

**North Yorkshire County Council, City of York Council and North York Moors National Park  
Authority Minerals and Waste Joint Plan**

I have considered all the representations concerning the *Stephenson* judgement and the quashing of NPPF 209a. Due to the uncertainties arising from the scientific evidence, particularly over methane emissions from hydraulic fracturing, and the consequential uncertainties over the potential impact this could have on air quality in the vicinity of nearby receptors, I am content that the retention of the 500m buffer zone in the Plan is sound.

My full reasoning will be set out in my final report following public consultation and consideration of representations on the proposed main modifications.

I have considered the further proposed main modifications/amendments to proposed main modifications advanced by the Minerals Planning Authorities, and I am content that they are justified to make the Plan sound, subject to the following comments.

In Annex B, is the reference to carbon emissions correct? Should this refer to methane emissions? In terms of climate change, if the MPAs wanted to link methane and carbon dioxide, would a reference to methane's Global Warming Potential as a carbon dioxide equivalent be the best way to express this? With respect to the final paragraph, I am not convinced that this level of detail is necessary for soundness. Also, there is no need to express a view on the weight the MPAs give to the 2018 WMS. Would the MPAs reconsider the text and provide me with an amended version?

Once this has been done, I would like to see an updated schedule of main modifications ahead of formal public consultation.