

**Balcombe Flow Test Community Liaison Group meeting**  
**20 September 2018**  
**19:00 at Bramble Hall, Balcombe, RH17 6HR**

**Attendees:**

Charles Metcalfe, Parish Councilor (Chairman)  
Sue Taylor, Parish Councilor and Leader of Energy Group  
Rosemary Robertson, Parish Clerk  
Nicky Gould, Parish Councilor  
Max Prestonbell, Parish Councilor  
Jane Moseley, West Sussex County Council in Planning Team  
Chris Bartlett, West Sussex County Council in Planning Team  
Andrew McNoughton, Mid Sussex District Council in Housing and Planning  
Yvonne Leddy, Business Unit Leader in Environmental Health at Mid Sussex District Council  
Michael Turner, Area Environment Manager of Environment Agency  
Steve, Site Inspector for Environment Agency  
Kate Wilson, Officer Representative for Mid Sussex Council  
Peter Stuart, Neighbourhood Police Officer for Mid Sussex  
Tim Hussain, Environmental Consultant for Onshore Oil and Gas Industry  
Chris Clay, Operations Manager for Angus Energy  
Paul Vonk, Managing Director of Angus Energy  
Gulu Sibanda, WSCC Mid Sussex Locality Lead  
Helen Butcher, Teacher at Balcombe Primary School  
Louisa Delphy, Representative of Frack Free Balcombe Residents Association  
Isabel Gordon, Shop Keeper in Balcombe  
Sally Dousett, Resident of Balcombe

**Apologies:**

Bill Acraman, County Councilor  
Gary Marsh, Midsussex District Council in Service Delivery

**Agenda:**

Follow up questions for Angus Energy.

**Main Points Discussed:**

Questions raised by the Parish Council previously sent. Further questions and concerns raised in the meeting.

When the next meeting is to be held.

### Questions and Answers:

Charles: We did notice a few of the school watching the traffic coming and going it did seem to be slightly different from what we had understood what was going to be in the West Sussex traffic plan as they seem to be coming from the North into the site via London Road. There is a film on a Twitter feed that shows this, when I put it to Chris he said it's not a violation at all because that's to do with the environment agency not the conditions imposed. I just wanted to understand as it seems to be a unified operation of preparing and then operating the site was considered by West Sussex to be a different operation.

Jane: Yes we can clarify that. There's a lot of operations for any site, particularly mineral sites with permitted development rights as people might know. There's permitted development rights and things like that which are issue binding planning permissions. So the works that are undertaken at the moment are all those for going onto site. I understand the environmental agency have seen the site to maintain it before they actually started the planning permission proper at which point it's controlled through the planning conditions.

Charles: So planning permission proper only starts at when the flow testing starts?

Jane: No, they gave us the 7 days notice.

Chris B: Which came in around Monday 10<sup>th</sup>.

Charles: So traffic going to the site is within the period of your planning permission?

Chris B: As I understood the movement to and from the site that was part of the video was on the Wednesday or Thursday...

Charles: Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup>

Chris B: ...which would be before the activity time.

Helen: On that note, there are pictures of people entering through the estate on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

Paul: Yes, that's part of the site preparation of installing the fencing, that's not part of the flow test. That's set up by the Landlord.

Helen: A lot of friends and parents have been watching the traffic by the school. A BKP lorry managed to go through 5 or 6 times and two other lorries that have gone through the village twice because they have overshoot. To me them not being able to find the site is laughable and ridiculous. On top of that Wendy Milbanks (head mistress of Balcombe Primary School) was told there would be nothing coming through between 8-5 by John or she would have a phone call beforehand. She did get phone calls before but then this Tuesday and Wednesday she was told there would be a certain number coming through and would get phone calls beforehand but that hasn't happened. There has been a lot of traffic coming through between 8-5.

Paul: To be clear this is not a violation of the traffic measures, we're talking about a suggested phone call that apparently did not happen. We will look into that. The important point is that none of the trucks actually moved past the school when they were not allowed to.

Helen: Well, they moved past the school when he assured Wendy they would not.

Paul: We will send John to have a chat with her. The difficulty is that we have the traffic plan, this gets communicated with all our service companies and the service suppliers. In the end there is a driver in the truck and even though the driver has been instructed perfectly by his bosses, you are dealing with an individual. If he decides to deviate at last minute, and the trucks come from the South, we cannot take these trucks. We send them back, we cannot have them entering from the wrong direction as per the traffic management plan.

Louisa: But you did take them.

Paul: There was one exception where the security company could not stop them and the gate was already open.

Sally: The trucks can't come in if they come from the South?

Jane: Can I explain – we have to figure out the quickest route from the A23 and in this case it's through the village and South direction, so that is the logic behind it.

Collective: What times are the trucks allowed to move past the school?

Tim: So it says here HGV movements must consider the school and no movements should be made during the following times: 8.30am-9.30am, 11.30am-12.30pm and 2.45pm-3.45pm is what is instructed to all out HGV drivers.

Charles: I was aware there was an afternoon club coming out at 4.20pm yesterday.

Jane: The intention is to capture the main bulk.

