

Les Mason



6<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Dear Mr. Scott

***Preesall Gas Project - Halite Energy Group's Underground Gas Storage Facility***

I understand the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) is currently re-examining Halite's application for a new gas storage project in Preesall, Lancashire following a Judicial Review in January 2014 that quashed the decision last year by the Secretary of State to refuse consent

I specialise in Health and Safety Management and Construction Supervision of multi-disciplined projects such as Preesall.

I am currently in the process of commissioning the last of the newly constructed gas storage cavities in Cheshire, for EDF Energy, after a successful project which began in 2009.

Storing gas in salt caverns underground is a proven industry with more than 70 underground gas storage facilities globally. There has never been a major incident recorded at an underground gas storage facility in the UK since the first underground field was brought online in 1959 at Hornsea, Yorkshire.

I have studied the Halite application; the Health & Safety Executive have stated that they have no concerns about important safety elements of their proposal including a Hazardous Substances Consent and a Quantitative Risk assessment.

I have worked closely with the HSE well intervention inspectors over the last nine years, and have a good relationship with them. A key element to the borehole site and operations regulations (BSOR) is to keep the HSE informed of each element of the operation, thus ensuring that their specialist regulators are more than comfortable with site activities.

I understand if consent is granted, construction of the facility could commence almost immediately, unlike many gas storage projects that have been approved but lack the economic and financial viability to get them off the drawing board.

The Preesall project will need to attract large-scale investment and, for this to be successful, granting consent will be required.

Yours sincerely

Les Mason