



Ministry of Housing,
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Local Government

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Dear Dr Wilkins,

Thank you for your letter of 19 December regarding Oldham Council's concerns about the proposed planning reforms for shale gas development.

The consultations on permitted development for shale gas exploration development, and the BEIS consultation on the inclusion of shale production projects into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime, are now closed. The Government is in the process of considering the responses to the consultations and will publish its responses in due course.

The Government remains fully committed to making planning decisions faster and fairer for all those affected by new development, and to ensure that local communities are fully involved in planning decisions that affect them. That is why the consultation on the principle of a permitted development right for shale gas exploration development sought views on the conditions any permitted development right would be subject to. Conditions can include local consideration of particular planning impacts, and public engagement.

Further to this, on 31 October 2018 we published a separate consultation on whether developers should be required to conduct pre-application community consultation prior to submitting a planning application for shale gas development, and the process of community consultation that could be required. This consultation closed on 7 January 2019 and we are currently considering the responses that we have received.

The Government has been clear that shale gas exploration development must be safe and environmentally sound. The UK has world-class regulation to ensure that shale gas exploration can happen safely, respecting local communities and safeguarding the environment. Independent experts are clear the risks can be managed effectively with an industry that follows best practice enforced through regulation. We are confident we have a robust regulatory framework in place.

Thank you again for your letter. I hope you find the information provided helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kit Malthouse". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

KIT MALTHOUSE MP