

Response by South Hambleton Shale Gas Advisory Group to the Government Inspector's Further Consultation (19th June – 10th July 2019) on the North Yorkshire Minerals & Waste Joint Plan

1. The decision of the High Court in the case of *Stephenson v. The Secretary of State for Housing & Local Government* (14th May 2019) can only be read as adding weight to the application of the precautionary principle, especially where human habitation is concerned. The argument in favour of a 500m buffer zone is therefore strengthened.
2. The Secretary of State's further Written Statement of 23rd May 2019 in response to the judgment merely draws attention to his earlier Statement. It does not therefore dilute the effect of the High Court decision, nor could it, and adds nothing to what has gone before. It does however draw attention to HMG's self-contradictory policy with regard to the use of fossil fuel which, on the one hand, promotes the 'green' economy and, most recently, promises a nil-carbon usage in the U.K. within the current generation of the population and, on the other hand, promotes domestic shale gas production. It must be born in mind that shale gas is 85% methane (CH₄) which upon the application of heat in its intended use for the generation of electric power and upon the consequent mixing with water vapour, which constitutes 78% of the earth's atmosphere, converts to CO₂.

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