



Minutes

Name of meeting	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date and Time	TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021 COMMENCING AT 4.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs M Lilley (Chairman), G Brodie (Vice-Chairman), D Adams, M Beston, V Churchman, C Critchison, W Drew, C Jarman, M Oliver, M Price and C Quirk
Officers Present	Oliver Boulter, Russell Chick, Alan Ransom, Sarah Wilkinson and Justin Thorne
Apologies	Cllrs R Downer, Smart and P Fuller

27. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 be approved.

28. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations at this stage.

29. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

There were no public Questions.

30. **Report of the Strategic Manager for Planning and Infrastructure**

Consideration was given to item 1 of the report of the Strategic Manager for Planning and Infrastructure Delivery.

RESOLVED:

THAT the application be determined as detailed below:

The reasons for the resolutions made in accordance with Officer recommendation were given in the planning report. Where resolutions are made contrary to Officer recommendation the reasons for doing so are contained in the minutes.

A schedule of additional representations received after the printing of the report were submitted at the beginning of the meeting and were drawn to the attention of Members when considering the application.

Application:

20/00513/FUL

Details:

The construction, operation and decommissioning of a well site for the exploration and appraisal of hydrocarbon minerals from one exploratory borehole (Arreton-3) and one side-track borehole (Arreton-3z) for a temporary period of three years involving the siting of plant and equipment, the construction of a new access track, a new junction with the Newport to Sandown highway (A3056), the erection of boundary fencing, entrance gates and other ancillary development with restoration to agriculture - revised plans and information relating to means of access and rights of way mitigation measures, site layout, sections and restoration; clarification relating to ecology and environmental health issues; revised location plan/ red line boundary (readvertised application).

Land To The North East Of New Barn Business Park, Sandown Road, Arreton.

Site Visits:

The site was carried out on Friday, 15 October 2021

Public Participants:

Mr J Idle (Objector)

Mrs S May (Objector)

Mr S Davis (Objector)

Cllr M Kimber (Arreton Parish Council)

Mr M Cartwright (Applicant)

Mr N Moore (Agent)

Additional representations:

Six additional representations had been received by the Local Planning Authority since the report had been published raising concerns regarding the application. A petition of 4,410 signatures had also been submitted.

Comment:

Councillor Peter Spink spoke on behalf of Councillor Suzie Ellis as Local Member on this item.

The Chairman explained that he believed it was relevant to allow the Cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage and Waste Management to speak to the Committee regarding this application, Councillor Bacon was unable to attend, and his statement was read out by Mr Boulter Strategic Manager for Planning and Infrastructure Delivery.

The committee questioned the economic benefit to the Island if the development was approved, Planning Officers advised that the economic benefit would be at a national level and there would be only minimal local

benefit to the Island.

Concern was raised regarding the impact the development would have on local tourism locations around the site and the committee asked what weight had been given to tourism when reaching the recommendation. Officers acknowledged that the proposed development would be visible and look out of place, however the structure was temporary, and the land would be restored.

It was noted that the Local Planning Authority approval would be one of a number of approvals required for this development, other agencies such as the Environment Agency and Public Health England would be responsible for elements of the proposal.

Questions were raised regarding the number of vehicle movements on and off the site, and the impact this would have on an already busy route to the ferries, they were advised by the Island Roads representative that the number of vehicles would not significantly impact on the road network.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the impact of the development on the Island's biosphere status.

A proposal to refuse the application due to the impact on the character of the area, tourism due to the nearby cycle network, the road network, water quality, the environment (including climate change) and the lack of economic benefit to the island which was duly seconded.

Prior to the three-hour point in the meeting, a proposal to extend the meeting by 30 minutes under Part 4B paragraph 6 (Duration of meetings) and paragraph 10 (voting) of the council's Constitution was put to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

THAT the meeting be extended by up to 30 minutes.

Planning Officers advised that the Local Plan does not provide guidance regarding local benefits of the application, however the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that great weight should be attached to minerals developments, including hydrocarbons. It was also highlighted that Island Roads had not objected to the application, and the road network was sufficient to take the additional movements on the local road network.

Officers also referred to the comments provided by statutory consultees in respect of impacts to ground water and ecology. Officers also highlighted a recent high court judgement relating to planning decisions and downstream environmental impacts relating to hydrocarbons.

The Chairman took an adjournment to allow officers to consider the

concerns and formulate a sustainable reason for refusal of the application based on these.

