

North Yorkshire Council  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
DL7 8AH

**Date:** 11 April 2025  
**Our ref:** 50303/04/HS/JCx/33651756v3  
**Your ref:** NY/2025/0030/ENV

To Whom It May Concern

## **Application Ref. NY/2025/0030/ENV – Land East of the Mill Yard, Burniston YO13 0DB**

On behalf of our client, Anglo American Woodsmith Ltd, we write to provide comments regarding the planning application submitted by Europa Gas and Oil Limited for the construction of a temporary wellsite and associated exploratory drilling, proppant squeeze, and flow testing.

Anglo American is currently delivering the Woodsmith Project, which includes the development of the Woodsmith Mine located south of Whitby, within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. The project has already secured the necessary planning permissions and Development Consent Order (DCO), allowing for the extraction of polyhalite and the construction of a tunnel system for transporting the material to a handling facility and harbour at Teesside. These developments aim to establish a world-class mining and production facility, making a significant contribution to the national economy and providing substantial transformational benefits to the local economy.

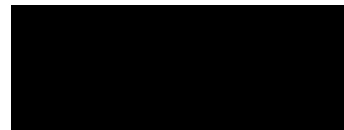
The adopted Minerals and Waste Joint Plan (2022) includes policies specifically aimed at protecting the delivery of the Woodsmith Project, which is recognised as a project of national significance. Paragraph 8.30 of the Plan highlights the potential risks presented by hydrocarbon extraction to mining operations—particularly the risk of locally sterilising potash and polyhalite resources and obstructing the development of access tunnels to more viable resource areas.

In response to these concerns, Policy SO3 seeks to safeguard the polyhalite resource associated with the Woodsmith Mine throughout its permitted operational lifespan. This protection extends to preventing sterilisation from non-mineral surface development, underground mineral extraction, deep drilling, and underground gas or carbon storage. Such activities will only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that they will not adversely affect the potential for future extraction of the protected mineral. Alternatively, proposed developments may proceed if it is shown that their benefits clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the resource.

The safeguarded polyhalite area is shown on the Policies Map, a copy of which is appended for reference. Although the proposed exploratory drilling area (shown on plan ref. ZG-EOG-CLTN-PA-18) does not encroach upon the safeguarded polyhalite area—defined as the application site and the borehole deviation zone—there is an overlap with multiple areas where Anglo American holds active Mineral Leases. As such, the proposals have the potential to materially and detrimentally interfere with areas where Anglo American may wish to access polyhalite resource within the red line boundary of its permission. Significantly, the submitted plan appears to be incomplete, as it appears cut off at its northern-most extent. As such, the full extent of the potential area of hydrocarbon extraction is not shown and it therefore remains unclear as to how any future operational hydrocarbon drilling might interact with the safeguarded polyhalite resource or affect the delivery of the Woodsmith Project overall.

The above matters are of concern to Anglo American and our client will therefore seek to engage with the applicant to ensure any potential conflicts are fully understood and addressed prior to the determination of the application.

Yours faithfully



**James Cox**  
Planning Director  
BA (Hons) MA MRTPI



## **Annex 1: Safeguarded Polyhalite Area**

# Minerals Resource Safeguarding Map Key



Planning Area Boundary



Safeguarded Strategic Waste Site – S04



Allocated Waste Site



Allocated Minerals Site



Areas of Search



Safeguarded Ancillary  
Infrastructure – S06, 102



Safeguarded railheads  
and wharves – 1003, 101, S05



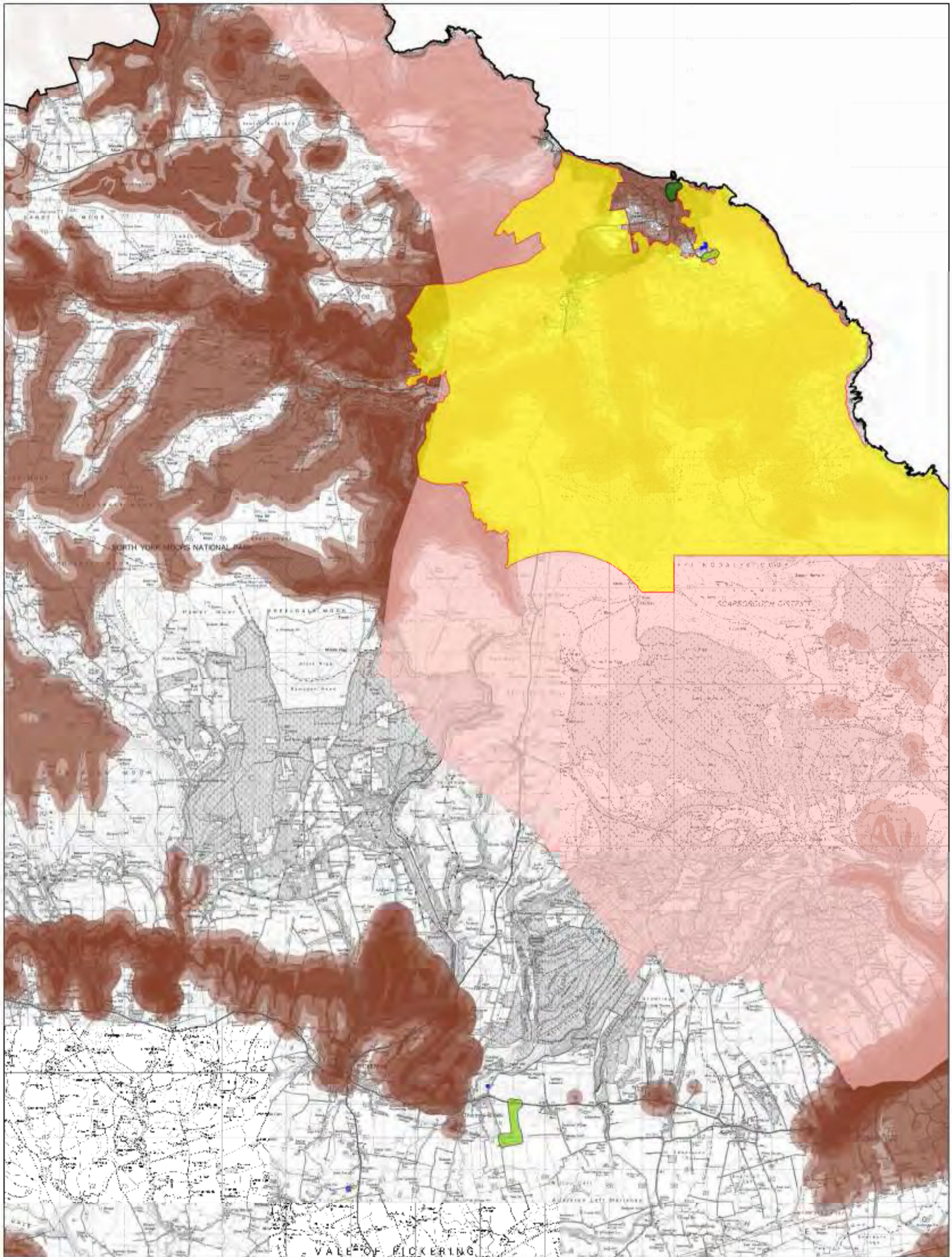
Safeguarded deep mineral resource –  
(Potash Safeguarding Area) S03, S07



Potash, polyhalite and salt supply - M02



Safeguarded surface mineral resource  
(Sand and Gravel, Crushed Rock, Brick Clay,  
Building Stone, Silica Sand and  
Shallow Coal) - S01, S02, S07



**Minerals Resource Safeguarding  
Map 13**

