

**33 Greenstead Road
Newby
SCARBOROUGH
YO12 6HN**

1 April 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 for the construction, drilling and testing of this site to extract gas through the "Proppant Squeeze" process.

Having considered this fully, as a very concerned resident in Newby, I wish to object for the following reasons:

1. Proppant Squeeze.

As Spike Milligan said "dog is spelled exactly the same as cat, it's just that the letters are different". Well as Proppant Squeeze is a process designed to extract gas from sandstone by fracturing the sandstone using hydraulic pressure, it would appear to be exactly the same process as "Fracking". A name change just to circumvent the current moratorium on fracking, introduced due to the inherent risks of a seismic event, as happened near Preston in Lancashire some years ago, in my opinion. Surely Proppant Squeeze will result in exactly the same risk factors? Further, the planned site will be drilling very close to two known geographical faults which run from Ravenscar to the drilling area.

1. Climate Change.

As the world is in the middle of a climate emergency, this application flies in the face of all the scientific advice and indeed the current Government's targets towards Net Zero. Gas demand in the UK has fallen by 18% in the period 2021 – 2023.

The UK exports 69 times more gas than the proposed site will produce.

Europa Oil and Gas share price has fallen 29% since September 2024 and the current share price is 62½ pence.

Europa Oil and Gas are desperate to drill for gas to save their business, and agreeing to their plans would open the flood gates for many other proposed exploration sites, including Foxholes, in East Yorkshire, Sherwood Forest, and others in East Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, thus further weakening our efforts towards climate zero targets.

Gas bills will not be reduced by production at this site, as the gas will be sold in the international market, with any profits flowing to Europa Oil and Gas, and its shareholders.

Energy security also will not be improved for the same reasons stated above.

The UK is moving to renewable, clean energy and simply does not need any more gas production.

Resources should be moved to providing more clean/renewable sources, not increase the CO₂ in our atmosphere.

2. Pollution

Deafening drilling, filthy roads, dust and light pollution 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for at least 37 weeks, (possibly up to 20 years!) plus the detrimental visual appearance of a 38 meter high drilling rig visible from both the immediate area, and the National Park.

Toxic fumes and foul smells from the flaring of gas, and reduced air quality.

Anecdotal evidence from other countries of a risk to the water table being contaminated.

The adverse impact of our physical and mental well being, especially those living close by, caused by all of the above.

3. Road Safety

All the proposed routes to and from the site, from as far as the A170, A171, A64, A19 to the access point into it, directly opposite Burniston Garden Centre are totally unsuitable to the expected 1154 return journeys which will be made by HGV's during the 37 week initial period. These will not only clog up these already busy tourist and business routes, but, especially near the proposed site, travel beside very narrow footpaths used by residents, school children, shops, pubs and doctors surgeries. There will be an excessive increase in noise, structural damage to roads, buildings, bridges and other infrastructure. The narrow roads in and through Burniston, Cloughton, Scalby, Newby, and Scarborough, and villages along the main arterial access routes further afield are frequently choked, especially in summer. Sutton Bank, near Thirsk is also prone to closure due to HGV incidents, sending HGV's through nearby diversion routes through the Howardian Hills area of outstanding natural beauty, (AOONB).

4. Industrial Development

This proposed development will destroy precious farmland and blight the lives of those who live in the area, as it is close to both private homes and rural villages in a beautiful peaceful location.

If the plans are agreed and approved, when drilling begins it could result in up to 20 years destruction of our lovely area, with up to 4 more 38 meter high drilling rigs being built and brought on-line. A times 4 multiplication of all the issues previously stated does not bear thinking about!

The plans show that the gas field extends under Scalby, Newby, Burniston and Cloughton, and drilling could fan out under all these villages.

The risk of any seismic episodes and the industrialisation of our wonderful countryside, villages and quiet lifestyle would have a devastating effect on the area and have a negative effect on house prices. Estate agents signs can be seen going up as we speak!

5. Tourism and ecological damage and environmental damage.

The planned site is only 1km from the National Park, and close to weak cliffs. It is also very close to two geographical coastal faults which extend southwards down the coast from Ravenscar to the proposed site.

It is also close to three ponds and a site of special scientific interest (SSSI), and is an ecological highway used by all manner of wildlife. The damage to wildlife and birdlife activity could be significant.

As a tourist area which attracts and relies on income brought in by visitors, we are proud of our beautiful countryside and all the benefits the area offers. The Heritage Coastline and extremely popular Cleveland Way could see a serious decline in visitor numbers if the development is approved, with the knock on negative effect to local businesses.

The Europa Oil and Gas study of the proposed site identified that only 4 birds and a few other species visited the area during the period under observation. A local bird watching club did its own survey and identified over 200 birds, plus numerous other wildlife types. A significant difference!

I feel the only way to get an accurate, reliable environmental impact assessment is for a full independent “End to End” study to be carried out to calculate the total expected costs and impact to our environment and eco-systems, to cover any and all expected life spans of the site, including its recovery to previous condition on cessation. **This should be done before any decisions are made to put spades in the ground, or HGV’s on the roads.**

6. Earth tremors

The Fracking in Lancashire caused earth tremors and effectively resulted in the moratorium on this process in England, (Scotland and Wales had previously done this). A recent anecdotal report says that land levels in the area have dropped, causing land previously dry, to now regularly be flooded.

Do we want this to happen here? My answer is “No thank you”!

I have lived locally (except from 22 years service in the Royal Air Force) all my life, and since 2006 I have lived in Newby. I have children and grandchildren also living at home and in Scarborough, and I want them to be able to enjoy the beautiful countryside, villages and National Park the way we have always done, in peace and quiet, without irreversible damage to our surroundings and to the earth beneath our feet. Without noise, air and light pollution, constantly muddied roads plus the detrimental effects on our infrastructure and physical and mental health, plus contamination of the water table, which could also happen.

I believe that approval of so much devastation with little or no benefit to our countries’ energy security or our gas bills, is too high a price to pay.

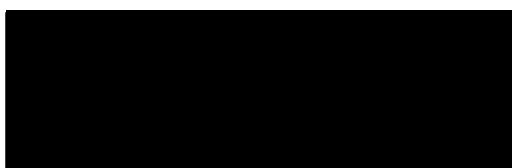
Please listen to the voices of the local people and do the right thing by rejecting this planning application.

“Proppant Squeeze/ Fracking?” - it’s one and the same in my opinion, and should be rejected outright for that reason alone, never mind all the other reasons I have raised in this letter!

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

Thank you for reading my letter.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Andrew John Pickard