

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Viking UK Gas Limited (hereafter referred to as the "Applicant") is seeking full planning permission for the exploitation of conventional hydrocarbon resources only, for the production of energy, including: gas production from the existing Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site; and construction of a 15.3 km long 8" diameter steel underground pipeline from Eberston Moor 'A' Wellsite to Knapton Generating Station (KGS) for the purpose of delivering natural gas and condensate from Eberston Moor 'A' Wellsite to KGS where it will be used as fuel-gas to generate power. These activities are collectively referred to hereafter as the "Proposed Development".
- 1.2 The area within which the Proposed Development will be located is referred to in this Environmental Statement (ES) as the "Assessment Site". The Assessment Site, situated within the administrative areas of North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNP), is shown on **Figure 1.1**. The minerals planning authorities (the decision makers) are NYCC and NYMNP.

### Background to the Proposed Development

- 1.3 The Eberston Moor gas field (originally called Lockton) was discovered in 1966 and produced gas between May 1971 and 1974. Since the 1970s, further discoveries of gas have been made in the area. Interpretation of seismic data acquired by the Applicant for the fields shows that large areas of gas remain un-tapped, while further studies have improved the understanding of the reservoir's behaviour. New seismic data, acquired by the Applicant in 2012, confirms the extension of the Eberston Moor gas field eastwards. Additional information about the history of the Eberston Moor gas field is contained within the Planning Statement.
- 1.4 Knapton Generating Station (KGS) opened in May 1995. It is located in close proximity to the village of East Knapton and approximately 10 km to the east of Malton. KGS processes gas from the local gas fields including the Vale of Pickering and is used to generate energy that can provide power for the equivalent of up to 40,000 homes when run at capacity.
- 1.5 Whilst, inevitably, there is still a degree of uncertainty about the scale of recoverable gas reserves, the Applicant wishes to pursue a phased approach to the development of the Eberston Moor gas field. This phased approach will help to:
- Ensure a clearer understanding of the production performance and recovery from the gas

field;

- Minimise economic risk and mitigate any adverse effects on the local environment; and
- Establish early production.

1.6 Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site was first approved in 2006 and reprofiled in 2008. A further permission was granted to retain the existing well site in 2011. Temporary planning permission was granted by the NYMNP A on 18 June 2013 to enable the Applicant to drill a sidetrack from the existing well (Eberston Moor – 1) within Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site and the drilling of up to two additional appraisal boreholes.

1.7 The sidetrack from the existing well will be drilled prior to construction commencing for the Eberston Moor Early Development Scheme (Eberston Moor EDS) or this Proposed Development. In addition separate planning permission will be sought to use the existing well cellar to drill a borehole for water disposal use, if required at a later date. The use of the borehole through the existing cellar will not be assessed further as part of this ES.

1.8 The initial phase of development or Eberston Moor EDS forms a separate planning application (ref: NYM/2013/0477/EIA) and involves the exploitation of conventional hydrocarbon resources only, for an operational period of up to five years, including: gas production from Eberston Moor – 1 Well at the existing Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site; piping the produced gas to the adjoining Lockton Compound where the gas would be conditioned; injecting the conditioned gas via an existing Above Ground Installation (AGI) connection to a Northern Gas Network (NGN) pipeline that runs between Pickering and Whitby; and creation of two new access points off Eberston Common Lane. If planning permission is granted in 2013, it is assumed that construction of the Eberston Moor EDS will commence in January 2014, with gas production commencing after July 2014. The operational life of the Eberston Moor EDS is anticipated to be up to five years. The aim of the Eberston Moor EDS is to enable medium term production performance of the Eberston Moor gas reservoir to be assessed, with the aim of proving reservoir volumes sufficient to support investment in future field development.

1.9 This planning application seeks permission for the second phase of the Eberston Moor gas field development which is anticipated to be carried out after the Eberston Moor EDS (or instead of the Eberston Moor EDS if planning permission for the Eberston Moor is not granted) on condition that reservoir volumes are assessed to be sufficient to support investment in future development of Eberston Moor gas field. The Proposed Development aims to carry out the following activities:

- Gas production at Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site; and

- Construction of one 8" diameter steel underground pipeline from the existing Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site to deliver gas and associated liquids to the KGS at East Knapton where the natural gas will be used as fuel-gas to generate power

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

- 1.10 The Proposed Development falls within Schedule 2,2, (e) and Schedule 2, 10, (k) Section of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2011 (SI 1824) (the "EIA Regulations") (Ref. 1.1) as it involves a surface industrial installation for the extraction of natural gas where the area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares and a pipeline for the transport of gas.
- 1.11 A screening opinion was sought from NYCC and NYMNPA in November 2011 in accordance with the EIA Regulations and Section B of the Planning Practice Guidance of Onshore Oil and Gas (DCLG, July 2013) (Ref. 1.2). The screening opinion adopted by NYCC and NYMNPA regarded the proposal submitted in 2011 to be a Schedule 1 Development under the EIA Regulations (Ref. 1.1) as discussed in **Appendix 1.1**. However modifications to the design of the Proposed Development since the adoption of the screening opinion means that the Proposed Development now falls within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations instead of Schedule 1. Even with the modifications since 2011, the Proposed Development is still considered to have the potential to have significant environmental effects and therefore the Applicant has submitted an ES in support of the planning application. The modifications are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of this ES.
- 1.12 EIA is the process of collection, publication and consideration of environmental information in the determination of a planning application. Consequently information on the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development has been gathered and is presented in this document, the ES. The ES will inform decision-makers (in this case NYCC and NYMNPA) of the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during construction, operation, decommissioning and restoration. It also identifies mitigation measures to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.

