

Environment Agency grants Rathlin Energy permit

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Environment Agency has granted an environmental permit variation to Rathlin Energy Ltd, following a public consultation on the Agency's 'minded to' decision.

The Environment Agency has granted an environmental permit variation to Rathlin Energy in Yorkshire.

It follows a public consultation on the Agency's 'minded to' decision, which took place at the end of last summer.

The decision is based on Rathlin Energy Ltd demonstrating that it has met and will continue to meet expected mandatory conditions as outlined in the permit.

Rathlin Energy UK Ltd, which has operated at West Newton in East Yorkshire since 2013, has an environmental permit for drilling wells and long-term oil and gas production.

It applied to vary the permit for West Newton A well site (WNA) at Fosham Road in High Fosham.

The Environment Agency only issues permits or permit variations if it's satisfied the operator can comply with the permit conditions and has appropriate systems in place to operate without causing harm to the environment, human health or wildlife.

Robust levels of environmental protection

Kathryn Richardson, Area Environment Manager, said:

We have reviewed the comments and evidence from both public consultations into this application.

I want to reassure people that the permit variation will ensure that robust levels of environmental protection are met.

Environmental law sets out these conditions, and as a regulator we will issue the permit if we can find no reason that the operator would not be able to comply.

There is a decision document which explains in more detail how the Environment Agency reached this decision.

It also outlines the concerns raised during the consultation and how the Environment Agency has addressed these.

You can find out more about this here: [HU11 5DA, Rathlin Energy \(UK\) Limited: environmental permit issued - EPR/BB3001FT/V006 - GOV.UK](#)

The Environment Agency may only refuse a permit application if it does not meet one or more of the

legal requirements under environmental legislation, including if it will have an unacceptable impact on the environment or harm human health. If all the requirements are met, it is legally obliged to issue a permit.

Rathlin Energy has applied to carry out 'well stimulation' (or 'proppant squeeze') on the existing WNA-2 well. This is a process used by the oil and gas industry, which is designed to improve the efficiency of the flow of oil or gas through the reservoir rock and into the well.

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Further background:

Environmental Permits:

- Environmental permits set out strict legal conditions by which an operator must comply in order to protect people and the environment. Should an environmental permit be issued, the Environment Agency has responsibility for enforcing its conditions.
- Our powers include enforcement notices, suspension and revocation of permits, fines and ultimately criminal sanctions, including prosecution.
- We may only refuse a permit if it does not meet one or more of the legal requirements under environmental legislation, including if it will have a significant impact on the environment or harm human health. If all the requirements are met, we are legally required to issue a permit.

Environment Agency regulation of onshore gas and oil:

- The Environment Agency's regulatory controls for the onshore oil and gas industry are designed to protect people and the environment. We do not permit activities that pose an unacceptable risk.
- Our regulatory process - permitting, inspecting, monitoring and enforcement - is designed to protect our water, land and air, and the people and wildlife that depend on them.
- We will not allow any activity that could pollute water (rivers and streams, surface water, groundwater, drinking water) or any removal of water if it could affect the public water supply or damage the environment.
- We ensure waste material is minimised, stored, and disposed of safely so it doesn't harm the soil or the wider environment.
- We protect the air by requiring that any waste gas is burnt in a safe and controlled way, and that any emissions are minimised and monitored.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-grants-rathlin-energy-permit>