

To Carmel Edwards

North Yorkshire Minerals and Waste Plan Examination

Response from Wenningdale Climate Action Network (WeCAN) as addition to our original response and we would like to take the opportunity to attend the Oral Examination.

We are a group of residents of North Yorkshire concerned about fracking and the effect of the planned production of the unconventional gas in the county. This is counter to the commitment of the UK Government in the Climate Change Act in 2008 to reduce greenhouse gas by at least 80% by 2050 when compared to 1990 levels.

The part of the Plan that is unsound is Hydrocarbons

We believe the Mineral and Joint Waste Plan fails to deliver on Objective 11, the plan takes a narrow view on “activity to mitigate and adapt to climate change”

We would like to add to our original response to the consultation to Sections M16-18

1. In October 2017 the Government produced the **Clean Growth Strategy** – this document gave a strategy that “ *sets out a comprehensive set of policies and proposals that aim to accelerate the pace of ‘clean growth’, i.e. deliver increased economic growth and decreased emissions.*”

The document is full of proposals, BUT in none of the 165 pages was there mention of “fracking”, “unconventional gas or oil”, “hydraulic fracturing” as a way of decreasing emissions.

The Plan does not comply with the Government’s Clean Growth Strategy and Objective 11 will not be achieved.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/651916/BEIS_The_Clean_Growth_online_12.10.17.pdf

In the original response we noted that the gas produced in hydraulic fracturing is about 90% methane, together with some other hydrocarbons, and that methane is about 30 times more powerful than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.

2. Methane contributes substantially to the greenhouse gas footprint of shale gas on shorter time scales, dominating it on a 20-year time horizon. The footprint for shale gas is greater than that for conventional gas or oil when viewed on any time horizon, but particularly so over 20 years. Compared to coal, the footprint of shale gas is at least 20% greater and perhaps more than twice as great on the 20-year horizon and is comparable when compared over 100 years.

Hydraulic fracturing will result in North Yorkshire County Council failing to achieve Objective 11.

3. It has been calculated that there is 2,795 Gigatons of proven coal, oil and gas reserves of fossil-fuel companies. Scientists estimate that humans can pour only 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by midcentury if we are to have reasonable hope of staying below even two degrees of global warming. The ultimate aim of the Paris Agreement was a target of 1.5 degrees. Increases greater than this are expected to have far-reaching, long-lasting and, in many cases, devastating consequences.

That means to prevent an increase in global temperatures there is a need to keep 80 % of currently identified fossil fuels in the ground.

The plan to allow hydraulic fracturing in North Yorkshire would increase the probability that global temperatures increased and the Plan would fail to achieve Object 11

4. The danger of environmental damage caused by companies involved in hydraulic fracturing both in this country and overseas in particular the US, (where many of companies are based), results in the unpredictable financial health of the companies and their ability and willingness to respond to damage resulting from emissions and contamination on sites they are involved with in North Yorkshire.

When other Local Government Bodies have begun the process of disinvesting their pension funds from fossil fuel, North Yorkshire County Council is encouraging the growth of the fossil fuel industry. This makes Objective 11 in the Plan look like cosmetic dressing.

The Plan can be made sound by stating that:

There will be no further hydraulic fracturing exploration activity.

The UN report presented at the Paris Climate Change Summit showed that the world's poorest nations are at ground-zero for climate change impacts – the impacts it describes are sea-level rise, floods, droughts, heat waves, cyclones, storm surges and other extreme weather events. People in the poorest nations have done almost nothing to cause climate change and yet they are the ones who will continue to suffer most.

This is a massive and historic injustice. The UN reports that a human exodus is already underway from the Western Pacific and unless we implement a rapid phasing out of fossil-fuels, mass migration away from the worst effects of climate change will cause a colossal flow of refugees.

What we need is a strong ethic of energy conservation and mass institutional divestment away from fossil fuels with re-investment and all hands on deck to produce safe, clean, renewable energy.

We would welcome a revised Plan through which North Yorkshire pays its part in building this ethic

From

Margaret McSherry
For the Wenningdale Climate Action Network (WeCAN)

High Hazel Hall
Clapham LA2 8HN
maggie@redroomevents.co.uk