

## GUIDANCE NOTES FOR OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

IT IS RECOGNISED THAT OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENTS ARE ALSO REGULATED BY THE SYSTEM OF SPECIFIC LICENCES AWARDED TO OIL COMPANIES THROUGH THE SECRETARY OF STATE WHICH ARE SUBJECT TO A NUMBER OF SAFEGUARDS, PARTICULARLY RELATING TO POLLUTION AND DETAILS OF DRILLING OPERATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, IN PLANNING TERMS, THESE TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT INVOLVE SENSITIVE AND COMPLEX ISSUES OF LOCAL CONCERN WHICH NEED TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE MPA.

IT IS OFTEN HELPFUL ESPECIALLY FOR OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENTS, FOR MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TOGETHER IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT WHICH SHOULD PREFERABLY BE SUBMITTED AT THE SAME TIME AS THIS APPLICATION.

APPLICANTS SHOULD ALSO REFER TO DoE CIRCULAR 2/85 PLANNING CONTROL OVER OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS WHICH GIVES CURRENT NATIONAL GUIDANCE.

SEPARATE INFORMATION SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE EXPLORATION, APPRAISAL AND PRODUCTION ELEMENTS OF THESE TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS THE SPECIFIC EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSALS. GUIDANCE ON THE RANGE AND TYPE OF INFORMATION IS GIVEN BELOW.

IF YOU ARE UNCLEAR ABOUT ANY ASPECT OF THIS INFORMATION, YOU ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED TO CONTACT THE MPA FOR FURTHER ADVICE.

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A5.1 All information should be referenced to supporting plans.  
If seismic surveys are to be used then it is accepted that seismic investigations generally involve limited environmental effects, and in many cases, this type of development - particularly involving vibrosis techniques - may be regarded as 'de minimus' (ie not requiring planning permission). Good practice requires that applicants notify the MPA as well as district and highway authorities of the proposals. (Operators may also need to inform other statutory bodies such as the water companies and police in relevant circumstances). Information requirements are for the proposed seismic method; and ground vibrations at nearest affected properties (if relevant).

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A5.2 All information should be referenced to supporting plans which must be specified in Question 5 of the main minerals application form.  
Applicants should also provide a summary of relevant information derived from exploration phases.

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A5.3 All information should be referenced to supporting plans which must be specified in Question 5 of the main minerals application form.

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A5.4 Applicants should summarise other on-site works associated with the proposed development or designed to protect the environment. This information is often best dealt with in an environmental statement. Applicants should clarify this requirement with the MPA.

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A5.5 The restoration of sites following unsuccessful exploration drilling should normally be undertaken immediately or as soon as possible after drilling has ceased.

In the case of appraisal and production sites, a comprehensive restoration and aftercare scheme should be submitted with this application.

For sites containing all field facilities (including pipelines, distribution terminals, gathering stations etc) applicants should provide plans for abandonment and reinstatement at the end of the permitted period. Applicants should note that the MPA may also require additional safeguards through planning obligations to ensure this removal takes place.

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