### **Planning Policy**

- 1.13 The EIA Regulations (Ref. 1.1) do not require assessment of planning policy or guidance; however, where appropriate, national and development plan document policies of relevance have been considered within the technical chapters of this ES.

## ES Structure

- 1.5 The EIA Regulations (Reg. 2 (1)) identify a requirement for an applicant to include within an ES:

*"...such of the information referred to in Part 1 of Schedule 4 as is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development and which the applicant can, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment, reasonably be required to compile."*

- 1.6 An outline of this information in respect of the Proposed Development and where it can be found in the ES is presented in **Table 1.1**.

**Table 1.1: Location of Information within the ES Required by Part 1 and Part 2 of the EIA Regulations**

Specified Information		Location within ES
1	Description of the development, including in particular –	
(a)	a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases.	Chapter 4 (The Proposed Development), Chapter 6 (Construction Programme)
(b)	a description of the main characteristics of the production processes, for instance, nature and quantity of materials used.	Chapter 4 (The Proposed Development), Chapter 6 (Construction Programme)
(c)	an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation, etc.) resulting from the operation of the proposed development.	All technical chapters (7-15)
2	An outline of the main alternatives studied by the applicant or appellant and an indication of the main reasons for its choice, taking into account the environmental effects.	Chapter 5 (Alternatives and Design Evolution)
3	A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development, including, in particular, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and inter-relationship between the above factors.	All technical chapters (7-15)
4	A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development, resulting from:	
(a)	the existence of the development;	All technical chapters (7-15) and summarised in chapter 17 (Statement of Significance)

Specified Information		Location within ES
(b)	the use of natural resources;	Chapter 12 (Flood Risk, Hydrology and Drainage)
(c)	the emission of pollutants, the creation of nuisances and the elimination of waste; and	Chapter 9 (Air Quality), Chapter 10 (Noise), Chapter 12 (Flood Risk, Hydrology and Drainage).
d)	the description by the Applicant of the forecasting methods used to assess the effects on the environment.	Chapter 2 (EIA Methodology) and all technical chapters (7 – 15) where appropriate
5	A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.	All technical chapters (7 - 15)
6	A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 5 of this Part.	Non Technical Summary (provided as a separate document)
7	An indication of any difficulties (technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered by the applicant in compiling the required information.	Chapter 2 (EIA Methodology) and in technical chapters where appropriate

1.7 The ES comprises three separate volumes, namely:

- The ES Main Text: The full text of the ES which comprises a total of 17 chapters, illustrated throughout by tables and figures;
- The ES Technical Appendices: A complete set of the technical documents undertaken as part of, or in support of, the ES. The technical appendices are provided in a separate volume to limit the size of the ES main text; and
- The Non-Technical Summary (NTS): The NTS provides a concise and straightforward summary of the Proposed Development, its likely significant environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate or to avoid these effects.

### EIA Team

1.8 The ES has been coordinated by Barton Willmore LLP and presents the results of technical studies carried out in conjunction with a number of specialist consultants appointed by the Applicant. The EIA team is listed in **Table 1.2** along with their respective disciplines and contributions to the ES.

**Table 1.2: EIA Team**

Organisation	Expertise/EIA Input
Viking Gas UK Ltd	Description of the Proposed Development; and Description of the Alternatives.
Barton Willmore LLP	Town Planning; EIA Coordination; Landscape and Views; and Economic Assessment.
URS Scott Wilson	Ecology and Nature Conservation; Air Quality; and

Organisation	Expertise/EIA Input
	Ground Conditions and Contamination
Archaeological Project Services	Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
Acia Engineering Acoustics	Noise
R Elliott Associates	Transport; and Flood Risk, Hydrology and Drainage

### Other Documents

1.9 A number of other documents have been submitted to NYCC and NYMNPA as part of, or accompanying, the planning application, including:

- Planning and Sustainability Statement;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Outline Safety Report; and
- Validation Checklist.

### ES Availability and Comments

1.10 Paper copies of the ES and the Technical Appendices can be purchased at a cost of £100 and £300 respectively. The Non-Technical Summary can be obtained free of charge. Copies of the ES, Technical Appendices and NTS can be obtained on CD for £20. All documents are available from:

Paul Foster  
 Barton Willmore  
 Elizabeth House  
 1 High Street  
 Chesterton  
 Cambridge, CB4 1WB.

