fast-moving traffic. As a main route to the south of the Island, it is heavily used by emergency vehicles, especially ambulances. Much has been said about visibility for traffic leaving the site but there is a bigger problem for traffic on the road. The proposal is for site traffic to come from Down End Road, onto the A3056 and turn right into the site. The view of the entrance for those traveling east, towards Arreton, is reasonably good if the driver is looking far enough ahead. However, due to the contours of the road (both corners and undulations) this is not true for traffic going west. Any vehicle travelling at speed towards Newport, which emergency vehicles tend to do, would have little warning of a large vehicle in the road either waiting to turn right on to the site or in the process of so doing.
- iii) It is noted that the intention is to stagger the arrivals and departures of vehicles so that no vehicle is left waiting in the road and that there are plans to delay vehicles on site if necessary. Should a problem occur e.g. a vehicle breakdown on site, rendering this

- impossible, are there any plans to delay vehicles en route from the ferry before they arrive at the site? If so, where would they be held?
- iv) Should the stage of flow testing be reached, will there be a holding barge for oil on the River Medina or will it be kept in tankers until it is shipped off the Island?
 - v) It is noted that the plan and sections are very poorly presented in terms of linework thickness and colour, and are therefore more difficult to understand than they should be. This is exacerbated by the fact that, in the current circumstances, it is not possible to consult full-size paper copies.
 - vi) The drainage of the work area is unclear. There is a containment drain which simply runs round the perimeter of the work area. There are rodding access points indicated at each corner – are these on the containment drain? The two rodding points adjacent to the car parking area are described as also being sumps. The containment drain is described as ‘covered/piped’ but it is unclear which bits are piped and which are covered. The ‘Waste Management Assessment’ states during drilling all run-off will be tankered off site; no detail is shown for the facilities needed to do this. Is the drainage to be a perforated pipe or a channel? (A3 PA 08 Construction Mode Plan Sheet 1 of 3)
 - vii) The Civil Engineering Design Statement confirms that surface water from the working area will be collected and disposed of off-site. The plans included indicate there to be two sumps, in the corners of the working area adjacent to the access/carparking area. However, these sumps are not shown on the plan or sections. How big will they be?
 - viii) Why is the working area level? Surely a small crossfall would be sensible to improve drainage?
 - ix) ES Table 2.1 of the Environmental Statement indicates a water well could be drilled. This is not shown on the plan.
 - x) A3 PA 11 Sections –
 - Section 1-1 and 3-3 do not show the blue line indicated on the plan or the surface water discharge points.
 - Section 3-3 fails to show the sump from which run-off from the working area will be pumped into tankers.
 - Section 3-3 does not show the concrete access ramp into the working area.
 - xi) Transport Statement - Table 6 – presumably the number of projected HGV movements is number/day – this should be made clear.
 - xii) The Transport Statement does not appear to allow for disposal of water contaminants arising from the surface water on site. Each 25mm of rainfall will generate approximately 140m³ of run-off and there could therefore be a significant number of tanker movements by an appropriately Licensed Haulier. Clearly the actual number cannot be predicted but a reasonable allowance should be included. To where will the arisings and recovery of contaminated mineral wastes including contaminated waters be taken? Is there a suitably Licensed Island mineral waste disposal processing plant, if so the emissions to air and protection of our ground water along with quality of our beaches and bathing waters would be a matter of further regulations at that site. If this is not a local disposal and the run-offs are to be shipped off the Isle of Wight to the plant at Fawley, we would expect the ferries to have been included in the Mitigation of Risks.
 - xiii) There is little reference as to how the contaminated waste water resulting from the drilling process will be disposed of.
 - xiv) The site is situated above a Zone 3 catchment area for drinking water and concern was expressed of the possible risk to that and other aquifers in the area, which are of great importance to the local farmers as the Arreton Valley is heavily cultivated. Any damage to the water supply would be catastrophic for the industry.
 - xv) Mention is made of the potential risk of pollution in the River Medina but there is no reference to the eastern Yar. Most of the Arreton Valley drains in this direction and not to the Medina. It should be noted that the Medina is covered by the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (Bird Aware Solent).
 - xvi) There are several sites in the area that are covered by the Mineral Safeguarding Plan, which exists to protect sand and gravel deposits on the Island. Whilst the applicants state that oil

exploration is compatible with this protected status, members are concerned that there may be a conflict of interest here. (Environmental Statement - Non-Technical Summary, section 3, para. 16). It is also noted that a full environmental report is not freely available from UKOG.

- xvii) Noise and light from the site are also concerns. Should this application be approved, the members would ask that conditions be attached that protect the Dark Skies policy.
- xviii) There is also a concern regarding air pollution, particularly the gas flare. Given the prevailing wind, the village of Arreton and particularly the Primary School would be in a direct line of any air pollution. The potential cumulative effect of this, combined with that of the anaerobic digester next-door, should be thoroughly investigated.
- xix) It is noted that the majority of the research was undertaken in or before 2018 and has not been updated. This would explain why there is no reference to the recent granting of UNESCO World Biosphere status to the Island and why no one from the UNESCO Commission in the UK was consulted.
- xx) Whilst mostly unseen from the road, the site will be clearly visible from surrounding rights of way and from the AoNB area on the Downs to the north. There is already a cumulative impact on the AoNB from the anaerobic digester, the gravel quarry and the tarmac plant, without the addition of a drilling rig.
- xxi) As this site is mostly surrounded by agricultural land, there will inevitably be a fragmentation of wildlife habitats and corridors.
- xxii) Approval of this project would seem to be incompatible with the IW Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency.
- xxiii) Part of the application involves capping the well at the end of the project, whether this be after the exploratory phase or after extraction. There will be inevitable degradation over the years and so the members would like to know who, if anybody, is responsible for the monitoring of such sites?
- xxiv) Should this application be approved, the members have concerns regarding what could happen in the event of the company falling into monetary difficulties before the project is finished. To this end, they would like to see a substantial financial bond lodged with a third party, which would be sufficient to cover the costs involved in closing down the project.
- xxv) Land is a finite resource, especially that given over to agriculture, and it should not be lost to speculative non-agricultural development.
- xxvi) The members of Arreton Parish Council feel that the risks posed by this project outweigh any potential benefits.
- xxvii) The members would also like it to be noted that they felt that a full and proper public consultation was not possible in the current circumstances.

144/20 To note the date of the next meeting, 13th July 2020

145/20 Any other matters raised by Councillors for discussion only

Nothing was raised.

There being nothing else raised, the meeting concluded at 8.40pm.

Sheila Caws, Clerk to the Council

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8th July 2020

..... Chairman

..... Date