I am responding to the Rural Tourism enquiry because I am very concerned about the damaging effect that fracking would have on rural tourism in England and in the rest of the U.K. I visit the Cleveland Way and the North York Moors as a walker/member of the Ramblers Association and as a cyclist. This area is currently threatened by fracking. I also have friends who have holiday cottages and am concerned that fracking will damage the livelihoods of those in the tourism industry.

Fracking brings with it the inevitability of water contamination through leaking wells, which would contaminate the aquifers that because provide our drinking water. The proponents of fracking say this would not happen, but experience in Pennsylvania and elsewhere prove that regulations don't work and I do not believe they would work in the UK either. Contamination of the water supply would clearly stop tourists visiting.

I am very concerned about the health impacts of fracking. Fracking is banned or restricted by moratoria in many countries including France, Germany, Bulgaria, Holland, Scotland and in the US states such as Maryland (where I have family) and New York State. These bans and moratoria are mainly because of the impacts of fracking on public health are considered to be too dangerous.

Allowing fracking in our most treasured nature and wildlife sites would result in noise, air pollution and high levels of heavy-duty traffic which would destroy the spectacular scenery and therefore stop tourists visiting. Is not Yorkshire the biggest attraction in Europe? And the organisers of the Tour de Yorkshire have worked hard to promote Yorkshire as a tourist destination.

It is clear that widespread fracking would have a very damaging effect on tourism in rural areas. I think DEFRA has a duty to oppose such developments within government and should instead be working to preserve our beautiful countryside, which if it were ever fracked, would not be easily or quickly recoverable.

I recommend 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 should demand an immediate moratorium on fracking and other forms of unconventional gas production.

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