

1. Community consultation - test of public support required.

I believe that a very significant test of lasting public support is absolutely required.

The consultation document reveals clearly that DECC has not considered at all how wide is the community that should be consulted on this matter or at what stage. A national consensus for the siting of the Facility in the Lake District should be built up first and then the final decision should be taken at local level once a site has emerged. I cannot understand why once again this is being proposed to be done entirely the wrong way round.

I feel that Cumbria County Council should retain a potential veto on the project until such time as a proper national and regional consensus has been built for the project - ie until the studies proposed, in this Consultation document, to be done during the Learning phase, have all been completed and discussed.

In order to achieve I believe there should be a new kind of local consultation process, of the sort which happens in a more orderly way in other countries than it has in the UK. This process must involve both effective community leadership, comprehensive discussion with every imaginable local organisation and a transparent polling process in which at least 66% of the entire local community of voting age (including abstainers, ie 66% of the whole adult population) should express themselves as being in favour.

2. Phasing of decision-making during the siting process

The wording is not clear. it needs to be clarified whether the community would lose its right before the Learning process starts and whether or not the representative authority would have some right to play a further role at the end of the 'Learning Phase' when the various studies are complete. I agree that the public consultation will have to continue throughout the learning process and there should be another democratic decision at that point, when the public (as well as the experts and the RWMD itself) will all be much better informed.

This siting decision-making should not in principle be separated from the planning process.

3. Roles in siting process

I do not think that the role of the County Council should be diluted in the way suggested here.

4. Geological suitability - my only no comment is that the information should be circulated earlier than proposed here.

5. Planning process

Borehole planning permission should be addressed much earlier and not separated from other steps in the process. This is to ensure that

6. Waste types inventory - no comment is that the information should be circulated earlier than proposed here.

7. Community benefits packages

Transparency is required for this; if there was clearer and more uniform criteria it might attract other districts. The payments should start during the planning process not just, as stated in the Consultation Document only 'before ' the start of underground operations'.

8. Socio-economic and environmental effects

I feel the SEA needs to be done before the Learning Phase begins not at the end of it.

Should include detailed assessment of the effects of the work both testing and site development, combined.

But when is the 'Decision to Participate'? This term is only introduced in this section and is another part of the process that is part of another process that is not transparent and needs clarification.

9. General comment - I do not feel that this consultation and consensus-building process is being carried out in a well thought-through manner. It lacks transparency and any ability to dispel the low level of the general public in the nuclear industry and its processes.

Regards
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