

Development Control Committee
Meeting to be held on 3 September 2014

Electoral Division affected:
Fylde West

Fylde Borough: application number LCC/2014/0096
Construction and operation of a site for drilling up to four exploration wells, hydraulic fracturing of the wells, testing for hydrocarbons, abandonment of the wells and restoration, including provision of an access road and access onto the highway, security fencing, lighting and other uses ancillary to the exploration activities, including the construction of a pipeline and a connection to the gas grid network and associated infrastructure to land to the north of Preston New Road, Little Plumpton.

Contact for further information:
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Executive Summary

Application - Construction and operation of a site for drilling up to four exploration wells, hydraulic fracturing of the wells, testing for hydrocarbons, abandonment of the wells and restoration, including provision of an access road and access onto the highway, security fencing, lighting and other uses ancillary to the exploration activities, including the construction of a pipeline and a connection to the gas grid network and associated infrastructure to land to the north of Preston New Road, Little Plumpton.

Recommendation – Summary

That the Development Control Committee visits the proposed site at Preston New Road before determining the application.

Applicant's Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the construction and operation of a site for drilling up to four exploration wells, hydraulic fracturing of the wells, testing for hydrocarbons, abandonment of the wells and restoration, including provision of an access road and access onto the highway, security fencing, lighting and other uses ancillary to the exploration activities, including the construction of a pipeline and a connection to the gas grid network and associated infrastructure to land to the north of Preston New Road, Little Plumpton. A supporting application for the installation of a monitoring array of 80 boreholes for seismic and water quality within the surrounding area has also been submitted (ref LCC/2014/0097). The applications are supported by Planning Statement, Environmental Statement (ES) and Non Technical Summary. The ES provides a full description and assessment of the following:

- The application site and surroundings

- A description of the proposed development
- Scheme alternatives
- Air Quality
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Community and socio economics
- Ecology
- Hydrogeology and ground gas
- Induced seismicity
- Landuse
- Landscape and visual amenity
- Lighting
- Noise
- Resources and waste
- Transport
- Water resources
- Public health

A full description of the proposed development will be provided when the application is presented for determination.

Description and Location of Site

The proposed site extending over approximately 2.5ha is located approximately 500m west of Little Plumpton between Moss House Lane and Preston New Road (A583) on land in agricultural use. Access would be taken from Preston New Road. Moss House Farm is located approximately 800m to the northwest of the site on the northern side of Moss House Lane. Staining Wood Farm is located approximately 360m to the south east with a number of residential properties approximately 500m away in Little Plumpton.

A full description of the site and surrounding area and properties will be provided when the application is presented for determination.

Background

There is no planning history to the site although a number of planning permissions have been granted for unconventional shale gas exploration operations in the Fylde and in West Lancashire. A full history of these activities will be provided when the application is presented for determination.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 11 – 14, 17, 56 – 66, 79 – 81, 87 – 90, 100, 103, 109, 118 – 125, 144 and 147 are relevant with regard to the requirement for sustainable development, core planning principles, the requirement for good design, protecting green belt land, flood risk, conserving and enhancing the natural environment and facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework – Flood Risk and Minerals Policy

Paragraphs 33 – 48 are relevant with regards to the restoration and aftercare of minerals sites.

Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Site Allocation and Development Management Policies – Part One

Policy NPPF 1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy DM2 Development Management

Fylde Borough Local Plan

Policy SP2 Development in Countryside Areas
Policy EP11 Building Design and Landscape Character
Policy EP12 Conservation of Trees and Woodland
Policy EP23 Pollution of Surface Water
Policy EP24 Pollution of Ground Water
Policy EP26 Air Pollution
Policy EP27 Noise Pollution
Policy EP28 Light Pollution

Consultations

The following bodies have been consulted or notified of the proposal:

LCC Developer Support (Highways)
Westby – with - Plumpton's Parish Council
Fylde Borough Council
County Landscape Service
County Ecology Service
County Archaeology Service
Environment Agency
Highways Agency
United Utilities
Natural England
Health and Safety Executive
National Grid Gas and Electricity
Department of Energy and Climate Change
Blackpool Airport Ltd
Public Health England
Lancashire Public Health
Ministry of Defence
Blackpool Borough Council
LCC Emergency Planning
Police – Emergency Planning
Civil Aviation Authority
National Air Traffic Services Ltd

The application has been advertised in the press, notices posted on the land and nearby properties notified by letter.

A full summary of the consultee responses and those matters raised in letters of representation will be provided when the application is presented for determination.

Advice

The planning application has generated a considerable amount of interest with several thousand representations having been received to date objecting to the proposal primarily in respect of visual, traffic, habitats, noise, pollution and seismic activity. A full summary of the representations received will be provided when the application is reported for determination.

A full assessment of the proposal against national policies and the policies of the development plan along with an assessment of the impacts of the proposal against those policies and in light of advice received from statutory consultees and representations received, will be provided in the report when the application is presented for determination.

However, given the nature of the proposal and level of public interest received to date, it is considered that the Committee visit the site before determining the application. This would have the benefit of members being familiar with the site and environs before determining the application and so having a clear understanding of the issues associated with the proposal.

Recommendation

That the Development Control Committee visits the proposed Preston New Road site before determining the application.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2014/0096	27/3/14	Stuart Perigo/Environment/531948
LCC/2014/0097		

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A