

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-648
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/06223/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

13

September 2016

Dear Mike

The Committee had previously asked to be informed with regard to actions taken in relation to petition P-04-648. I would, therefore, like to take the opportunity to provide an update.

A Notification Direction was issued on 22 March 2016 regarding underground coal gasification, the effect of which is for local planning authorities to notify Welsh Ministers where they do not propose to refuse an application for underground coal gasification. The new direction will apply to any relevant application for planning permission registered as valid on or after 25 March 2016 and includes all applications connected with the gasification of coal in the strata but does not include the drilling of boreholes solely for the purposes of core sampling. This represents a precautionary approach in terms of the planning system.

I can confirm the intention previously expressed by my predecessor not to apply the Notification Direction relating to shale gas and coal bed methane to exploratory boreholes. This Direction remains as issued on 13 February 2015, on the basis of exploratory boreholes being widely used for engineering operations and routinely undertaken without any adverse environmental impacts.

Regards
Lesley

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Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.