

RSRL Winfrith Stakeholder Group response to the Governments Consultation on the Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility for Nuclear Waste.

The Winfrith Stakeholder Group held a meeting on the 14th of November and the GDF consultation was brought to the attention of the attendees by the Chairman.

It was made clear to all members that they were able to make their own comments via the Decc website if they so wished to do so.

Question 1

Over all the general consensus of opinion was that as this is of National Importance the Government should take advice of the Geological experts and find the appropriate site, do all the required testing and then as with the HS2 get on with it.

It is felt that Volunteerism may not work regardless of how money is put forward for the hosting community, there would be many protests, leading to Public Inquiry's, which would lead to endless delays. If this were to happen it would eventually end up with the Secretary of State Minister dealing with it.

As they saying goes "one cannot please all the people all the time" It would probably be in the public interest to have a referendum to raise national awareness of finding a suitable area to build the GDF for RadioActive Waste. Another way to bring this to the public's attention could be to have a Television Program on prime time Television probably hosted by Professor Brian Cox telling the public that a GDF has to be built in the country, what it would contain, and for how long, and any problems that could occur and what legacy would be for generations to come. Then to follow on to this, a proper debate probably hosted by David Dimbleby with geological experts, politicians, possible host communities, and representatives from other countries i.e. Sweden where they have and are doing the same thing.

Question 2

As to leaving the planning decision with a Parish Council, of course any planning details would be given to a Parish Council if the GDF was going to be in their boundary, but any major decision on something of this importance would have to taken by a higher authority. In fact as this is a National Problem the Government should (as with the HS2) take the decision using the new Planning Laws relating to major builds such as New Runways at major Airports, siting of New Airports. Ideally, an independent panel which includes members from Parish, District, and County representatives should be set up.

Question 3 and 4

It is basically agreed with 2.84 and 2.85 on page 35, but independent verification must be and seen to be truly independent.

Question 5

There is no major disagreement on this policy as long as it was Non intrusive to local communities. Announcements in local papers could inform on what was happening in any particular area.

Question 6

It will be very difficult to communicate and put into an understandable format just what a GDF is and what it will contain in the way of RadioActive Waste to most volunteer communities. Once the thought of having this in their community for what basically is a life time, people will start to think about their children's future, also, what impact it will have on their housing and the future of their surroundings. Just because it will bring work into a community other feelings might override this. Another thing is the that a good deal of the younger generation is becoming very anti nuclear and this will be the generation that will have to deal with it once it is built.

Question 7

The proposed approach to community benefit has not been made very clear in what way it will be handled. Will the package go directly to the people in such a way that their council tax is reduced for ever, or will the money be paid to councils to deal with as they wish. Also would the benefit last the life time of the facility?

Question 8

A GDF is the only way forward for storing this nations Nuclear Waste, it is difficult to see into the future and see what socio economic and environmental effects that will come from hosting it, as long as stated that sites that come under AONB, SSSI, National Parks are not included in the siting process.

Finally, no mention of transport is in this document, will new roads, or railways have to be built? Size of facility and how much waste is not mentioned either. Also on page 50, 3.64 it is stated that waste from small users in either another EU Member State or a developing country could be imported, Why? this is not made clear enough, what is meant by developing Country? and if it is another EU Member State, why not keep it in the EU instead of transporting to the UK. What is classed as a developing Country? This item should be made much clearer.

Signed on behalf of RSRL Winfrith Stakeholder Group

Sandra J Ellis

S.I. Ellis
Chairman.