



*Media release - 5 February 2013*

## **Gas Field Hazard Marked Out**

**A large zone of land, running from Highton to Anglesea, is currently under licence for gas exploration. On Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> of February at 2pm, Frack Free Geelong, a community based group who are opposed to gas exploration and mining in the region, hope to bring attention to this issue by marking out a section of the zone with hazard tape.**

“As we’ve seen from overseas and interstate, fracking poses serious threats to our health, drinking water, rivers, farmland, and other industries, particularly tourism,” said Elizabeth Packett, spokesperson for Frack Free Geelong.

“We want to raise awareness of this issue in our region by physically marking out an area where a potential gas field could lie. People will be shocked to learn that it’s on the same land as private homes, businesses, churches, kindergartens, sports clubs, Deakin University and even the Highton Cemetery.”

“The state moratorium against fracking, which runs until June 2015, does not protect us from exploration drilling. The mining companies could start that any day, and if they find gas, you can be assured they will do everything they can to extract it. The exploration drilling in itself is a huge investment costing millions of dollars for which these companies will expect a return.”

### **Concerned citizens are invited to join**

“Gas mining is a choice, and if we choose to go down that road, we are locking ourselves into continued fossil fuel addiction for decades. According to the latest peer-reviewed climate science, this is the last thing we should be doing. We have other choices. There is no shortage of sun or wind in our area,” explained Elizabeth Packett.

Frack Free Geelong welcomes people who share our concerns to join our event on the 15th of February. Depending on the response from the City of Greater Geelong Council, the group may launch a petition on the day, asking the Mayor and Councillors to make a commitment to ban gas mining within its borders.

In November 2013, Surf Coast Shire Council addressed the issues of fracking in the region by putting a motion forward to state government in support of a permanent ban on coal seam gas exploration.

***Saturday 15th of February 2014 at 2pm: Meet at the corner of Scenic Road and Barrabool Road in Highton.***

***For comment and more information about these coming events, please contact:***

Elizabeth Packett

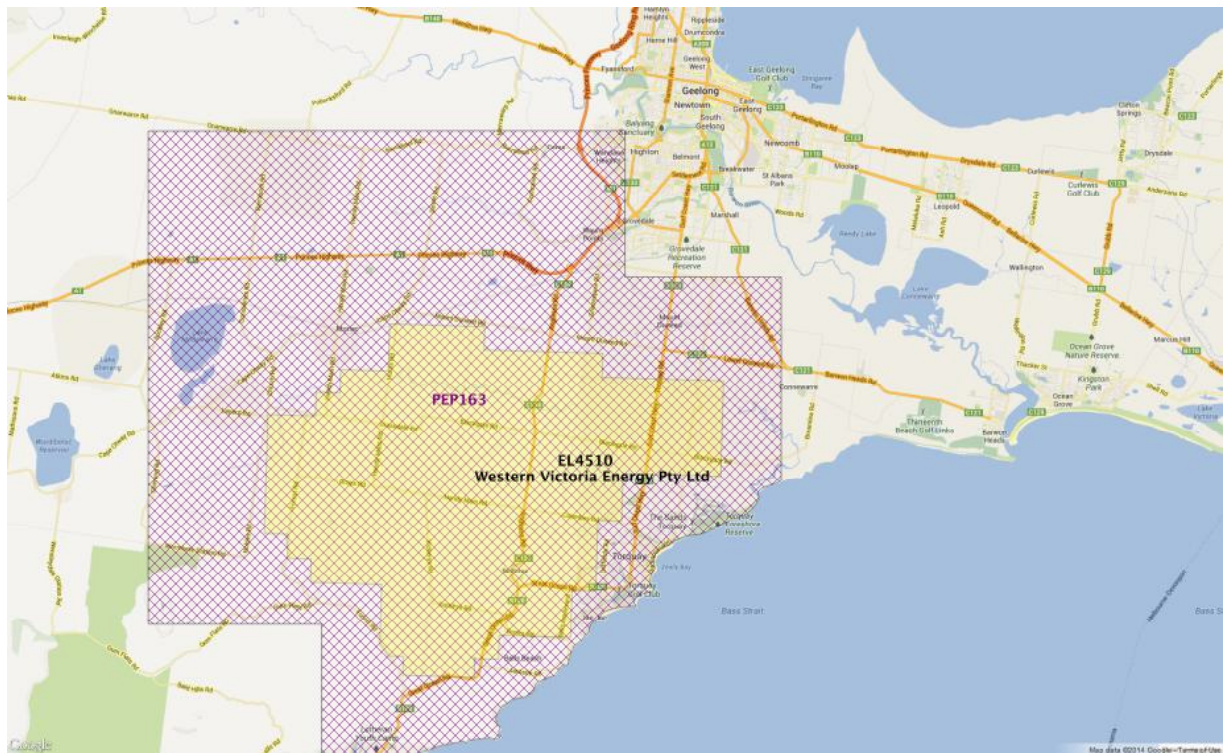
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***For more information and high resolution photos for download see:***

