

Response to questions arising from CLP meeting, 2 October 2017

Questions posed by Cllr Stuchfield, Fleetwood Town Council

What will happen to the excess brine if not compatible to need?

The brine created by washing the caverns will be discharged to the Irish Sea through a 2.3km outfall. The discharge is permitted by a Discharge Consent granted by the Environment Agency. There are detailed monitoring requirements regarding the discharge of brine which are stipulated within the Environment Agency's Discharge Consent. If the standards cannot be met discharge will cease.

Will it be flooded into the legacy 104 salt caverns remaining at the ICI site, if so will 107 be used? As that has mercury in it...?? This itself is a concern as not capped due to pressure levels.

It is unlikely that the legacy of brine-wells will be used to dispose of brine. Some may be used to top up brine levels in the old brine-wells. No brine will be disposed of into BW107 as this owned by NPL and not Halite Energy.

What is the integrity of remaining caverns as they are not naturally sealed?

The integrity of the legacy brine-wells is variable and is dependent on the way ICI washed the caverns, their shape and the condition when abandoned. Generally speaking those with a salt roof are stable and maintain a consistent brine level. Those with a mudstone roof can be prone to slow roof deterioration.

What safety parameters are going to be deployed?

The DCO requires the new caverns to be designed and tested before gas can be stored in them. The Health & Safety Executive is the relevant authority that will check designs, in situ testing and give approval before any cavern be used for gas storage. This is managed through the COMAH regulations.

The dead zone talked about after leeching how impacting is it on marine life as brought up by panel member. How far out will it spread? And how deadly is the dead zone and what is the timescale for regrowth after depositing excess by flushing? Will estuary marine life be devastated?

The dead zone is estimated to be 50m around the end of the outfall. Monitoring points will be located between the diffuser and the estuary. Part of the monitoring requires diver surveys to check the size and impact of the discharge. If monitoring shows concentrations of salt at defined distances from the diffuser are not met then discharge has to cease.

If after your initial 9 cavern leeching over an 8 year cycle in 2 phases starting 2018; you find that it is not satisfactory. What happens to the legacy caverns you are housekeeping at the moment? Who will look after them?

The legacy brine field is the responsibility of the owner of the land.

More importantly what is the financial cost implication? What happens if no one looks after them and how stable are they?

If no one looks after the legacy brine-wells several things may happen. Salt roof caverns are likely to remain stable for a very long time provided the brine level within the brine-well casing is maintained. Mudstone roof caverns may deteriorate. The steel casings will gradually corrode. Eventually this could lead to further collapses or blow outs. The owner of the land will be expected by the regulators to undertake monitoring of the brine-wells and to implement remedial works for general maintenance or where there is a blow out or collapse.

After stating that strict rigors are applied to your work and it has to be stringently applied. You mentioned funding available? How do you access that?

The Halite Energy Group has been well funded by external investors since 2010. Its existing majority investor continues to back the project. Halite remains in confidential discussions with other financial institutions and companies who remain interested in making an investment.

ENDS