

Mrs Deborah Green
Fields Farm, Station Lane, Cloughton, Scarborough. YO13 0AD

18th March 2025

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

Re: Planning Ref. No: NY/2025/0030/ENV
Europa Oil and Gas application for appraisal drilling at Burniston Mill Site

Dear Amy,

I am writing in connection with the above Planning Application made by Europa Oil and Gas and wish to object for the following reasons:

Planning Application Discrepancy

The planning application has been made supposedly for a test site but within this application there is reference made to the retention of equipment, which means that Europa intends to continue (when they have found the gas) with commercial production. This in turn suggests that there will be no decommissioning, restoration or aftercare on site for many years & therefore no chance of the land around the site returning to its previous condition.

Effects on our Farming Business

We are Duchy of Lancaster tenants and farm approximately 1500 acres of land in the Burniston, Cloughton and Scalby area which includes all the land surrounding the Mill Site and much of the land under which the hydraulic fracturing is to take place.

Our family have been farming in the Cloughton area for over 200 years and we now fear that our future and that of the farm will be severely affected if permission for such a scheme is granted.

The planned drill site is in the middle of some of our best arable land and very close to several conservation areas we have created. Our farming practices have changed over the years to encourage more wildlife and birds – particularly those birds that migrate to our nearby fields where we have created scrapes & ponds to help sustain them and we are worried that all this hard work and effort could be lost. At present some of the measures we have in place to help wildlife in the area include -

1. 15 acres of land has been taken out of arable cultivations and a Wildlife Corridor (natural regeneration) has been created adjacent to the Cleveland Way and SSSI.
2. 5 acres of Field Corners have been left (natural regeneration) for birds & animals to nest, feed, and use as undisturbed habitat.
3. 3 acres of arable land is sown each year with a pollen and nectar mix for insects and bees.
4. 25 acres is sown with an over-winter feeding mix for birds.
5. 50 acres of over winter stubble is also left for winter feeding of birds and animals.
6. There are approx. 10 miles of good, thick, mature hedges on the farm.
7. 20 acres of woodland has been planted in the past 15 years and future projects are in hand.
8. We have also created various ponds within the area.

It has been our intention to increase this conservation work (hopefully to double it) over the next few years but will it be worth it if Europa's gas drilling upsets the environment and the wildlife/birdlife therein?

We also have 15 bee hives in a field, less than half a mile from the intended drill site. Bees travel up to 3 miles to collect pollen & it has been proven that they can be affected by pollution. We would hate to lose them – they improve the quality of our oilseed rape.

Europa state that all chemicals used in the operations will be monitored and stored in above ground tanks but how can we be sure there will be no leaks and if so, what future impact this will have on the soil and crops nearby

Contamination & Disturbance of Water Aquifers

On our land we have a bore hole which provides water both for the farm and our domestic use. Where this water comes from, we have no idea but we are completely reliant upon its supply & we fear that it could be polluted or lost if drilling takes place nearby. Europa have stated that they will be drilling down through the water aquifers and no one can be sure what effects this might have.

Inadequate Ecological Survey

The ecological survey carried out for the site is very disappointing as in the main it refers only to the little bit of rough grass where the drill is to be sited and the hedges/trees immediately adjacent to it. This is a small area of only minimal importance to the local ecology and we wouldn't disagree with the survey findings. What is frustrating however, is that the site will doubtless have an impact on the neighbouring farmland and this larger area has not been included in the survey.

The map used very cleverly cuts out the surrounding fields, including one of wild bird cover we have adjacent to the site and the woodland, old pasture meadows and gorse banks very close by. We feel sure that wildlife and birdlife will be disturbed to some extent by noise, lights, vibration, pollution, etc.

The gas flaring might not be good for the environment nearby and we have read that it can have an effect on soil quality, can cause acidity in the soil and can also reduce the number of natural bacteria found but none of this has been measured or mentioned in the survey.

One feature they have mentioned is a pond nearby but this is not part of any conservation project – it was a condition of planning when the grainstore was built. It is an attenuation pond designed to hold excess water off the barn roofs and control discharge thereby avoiding flooding the local area or filling the nearby beck too quickly. Despite what the survey says - this is not a polluted pond the water is clean and it does support not only wildfowl but many frogs and toads!

Geological Faults

Two major fault lines come together in the north yorkshire coastal area near Burniston – The Peak Fault from the north and the Red Cliff Fault from the South forming a complex zone of extensional faulting.

We are told that proppant squeeze does not cause the same environmental problems as normal fracking but who's to say whether we will experience earth tremors and how this will affect these faults and the already unstable coastline.

Heritage Coastline & Tourism in the Area

The Yorkshire heritage coastline forms one of the most beautiful areas in the country and is of vital importance to the region and this drill site is less than half a mile from this coastline and the sea. Scarborough's thriving tourism industry will doubtless be affected by such a project.

Local Concerns

We along with the local community, have a host of concerns which include light pollution (through both gas well flares and site illumination) unsightly buildings and drilling rig, noise pollution particularly at night, the creation of dust and air pollution, the safety of toxic chemicals being stored and removed from the site and HGVs travelling along our rural roads.

Climate Change

The world is in climate crisis – we do not need new fossil fuels. Coal, oil and gas – are by far the largest contributor to global climate change, accounting for over 75 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions. If the UK is to reach net zero by 2030 how can a new gas field which is expected to last for 20 years and is likely to be the biggest gas field in the UK (according to Europa's CEO) be a good idea?

I hope that my concerns are fully taken into account by the Planning Committee during your review process.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Green