



DON'T DRILL THE HILL

A Voice for Leith Hill

October 2017



Welcome to our second Newsletter full of up-to-date information about the campaign against oil-drilling on Leith Hill. It's information that you rarely find in the media.

Read on, find out more and join us by helping in any way you can. It's easy once you know how!
Request your own e-mailed copy each month by contacting info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk

LAST CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

Surrey County Council's Planning & Regulatory Committee will discuss Europa Oil's controversial Traffic Management Plan at County Hall, Kingston on 18th October. The previous TMP was **deferred** by the P&RC on August 2nd and then **refused** by Mole Valley Development and Control Committee later that same day. **Can you attend it?** The updated proposal changes little: Europa will use **aluminium trackway** thus reducing lorry movements but increasing their size to 18.3m.

Around 18 weeks of roughly 1,000 HGV and tanker journeys up & down Flint Hill then Knoll Rd & Coldharbour Lane from 9.30-3.00 Monday - Friday. Some loads will be 15 -19m long and between 2.6 and 3.17m wide.

A one-way system in 4 stages up Coldharbour Lane controlled by signboards.

Coldharbour Lane effectively closed from 9.30 am - 3.00pm for six days to allow the drill rig up then down the Lane

Stone-carrying lorries travelling in convoy along the A24 to the North Holmwood roundabout then up Flint Hill to Knoll Rd and Coldharbour Lane.

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Campaign group Leith Hill Action Group believe that information requested by the Council has not yet been provided, for example a 3D analysis of the route.

Permission to bring heavy traffic to the site is one of the final obstacles holding Europa back so please object. We need a huge number of letters opposing the plan.

Please write **THIS WEEK**. <http://www.voiceforleithhill.co.uk/> has a useful template with suggestions for points to make.

Then email mwcd@surreycc.gov.uk

Subject: **Planning Application SCC Ref 2017/0027**

You must include your name and postal address incl. postcode or your letter won't be considered. It's a nice touch to give some personal details of why you are objecting and how you'll be affected.

STOP PRESS!

Scotland votes to block fracking indefinitely. So do Ireland, France and Germany. England?

Last week Mole Valley District Council rushed the revised TMP through their own planning committee having first disqualified from voting 2 key councillors who had previously voted against it. How can this be happening?

SCC are not allowing any speakers on the TMP as the earlier version has already been discussed, so your letters are even more important.

NEWS FROM THE PROTECTION CAMP

The camp & supporters celebrated the Autumn Equinox with a seasonal feast. Many thanks to everyone who supports us with food, clothing and other supplies - we couldn't be here without local backing. It's nearly a year since the camp was first established. It's been a long year, but we aren't going anywhere while Europa & partners are still around! We will be celebrating the anniversary with music and workshops from 21st-22nd October - all welcome. Check the Leith Hill Protection Camp Facebook group for details.

TRAFFIC CONCERN FOR CYCLISTS

'Legs of Steel' cyclists who raced the Surrey Hills on Saturday Sept 30th expressed their disbelief and concern over Europa's plans when 'A Voice for Leith Hill' supporters distributed leaflets to the 360 participants.



Brenda, a regular Leith Hill cyclist, said "I can't believe this has ever got so far. That road is so narrow and steep, and cyclists come down it at speed. It'll be dangerous and ruin a beautiful area."

COMMUNITY POWER—JOIN US!



Heartfelt support from the Gruffalo community picnic at Leith Hill Tower on Sept 16th

People getting together and talking is the key to success. Door knocking has proved a powerful way to raise awareness and build a strong campaign. Let's do it in Dorking.

Contact info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk if you're willing to help out. Training & materials will be provided.

Events

Sunday 15th October 5pm: Energy Event at the well-site, Old Bury Wood. Gather at the Camp to walk, meditate and create positive energies around the threatened area.

Sat 21st & Sun 22nd October: Happy birthday! The Camp celebrates a year of resistance with live music and workshops. See the Leith Hill Protection Camp Facebook page

Friday 27th October: Social gathering 7.30 at the Lincoln Arms, Station Approach, Dorking RH4 1TF. It's Friday - let's party! Chat about the campaign & bring musical instruments for a light-hearted session.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FIGHT AGAINST OIL

Back in 2008 Europa Gas & Oil applied to carry out an exploratory drill at Bury Hill Woods on Leith Hill. Local parish and district councils, the National Trust, the local water authority and thousands of individuals objected to the proposal. Despite this and the tireless work of local lobby group **Leith Hill Action Group**, permission was eventually granted by the Government Planning Inspectorate in 2014. **A Voice for Leith Hill** started with a picnic on the proposed wellsite in 2015. It's a community group that feels that this beautiful woodland area needs a voice.

Following approval in 2014, Europa have had to submit detailed plans for development and every word and drawing has been scrutinised by LHAG, A Voice for Leith Hill and other groups. Inconsistencies and inaccuracies have been exposed and this fight has continued for the last 3 years.

Weald Wide Watch

The explorations at Leith Hill are part of a new wave of 'tight oil' extraction across the South East. Oil companies are expected to make over 900 applications to drill the Weald.

Stephen Sanderson of UK Oil and Gas (UKOG) has said "This type of oil deposit... depends on drilling your wells almost back to back so it becomes... an industrialised process". UKOG have recently increased their stake in the Leith Hill project to 40% - the largest share.

If we don't act to protect our countryside the view from Coldharbour could one day be very different... instead of bonfire smoke we'd see gas flares belching from drill sites.



Tight squeeze on Coldharbour Lane—the shape of things to come?

Brockham: Angus Energy (a partner in the Leith Hill project) drilled a sidetrack without permission from Surrey County Council. SCC's lawyers have upheld the Council. See brockhamoilwatch.org.

Billingshurst (Broadford Bridge): UKOG have drilled this summer and are seeking a one year extension.

Horse Hill (Gatwick): A consortium including UKOG explored for oil. They have now applied for an extension.

Markwells Wood (Portsmouth): UKOG have for now withdrawn their application to drill and acidise after Markwells Wood Watch crowd-funded a hydrogeological report.

Balcombe (Sussex) Cuadrilla drilled a well in 2013. After huge protests they went quiet for years, but have just applied to the Environment Agency for new permits.

Lidsey, nr Bognor: Angus Energy have just brought a drilling rig onto the site and can go into immediate production after flow-testing.

And don't forget Albury, Godstone, Godley Bridge & Baxter's Copse (W. Sx), Isle of Wight. For more info what's happening in the South East, see the news site Drill Or Drop <https://drillordrop.com>.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: It's time to step forward

- **Find out more about the planning app on our website / Facebook page then write to Surrey County Council Planning: ref MO/2017/0911.**
- **Tell everyone,** write letters, display leaflets, posters and car stickers and **come to events.**
- **Contact Europa's suppliers** and ask them to pull out. They have Facebook pages and websites.
- **Volunteer** for our street-by-street surveys and information stalls.
- **Save annual leave** to show your support for any peaceful protest if and when work starts on the site.
- **Train** to find out more about your rights as a protestor or become a legal observer.
- **Find out more.** LHAG, A Voice for Leith Hill, Brockham Oil Watch & Weald Action Group have excellent and informative websites. Join the Leith Hill Protection Camp Facebook group for updates.
- **Do you have any special skills?** Social media / organising events / PR / woodworking / design etc etc...do you like talking to people? Don't be shy!

Please email info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk with any questions. Or leave a message on 01306 889278.

Website: www.voiceforleithhill.co.uk / Email: info@voiceforleithhill.co.uk / Facebook A Voice for Leith Hill