I am responding to this enquiry because I am very concerned about the damaging effect that fracking would have on rural tourism.
I live in Hovingham, in Ryedale an area currently to be subject of fracking development.

1 Industrialisation of our countryside.

- Once in production there would be minimal impact except drilling has to carry on due to the huge spike of gas initially
- This means lots of new wells are required to be drilled constantly
- Drilling can not be done quietly, without 24 hour working, but all with dust, noise, light, decreased air quality etc
- England’s most precious landscapes are already licenced for fracking.
- Shale gas companies are planning hundreds of wells per licence area.
- Widespread industrialisation of the countryside for shale gas production is incompatible with EFRA’s aim of developing sustainable rural tourism. Their own draft report said so!

2 Fracking will have a negative impact on people and their homes near well-sites.

- Fracking will be allowed within 400m of homes, businesses and rural villages. Increasing evidence from abroad is showing that proximity to well sites is connected to various health effects
- Drilling and fracking are noisy 24-hour-a-day activity
- Visitors won’t want to spend their holidays in the shadow of a fracking well-site with 24 hour operations and will avoid fracking ‘blackspots’.
- Tourist businesses close to a well-site, such as campsites, B&Bs, pubs, hotels, etc. will suffer a fall in visitor numbers.

3 Fracking will result in a huge increase in heavy traffic on country roads.

- Each fracking well will require thousands of HGV movements to and from the site.
- Each fracking well-pad will have between 10 and 40 wells, which means tens of thousands of HGV trucks per well-pad.
- These trucks will cause noise and air pollution.
- There will be more queues, traffic accidents and damage to roads and verges. The majority of rural roads are not designed for this level of heavy traffic as many have no proper kerbs or foundations at their edges
- Travelling around rural areas will be far more difficult for all road users be they locals or tourists
- This will impact on rural businesses such as farms, shops and small factories, all of which rely on prompt deliveries for their businesses to function effectively.
- The peace and quiet of the countryside and rural villages will be destroyed.
- Rural roads many of which have no footpath will be much more dangerous for any recreational users be they cyclists, walkers, runners or even just local residents - but again they don’t count for anything!
4 The health impacts of fracking will deter tourists from visiting fracking areas.

- Fracking is banned or restricted by moratoria in many other countries, such as France, Germany, Bulgaria, Holland and Scotland, and in US states such as Maryland and New York State.
- These bans and moratoria are mainly because the health impacts of fracking on public health are considered to be too dangerous.
- Dr. Howard A. Zucker, NY State Health Commissioner, who recommended a fracking ban in his home state after a six-year study, said, "Would I let my family live in a community with fracking? The answer is no. The potential risks of fracking are too great. In fact, they are not even fully known."
- New studies from John Hopkins University show that people living near fracking wells are four times more likely to have asthma attacks and premature births.
- The financial structure of our rural areas health provision will not be able to account for a massive increase of health effects without effecting existing services, for example stress will lead to mental health outcomes - this part of our health system is already under massive pressure. Recent reports conclude that stress is a major factor caused just by exploratory drilling.

5 Fracking will reduce employment in the rural tourism sector.

- Tourism provides millions of permanent jobs for the rural economy (over 3.1 million in 2013, according to Visit Britain).
- Fracking would only provide a small number of short-term jobs at each well-site.
- Even industry estimates of up to 64,000 jobs in 2024 from 4,000 fracking wells are dwarfed by the numbers of jobs in tourism threatened by fracking.
- Most jobs on fracking well-sites would go to specialists brought in on fixed contracts, not local people.
- Fracking in the USA has been shown to be a boom-and-bust industry and does not create long-term jobs.
- Widespread fracking would threaten thousands of permanent jobs in the tourist industry, as visitor numbers would fall and businesses would close.
- Recent evidence from Australia makes it very clear that evidence exists to show this is the case (Report prepared in Victoria)

6 Fracking will affect the reputation of food produced in tourist areas.

- Rural economies depend on farming and food production as well as tourism.
- Many areas of the country are known for their high-quality produce and rely on this reputation to attract tourists to local food fairs, farmers’ markets, restaurants, etc.
- The introduction of fracking in these areas may compromise the quality and reputation of locally produced food. Once an area loses its 'provenance' for quality it will be lost forever.
- There will be the perception that food from farms grown near fracking wells could be contaminated particularly as it is a fact that air quality in the immediate proximity to a wellsite is diminished due to volatile organic compounds etc.
- This will all result in lower sales, falling tourist numbers, and lower rural employment.