» [www.frackfreegeelong.org/download](http://www.frackfreegeelong.org/download)

**Frack Free Geelong are a newly formed community group concerned about the risk that coal, coal seam gas, tight gas and shale gas exploration will have on Geelong and the Surf Coast. The group currently consists of approximately 400 concerned citizens in the Geelong region.**





## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Frack Free Geelong calls on the City of Greater Geelong Council to recognise the community's concern about coal seam gas and other forms of unconventional gas mining and advocate for the prevention of further gas exploration and mining in the City of Greater Geelong.**

Frack Free Geelong recommends the Council to move a motion similar to the following:

- 1) That Council advocates to the state and federal governments for a ban on new gas exploration and mining/extraction in the City of Greater Geelong until it is proven to be safe.
- 2) That Council works with the community to stop gas exploration, extraction or mining by keeping the community up to date with all relevant information as it becomes available, and by providing resource support to community groups.
- 3) That Council opposes gas exploration, extraction, mining or infrastructural work on land it owns or manages until it is proven to be safe.
- 4) That council incorporates this position into its Environmental Management Strategy which is currently out for public comments.

## About the Surf Coast Motion

**Frack Free Geelong commends the Surf Coast Shire Council and Barwon Water for taking the concerns of their constituents seriously.**

Frack Free Geelong congratulates both the Surf Coast Shire Council and Barwon Water for their recent public statements of concern about the negative impacts which they believe the exploration and extraction of unconventional gas will have in our area.

Now we would like to see the City of Greater Geelong Council, and Barwon Health along with Barwon Water make a very clear stand against this practice.

## About the Environmental Management Strategy 2013-2017

The Geelong City Council is currently drafting their Environmental Management Strategy 2013-2017, but as yet, there is no mention of gas mining within this paper. Frack Free Geelong encourages all citizens who understand that this is an important strategy document for Geelong, and who are concerned about the environmental impacts of fracking in our region, to send a personal message to the Council asking them to consider adding a section about the Council's position on fracking.

It can be as simple as sending an email to: [environment@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment@geelongcity.vic.gov.au) or go to this page and fill in the form:

[www.geelongaustralia.com.au/council/yoursay/consult/item/8d0cae103b24f87.aspx](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/council/yoursay/consult/item/8d0cae103b24f87.aspx)

Before submitting a response, take a look at the draft strategy paper here:

['Environmental Management Strategy 2013-2017'](#)

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## COMING EVENTS

### Action event

*Saturday 15 February at 2pm in Highton*

Is your home, school, church or sporting club located on a potential fracking field? Join our action to build awareness of where the gas exploration licence boundaries lie.

### Workshop

*Friday 28 February at 6pm in Geelong Trades Hall*

If there's one fracking thing you do this year, come to Annie's workshop. Annie was instrumental in developing the Gasfield Free Community strategy and her workshops are inspiring and empowering.

### Film evening

*Tuesday 18 March at 7pm at Beav's Bar*

Frack Fee Geelong presents the acclaimed documentary film 'Gaslands 2'. A must see for anyone who wants to know more about the impact of fracking.