

Huge oil refinery cancels 'shutdown' over strike fears



One of the UK's biggest oil refineries has cancelled an essential maintenance 'shutdown' over fears the facility would be dismantled, then industrial action would begin before the plant is reassembled. .

Stanlow Oil refinery, in Ellsemere Port, was due to close for 'a package of maintenance activities on processing units' this year – but has now shifted the work to 2024.

Up to 1,000 workers were due to work on the shutdown – who are currently in dispute with their employer.



A majority of 92 per cent of GMB members involved in the project, who are covered by the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI) voted to turn down a pay deal 8.5 per cent for 2024 and 3.5 per cent for 2025.

Bosses have refused to meet with GMB until 21 September – so the union is progressing with a strike vote, which begins next month.

Charlotte Brumpton-Childs, GMB National Officer, said:

“Workers covered by NAECI predominantly work on oil refineries and power stations in an industry awash with cash.

“GMB members are not seeing their share of the wealth they are creating.

“They have endured a pay freeze in 2021 and just 2.5 per cent in 2022 and 2023. Their pay is now more than 20 per cent behind where it would be had it kept up with inflation. GMB members have had enough.

“Rather than kicking the can down the road on important shutdowns, employers could avoid any industrial action by engaging in meaningful negotiations and making a decent offer.”

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