I am a local resident. While not in the tourism business directly, my community is largely reliant on tourism and I believe it would be badly affected by fracking, if it were allowed to go ahead. Local towns such as Helmsley, which rely on visitors for trade, would be adversely affected – both physically, by the industrialising effects and increased road traffic of fracking, and materially, by the drop in visitor numbers that may result, especially near fracking ‘blackspots’. Other businesses – campsites, farm shops and other local attractions which rely on peaceful, unspoilt countryside to attract visitors – will also be badly hit.

I object to fracking on a number of levels not least:

- Fracking will result in the irreversible industrialisation of our countryside, which is essentially incompatible with EFRA’s aim of developing sustainable rural tourism.

- Fracking will have a negative impact on homes and businesses near well-sites – especially in relation to noise, light and air pollution.

- Fracking will result in a huge increase in HGV truck movements, making life more unpleasant for both residents and holiday makers.

- The unknown and untested health risks of fracking are concerning enough to deter people from visiting fracking areas.

The shale gas industry is one of the greatest threats facing rural tourism in England and I feel that Defra has a duty to oppose such developments within government, and should instead be working to promote sustainable, low-impact tourism in order to preserve the English countryside.

I recommend that the EFRA Select Committee should commission a new independent report of the impact of the shale gas industry on the rural economy, including rural tourism. Until such a report is produced, the EFRA Select Committee should demand an immediate moratorium – as in many other countries, on fracking and other forms of unconventional gas production.