

Notes from the CLG on 14th January 2016

David Boyne welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced John Blaymires, Chief Operating Officer of IGas who was attending to discuss the Smythe report. Due to John's train times it was agreed defer other agenda items until after he had spoken.

1. **Apologies** received from Jennifer Worthington, Liz Yates, Peter Marsden.
2. **Smythe Report**

David introduced the report and explained some of the background relating to Professor Smythe. David Bardsley suggested that the core issues to be discussed be addressed first.

John stated that he would answer any questions with the proviso that he must respect planning regulations. But he hoped that he could address any concerns.

There was a discussion around the emotive language within the report and it was suggested by some, that Prof Smythe is not independent because he is well known for his views against fracking and he was hired by Bassetlaw Against Fracking to carry out this piece of research.

Prof Smythe asserts that there is inaccurate and insufficient supporting data with the application and that the 3D data is inadequate. John pointed out that Prof Smythe has not seen the 3d seismic data, but the data held is full fold coverage of the area. This is part of the reason IGas selected the current site. John explained that the site location is driven by geology and that Misson Springs is the deepest most mature area and so the optimum area to explore.

Prof Smythe questioned the contents in the map showing boreholes which he states are in the wrong places. John pointed out that the maps are there for illustrative purposes only. The well which Prof Smythe asserts is mis-positioned is actually wrongly labelled – it should have been labelled 'Comely.'

John pointed out that IGas have an extensive database of maps/seismic data etc and also access the UK Onshore Geophysical Library database. The whole basin has been mapped.

Prof Smythe asserts that IGas have used incorrect classification of the tertiary target. It does not match BGS nomenclature. It was explained that the reason for this is that BGS use the term Bowland-Hodder Unit where IGas geologists have detailed this further breaking this area into two distinct areas – Bowland Shale and Carboniferous Limestone Supergroup. Consistency in naming geological horizons is difficult, as different names are used in different areas for the same formations. However, the industry is trying to bring these names together.

The report also states that sites have been selected on non-geological criteria which, it asserts is misleading the Council but John explained that many criteria are used to determine a suitable location for explorations. In the first instance geological assessments are the fundamental starting point. Then using a series of screening techniques using amongst other things Geographical Information Systems (GIS), a series of other screening parameters are applied and notably against above ground criteria to select a potential site. Criteria include, but are not limited to, such things as transport access, population density, infrastructure, environmental considerations etc.

It was asserted in the report that the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive will be unable to assess the impact of the proposed development. John dismissed this view, stating that the regulators will have a detailed well design document and work programme. An independent well examiner will be used and their recommendations submitted to the HSE. Key environmental permits, e.g. Mining Waste Permit, will be submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) and will be made public for consultation and comment.

The group then moved on to discuss the 'Misson Fault' – a fault which Prof Smythe maintains exists underneath the site at Misson Springs.

Prof Smythe asserts that most or all of the Springs Road site is sited on the Sherwood sandstone Principal Aquifer and that there is a fault traversing the site. He also states that the boreholes support this interpretation. John explained that this is certainly one interpretation of the data, there are other interpretations that are equally if not more feasible using Prof Smythe's dataset. The borehole data used by Smythe are very shallow and as there is only very thin potential Mercia Mudstone Group deposits therein so if it were a fault it would arguably be of negligible throw (size) and impact on the proposed development. Also his postulated fault is not visible on 3-D seismic and shows a different orientation to the regional faulting trends seen within the Gainsborough Trough. Whilst it is possible that there is a shallow fault, Prof Smythe has extrapolated the extent of his postulated fault from the surface to the deep shale horizons – there is no evidence to support this assumption and it is not consistent with the 3-D seismic dataset.

A question was asked about the seismic event which happened in the Fylde and John explained that this was because only 2-D data had been obtained at the time. There is now a 3-D dataset available covering that area. This is why companies now use 3-D data when evaluating an area for a potential future test well. He went on to explain the traffic light system which is now in use to ensure that in the event of encountering a fault that might lead to induced seismicity, operations are monitored and halted before any issues arise.

It was suggested that IGas should share the 3-D data and allow Prof Smythe access to it, but John pointed out that this is commercially sensitive information and so will not be made public. He explained that the seismic is seen and interpreted by specialists at the Oil and Gas Authority (formerly DECC) as a pre-requisite before any future hydraulic fracturing consent would be given even if approved by the relevant council planning authority. This scrutiny of the 3-D seismic data is not therefore part of the planning application as it is covered under a separate jurisdiction, i.e. by the specialist staff of the relevant Regulator the OGA. The OGA have oversight all the way through the exploration process and they have the final say on whether an Operator can proceed, assuming the other Authorities/Regulators have approved the application. However, John did reiterate that the current planning application is not an application to frack, but merely an application to drill two exploration wells.

Peter Edwards pointed out that Misson Parish Council's objection letter highlighted that there are elements of the planning application which are inaccurate – transport being one of these. The accident data shows no fatal accidents and this is not true. Rhonda said she would check into this as she knew about the fatality and would report back to the group.

Peter also stated that the planning application stated that there were no HGV movements through Misson and pointed out that there are HGV movements in Misson. John pointed out that a key component of the application was that no HGV movements were planned to go through Misson, but he thanked Peter for his comments and pointed out that this is the point of the consultation process – to address any concerns.

