
Independent Examination of the Derbyshire and Derby Minerals Local Plan

Matters, Issues and Questions

Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council Response

Main Matter 7 – Whether the Plan makes appropriate provision for the extraction of energy minerals.

Issue: Whether the policies for the extraction of energy minerals are consistent with national policy.

1. Should the Plan make provision for shallow geothermal energy opportunities?

MPA Response

- It is acknowledged that the Plan does not make any provision for shallow geothermal energy opportunities
- Since the issue has been raised by the Inspectors, the MPAs have given further consideration this and first of all they have tried to get a better understanding of what geothermal energy is and the processes involved to facilitate it.
- The MPAs initial thought was whether or not this was actually a minerals related matter as they could not quite see what implications it had for any physical extraction of minerals or their use. It appears to be a process for the extraction of heat from the ground rather than the extraction of any energy mineral as such, which could be a by-product associated with the drilling process.
- From what the MPAs understand, shallow geothermal energy utilizes the Earth's relatively constant temperature, typically around 13°C, found a few meters below the surface.
- This energy source, accessible at depths of up to 500 meters, is primarily used for heating and cooling buildings through ground-source heat pumps

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- Holes (approximately four inches in diameter) are drilled about 20 feet apart and 100 to 400 feet deep, allowing for two pipes to be inserted and connected at the bottom with a U-bend to form a loop.
 - The MPAs are aware from a lot of the climate change work they do in Derbyshire and Derby, that ground source heat pumps, in particular, are becoming much more widely used, both in commercial and domestic buildings.
 - That being the case, the MPAs consider that a policy could be included in the Plan, which is supportive of this type of energy opportunity.

Conclusion

The MPAs would very much welcome the Inspectors' recommendation for a policy approach based on its successful inclusion in other Minerals Local Plans.