



Historic England

Consultation on Shale Wealth Fund

Introduction

Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non-departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England's historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for.

We welcome the opportunity to submit a response on the following issues:

Consultation Question 5: Do you have views on how the “local community” to a shale site should be defined for the purposes of the Shale Wealth Fund?

Though not directly related to Historic England's remit, we observe that research has recently been undertaken on defining local communities and processes for disbursement of funding led by RWM, a subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/radioactive-waste-management>.

Whilst this is in the context of the proposed Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for higher activity radioactive waste, there may be lessons that could be learned from the evidence submitted: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/implementing-geological-disposal-working-with-communities>

Consultation Question 11: At the local level, should expenditure from the Shale Wealth Fund be subject to any ring-fences for a specific purpose? If so, should these be locally or centrally determined, and do you have views on what they should be?

As noted at paragraphs 3.11-3.12 of the consultation document, there are already useful examples of how community investments can be ring-fenced for certain purposes already in existence, e.g. the Landfill Communities Fund. One of the objects of that Fund was of direct relevance to the historic environment ('the restoration of a place of religious worship or of historic or architectural interest'), and we would strongly support such an approach in relation to the Shale Wealth Fund, as the historic environment is a key contributor to growth and sustainable development. Regeneration can be promoted through research and support programmes funded via the Shale Wealth Fund (also see our response to Question 16).

Lessons can also be learned from approaches taken on non-energy minerals extraction. English Heritage (the precursor to Historic England) was a distributor body for the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, administered by Defra. This provided opportunities for carrying out

research and conservation, for promoting public appreciation and enjoyment of the historic environment, and for developing good-practice guidance. This arrangement, which contributed to an effective strategic approach, can usefully inform approaches taken to the Shale Wealth Fund.

Whilst the surface footprint of a shale site is relatively small, nonetheless it can have significant direct and indirect impacts. Potential direct impacts on the historic environment include issues such as vibration and/or fluid transport, plus impacts on areas with water-logged archaeology. Indirect impacts on setting (which may be temporary) must also be considered, plus perceived impacts – whereby tangible effects may result from changes in how people feel about a place that hosts a site which undertakes hydraulic fracturing. Cumulative impacts from a production facility must also be clearly understood and appropriate measures taken to mitigate or offset those impacts.

Whilst the criteria for Shale Wealth Fund expenditure could usefully be defined nationally, local decisions on how the Fund is spent within those criteria will allow closer links to community priorities, as expressed through local and neighbourhood plans (and in which a local approach to the historic environment will be defined).

Consultation Question 16: What kind of investments do you think should be made from a regional level of the Shale Wealth Fund?

As stated in our answer to question 11, we believe a priority of the Fund should focus on the historic environment as a key contributor to growth and sustainable development.

The historic environment is intrinsically linked to economic activity, with a large number of economic activities occurring within it, dependent on it or attracted to it. Quoting from Historic England's *Heritage and the Economy* publication (part of Heritage Counts 2016):

- In 2013 heritage directly generated £10 billion in gross value added (GVA) in England; and if indirect and induced effects are considered, heritage sectors' contribution to GVA increases to £21.7 billion – equivalent to 2% of national GVA (*TBR 2016 Heritage Economic Impact Indicator*).
- For every £1 spent as part of a heritage visit, 32p is spent on site and the remaining 62p is spent in local businesses (*HLF Visit Britain, Investing in Success – heritage and UK tourism economy*).
- Repair and maintenance of historic buildings directly generated £9.7 billion in construction sector output in 2015 (*TBR 2016 Heritage Economic Impact Indicator*).

There are significant opportunities for effective investment in the historic environment – focused on research, maintenance, guidance or other related priorities.

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