

Inclusion of Shale Gas Production Projects In The NSIP Regime **Questions and Proposed Responses**

Question 1.

Do you agree with the proposal to include major shale gas production projects in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime?

Proposed Response

Inclusion in the NSIP regime should apply only where the shale gas production is truly of national significance, the exploratory and appraisal phases should provide the operators with sufficient information to know how much gas they are likely to be able to extract from a well site, or how much per annum, and therefore confirm whether it is nationally significant or not. We would not want to see smaller shale gas production development included merely because of a desire to speed up planning decisions as the County Council believes that such non nationally significant infrastructure decisions are best made locally.

Question 2.

Please provide any relevant evidence to support your response to Question 1.

Proposed Response

Without any experience of shale gas production experience this is a difficult question for the Council to answer but it seems clear that there is a danger without criteria which ensure projects make a substantial contribution to national energy requirements before being treated as NSIPs that this will be seen as just taking controversial development out of locally accountable decision making.

Question 3.

If you consider that major shale gas production projects should be brought into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime, which criteria should be used to indicate a nationally significant project with regards to shale gas production? Please select from the list below:

- a. The number of individual wells per well-site (or 'pad')
- b. The total number of well-sites within the development
- c. The estimated volume of recoverable gas from the site(s)
- d. The estimated production rate from the site(s), and how frequently (e.g. daily, monthly, annually or well lifetime)
- e. Whether the well-site has/will require a connection to the local and/or national gas distribution grid
- f. Requirement for associated equipment on-site, such as (but not limited to) water treatment facilities and micro-generation plants
- g. Whether multiple well-sites will be linked via shared infrastructure, such as gas pipelines, water pipelines, transport links, communications, etc
- h. A combination of the above criteria – if so please specify which
- i. Other – if so please specify

Proposed Response

The criteria used need to ensure that only genuinely nationally significant infrastructure projects are selected and that the project makes a substantial contribution to national energy requirements. Without any technical knowledge or experience of production of shale gas the Council feels that (c), (d), (e) and (g) would be the most appropriate criteria to be used.

Question 4.

Please provide any relevant evidence to support your response(s) to Question 3.

Proposed Response

The Council has no specific evidence to support its response to question 3 for the reason given in its answer to 3.

Question 5.

At what stage should this change be introduced? (For example, as soon as possible, ahead of the first anticipated production site, or when a critical mass of shale gas exploration and appraisal sites has been reached).

Proposed Response

It is potentially premature implementing such changes when it is unknown whether there is economically recoverable shale gas available but a system needs to be in place in time to deal with major projects which recover significant quantities of gas and will make a major contribution to national energy generating capacity.

Question 6. Please provide any relevant evidence to support your response to Question 5.

Proposed Response

No further comments to make.