

Authorities' Proposed modification to Policy M17

4) Specific local amenity considerations relevant to hydrocarbon development

- i) Hydrocarbon development will be permitted in locations where it would not give rise to unacceptable impact on local communities or public health. Adequate separation distances should be maintained between hydrocarbons development and residential buildings and other sensitive receptors in order to protect against unacceptable ~~ensure a high level of protection from~~ adverse individual and cumulative impacts on amenity from noise, light pollution, emissions to air or ground and surface water and induced seismicity, including in line with the requirements of Policy D02. Proposals for surface hydrocarbon development, particularly those involving hydraulic fracturing, within 500m of residential buildings and other sensitive receptors, ~~are unlikely to be consistent with this requirement and~~ will only be permitted following the particularly careful scrutiny of supporting information which robustly demonstrates how in site specific circumstances an unacceptable degree of adverse impact can be avoided. ~~in exceptional circumstances.~~
- ii) Proposals should refer to any relevant data from baseline monitoring and other available information to ensure that a robust assessment of potential impacts is undertaken, and that comprehensive mitigation measures are proposed where necessary.

5.146 Unlike other forms of minerals development currently taking place or expected in the Plan area, some phases of hydrocarbons development, such as the drilling of a well, require 24-hour operations. Such operations have acute potential to impact on local ~~residents communities~~ adversely, for example due to noise and light intrusion. This potential exists over much of the area that is currently subject to PEDLs, which is rural in nature, often with relatively low background noise levels, and relatively dark night skies. It is therefore important that locations for development are selected which will ensure adequate separation distances from residential property and other sensitive receptors. This would also help to ensure adequate protection from other potential impacts, such as emissions to air or water or induced seismicity. The adequacy of separation distances to properties and other receptors will need to be determined by the Mineral Planning Authority on a case by case basis, but in all cases a ~~robust rigorous~~ assessment of potential impacts is required and ~~a high standard of~~ effective mitigation provided where necessary. The Authority considers that the potential for adverse impacts to arise will tend to increase with greater proximity to sensitive receptors and that proposals within 500m of sensitive receptors are generally likely to create higher risks of harmful impacts on amenity. Such development will generally require especially careful scrutiny of existing conditions, potential impacts and the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures during consideration of any planning application. The Authority will accordingly expect applications to be supported by more detailed and rigorous information in all these cases, which demonstrates that development can take place acceptably within this distance from sensitive receptors. ~~In order to ensure that an appropriately high standard of protection can be maintained, and to help to provide clarity on the approach to be followed by the Mineral Planning Authorities, it is considered that a minimum horizontal separation distance of 500m should be maintained between the proposed development and occupied residential property or other sensitive~~

~~receptors, unless there are exceptional circumstances.~~ A 500m distance from the well pad boundary (excluding site access) is considered to represent a reasonable distance of immediate sensitivity taking into account the potential for a complex range of individual and cumulative impacts ~~including~~ on amenity and impacts arising from potential mitigation comprising noise, vibration, lighting and light pollution, and visual impact. Disturbance during the night time periods (23:00 – 7:00) has the potential for a greater degree of perceived impact. To the extent that there are other factors, relating to emissions to air or ground and surface water, or ~~and other emissions, as well as~~ the potential ~~for some forms of hydrocarbon development to~~ generation of induced seismic activity, are relevant, these will also be taken into account. ~~.generate disturbance during night time periods, when there is potential for a greater degree of perceived impact.~~ For the purpose of interpreting this approach, the term 'sensitive receptor' ~~includes~~ comprises residential institutions such as residential care homes, children's homes, social services homes, hospitals and non-residential institutions such as schools.

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