

BURNISTON **Parish Council**



Response from Burniston Parish Council to the Friends of the Earth letter dated 18th December 2025 in relation to Planning Application NY/2025/0030/ENV - Construction of a temporary wellsite for the appraisal of gas, including drilling operation, proppant squeeze and flow testing operation and site restoration.

Applicant - Europa Oil and Gas Limited, 30 Newman Street London W1T 1PT

On December 18th 2025 Friends of the Earth submitted a letter to North Yorkshire Council in relation to the planning application NY/2025/0030/ENV.

This letter points out in great detail our current Government's proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and makes reference to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's document 'Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system', dated December 2025.

Even though this is a consultation document with a closing date of 10th March 2026, the government has openly spoken about these reforms and are clear in their intentions.

We would draw your attention to, and make particular reference to the parts of the Reforms-National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document that are relevant to this planning application.

In Chapter 11. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals, on P63 of the document outlines two key areas –

1. A more restrictive approach to the extraction of coal, oil and gas

'The new proposed planning policy on fossil fuel extraction is intended to support this direction of travel and to align with the proposed licensing reforms. It is recognised that the licensing reforms are to be finalised and remain pending, but the opportunity to propose updates to planning policy is being taken now in acknowledgement of the transition to green energy and to reduce the climate impacts associated with fossil fuel extraction.'

2. New policy on critical and growth minerals –

'aligning with those set out in the government's recently updated Critical Minerals Strategy . This new policy reflects their importance in supporting the green energy transition, achieving net zero, safeguarding national security and supporting the growth of key sectors set out in the Industrial Strategy.'

P65 of the document outlines a key factor for planning committees.

National decision-making policies M3: Assessing the Benefits of Mineral Development

'The footnote in policy M3 makes clear that this policy does not apply to development involving peat, coal, or onshore oil and gas extraction. ***This represents a policy change for oil and gas (i.e. the policy no longer provides that "great weight" should be given to the benefits of oil and gas extraction).***'

The application from Europa Oil and Gas Ltd relies very heavily on the 'great weight' policy and references it, as correctly pointed out by the Friends of the Earth', on at least four occasions as a substantial part of their argument to have the planning application passed.

The proposed reforms to the NPPF are reforms for the long term. At Burniston Parish Council we understand that the NPPF reforms will allow a planning committee or Planning Inspector to make a decision, which is clear and transparent, based on all the evidence presented, without the external pressure of the 'great weight' policy. Removing 'great weight' would fundamentally change the planning balance for Europa's application.

At Burniston Parish Council we request that North Yorkshire Council does not rush into bringing the Planning Committee date early. The reforms, the consultation of which closes on the 10th March 2026 are close. Any delay in hearing Europa Oil and Gas Ltd's application, is modest. particularly when considering that all evidence presented would have to be given equal weight. This is clearly in the public interest.

A clear advantage to all parties involved in this planning application, whether for it or against it, is that of legal certainty. Everybody will know that the NPPF will demand a balanced and fair scrutiny of the application and every document or letter that has been submitted to North Yorkshire Council be equally considered.

Burniston Parish Council objects to the application NY/2025/0030/ENV and requests that any planning hearing for this matter held by North Yorkshire Council is delayed pending the result of the above described reform document and as previously requested any hearing is held at a location that is suitably large enough to accommodate all those who wish to attend.

As a consultee Burniston Parish Council asks that this document is published on the planning portal under NY/2025/0030/ENV.

With regards, Cllr. Richard Parsons on behalf of Burniston Parish Council.