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Submission to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Shale Gas Regulation & Planning -  
8th November 2016

Further to my submission to the September meeting, and my oral evidence on November 8<sup>th</sup> I wish to make the following points of immediate concern to our local community.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities ‘to ensure ... that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historical environment or human health ... and take into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and /or from a number of sites in a locality.’

In the light of this, specific points of concern are:-

1. Uncertainty as to the number of wells and fracks intended by Third Energy at KM8. If we consider the distress caused when the well was drilled (24 hours a day), to the eight weeks during which we can expect 900 HGVs and 500 other vehicle movements, with nightclub level noise, it is entirely reasonable to ask how many more times?

2. Concern that fracking will create only short term specialist jobs, bringing people with the required qualifications from outside, while undermining long term local prospects in agriculture, food and tourism. In support of this concern I point you to the recent decision of the government of Victoria, which has banned fracking, having seen its impact on Queensland. They report that for every ten jobs created by the unconventional gas industry, eighteen have been lost in agriculture.

The following are extracts from the Government statement:-<sup>i</sup>

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3. Concern for potential damage to the race horse breeding and stable industry around Malton. In New South Wales the equivalent area is offered special protection, as Critical Industry Clusters. I quote from the government document:-<sup>ii</sup>

‘The Department has identified a concentration of equine (horse) and viticulture (wine) industries in the Upper Hunter and mapped these locations as ‘Critical Industry Clusters’ (CICs). CICs are concentrations of highly productive industries within a region that are related to each other, contribute to the identity of that region and provide significant

employment opportunities. The creation of these industry clusters aims to protect this high quality agricultural land from the impacts of coal seam gas (CSG) and mining activities. In January 2014, the NSW Government finalised the CIC maps and introduced a ban on new CSG activity within the mapped areas.' Coal seam gas exploration and production is banned within the CICs and within two kilometers of them.

3. Fugitive methane emissions as a major factor in air pollution. I quote from Professor Nick Cowern, who presented evidence to the 'climate Change Committee:-

1. Methane emissions occur during exploration, well 'completion', production, collection, transmission, processing, storage where this applies, and distribution to end users. US experience shows that the lowest one can expect to reduce overall emissions to, is around 3% of production.
2. The global warming potential of methane is such that, over a few decades after emission, this fugitive methane has a similar, additive, warming effect to that of the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by end users on burning their gas. Thus the methane typically doubles the effect of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
3. Fracking is particularly bad because the process of well completion emits more methane than that for conventional gas, and because of the higher complexity and shorter time for which the associated network of compressor stations, pumps, pipelines, etc are required to operate.
4. This makes fracked gas every bit as bad a global warming agent as burning coal, at least over a timescale of several decades.
5. Current climate projections strongly suggest we will reach around 1.5°C of global warming some time during the 2020s, accompanied by a complete loss of Arctic summer ice - a likely tipping point for further climate change.
6. This is within the time frame on which the UK Govt and industry wish to pursue fracking, and before the timescale on which mitigation such as the use of carbon capture and storage could make a significant contribution.

4. Health concerns: Disturbing medical research continues to come from the US, most recently from Yale and a further report from John Hopkins School of Public Health. As a consequence The 16,000 member Pennsylvania Medical Society has called for a moratorium on new shale gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing and is urging the state to establish an independent health registry and start studying fracking's public health impacts. To quote their President "We do support a moratorium at this point because of questions that have been raised. Those questions now point to the need for a registry and more science and research to give us a better understanding about whether fracking is safe and what the risk is. The past President noted that a similar resolution was rejected three years ago, but now "growing evidence has shown its increasing deleterious effects outweighs any economic benefit."

I have to point out that the NHS [Scarborough](#) and Ryedale Clinical Commissioning Group (SRCCG), states: "The NHS SRCCG does not believe it is in possession of sufficient evidence to conclude the application for hydraulic fracturing in the Ryedale area necessarily poses low risk to the health of the community."

