

Submission by Mike Potter on behalf of Ryedale Liberals 8 Jan 2019

In response to the inspectors questions for the additional hearings 24/25 Jan:

1. We believe policy M17 is sound in light of the WMS 17 May 2018.
2. We agree that applications should be assessed on a site by site basis, but only within the confines of reasonable regulation through the MWJP. The MWJP proposals we support do not restrict shale gas production. This policy has very little (if any) sterilisation underground. It does however put reasonable restrictions upon where the well pad may reasonably be sited.
3. If we understand it correctly, we are completely opposed to this main modification. We understood (mistakenly?) that there would be a high level of protection everywhere, so what level of protection will be given outside 500m if this main modification were to be adopted?
4. 500m is an arbitrary figure. So is 499 or 501, but clearly it has got to be a distance that is far enough away to give an element of protection to the population and near enough to not cause any 'sterilisation'. The maximum distance for separation would be 1500m (the industry's stated normal distance of lateral drilling). The limit at the other end of the scale is zero. Clearly, zero is unacceptable in human impact terms and 1500m would cause significant sterilisation. So as to achieve a workable document, a number has to be chosen between the two. At first glance 750m would be reasonable, but the industry appears to be unhappy with this figure. However, this has to be offset against the precautionary principle i.e. we must draw any arbitrary line initially on the cautious side. On this basis 500m can always be reduced in future. A lesser figure, if it turns out to have a significant detrimental impact, would be far more difficult to increase.
5. It is not possible to provide effective mitigation measures until impacts on receptors from noise, light, air quality, seismicity, health etc, have been adequately monitored and continually assessed.
6. Not applicable to us.
7. If a proper scientific evaluation is to be made, then as many variables must be removed as possible. Having a standard minimum distance will make any potential impacts far easier to compare, monitor, measure etc.
8. This question fits in very well with our previous answers. Existing monitoring at KM8 indicates a distance of 750m is required following a series of noise and air quality (odour) breaches, again at over 750m. Health: To our knowledge, there is no baseline health monitoring, meaning it will not be possible to assess the impact of fracking. All of the above have occurred before fracking even started i.e. mere preparation for fracking has caused the above. This evidence would indicate: i) The need for a North Yorkshire Minerals and Waste plan including hydrocarbons, because when this application was granted, no such plan was in place. ii) The indications are, from this limited amount of evidence, that 500m would be too small a distance.
9. This follows on neatly to our reply regarding Kirby Misperton. The trial run could be regarded as the activity at KM8, with the above result i.e. we are not in favour of this approach.
10. Although this question does not apply to us, we cannot see how, with an ability to drill at least 1500m horizontally in any direction, a 500m zone can sterilise any significant amount.

11. Again, although this question is not aimed at us, the extraction of oil or gas by fracking or any other method cannot under any circumstance be environmentally robust.

12. Although this question may be aimed at the industry, we feel that the answers may lie within the renewables industry.

13. We look forward to responses to this question. This to include i) Details of precisely how green completions will be incorporated ii) Reduction of the impact of associated infrastructure e.g. processing plants, compressor stations.

14. Not applicable to us.

15. Although this is aimed at the industry, we would like to underline green completions as mentioned above, including flaring only for extreme safety reasons. Also, to add to your list the issue of public health. The issue of public health is one where cumulative impact (not only single issue, but multi factorial) must be monitored.

16/17. We await the response with great interest.