7 Our most treasured nature and wildlife sites are under threat from fracking.
● Our nation’s protected areas, such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), World Heritage and Ramsar sites, etc. are hugely important for rural tourism and attract millions of visitors every year.

● There is currently no primary legislation banning fracking within these protected areas. Currently fracking in these areas is only restricted by planning conditions and government policy statements, not legislation.

● However, current legislation does allow fracking well-pads to be situated just outside the borders of these protected areas and wells can then be drilled horizontally underneath the protected areas.

● National Parks, AONBs and SSSIs may therefore end up being ringed by fracking well-sites.

● The resulting noise, pollution and traffic would destroy the amenity of the country’s most precious and wildlife-rich natural places.

● This again would result in a dramatic fall in the number of tourists visiting the area.

8 Wildlife tourism in the countryside.

● Large numbers of tourists visit the English countryside to enjoy the wildlife that lives there.

● Widespread fracking will have a very damaging effect on wildlife populations, particularly if fracking wells are situated around the edges of protected areas like SSSIs.

● Noise, air and light pollution and increased traffic from fracking well-sites will reduce the population of wild birds and animals, most of whom will leave the area completely.

● Drilling and fracking at night would also have a detrimental effect on protected nocturnal species such as owls and bats.

● This loss of wildlife will have a damaging effect on wildlife tourism in rural areas and a consequent drop in visitor numbers.

● Many of our rural areas have 'dark skies', these mean that the night sky is greatly enhanced. This will be lost with any scale of industrial development of a that area.

9 Water contamination

● Fracking also brings with it the threat of water contamination through leaking wells, which could contaminate the aquifers that provide our drinking water.

● There may also be surface spills or other above-ground accidents, which could pollute streams, rivers and other water courses.

● Fracking companies are not required to post a bond with local councils to pay for environmental clean-up, if indeed such clean-up were possible.

● One incident of contaminated drinking water, or a catastrophic explosion at a well-site, would permanently damage the reputation of a popular tourist area for many years.

● Any water contamination incident would result in a drop in tourists visiting that area.

10 Reduced property prices, which will discourage rural investment.

● Fracking will negatively affect property prices, particularly for those closest to a well-site.

● The DEFRA Shale Gas Rural Economy Report stated: "A study in Texas concluded that house prices valued at more than $250,000 and within 1,000 ft of a well-site saw their values decrease by 3-14%.

● The same report went on to say: "House prices in close proximity to the drilling operations are likely to fall. There could be a 7% reduction in property values within one mile of an extraction site."
• A recent report in Mortgage Introducer magazine stated that properties near the only well that has ever been fracked, Preese Hall near Blackpool, fell by 4%.
• A drop in property values will have a negative effect on business investment. A major driver of the rural economy.

11 Public opinion is overwhelmingly negative.

• Fracking is extremely unpopular with the general public, with only 21% of the population supporting the process, according to the latest Government Wave 18 survey.
• The government’s proposals to pay up to £10,000 to residents living near well have failed to convince the public, with only 33% supporting the policy.
• Most people don’t like fracking, and are unlikely to want to go on holiday to an area where this industry is established.
• If a particular part of the countryside is known to be a fracking zone, this will discourage people from visiting this area, reducing tourist numbers.
• The aforementioned attitude survey makes the point that the more a respondent knows about fracking the more they are likely to be against the idea/industry.

