

Our ref: LS/CS/RP

5 September 2014

Giles Scott
Head, National Infrastructure Consents
Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC)
3 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

Dear Mr Scott

***Natural Gas Underground Gas Storage Planning Application
Preesall, Lancashire [Halite Energy Group Limited]***

At Preston's College, we are building more and more of our provision around the real needs of companies to ensure we become the college of choice for local businesses when it comes to training requirements. We believe that by offering young people and adults as much help and advice as possible, we can support them to make the right decisions for the future and remain committed to providing the best service possible to them.

Making our learners "the most employable" is why I am writing to you as a supporter of the Halite Energy Group application to build a £600m facility in Preesall, Lancashire.

The chances of our students finding employment are greatly enhanced because if approved, we can provide the training or qualifications required by Halite in the relevant disciplines over its eight-year construction program.

Halite has already committed to preparing local people for employment opportunities on the project. Over 100 students were sponsored on a local training program. Preston's College is well set to provide a range of courses that would be relevant to the construction program that could lead directly to employment for our students.

Preston's College is also a large user of energy. We are exposed to high and volatile energy prices and believe that increased levels of gas storage such as those offered by Halite can improve the security of energy supplies and contribute to lower and downward pressure on gas prices.

The following three factors make this requirement more immediate:



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1. Sufficient levels of LNG supplies arriving in the UK market cannot be guaranteed in the long term

We welcome the Government's initiatives to diversify energy supply and continue to ask them to support increased gas storage to guard against the impact of external turmoil in the market and on gas prices.

2. Year on year reductions in the availability of indigenous supplies are inevitable

The decline in UKCS production is inevitably resulting in an increased reliance on international gas markets to deliver a secure supply to energy intensive users. Increased gas storage will provide the UK with additional domestic security both during and upon completion of the transition to renewable forms of energy.

3. Gas storage capacity is out of line with other European markets

The UK has 15 days of gas storage compared with almost 100 days in both France and Germany. This places the UK at a considerable disadvantage as our indigenous gas supplies deplete.

Because of the above, it seems entirely sensible that the Department of Energy and Climate Change give very close consideration and approves proposals for gas storage facilities such as Halite's.

Projects such as this facility not only offer the prospect of a valuable addition to UK energy infrastructure but also bring substantial economic benefits to us here in the North West.

If you then combine gas storage with shale gas, the opportunities for all local universities and colleges to provide the training and skills required would underpin an economic rebound in the region for the foreseeable future. This would be very good news for the people of Lancashire.

Yours sincerely



Lis Smith
Principal & Chief Executive