



Developer Services & Planning  
Thirlmere House  
Lingley Mere Business Park  
Lingley Green Avenue  
Great Sankey  
WARRINGTON  
WA5 3LP

planning.liaison@uuplc.co.uk

**Your ref**

**Our ref**

**Date**

DC/13/3397 v2

5 November 2013

GDF team  
GDF siting process consultation  
Department of Energy and Climate Change  
55 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2EY

Dear GDF team

**Proposal: Managing Radioactive Waste Safely: Consultation on the site selection process for a Geological Disposal Facility**

Thank you for your consultation and seeking the views of United Utilities Water PLC in this process.

We support growth and sustainable development within the North West.

Our aim is to proactively share our information; assist in the development of sound planning strategies, to identify future development needs and to secure the necessary long-term infrastructure investment.

We wish to build a strong partnership with all Local Planning Authorities [LPAs] to aid sustainable development and growth within the North West. We aim to proactively identify future development needs and share our information. This helps:

- ensure a strong connection between development and infrastructure planning;
- deliver sound planning strategies; and
- inform our future infrastructure investment submissions for determination by our regulator.

Water and wastewater services are vital for the future well-being of your community and the protection of the environment. When developing your Local Development Framework [LDF] and future policies you should consider the impacts on its community and environment and ensure infrastructure capacity is available.

We have no specific comments to make at this stage on the consultation document, but wish to be included in further consultations and where necessary, the development of your future sustained economic growth plans and policies, to ensure

that your project can be delivered sustainably and with the necessary infrastructure available in line with your delivery targets.

Our latest position with regards to the provision of water and wastewater services within Cumbria is attached for your review [see Appendix A below], and should be taken into consideration when assessing the siting process for developing a Geological Disposal Facility and any supporting planning policies.

We would like to be notified of your decision on whether to accept our comments and the future progress of the site selection process for a Geological Disposal Facility.

If you wish to discuss this in further detail please do not hesitate in contacting me or Jenny Hope.

Yours sincerely

Dave Sherratt  
Local Development Framework Assessor  
Developer Services & Planning  
United Utilities Water PLC

## Appendix A

United Utilities Water PLC supplies water to and treats wastewater from approximately 160,000 customers in our West Cumbria Resource Zone. United Utilities Water PLC has a number of sources of water in this area including lakes, rivers and groundwater and hundreds of kilometres of water supply network infrastructure.

United Utilities Water PLC support the consultation proposal to carry out more detailed geological investigations to locate potential suitable repository sites and the opportunity for United Utilities Water PLC to be consulted in this procedure going forward. United Utilities Water PLC would seek assurance that the criticality of the public water supply system of West Cumbria is acknowledged and any risks to the associated infrastructure, water quality or water resource is accounted for. Supplies of potable water to the repository from the United Utilities Water PLC network [e.g. for administration buildings, offices, workshops] whether they be temporary or permanent also need to be discussed with United Utilities Water PLC as this could affect our customer's level of service for the water supply zone and wastewater treatment if not fully accounted for in our business plans.

We will continue to utilise local sources of water for the immediate future to supply our West Cumbria customers. However, in the longer term, as part of our revised draft Water Resources Management Plan<sup>1</sup> submitted to Defra in November 2013, we are proposing to link our West Cumbria resource zone to our much larger Integrated Resource Zone, bringing about benefits both for the environment and our customers. In doing so, we would close our primary water supply and treatment assets located in West Cumbria with some groundwater sources being retained as a drought contingency measure.

United Utilities Water PLC operates and maintains a number of wastewater treatment works and sewerage infrastructure assets in the area. Any potential change, whether they are temporary or permanent may affect the operation of these wastewater infrastructure assets and could result in a major environmental incident, therefore there is need for on-going discussion and inclusion in United Utilities Water PLC's business plans.

In particular, construction of the repository and associated facilities may generate large volumes of groundwater, the disposal of which may require United Utilities Water PLC to be involved through its existing wastewater network and treatment facilities

Due to the change in water sourcing and the future protection of United Utilities Water PLC's assets and service to customers, it is imperative that United Utilities Water PLC is engaged and consulted in all aspects of the project, including the investigation process; design, construction phase, operation and maintenance of the permanent and temporary facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://corporate.unitedutilities.com/Water-Resources-Management-Plan.aspx>