



**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**  
**Wednesday 12 September 2018**

**1. QUESTION FROM PETER SCOTT**  
**Re: Shale Gas Exploration**

Will the Leader, on behalf of the Council and residents of Devon, express his concern to Government about recent developments in shale gas exploration (Government proposals announced in May to reclassify Shale gas exploration as (a) permitted development and (b) NSIP National Significant Infrastructure Projects) by way of a letter to the Secretary of State to object to applications for fracking having permitted development rights such that applicants can avoid the usual planning system. In addition that Clause 209 (in the NPPF agreed on 24th July 2018) that says "*Minerals planning authorities*" are required to: "*recognise the benefits of on-shore oil and gas development, including unconventional hydrocarbons, for the security of energy supplies and supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy; and put in place policies to facilitate their exploration and extraction*" threatens to industrialise sensitive rural locations, goes against the spirit of "localism" and unreasonably promotes unsustainable fossil fuels at the expense of sustainable renewable energy options.

On the same subject, will the Leader arrange to make a Collective Council submission to the two consultations below, objecting to the proposals, that they undermine the spirit of 'localism' and erode the power of local residents to protect themselves from unproven potentially dangerous, industrial developments.

Government consultation - proposals to treat shale gas exploration developments as 'permitted development'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/permitted-development-for-shale-gas-exploration>

Government consultation - treating fracking developments as NSIP [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/inclusion-of-shale-gas-production-projects-in-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-project-nsip-regime](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/inclusion-of-shale-gas-production-projects-in-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-project-nsip-regime)

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART**

Through the Friends of the Earth, I have received dozens of emails on the matter all apparently from individual people residing in Devon and I have replied saying there are no areas in Devon licensed for any form of shale gas exploration.

This is because of the geology of Devon with any potential for shale gas extraction limited to the Jurassic Lias group which are in the eastern corner of Devon, but not of sufficient depth to be viable for hydrocarbon extraction.

The use of permitted development rights and applications determined under the NSIP (National Significant Infrastructure Projects) regime are parts of the planning system in England and the NPPF is the national guidance for planning authorities when determining applications and making development plans.

Given the unlikelihood of any proposals coming forward in Devon the Chief Planning Officer was not intending to provide a direct response to these consultations.