Paul: This information will be shared and if there's any adjustments that need to be made we would love to hear them.

Louisa: I thought from the last meeting there was an action to go to the school to meet with the head teacher to discuss this?

Paul: Yes, there was a meeting.

Isabel: How many tankers would there be should they find oil?

Paul: At the moment we have a really large operation in terms of equipment. If the site has oil then you'll only have traffic movements when you have an operation, for example when we're finished we will have to remove everything. Should it be commercial and we have all the approvals we would have to have slightly more movements we've had in the last week to make it a permanent site and that's it.

Tim: Everything requires permission.

Paul: The only truck movements you would have while production is ongoing is to transport oil out.

Isabel: Do you have any idea how many to expect?

Chris C: A minimum for commercial would be about 2-3 trucks a week. If it was more successful you wouldn't get to the point of 10 or 20 trucks a week. You'd find a different means like a pipeline.

Louisa: Can you confirm your actual start date?

Paul: No I cannot. We have basically finished mobilizing, we should be able to commence operations in the next day or two but we're still awaiting some approvals. We gave 7 days notice two weeks ago.

Chris B: From our point of view the six month period they are to complete in started on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

Sue: There's 5 pre-operation approvals needed, I understand one was signed off today. Can you tell me the status of the other 4?

Michael: Yes, 3 have been signed off, the final one is about vapor recovery. We await a little bit more information to come tomorrow morning and if we're satisfied with that we will sign off tomorrow.

Charles: Are we waiting for anything else?

Paul: Yes, when Environmental Agency sign off then the Oil and Gas Authority have to give approval.

Helen: But there were traffic movements on Wednesday and Thursday?

Chris B: Yes, this would be for the permitted development, they can do this whenever they're ready.

Paul: This is for the site preparation.

Sally: We've been talking about a 6 month period, but you're not intending to be here for 6 months are you?

Paul: if we get the approvals tomorrow the test is 7 days.

Helen: So the whole thing could be gone in two weeks?

Paul: Yes.

Collective: The times are not very clear on the table for when traffic movements will be.

Paul: We don't give the exact times because we prefer not to have any disruptions. The equipment will go on site, flow testing will take place then the equipment is moved off site.

Max: How many trucks will be leaving the site?

Paul: The same amount of trucks that came in, with a daily maximum of 12.

Charles: Can we make sure that there is a very clear marker for the site?

Paul: More than happy to, yes.

Jane: Something that's ok with the highways, something official would be harder to do.

Tim: It's a valid point, we will look into it tomorrow and see the best way to sign post the site.

Sue: Where will the waste water go?

Tim: An approved Environmental Agency waste carrier who takes the waste water off site, I don't know off the top of my head where to.

Max: What waste will there be?

Paul: Basically everything that comes out the well that is not oil. BKP remove the waste, they are fully regulated.

Max: That includes the water you pump down?

Paul: Yes, it becomes salty and mixes with impurities in the well and has to be processed as a waste

Max: We did ask the question last time about going through certain faults?

Paul: Yes, we went back to our team and there are no faults. As soon as there's a fault in the well it could compartmentalise the reservoir and then you risk getting an influx from a different zone, which you don't want so you try to avoid faults when drilling a well

Helen: There are concerns, just at the end of March you injected fluid into the Brockham well and on the 1<sup>st</sup> April there was the first of 12 earthquakes in that area.

Paul: There is no link whatsoever with our site and the tremors. What we're doing now is a well test, we don't know how much fluid will come up and in any normal operation there is no reason for this to happen. The UK is actually full of onshore activities that have been going on for many years.

Sally: Does the drilling just go down or does it go across?

Chris: It goes down and then I think it goes South West so under London Road.

Helen: There are a lot of parents who are concerned about the flare.

Paul: The flare is there for safety. When you have an oil well you can have a mixture of oil and gas. If you have a flare it will burn the gas as soon as it comes out of the well. The only thing that burns in the flare are the light hydrocarbons from the well, so carbon molecules with hydrocarbon molecules. What happens in the flare is these react with oxygen so what you get out of the flare is CO<sub>2</sub> and water vapour. Many questions were concerns about the emissions from the flare so I asked the team to take a look at it. For comparison, any house in Balcombe with gas central heating, is basically flaring when the heating is on. Those flares though are not as good as the flare we have on site but hypothetically if we had on the flare for the next 7 days doing nothing but producing the flare 24 hours a day (which we'll not) and rather than an oil well it would be one of the biggest gas wells onshore UK we would not come even close to same amount of emissions being produced by the gas central heating systems in Balcombe in 8 weeks.

Helen: I understand there will be some sulphur in the course of drilling?

Chris C: Not that we're aware.

Sue: The analysis of the oil from the 1986 report shows 1.8% sulphur.

Charles: Have you seen the reports from the mid 80s?

Paul: Yes our team has seen them and compare. We have sensors to ensure the work environment on site is 100% safe. I cannot tell you if the well will produce sulphuric gas but this is why we're testing it and if there are any concerns we will shut it down.

[Sue later brings in the report and finds it is 1.56%]

Max: Will we be able to see the results early on for the make up of the gas?

Chris C: Yes I don't see why not.

