Comment for planning application WSCC/045/20

Application number	WSCC/045/20
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Type of Comment	Objection
Comments	UK parliament declared an environmental and climate change emergency in May 2019. This recognises the urgency needed to combat the climate crisis. We cannot continue to extract and burn more fossil fuels if we are to limit global warming and the environmental devastation that would follow. This flow test and subsequent planned production would lead to more fugitive emissions including quantities of methane which are far more potent than CO2 for global warming. Additionally, the eventual burning of the oil itself, if recovered of course, contributes also to climate catastrophe and makes it harder to hit our C02 reduction targets and hopes of achieving net zero carbon emissions 2050. We should be investing in cleaner more renewable sources of energy that can also contribute to sustained economic environmental and social development, i.e. wind and solar electricity generation. Use our land assets a different way, leaving the minerals in the ground. This application is also not in accordance with the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (July 2018): because it is not in the public interest to flow test this tiny quantity of oil: The Strategic objective and vision sates "minerals resources will be safeguarded and exploited in a manner which only sees minerals development take place in exceptional circumstances and where it is in the public interest." It is not in the public interest to flow test this well. The majority of Balcombe residents when polled are against this. The majority of the public are also against this type of onshore fossil fuel extraction. This site is mostly expecting oil, which is not gas and certainly not part of any temporary transition to a low carbon then zero carbon emission future. The volume of oil projected would also not provide any significant security of energy supply compared to the nation's current usage. The previous flow test produced an equivalent of 1600 barrels / day, which is more likely to settle at 500 - 700 barrels a day during production 1st phase then reduce to more like 200 barrel of oil per day after the 1st year because production rates never sustain the initial burst. Angus expect the site to produce just 0.005% of the amount of Wytch farm, so this is hardly a game changer nor significant in supply volume. Angus stated in a community liaison meeting this October 2019 that the production at Balcombe would be comparable with Brockham volumes that produces only 0.00064997 mb/d, which is a tiny compared the UK's main onshore site at Wytch farm that pumps out 13.748 md/d. The negative local and global environmental effects far outweigh the miniscule positive contribution of energy supply capacity. National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) - Section 2 (Achieving sustainable development) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This application puts us into reverse against that aim. It absolutely does not contribute to a new achievable sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: an economic; a social and an environmental. This application goes against the social and environmental goals of sustainable development, while only possibly making a small contribution economically to the shareholders or Angus Energy. Locally, it harms residents economically too because of the depression in house prices this activity causes. This was forecast in government reports (redacted) and statistically proven when comparing house price trends in Balcombe with regional and national trends from 2012 when Cuadrilla first started its exploration activity in Balcombe. Paragraph 205 in section 17 also states in considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should o Ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality; and o Provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions Bonds or other financial grants guaranteed to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances" Hydrogeological risk is also woefully considered in the application. There has been insufficient baseline monitoring of groundwater and the application RSK risk study claims a "lack of local connection to surface recharge mechanisms. However, there was only 1 sample taken, which is hardly representative and indeed the trace elements found in the sample were dismissed as an irregular peak that showed transmission was occurring. The application also suggests that the Ashdown Beds aquifer "may be saline" without baseline groundwater quality evidence to substantiate the claim, which should be considered poor science, speculative, not evidence based and contrary to a general understanding the Ashdown Beds aquifer in the High Weald part of Sussex (where groundwater is abstracted from the Ashdown Beds elsewhere for public water supply. Land on top of the drill spur is on the top of a ridge or fault line. Streams and ditches run from here all the way down the Ouse at the bottom, sometimes underground and chased by drains, sometimes open water over the top. Livestock graze on these fields and are very likely to drink from the ditches. Some of the farms may likely use ground water along here and not realise the contamination risk. As this report points out, you can't

assume that water in the area will not be used for anything else as RSK does, so contamination of it would matter. If the ground water here is contaminated it could have an appalling effect of on the farming going on above it, the livestock grazing and on the Ouse itself.

Received 28/09/2020 15:11:03

Attachments