



To whom it may concern

RE: Warrington Local Plan

UKOOG is the representative body for the onshore oil and gas industry, including operators and its supply chain. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the modified local plan.

Overall UKOOG are supportive of the modified plan as it stands, in particular we support the removal of the '250m exclusion zone' as the local plan now states, *'It is not proposed to safeguard hydrocarbons themselves as their exact locations will only be determined through detailed exploration and because the surface development associated with their extraction is flexible regarding its location'*.

We feel it would be important for the plan to recognise the importance of oil and gas to Warrington and to the UK more widely, and that we welcome the fact that local policy does support the development of oil and gas production domestically. We wish to note the comments made by the Inspector on Egdon Resources' appeal for the Wressle development¹ regarding national energy policy: *'National energy policy, most succinctly set out in NPS EN-1 and the Framework, is aimed at reducing demand by end users, and in that way reducing both demand and consumption. It is no part of national policy to attempt to reduce emissions by restricting the production of hydrocarbons in the UK, as was implied or stated by some objectors. Nor was such an approach suggested by the Committee on Climate Change when dealing with the net zero 2050 position – and there is no policy which provides that a net zero carbon economy in 2050 would be hydrocarbon-free.'*

Policy ENV5 states:

Exploration and appraisal of hydrocarbons:

2. Planning permission will be granted for proposals for exploration and appraisal of oil and gas resources, within areas benefiting from a Petroleum Development Licence (PEDL), provided that:

¹ <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?CaseID=3221694&CoID=0>

- a. *the site and equipment is sited at a location where it can be demonstrated that it will accord with all other policies of the Local Plan in relation to the protection of the environment, public amenity and sustainable transport; and*
- b. *the timely restoration and subsequent aftercare of the site is secured, whether or not oil or gas is found.*

While UKOOG support the above requirements we would like to remind the local authority that the majority of the environmental considerations associated with onshore oil and gas development are within the remit of the Environment Agency. The inspector's decision in the Wressle appeal² also stated, '*In line with the NPPG on Minerals I am entitled to assume that other regulatory regimes will operate effectively and that it is not necessary for me to carry out my own assessment because I can rely on the assessment of the other regulatory bodies. There is no evidence that other regimes are incapable of operating effectively and adequately regulating the development.*'³

² <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?CaseID=3221694&CoID=0>