12 Defra’s own report says that fracking would negatively impact the rural tourist sector.

• Defra’s draft Shale Gas Rural Economy Impacts Paper, which was eventually published unredacted 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.”
• This paper also went on to say that fracking “may reduce the number of visitors and tourists to the rural area, with an associated reduction in spend in the local tourism economy.”
• The first time this report was published it was redacted 63 times, including sections on house prices, economic impacts, social services, local services and the executive summary.
• The unredacted report was finally published in July 2015, only because the government was forced to do so by the Information Commissioner after a long-running public outcry.
• When it was finally published, Defra distanced itself from the report’s conclusions, claiming that it was an early draft of an internal document, was not analytically robust, and that work on this report had been discontinued.
• Many people wonder why the report was discontinued, instead of being re-drafted so that it was considered by Defra to be ‘analytically robust’ and suitable for publication. Was the effect of fracking on the rural economy not worthy of further examination?
• Defra has therefore never completed a comprehensive report on the effect of fracking on the rural economy – which of course would include the rural tourism sector, the subject of this enquiry. Is this perhaps because Defra knows that the results of such a report would be overwhelmingly negative?

Conclusion
I recently visited an organic farm (Home Farm Newby Wiske) which had it’s own anaerobic biodigester, amazing, it uses waste material from the farm (and others around it) it produces power and warm air to the business. The waste slurry is a fertiliser that goes back into the land - now that I would call sustainable development. Our planning system talks about sustainable development but there is no way we should consider fracking as sustainable, consider that even if
all the gas is fracked it will only provide a small percentage of our needs (less than 15%). The main benefits - it will provide profit to the gas company and taxes to the government. However lets look at the negatives all of which will have a major bearing on tourism and the rural economy

1. it is a new industry, there are no existing facilities or infrastructure
2. it would become a massive construction project across the licensed areas
3. the rural areas will find it difficult to improve the infrastructure to accommodate the additional road traffic - look at the A64 in North Yorkshire, one of the most deadly roads in the UK, many road deaths every year, and we are going to increase the HGVs using this by a massive amount. After York there is less than 10 miles of dualled roadway. The queues for tourists heading for the coast on a sunny day are regularly in excess of 3 miles long. Both on the way there and on the way back! This will only get worse as there is only the one main road.
4. the loss of jobs in the tourist economy and agriculture will not be made up for by an increase of opportunities, look at the reports coming from the Australian State administrations.
5. we have no way of processing the waste water, this will remain a problem unless the Environment Agency amend their regulation - is this what we are to look forward to - lower standards. This will lead to a greater risk of contamination of our water producing strata. This would have potentially the biggest effect on the rural area both in terms of its economy and tourism
6. in Yorkshire there has been a massive increase in the cycling economy (the Tour de Yorkshire was responsible for an estimated £30+ million to the tourist economy in 2016) since the 'Tour de France' and subsequently the 'Tour de Yorkshire' it is easy to consider the likely effect of an area riddled with construction sites for wells and pipelines - I can't imagine they will be on the route of any 'Tour'!
7. the effect on the really quiet areas, where people go to recharge their batteries away from it all, they will become none existent once a fracking industry arrives - this is not the US or Canada we do not have vast areas with hardly any population to despoil. Bring the industry in and wave goodbye to tranquility - the very essence of which is probably attracts most tourists to these areas now.
8. It is clear that fracking will have a very damaging effect on tourism in rural areas, and I believe that the shale gas industry is one of the greatest threats facing rural tourism and tourism based businesses in England. Our LEP (Local Economic Partnership) in North Yorkshire doesn’t even mention this industry in their plan, it does however mention tourism and hospitality businesses and so on, as well as the growth particularly in high quality/artisanal food businesses. It makes a point that the majority of businesses are small or medium sized. These businesses would be hugely disadvantaged should tourist numbers fall significantly, a fall that could not be made up for by itinerant oil site workers.

I feel that Defra has a duty to oppose such development and should be working to promote sustainable, low-impact development in order to preserve the English countryside. This is what the majority of business owners and residents want in these areas.

**It is imperative that the EFRA Select Committee should commission a new independent report on 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 on**
fracking and other forms of unconventional gas production otherwise some areas of the country stand to be greatly disadvantaged and altered in a way that will change them forever

September 2016