

Media Release

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The facts about fracking in Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire County Council is publishing a fracking factsheet for residents following a surge in enquiries prompted by recent media coverage on the issue.

To date, Nottinghamshire County Council has not received any planning applications for exploration, testing or production of shale gas using fracking or any other method of extraction.

The Council is reassuring residents and other interested groups that if plans were ever received in the future, they would be extensively publicised and subject to full consultation with the public and other relevant agencies.

The Council's factsheet sets out the process any operator would have to go through before being given permission to carry out any fracking activity.

The factsheet can be downloaded from
www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/thecouncil/democracy/planning

The three phases of development - exploration, testing and extraction - can only take place where the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has issued a license under the Petroleum Act.

Once a license has been issued to an operator and they are ready to progress to the next stage, they would make contact with the relevant Minerals Planning Authority (Nottinghamshire County Council) and other statutory consultees, including the Environment Agency and Natural England.

The Council would then need to determine if an Environmental Impact assessment is required, before any application is submitted by the operator. The planning application would be advertised and open for consultation.

In the meantime the operator would apply for relevant permits from the Environment Agency.

If the application is ultimately granted planning permission and the necessary Environment Agency permits, the DECC would finally be required to grant consent for the well.

Councillor Sybil Fielding, Chair of Planning and Licensing Committee at Nottinghamshire County Council, said: "The widespread national media coverage about fracking and where potential sites could be has prompted a number of enquiries about any local activity or plans for Nottinghamshire

"We want to advise residents that no applications for shale gas extraction have been received by the County Council to date and that any plans that are forthcoming in the future would be widely publicised and consulted on before any decision is made on its suitability. The planning process is part of a comprehensive regime of regulation involving a number of agencies that

any application would need to satisfy.

"The County Council is already in the process of revising its Minerals Local Plan, which will include a policy on Hydrocarbons (including shale gas). This plan will be out for public consultation in the Autumn."

There are already a number of approved oil and gas extraction activities taking place in Nottinghamshire, including active oil fields at Eakring, Kirklington and Beckingham and mine gas recovery schemes at Bilsthorpe, Clipstone, Mansfield Crown Farm and Bevercotes.

Proposals for the exploration and development of coal bed methane have been permitted on sites near Lound, Worksop and two near Retford but have not yet been developed by the applicant.