Tel: 01223 345555

1.11 Additional copies of this ES are also available for viewing by the public during normal office hours in the planning departments of NYCC and NYMNPA. Comments on the planning application should be forwarded to Alan Goforth at NYCC and Mark Hill at NYMNPA at the addresses below:

North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
North Yorkshire, DL7 8AH  
Tel: 08450 349494

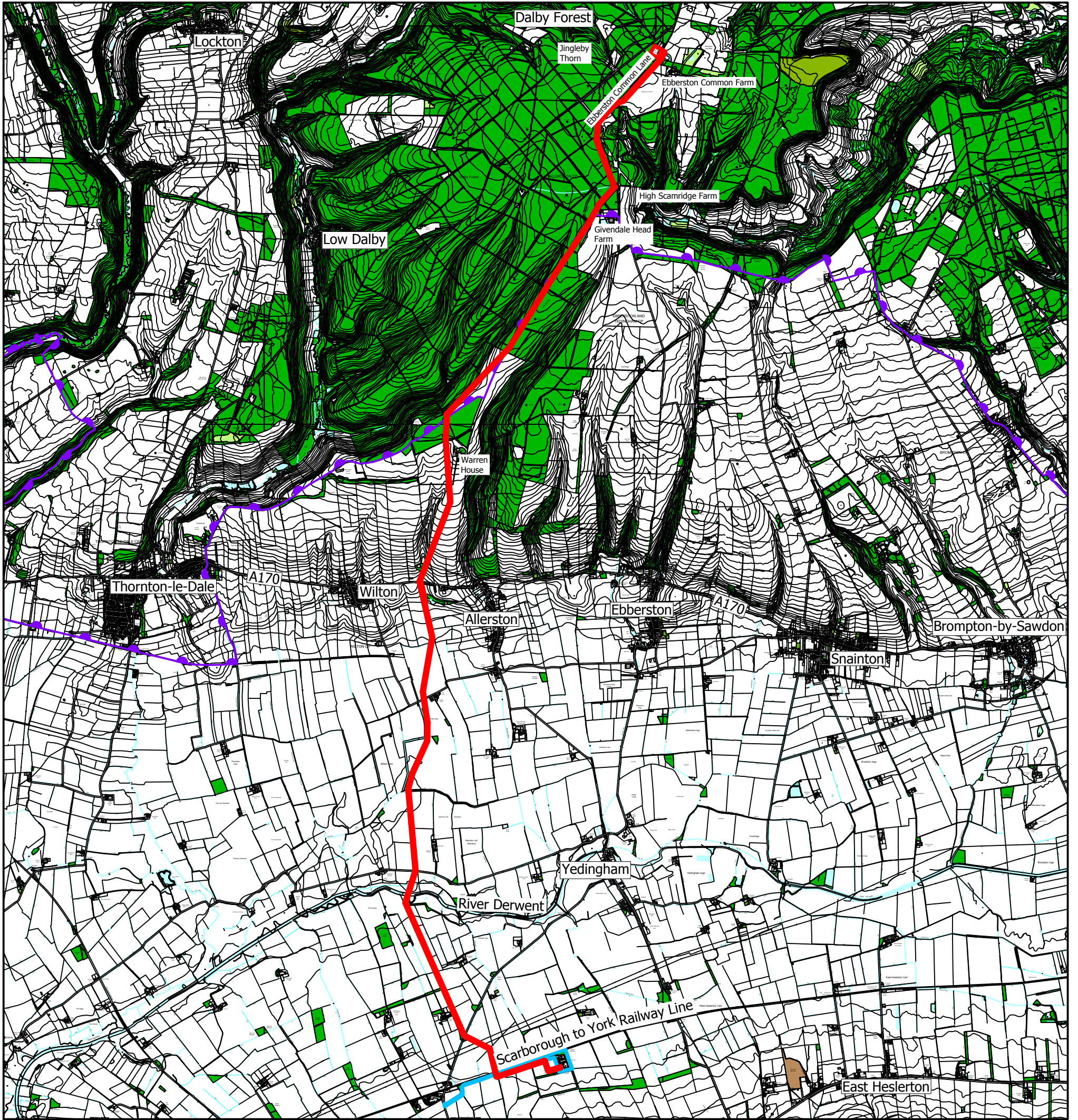
Email: [planning.control@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:planning.control@northyorks.gov.uk)

North York Moors National Park Authority  
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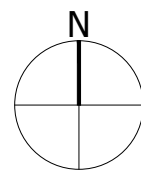
Email: [planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk)





**LEGEND**

-  Assessment Site Boundary
-  Other Land in Clients Ownership
-  North York Moors National Park



Project  
**Eberston Moor 'A' Well Site to Knapton Gas Pipeline**  
 Drawing Title  
**Site Location Plan**

Date 16.08.2013	Scale 1:50,000 @A3	Drawn by ML	Check by MC
Project No 19819	Drawing No E015	Revision A	



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**Figure 1.1**