

MINERALS AND WASTE APPLICATION WA/2019/0796 - LOXLEY WELL SITE - LAND SOUTH OF DUNSFOLD ROAD AND EAST OF HIGH LOXLEY ROAD, DUNSFOLD, SURREY

NIGEL MOORE PRESENTATION

Good morning Mr Chair and Members of the Planning Committee - My name is Nigel Moore, I'm a Chartered Town Planner and part of the Loxley Design Team.

As you will know, in June, you were minded to refuse Loxley for 5 reasons.

The Applicant accepts without reservation the concerns expressed and I will now present the measures designed to remedy the situation and establish Loxley as a development worthy of your support.

**Firstly, Members were not convinced of the need for gas exploration.**

In response, there are two key pieces of information to consider:

- Firstly, historic exploration at Godley Bridge and Alfold in the 1980's confirmed the presence of gas.  
It was not feasible to continue exploration at that time  
but efficient drilling techniques make it viable today;  
and secondly.
- The geology is the same as that at Horse Hill, a known discovery which is now being readied for production in the coming year to coincide with our economic recovery from Covid-19.

Having studied this evidence in detail the Applicant confirms that Loxley is a known reserve of domestic gas; but add to this evidence the following considerations;

- Exploration can't be footloose; similar to all other mineral development it must follow the resource;
- Exploration is a serious business; the planned expenditure is £6m and the search for gas is a matter of national importance - our national energy policy says it's "*critical*" (a word rarely used in policy documents) that we have access to domestic supplies ... because...

Gas is a key commodity for our manufacturing base and it heats our homes, hospitals and schools.

In short, we need gas now to keep the lights on but we'll also need it in the future given that the Committee on Climate Change predicts we'll still consume 70% of the gas we do today in the year 2050 when our Greenhouse Gas emissions will be Net-Zero.

The UK is currently a net importer of gas and if we do nothing, by 2050, we'd be dependent on the goodwill of other countries for 86% of our supply. This level of exposure would be unsustainable in planning terms and an unacceptable risk to our national security. Put simply, any interruption in supply would have a significant and adverse impact upon our national economy and social well-being.

Domestic gas is therefore the insurance policy we need to protect ourselves against any external threat to turn the taps off or spike the prices - but this historic economic concern has now been joined by a more pressing environmental concern - because the Liquefied Natural Gas we import from the United States, Russia and the Gulf has a greenhouse gas content 4 times higher than UK gas.

In summary; continued import dependency makes no sense... but it's worse than that

because it will actually harm our economy and our environment. Contrast this with an alternative future where sites like Loxley restore our gas sovereignty, secure our supplies and clean our supply chains.

Accordingly, Loxley is precisely the kind of site that should be explored given that gas is critical to our current and future prosperity.

## **Secondly, Members expressed Highway concerns**

Planning conditions now dictate that:

- all HGV's will enter and exit the site from the east and avoid the rural road network to the west;
- they will be digitally tracked to ensure they stick to the route; and
- verges will be protected; junctions will be improved and wheels washed.

At the last Committee **Mr Gordon** spoke of the need for clear access to High Loxley Road on a Friday in connection with events at High Billingham Farm. In response, there will be no HGV movements from Friday-noon onwards leaving the long weekend free for Mr Gordon's activities.

**Mr Herman** has confirmed that the Trew Fields Cancer Festival will be held from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in 2021. In response, the Applicant will cease operations during this time and commit to do the same in years 2 and 3.

**Signage** is in place to deter HGV's from using Marwick Lane as a rat-run but this is not meant to restrict HGV movements elsewhere. 934 HGV's use Dunsfold Road on weekly basis – so an additional 10 HGV's per day would not be material.

Speeding cars are the reason why **Chevrons** have been installed on bends.

There have been no accidents involving HGV's because Dunsfold Road is sufficiently wide to accommodate these vehicles.

## **Members expressed concerns for Noise and Air Emissions**

Both have been the subject of independent assessment with which the Council's Environmental Health Officer agrees and the Environment Agency have already issued a Permit confirming that the environmental protection measures are acceptable.

## **Last but not least... in response to Members concern for the Rural Economy;**

- the planned expenditure at Loxley is £6M and there are few other land-uses that result in this amount of inward investment into the rural economy;
- the environmental capital of the area will be enhanced with new trees, hedgerow and habitats; and
- local firms will be used where possible to ensure the maximum amount of spending is retained within the local economy.

## **In summary;**

Conditions are in place to ensure the site operates as predicted but the Applicant is willing to accept further conditions if Members consider it necessary.

Members can be confident that this suite of conditions will work because of the well of trust built up at Horse Hill - a similar exploration site - operational since 2014 but with no breach of planning conditions.

Loxley would be sympathetically managed with the same spirit of goodwill and therefore there is no reason to doubt the same harmonious outcome – an outcome that all parties want.

## **In conclusion;**

- UK gas is the cleanest gas & the cheapest gas - it makes no sense to keep shipping it in from afar
- If approved, Loxley would progress in full compliance with your Minerals Plan but it has the potential to do so much more
- because no longer must we choose between protecting the economy or protecting the environment - we can do both - Loxley would allow us to keep the lights on and cut our emissions without impoverishment or any loss of personal freedoms – in short, we can have our cake and eat it.

Thank you for listening.