

To: The Planning Committee WSCC  
From: Chichester District CPRE  
WSCC/083/13/KD

We strongly object to this proposal. In the applicant's planning statement it is said (4.12) that: "the application is for a conventional well"(viz. oil and gas only). But it is clear from the rest of the statement that "if the results indicate that hydraulic fracturing would be required, permission would be sought for drilling a new well (4.14)". Dr Smythe in his report (see below,) says that he considers that there is no free flowing oil or gas available in the site area. We believe that the current intention is for a fracking well from the start, and that it would later be extended laterally for several kilometres through multiple new wells, to encroach on much of the countryside, in the "300 sq Km of the Central Weald Basin(11/7)". The result will be the inevitable destruction of the present quality of life of most residents living near each site, or having to use its access roads.

The DCLG Guidance for onshore oil and gas (July 2013) states in para 6 that "most adverse affects can be mitigated". but this cannot be right for fracking. The proposed mitigation by conditions in paras 67/68 are exemplified in Appendix D which implies that the conditions are largely only appropriate for conventional wells. Appendix A notes that the use of huge quantities of water for fracking means that the spent fluid "coming to the surface for treatment can vary between 25-75%, while the rest remains in the ground." If aquifers and ground water, are polluted, there is no remedy. Furthermore, the 45 metre high mast of the huge drilling machine

cannot be screened with a few trees, nor can the large buildings used to store water, or the car parks for numerous HGV's, and cars of staff.

There are two recent reports available from qualified geologists. Dr David Smythe, retired Professor of Geology, who studied US fracking is mentioned above. He has reported that: "Shale basins in the UK are typically heavily faulted (in contrast with the US experience). Such faults provide a fast track for the migration of gases and fracking fluids into the overlying aquifers and surface bodies of water. Faced with this risk fracking has been banned in France and Germany. Fracking for shale gas should therefore be banned in areas of complex fault geology." We comment here that if one of the viscosity-reducing chemicals leaked through a fault then the osmotic hydration of the root systems of trees and shrubs would surely suffer. We are not told what chemicals would be used here or whether they include methanol or formaldehyde. The second report is from Graham Warren, BSc Geology, MSc Engineering and Hydrology, dated 29/1/14 for this application. He uses BGS survey sheet "Fault Patterns in the Weald". This shows that there are many faults between Kirdford and Wisborough Green running North-South, but some to the west. The report notes that



"The process of borehole construction and installation of casing also carries the risk of fragmentation of the rock formations penetrated; and there are no techniques for grout-sealing within the damaged zones which would ensure complete protection against migration of contaminants. In any event, all steel casings, even those of the highest quality, have a limited life and many will begin to break-down within a few years." Mr Warren is also concerned about possible damage to the licensees who abstract water for agriculture or private properties. His conclusions include: "We are of course aware that this application is for exploratory drilling and testing, but this stage also has provision for trial fracking and could therefore create a regime of disturbance, distress and expense for the local community. And if the premise is accepted that this site would, in any event, be unsuitable for fracking operations, then no purpose would be served by authorising an exploratory programme, the purpose of which would be to assess the the potential of the site for shale gas extraction. To do otherwise and grant planning permission could therefore be construed as tacit approval for subsequent development".

As regards planning laws, the NPPF 120 might have been specially drafted to nullify this application. Every word of it applies to the Kirfdord site: "To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability, planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity, and the potential sensitivity of the area or proposed development to adverse effects from pollution, should be taken into account". On this basis the location is wrong. th However the

present proposal is also unsustainable under NPPF 7, because out of the three dimensions: Economic, Social and Environmental, the last two would be severely breached.

Other objectors have mentioned the potential damage to the local environment regarding the landscape, the single track bridge, the village green, the narrow country roads without footpaths, the damage to road edges from traffic, the lack of pedestrian access to the village, the loss of tranquility etc. We comment that it is no exaggeration to say that fracking activities would irreparably ruin the country roads in the area. Traffic danger would prevent ramblers, cyclists, and horse riders from using the roads. We therefore submit that severe local environmental damage would be certain to be caused. To prevent this, and to protect the residents' quality of life, planning permission should be refused.

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