Summary of recent Coal Bed Methane (CBM), Coal Mine Methane (CMM) and Natural Gas sites in Staffordshire

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The Sites

Land adjacent to A53 Whitmore Road, Seabridge - StrataGas PLC

Application for exploratory drilling of a four well coal bed methane pilot scheme known as 'The Swallowcroft Coal Bed Methane Pilot Project' - refused 19/7/01 by Members against officer recommendation to permit for a temporary 2 year period (ref. N.00/0620)

Refused - 19/7/2001 - Appeal – dismissed

Land off Cocknage Road - Greenpark Energy Ltd (CMM) now owned by Alkane Energy

Application to extract and utilise mine gas (methane) from the former Florence Colliery for the production of electricity comprising of the installation of a temporary borehole platform and drill, erection of gas extraction and power generation plant and ancillary apparatus and construction of a new site access (ref. S.06/25/401 M)


Installation of gas meter cabinet for the importation of natural gas (ref. S.15/15/401 M)

Granted – 22/3/16

Lordsley / Trentham Quarry - Nexen Exploration UK Ltd now owned by IGas Energy

Construction of a drilling site together with associated access to drill an exploratory coal bed methane borehole (ref. N.07/21/250 M)


Brancote Sewage Treatment Works - Nexen Exploration UK Ltd now owned by IGas Energy

Construction of a drilling site together with an associated access to drill an exploratory coal bed methane borehole (ref. S.08/09/437 MW)

Granted – 14/10/2008 – not implemented

Application for a new planning permission to replace extant planning permission S.08/09/437 MW, for the construction of drilling site together with an access to drill an exploratory coal bed methane borehole (ref. S.11/18/437 MW)

Granted – 22/12/2011 – (not implemented)

Planning permission lapsed on 22/12/2014
Gorse Lane, Fradley - Nexen Exploration UK Ltd now owned by IGas Energy

Construction of a drilling site together with associated access to drill an exploratory coal bed methane borehole (ref. L.08/01/858 M)


Plot 12 Keele University and Business Park – Nexen Exploration UK Ltd now owned by IGas Energy

Construction of a drilling site together with associated access to drill two exploratory coal bed methane boreholes (ref. N.08/20/299 M)

Granted – 08/04/2009 - operational (drilling commenced 16/6/10) - one borehole has been drilled.

Variation of Conditions 5 and 8 of planning permission N.08/20/299 M to enable the second of the 2 approved wells to be drilled and to allow a reasonable time period for the well to be drilled (ref. N.11/10/299 M)

Granted – 19/8/2011

Variation of condition 4 of planning permission N.11/10/299 M to extend life of planning permission to 22 December 2017 (relating to exploratory coalbed methane boreholes). (ref. N.12/10/299 M)

Granted – 21/6/2013

Land at Knowl Wall Farm, Tittensor – Greenpark Energy Ltd (CBM) now owned by Dart Energy

The drilling of boreholes for the exploration, testing and appraisal of Coal Bed Methane gas (CBM) and the subsequent development and operation of a hub for CBM gas production (ref. S.09/13/436 M)

Granted – 26/2/10 – (not implemented)

Planning permission lapsed on 26/2/2013

Land at Groundslow Farm, near Tittensor - Greenpark Energy Ltd (CBM) now owned by Dart Energy

The drilling of boreholes for the exploration, testing and appraisal of Coal Bed Methane gas (CBM) and the subsequent development and operation of a hub for CBM gas production (ref. S.09/14/437 M)

Granted – 24/3/2010 – (not implemented)

Planning permission lapsed on 24/3/2013.
Land at Swynnerton Estate - Greenpark Energy Ltd (CBM) now owned by Dart Energy

Drilling of boreholes for the exploration, testing and appraisal of coal bed methane (CBM) gas and the subsequent development and operation of a hub for CMB gas production (ref. S.10/07/438 M)

Granted – 22/9/2010 – (not implemented)

Planning permission lapsed on 22/9/13.

Land at Spot Grange Farm – Greenpark Energy Ltd (CBM) now owned by Dart Energy

The drilling of boreholes for the exploration, testing and appraisal of coal bed methane (CMB) gas and the subsequent development and operation of a hub for CMB gas production (ref. S.10/08/439 M)

Granted – 12/11/2010 – (not implemented)

Planning permission lapsed on 12/11/13.

