



Minerals Plan Examination Comments from CPRE Somerset August 2014

Matter 9: Energy Minerals

3. In particular, noting the complex geology of the Mendip Hills, is sufficient guidance and protection provided to a) the geological structure of the area, and b) groundwater?

NO. PARAGRAPHS 92.9 TO 9.35 ACKNOWLEDGE ALL THE PITFALLS OF THIS DEVELOPMENT BUT OFFER NO ROBUST CONTROL. THE EFFECT ON CLIMATE CHANGE OF MINING FOSSIL FUELS IS NOT DISCUSSED

4. Should Policy SMP7 include a requirement for the process of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be undertaken and submission of an Environmental Statement (ES)?

YES. THIS NEEDS TO BE OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.

5. If so, should all applications for oil and gas exploration, appraisal and production be supported by EIA and an ES or should there be exceptions? Please give reasons.

NO. THE GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE MENDIP HILLS IS TOO DIVERSE

6. Has sufficient account been taken of viability?

WHAT ASPECT OF 'VIABILITY'? ECONOMIC? ENVIRONMENTAL? SOCIAL?

11. Does transport of energy minerals need to be addressed separately and in addition to the general Development Management policy on Transport?

YES. TRANSPORT TO AND FROM DRILLING SITES ON NARROW BACK LANES IS A SERIOUS PLANNING CONCERN

12. Overall, does Policy SMP7 provide sufficient scope, direction and flexibility for applicants of energy minerals permissions?

NO. SMP7 IS (UNAVOIDABLY) VAGUE AS NO EXPLORATION HAS YET OCCURRED. THE MINERALS PLAN MAY HAVE TO BE REVISED BEFORE 2030