

news release

24 July 2013

Environment Agency grants mining waste permit at Balcombe

The Environment Agency has today (Wednesday, 24 July) granted a mining waste permit to Cuadrilla Balcombe Ltd (Cuadrilla). This permit covers the management of wastes arising from an exploratory borehole to test for oil and gas reserves at Balcombe in West Sussex.

After a thorough assessment the Environment Agency is confident that, providing their permit is complied with, the environment will be protected. The company is not proposing to carry out any hydraulic fracturing (fracking) as part of this activity.

Before reaching its decision, the Environment Agency reviewed concerns raised by local people during the four week consultation with communities, interested groups and other professional organisations.

The permit will require the company to manage its waste effectively in order to protect local people and the environment. Environment Agency officers will now enforce these operating conditions.

Chris Wick of the Environment Agency said: "We have scrutinised the application rigorously together with undertaking a full public consultation to gather in any local information necessary to determine the permit. We would like to thank all those people who responded to this consultation.

"Detailed information from the company shows they have the necessary plans in place to carry out this activity to the highest environmental standards. If the activity goes ahead as planned, we will monitor Cuadrilla's operations and work with other regulators to ensure that the activity does not cause harm to people and the environment."

The environmental permit and the decision document outlining how we reached our decision are available here <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/permits/app/cuadrilla/balcombe>.

Cuadrilla has also formally applied for a permit to manage any waste water or solid waste which may contain naturally occurring radioactive substances. Naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM) are present in many types of rocks. Sometimes, waste water from such activities can contain low levels of this NORM. A permit is required to ensure safe disposal of any waste that may fall within the scope of the regulations.

Cuadrilla does not need this permit to drill a borehole, but the company will need it in order to carry out well testing.

Cuadrilla's application is available on our website: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/>

People now have the chance to comment on the proposals by visiting our website or by emailing:

rsr.rotherham2.ne@environment-agency.gov.uk

or writing to:

P&SC – RSR Team

PO Box 4404

Sheffield

S9 9DA

The consultation on the second permit runs until Tuesday 13 August 2013. All responses received will be fully considered before a final decision to grant or refuse the permit is made.

ENDS

All media enquiries: 0118 953 5555, out of hours 0800 141 2743.

Please ask for the duty press officer

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