

Dear Sir / Madam

On behalf of English Heritage, I am writing in response to the consultation by DECC on the **Site Selection Process for a Geological Disposal Facility**.

English Heritage is the Government's principal adviser on all aspects of the historic environment, including historic buildings and areas, archaeology and the historic landscape with responsibilities that extend to the urban, rural and marine environments. Alongside our statutory duty to conserve the heritage, we are also required to advance its understanding and enjoyment by the public. As part of this function we manage an estate of over 400 properties open to visitors.

Our statutory duties and locus in responding to the consultation are with regard to the potential effects of the site selection process for a Geological Disposal Facility on the historic environment. Our comments are therefore restricted to responding to ***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 proposed and why?***

English Heritage does agree with the proposed approach which should help to ensure early consideration of the potential issues, type and likely scale of the impacts on the historic environment and the significance of heritage assets (whether designated or not) and their settings. In our experience, early consideration of the historic environment in the siting process should help to enable a balanced and appropriately informed approach to decision making and mitigation. In this context, at the appropriate stages, we recommend that particular attention is given to the assessment of the likely off-site and cumulative impacts on the setting of heritage assets, and thereby the likely impacts on their significance.

We also wish to confirm that English Heritage supports the broad approach of Government to community consultation and engagement with these important proposals.

We do hope that you find these comments helpful.

Regards

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