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The Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
3 Whitehall Place
London
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12 November 2026

Dear Secretary of State

In August 2024 the leader of North Yorkshire Council wrote to you seeking clarification as to whether it was your intention to address an aspect of energy related planning policy that has garnered significant public interest within the council's area and beyond.

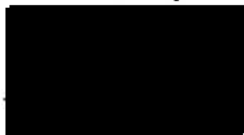
At that point in time the Council had recently been in receipt of a request for a formal screening opinion relating to a proposal to seek temporary planning permission for the construction and operation of a drilling rig for the exploration of subsurface hydrocarbons testing well and retention of equipment relating to a site in the eastern part of the council area (reference NY/2024/0113/SCR). Subsequently a planning application (reference NY/2025/0030/ENV) was submitted and is pending determination at a meeting of the Council's Strategic Planning Committee.

Following the requisite public consultation on the planning application, the Council has been in receipt of a large number of third party representations (some 1500 in total) expressing objection to the proposal, a significant proportion of which have made reference to what they purport to be a 'loophole' in the extant moratorium on 'fracking' activities. Within the submission, the potential operator includes reference to a propellant squeeze which - in the view of the potential operator - falls outside the definition of 'fracking' set out within the moratorium (representing "small scale hydraulic fracturing activity" deploying less fluid than the definition of 1,000m³ per fracking stage). Third parties contend that the moratorium should include operations of this nature.

It has been noted that during the recent Labour Party Conference you made a speech in which you indicated that the Government is planning to pass a new law that would ban 'fracking' permanently in England, and that you wanted to legislate at the earliest opportunity and launch a national campaign against fracking in the meantime. In light of this and the high level of public interest on the aforementioned planning application within North Yorkshire, I would be grateful if you could provide an indication as to the Government's precise position on this matter, the timeline for any legislative changes, and specifically to provide an indication as to whether it is intended to review and/or extend the definition of hydraulic fracturing operations to which the current moratorium relates.

We would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience in light of the potential timeline for determining the subject planning application.

Yours sincerely



Mark Crane
Executive Member for Open for Business

cc Alison Hume MP