I live in Ryedale which is an area threatened by fracking – an application to frack at nearby Kirby Misperton has already been accepted. I am responding to this enquiry out of concern about the damaging effects fracking would have on rural tourism and recreation in our National Parks. The monastery to which I belong is in the North York Moors National Park. We run a holiday homes business which is my main work and I am most concerned about the harmful impact fracking would have in our area.

Mindful of the vast numbers of wells needed to make shale gas extraction viable (I believe there are now 10,000 plus in Pennsylvania), I find it hard to see how such heavy industrialisation of our most precious landscapes which draw thousands of visitors each year can be compatible with developing a sustainable rural economy based on tourism – isn’t that one of EFRA’s aims?

Defra’s own draft Shale Gas Rural Economy Impacts Paper, published in July 2015, states the following: *Shale gas may transform a previously pristine and quiet natural region, bringing increased industrialisation. As a result, rural economy businesses that rely on clean air, land, water and/or a tranquil environment may suffer losses from this change, such as agriculture, tourism, organic farming, hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation.*

I am particularly concerned about the vastly increased volume of HGVs that will be necessary to support each well-pad. Our country roads are not made for such heavy traffic which will also cause pollution, especially increased greenhouse gases, as well as disturbing the peace and tranquillity which is so prized by those who visit our holiday homes. This pollution may well also have a detrimental effect on the quality, real or perceived, of regional produce such as cheeses.

Many people who support our business come to enjoy the wildlife of this area which is particularly rich in species of birds, both native and migratory. Fracking at night will be detrimental to nocturnal species such as owls and bats which are currently protected by legislation.

All in all, it is difficult to accept that even the full quota of jobs promised by the fracking industry at full throttle can in any way make up for the dramatic impact on tourism and the wealth - both monetary and the unquantifiable wealth of silence, beauty and a sense of well being which this largely unspoiled area of Britain generates not only for Yorkshire but for the whole country. In Yorkshire alone, tourism accounts for 11% of the employment, that is, c. 243,000 jobs.

**Conclusion**

I would like to suggest that the EFRA Select Committee 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 would be wise to advise an immediate moratorium on fracking and other forms of unconventional gas production.

(Please note that the above represents my own personal viewpoint rather than that of the community to which I belong.)