

Hundreds of gas wells to be constructed on Lough Allen Basin

Fiona Heavey

TAMBORAN Resources expect to drill hundreds of gas wells over the next 15 years on the Lough Allen Basin, with the majority located in Co Leitrim.

Richard Moorman CEO of Tamboran Resources, one of the companies in possession of an onshore petroleum licence to explore the Lough Allen Basin for commercial gas, told the *Leitrim Observer*, "The best gas is in Leitrim."

Despite having a licence to explore a large portion of the basin which covers five counties, Tamboran said they will be seeking to drill for gas only in Leitrim, Fermanagh and Louth. He said, "we expect to drill hundreds of gas wells over 15 years."

He noted the most concentrated gas is in Leitrim and their main focus will be south of the mountain, not far from Glenfarne. "We see what we see there," he commented.

Legally the gas companies do not need to consult or work with local planners at any stage of their progress, but Tamboran Resources want to work closely with Leitrim County Council. Mr Moorman and Tony Brennan an Irish Representative of the Company met with Leitrim County Council planners,

officials and County Manager last week and committed to keeping the council informed every step of the way.

Mr Moorman told the paper that their biggest obstacle to extracting the gas, is "the cost." He said the American equipment is "too big" for Ireland and does not adhere to the emission standards here. They will need to build new equipment fit for purpose. He projected it could cost up to €6m to construct each well. He also said they expect to build pads with 6-12 wells on each pad, pads will be situated at least 2-4kms away from each other. He said they will need to source funding of over €50m for the drilling to commence.

After completing the agreed terms of their exploration permit, Mr Moorman said they must complete an Environmental Impact Assessment. He said he did not "anticipate any problems" with this and following that he said, "I don't see anything preventing us from getting to a natural gas state." He stated that getting the drilling licence from the Irish state will be "straight forward."

Mr Moorman confirmed that the company expect to use Hydraulic Fracturing to extract the gas. He said "Tamboran will always utilize the highest, cleanest, most respon-

sible technologies to explore for shale gas in the Lough Allen Basin. In relation to the Gaslands documentary, Mr Moorman said the effects shown in the movie "do not stem from fracking" but from "air and water contamination as a result of malpractice, the construction of bad well bores and bad quality cement."

In relation to the growing protest movement against fracking in Leitrim and the North west, Mr Moorman said he respects the concerns of the residents. "We support your efforts to ensure that all unconventional natural gas exploration is conducted safely and responsibly."

He said following a meeting with Leitrim County Council in September, the company will hold a public meeting to provide all the information they have and to answer any questions. He said over the next month they will be putting more facts and local information on their website. Tamboran expect to be in this community for the next decade. Mr Moorman said "We don't want people to hate us, we want to do the right thing from day one."

To read our exclusive interview with Richard Moorman, CEO of Tamboran Resources, see page 2.

begin fracking in 18 months

Exclusive Interview by Fiona Heavey

CEO of Tamboran Resources, Richard Moorman gave an exclusive interview to the Leitrim Observer last week outlining the plans the company have to explore and eventually extract gas from the Lough Allen Basin, he outlined their obstacles, the procedure they must follow and their willingness to co-operate with the local community.

At the moment the company are involved in the "boring side" of the exploration according to Mr Moorman. They are "evaluating the work of over 50 years on Lough Allen Basin." During this time 12 wells were drilled and "four were fracture stimulated" according to the information they have received from the Petroleum Affairs Division. Working with a "a local geological expert" Tamboran are taking the information gathered from previous tests and are analysing them through modern technology.

months they will be collecting shale rock samples, from the surface but also from shallow holes (100m to 200m deep boreholes). He said, "we will be using fancy equipment to determine the composition of the rock." How the rocks are composed is very important to the process he outlined, because if the rocks have too much clay, they will not crack and will be unsuitable for hydroclitic fracking.

Tamboran expect to initiate a thorough environmental impact assessment within the Lough Allen basin by the end of August. This assessment will likely take up to a year to complete.

Mr Moorman said legally his company do not have to consult or work with local planners at any stage of their progress, but he said they will. They want to work closely with all environmental and regulatory authorities, as well as Council planning officials.

After satisfying the Licensing Option requirements, if the shale gas

the Lough Allen Basin. A test well could likely be drilled to a depth of 1,000m to 1,500m.

Mr Moorman said, getting the licence to drill from the Irish State will be "straightforward." He also said following the exploration requirements and the Environmental Impact Assessment he "doesn't believe there is any legal requirement" to hold back the licence.

Tamboran is confident that it can safely and responsibly conduct a hydraulic fracture stimulation ("fracking") within the Lough Allen basin.

Mr Moorman said the biggest obstacle standing in their way is the cost. "The equipment in the US is too big for here, we will need to build new equipment for the area." He projected it could cost up on €6m to construct each well. The company will need to source over €50m for this project to commence.

To construct a drill test Mr Moorman said they will need the permission from landowners, they will also need to clear the land and make way



CEO of Tamboran Resources,
Richard Moorman

duction of the first well is at least 18 months away.

In relation to LANGO, Mr Moorman said he met with the President of the company and they have committed "to work together." He said it would be preferable to have the public meetings together if they are both ready to proceed. He expects to hold a public meeting following his presentation at Leitrim County Council in September.

Mr Moorman said "The best gas is in Leitrim" and said they will focus much

mineral rights. He said the company will need to negotiate compensation with landowners and show them the plans. He said "we will need agreement from landowners to proceed with any construction of wells."

He said the pads holding 6-12 wells will be spaced out and "will only take up a half of a percentage of the land." Beside the wells there will be a compressor to take the excess water off the gas.

"I don't anticipate any chemical processing," he predicts that the gas will be "ready to sell out of the ground."

In relation to the long term, he said if successful Tamboran will be drilling for over a decade in the area "We want to be part of the community."

He stated that if the extraction of the shale gas is economical, which he expects it will be, "significant investment would need to be brought forward by Tamboran, thereby creating many jobs in the local community as well as significant economic activities for the