

To the Consultation Coordinator:

From all that we hear, Cumbria county's Allerdale and Copeland's borough councils are eager to propose that investigations be undertaken to site a GDF in west Cumbria. If that is true and a vote is taken in the councils proposing such and their proposal is accepted by DECC, it would be nothing short of a travesty. Why a travesty? There are numerous reasons, but at the top of the list are the following three:

First, West Cumbria would have to be ruled out because it fails to meet international criteria laid down for siting a GDF – criteria that include (1) topography spanning 20–30 kilometres which is flat; (2) the absence of complex geology; and (3) the presence of low-oxygen groundwater.

Second, investigating an area already largely investigated in the 1980s (by BGS) and the 1990s (by Nirex) would be a shocking waste of taxpayers' money (many millions were spent by Nirex) and a foolish waste of time for reasons alluded to in the paragraph above. How much more sensible it would be to spend time looking in areas of the UK where the criteria cited in the paragraph above are found.

Third, investigations would put the economy of west Cumbria – indeed the entire county – at risk. As many as 15 million visitors to the Lake District pump £2.2 billion into the economy – principally in the national park, but beyond the park and the rest of the county as well. That's enough money to employ 57,000 working in tourist services directly and to help keep countless tradespeople, suppliers and retailers in business. It's unlikely that tourists would head to the Lake District if part of the park becomes a huge engineering site complete with drilling, dynamiting and excavating along with all the noise that accompanies these activities plus the disruption resulting from widening roads to accommodate huge diggers and HGVs endlessly hauling material – and in years to come, hauling radioactive waste.

The Government appears to be afflicted with the double Ds – D for desperation and D for dilemma. It's desperate to see at least ten new nuclear powers stations built in the next several years while acknowledging a dilemma that has lingered over the years before that can happen, namely, a way to deal effectively, safely – and rapidly -- with the enormous amount of nuclear waste that has accumulated in Sellafield over the last sixty years plus all the waste that will be produced by new power stations in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely

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