

CABINET – 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

Written Question from Sylvia May of Totland to Cllr Barry Abraham Cabinet Member for Planning.

QUESTION

Please can the following question be asked at the cabinet meeting on 13th September.

"In July the HCLG formally published the following statement in their Summary document **Planning Guidance on Fracking**

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/767/76702.htm>

"Fracking planning applications should not be brought under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure regime nor acquire permitted development rights"

Will members hold formal discussion of this issue and follow the lead of over 80% of other Conservative councils with PEDLs in their wards by supporting this statement in opposition to the May WMS ?

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-05-17/HCWS690>

RESPONSE

This matter was discussed by Full Council in January 2016 when it resolved:

(i) THAT the Isle of Wight Council notes that on December 17th 2015 five zones of the Isle of Wight considered for oil and gas extraction were all granted as open for conventional exploration licences and do not preclude unconventional drilling in the form of fracking.

(ii) THAT the Council recognises that there is widespread public concern over the use of unconventional oil and gas extraction through fracking in terms of its potential environmental effects and implications on climate change in relation to the Eco-Island policy pursued by this Council since 2008, but also recognises that as a planning authority the council is unable to express opposition to the principal of fracking as this would suggest predetermination.

(iii) THAT the Council notes that for any application relating to the operations identified above to be successful on the Isle of Wight it would be required to satisfy, and not negatively impact upon all relevant policy requirements of the Island Plan, including, but not limited to:

SP4- Tourism

SP5- Environment

SP6- Renewables

SP9- Minerals

DM2- Design quality
DM8- Economic development
DM11- Historic and built environment
DM12- Landscape, seascape biodiversity and Geodiversity.
DM13- Green Infrastructure
DM14- Flood Risk
DM16- Renewables

(iv) THAT the Council further notes that fracking applications made in Lancashire and West Sussex have been refused by their principal authorities but before going to the planning inspectorate have been diverted to the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government for a final decision. Lancashire County Council has in turn queried this process on the basis that the Government has a clear policy in favour of fracking and should therefore be unable to take such planning decisions as there is a clear issue of predetermination by the Secretary of State. This Council fully supports these concerns as raised by Lancashire Council.

(v) THAT given the special circumstances of the Isle of Wight, the complex geological structure of the Island, the potential implications of the activities listed above, the extent and intensity of environmental conservation status on the landscape and coastline and importance of such to the wider tourism economy this Council resolves:

(1) To request that a planning performance agreement to be entered into by any developer wishing to undertake such activities including agreement to waive existing time limits for determination in order to ensure full consideration of impacts as required by the policies set out at (iii) above;

(2) To require any application, and all elements of the application including all matters relating to the policies set out at (iii) above, to be determined by the Council's Planning Committee in accordance with the constitution as this Council deems that any such application would have Island-wide significance

(3) In the event of a refusal of any such application by the Planning Committee, to request that any Appeal that might follow be determined by a body that has not predetermined or could be seen as having predetermined any issues in relation to the application. “

As such, the Council supports decisions relating to the extraction of minerals, oil and gas to be made at the local level given the potential impacts upon the island. I do not consider that the Council's position on this matter has changed.

There is a motion going to Full Council on 19 September 2018 opposing the Government's proposal and this will be a decision of Full Council and not the ruling group