



Infrastructure Act 2015

2015 CHAPTER 7

PART 6

ENERGY

Other provision about onshore petroleum

49 Advice on likely impact of onshore petroleum on the carbon budget

- (1) The Secretary of State must from time to time request the Committee on Climate Change to provide advice (in accordance with section 38 of the CCA 2008) on the impact which combustion of, and fugitive emissions from, petroleum got through onshore activity [^{F1}in England] is likely to have on the Secretary of State's ability to meet the duties imposed by—
 - (a) section 1 of the CCA 2008 (net UK carbon account target for 2050), and
 - (b) section 4(1)(b) of the CCA 2008 (UK carbon account not to exceed carbon budget).
- (2) As soon as practicable after each reporting period, the Secretary of State must—
 - (a) lay before Parliament a copy of advice received under subsection (1) during the reporting period, and
 - (b) lay before Parliament a draft of regulations under subsection (3) or a report under subsection (5).
- (3) Regulations under this subsection are regulations providing for section 43 to cease to have effect [^{F2}in England] to such extent as may be specified in the regulations.
- (4) No provision made in regulations under subsection (3) has effect in relation to anything done in exercise of the right of use conferred by section 43 before the date on which the regulations come into force.
- (5) A report under this subsection is a report explaining why a draft of regulations under subsection (3) has not been laid.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading: Other provision about onshore petroleum. (See end of Document for details)

- (6) Regulations under this section may make such consequential amendments or repeals of sections 43 to 48 and this section as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.
- (7) In this section—
- “CCA 2008” means the Climate Change Act 2008;
- [^{F3}“petroleum got through onshore activity in England” means petroleum got from the strata in which it exists in its natural condition by activity carried out on land in England (excluding land covered by the sea or any tidal waters);]
- “petroleum” has the same meaning as in Part 1 of the Petroleum Act 1998 (see section 1 of that Act);
- “reporting period” means—
- (a) the period ending with 1 April 2016, and
- (b) each subsequent period of 5 years.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 49(1) inserted (1.10.2018) by [Wales Act 2017 \(c. 4\), ss. 25\(4\)\(a\), 71\(4\)](#) (with [Sch. 7 paras. 1, 6](#)); [S.I. 2017/1179, reg. 4\(a\)](#)
- F2** Words in s. 49(3) inserted (1.10.2018) by [Wales Act 2017 \(c. 4\), ss. 25\(4\)\(b\), 71\(4\)](#) (with [Sch. 7 paras. 1, 6](#)); [S.I. 2017/1179, reg. 4\(a\)](#)
- F3** Words in s. 49(7) substituted (1.10.2018) by [Wales Act 2017 \(c. 4\), ss. 25\(4\)\(c\), 71\(4\)](#) (with [Sch. 7 paras. 1, 6](#)); [S.I. 2017/1179, reg. 4\(a\)](#)

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 49 in force at 12.4.2015, see s. 57(7)(b)

50 Onshore hydraulic fracturing: safeguards

After section 4 of the Petroleum Act 1998 insert—

“4A Onshore hydraulic fracturing: safeguards

- (1) The Secretary of State must not issue a well consent that is required by an onshore licence for England or Wales unless the well consent imposes—
- (a) a condition which prohibits associated hydraulic fracturing from taking place in land at a depth of less than 1000 metres; and
- (b) a condition which prohibits associated hydraulic fracturing from taking place in land at a depth of 1000 metres or more unless the licensee has the Secretary of State's consent for it to take place (a “hydraulic fracturing consent”).
- (2) A hydraulic fracturing consent is not to be issued unless an application for its issue is made by, or on behalf of, the licensee.
- (3) Where an application is made, the Secretary of State may not issue a hydraulic fracturing consent unless the Secretary of State—
- (a) is satisfied that—
- (i) the conditions in column 1 of the following table are met, and
- (ii) the conditions in subsection (6) are met, and

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading: Other provision about onshore petroleum. (See end of Document for details)

(b) is otherwise satisfied that it is appropriate to issue the consent.

(4) The existence of a document of the kind mentioned in column 2 of the table in this section is sufficient for the Secretary of State to be satisfied that the condition to which that document relates is met.

(5) But the absence of such a document does not prevent the Secretary of State from being satisfied that that condition is met.

<i>Column 1: conditions</i>	<i>Column 2: documents</i>
1 The environmental impact of the development which includes the relevant well has been taken into account by the local planning authority	A notice given by the local planning authority that the environmental information was taken into account in deciding to grant the relevant planning permission
2 Appropriate arrangements have been made for the independent inspection of the integrity of the relevant well	A certificate given by the Health and Safety Executive that it— (a) has received a well notification under regulation 6 of the Borehole Sites and Operations Regulations 1995, (b) has received the information required by regulation 19 of the Offshore Installations and Wells (Design and Construction, etc.) Regulations 1996, and (c) has visited the site of the relevant well
3 The level of methane in groundwater has, or will have, been monitored in the period of 12 months before the associated hydraulic fracturing begins	An environmental permit has been given by the relevant environmental regulator which contains a condition that requires compliance with a waste management plan which provides for monitoring of the level of methane in groundwater in the period of 12 months before the associated hydraulic fracturing begins
4 Appropriate arrangements have been made for the monitoring of emissions of methane into the air	An environmental permit which contains a condition requiring compliance with a waste management plan which provides for the monitoring of emissions of methane into the air for the period of the permit
5 The associated hydraulic fracturing will not take place within protected groundwater source areas	A decision document given by the relevant environmental regulator (in connection with an environmental permit) which indicates that the associated hydraulic fracturing will not take place within protected groundwater source areas
6 The associated hydraulic fracturing will not take place within other protected areas	A notice given by the local planning authority that the area in respect of which the relevant planning permission

