

**Wiltshire Council**

**Council**

**23 February 2016**

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### **Petition Received for Presentation to Council**

#### **Call for an urgent moratorium (ban) on fracking in Wiltshire**

- 87,521 supporters
- BY: [Iona Hassan](#)
- TARGET: Wiltshire Council

The petition which can be found <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/en-gb/takeaction/369/646/655/> states as follows:

Public safety is a primary duty of any council. Evidence shows that contamination of ground water and surface water are key challenges associated with unconventional oil or gas extraction (including fracking).

Unconventional oil and gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing pose great risks to both the stability and health of our environment, species and ecosystems. Areas where unconventional gas drilling has taken place have seen a rise in land, air, and water pollution.

Safe and clean water supplies are critical for homes, hospitals, businesses, nature and the rural economy. Impacts on the rural economy, including effects on house prices, buildings insurance and the tourism & agricultural industries, should also be fully considered.

Evidence from the UK government's own reports [4] suggest that shale gas production will have little effect on reducing greenhouse gas emissions at a time when we should be seeking to reduce these substantially. Investment should be made in clean renewable energy technologies.

We ask Wiltshire Council to agree an urgent moratorium on any form of unconventional oil or gas extraction in Wiltshire until the complete local assessment of the environmental impacts, including noise, light and air pollution and the possible impacts on Wiltshire's aquifers and rivers, has been undertaken and the findings have been reported to the Council and the general public.

Additional information

Assessment of the impacts of fracking on ground water and surface water is largely absent from the government's own report [1], and yet experts have suggested [2,5,6] that aquifers and watercourses may be particularly vulnerable.

We ask the council to oppose unconventional oil and gas exploration and extraction county wide due to the potential adverse effects to our natural environment (particularly to our aquifers and rivers), concerns regarding public health [3], noise and air pollution (through increased traffic and fugitive emissions) and its impacts on meeting legally binding targets on climate change.

The hydrogeology in Wiltshire is highly complex. With the government's AEA report identifying one of the main environmental risks from hydraulic fracturing as groundwater contamination and surface water contamination [5] we feel that this has not been considered sufficiently in the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) [1]. Any effects on water resources and contamination should be considered fully before any licences or planning permissions are granted.

1. Habitats Regulations Assessment: 14th Onshore Oil and Gas licensing Round, Consultation on proposed assessment, URN: 15D/401 OGA August 2015. From <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/habitats-regulations-assessments-of-14th-onshore-oil-and-gas-licensing-round>

2. <http://nora.nerc.ac.uk/16467/1/OR12001.pdf>  
Potential groundwater impact from exploitation of shale gas in the UK – BGS. Pg 7 – Summary

3. <http://www.medact.org/news/new-report-health-fracking-the-impacts-opportunity-costs/>  
FULL REPORT - [http://www.medact.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/medact\\_fracking-report\\_WEB3.pdf](http://www.medact.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/medact_fracking-report_WEB3.pdf)

4. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/237330/MacKay\\_Stone\\_shale\\_study\\_report\\_09092013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/237330/MacKay_Stone_shale_study_report_09092013.pdf)

5. Support to the identification of potential risks for the environment and human health arising from hydrocarbon operations involving hydraulic fracturing in Europe, AEA, August 2012.  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/pdf/fracking%20study.pdf> – pg 6.

6. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvaud/856/85606.htm#a5>