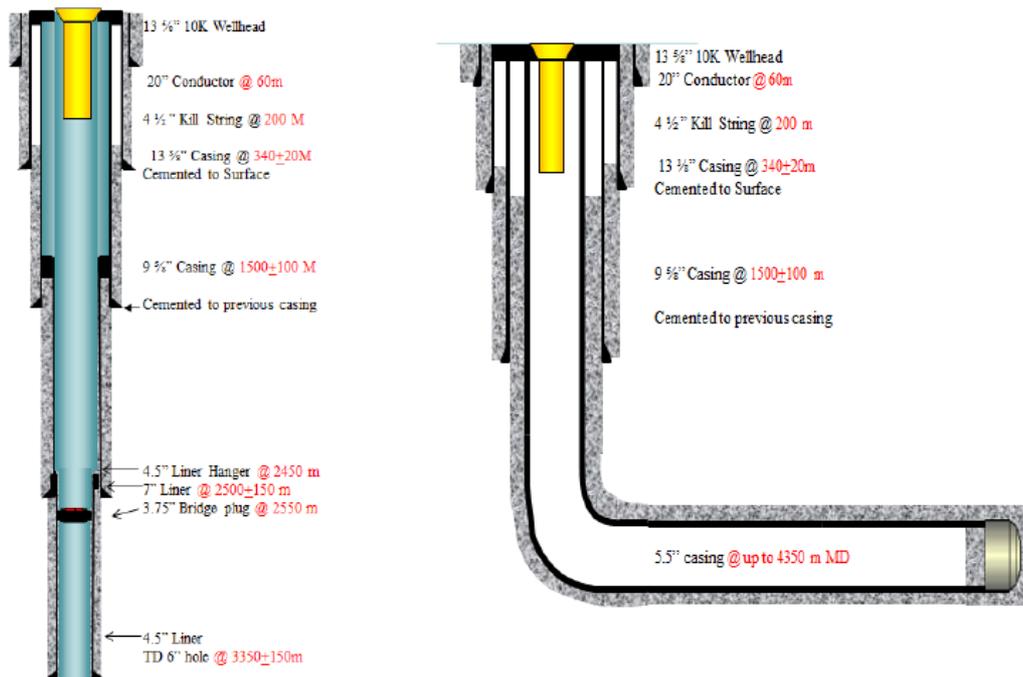
Prof Smythe had suggested that IGas has misled the Council as to the proximity to the SPZ3 aquifer. John explained that the site at Springs Road is not on SPZ3 although it is close. However this type of information is taken into account by the Environment Agency as part of their role as the environmental regulator.

Someone commented that farmers bore for water and asked what is the difference between what they do and what we will do. John explained that his understanding was that farmers need a permit to abstract water, however they do not need planning permission to drill a water borehole, unlike the recently submitted application by IGas for groundwater monitoring boreholes, as this is typically considered permitted development. Tony pointed out that there are no further abstraction licences available in the Idle valley.

Prof Smythe asserted that IGas had ignored the Magnesium Limestone but John stated that they are fully aware of its' presence particularly as it has been demonstrated to be gas bearing in various wells drilled in the vicinity.

The report also suggested that IGas are trying to hide shale developments under the guise of a conventional target. John explained that IGas has always been consistent and transparent in explaining that we were primarily exploring for shale gas in the area. Historically, exploration wells in the area have found hydrocarbons in "conventional" reservoirs. Part of any licence obligation is to find out what is in the ground and that includes all types of hydrocarbons both shale and so called conventional resources.

A member of the group then asked where they could find the detail of the well casing in the planning application. It is on page 20 of the supporting statement (please see drawing below.)



At this point John left and we returned to the normal business of the meeting.

3. **Minute** from the last meeting was accepted. Rhonda clarified that Peter Edwards was now attending the meeting on behalf of Misson in place of Cheryl Neal.

4. **Springs Road Site: IGas timelines update**

- Dec 2014 Land lease signed at Springs Road.
- Jan 2015 Scoping Report submitted to Notts CC. A 'scoping opinion' had been prepared for the Planning Authority by IGas and land and transport surveys started. Distributed for comments to Parish Councils.
- June 2015 – site location moved circa 200 m back from Springs Road.
- Amended scoping report submitted to Notts CC.
- Planning application validated by Notts CC on 28th October.

All of the associated documents will be available on the NCC website

(<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planningsearch/plandisp.aspx?AppNo=ES/3379>)

and also at www.springsroad.co.uk.

- Should planning permission be granted then two exploratory wells will be drilled to evaluate the geology and shale potential.
- Should IGas decide to go ahead a further planning application to allow hydraulic fracturing and test flows of gas would be required.
- The planning process will require further consultation with local people.
- **If planning permission is granted for an exploratory drill then the following timelines could follow. NOTE the timescales are very rough and indicative only:**

Q2 2016 Site construction and rig move

Q3 2016 Drill vertical well (3 months)

Q4 2016 Depending on results, drill horizontal well (4 months)

5. Misterton 1 Well abandonment

Rhonda updated the group, telling them that IGas are in discussion with the landowner regarding obtaining access to the site in order to carry out the necessary works. No date has been set to commence works yet.

6. AOB

Tony confirmed that he had negotiated reduced rates for this year's brownfield briefing on Shale in London. Bob, Kevin, David Boyne, David Bardsley, Tony, Annette, George, Jayne, Peter and Bev are all attending. Rhonda said that some people from the Tinker Lane group will be attending also.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Thursday 11th January 2016 – venue to be confirmed.