5. A specific local water concern. We are concerned about the possibility of polluted water escaping from the site. The drain from the site discharges from Sugar Hill Drain to the Costa Beck, which flows through the village. The Costa Beck subsequently flows into the River Rye. This means that any leakage can quickly contaminate the groundwater in our local area.

Overall the risks and sacrifices to which our community will b subjected are hugely disproportionate to the short term energy gained.

Yours sincerely

+ Graham Cray

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/aug/30/victoria-to-permanently-ban-fracking-and-coal-seam-gas-exploration>

<sup>ii</sup> pdf attached

January 2014

## Frequently Asked Questions Critical Industry Clusters Upper Hunter

### WHAT ARE CRITICAL INDUSTRY CLUSTERS?

- Critical industry clusters (CICs) are concentrations of highly productive industries within a region that are related to each other, contribute to the identity of that region, and provide significant employment opportunities.
- Two critical industry clusters – for the equine and viticulture industries – have been identified in the Upper Hunter region.
- Coal seam gas activity is now prohibited in the mapped CIC areas. State significant mining development in these areas will be subject to the Gateway process – an independent, upfront and scientific assessment of the land and water impacts of the proposal.

### WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

- Maps showing the clusters of the two industries in the region were produced as part of the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan in 2012. As this mapping was done at a broad regional scale, a commitment was made in the Plan to verify the location of specific enterprises in the clusters.
- In 2013, an independent consultant conducted the regional verification process, with input from industry members. The consultant used evidence of current commercial activity.
- These maps were exhibited in October and November 2013 to ensure that the process captured all relevant enterprises. Landholders were given the opportunity to nominate their land for inclusion if it met certain criteria.
- Mining and coal seam gas companies were also given an opportunity to identify properties that they owned as at the date of release of the Strategic Regional Land Use Plan (10 September 2012) to have these properties removed from the CIC mapping.

# Strategic Regional Land Use Policy



## WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EXHIBITION OF THE DRAFT CIC MAPS?

- The exhibition of the draft CIC maps closed in mid-November. The NSW Department of Trade and Investment, on behalf of the Government, collated these submissions - which amounted to over 1500 parcels of land - and consulted with an interagency committee to determine which were eligible based on the agreed criteria.
- These maps are now complete and have been given legal effect via an amendment to the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007* (the Mining SEPP).
- The maps are available at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/oasfs/resource-planning>. Through this website, landholders can view the maps and search for their lots.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF MY PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE CRITICAL INDUSTRY CLUSTER AREAS?

- New coal seam gas activity is now banned within the mapped CIC areas.
- State significant mining projects proposed within the mapped areas must go through an additional level of scrutiny via the Gateway process, prior to the lodgement of a development application.

## WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE AS A RESULT OF THE NOMINATION PROCESS AND PUBLIC EXHIBITION?

- The combined area of the CICs has been increased by 20,700 hectares or 7.7%.
- The size of the equine CIC has been increased by 22,320 hectares or 9.6 per cent to 254,900 hectares, while the size of the viticulture CIC has been decreased 3,250 hectares or 5.2 per cent to 60,000 hectares.
- Some additional properties were added to the CIC as a result of eligible nominations for inclusion. Reductions in area resulted from eligible resource companies nominating for removal from the cluster area.

# Strategic Regional Land Use Policy



## HOW WILL PROPERTY OWNERS BE INFORMED ABOUT THE NEW CICs?

- The NSW Department of Primary Industries will write to property owners and other stakeholders who made submissions on the draft maps. The information will include advice on the CIC maps which will enable property owners to identify their properties.
- The maps are available at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/oasfs/resource-planning>. Through this website, landholders can view the maps and search for their lots.
- The Department of Primary Industries will brief the peak industry associations and a technical inquiry telephone line - (02) 6391 3644 - has been set up.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- Visit the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure's website at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/srlup](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/srlup)