Consultation : Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility : September 2013

Response from Holme Low Parish Council

Question 1: Do you agree that the test of public support should be taken before the representative authority loses the Right of Withdrawal? If so, what do you think would be the most appropriate means of testing public support and when should it take place? If you do not agree with the need for such a test please explain why.

Each local parish/town council should decide for its own area, after having tested for public support early in the process by public meetings, referendum or otherwise.

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed amendments to decision making within the MRWS siting process. If not how would you modify the proposed phased approach, or, alternatively, what different approach would you propose? Please explain your reasoning.

The Parish Council do not agree with reduced role of the County Council in the decision making process and the virtual elimination of the local town/parish councils from the democratic process.

Question 3: Do you agree with this approach to revising roles in the siting process set out in the White Paper? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

The process need to follow the localism agenda, with a genuine national approach.

Question 4: Do you agree with this proposed approach to assessing geological suitability as part of the MRWS siting process? If not what alternative approach would you propose and why?

A safe subsurface retrievable storage facility would be the best option, located in the area where the bulk of the waste is currently stored.

Question 5: Do you agree with this proposed approach to planning for the geological disposal facility? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

The Parish Council do not agree with a geological disposal facility but believe that a safe subsurface retrievable storage facility would be the best option.

Question 6: Do you agree with this clarification of the inventory for geological disposal - and how this will be communicated with the volunteer host community? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

The Parish Council do not agree with a geological disposal facility. A retrievable subsurface storage facility would enable the waste to be reprocessed or made less dangerous in the future if that was an option. Local people need to know what is to be stored and volumes etc

Question 7: Do you endorse the proposed approach to community benefits associated with a GDF? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

To suggest to a community that its economic wellbeing depends on its agreement to host a GDF is wrong. Community benefits should not be discussed until a host community has been identified.

Question 8: Do you agree with the proposed approach to addressing potential socio-economic and environmental effects that might come from hosting a GDF? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

The Parish Council do not agree that the case for a geological disposal facility has been made. A balanced view needs to be provided, setting out any potential benefits or gains, against any possible disadvantages or risks.

Question 9: Do you have any other comments?

Holme Low Parish Council are very concerned that the Government has reopened the search for a nuclear repository in our area, when Cumbria County Council Cabinet unanimously ruled it out in January of this year. By removing the County Council from the new process, the Government have simply eliminated the only barrier which stood in its way during the MRWS process.