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading: Other provision about onshore petroleum. (See end of Document for details)

	has been granted does not include any land which is within any other protected areas
7	In considering an application for the relevant planning permission, the local planning authority has (where material) taken into account the cumulative effects of— (a) that application, and (b) other applications relating to exploitation of onshore petroleum obtainable by hydraulic fracturing
	A notice given by the local planning authority that it has taken into account those cumulative effects
8	The substances used, or expected to be used, in associated hydraulic fracturing — (a) are approved, or (b) are subject to approval, by the relevant environmental regulator
	An environmental permit has been given by the relevant environmental regulator which contains a condition that requires substances used in associated hydraulic fracturing to be approved by that regulator
9	In considering an application for the relevant planning permission, the local planning authority has considered whether to impose a restoration condition in relation to that development
	A notice given by the local planning authority that it has considered whether to impose such a condition
10	The relevant undertaker has been consulted before grant of the relevant planning permission
	A notice given by the local planning authority that the relevant undertaker has been consulted
11	The public was given notice of the application for the relevant planning permission
	A notice given by the local planning authority which confirms that the applicant for the relevant planning permission has certified that public notification requirements, as set out in a development order, have been met

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- (6) The conditions mentioned in subsection (3)(a)(ii) are—
- (a) that appropriate arrangements have been made for the publication of the results of the monitoring referred to in condition 4 in the table;
 - (b) that a scheme is in place to provide financial or other benefit for the local area.
- (7) A hydraulic fracturing consent may be issued subject to any conditions which the Secretary of State thinks appropriate.
- (8) A breach of such a condition is to be treated as if it were a breach of a condition of a well consent.

4B Section 4A: supplementary provision

- (1) “Associated hydraulic fracturing” means hydraulic fracturing of shale or strata encased in shale which—
- (a) is carried out in connection with the use of the relevant well to search or bore for or get petroleum, and

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading: Other provision about onshore petroleum. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) involves, or is expected to involve, the injection of—
 - (i) more than 1,000 cubic metres of fluid at each stage, or expected stage, of the hydraulic fracturing, or
 - (ii) more than 10,000 cubic metres of fluid in total.
- (2) For the purposes of deciding the depth at which associated hydraulic fracturing is taking place in land—
 - (a) the depth of a point in land below surface level is the distance between that point and the surface of the land vertically above that point; and
 - (b) in determining what is the surface of the land, any building or other structure on the land, and any water covering the land, must be ignored.
- (3) Subsections (1) and (2) apply for the purposes of section 4A and this section.
- (4) The Secretary of State must, by regulations made by statutory instrument, specify—
 - (a) the descriptions of areas which are “protected groundwater source areas”, and
 - (b) the descriptions of areas which are “other protected areas”,for the purposes of section 4A.
- (5) A statutory instrument which contains regulations under subsection (4) may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.
- (6) The Secretary of State must lay a draft of the first such regulations before each House of Parliament on or before 31 July 2015.
- (7) The Secretary of State must consult—
 - (a) the Environment Agency before making any regulations under subsection (4)(a) in relation to England;
 - (b) the Natural Resources Body for Wales before making any regulations under subsection (4)(a) in relation to Wales.
- (8) These expressions have the meanings given—
 - “development order” has the meaning given in section 59 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
 - “environmental permit” means a permit granted under regulation 13 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010;
 - “hydraulic fracturing consent” has the meaning given in subsection (1)(b);
 - “licensee” means the holder of the onshore licence for England or Wales;
 - “local planning authority” means—
 - (a) the planning authority to which the application for the relevant planning permission was made (unless the Secretary of State or Welsh Ministers are responsible for determining the application), or
 - (b) the Secretary of State or Welsh Ministers (if responsible for determining the application);

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading: Other provision about onshore petroleum. (See end of Document for details)

“onshore licence for England or Wales” means a licence granted under section 3 which authorises a person to search or bore for or get petroleum in those parts of the landward area (within the meaning of the Petroleum Licensing (Exploration and Production) (Landward Areas) Regulations 2014) that are in England or Wales or are beneath waters (other than waters adjacent to Scotland);

“relevant environmental regulator” means—

- (a) the Environment Agency, if the relevant well is situated in England, or
- (b) the Natural Resources Body for Wales, if the relevant well is situated in Wales;

“relevant planning permission” means planning permission to be granted, or granted, in respect of development which includes the relevant well;

“relevant undertaker” means the water undertaker or sewerage undertaker in whose area of appointment the relevant well is located;

“relevant well” means the well to which a well consent relates;

“well consent” means a consent in writing of the Secretary of State to the commencement of drilling of a well.

- (9) The power of the Secretary of State to make regulations under section 4 includes power to make such amendments of the definition of “onshore licence for England or Wales” in this section as the Secretary of State considers appropriate in consequence of any other exercise of the power under section 4.
- (10) The Secretary of State may, by regulations made by statutory instrument—
 - (a) make such amendments of column 2 of the table in section 4A as the Secretary of State considers appropriate, and
 - (b) make such other amendments of section 4A or this section as the Secretary of State considers appropriate in consequence of provision made under paragraph (a).
- (11) A statutory instrument which contains regulations under subsection (10) may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.”

Commencement Information

I2 S. 50 in force at 30.7.2015 for specified purposes by S.I. 2015/1576, reg. 2

I3 S. 50 in force at 6.4.2016 in so far as not already in force by S.I. 2016/455, reg. 2

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Infrastructure Act 2015, Cross Heading:
Other provision about onshore petroleum.