

Re. Application # NY/2025/0030/ENV

TO:

Case Officer: Amy Taylor
Planning Department
North Yorkshire Council, County Hall,
Racecourse Lane, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

Date: Tuesday 18 March 2025

Dear Amy,

Below, I set out some of the many reasons I OBJECT to this unnecessary and immoral development.

Despite spurious claims by the applicant otherwise, there is only one reason this proposal is before the planners: PROFIT, all of which will go offshore, none of which will benefit our local community or the generations of our descendents that require a functioning, diverse, healthy ecosystem in order to live. We are already beyond IPCC tipping points, already past the Paris Agreement target of 1.5°C post-industrial rise in global temperature. We are already seeing an endless catalogue of environmental disasters WORSENERED AND INTENSIFIED by the continued extraction and burning of fossil fuels; obfuscation, denial and lobbying by the fossil fuel industry, the undermining of democratically-taken decisions at all levels and the stepping up of disinformation in furtherance of this aim.

Regional and national governments are ill-equipped to deal with the fallout from these disasters and the colossal cost of mitigation, the burden of which falls not on the extractor of the fossil fuels, but on the taxpayer, residents of Burniston and North Yorkshire. This development would be like throwing petrol on a fire, with calamitous results for our children's generation and is yet another case of an extractive southern-based company exploiting the north.

UK households and businesses are required to decarbonise, at pace, not to prolong their reliance on fossil fuel developments which would be in direct opposition to UK government and NYC's legally binding commitments to net zero, a lower-carbon economy and the development of green jobs.

NEGATIVES

- Development would make a mockery of national CO2 reduction targets.
- Would divert resources and investments from greener alternatives of which the UK has an abundance.

- Would encourage continued reliance on fossil fuels and delay the transition to greener alternatives.
- There is zero guarantee that any extracted gas would end up in the UK system since it would be sold on the open market.
- Wellhead construction and operation will rely on external, not local, expertise so there would be no high-skilled job creation.
- The only beneficiaries will be Europa O&G shareholders and landowner.
- Profit will be offshored, with little returning to the exchequer.
- Constant disruption to traffic and peace in the village from local and national activists that an operation of the proposed scale would attract. This could well set local residents with differing views against one another and destroy the relative harmony in the village and surrounds.
- Sited close to the Cleveland Way and National Cycling Route #1, it will have a severe negative impact on local tourism business
- It is not an offshore site so the relative ease of access could attract direct action from militant environmentalists
- The site would require expensive policing with knock-on effects for community policing and crime reduction. Who pays for this?
- The site would be in operation 24/7, excessively and insensitively lit, like a lorry park [<https://kentandsurreybylines.co.uk/wellbeing/environment/light-pollution-at-lorry-park-lights-too-bright/>], and would totally disrupt the night sky for the village and surrounds, with related impacts on nocturnal wildlife and nearby residents.
- The noise and emissions from drilling and gas flaring will be intolerable for those living nearby and will carry far and wide.
- Potential for subterranean disturbance could well result in drop in house price value. Will all properties in proposed development envelope be independently valued prior to commencement of any works. If approved, will North Yorkshire Council compensate residents for the drop in property values? The Council would leave itself open to mass legal action by residents.
- There will be a direct affect on buildings insurance and the ability of owners to make claims.
- Unsubstantiated claims in Europa company literature do not take into account public perception of the development or sentiment regarding its consequences.
- There is no indication from the developer of how the gas will be transported away from the wellhead – will this involve construction of a major gas pipeline and yet more environmental destruction?

Who pays for environmental damage and clean-up? We've seen countless examples of businesses exploiting environmental legislation loopholes, tying up community groups and local councils in

time-consuming and expensive red tape and legal challenges. Underresourced councils in particular find it easier and cheaper to capitulate rather than 'risk' taxpayer funds on defence of difficult but democratically-taken decisions – see, for example, the PFAS scandal and Jersey Council [<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-66361242>] or contamination related to fracking [<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2017.1349638>]

Europa O&G cannot be trusted to police itself: we've seen with water companies what happens when shareholder and executive greed overrides environmental commitments or even basic decency: profit wins, consumers and the environment lose; profit is privatised, losses and the costs of mitigation are socialised.

POSITIVES

None.

This development must be rejected outright.

Sincerely,

Damion Chew
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Burniston
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