



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

Rt Hon George Howarth MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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**Kit Malthouse MP**  
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15/2 October 2018

Dear George,

Thank you for your email of 10 September to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on behalf of your constituents, regarding their concerns about the proposed planning reforms for shale gas development. I am replying as the Minister of State for Housing.

The joint written ministerial statement on energy and planning policy by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 17 May 2018 reiterated the Government's view that there are potentially substantial benefits from the safe and sustainable exploration and development of our onshore shale gas resources.

The measures announced in the statement included holding an early-stage consultation, in the summer 2018, on the principle of whether non-hydraulic fracturing shale gas exploration development should be granted planning permission through a permitted development right, and in particular the circumstances in which it would be appropriate.

Alongside the permitted development right consultation, a BEIS led initial consultation was published on the criteria to trigger the inclusion of shale production projects into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime. This consultation closes on 25 October 2018.

We recognise the importance of local communities having their say on planning applications. That is why the consultation on the principle of a permitted development right for shale gas exploration development is seeking views on the conditions any permitted development right would be subject to. Conditions can include local consideration of particular planning impacts, and public engagement. The consultation opened on 19 July 2018 for a period of 14 weeks, ending 25 October 2018. Subject to the outcome of the consultation a further detailed consultation will be needed on any proposed permitted development right, before introducing secondary legislation.

In addition, we have committed to 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. This consultation will be launched in autumn 2018.

I hope this is helpful to your constituents and I would further encourage them to participate in the consultations, which can be found at:

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/inclusion-of-shale-gas-production-projects-in-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-project-nsip-regime>

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kit Malthouse', written over a faint, illegible watermark.

**KIT MALTHOUSE MP**