Following the adjournment officers read out the proposed reason for refusal and in accordance with the Councils Constitution a named vote was taken the result follows:

For (11)

Councillors, David Adams, Michael Beston, Geoff Brodie, Vanessa Churchman, Claire Critchison, Warren Drew, Chris Jarman, Michael Lilley, Martin Oliver, Matthew Price, Chris Quirk

Against (0)

RESOLVED:

THAT the application be refused.

Reason:

The proposed development would cause significant harm to the landscape and visual qualities of the surrounding rural area and thereby compromise the Island's tourism industry. The economic benefits of the proposed development would not outweigh the harm to the integrity of the Island's landscape and Biosphere status. SP4. SP5, DM2, DM12.

31. **Members' Question Time**

There were no Members questions.

CHAIRMAN

UPDATE FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF A REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
– Tuesday 19th October 2021

1. **20/00513/FUL** **Land north east of New Barn Business Park, Sandown Road, Arreton, Newport, PO30 3BT**

Nature of Representation

Since the publication of the officer report an additional 6 representations have been received by the Planning Authority, which raise concerns about the proposed development. Some of the concerns raised reflect those already set out within the third-party representations that have been summarised within the report. The following list summarises additional issues raised by the recent comments:

- The planning department's report does not include any worldwide scientific reports that have been issued this year, relating to flooding, fires and increasing crop failures
- There is no mention of the IPCC report issued on 9th August 2021
- The report does not mention the effects that fossil fuels have on greenhouse gas emissions
- To say that the economic benefits outweigh the potential damage is neglectful to all life
- The Planning Department are not separate to the Council, just as the Isle of Wight is not separate from the Earth
- The report gives credence to Government departments that are already failing the Island's environmental protections that are needed
- To ignore warnings that Island residents are taking time to write potentially diminishes the trust that Islanders have in the Council
- The Council should now move the net zero goalposts back to 2030 rather than the 2040 target
- UKOG's stated recoverable volume of oil only relates to 2 days of UK supply
- Onshore oil only accounts for 2% of UK production and so the officer report is wrong to conclude that the application will bring substantial economic benefits and outweigh environmental damage
- Future problems from decaying underground infrastructure left in place after wells are capped and abandoned

In addition, a petition was provided to the Council on 12th October 2021, which included 4,410 signatures supporting the concerns raised within the petition. The petition includes the following statement:

'The Isle of Wight cannot afford to have its freshwater drinking supply contaminated by the proposed oil drilling. During the drilling process, high strength acids and chemicals are forced into the rock to get the oil below our fresh water source.'

UKOG have submitted a planning application and announced that drilling will go ahead if their planning application to the Council is successful. Please go to the IOW website to

voice your concerns “Can I add that the proposal to drill for oil on the Island by UK Oil and Gas has now resulted in a full planning application. It is absolutely vital that the people who sign your petition now write to the planning department of the Isle of Wight to make their objections known. All the details are given on the following website with easy to follow suggestions to make your objections: <https://www.dontdrillthewight.co.uk?...>” – Don’t Drill the Wight

Isle of Wight Council should reject UKOG’s planning application. Oil drilling would contribute to the destruction of the natural environment on the Isle of Wight, the quality of water and would increase the impact of climate change.’

Finally, officers have noticed a typographical error within paragraph 7.8 of the officer report. This refers to ‘National Planning Policy Statements for energy’ whereas this should read as ‘National Policy Statements for energy.’

Officer Conclusion

One of the additional comments refers to recent worldwide scientific reports. However, the role of the Planning Authority is to consider the merits of a proposed development on the basis of existing policy guidance. The potential impacts of the development on ecology have been assessed, in consultation with Natural England and the Council’s Ecology Officer, with their conclusions and comments and the relevant ecological guidance referred to within the report. The worldwide reports referred to do not change the current policy framework against which this application should be assessed.

The issue of climate change is referred to within the principle section of the officer report.

Regarding the balance given to the material considerations for this planning application, the officer report sets out the reasons for the balance between the relevant social, economic and environmental issues. This is based on the relevant national and local policy guidance, site specific issues, supporting information and comments that have been received from consultees and the public.

Regarding the likely reserves of oil, it should be noted that policy guidance does not refer to a ceiling level or a minimum level of minerals that a development proposal should deliver.

Officers conclude that the additional representations should be noted, with no change to the officer recommendation.

Ollie Boulter – Strategic Manager for Planning and Infrastructure Delivery
Russell Chick – Planning Team Leader

Date: 19th October 2021