

Operations at Preston New Road

Keeping you informed

Update 8

11 March 2019

As the regulators of the shale gas industry we are committed to keeping local people updated on our work at the Preston New Road site.

Permit Variation

Cuadrilla has applied to vary their environmental permit for their Preston New Road site. We will now assess their proposals to ensure that these changes meet our strict requirements.

The permit variation seeks consent for:

- Changes to the composition of the permitted fracturing fluid
- Refining arrangements for the management of wastes
- Updating requirements for environmental monitoring of surface water, groundwater and air quality
- Clarification that a hydraulic fracturing programme may be conducted on more than one occasion for each well.

As part of the Environment Agency's assessment of the application, we are seeking views from the local community and interested groups. We would welcome comments on local environmental factors that people feel are important and relevant to our assessment.

You can make comments on the application until Wednesday 20 March 2019. You can view the documents and make comments online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pr4-3pj-cuadrilla-bowland-limited-eprab3101mwv005-environmental-permit-application-advertisement>



Keeping you informed

Please visit our Citizen Space webpage to see the latest information from our audits, site inspections and reports from the operator.

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/onshore-oil-and-gas/information-on-cuadrillas-preston-new-road-site>

Our next scheduled update will be issued in 2 months' time.

Seismic data analysis

As we reported in our last update, Cuadrilla have completed their first hydraulic fracturing operation at Preston New Road. As part of its normal responsibilities as one of the regulators of this industry, the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) now plans to carry out a scientific analysis of the data gathered during these operations. It is not a review of the traffic light system.

As is usual in these circumstances, the OGA will work with recognised and independent geologists and scientists with expertise in hydraulic fracturing operations to assess these data and will provide updates on their website as appropriate at : [OGA's website](#).

Methane emissions

The environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency sets legally binding conditions to control both fugitive emissions (leaks) and point source emissions (from flaring) at the site.

In January, in line with strict requirements of the site permit, Cuadrilla notified the Environment Agency on three occasions when short term methane levels were detected above the reporting thresholds at the site boundary.

The reporting threshold (> 7.1 ppm) is set as a very precautionary level to ensure a substantial level of protection for people and the environment. The peak methane levels detected (30.5 parts per million) were far below those deemed hazardous or explosive (50,000 ppm). The Environment Agency is reassured through its assessment that emissions have been well below the levels that would constitute a risk to people. They are also comparable to other methane sources in the area for instance from dairy farms.

These levels recorded have resulted from the short term operations of the on-site flares. The release of methane from the flares at the site is allowed only where necessary for safety reasons. The Environment Agency is currently carrying out a detailed assessment of the operations of the flare to check compliance with the Emissions Management and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). It will report its detailed assessment and findings on Citizen Space in the coming weeks.

Environment Agency inspectors on site checks in January confirmed that the company's leak detection and repair procedures were robust. No breaches of the permit were found. Copies of the compliance assessment reports are available on Citizen Space at the link on page 1 of this update.



Contacting us

Environment Agency

24 Hour hotline number 0800 80 70 60 or PNREnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm

The Oil and Gas Authority at oga.correspondence@ogauthority.co.uk