
From: Emily Mott [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 March 2021 16:23
To: Richard Burrett <richard.burrett@westsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Balcombe

Dear Mr. Burrett-

I'm writing because tomorrow the WSCC Planning Committee will be voting on whether to allow Angus Energy to test for oil in Balcombe. The last time the application came to committee, the officer recommended refusal, citing that It is not in the public interest to have a major development in an area of outstanding natural beauty, and the residual need for hydrocarbons could be met elsewhere.

Planning applications have been coming forward for Balcombe over the past 9 years. With 800 community and parish council objections it is clear there is no public interest in supporting this and huge environmental, ecological and economic costs to an area that is meant to have the highest protection.

Almost two years ago, WSCC committed to more action to become carbon neutral. Allowing unnecessary oil and gas exploration in the county will be in direct conflict with this commitment. The recent net zero target by the government is a sign that national policies are changing, and we can expect further legislation to reduce carbon emissions in this coming year as the government responds to the recommendations of the recent Committee on Climate Change (CCC) reports.

The contribution towards climate change will not only come from the burning of any oil that might be found and recovered. Stored oil contains gases, particularly methane which has over eighty times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. In WSCC Singleton IGAS is currently the biggest single carbon emitter in the county (for example 5459 tonnes VOCs were emitted 2018-19 through flaring/cold venting) and thousands

of cubic metres of toxic radioactive waste water. NAEI website: [UK Emissions Interactive Map \(beis.gov.uk\)](#).

Waste water is also a major issue with production. There are currently no facilities to treat hazardous liquids in the south of England so toxic waste water from operations would have to be transported North or reinjected into the ground. At Singleton, IGAS is currently seeking to reinject: 17,000m³ = 4,491,413.47 US Gallons/ 3,739,551.25 UK Gallons. For reference, an olympic sized swimming pool that is 25mx 50m x 2m holds 660,430 gallons(US). This is toxic radioactive waste water.

It is clear that there will be no significant contribution to our national requirement (this is already being met in other ways), but it will contribute to the GHG emissions that are set to produce disastrous climate change, and will conflict with the challenging national target of net zero emissions by 2050. The adverse impacts of the emissions produced at Balcombe **will** demonstrably outweigh the benefits

I can not understand why the reduced time period in the current planning application should be considered significantly different than the last application where refusal was recommended. If the company were to find oil within a year, they would apply for 25 years production. Because of the time it takes for these developments this would take us to the Net Zero target date of 2050 or beyond.

The current NPPF no longer includes a presumption in favour of oil development. The revised NPPF now gives greater weight to the term “energy”, and with frequent references to sustainability and climate change.

We urgently need to prioritise environmental and climate change considerations over the claimed economic benefits of hydrocarbon exploration.

Examine production history for Lidsey, for example, where WSCC has granted planning permission to Angus.

In 2016, the [Angus admission document](#) to the AIM stock market **predicted** gross production from Lidsey at 279 barrels of oil per day (bopd) in the first year.

Data from the Oil & Gas Authority for 2020 shows that up to October (the most recent figures available), the site produced for just three months and in small quantities. The rate was nearly 5 bopd in January 2020, 3.5 bopd in February 2020 and nearly 8 bopd in March 2020. (from Drill or Drop) But production has been disappointing and never came close to reaching this level. Now this company is saying they were wrong about the direction of the wells and that they drilled “on the edge of the reservoir”.

Please also consider Angus Energy’s poor finance history and record of non compliance of planning permissions (Brockham, Surrey)

Furthermore, WSCC has just announced that the pandemic ‘has changed dynamics of what council’s priorities are.’ The Reset Plan promises to bring us resilience, health and sustainability. Your constituents have made it clear that the environment is a top priority. West Sussex has potential to be leaders in the field of reducing carbon emissions and this must include the end to facilitating further oil and gas development such as proposed by Angus at Balcombe. In WSCC words, as per your website: “Its time to turn to the generation of clean, green energy locally and the promotion of the benefits to local organisations and residents.”

Please take this time to truly consider how you can best represent the people of West Sussex and all of nature by taking positive steps away from fossil fuels and towards a greener, cleaner future.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the above points.

Kind Regards,

Emily Mott
Markwells Wood Watch, Weald Action Group
South East Climate Alliance

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