Three Nooks Farm – Sever Star Natural Gas (NATURAL GAS) now owned by Alkane

Permission to repair two existing boreholes and appraise the natural gas reservoir and permission extract underground gas for power generation (ref. SM.11/18/161 M granted 28/6/12 and SM.12/06/161 M granted 23/5/13). The repair of the existing boreholes and appraisal has taken place.

Refer to Alkane web site for updates on the Three Nooks Farm site

Permission to extract underground gas for power generation (ref. SM.12/06/161 M granted 23/5/13) (not implemented). Planning permission lapsed on 23/5/16.

Permission to extract underground gas for power generation (ref. SM.14/11/161 M granted 17/4/15) (not implemented). Development is required to commence before 17/4/18.
Detailed Examples

Land off Cocknage Road - Greenpark Energy Ltd (CMM) now owned by Alkane Energy - COAL-MINE METHANE

Application to extract and utilise mine gas (methane) from the former Florence Colliery for the production of electricity comprising of the installation of a temporary borehole platform and drill, erection of gas extraction and power generation plant and ancillary apparatus and construction of a new site access (ref. S.06/25/401 M)

Granted – 07/12/2007 - operational (wef 22/6/09)

Planning issues – minerals and energy planning policy; impact on environment and amenity – visual, historic environment, biodiversity, noise, dust, air quality and health, traffic, ground stability, emergency planning, alternatives locations, Green Belt.

Not EIA development

Green field site

Gas extraction and electricity generation – notice of commencement wef 12/3/2010

This application was to extract and utilise mine gas (methane) associated with the former deep-mine coal workings known as Florence Colliery near to Lightwood, Stoke-on-Trent.

The drilling site is in Staffordshire; the former Florence Colliery is in Stoke-on-Trent.

Phased development

Phase 1 – site investigations and appraisal - 12-16 weeks – incl. 3 weeks drilling
Directional drilling – depth 337 metres
Drill site area 70m x 50m
30 m drill rig – 24/7 drilling

Phase 2 – installation of gas extraction and electricity generating equipment – if phase 1 successful – then estimated to last 25 years
Electricity generators and transformers
Noise reduction measures – incl. screen bunds and fencing
24/7 operation

Plot 12 Keele University and Business Park - Nexen Exploration UK Ltd now owned by IGas Energy - COAL BED METHANE

Construction of a drilling site together with associated access to drill two exploratory coal bed methane boreholes (ref. N.08/20/299 M)

Granted – 08/04/09 - operational (drilling commenced 16/6/10)

Planning issues – minerals and energy planning policy; impact on environment and amenity – visual, noise, odour, traffic and ground water pollution
Not EIA development
Plot 12 – Keele University Science and Business Park.

The proposal was to drill two pilot coal bed methane (CBM) boreholes to include lateral sections within the coal, and production test the CBM gas as a sustainable energy source for Keele University. The proposals are made in partnership with Keele University as one element of a wider sustainable energy strategy for the University in their aim to become ‘carbon neutral’ within ten years.

Phased development

Phase 1 – site investigations and appraisal - 30 to 75 days
Directional drilling – depth circa 2000 feet
Drill site area 0.25 ha
38 m drill rig - 24/7 drilling

Phase 2 extended production test - 30 to 180 days
To assess the quality and quantity of gas

Application made to extend the time to drill and assess the site to 22/12/2017 (relating to exploratory coalbed methane boreholes). (ref. N.12/10/299 M) – granted 21/6/2013.

Land at Spot Grange Farm - Greenpark Energy Ltd (CBM) now owned by Dart Energy - COAL BED METHANE

The drilling of boreholes for the exploration, testing and appraisal of coal bed methane (CMB) gas and the subsequent development and operation of a hub for CMB gas production (ref. S.10/08/439 M)

Granted – 12/11/2010 – pre-operational

Planning issues – minerals and energy planning policy; impact on environment and amenity – Green Belt, noise, traffic and highway safety

EIA development – voluntary ES

Phased development

Phase 1 site establishment – six weeks

Phase 2 drilling – 17 weeks
Directional drilling – depth up to 1400 metres
30 m drill rig - 24/7 drilling

Phase 3 production (if results are successful)
Up to 20 years part of a “production hub”

Phase 4 – capping and restoration