Michael: I encourage it to be published on the website so they're available.

Chris C: We take gas and oil samples to be analysed in a laboratory so there may be a delay in publishing the results but we would know very quickly if there was an issue.

Helen: I'm surprised with all the money that is going into this the report from the 1980s has not been read.

Tim: We have a team of geologists who have read the reports, they do not just go into this blindly.

Chris C: It has not been raised as an issue.

Charles: Steve, I assume you have read the reports?

Steve: No, part of the assessment is how the gas is disposed. We have the reports provided by Angus Energy, we carry out our own assessment. If the flare is operating correctly at the right flow rate at the right temperature the emissions are insignificant. They will have

to monitor the flare and make that data available to us. That did take into account sulphite concentrations.

Helen: How is the temperature checked?

Steve: There are 4 sensors on the flare, when the flare is in operation there will be a constant record of the temperature all the time. As part of our inspections that's one of the things we will look at.

Paul: As part of the flow testing we will not always have a flow. We also shut the well in to let the pressure build up so the flare will not be on 24 hours a day.

Helen: It would reassure people if the site inspection was done early on rather than 3 months down the line.

Michael: We can carry out an inspection unannounced and we will be conducting a joint inspection with Health and Safety during the well flow testing.

Charles: Is there anyway the temperature and composition of the gases data could be shared electronically in real time with the EA?

Michael: Not in real time.

Steve: We don't have the resources. The operator has to tell us immediately if there is a problem.

Michael: It is audited later and if we find there were problems we will be very unhappy.

Helen: That's a big concern if something happens and its not reported.

Tim: If there is an issue on site, so the temperature was not maintaining 800 degrees we would have to report it.

Charles: You can see some people are concerned that a monthly report is required on a 7 day test.

Jane: Presumably you wouldn't let them operate until we take into account the worst case scenarios.

Steve: The risk assessment indicates the main issue is making sure the flare operates efficiently.

Jane: In the worse case scenarios then you would have mechanisms in place for this.

Helen: When will the results of the data be published?

Michael: Very soon after the inspection. The operator has 15 days to come back to us with any dispute but normally we will have a conversation with the operator. It will then be on the public register after 15 days. The quicker route is for Angus Energy to share that on their website.

Helen: Can the results be put in a way that are 'translated' so everyone could understand them?

Tim: We wouldn't publish the raw data.

Paul: If we're talking emissions then we're talking chemistry and chemical formula.

Michael: I would urge that Angus have some report but any information or data submitted by Angus will be available on the public register.

Isabel: What difference would it make if there was sulphur?

Chris C: Not much as you would just have to take it out. We would have to take extra precautions. It is corrosive so you'd have to make sure the equipment would be ok.

Paul: There are many, many oil wells that have Sulphur in them.

Helen: Don't you have a planning permission to do with the bats? Who is taking care of this?

Paul: Not sure, there is someone who is taking readings.

Paul: There were a few questions about noise. The device to measure the noise was put near the trains so it was in breach but the noise monitoring is now somewhere else so this will be recalculated and if it's still in breach we will need to make adjustments.

Louisa: Where do we report noise complaints?

Paul: During the first meeting we offered a helpline and email address.

Steve: The quickest way to get a solution is to contact the operator. I'm not saying don't report it but the operator are in the best position to help you.

Michael: We have a 24 hour helpline but if there is only one call about noise in the evening we won't look at it until the next day.

Sue: Have any cement logs been done?

Chris C: Yes.

Paul: I think they're already in the public register.

Louisa: Can we be more careful with the air monitoring as this time?

Chris C: There are no monitoring tubes attached to a temporary fence this time, only to the permanent fence.

Rosemary: Can the Environment Agency monitor the air quality in the centre of the village before and after and during?

Michael: No, we don't have the resources. We have done research on potential air quality which is part of the initial assessment.

Yvonne: Air quality monitoring tubes have been placed outside the school by MSDC at the request of WSCC to check how air quality is affected by traffic, as they are doing in the wider County. The tubes will be replaced every month and the results will be ready in a year's time. We cannot produce a monthly report as this wouldn't be appropriate but we can break down the report to show the air quality each month. We'll report it to DEFRA and then put it on the website.

Chris C: I have to say the flare we are using is very sophisticated and I'll be amazed if you see any emissions from it and I don't think people need to be concerned.

Helen: A question from the head mistress – we are aware of an incident in Germany with well and localized pressure that has caused local issues. If there was an incident what should she do, considering there is a school of children?

Paul: We have an emergency plan in place, we will come to the school to go through it and John will take minutes this time.

Helen: Say one of the tankers came off the road and there's a spillage? What should we do with the children?

Chris C: If there was any sort of spill the best thing to do is shut the doors and windows and call the fire brigade. It wouldn't necessarily be toxic.

Helen: What is the produce water labeled as?

Paul: I can check with BPK.

Charles: What about if oil is spilled?

Chris C: It's not particularly volatile and I would give the same advice for any spill. I'm pretty sure the acid tank is double walled so there is less chance of this spilling.

**Next Meeting:**

Agreed to discuss the results on Thursday 18 October 2018, location and time to be confirmed.