

## **EIA Screening – Further Advice**

**For:** Andrew Law, Development Management Specialist, North Lincolnshire Council

**Application:** Ref. PA/2024/275 Wressle Wellsite, Lodge Farm, Clapp Gate, Appleby, North Lincolnshire DN15 0DB – Extension to the Wressle Wellsite and associated pipeline

**Date:** 7 January 2026

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Dear Andrew,

1. As requested, this note gives further advice with reference to your Authority's pending EIA decision for the development proposed under planning application ref. PA/2024/275 (Wressle Wellsite, Appleby).
2. The question before your Authority is whether the proposal could have likely significant environmental effects and be classed as 'EIA development'. The proposal is not of a scale, in terms of projected daily production of oil and gas, to fall within the scope of Schedule 1, paragraph 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations). The project is within the scope of paragraphs 3(d), 3(e) and 10(k) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and requires formal EIA screening.

### **Objection on behalf of Frack Free Lincolnshire**

3. An objection to the proposal (dated 8 December 2025) has been submitted on behalf of Frack Free Lincolnshire which challenges the adequacy of the applicant's greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment. The applicant updated their assessment in response to guidance published in June 2025 by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). That guidance covers the assessment of distant downstream (Scope 3, Category 11) GHG emissions from oil and gas development for the offshore oil and gas industry. The guidance is also applicable to onshore oil and gas development. I note the recent objection agrees the DESNZ guidance is pertinent to the application.
4. The objection letter challenges the submitted GHG assessment on several grounds. It is argued the assessment fails to consider the worst-case scenario and does not properly consider the cumulative effects of the project in association with other existing and committed oil and gas production. The objection letter does not comment on the fact the submitted GHG assessment did not offer a conclusion on the likely significance of the project's distant downstream emissions. The position set out in the objection letter is that the effects could be significant, and

that EIA should be required to enable detailed consideration of that question during determination of the planning application.

## **Draft National Planning Policy Framework and National Decision-making Policies, December 2025**

5. On 16 December 2025 the Government launched a consultation on a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). That draft incorporates proposed national plan-making and decision-making policies. The draft NPPF includes national decision-making policies relevant to the consideration of oil and gas development and such projects climate change effects.
  - Draft national decision-making policy CC2 (Mitigation of climate change) (p.27) specifies the measures development proposals should incorporate to contribute to climate change mitigation and the transition to net zero. Specific mention is made of fossil fuel extraction at CC2 (g), which states that development proposals should "Not increase the extraction of fossil fuels unless it is in accordance with policy M5.".
  - Draft national decision-making policy M5 (Development involving peat, coal or onshore oil and gas) (p.52) directs that onshore oil and gas development, covering exploration, appraisal or production, should only be approved within licensed areas.
  - Draft national plan-making policy M1 (Planning for a sufficient supply of minerals) (pp.49-50) for onshore oil and gas directs that development plans should not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites outside licensed areas.
6. The above national plan and decision-making policies whilst currently in draft form, should be attributed some weight in planning and EIA decision making.

## **Closing comments**

7. On a precautionary basis, considering the matters raised in the letter of objection and the revisions to national planning policy I recommend amending your position on the proposal's EIA status. In the absence of an established method for assessing the significance of new development's GHG emissions at screening stage it is appropriate to require EIA. Classing the scheme as 'EIA development' will enable your Authority to consider all pertinent environmental information, including that offered by statutory and other consultees, when determining the application.

8. I hope the above advice is of assistance, and should you require clarification on any point or require help in defining the scope of the EIA please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jessica

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**Surrey County Council**