



Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London, SW1H 0ET

27 April 2022

Dear Kwasi,

British Geological Survey commission into Shale Gas Extraction

Thank you for your letter dated 5 April to all MPs, informing them that you have commissioned the British Geological Survey to advise on the latest scientific evidence around shale gas extraction.

In July 2018, the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee published a report into [Planning guidance on fracking](#).

Subsequent to the publication of our report, the Government announced, on 9 November 2019, that there was to be a moratorium on fracking until compelling new evidence is provided

Our report did not deal with the merits of fracking, or specific changes to the planning guidance that were based on the environmental impacts of fracking but, in that report, the Select Committee identified a number of issues that needed to be addressed in the planning regime dealing with fracking.

Key shortcomings included a lack of clarity over the definition of fracking, with conflicting definitions in statute and guidance; a lack of any clearly stated Government policy of planning for fracking, notably in the National Planning Policy Framework, allied with a disparate set of guidance documents.

As these issues have not been addressed, the Select Committee's conclusions and recommendations still stand

We recommend and request therefore that, should the findings from the new study by the British Geological Survey give rise to consideration by your Department that fracking may recommence in any form, your Department works closely with DLUHC to address the identified shortcomings in planning guidance before the moratorium is lifted.



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I also wish to raise the fact that nearly four years since this report was published it has not received a response from the government. I am conscious that some factors will have changed since the report's publication, but there are also serious points made in the report on which the Government should respond. Therefore, I am copying this letter to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and ask that a response to this report be provided to the Committee.

Best wishes,

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee