

The Fermanagh Fracking Awareness Network (FFAN) would like to make the following response to the consultation with regard to the above Bill.

FFAN is a cross community network of individual Fermanagh residents. It is not affiliated to any political party or other organisation but works with a broad range of groups and individuals who are concerned about the risks of hydraulic fracturing. Our vision is of County Fermanagh as an inclusive, progressive and vibrant county where its people and resources are respected, regenerated and sustainably managed and developed and where communities are healthy and prosperous, a great place to bring up families in a clean and unspoilt environment. We want this vision to be sustainable for the generations that follow.

In FFAN's view, the Bill as currently drafted, with particular reference to Clauses 2 and 6 would:

- *create huge uncertainties, increased delays and appeals in the already overloaded planning system.

- *be impossible to apply effectively, as purported economic benefits could not be properly assessed, monitored or enforced.

- *encounter unworkable contradictions between the duties laid out in Clause 2 of:

- (a) furthering sustainable development;
- (b) promoting or improving well-being; and
- (c) promoting economic development.

- *allow inappropriate forms of development, such as shale gas extraction, which would be harmful to human health, the environment and existing and growing economic sectors such as agriculture and tourism.

We would urge the committee to enact a policy of sustainable development as defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development 1987; "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Such a policy would include resource conservation, environmental and inter-generational justice, the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle and meaningful public consultation. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy identifies five guiding principles as follows:

- *Living within environmental limits
- *Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- *Achieving a sustainable economy
- *Promoting good governance
- *Using sound science responsibly

FFAN strongly supports these principles and recommends that they be set out in Clause 2 of an amended Planning Bill along with suitable detailed policy and procedures to ensure their implementation in practice.

We further advocate the amendment of Clause 5 to include a third party right of appeal and the removal of Clause 6. We are additionally concerned at the implications of Clause 20, which seems to imply that a fixed penalty would be sufficient to remedy planning breaches. The committee will appreciate that in the case of potential damage to human health, environment and livelihoods, financial penalties alone cannot possibly suffice.

Finally, we are concerned at the manner in which this Bill is being dealt with, especially in view of the clear message of previous consultations upon similar measures, such as PPS24, that such priorities would be inappropriate and damaging to Northern Ireland. We would urge the committee to insist upon proper accountable public consultation upon this drastic proposal.

Fermanagh Fracking Awareness Network
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