

EMBARGO TILL 00.01 25/11/17

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INEOS SHALE REQUESTS PLANNING INSPECTORATE RULING ON TWO APPLICATIONS

INEOS has lodged three applications for test drilling in the East Midlands

With no decisions made by the Councils in reasonable time periods INEOS will ask the Planning Inspectorate to intervene

Tom Pickering, Operations Director at INEOS Shale said: "This decision has not been taken lightly, and we understand the pressures on Councils to make decisions of national importance at a local level. Nevertheless, because of the unreasonable delays we have been left without an option if there is to be progress on these important projects (in line with our commitments to Government)."

INEOS Shale has today announced that it will ask the Planning Inspectorate to intervene in two applications for shale survey work. The work at these sites – one near Marsh Lane in Derbyshire and the other near Rotherham at Harthill, would involve coring wells. These would provide geological samples which would also then be available for the nation to use as part of a wider evidence base for any other future projects.

With the statutory period for determining the applications long finished, INEOS will be asking for decisions to be made by the national planning body. The choice to appeal was made after INEOS granted numerous extensions and had established that not only were the decisions overdue but also that decisions would still not be forthcoming in the short term.

The work would bring inward investment into the local area with the possibility that the sites could also be used for shale gas development if the surveys are successful.

Tom Pickering, Operations Director at INEOS Shale said: "This decision has not been taken lightly, and we understand the pressures on the Councils to make decisions of national importance at a local level. Nevertheless, because of the unreasonable delays we have been left without an option if there is to be progress on these important projects.

"It is our duty to explore our licence areas and we have recently had the 'hurry-up' from the Government's Oil and Gas Authority. Whilst our consultation process has always prioritised local people, we cannot wait indefinitely for these local decisions.

"Finally, we are also disappointed that a strong shale presence in the region has not been more welcomed given the recent manufacturing decline in the region as a result of energy costs, including the almost closure of Liberty Steel."