

**From:** [planningregister@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:planningregister@northyorks.gov.uk)  
**To:** [Planning Control](#)  
**Subject:** New comments for application NY/2025/0030/ENV  
**Date:** 14 January 2026 09:09:43

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New comments have been received for application NY/2025/0030/ENV from Professor Chris Garforth.

Comments:

NY/2025/0030/ENV - Europa Oil & Gas Ltd - Proposal to drill appraisal gas well at Burniston

This is a third representation submitted by Frack Free Coastal Communities. It relates to two pieces of information that have emerged since our two earlier submissions.

#### 1. National Planning Policy Framework consultation

The government is currently consulting on a proposed revision of the NPPF. Some of the proposed changes are relevant to Europa's planning application. Of particular relevance is proposed policy M3 'Assessing the benefits of mineral development'. Page 51 of the proposed revised NPPF makes it quite clear, and explicitly so in footnote 41 on that page, that the policy would not apply to onshore oil and gas development. If this change were to be implemented by government following the current consultation, then no weight at all should be given to supposed economic or other benefits when determining applications for onshore oil and gas. Given that Europa rely on the 'great weight' to be given to benefits under the current NPPF in justifying their proposals, we would urge you to delay determination of the application until the revised NPPF is in place. The justification given by government for proposing these changes is that they will align the NPPF with current and future government policy on the transition away from fossil fuels and towards net zero. If the determination is made ahead of the revised NPPF taking effect, North Yorkshire could be seen to be making a planning decision in a way that is contrary to the clear direction of travel of government energy transition and planning policy.

If the planning authority is unwilling to defer a determination until the revised NPPF is in place, we would argue that the very clear indication of government intent is a material consideration in the assessment and determination of Europa's application. At the very least, we would expect that the planning officers' assessment of the planning balance will disregard any alleged economic or other benefits from the proposed development at Burniston so that their report and recommendation to the Planning Committee are in line with the government's direction of travel in respect of the NPPF and energy policy.

#### 2. Venue for the Planning Committee meeting

We understand that the Planning Committee meeting to determine Europa's application is likely to be held in Scarborough, which we welcome. However, it is important that the chosen venue is appropriate and safe for the potentially large numbers of people who will want to come and see elected Councillors weigh up the proposals and make a decision that will have significant implications for the area in which they live. The small size of the public gallery at the Town Hall and the narrow pavement outside where one can expect a large number of people to want to assemble make the Town Hall unsatisfactory. We ask you to consider a larger, more appropriate, space such as the Spa complex in Scarborough or the Stephen Joseph Theatre for the committee meeting. If that is not possible, then our view remains that it should be held in Scarborough in the interests of transparency and local democracy.

Chris Garforth  
Chair of the Steering Group of Frack Free Coastal Communities